

International Journal of
Business Strategies
(IJBS)

**Business
Strategy**

Success!

Marketing

Teamwork

Plan

Opportunity

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

Motieri Stanely Ontiri
Prof. David Minja



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

¹Motieri Stanely Ontiri
PhD Candidate: Department of Public Policy and Administration
Kenyatta University

²Prof. David Minja
Senior Lecturer: Department Of Public Policy and Administration
Kenyatta University

Abstract

Purpose: The main purpose of the research was to examine the level of service delivery at Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company and how direct participation can be leveraged to foster the delivery of the company services

Methodology: The research was premised on a descriptive research design with convenient random sampling being utilized. The research data was collected using a structured questionnaire with the collected data being analyzed using descriptive and correlational analysis.

Findings: The findings confirmed a strong positive association between direct participation through; delegation of work duty, involvement in setting up work plans, participation in decision making, setting up of individual goals all contributed to positive increase in service delivery.

Unique Contribution: The study offers invaluable insight into the service delivery of the state parastatal and highlights how personnel participation has been integral in enhancing the level of corporate service delivery.

Keywords: *Direct individual-based participation, delegation of duty, service delivery*

Introduction

Employee participation is all about making an enabling environment in which individuals have an impact on actions and decisions that influence their occupations. Thus, the management team should be proactive in addressing the needs of employees who are considered the organization greatest asset. Empirical research has shown that employee participation contributes to; enhanced managerial decision-making ability (Apostolou & Mentzas, 2003), change in attitude about work, better welfare of workers (Freeman & Kleiner, 2005), reduced expenses through reduction of waste improved worker productivity across businesses (Jones, Kalmi, & Kauhanen, 2010), intent to stay, motivation, commitment, creativity, empowerment and job satisfaction (Light, 2004).

Service delivery is the process of provision of benefits and outcomes from the undertaking of a specific task or project (Alford & O'Flynn, 2012). Mare and Benington (2010) define service delivery as the provision of intangible experience that meets the intended benefits of the user. For the intangible experience to be rendered effective, it should be based on certain conditions. Participative decision making is an employee involvement method described as the extent to which employers engage employees in making key decisions for the organization (Stratejisi, Güney-Batı, & Çıkarımı, 2013).

The goal of participative decision making is to enable the organization engage employees through involvement and consequently achieve higher job performance (Borgogni, Dello Russo, & Latham, 2011). However, participative decision making is a power-sharing initiative where decision making roles are shared between senior managers and employees (Black & Gregerse, 2010). In order to be effective, participative decision making should involve all the employees in the organization since it seeks to solve employee's problems and enhance decision making (Locke & Schweiger, 2009).

Mann and Harter (2016) established that by linking workers, by having them participate in judgment making, by making the place of work more self-governing and by empowering workers, there are certain outcomes such as attitudes and efficiency thus leading to improvement. Kariuki and Makori (2015) found that employee engagement has positive approach apprehended by workers about their jobs as well as inspiration and effort they place into their jobs concluded that that engagement leads to optimistic members of staff which leads to better performance.

Statement of Problem

Limited employee participation witnessed in the public sector has persistently resulted to poor service delivery. The by-product of this is unsatisfactory working conditions, high turnover, raising of voices, decisions that are not up to the standard and uncooperative employees who are not working towards a common goal. Therefore, employee participation should take the center stage as it constitutes a powerful force for re-energizing service delivery, customer satisfaction, satisfactory working conditions and in coming up with holistic decisions. Studies (Addai, 2013; Ambani, 2016; Langat & Lagat, 2017) have all indicated that employee participation is a deep construct to all facet of human resource management known hitherto. If issues affecting human resources are not resolved in an appropriate manner, employees fail to fully involve themselves in their job. However, there is limited research on how direct employee participation influences the service delivery within state parastatals hence the need for the current research examination.

Research Objective

To determine the effect of direct individual-based participation on service delivery in Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Company, Nairobi City County, Kenya

Review of Literature

Theoretical Literature

Participatory Management Approach

The participatory approach to management is replacing the old command-and-control method. This method of management involves everyone in defining objectives, decision making and accountability (Kagaari, Munene & Ntaayi, 2010). The implementation of participatory management requires the sharing of written goals, strategies, financial and production or performance information. This section was guided by a number of theories and models. A study by Juan (2007) identifies participation in two main forms: work-related and financial participation. Work-related participation includes suggestion scheme, employee survey feedback, job enrichment, quality circles, union-management committees, self-managing work teams, mini-business units and employee strategic committees. Financial participation activities include fixed salary, skill or knowledge-based pay, individual incentives, profit-sharing schemes, gain-sharing, flexible benefits (cafeteria style), employment security, non-monetary recognition awards and stock option plans. These participation activities influence the service delivery of organizations differently depending on the level and form of influence employed. This theory is of relevance to the current study in linking how various direct individual based participation practices influence service delivery.

Empirical Literature

Gonzalez (2009) identifies three forms of direct participation: informative, consultative and delegated participation. Informative participation is mainly utilized by supervisors and other superiors while consultative participation includes setting up of suggestion boxes and attitude surveys within the firm while delegated participation involves the use of select groups to advocate for better personnel terms of service. Armstrong (2009) indicates that employees can affect the organization productivity based on their commitment to the organization goals. This can be characterized through their involvement in decision making and the aspects of the firm. Thus, in order to foster better performance, the management should not treat employees in isolation. Involving employees in decisions and policy changes that directly affect their job, while empowering employees to be more autonomous, greatly improves morale at large. When employees are viewed as a firm asset this improves their confidence levels and the company can register significant gains from the increased employee motivation. The longer the employee is directly involved the more they will become a valuable asset to the firm (Bearn, 2015). Addai (2013) conducted a study on the link between decision making, employee involvement and worker motivation in the banking sector in Ghana. The findings of this research study revealed that, involving employees in various initiatives enhances job satisfaction and increases commitment to the organization.

The most common individual empowerment schemes in Kenya's public sector include training and development programs and employee feedback survey. According to Summers and Hyman (2005), attitude surveys examine a variety of attitudes and behaviour, such as beliefs, opinions, values, expectations and satisfaction. These methods of employee participation are critical in fostering employee productivity. Wachira (2013) investigated the connection employee engagement and commitment at a bank in Kenya. The findings revealed that employee engagement and employee commitment can be established through job satisfaction and

employee manager relationship. This previous study looked at employee engagement levels and job satisfaction while the present study seeks to determine the effect of employee involvement on job performance. Mwololo and Were (2018) conducted a study examining the effect of employee participation on the adoption of total quality management by multinational firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya. A Case of General Motors East Africa Limited. The researchers adopted a descriptive research design and sampled 176 respondents. The findings of the research indicated that consultative committees with personnel as well as team cohesiveness was positively related to the adoption of total quality management at General Motors Limited. Kingi and Kalai, (2018) examined effects of teachers' participation in management of physical and material resources on their motivation, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design with a semi-structured questionnaire being utilized in the data collection process. The findings of the study indicated that direct involvement of teachers in decision making was positively associated with enhanced management of resources and better work motivation. The research did not examine the effect of participation on quality of service rendered.

Research Methodology

This study utilized an explanatory research design since it is useful in establishing the relationship between variables. The study was conducted at Nairobi City Water and Sewerage Services in Nairobi City County. There are 240 employees at the company headquarters (NCWSSC, 2017) who served as the unit of observation in the research. The sample respondents for the study were 148 personnel who were apportioned equally per each personnel level. The study further employed random sampling in selecting the respondents for equal representation. The research collected research data using structured questionnaires. The collected research data was analyzed using descriptive and correlational analysis with the results being presented using charts and tables. The study ensured that all ethical guidelines were adhered to within the course of the research.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The research was able to obtain a 71% (n=105) of positive response as shown in figure below.

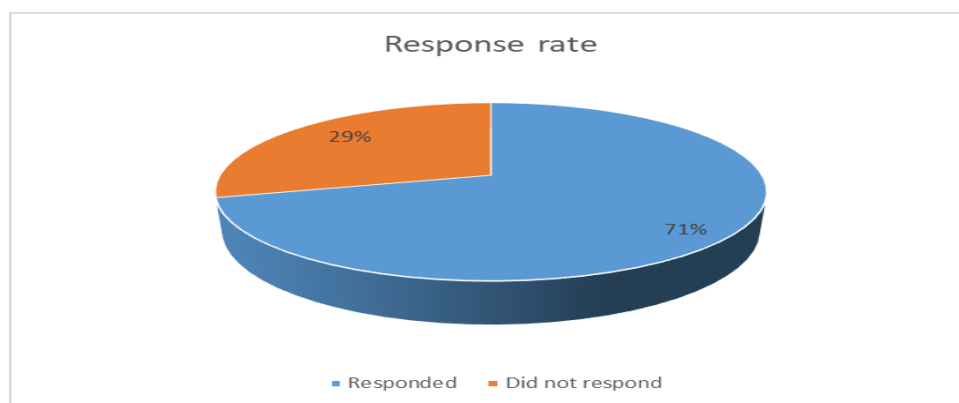


Figure 1 Research Response

Influence of Direct Individual Based Participation on Service Delivery

The research sought to examine the effect of direct individual-based participation on service delivery within NCWSSC.

Table 1 Direct Individual Based Participation on Service Delivery Descriptive

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Setting of goals by employees enhances service delivery.	105	3.9810	.77187
Utilization of survey feedback by personnel has enhanced the delivery of services at the company.	105	4.3524	.77187
Setting up of work plans by personnel enhances efficiency within the firm.	105	4.2095	.59960
Increased employee involvement leads to reduction in service complaints.	105	4.0476	.75168
Adoption of employee suggestions by management fosters productivity among the personnel.	105	4.2190	.95052
Increased management delegation of duties fosters employee productivity and effectiveness.	105	4.2952	.71956
I am a member of problem-solving team in the organization	105	3.7619	.68674
I participate in strategic management meetings	105	3.4762	.74801
I am an active member of a semi-autonomous work group in the organization	105	3.1048	.88713

Source: Researcher Data (2019)

The findings of the study on table 4.5 indicated that most employees were in agreement that setting of goals by employees enhances service delivery as indicated by the mean value of 3.981 and a standard deviation of .77187. Findings of the study further indicated that utilization of survey feedback by personnel has enhanced the delivery of services at the company shown that respondents were in agreement as indicated by a positive mean of 4.3524 and a standard deviation of .77187 showing minimal variation in the responses obtained. The study results showed that there was strong agreement among respondents that setting up of work plans by personnel enhances efficiency within the firm as shown by a high mean value of 4.2095 with a standard deviation of .5996. The findings of the study indicated that with regard to increased employee involvement leads to reduction in service complaints had mean value of 4.0476 with a standard deviation of 75168. The results of the study also showed strong agreement among respondents in regard to adoption of employee suggestions by management fosters productivity among the personnel as shown by a mean value of 4.219 and a standard deviation of .95052

The findings on table 4.5 indicated there was strong agreement among respondents that increased management delegation of duties fosters employee productivity and effectiveness as shown by the mean value of 4.2952 and a standard deviation of .71956. Study results on table 4.5 showed that there was agreement among respondents that they are members of problem-solving team in the organization as indicated by a mean of 3.7619 and a deviation of .68674. Findings of the study showed there was agreement among respondents that they participate in strategic management meetings as shown by a mean value 3.4762 and a standard deviation of .74801. Results of the study further showed that there was moderate agreement among respondents that they're an active member of a semi-autonomous work group in the

organization as shown by the mean value of 3.1048 and a standard deviation of .88713. The above results are in line with the conclusions by Dong, Sivakumar, Evans, and Zou, (2015) who indicated that goal setting by employees enhanced the performance of firms. Addai, (2013) also held that involvement of employees in decision making fostered motivation within the work place which contributed to better organization performance.

Correlation between Direct Individual Based Participation and Service Delivery

Table 2 Correlation Matrix

		Service Delivery
Direct Participation	Pearson Correlation	.701**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	105

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The study sought to examine how direct participation influences the service delivery. The findings show there is a strong and positive significant effect between direct individual-based participation and the service delivery as indicated by $P = .701$, $Sig = .000 < .05$. These findings are consistent with Bosire, Moses, and Evans, (2017) who indicated that increased employee participation in decision making and task solving helped improve service delivery.

Discussion

The majority of the respondents were in agreement that increased utilization of survey feedback had improved their productivity within the organization. Respondents also agreed that increased involvement in decision making within the firm led to a reduction in the number of complaints. The respondents were further in strong agreement that adoption of employee suggestions by management fosters productivity among the personnel. On the other hand, there was relative agreement among respondents that they are involved in semi-autonomous work groups actively. Respondents also were in agreement that they participate in strategic management activities within the organization.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings confirmed a strong positive association between direct participation through; delegation of work duty, involvement in setting up work plans, participation in decision making, setting up of individual goals all contributed to positive increase in service delivery. The study recommends employees to be assigned authority in their tasks and receive reward in case of successful service delivery. Suggestion systems should be established and individual employees should be allowed to participate (to propose) in cases related to their organizational unit beyond their tasks.

When they propose useful suggestions, a proportionate reward should be given to them. After they mature and enjoy the necessary skills to participate in affairs, they should be gradually allowed to plan and make decisions in related issues. To encourage team-working and improve team performance, rewards should be changed from individual orientation towards group performance. The study further proposes that the management of the company should re-evaluate their internal structures and corporate governance practices to alleviate any future challenges to their service delivery.

References

- Addai, D. (2013). Employee involvement in decision making and worker motivation: a study of two selected banks in Ghana. *Doctoral dissertation, University of Ghana.*
- Ambani, K. M. (2016). Effect of Employee Involvement on Job Performance at the Kenya Medical Research Institute (Center for Global Health Research) Kisumu . *Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi.*
- Apostolou, D., & Mentzas, G. (2003). Experiences from knowledge management implementations in companies of the software sector. . *Business Process Management Journal*, , 9(3), 354-381.
- Black, M., & Gregerse, N. (2010). Employee Participation. *Researchgate.*
- Borgogni, L., Dello Russo, S., & Latham, G. P. (2011). The relationship of employee perceptions of the immediate supervisor and top management with collective efficacy. . *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, , 18(1), 5-13.
- Bosire, D. K., Moses, N., & Evans, M. K. (2017). Human Resource Practices and Service Delivery in Kakamega County, Kenya. . *Int. J. of Multidisciplinary and Current research*, , 5.
- Dong, B., Sivakumar, K., Evans, K. R., & Zou, S. (2015). Effect of customer participation on service outcomes: The moderating role of participation readiness. . *Journal of Service Research*, , 18(2), 160-176.
- Freeman, R. B., & Kleiner, M. M. (2005). The last American shoe manufacturers: Decreasing productivity and increasing profits in the shift from piece rates to continuous flow production. *Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society*, 44(2), 307-330.
- Gonzalez, M. (2009). The Multidimensional Impact of Workplace Direct Participation in European Jobs. An Assessment of Theory, Debate and Research. Quality of Work in the European Union: . *Concept, Data and Debates from a Transnational Perspective*, , (67), 187.
- Juan, M. (2007). Comparative study on employee participation in Spain and US.
- Jones, D. C., Kalmi, P., & Kauhanen, A. (2010). How does employee involvement stack up? The effects of human resource management policies on performance in a retail firm. *Industrial Relations: A journal of economy and society*, 49(1), 1-21.
- Kagaari, J., John, C., Munene, & Joseph, M. N. (2010). Performance management practices, employee attitudes and managed performance." . *International Journal of Educational Management* , 24.6 (2010): 507-530.
- Kariuki, N., & Makori, M. (2015). Role Of Job Design On Employee Engagement In Private Universities In Kenya. . *Journal of Management*, , 2(60), 365-385.
- Langat, E., & Lagat, C. (2017). Effect of Organizational Ownership and Culture on Employee Performance Among Selected Banks in Kenya. . *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, , 13(13).

- Light, J. N. (2004). The relationships and effects of employee involvement, employee empowerment, and employee satisfaction by job-type in a large manufacturing environment. . *Capella University. A dissertation.*
- Locke, E. A., & Schweiger, D. M. (2009). Participation in decision-making: One more look. . *Research in organizational behavior*, , 1(10), 265-339.
- Mann, A., & Harter, J. (2016). *The Worldwide Employee Engagement Crisis*. Washington, DC, USA.
- Stratejisi, Ç. İ., Güney-Batı, N. D., & Çıkarımı, P. (2013). Employee Relations Strategy: Implication for Performance in Lagos State University, South-West, Nigeria. *Academia.Edu.*
- Summers, J., & Hyman, J. (2005). Employee participation and company performance: a literature review. *Joseph Rowntree Foundation, University of Aberdeen. ISBN, 1(85935), 299.*
- Wachira, J. M. (2013). Relationship between employee engagement and commitment in Barclays bank of Kenya. *Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi.*