Full Length Research Paper

Effect of Optimum Communication and Staff Recognition on the Commitment of Sub-Ordinate Staff in Public Secondary Schools

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The purpose of this study was to assess the effective communication and recognition on the commitment of the sub-ordinate staff in secondary schools. This aspect bedevils optimum production by the non-teaching staff. The findings of this study are useful to the following groups of people and organizations: Ministry of Education in policy formulation on non teaching staff, School Boards of Governors on policy formulation and Human resource consultancy firms. Correlational research design in seeking the relationship between effective communication and recognition on the commitment of non teaching staff. Data collection instruments such as questionnaires and interview schedules were used. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze by way of percentages and ratios. Sufficiency of communication and recognition had a highly significant [$p < 0.05$] influence on commitment among the support staff. This study recommended that school stakeholders should provide adequate information and communication channels.

Keywords: Optimum Communication, Staff Recognition, Commitment Of Sub-Ordinate

INTRODUCTION

According to Dave and Prentis (2007), non-teaching staffs in schools world over are increasing and considered as an essential segment f the education team in most schools. Enz, (2001) observes that Organizations have faced many challenges throughout the years in terms of effective communication and recognition of the support staff to maximise the output.

Kenya has experienced a rapid expansion of its educational sector partly due to high government expenditure on the free secondary tuition education programme (IPS, 2008). According to KESENTSU (20I2), it is estimated that the non-teaching staff are over 800,000 plus in secondary schools.

Work motivation as a set of energetic forces that

Table 1. Summary of study population unit sampled, sampling method and sample size

Study population	sampling method	Sample Size	Percentage
Non-teaching staff	Stratified random	50	20
Heads of section	Purposive	50	20
Heads of units	Purposive	50	20
Heads of sub units	Purposive	50	20
Head teachers	Purposive	50	20
Total		250	100

Table 2. Summary of study population unit sampled, sampling method and sample size

Study population	sampling method	Sample Size	Data collection Instruments
Non-teaching staff	Stratified random	50	Questionnaire
Heads of section	Purposive	50	Interviews
Heads of units	Purposive	50	
Heads of schools	Purposive	50	
Schools in Bungoma County	Stratified random	50	

originates both within as well as beyond an individual's being to initiate work related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration (Meyer, 2004).

[a] Effective communication as a management tool in organisations

Effective communication enables employees to comprehend exactly what is expected of them. This triggers to perform their duties diligently and with passion hence curtailing management crisis (Meyer and Becker, 2004). This constitutes employee motivation which is vital to the future success of other organizations because, managers can avoid the high costs associated with

turnover Enz, (2001) suggests that the number one problem in the schooling industry is the care and motivation of human capital; the teaching and non teaching staff which develops from lack of effective communication in a given organization.

[b] Recognition of sub-ordinate staff in institutions

Sub-ordinate staff recognition is a multidimensional construct that has the potential to predict organizational outcomes such as: performance, turnover intentions, attendance, tenure and organizational goals (MOE, 2012). This is further supported by Meyer, (2004). Thus the issues of employee acknowledgement and
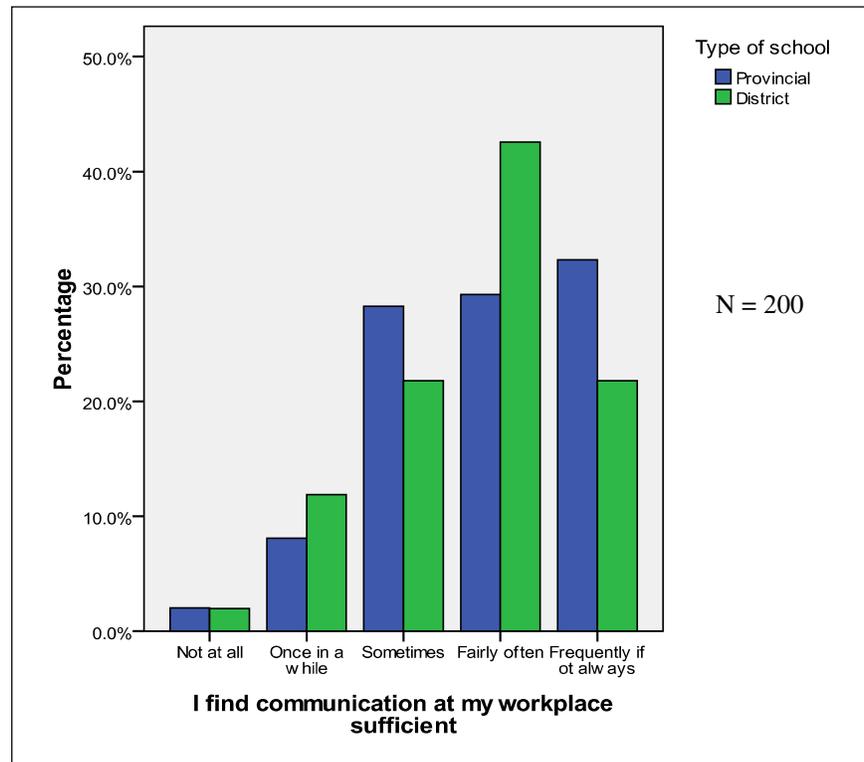
organizational commitment have so far drawn attention within the scope of Education Sector in Kenya (MOE, 2012). With the commissioning of Free Primary Education (FPE) in Kenya, in (MOE, 2012), there is increased work capacity for non-teaching staff. Emphasis on their recognition is a driving factor for their maximum output. This should be extended to all employees in public sectors to enhance achievement of the vision 2030. (MOE, 2012).

[c] Commitment of staff to the attainment of organizational goals.

Organizational staff commitment research in schools has received interest in the academic arena concerning effects upon operational output metrics as well as client interactions. UNISON, (2007) report suggests that existing research including research previously carried out for UNISON by the Labour Research Department (2004) has tended to focus on what schools and local authorities have to say about the effect of motivation on organization commitment. Indeed, schools are now being "surveyed" to such an extent that many refused to take part in the project (UNISON, 2007). According to Meyer, (2004) organizational researchers and practitioners have always been interested in work motivation and employee commitment. This is further strengthened by Ayen (2011) who asserts that motivation and employee commitment

variables have considerable influence on both task and behavioural outcomes.

It is along this background that this study was conducted to determine the effect of information availability and communication as well as employee recognition on organization commitment of non teaching staff in public secondary schools.
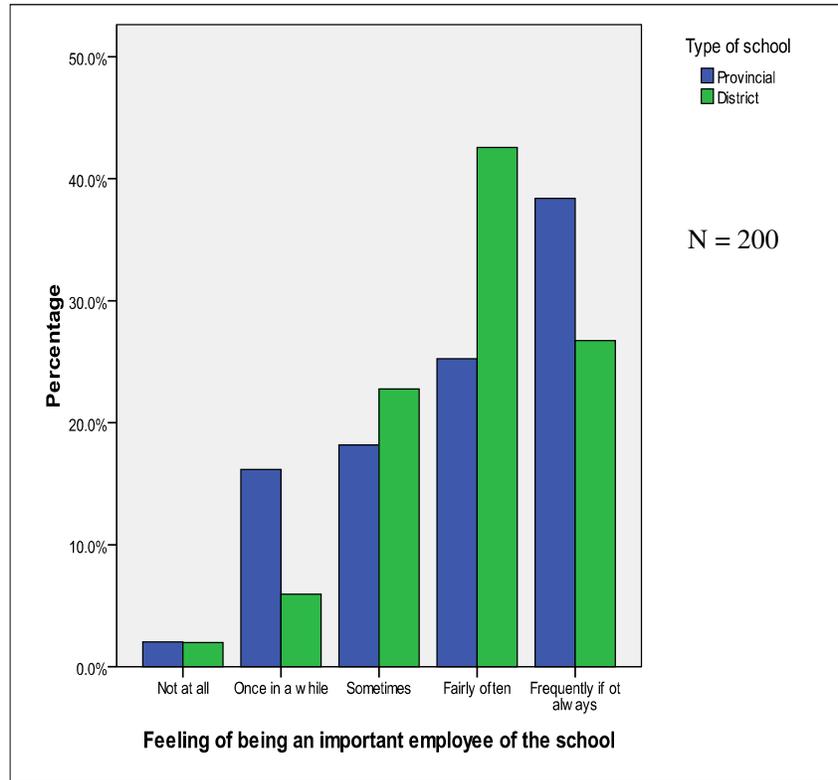
MATERIALS AND METHODS

[a] **Study site**

The study was conducted in Bungoma County. This was motivated by its cosmopolitan nature, as schools in the County are a representation of schools in Kenya. The County is the second most populous in the Western region of Kenya. It is the third most populated in the country KNBS, (2010). It covers an area of 3,032.2 km^2 and has a population of 1,375,063. Males occupy 48% of the population, while females occupy 52%. Its districts included in the study are: Bungoma South, Bungoma North, Bungoma East, Bungoma West, Bungoma central, Bumula and Mount Elgon.

[b] Study population

The study population was 2160 non-teaching staff in

Figure showing bar chart with axes "Percentage" (vertical) and "Feeling of being an important employee of the school" (horizontal). Categories: Not at all, Once in a while, Sometimes, Fairly often, Frequently if ot always. Type of school: Provincial, District. N = 200

public secondary schools KESENTSU, (2012). Among the available secondary schools, there are several District schools that occupy more than 65% of the total registered schools and 30% being county schools while Centres of Excellency occupy 5% of the total registered schools, (MOE, 2012). The study involved 50 heads of schools and 200 Departmental heads of non-teaching staff and members where applicable to provide a right representation in providing information about the study.

[c] Research Design

This research adopted a co-relational research design. It is about relationships among variables, it involved description, analysis and interpretation of circumstances at the study time Gupta (2004). The study adopted this design since it enables rapid collection of data from sampled population and it ensures that relevant data is obtained which can later be used to make generalizations on the target population.

[d] Sampling Strategy

Stratified random sampling method was used in the target 206 public secondary schools to get a sample size of 50 schools. This ensured that each category of public schools was proportionally represented. Purposive sampling was used to identify the various head teachers and heads of section for study since they were key informants. They also had reliable information based on their supervisory role, (Table 1). This technique was used to identify respondents with common characteristics to constitute the sample of the study. The stratified random sample was therefore estimated at 200 non-teaching staff. This was done using stratified random sampling to ensure that each employee was proportionally represented.

[e] Data collection

The instruments employed in the primary data collection were questionnaires and interview schedules (Table 2). Questionnaire was used to obtain data from the non-teaching staff.
 The unstructured interview method was used to collect data from selected respondents like the Head teachers, heads of sections and heads of units. Secondary data were obtained from the organizations reports, publications, manuals and newsletters.

[f] Data Analysis and Presentation.

Prior to processing the responses, all completed and received questionnaires were edited to ascertain that

they were complete and consistent across respondents. Data was subsequently calibrated under different variables with their frequencies. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data by way of percentage and ratios in describing the characteristics of the collected data. Inferential statistics involved correlation and Chi Square tests which were used to measure the association and the degree of its intensity between the relevant variables. The relationship among the study variables was evaluated using correlations which were tested at 95% confidence level (alpha level or level of significance p = 0.05). The results were then presented in frequency tables and pie charts. The statistical programme for social science (S.P.S.S) computer software packages was applied.

DISCUSSION

Impact of information availability, effective communication and employee recognition on organizational output of the sub-ordinate staff.

[a] Sufficiency of communication at the workplace for non-teaching staff in public secondary schools.

Respondents were asked to indicate whether communication at their workplace was sufficient. The responses are summarized in Figure 1. A Chi Square test conducted and the results indicated that there was a significant (p>0.05) association between communication and school types ($\chi^2_{4,0.05} = 6.08$). These results indicate that majority of respondents were of the view that communication at the workplace was sufficient. Data from key informant interviews with school managers indicated that most of them were striving to ensure that there was adequate communication between the management and the workers as well as amongst workers themselves. Studies on work motivation confirm that adequate and effective communication improves worker's performance, satisfaction and commitment (Meyer, 2004). According to the managers, adequate communication was vital in enhancing peaceful co-existence hence curbing the occurrence of strikes. Olajide (2000) asserts that one way managers in schools can stimulate motivation is to give relevant and adequate information on the consequences of their actions on others. According to Ayen (2011), there is no known organization in which people do not usually feel there should be improvement in the way departments communicate, cooperate and collaborate with one another. Calvin (1998) states that information availability brings to bear a powerful peer pressure in which two or more people running together will run faster than when running alone or running without awareness of the pace of the other runners. By sharing information, support staffs in schools compete with one

another. KESENTSA (2012) advocates for effective communication at all levels in the workplace.

[b] Recognition of sub-ordinate staff by employers in public secondary schools

The study sought to establish whether employees were being recognized for the work done. Employees were asked to indicate whether they saw themselves as important employees of the school. The responses are summarized in Figure 2. A Chi Square test of independence indicated that there was a significant (p<0.05) association between school type and recognition of workers by employees ($\chi^2_{4,0.05} = 6.17$). From the results showed that. `not at all` responses were 2.0%, `once in a while` 11.0%, `sometimes` (20.0%), `fairly often` (34.0%) and `frequently if not always` (32.5%). The results indicate that most of the non teaching staff workers had a feeling that they were important employees of the organization, hence a feeling of recognition by the management. Studies by Olajide (2011) have shown that recognition of support workers in organizations and schools is a very influential factor to an individual towards motivating the person for better output. The innovative ideas that have been recognized and the individual facilitated for the same in the presence of others provide for great impetus to do more and for others to draw an example and do that extra which is not part of the ordinary. Sinclair. (2005) provides that the manager plays a very important and linking role in this aspect or recognition. It needs not to be only a particular good or innovative work done. Non-teaching staff in organizations and schools just need a sense of recognition to an industrious employee through, bonus, verbal expression, name tags, gestures, gifts, promotion, scholarships, compensation, individual rewards, job security, new opportunities, perceived control, perceptions of fairness, and participation in decision making, profit sharing, and payment of various allowances. Examples include: Time based (overtime pay), output – performance based amongst others. Nzuve (2010) also suggested that recognition in itself may work as an incentive for one or more of the following reasons: to improve the quality of service, for good maintenance of work to reduce breakdowns, for regular attendance and punctuality, for safety precautions and special rewards, and for long service in the organization/ schools. Results from interviews by Principals, Heads of departments and units pointed out a similar pattern.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, adequate communication and support staff recognition in public secondary schools had

a highly significant [$p < 0.05$] effect on the commitment employees to their respective institutions

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the above findings, the school stakeholders should also provide shorter communication channels since information availability brings to bear a powerful peer pressure hence will assist employees meet the various challenges. Non-teaching staff should also be recognized in monetary terms to enhance the achievement of organizational goals.

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