# Effect of Role Culture Implementation Approach on Universities Performance in Kenya

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## Abstract

The recent increase in competition and insufficient government financing, as well as the government's increased focus on technical, vocational education training, have had a significant negative impact on higher education's service delivery and performance. The study sought to determine the effect of role culture implementation approach on university performance in Kenya. The study used a descriptive research approach, and its target population included 444 senior university employees from all 74 accredited universities in Kenya. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The study discovered that role culture was significant to performance of universities. The R square value of 0.184 proved that role culture affected the performance of universities by 18.4%. The correlation value of (r=0.321, p<0.05) showed the relationship between role culture and universities' performance was positive and significant. The chi-square value of $\chi^2 (5) = 12.222$, p=0.027 further established a significant relationship between role culture and universities' performance. Role culture was significantly associated with research output, student placement by KUCCPS, and graduation rate. Organization managers must have a good understanding of the cultures that exist in universities and the impact it generates on typical performance. At the managerial level, the management should not only pay attention to the results but also consider the needs of the staff for positive outcomes.

**Keywords**: *Role culture, implementation approach, universities performance*

## 1.0 Introduction

Role culture is an organizational culture that focuses on defining and allocating duties and responsibilities to individuals based on their proficiency, skills, interests, and educational background to obtain optimum results from every individual. This culture promotes employees' decision to do what they are best at and therefore, staffs are eager to take on the task. Each individual in an organization has responsibilities needed to pursue and must own the tasks delegated by their managers. In such a work atmosphere, authority comes with responsibility (Dalton *et al*., 2017). This type of culture is a substitute set of structures and processes for the naked authority of the leader. The culture places a lot of emphasis on role delegation, bureaucracy, authority, team roles, role clarity, or job descriptions (Harrison & Stokes (2017).

Delegation entails the power to carry out a job but does not require the delegated person to give the assignment to a different person. This enables the manager or leader to assess the task that has been assigned and make sure that it is finished and carried out correctly to achieve the

desired results. The most precious resource each educational institution has had and still has is its staff. Therefore, school administrators may operate more productively by giving delegated staff the ability to oversee their given activities. It's crucial to properly train staff members so they may get the knowledge, experience, and confidence needed to advance to higher positions. A greater level of efficiency and better management are provided by effective delegating. Delegation mostly seeks to have another person complete the task (Robbins, 2017).

In a well-defined organization, authority is explicitly assigned in a role culture. These companies generally create categorized establishments in which one's career establishes their degree of authority and at hand are limited openings for a professional mandate. Role-oriented cultures, according to Haas & Hansen (2018), "substitute a set of constructs and methods for the bare authority of the head." Those kinds of ethos place a lot of emphasis on job specialization and descriptions. In other words, the employment type is extra than essential compared to the human being holding the position since work is governed by the processes and regulations that outline it (Müller & de Lichtenberg, 2018). The power of a role culture, according to Mutai (2018), "lies in its functions or specializations (financial, buying, manufacturing, and so forth), which may be conceived to be a succession of towers that are managed and operated by a limited number of high-ranking officials (the pediment)". This suggests that structured, centralized activities, which are managed by roles and communications protocols, are the basis and pillars of such an organization (Ngo, 2019). Due to its mechanical processes, this form of organization is sometimes regarded as bureaucratic.

The tactical mission viewpoint proposes that designation to executives impacts the overall performance of the crucial company by having an impact on the aggressiveness of the focal firm's activities as well as on its competitive contacts with the competition. However, the likely environment affects how these competitive exchanges play out. The decisions a business makes about delegation, their viable conduct, economical exchanges together with opponents, and company triumph are all theoretically connected by this approach. The exclusive involvement of the tactical entrustment viewpoint is to assess the recital outcomes of those pronouncements based on their bearing on viable exchanges, despite other streams of management research linking delegation dimensions like incentives and organizational structure to a firm's behavior. The strategic delegation viewpoint, therefore, highlights how organizational features inside enterprises can influence the dynamics of competition between firms (Dalton *et al.,* 2017).

Role culture is based on the relationship between a company's delegation choices and how aggressively it competes. Depending on the exact type of delegation dimensions involved, there may be a difference in the specific causal mechanisms underlying this shift in corporate aggression. Selecting managers, for instance, who are committed to dominating a certain market sector might influence the businesses they run to focus more on volume increase than profit (Young & Goold, 2017).

### Problem Statement

The findings of the survey to do with the link between performance of the organization and then managerial culture implementation method have been reported to be ambiguous and conflicting. According to Ojo's (2018) study, there is no clear correlation between organizational performance and implementation methods for organizational culture. The strategy for implementing organizational culture is extremely widespread in many organizational setups, but it is still a very complicated notion and a crucial aspect in determining whether an organization succeeds or fails. The recent increase in competition and insufficient government financing, as well as the government's increased focus on technical,

vocational education training, have had a significant negative impact on higher education's service delivery and performance (TVET).

Rahid, Sambasivan, and Johari (2017) claim that Kenyan Universities' negative outcomes are due to their rigorous performance. Most universities have recently drawn attention of the public because of the deterioration in their execution levels. Although a large portion of it may be attributable to the rise in student enrollment, limited resources, staff turnover, insufficient capital expenditures, labor conflicts, and "brain drain," Universities need to be strategic and understand the value of implementing a healthy corporate culture as a key component to gaining a competitive edge (Obiwuru et al., 2018). Despite the fact that there have been a lot of prior studies to establish the connection, very little evidence has been shown to demonstrate how organizational culture implementation strategy affects university performance (Simons, Dávila, & Kaplan, 2018). This study set out to fill this gap by analyzing the performance of Kenyan institutions in relation to role culture implementation method.

### Research Hypothesis

H0: Performance of institutions in Kenya and role culture implementation approach do not significantly correlate.

## 2.0 Literature Review

A logically connected set of positions or job boxes define this sort of culture in an organization (Harrison, 2016). A small group of senior management members works together at the top to coordinate these jobs or job descriptions. Role-oriented organizations, in the words of Harrison and Stokes (2017), "do not allow individual autonomy or choice to members at minor levels because they function on the notion that people are not to be trusted." Because of this culture, there is a hierarchical line of command, which promotes consistency and predictability. By providing a predictable pace of ascent up a pillar and the opportunity to learn specialized skills without danger, it can provide stability for organizational members (Harrison & Stokes, 2017). This organizational role culture places a strong emphasis on accountability, legitimacy, and legality to prevent organizational members from making errors.

### Role Clarity

In a company with a role culture, role clarity is essential. In terms of job clarity, technical proficiency and specialization are more important than product innovation or pricing (Nylor, 2017). For a company with a role-oriented culture, this poses a constraint. In accordance with Obiwuru et al. (2018), "role cultures are likely to be most effective in stable and predictable contexts over which the organization exercises some influence or when product life cycles are extended." As a result, it may be challenging for a business with this sort of culture to thrive in a setting that demands adaptability and quick responses to changing circumstances.

All personnel has clearly defined roles, duties, and levels of power. Employees think it is their responsibility to follow legalistic procedures and adhere to the organization's numerous regulations, which are detailed in extensive manuals (Deshpande & Farley, 2017). Thomas (2017) defined role clarity as the presence of information that is important to the function, either because the information is limited or because the information's quality varies. Roles express the expectations of the person and the organization and act as a line of demarcation between them. The extent necessary data is presented regarding by what means the member of staff is projected to work is characterized as function lucidity, corresponding with the title role hypothesis. Role clarity enhances job happiness, which in turn has a good ripple impact on one's functions and duties (Ify& Rao Nemani, 2017).

When operationalizing career happiness, Nihal Hettiarachchi (2017) included employment duties as a factor and discovered a substantial relationship between job performance and work obligations. Based on a study he did at a financial firm, Omukaga (2018) discovered that work satisfaction levels decrease as role conflict increases. Gupta discovered that role conflict and ambiguity resulted in lower levels of work satisfaction (2018). Role conflict, according to studies by Um & Harrison (2018), raised the levels of work discontent. Additionally, studies have demonstrated that role conflict helps employees become more adaptable and receptive to changing positions (Prins, 2018).

According to a study by Hemantkumar and Premchand (2017), the company form and career classes' hazy boundaries, alongside the lack of position lucidity and tyrannical management in non-computerized companies are the main causes of workplace complexity. Other factors include continuous change and a diverse workforce. Both genders take part in a key part in the advancement of the company, and role clarity has a mixed effect on organizational citizenship behavior, according to Mohit Yadav and Anil Kumar's 2017 study on the topic. Employees' perceptions of their work performance are proven to be more consistent and accurate when their roles are clear, which leads to improved psychological empowerment and higher performance. According to Guszcza (2019), role clarity does not significantly affect team performance, even though a strong vision enhances it.

Employee attitudes and actions that promote cooperation are negatively impacted by high levels of position uncertainty. Role ambiguity raises stress levels because employees frequently feel frustrated and anxious about how to carry out their duties and attain desired results (both material and social). It can also result in decreased employee performance and, as was already said, a lack of employee dedication and interest. Additionally, employees' perceptions of their competitors might be lowered as a result of conflicting job expectations, which can also lead to irritation and discontent. According to Kahn and colleagues (2017) research, individuals who face high degrees of position vagueness with war may make an effort to lessen the stress by circumventing their problem at work by abstaining from work frequently or quitting the company. According to research by House (2017), role clarification is a task-oriented leader activity intended to give subordinates cognitive frameworks about how they might achieve their job goals. Setting task objectives for workgroups is part of role clarification, which also involves the primary goal of directing and coordinating subordinates' work activities and ensuring that they are aware of their responsibilities.

According to Yukl (2019), establishing clear task objectives helps subordinates focus their efforts on carrying out crucial tasks and responsibilities, encourages them to look for more effective ways to complete their work, and makes it easier to assess their performance by giving them a standard to measure it against. Job illumination is a fundamental element of starting form, one of the two crucial aspects of principal behavior that Ohio State leadership studies have discovered. In the path-goal theory of leadership, role clarification also serves as the main tenet of directed conduct (House 2017). Studies on role clarification had more conclusive findings than studies on the effects of beginning structure. Clarifying roles is a key factor in determining management performance, according to several research. Furthermore, both laboratory and field research has, again and again, revealed ascertaining clear, difficult aspirations run to better amounts of both personal and firm operation (Locke and Latham 2019).

### Team Roles

According to Jones (2017), a team is made up of people who collaborate to accomplish shared objectives and deliver high-caliber services. The capability of operating as a group can assist

the crew colleagues to see more emotionally assured, more self-confident in themselves, and well again capable to work out and make conclusions with others. It aids in establishing productive agendas, original ideas, constructive tactics, and good ideals in the workplace. However, a lack of collaboration principles and techniques can result in professional failure, disappointment, low morale, and subpar output, all of which put forward a threat to the very continuation of the business. The notion of collaboration must be present for employees to collaborate effectively toward shared objectives and goals. When the task involves a wider range of knowledge, judgment, and opinion, the team performs better than an individual. The advantage of teamwork is a substantial rise in throughput in fields that call for imaginative conundrum-resolution of various tasks, a superior level of adaptation, and operation administration (Vaková, 2017). Any business or institution must have a strong sense of collaboration to attain success since it allows people to grow professionally and personally and discover suitable approaches to fulfilling careers successfully. Positive interactions and cooperation among staff members enable them to comprehend the value of teamwork in advancing human civilization and assisting people in achieving the shared objectives and purposes that they all require (Manzoor *et al*, 2017).

Corresponding to (Wageman, 2017), "Firm's cooperation" is the one way anything is achieved with superiority and proficiency and is a key factor in the controlled economic growth and close monitoring of the company's performance by top management. The fact that most successful businesses would not recruit someone who cannot operate in a team to resolve disagreements and complete diverse duties demonstrates the value of collaboration as a crucial talent in the workplace.

Humans have utilized the concept of collaboration to solve numerous problems, meet essential needs and requirements, and improve judgment for the benefit of all social groups. Another approach to seeing cooperation is as a potent weapon that can be used by a group of individuals to successfully reach better conclusions (Mulika, 2017). Teamwork contributes to the improvement of workers' skills and viewpoints through the organic exchange of constructive thoughts, beliefs, events, and beliefs among group members. Because of this, both the organization's services and its personnel's job performances keep becoming better over time. Companies should thus stress the benefits of collaboration to increase staff productivity and innovation, and acquire a competitive edge. A crucial component of collaboration is also the decrease in capability, which helps workers work better because there is no additional stress from their duties. After all, each team member was given an equitable distribution of the tasks. Many businesses in today's industries struggle to expand because of inadequate employee collaboration, which surely affects the performance of that company and its personnel over time (Mullins, 2017). To create a positive work environment, all team members must have mutual regard for one another and trust in one another.

The results of a study conducted by Waweru (2017) showed that collaboration is not represented in the fundamentals of employee interactions in organizations. Effective communication, conflict resolution, and resolutions become crucial throughout the whole organization if teamwork is to develop, which in turn improves the performance of the organization. According to Wilson and Sonder (2018), a team is well-defined as a collection of persons who go to work together to produce certain goals; as a consequence, when the proper team is formed, intended results will be attained. The individual must succeed to enable a good fit when it comes to the performance of the group to boost organizational performance. This implies that each person must succeed on his or her terms for the group to function well. Members of a team are expected to possess particular traits, such as intellect, excellent

communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and a willingness to collaborate with other employees to find solutions. According to Milsome (2017), cooperation rather than individual success drives total firm performance.

Corresponding to a Mulika (2017) study on the fundamentals of productive cooperation in contemporary businesses, the team leader has to be able to foster and maintain a healthy workplace culture that supports the achievement of corporate goals. For the team members to get completely engaged in working in an atmosphere where there is a good attitude toward work, effective team leadership is essential. Elevated levels of devotion at all levels of the business also help with this. The team leader should consequently have the abilities and traits required to guide performance in accordance with the team's goals and direction. As suggested by the team's leader, the other team members ought to have the same organizational objective (Charles, 2017).

According to several studies by Rosh *et al.* (2018), Hornaday (2017), and Ooko *et al.*, (2015), performance has emerged as the factor that has been investigated the most extensively in terms of group dynamics. As noted, group cohesiveness has also been demonstrated to have a significant role when there is a good relationship between the team's structure and performance (Rosh *et al.,* 2018). According to the findings of (Hornaday, 2017) in his study on team cohesiveness, both the link between group structure and group execution has remained to improve morals in discoveries undertaken by many investigators. The effectiveness of a team influences management unity or integration, which enhances coordination of each team's activity to increase production and efficiency within the company. People should be encouraged to collaborate to create new concepts, items, procedures, and methods, claim Ooko *et al.* (2015). For teams to properly understand their mission throughout the business, effective cooperation enables organizations to identify simple responsibilities for team members. Determining each team member's responsibility in achieving the organization's goals also helps (Peter, 2017).

According to Bruce's poll from 2019, a team's success may be assessed by how well it performs overall in achieving the larger company's aims and intentions. Specific teams are anticipated to accomplish and exceed the organization's aims and intentions. These crews are in charge of providing long-term solutions to the complex issues influencing corporate performance. According to Bruce's research (2019), highly specialized teams are only seen as effective after solving the significant issues that have been brought to their notice. Every business expects different teams to work toward aims and targets that correspond with the organizational orientation. This may be accomplished by the organization continually upholding its ideals and values.

## 3.0 Methodology

The study used a descriptive research approach, and its target population included 444 senior university employees from all 74 accredited universities in Kenya, including the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Dean of Faculty, Dean of Students, Heads of Departments, and Registrar. The study's ultimate sample size of 365 individuals was calculated using the Yamane formula. Additionally, the research's primary technique for acquiring quantitative data was a questionnaire. Before being loaded into SPSS version 23 for analysis, the acquired data was cleaned. Descriptive as well as illative figures were employed to evaluate the information. The effectiveness of Kenya's public universities was examined using inferential statistics to evaluate the link between the role culture implementation approach and operation. To evaluate and display explanatory data, frequencies, proportions, means, and universal variation were

used. Chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

## 4.0 Results and Discussion

The study discovered that role culture typically has an impact on university students' academic success. Performance at universities was substantially impacted by role culture (Role culture: $X^2$=12.222, df=1, p<0.001). The R square value of 0.131 proved that role culture affected the performance of universities by 13.1% without supervision compared to 18.4% when there was supervision. The role of culture had a significant effect on universities' performance (r=0.321, p<0.05). Role culture was associated with satisfactory graduation rates because the cases are more than those for the absence of this culture type and satisfactory graduation rates. With regards to research output role culture was related to good research output (Role culture: $X^2$=3.492, df=1, p=0.062; p>0.05 for both phi). Role culture was also associated with satisfactory university ranking. Role culture was also significantly associated with "placement" performance of the universities (Role culture: $X^2$=87.302, df=1, p<0.001), graduation performance of the universities (Role culture: $X^2$=6.667, df=1, p=0.01) and universities ranking at 5% significance level (role culture: $X^2$= 000, df = 1, p = 1).

### Hypothesis Testing

The chi-square value of $\chi^2$ (5) = 12.222, p=0.027 shows a significant relationship between role culture and universities' performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis there is no significant relationship between role culture implementation strategy and performance of universities in Kenya was rejected. Um and Harrison (2018) also found that role culture increased the levels of job satisfaction and created a positive impact in making employees more open, and flexible in adjusting to their roles. Guszcza (2019) also reported a strong relationship between role culture and organizational performance.

### Logistic Model for the Relationship between Role Culture and Performance of Universities

*$H_0$: there is no significant relationship between role culture implementation strategy and performance of universities*

The relationship between role culture and performance of universities was tested at a 5% level of significance (α=0.05). The model predicts 66.7% of the responses were correct; the p-value (p=0.015<0.05), the chi-square value of 5.90 is significant; the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between role culture implementation strategy and performance of universities was rejected. The Nagelkerke R-square value shows that 31% of the variation in the performance of universities is elaborated by the logistic model. Wald statistic further gives an index of the significance of the predictor in the model. The outcomes showed that role culture was a significant predictor of the performance of universities (Wald=5.733, p<0.05). Therefore, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis and accepts the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between role culture implementation strategy and the performance of universities. Role culture had an odds ratio (Exp (B)) of 2.600. This implied that the role culture implementation strategy by one unit generate 2.6 units increase in the performance of universities

### Discussion

Role culture was significant to the performance of universities. The R square value of 0.184 proved that role culture affected the performance of universities by 18.4%. The correlation value of (r=0.321, p<0.05) showed the relationship between role culture and universities' performance significant. The chi-square value of $\chi^2$ (5) = 12.222, p=0.027 further established

a significant relationship between role culture and universities' performance. Role culture was significantly associated with research output, student placement by KUCCPS, and graduation rate. Denison and Goelzer (2017a) also found that role culture fosters the development of individuals' special talents and coordination. Another study by Hambrick *et al*. (2018) also discovered that giving employees positive feedback on their roles enhances their performance in attaining the objectives. Employee feedback-seeking is a useful tool for managing role ambiguity. Roles' creation and maintenance are essential for employees' socialization, productivity, and well-being. Roles are essentially a set of actions or demeanors that relevant organizational stakeholders anticipate from someone in a certain position inside the organization. Ineffective communication between role receivers and role senders can complicate rule-making procedures, and volatility in an organization's work environment may need continual role revisions. When roles' domains, means of fulfillment, and outcomes of role performance are not clearly stated, it results in role ambiguity.

Li-Fei and Hua (2018) also found that role ambiguity may increase as an organization's complexity increases due to more centralization, formalization, and ambiguous goals. Role ambiguity can also arise in organizations that often modify how work is done. Employee job ambiguity may also grow as a result of inadequate or absent managerial communication. As a result, employees experiencing role conflicts and role ambiguity to a great level will try managing their associated stress by resigning from their job, boycotting the organization, or through a high rate of absenteeism. Kahn and colleagues (2017) also found that role ambiguity raises stress levels because employees frequently feel frustrated and anxious about how to carry out their duties and attain desired results (both material and social). It can also result in decreased employee performance because of a lack of employee dedication and interest. Additionally, employees' perceptions of their competitors might be lowered as a result of conflicting job expectations, which can also lead to irritation and discontent.

Okoko (2017) also affirmed that there exists a relationship between corporate culture and firm performance. Yukl (2019) also acknowledged that establishing clear role objectives helps subordinates focus their efforts on carrying out crucial tasks and responsibilities, encourages them to look for more effective ways to complete their work, and makes it easier to assess their performance by giving them a standard to measure it against. Mulika (2017) also reported on the fundamentals of productive cooperation in contemporary businesses, the team role leader has to be able to foster and maintain a healthy workplace culture that supports the achievement of corporate goals. For the team members to get completely engaged in working in an atmosphere where there is a good attitude toward work, effective team role leadership is essential. High levels of devotion at every level of the business also help with this. The team leader should consequently have the abilities and traits required to guide performance in accordance with the team's goals and direction.

## 5.0 Conclusion

Role culture was significant to performance of universities. Delegation**,** bureaucracies, team roles, and role clarity or job description were key aspects that dominated role culture. Staff adhered to procedures and protocols, teamwork was promoted, roles were properly clarified among staff and universities had narrower spans of control due to division of labor.

## 6.0 Recommendations

Organization managers must have a good understanding of the cultures that exist in universities and the impact it generates on typical performance. This is very important while making imperative decisions. It is always good to change the culture when it does not yield positive

outcomes. At the managerial level, the management should not only pay attention to the results but also consider the needs of the staff for positive outcomes. The employees are invaluable assets to the organization and therefore managers are reminded to develop a workplace culture that promotes employee satisfaction. The involvement of staff in decision-making is one approach to improving workplace culture.

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