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INDIRECT INDIVIDUAL BASED PARTICIPATION AND
SERVICE DELIVERY IN NAIROBI CITY WATER AND
SEWERAGE COMPANY, NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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INDIRECT INDIVIDUAL BASED PARTICIPATION AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN NAIROBI CITY WATER AND SEWERAGE COMPANY, NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

Purpose: The main purpose of the research was to examine the effect of indirect individual based participation on service delivery in Nairobi city water and sewerage company, Nairobi City County,

Methodology: The research was premised on a descriptive research design with convenient random sampling being utilized. The study relied on both primary and secondary data. The study utilized a questionnaire to collect primary data. Secondary data was obtained from periodicals, journals and other relevant materials available in the internet as well as from the physical library. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Findings: The study concludes that the management should seek to enhance the adoption of both indirect participation elements such as work unions and collective bargaining agreements as tool of supporting better service delivery.

Unique Contribution: The study helps in enhancing the available empirical knowledge on how the effect of indirect individual based participation on service delivery in Nairobi city water and sewerage company, Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Keywords: *Indirect individual-based participation, collective bargaining agreement, workers union, service delivery*

Introduction

According to Gupta (2011), organization around the world are faced with a myriad of volatilities which have led to intense competition, diversity in the personnel and continuously changing customer demands and technological growth. Modern managements can no longer afford to sideline the worker in strategic decision-making process. Hence a dynamic business environment requires diverse strategic approaches be adopted in order to manage workers effectively. Traditionally, workers have had either no say or an indirect say in issues which concern their job environment. Therefore, in efforts to boost organizational efficiency, employee participation has been an area of academic concern and recent management interest (Worley & Lawler, 2010).

Buciuniene and Skudiene (2008) indicates that employee participation is largely influenced by the leadership behavior within an organization. Nerdinger (2008) is of the view that personnel within a firm will actively seek to be involved in decision making that affects their work environment. Representative participation is a form of employee involvement achieved by selecting or electing employee representatives from the different department and teams to sit on the organization board. The process is consultative where employees elect representatives who are mandated to discuss with senior management issues that concern employees (Apostolou, 2000). This forum provides employees a chance to contribute to proposals before they are presented to senior management for implementation.

Mueller (2012) indicated that adoption of work councils leads to 6.4% increase in productivity; hence showing that employee participation is a predictor of enhanced service delivery. While noting that the density of union membership fell in America to 11.8% in public and 6.9% in the private sector respectively, Sherk (2012) noted that the alternative that employees in America wanted was increased employee participation; which includes self-directed work teams, production committees, safety committees, workers councils and suggestion systems. Ambani (2016) indicated that globally representative employee participation has gained recognition as the ideal method of ideas and information sharing within an organization. This included the formation of work councils, the collective bargaining agreements and having an employee representative in the organization board.

Problem Statement

A research conducted on the impact of the employee participation on performance of the organization in the Kenyan banking sector found out that employee participation on management has a positive impact on the performance of the firm (Chesang, 2007). The findings by Chesang, prompted her to recommend for a participatory policy in an organization. However, the study was conducted in a banking sector hence findings may not be reflective of the current study. Despite the key role NCWSSC plays in service delivery within the city there has been minimal empirical work examining the contribution of indirect employee participation towards service delivery. It is from this backdrop that the researcher seeks to examine if any the contribution of indirect employee participation towards service delivery at NCWSSC. The findings of the research may enhance the service delivery within the company as well as offer concrete basis for policy formulation geared towards better personnel productivity. The current study sought to examine the influence of indirect employee participation on service delivery at Nairobi City Water and Sewerages Services Company.

Objectives of the Research

- i. To examine the influence of Indirect Individual Based Participation on Service Delivery in Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company, Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this research was limited to Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Services Company personnel working within Nairobi City County. The respondents included senior management, middle level management and low-level management with knowledge on indirect employee participation and service delivery at the company. The scope of the study was contextually restricted to aspects of indirect employee participation on service delivery.

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Review

Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory argues that every legitimate person or group participating in the activities of the firm do so to obtain benefits. All stakeholder interests should be considered intrinsically valuable. Stakeholder theory begins with the assumption that values are necessarily and explicitly a part of doing business. According to Freeman, Wicks and Parmar (2004) the stakeholder theory motivates managers to propel the organization forward and allow it to enhance its performance metrics. The theory also articulates that managers will strive to foster efficiency through promoting better relationships within the work place.

Stakeholder theory argues that the organization has relationships with many constituent groups and that managements can engender and maintain the support of these groups by considering and balancing their relevant interests (Reynolds, Schultz & Hekman, 2006). Employers therefore need to consider workers as very pertinent components of the decision-making process in the organization. There is need to balance stakeholder interests in order to realize improved performance (Friedman, & Miles, 2002).

Traditionally, firms only address the needs and wishes of four parties: investors, employees, suppliers, and customers. However, stakeholder theory argues that there are other parties involved, including governmental bodies, political groups, trade associations, trade unions, communities, associated corporations, prospective employees, prospective customers, and the public at large (Reynolds, Schultz & Hekman, 2006).. Sometimes even competitors are counted as stakeholders. Hence this theory was essential in guiding indirect participation as a predictor of service at the Nairobi Water and Sewerage Services Company.

Empirical Review

Indirect forms of participation include: joint consultative committees, workers councils, and employee representatives in the board of directors or management. Owing to decline in traditional sectors of the economy where collective bargaining flourished, the proportion of companies using new forms of employee participation has been growing in the U.K. Employers have continued to be encouraged to adopt employee participation (Summers & Hyman, 2015). In the US, a new face of labor movement has emerged. Alt-labor is a concept that is emerging as an alternative to workers unions. In these new face workers who are not members of organized traditional workers unions are mobilizing members to enable them make various demands to employers (Eidelson, 2013).

Parasuraman, Kelly and Rathakrishnan (2013) conducted a study on employee participation in the Malaysian private sector. The results revealed that there was no genuine participation by

employees in most organizations in Malaysia. Mostly, management-imposed employee participation scheme without consultation with unions. The results of the study also indicated that increased employee participation fostered better service delivery. This study was however conducted in a developed economy and therefore the findings may not be replicated in Kenyan situation.

Levine and Tyson (2010) indicated that consultative employee participation lead to better information sharing within the organization but with limited employee involvement in final decision making whereas substantive involvement increases employee autonomous control on decision making which improves the service delivery within the firm. Alper (2008) opines that managers need to build trust by formulating human resource practices that promote open and honest communication and create opportunities for employees to participate in decision making process that might affect their work.

Brunt and McCourt (2011) noted that NGOs in Kenya find co-determination and employee control to be unrealistic due to pressure or directives from donors and management environments. Consultation is preferred, especially where the management uses works councils or handpicks workers representatives into the management boards. The intention of individuals or group participation goes beyond democratic purpose. Apart from serving as an expansion of democratic space, it also includes bringing efficiency, and the right to influence decisions. However, the above study factors only NGO's and does not consider employee participation within government agencies.

Butali and Njoroge, (2018) conducted a study on the effect of employee participation on organizational performance with organizational commitment as a moderator. The researchers focused on public universities in Kenya and utilized a mixed research methodology. The results of the study indicated that lack of employee involvement in decision making contributed to poor organization performance. The researchers also found out that employee unions were a key aspect in defining employee responsibilities which was key to enhanced commitment. The study focused on public universities whereas the current research scope was a public utility firm.

Research Methodology

This research adopted a descriptive survey study design to accurately and systematically describe the effect of employee participation on service delivery at Nairobi water and sewerage Services Company. This approach was adopted an in-depth exploration of data on the nature of the problem. The study was carried out among employees working in Nairobi Water and Sewerage Services Company.

The employees were selected since they have sufficient knowledge on employee participation and service delivery within the firm. There are 240 employees at the company headquarters (NCWSSC, 2017). The study relied on both primary and secondary data. The study utilized a questionnaire to collect primary data. Secondary data was obtained from periodicals, journals and other relevant materials available in the internet as well as from the physical library. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. For the descriptive statistics the research utilized frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation. Inferential statistics was conducted using a correlation analysis.

Research Findings

The results of the study indicated that 74% (n=78) were graduate level students, 24% (n=25) were diploma level students while only 2% (n=2) of the respondents were postgraduate

students. The findings further showed that the majority of the respondents 43% (n=45) were within procurement departments, 25% (n=26) of the respondent were within operations department, 17% (n=18) of the respondents while within finance department while only 15% (n=16) of the respondents were within the administration department.

Influence of Indirect Employee Participation on Service Delivery

The research second objective was to establish the influence of indirect employee participation on service delivery within the organization. The results are presented on below;

Table 1 Indirect Employee Participation and Service Delivery

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Involvement of workers union in setting organization goals fosters service delivery	105	3.3238	1.07860
Involvement of union representatives ensures job security which enhances productivity of employees	105	4.4000	.67368
Having employee representatives in the board fosters attainment of organization goals	105	3.7905	.68914
Increased employee union involvement enhances employee commitment which increases productivity and efficiency.	105	4.0000	.95071
Meeting employee association agreements increases employee motivation which enhances the service delivery.	105	3.8190	.87465
A council of elected workers representatives exists in this organization	105	3.8000	.83666
Engaging in consultations with employees fosters involvement in decision making.	105	3.7429	1.20119
Adopting collective bargaining agreements enhances productivity within employees.	105	4.3238	.96571
The goals of the firm are incorporated in collective bargaining agreements with my employer.	105	4.0571	.96903
Performance contracts have been introduced to foster service delivery.	105	3.9714	.62722

Findings of the study indicated with regard to involvement of workers union in setting organization goals fosters service delivery there was agreement among respondents as indicated by a mean value of 3.3238 with a standard deviation of 1.0786. The result of the study involvement of union representatives ensures job security which enhances productivity of employees with a strong agreement of 4.4 with a standard deviation of .67368. The results of the study on table 4.6 showed there was agreement among respondents concerning having employee representatives in the board fosters attainment of organization goals as shown by a mean value of 3.7905 and a standard deviation of .68914. The findings of the research further indicated that increased employee union involvement enhances employee commitment which increases productivity and efficiency as show by a mean of 4 and a variation of .95701. Concerning meeting employee association agreements increases employee motivation which enhances the service delivery indicated there was an agreement among respondents as shown by a mean value of 3.819 and a standard deviation of .87465. The results of the study showed

there was agreement among respondents in regard to council of elected workers representatives exists in this organization as shown by a mean value of 3.8 and a deviation of .83666. Ambani, (2016) results also indicated that enhanced collective employee representation enhanced performance within institutions. Similarly Gilkar and Darzi, (2012) indicated that employee job involvement contributed to better organization performance.

Results of the study indicated that with regard to engaging in consultations with employees fosters involvement in decision making showed there is agreement among respondent as indicated by a mean value of 3.7429 and a standard deviation of 1.20119. Findings of the study indicated there was strong agreement among respondents that adopting collective bargaining agreements enhances productivity within employees as shown by a strong mean value of 4.3238 and a deviation of .96571. Results of the research also showed strong agreement among respondents that the goals of the firm are incorporated in collective bargaining agreements with my employer as shown by a mean value of 4.0571 and deviation of .96903. Concerning performance contracts have been introduced to foster service delivery there was agreement among respondents as shown by a mean value of 3.9714 and standard deviation of .62722. Odongo and Wang, (2017) also indicated that employee contracting through union agreements enhance the productivity and job performance among personnel. Wasike, (2012) also noted that participation among employee contributed to better service delivery within firms.

Correlation Analysis

The research further sought to examine how indirect employee participation influences service delivery within NCWSC in Nairobi County.

Table 2 Correlation Results

	Service Delivery
Indirect Employee Participation Pearson Correlation	.186
Sig. (2-tailed)	.037
N	105

The study sought to examine how indirect employee participation influences the service delivery. The findings show there is a weak positive significant effect between indirect employee participation and the service delivery as indicated by $P = .186$, $Sig = .037 < .05$. Similarly, Keinan and Karugu, (2018) concluded that management involvement of employees in the decision making and broad indirect participation enhances the performance of the firms in Kenya.

Discussion

The respondents also strongly agreed that involvement of union representatives contributed to job security which fostered productivity. Respondents were also in agreement that employee union involvement enhances employee commitment which increases productivity and efficiency. The respondents also majorly agreed that organization goals are incorporated in the collective bargaining agreements which contribute to better service delivery.

Conclusions

The results of the study also indicated there is a weak positive influence of indirect participation with the service delivery within the company. The study concludes that the management should

seek to enhance the adoption of both indirect participation elements such as work unions and collective bargaining agreements as tool of supporting better service delivery.

Recommendation

The study further recommends that the organization should regularly dialogue with employee unions and meet terms of the back to work agreements in order to minimize industrial action among employees. Sharing in decision rules and the goal setting process with employees, making the goals very specific and providing clear, frequent and consistent feedback regarding goal achievement to reduce uncertainty about management expectations; will be instrumental in supporting positive service delivery.

The study also recommends that the organization should enhance the capacity of work unions and work councils in participative decision making within the organization. The organization should further foster the implementation of performance contracts and collective bargaining agreements as tools of enhancing service delivery. The study further recommends that the firm should review its internal policies regarding human resource management in order to ensure the engagement of its personnel through better consultative measures; which can be leveraged to improve service delivery.

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