

Determining Influence of Management Commitment on Development of Emotional Intelligence in Public Service - A Survey of Ministries in Kenya

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Abstract: *The purpose of the main study was to conduct a survey of factors affecting the development of emotional intelligence in Kenya's Public Service Ministries. Emotional Intelligence (EI) covers a wide range of skills and personality dispositions such as confidence, optimism, adaptability, motivation, peer relations and coping with stress. This paper analyzes whether management commitment influence the development of emotional intelligence in Kenya's Public Service. The survey was carried out in 42 Kenya Government Ministries targeting a population of 79 Human Resources Management staff representing 10% of the total sample population across 42 ministries. Data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods with the assistance of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). It concluded that management in the ministries has failed to play its role in developing employee's emotional intelligence by lack of commitment in planning activities aimed at development of EI. There should be equal opportunities for employees in training.*

Keywords: Management Commitment, Emotional Intelligence, Public Service, Kenya

1. Introduction

One of the priorities of the Government of Kenya in the Economic Recovery Stimulus and Vision 2030, is to reform the public sector by making it more efficient and to provide good investor environment so as to boost economic growth (UNDP, 2008). From the Corruption Perception Index of 2011, despite the government's effort to transform the Public Service, positive results are yet to be realized.

The Public Sector requires leaders who have both the vision and capacity to generate in others the commitment to advance the new visions for development (GOK 2012). The public sector therefore requires to develop transformative leadership and one of the characteristics of such leaders is a high level of emotional intelligence.

Goleman (1995) in his empirical studies has established that a significant positive relationship exists between emotional intelligence and transformational leadership. The Government has also intensified efforts to bring about an attitudinal change in public service that value transparency and accountability to the citizens of Kenya (GOK 2007).

Emotional Intelligence provides an environment by which attitudinal change can be promoted and managed. This is applicable for both individuals and groups. A Kenya School of Government has been proposed to provide research and training for transformative leadership to the highest international standards (GOK 2007). Research suggests that people with high levels of emotional intelligence "experience more career success, build stronger personal relationships, lead more effectively, and enjoy better health than those with low [emotional intelligence] EQ" (Cooper,

1997).

The future success of Kenya is dependent on the leadership abilities of managers to deal with a rapidly changing environment. The Public Service Reform Programme was launched to achieve a smaller, affordable, efficient and effective Public Service, (Obongo 2009).

According to the Public Service Commission, the civil servants recruiting body, no emotional intelligence tests have been applied during recruitment of staff while the ministry in charge of developing human resource has not developed a strategy for developing emotional intelligence for various cadres of Public Servants, (GOK 2012). The main objective of this study was to examine the factors that affect the development of emotional intelligence in the Public Service by determining whether management commitment influences development of emotional intelligence in Public Service.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study is exploratory in nature; therefore, a descriptive survey design was used to execute the study (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 1996). Surveys are inclusive in the types and number of variables that can be studied (Bell, 1996). The study used descriptive research design to answer the research questions which were used to analyze the factors that affect development of emotional intelligence in the Public service in Kenya.

The study used descriptive research because the design determines and reports the way things are (Mugenda & Mugenda 2003). The goal was to offer phenomena of interest from a specific perspective, (Kothari 2008).

2.2 Target Population

Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) define population as an entire group of individuals, events or objects with some observable characteristics. The estimated population studied was 720 civil servants across the various ministries under the human resource development function, (GOK 2012). The list of respondents has been provided by Human Resources development department of the Government of Kenya. On the basis of the staff segment, the study considered the overall population to be heterogeneous as shown in table 1.

This study employed stratified random sampling method as a technique of probability method. When the population from which a sample is to be drawn does not constitute a homogeneous group, then stratified sampling technique is applied so as to obtain a representative sample. In this technique, the population is stratified into a number of non overlapping subpopulations or strata and sample items are selected from each stratum. If the items selected from each stratum is based on simple random sampling the entire procedure, first stratification and then simple random sampling, is known as stratified random sampling, (Kothari 2008) Stratified sampling method was used to select the sample of study. The sample size of 79 human resources development cadre was determined (table 1) by the rule of the thumb (Bradburn and Sudman 1988).

Table 1: Target population (GOK 2012) and sample population of Study

<i>Cadre</i>	<i>Population size</i>	<i>Percentage proportion in the Target Population (%)</i>
Human resource Management/development Officers	193	28
Human resource Management/development assistants	502	68
Human resources Management development directors	25	4
Total	720	100

2.3 Data Collection Instruments

This study used both primary and secondary data. The study used questionnaires as data collection tools. The study adopted a questionnaire with both closed ended and open ended questions for the purpose of collecting data, (Orodho & Kombo, 2002). On the other hand close ended questionnaires were characterized by the condition that the respondents were limited to a fixed set of responses. According to Burns and Grove (2005) a questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions allowed every possible answer to have a response.

2.4 Data Processing and Analysis

Data from the questionnaire was processed by editing, classification and thereafter coded before they are entered

into the computer for analysis using descriptive statistics. The statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) was used as it offers numerous statistical analysis routines that analyze small to very large data statistics, (Mujis, 2004).

3. Data analysis, Results and Discussion

The study targeted a total of 720 respondents and a sample of 72 respondents was taken. However, only 61 respondents responded and returned their questionnaires contributing to 84.72% response rate. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. Most of the respondents (45%) were aged between 26 and 35 years, 25% were 55 and above years of age, 12% were aged between 36 and 45 years while 7% of the respondents indicated that they were 18 to 25 years of age. Most of the respondents 53% indicated that they had degree level as their highest level of education

3.1 Management Commitment

The study sought to know whether management encourages development of personal competencies other than technical skills in ministry. From the findings, majority 80% of the respondents indicated that the management did not encourage the development of personal competencies other than technical skills in ministry while 20% of the respondents indicated that management encouraged development of personal competencies other than technical skills in ministry. These findings concurred with Boyatzis (2001) who stated that top management needs to be committed towards emotional intelligent development of the employees.

The respondents were requested to indicate if management carried out a review of key personal competencies. From the findings, majority (77%) of the respondent indicated that management failed to carry out a review of key personal competencies while 23% of the respondent indicated that management carried out a review of key personal competencies. This implies that management in the government’s ministries was not supportive towards development of emotional intelligent by failing to review key personal competencies. The results are in line with Armstrong (2009) who argued that managers in companies that the people who come to work will already possess a high degree of emotional intelligence that will help them perform their job better and they should be supported development emotional intelligence.

3.2 Senior Management Willingness to Invest In Personal Competencies

The study sought whether senior management was willing to invest in the development of personal competencies in the public service. From the findings, majority 69% of the respondent indicated that the senior management was not willing to invest in the development of personal competencies in the public service while 31% of the respondents indicated that senior management was willing to invest in the development of personal competencies in the public service.

This implies a lack of management support and improving on the willingness to develop personal competencies for effective and efficient affected development of emotion intelligence in Kenya’s civil services. This was in line with Hartle (1992) who recommends that incorporating elements such as performance objectives, coaching and counseling, performance review, skills training, performance-related pay, and training and development can afford an excellent opportunity to assess emotional intelligence competencies that ultimately lead to outstanding performance and support their development.

Table 2: Senior Management Willingness to Invest in Personal Competencies

	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>No</i>	42	69
<i>Yes</i>	19	31
<i>Total</i>	61	100

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that the management in government ministries did not encourage the development of personal competencies other than the technical competencies and skills in ministries. Public service management needs to enhance development of personal competencies in government ministries. This was clearly indicated by most of the respondents who indicated that the management did not carry out a review of key personal competencies.

The study also revealed that management in the ministries was not willing to invest in the development of personal competencies in the public service as indicated by a good number of respondents. This clearly depicted lack of support from management towards developing personal competencies for effective and efficient development of emotion intelligence in Kenya’s civil services.

The study therefore recommends that management in public sector should create equal opportunities for the employees in training and evaluation on training effectiveness to influence the emotional intelligence development. The study recommends that a further study should be carried out to compare Emotional Intelligence (EI) levels among staff of various ministries and the impact of EI levels on service delivery.

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Author Profile



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