



"On-the-Job" Training and Performance in Yumbe District Local Government - Uganda

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Abstract

This study was intended to examine the influence of "On-the-Job" Training on Performance in Yumbe District – Uganda. The study adopted a Case Study Design to allow in-depth study. Quantitative and Qualitative approaches were employed. A total of 218 questionnaires were administered to the respondents and 179 questionnaires were received back, registering a response rate of 82%. Descriptive statistics were computed. Inferential statistical analysis including correlation and multiple regressions were used to test the hypotheses. The correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the strength of the relationship. The significance of the coefficient (p) was used to test the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. Regressions were used. ANOVA determined which of the independent variables accounted for most of the variation in the dependent variable. Qualitative data were analyzed under themes. The analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data established that there was a weak positive correlation between 'On-the-Job' Training (mentoring and job rotation) and Performance. The combined effects accounted for 34% variation in performance. Specifically, the results showed that there was a moderate positive relationship between mentoring and performance and a weak positive relationship between job rotation and performance. It was concluded that "On-the-Job" Training has influence on Performance.

Keywords: "On-the-Job", Training and Performance

Introduction

This study was intended to examine the influence of "On-the-Job" Training on Performance in Yumbe District Local Government – Uganda. In the study, "On-the-Job" Training was considered in terms of mentoring and job rotation which were chosen because these are most common practices of employee development in the district; while performance was considered in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Performance in the local governments has become an issue of concern, despite the continuous government support for capacity enhancement programs. The study was, therefore, intended to establish why, despite the government efforts on employee capacity development, performance in Yumbe District Local Government has remained wanting. The study presents the background to the study, the problem statement and the objectives; it continues to present the methodology used to conduct the study, the results, conclusion and recommendation.

Background to the Study

Following the introduction of decentralization in Uganda in 1993, the implementation of the Objectives required the creation of more administrative units. Despite this, the size of public service expanded as more administrative units and the corresponding personnel were increased in number to meet the equally increasing demand for services in the districts. Consequently, during the early implementation of decentralization, a number of employee capacity enhancement programs were undertaken, though reluctantly at the beginning, (Helmsing, 1997); the necessity of the decentralization heightened the importance of capacity building, thus, a series of workshops, seminars, short and long term training opportunities were availed to civil servants and politicians to equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills and positive attitude so that they perform to expectations. The government, with the support of its development partners undertook a massive investment in institutional and individual capacity enhancements in the country, thus, the strategy was implemented by ensuring that most development programs had components for employee training.

Besides the joint-government and its partners capacity enhancement programs, some local governments also received direct support from various development partners like Innovations at Makerere (I@Mak), DANIDA support to decentralization, International Development Agency (IDA) Institutional Capacity Building, Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE), Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC), the Austrian Scholarship programs, the Netherlands Fellowship - all directed towards supporting staff training programs both long and short term, within and outside the country. The capacity enhancement components have been utilized to cascade local trainings internally, by the district (district resource pool), or externally, by pre-qualified firms. Some employees have been trained on-the-job through attachments, mentoring, job rotation, job instructions, delegation, while others have been sent for short and long courses in training institutions.

It was a policy that staff are mentored and given support supervision regularly as training strategies, all aimed at enhancing capacity of staff to perform better in the local governments. But several years down the road, in many districts, there seems to be no much evidence of improved performance, as many still lag in effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery. As a result, in year 2007, many districts were penalized for not meeting minimum performance standards (*Sunday Vision*, October 14, 2007).

In Yumbe District, since 2003, a number of staff benefited from the above training opportunities in the programs of higher degrees, undergraduate courses and postgraduate diploma courses as hundreds of others attended short courses,