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Abstract

This study sought to examine whether community-based organizations implementing HIV/AIDS conduct staff performance appraisal, and its impact on staff performance. The researchers argue that performance appraisal practices is a key indicator to the success of community-based HIV/AIDS projects. However, it is rarely practiced to document the capacity of employees in project performance. It is on this basis the study sought to find out staff performance appraisal on the performance of HIV/AIDS project. The study anchored on descriptive research design. The target population was the staff implementing HIV/AIDS projects in Nakuru Town East Sub-county. Simple random sampling procedure was applied to the 200 respondents who participated in the study. Quantitative data gathered through questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The Pearson’s chi-square test ($\chi^2$) was run to assess the association between the identified variables. The study found that 69.8% of the respondents agreed that the organization often conducts periodic staff evaluation, and 57.8% of staff willingly participate in performance appraisals. Majority (79.9%) of the respondents confirmed that when staff performance appraisal is effectively performed, there is high level of achievement of community-based HIV/AIDS projects.

1.0 Introduction

Can staff performance appraisal impact on performance of community-based projects? This is the main question of this article. According to Cascio & Award (1981) performance appraisal is an orderly account of the job and that of the employees. For McCourt & Eldridge (2003), performance appraisal as the process that is carried out to enable both the individual and the organization to analyse, examine and evaluate the performance of specified objectives over a period of time. It is also the process of obtaining, analysing and documenting information about the worthiness of an employee (Dowling, Welch and Schuler, 2009).

In this study, staff performance appraisal is the process that is carried out to enable both the individual and the organization to analyse, examine and evaluate the performance of specified objectives over a period of time. In community
based projects performance appraisal is significant as it provides staff performance feedback while identifying individual staff strengths and weaknesses, evaluating goal achievement as well as identifying individual training needs. Any form of appraisal applied must be in line and compatible with the procedures, needs and arrangement of the organization in order to generate benefits (Appelbaum et al. 2011).

McNeil (2010) quips that projects create an environment where resources are loaned to a project manager to complete certain responsibilities of a project. Many times these resources do not report directly to the project manager, and attempts to get team members to be accountable for their work on the project can become problematic. Therefore, organizations have come up with various approaches to measure the performance of employees.

For Dessler (2008) the performance appraisal process involves setting performance standards, communicating standards and expectations, measuring actual performance, comparing actual performance with the set standards, discussing results providing feedback and decision making on corrective actions. In a climate with growing emphasis on participative management styles, self-regulated or voluntary systems of performance appraisal may become increasingly prevalent and important. As Beardwell (2008) avers, management of staff performance is a necessary function of the managerial department. Therefore, an appraisal scheme need to be set up in an atmosphere of openness, with agreement between management, employers and employee representatives on the design of the scheme (Choge, 2010) and employees should have a clear understanding of the need of performance appraisal process (Graysm, 2004).

Wright & Geroy (2001) project staff competencies change through effective training programs. It not only improves the overall performance of the employees to effectively perform the current job but also enhance the knowledge, skills and attitude of the workers necessary for the future job, thus contributing to superior organizational performance. In the USA, Evans, Pucik & Barsoux (2002) revealed that NGOs and for profit organizations were both facing increased competition due to globalization, changes in technology, political and economic environments and therefore, prompting these organizations to appraise their staff in order to prepare them to adjust to organizational needs.

In Australia, Cheung et al. (2014) expressed that New South Wales Public Works Department propelled a Project Performance Evaluation (PPE) system, which covers an extensive variety of execution parameters. Alotaibi (2011) in his investigation found that Saudi Arabia did not have a fitting development contractual worker performance monitoring system, and the recognizable proof and investigation criteria and sub-criteria for a choice structure.

Laura, Rowe, Sister, Brillant, Emily, Bernice and (2010) argue that performance appraisal is paramount in improving management skills of staff. For example, good management skills have had a positive impact on health systems strengthening and process-related outcomes in many countries. Their study sets out to examine a set of guiding principles that promote the systematic transfer of management skills to strengthen key staff and leaders in health facilities and county health teams in Liberia. Further still, although effective performance appraisal may be good for an organization, it may be bad if not professionally handled. Depending on the appraisal pointer, whether negative or positive, its effects on employees can tarnish the reputation of the organization if not taken positively by the employee (McCourt & Eldridge, 2003).

In South Africa, Mabuza (2010) found that a number of organizations fail in their endeavours to run successful Hiv/Aids workplace programmes. A qualitative research study was carried out from 21 to 24 December 2009. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from the 12 senior managers purposively selected. This research study will differ from the above in that the researcher will interview leaders and subordinate staff members of different HIV/AIDS programs. Sosena, Yigeremu, Mirkuziee, Biftu, Jeannie & Elizabeth (2010) argue that staff appraisal is needed at all levels of project management.

Swart et al. (2005) assert that bridging staff performance gap refers to implementing a relevant training intervention for the sake of developing particular skills and abilities of the employees and enhancing employee performance. While the above studies address Hiv/Aids related issues in different geographical regions, use of different research instruments, this study will focus on Hiv/Aids projects in Nakuru East Sub-county in Kenya. Kuvaas, (2006) found a relationship between satisfaction with performance appraisal and outcomes such as affective commitment and employee turnover intentions. Dissatisfaction with
performance appraisal is associated with negative outcomes including increased job dissatisfaction, lower organisational commitment, and higher intentions to quit (Brown, Hyatt & Benson, 2010).

In Kenya, with numerous NGOs being established to address Hiv/AIDS, there is evidence that they are not performing to the expected level. Mutobera (2014) averred that most of the organizations implementing HivAids projects are managed by personnel who have inadequate managerial knowledge and skills ensure improved performance of projects. As an outcome, large donors such as USAID have pulled out and even cut down their funding leading to closure of Hiv/Aids clinics and initiatives (World Bank, 2010). The main question in this study is, could it be that donors were not satisfied by staff performance?

Following the introduction of performance contract as documented in public sector reforms and performance contracting session paper, 2003, in the public service, it became clear that employees of public institution had to improve their performance. However, this does not leave out employees working non-profit organizations. For the effectiveness of performance appraisal, studies have shown that the responsibility for enacting performance appraisal has largely shifted from the human resource management department to line managers (Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2010). And thus, the role of line managers is therefore, significant to ascertain how employees perceive and react to performance appraisal.

Most studies to date have focused on performance appraisal in traditionally structured organisations where evaluators and those evaluated have fairly stable one-to-one dyadic relationships (Bredin & Soderlund, 2011). Additionally, it is not clear, how line managers work together for assessing the performance of staff in in project teams, especially when these employees shift from team to team (Keegan et al. 2012).

Bayo-Moriones et al. (2017) point out that staff performance appraisal become more reliant on input from workers themselves. Mercer (2003) study found that out of 3500 employees, only 20% believed that virtuous performance will be rewarded while some 33% felt that their organization operated in such a way that there was inadequate link between pay and performance. From the above finding, linking pay to performance requires a robust performance appraisals process and effective implementation by line managers. The researchers argue that although staff performance appraisal may not always guarantee success for specific Hiv/Aids prevention, care or policy programs, it is a prerequisite for effective performance of projects.

Performance appraisal system is the systematic description of job relevant strength and weakness within and between employees. It needs to satisfy the combined needs of individual subordinates, the manager and corporate-organization.

Mutobera (2014) study found that most NGOs staff lack technical, financial and managerial capacity to mount effective performance of community based projects. Many grassroots organizations dealing with HIV/AIDS related activities wind up as soon as the donor funding ends. In a stakeholders meeting organized by NACC in 2016, it was shared that many of these organizations never access any external funding because of their limited staff capacity in project management.

1.1 Statement of the Problem
In the contemporary contexts, every institution whether local, national or international, consider staff performance appraisal as significant in the attainment of its vision and overall goals. Notwithstanding, in recent times much focus has been on public institutions with less or no attention on non-profit community-based organizations. We argue that staff performance appraisal can be utilized to increase and advance productivity in these organization. McKinsey (2006) notes that improved capabilities, knowledge and skills of any workforce is major source of competitive advantage in a global market. However, the extent to which staff performance appraisal is applied in community-based organizations is not known. Thus, the need for this study.

2.0 Research Methodology
This study employed descriptive research design. The target population were the staff implementing various Hiv/Aids projects in Nakuru Town East Sub-county. The sample size was 200 respondents, who were reached through simple random sampling technique. This study employed a questionnaire (with closed and open-ended questions. Content validity was established through experts’ consultation. Test re-test method was used to ascertain the level of reliability of the piloted research instrument. Data was analysed quantitatively and presented in form of tabulation.

3.0 Findings and Discussion
The study examined whether organizations implementing community-based projects
implement staff performance appraisal to improve the performance of projects. In this study, the researchers argue that performance appraisal practices is a key contributor to the success of community-based HIV/AIDS projects. However, it is relatively practiced by community organizations to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their employees to improve their productivity, which in turn helps the organizations to gain competitive advantage with project staff. It is on this basis the study sought to find out staff performance appraisal on the performance of HIV/AIDS project. In this study, staff performance appraisal is determined by how frequent staff evaluation is done, review of performance contracts, staff performance reviews, and staff participation in performance appraisals and quality of work in the organization.

3.1 Staff performance Appraisal on the Performance of HIV/AIDS Projects
The researcher begun with understanding the relationship between staff performance appraisal and performance of HIV/AIDS projects in the study area. The findings are presented in table 1.0 shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Rare</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The organization conducts periodic staff evaluation</td>
<td>26(13.5%)</td>
<td>134(69.8%)</td>
<td>32(16.7%)</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees are offered performance contracts upon joining the organization</td>
<td>38(19.8%)</td>
<td>120(62.5%)</td>
<td>34(17.7%)</td>
<td>0(0.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project supervisors conducts performance reviews on employees</td>
<td>35(18.2%)</td>
<td>121(63.0%)</td>
<td>35(18.2%)</td>
<td>1(.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees willingly participate during performance appraisal periods</td>
<td>28(14.6%)</td>
<td>111(57.8%)</td>
<td>47(24.5%)</td>
<td>6(3.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked if the organization conducts periodic staff evaluation, majority 134(69.8%) indicated often while 32(16.7%) indicated rare and 26(13.5%) indicated very often. This shows that the organization usually carries out periodic staff evaluation to reward their employees and motivating them. When the respondents were asked if employees are offered performance contracts upon joining the organization, 120(62.5%) indicated often while 38(19.8%) indicated very often and 34(17.7%) indicated rarely. This shows that most organizations offer performance contracts to their new employees. It was confirmed during an interview with one manager that the same performance contracts have targets for every employee, which are used during performance appraisal.

When asked if project supervisors conducts performance reviews on employees, 121(63%) indicated often, 35(18.2%) indicated very often while 35(18.2%) indicated rarely and 1(.5%) never. This shows that project supervisors usually conducts performance reviews on employees to increase competition among employees at the same time improving their performance towards achieving organizational goals. When asked if employees willingly participate during performance appraisal periods, majority of the respondents 111(57.8%) indicated often, 47(24.5%) indicated rarely while 28(14.6%) indicated very often and 6(3.1%) indicated never. This shows that most employees willingly participate during performance appraisal periods, since before, they were given contracts to work in respective organizations, and they were let aware of participating in performance appraisal.
Table 1.2. Staff Performance Appraisal * Performance of Community Based HIV/AIDS Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Performance Appraisal</th>
<th>Performance of Community Based HIV/AIDS Projects</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>Count 4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Staff Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>139</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Staff Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Staff Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>60.5%</td>
<td>39.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Staff Performance Appraisal</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2 above shows that majority (60%) of the respondents who indicated that staff performance appraisal were very often done, while 40% revealed that the performance of community Based HIV/AIDS projects were often achieved. Additionally, majority (79.9%) of the respondents who indicated that staff performance appraisal were often done, revealed that the performance of community based HIV/AIDS Projects were often achieved, and 20%(rarely) rarely and none (0.0%) very often. Lastly, most 26(60.5%) of the respondents who indicated that staff performance appraisal were rarely done, revealed that the performance of community-based HIV/AIDS projects were often achieved, 17(39.5%) rarely and none (0.0%) very often. In conclusion majority (79.9%) of the respondents confirmed that when staff performance appraisal is effectively performed, there is high level of achievement of community-based HIV/AIDS projects.

Table 1.3 Association between the staff performance appraisal and performance of community Based HIV/AIDS Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chi-Square Tests</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>82.496</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>34.977</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>19.523</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The p-value (.000) for the linear-by-linear Association was below .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis that “there was no significant association between the staff performance appraisal and performance of community Based HIV/AIDS Projects” was rejected. This implies that there was a significant association between the staff performance appraisal and performance of community-based HIV/AIDS Projects.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that majority (79.9%) of the respondents participate in staff performance appraisal and they feel that it can effectively improve performance of community-based HIV/AIDS projects. Therefore, the researchers pose that organized staff appraisal performance arrangement will motivate and improve productivity of community based projects. It is the recommendation of the study that development
professionals should give priority to regular performance appraisals on all staff in various projects for effective project performance.

References


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Facility Management: Guiding Principles.


