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**AN ANALYSIS OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AND THEIR
INFLUENCE ON STAFF PRODUCTIVITY: A CASE OF WAJIR
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AN ANALYSIS OF MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON STAFF PRODUCTIVITY: A CASE OF WAJIR COUNTY GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to conduct an analysis of managerial competencies and their influence on staff productivity in Wajir County government.

Methodology: The study adopted a descriptive case study research design. The target population comprised of all the 2000 employees working with the Wajir county government. A sample size of 244 obtained by applying the Yamane formula was used. The study used stratified random sampling and simple random sampling technique to come up with the sample. The study used primary data collected through the administration of questionnaires. The statistics generated included descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The particular descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages while the particular inferential statistics included correlation analysis and regression.

Results: The possession of technical skills, conceptual skills, human skills and informational skills by managers was found to have a positive and significant effect on staff productivity.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study recommended that urgent measures be undertaken to ensure that at least everyone in management had acquired some basic technical skills in their assigned task. It was also necessary to continuously improve the existing technical skills of those in management within the county government through regular on job training for the management. The study also recommended that short courses such as conflict resolution, strategic leadership and mentorship programs should be included the county government staff development agenda as well as team building activities where those in management should be highly encouraged to avail themselves. It was also recommended that it was necessary for those in management positions to constantly acquire the needed information on the staff activities and performance in order to constantly and effectively monitor and evaluate the performance of staff in the county government to ensure that they were actively involved in activities that led to increased productivity. It was also necessary for the management to improve how and the ways in which they disseminated information at levels in the county government to ensure that barriers in communication do not hinder the progress of the county government agendas.

Keywords: *managerial competencies, staff productivity, technical skills, conceptual skills, human skills and informational skills*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A competency essentially is a combination of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that contribute to personal effectiveness and are a set of knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that a person needs to be effective in a wide range of positions and various types of organizations (Hellriegel, Jackson, & Slocum, 2005). Boyatzis (1982) defined competencies as the underlying characteristics of a person that lead to or cause effective and outstanding performance. It also refers to personal-oriented and task-oriented skills that are associated with effective leadership and management (Martin & Staines, 1994). Hence for the survival and sustained growth of any individual and institution, the assessment and effective implementation of the competencies comes at the core and the same has necessitated the present work on assessment of managerial competencies.

Managerial competencies are the needed skills, knowledge and attributes to perform managerial tasks effectively and efficiently with readiness and dexterity for all professions. Managerial competencies, i. e. behavior necessary to reach the required level of a manager's performance, in combination with efficient organization management thus become a key factor of success and subsequently also a competitive advantage (Martina & Jiri, 2012). Managerial competencies identification and development are important tools of human resources management that is aimed at achieving strategic organizational goals. Due to current dynamic development and changes, more and more attention is being paid to the personality of managers and their competencies, since they are viewed as important sources of achieving a competitive advantage. Abraham, Kams, Shaw, and Mena (2001) found that organizations are willing to identify a set of managerial competencies that describe the successful managers. However, these organizations are not paying due concern to these competencies in their performance appraisal system. They recommended that to be a high-performance organization, an organization should identify the most critical managerial competencies and incorporate them in the performance appraisal system.

Many researchers over a period of time have tried to identify and establish competencies which are required for managerial effectiveness leading to superior performance. Some experts suggested that inherent ability, personality, experience, managing people, leadership, team working ability and customer focus as key competencies that would define and lead the way to successful completion of assignments by managers in the 21st century. A substantial study for the Sinhgad Institute of Management found that the skills most in demand were managing people, leadership, team working and customer focus. Functional and technical skills are not unimportant, but it is these "softer" skills that will define the successful managers and leaders of tomorrow. The findings show that the key factor for successful organizations in the new millennium will be having leaders who have excellent people management skills and an understanding of behavioral issues (Adsule & Berad, 2014).

According to Islama and Rasad (2006), every organization has been established with certain objectives to achieve. These objectives can be achieved by utilizing the resources like men, machines, materials and money. All these resources are important but out of these, the manpower is the most important. It plays an important role in performing tasks for accomplishing the goals. Various factors like skills, training, motivation, dedication, welfare, management policies, fringe benefits, salary and packages, promotion, communication etc. are responsible to encourage the

people to work sincerely and give their best output. The importance of employees' performance must be understood by the management and sincere efforts must be put in that direction.

At a minimum, the three basic skills that managers typically use are technical, human, and conceptual; and the proportion of one's time spent in these areas may change as managers move up the hierarchy (Katz, 1955). For example, senior managers may not spend as much time in technical functions as those who are in first-line management. Top managers tend to spend more time using their conceptual skills. As emphasized by most management scholars, research has shown that education and experience help managers acquire relevant managerial skills that allow them to perform their jobs effectively, especially conceptual, human, and technical (Clem & Mujtaba, 2010). Jones and George (2009, pp. 17-18) provide the following definitions for human, technical, and conceptual skills: Technical skills are job-specific knowledge and techniques. The specific kinds of technical skills depend upon the manager's position in the organization. Human skills include the ability to understand, alter, lead, and control the behavior of people and groups. The ability to communicate, to coordinate and motivate people, is the principal difference between effective and ineffective managers. Conceptual skills include the ability to analyze a situation and distinguish between cause and effect. Senior level managers require high conceptual skills because their primary responsibilities are planning and organizing the long-term vision of the organization.

An organization's performance and success largely depends on its skilled labor force and how efficiently the organization is able to tap that resource and effectively utilize it. A competent and competitive workforce is therefore necessary for the survival of firms and organizations in rapidly changing environments. Having competent and loyal employees in a firm increases its success potential as a result of increased job efficiency and minimal wastage (Macey, 2006; Branham, 2005; Forkouh, Appienti, and Osei, 2012). In every company or organization, employees are the most valuable asset since they can either make or break the reputation of the organization or adversely affect its profitability. Employees often are responsible for the great bulk of necessary work to be done as well as customer satisfaction and the quality of products and events (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). Their performance has an effect on the overall organization's performance and its bottom line (Purcell & Hutchison 2007). According to Bechtold, Janaro, and Summers (1984), work force as a factor of production and its productivity is the most important variable in attaining economic development in any society. That is, all other forms of physical investment cannot be useful without the existence of a useful and effective working force. Paying little or no attention on the productivity of workforce not only decreases the effectiveness and efficiency of organization but also leads to increased adverse events and dissatisfaction among employees (Saatchi, 2003).

In the organizational context, performance is usually defined as the extent to which an organizational member contributes to achieving the goals of the organization. Performance is associated with quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence/ attendance on the job, efficiency of the work completed and effectiveness of work completed" (Mathis & Jackson, 2009). Employee Performance is the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual or individuals, as set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resource within a changing environment (Thao & Hwang, 2012).

Productivity can be defined as “an economic measure of output per unit of input. Inputs include labor and capital, while output is typically measured in revenues and other GDP components such as business inventories. With a variety of new techniques, better leadership abilities and skills can be established to be successful in increasing the employee’s productivity in the organizations. Due to the aggressive competition of the global and worldwide market and added diversified forces, the collection of management and leadership abilities and skills must be increased and expanded to increase the productivity of the employees in the organizations (Wart, 2003). The leaders direct the affiliates of business in the direction of the objectives of the organization.

According to the International Labour Office, increased productivity at any given level can be attributed to various factors such as new capital equipment, organizational changes or new skills learned on or off the job. These factors can be at the individual level such as health, education, training, core skills and experience; by factors at the enterprise level, such as management, investment in plant and equipment and occupational safety and health; and by factors at the national level, such as supportive national macroeconomic and competition policies, economic growth strategies, policies to maintain a sustainable business environment and public investments in infrastructure and education (ILO, 2005).

The working environment is a crucial factor in employee productivity. A healthy working environment or organizational structure is a crucial desirable need for all employees. When organizations where individual and organizational goals are achieved exist, then the general assumption is that there is high level of cooperation and harmony between the employers and employees and that an individual whose needs are met will contribute in productivity (Aytaç, 2003). Even if the attitudes of the administrators are not the only factor in motivating the employees, they have a direct influence. Administrators who are effective in ensuring the motivation should take the needs of the employee into consideration and they should also consider how these needs are perceived within the organization and be aware of the fact that the employee needs will be satisfied. Administrators can increase the motivation and morale of the employee by adopting a communication technique which is based on elegance and respect. Motivation affects the productivity by ensuring the loyalty of the employee to the job and the organization as a result of a successful combination of leadership role and an appropriate communication technique (Mescon, Bovee, & Thill, 1999).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Employees often are responsible for the great bulk of necessary work to be done and therefore paying little or no attention on the productivity of workforce not only decreases the effectiveness and efficiency of organization but also leads to increased adverse events and dissatisfaction among employees (Saatchi, 2003). The International Labour Office (2005) points out that, factors at organizational level such as management influences employee productivity. The effective application of the managerial skills of planning, organizing, coordinating, controlling, directing, problems solving, clarifying subordinates role, criticizing pressing subordinates, participating and time management greatly impact employee productivity. Mescon, Bovee and Thill (1999) assert that even if the attitudes and skills of the administrators are not the only factors in motivating the employees, they have a direct influence. Gana and Ifah (2012) assert that in most organizations, both predecessors and successor management have done little in

cultivating the skills and attitudes required to help employees become agents of change to strive hard to actualize or organizations dreams.

Abraham et al. (2001) found that organizations were willing to identify a set of managerial competencies that describe the successful managers. However, these organizations were not paying due concern to these competencies in their performance appraisal system. According to Elmi (2015), after two years of devolution, Wajir county had received colossal amount of funds from exchequer conservatively estimated to be about KShs. 13b for the county development and about 1.4b for CDF for the six constituencies in the county yet the county is listed as among the under performers. This was greatly linked to massive corruption, mismanagement of funds, personal interests, and absenteeism among the administrators and other top management officials who were poorly skilled in undertaking their roles. The result of the above has been poor service delivery, unmet goals, among other issues within the county as a result of poor staff productivity. The mainly caused by poor placement of employees, inadequate resources to undertake tasks, lack of motivation and satisfaction among employees which has been expressed through untimely completion of tasks, low output among employees, great wastage of allocated resources and poor wage rates. Therefore, the performance of the county government based on national reports could be attributed to low employee productivity emanating from poor managerial skills/competencies among administrators and those in management positions.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To determine the effect of technical skills on staff productivity in Wajir County government
- ii. To examine the effect of human skills on staff productivity in Wajir County government
- iii. To examine the effect of conceptual skills on staff productivity in Wajir County government
- iv. To examine the effect of informational skills on staff productivity in Wajir County government

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Katz Theory of Managerial Skills (Three-Skill Approach)

Katz (1974) presented a classification of managerial skills which was the first major classification of these types of skills that were perceived to be necessary for all managers. In his article named “skills for an effective administrator” which was published in the Harvard Business Review in 1974, he highlighted the crucial sets of managerial skills that were needed for increased effectiveness by managers. Lately, managerial skills have been conceptualized in terms of basic observable interrelated categories that are termed; task, people related and self and career development sets (Analoui, 1993). The research work by Katz (1974) pointed out that managers required three essential skills namely technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills. Technical skills consisted of knowledge of and proficiency in a particular area of specialization such as engineering, computers, financial and managerial accounting, or manufacturing and these skills were normally more crucial for lower levels of management since these managers were directly involved or dealing with employees doing the organization's work.

Human skills represented the ability to work harmoniously with other individuals both at the individual or group level. These skills were very important because managers dealt directly with the people and therefore managers who had good people skills were able to get the best out of their employees. These managers knew how to communicate, motivate, lead, and inspire enthusiasm and trust (Gana, & Ifah, 2012). Therefore, these skills were equally needed at all levels of management. Conceptual skills are the skills managers needed so as to think and conceptualize about abstract and complex situations. Using these skills managers were able to see the organization as a whole, understand the relationship among various subunits, and visualize how the organization fitted into its broader environment. These skills were the most important at top level management. These views have been supported by the work of other scholars such as (Caproni, 2001) who asserted that managers at different levels needed to be more proficient at some skills than others. For instance, as one moved up in an organization (e.g., upper level executives), conceptual skills were needed to a greater extent than at lower managerial levels. It was also shown that human skills (i.e., ability to listen, verbally communicate, show patience and empathy, and understand a subordinate's needs) were most important to success at any managerial level (Whetten & Cameron, 2002). This theory therefore formed the basis of the study since it highlights three important managerial skills that affect the effectiveness of managers or anyone in managerial position which also impact employee productivity.

2.1.2 Mintzberg Managerial Roles Classification Model

By conducting a longitudinal study of managerial work Mintzberg (1974) sought to provide the required classification of managerial skills. He conducted the study by obtaining the personal information about five CEOs, a calendar of their scheduled appointments for a month as well as more information regarding their organizations. Based on the information he collected, he planned a week of structured observations in which he collected two types of data namely anecdotal data and structural data. From the observations, Mintzberg (1974, pp 28-48) found that managers worked on unrelenting pace where they had a large variety of tasks and were often subjected to frequent interruptions. He noted that they normally preferred working on specific well defined activities of current importance rather than on more general functions which may be less certain and whose immediate relevance was unclear. He established that they favored verbal rather than written contact with others. This influenced him to postulate that managerial activities or roles could in general be classified into three categories (Shapira & Dunbar, 1980).

Mintzberg (1974) defines a role as an organized set of behaviors that are identified with a specific management position and is measured by what individuals do in their day to day work. He classified these roles into interpersonal which includes figurehead, leader and liaison; informational that includes monitor, disseminator and spokesperson and; decision making that includes entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator. He further asserts that each role is normally influenced by four factors namely; Environment which are the organization characteristics; job implying its level and the functions supervised; person (manager's characteristics and situation which is a temporal feature. In essence, all managers perform all roles but to some degree and these roles vary insignificantly as managers being specialized require performing particular set of specialized roles (Ghalandari, 2012). This theory was therefore applicable in this study as highlights one of the key competencies in this study.

Informational competence especially in terms of monitoring, disseminating and communicating on behalf of employee largely affects their productivity.

2.2 Empirical Review

Gana and Ifah (2012) examined the effects of manager's managerial skills on staff efficiency and effectiveness in organization. The total population of sixty (60) staff was used as data sources. The result obtained from the analysis showed that there existed a strong relationship between manager's managerial skills and staffs efficiency and effectiveness in organization. The study also emphasized the needs for managers to acquire basic skills approach such as technical, human, conceptual, diagnostics and communication skills through education, experience and mentor relationship.

Butt, Waseem, Rafiq, Nawab, and Khilji., (2014) examined whether leadership skills such as technical skills, conceptual skills, interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence and social intelligence had an impact on increasing the productivity of employees in Pakistan. With different other concepts, better skills of leaders could increase the productivity of employees. Skilled and dedicated leadership could set good values. Learning and mastering a variety of abilities facilitated leaders to spread and establish high standards in the organizations. The results showed that all the variables had positive impact on productivity of employees working in Pakistan through leadership skills.

Abbaszadeh, Eyni, and Rabiei, (2012) assessed the relationship between managerial competencies of managers' and employees' productivity, in Fars Chemical Industries Company, Shiraz, Iran. In this research, managerial competencies, as independent variable, was measured from two aspects, managers' characteristics and skills. Also, productivity of employees, as dependent variable, was assessed from four aspects those are motivation, work style improvement, organizational commitment and optimum use of organization's resources. Research's conceptual model was extracted from Robbins' organizational behavior pattern and Katz's model in order to measure managers' characteristics and their skills, respectively. Results showed that there are significant relationships between: managerial skills and optimum use of organization's resources; managers' characteristics and optimum use of organization's resources; managers' characteristics and work style improvement; and managers' characteristics and employees' motivation. Results of regression also indicated that the impact of managers' characteristics on employees' productivity was much more powerful rather than managerial skills.

Moghrabi, Sharabati, and Khader (2014) investigated the influence of managerial skills on managerial behavior at Jordan Kuwait Bank (JKB), by using Wilson's skill profile classification (Technical, Teambuilding and Drive). Practical data were used in the empirical analysis collected from 143 out of 947 employees working at JKB, by means of a questionnaire. The results of the study indicated a positive significant relationship between managerial skills and JKB managerial behavior. The results also indicated that the teambuilding skills were practiced by managers in JKB at moderate level, while the drive skills and technical skills were presented and practiced at high level. However, multiple regressions showed that the drive skills indicators were having the highest effect on managerial behavior, followed by technical skills, while still they have a lot of work to improve teambuilding skills. Furthermore, empirical results indicated that there are strong inter-relationships and interactions among the three components of managerial skills. The

use of one organization and a single industry study design limits its generalization to other organizations and industries. The data is also limited to Jordanian setting; therefore, further research on other organizations, industries is highly recommended.

Human skill is knowledge about and ability to work with people. It is quite different from technical skill, which has to do with working with things (Katz, 1955). Human skills are “people skills.” They are the abilities that help a leader to work effectively with subordinates, peers, and superiors to accomplish the organization’s goals. Human skills allow a leader to assist group members in working cooperatively as a group to achieve common goals. For Katz, it means being aware of one’s own perspective on issues and, at the same time, being aware of the perspective of others. Leaders with human skills adapt their own ideas to those of others. Furthermore, they create an atmosphere of trust where employees can feel comfortable and secure and where they can feel encouraged to become involved in the planning of things that will affect them. Having human skills implies that a leader is sensitive to the needs and motivations of others and taking into account their needs during decision making. In short, human skill is the capacity to get along with others as you go about your work.

Naderian and Amirhosseini (2006) carried out a study titled human skills for sport managers (indicators and criteria from managers' perspective). Research results showed that sport managers required priority to skills such as providing job security for the subordinates and resolving the conflicts between employees under their supervision, lectureship and rhetorical principles in order to be effective in fulfilling the requirements and influencing the behaviors of human resources. From the perspective of experienced managers, these human skills have a significant influence on managers' job performance.

Quang, Khuong, and Le (2015) conducted a study to investigate the application of leaders’ emotional intelligence in formulating appropriate leadership styles for enhancing employees’ job engagement. Quantitative approach was employed with structured questionnaire distributed to 400 white-collar employees working in offices of Hoa Binh Corporation and its subsidiaries located in Ho Chi Minh City. The empirical results of this research indicated that five leaders’ emotional intelligent competencies, namely self-motivation, self-esteem, self-management, emotional literacy, and interpersonal relation had statistically positive effects on the employee engagement; whereas, the leader’s competency regarding to change resilience had statistically negative effect on the employee engagement. This result implied a strong influence of the emotional intelligent leadership in retaining and developing the workforce engagement. In line with these findings, Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, and Dornheim (1998) proposed that emotional intelligence of the managers is strongly associated with desirable corporate culture such as greater optimism, less depression, and less impulsivity in the working environment. When emotional intelligence is fostered by the managers, there will be the increase in employee motivation, cooperation, performance, productivity, and profits as proposed (George, 2000).

Kanthasamy (2009) examined the relationship of interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence as well as the moderating effect of the manager’s organizational commitment towards their performance. This study involved a questionnaire based survey of selected 100 managerial staffs from Indah Water Konsortium Sdn Bhd. The frequency analysis, factor analysis, reliability test and hierarchical regressions analysis were used to analyze the results of the research. The results

of the study indicated that only two items of interpersonal skills which are motivating and assessing have positive and significant relationship with managerial performance. Emotional intelligence, on the other hand does not have any significant relationship with the performance. Meanwhile, hierarchical regression analysis showed that only the interaction terms of affective commitment and assessing has moderating effect on managerial performance. Thus, in order to be a successful leader and manage their performance, managers at IWK need to equip themselves with sufficient knowledge, improve their interpersonal skills as well as to manage their emotional intelligence. This would enable them to performance objectively and decisively, as well as to provide their employees, feedback on a regular basis and guidance in order to assist them in improving their performance.

Matin, Jandaghi, Karimi, and Hamidizadeh (2010) sought to identify the interpersonal communication skills that enhanced organizational commitment i.e. perceived levels of employee commitment in the organization. To do so in a descriptive survey, the models provided by Robbins and Hunsaker and by Allen and Meyer were used to measure interpersonal communication skills and organizational commitment respectively. The used tool was questionnaire. The statistical community included public organizations in Qom city among which two organizations were selected randomly. Sampling was also conducted randomly in both organizations. Finally, 106 individuals responded to questionnaire items. The findings of the research showed that among the existing skills in the model, just team building skill has a significant relation with organizational commitment.

Ghalandari (2012) conducted an investigation of the effect of management skills (technical, human and cognitive) on productivity of human resources in Iran. According to the study results, lack of attention to labor productivity and paying attention to other factors will not only reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, but also cause increase in loss and accidents and dissatisfaction of manpower. Therefore, paying attention to the human skills in order to increase labor productivity in the organization can be useful. Totally, 100 questionnaires were distributed to staff of Islamic Azad University of Urmia city, that 66 questionnaires were used for the final analysis, which the results from analysis of them based on simple linear regression show that management skills (technical, human and cognitive) have a significant and positive influence on productivity of human resources in Iran.

According to Katz (1955), conceptual skills are the ability to work with ideas and concepts. Whereas technical skills deal with things and human skills deal with people, conceptual skills involve the ability to work with ideas. A leader with conceptual skills is comfortable talking about the ideas that shape an organization and the intricacies involved. He or she is good at putting the company's goals into words and can understand and express the economic principles that affect the company. Conceptual skills are central to creating a vision and strategic plan for an organization. Conceptual skill is most important at the top management levels. In fact, when upper-level managers do not have strong conceptual skills, they can jeopardize the whole organization. Conceptual skills are also important in middle management; as we move down to lower management levels, conceptual skills become less important.

Seyedinejat, Ebrahim, and Dousti (2014) were ranking the managers based on their skills in offices of physical education in Mazandaran province. Research method was descriptive-survey and practical in purpose. The statistical population consists of 18 experts (masters, managers) in

offices of youth and sport in Mazandaran province studied in order to be ranked based on their conceptual, human and technical skills. Data analysis is carried out using FMADM method (FAHP technique). Research result suggests that in conceptual skill, the role of strategic and long term objectives and also awareness of rules and regulations, in human skill effective communication and in technical skill delegation of authority have the highest priorities respectively. Planning based on above said results may increase effectiveness and efficiency in related organizations.

In a study conducted by Ling (2007), a quasi-experimental design using Solomon's 4-group experimental design as the basic research instrument was developed to assess the extent of effectiveness of a conceptual skill training program. The participants for the quasi-experiment were drawn from the private sector, encompassing middle and senior level managers from both the manufacturing and service industries. The study was longitudinal as it was conducted over a period of three months. The results indicated that the group that had undergone the specific conceptual skill training had shown marked improvement in terms of acquisition of knowledge and had also implied that what was learnt was able to be applied at work. The findings of the study supported the contention that training intervention in a specific conceptual skill will lead to training effectiveness, even after a period of time.

Femi (2014) examined the significant relationship between communication and workers' performance in some selected organizations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Data for the study were collected through questionnaire with sample population of 120 respondents. The result of this study reveals that a relationship exists between effective communication and workers' performance, productivity and commitment. Therefore, organizations should regularly articulate it policies, goals and objectives to it workers in order to improve work performance. That is, communication is a means through which the task and the resources needed to carry out an assignment, the roles and duties and the expected results are made known to the subordinates which makes work easier for better performance. Also, managers need to communicate with employees regularly to get feedback and offer suggestions in other to prevent confusion about future job assignments; this will help improve workers performance and organizational productivity. In addition, top managers should communicate directly with their subordinates on issues of importance. Organizations should eliminate the barriers on communication and create efficient, participative, and transparent communication medium to improve workers commitment.

Rajhans (2012) conducted a study on the effects that organizational communication has on employee motivation and performance. The organization chosen for this research study is, Vanaz Engineers Ltd., a large manufacturing company well known in India for its diversified and quality products. The objective of the study is to explore the interrelationship between communication and motivation and its overall impact on employee performance. The paper focuses on the fact that communication in the workplace can take many forms and has a lasting effect on employee motivation. If employees feel that communication from management is effective, it can lead to feelings of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization and increased trust in the workplace. Effective downward communication allows decisions taken by the management of the organization to be converted into action by employees, also boosts teamwork, trust, better relations, productivity and fewer chances of rumours and

miscommunication. Furthermore, it allows for a consistency of action, and it may stimulate a greater commitment on the part of employees. Upward communication helps managers to understand both business and personal issues that affect employees. In addition, creative suggestions from employees help management in decision making and improvement of the organization.

Muda, Rafiki, and Harahap (2014) analyzed the determinants for employee performance in Islamic Banks. Based on the literature discussed, the three factors considered as the important elements influencing the employees' performance that needed to be investigated. The research question was whether each of the factors had a simultaneous and partial effect on the employees' performance or otherwise. Using the quantitative method, the population of this study was 47 respondents. The primary data gathered in the form of questionnaires with a Likert typed-scale were then analysed using the multiple regression method. The study findings revealed that these factors affected the employees' performance. Moreover, the F test showed that the job stress, motivation and communication variables simultaneously influenced employees' performance, while the T test showed that both job stress and motivation variables had no partial effect on the employees' performance, whereas the communication variable had a partial effect on employee performance.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive case study research design. The target population comprised of all the 2000 employees working with the Wajir county government. A sample size of 244 obtained by applying the Yamane formula was used. The study used stratified random sampling and simple random sampling technique to come up with the sample. The target population was stratified into 3 strata (according to position). Further, random sampling was used to select employees from each position. The study used primary data collected through the administration of questionnaires. The statistics generated included descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The particular descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages while the particular inferential statistics included correlation analysis and regression.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

The number of questionnaires that were administered was 244. A total of 176 questionnaires were properly filled and returned. This represented an overall successful response rate of 72.13%.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

This section presents the descriptive results on technical skills, human skills, conceptual skills, informational skills and staff productivity in Wajir county government.

4.2.1 Technical Skills

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of technical skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on technical skills. Results in Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents who

were 74.5% (20.50%+54.00%) disagreed with the statement that those in management positions within the county government had enough and proper training on their area of work. The results also revealed that a majority of the respondents, 72.70%, disagreed with the statement that those in management positions within the county government had undergone training on how to use the appropriate tools and techniques in their work. A majority of the respondents, 69.3%, also indicated that there were no regular on job trainings on technical areas for those in management within the county government. 81.3% of the respondents representing a majority did not see the possession of technical skills by those in management as a source of credibility and means to motivate and identify with other employees. A majority of the respondents, 79.60%, also indicated that supervisors within the county government did not have the ability to when necessary, step in to competently do that job or they did not know their own job extremely well. On a five point scale, the average mean of the responses was 2.244 which means that majority of the respondents were disagreeing with most of the statements and that the responses were clustered around the mean as shown by a standard deviation of 1.074.

Table 1: Technical Skills

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std. Dvn |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Those in management positions within the county government have enough and proper training on their area of work | 20.50% | 54.00% | 9.70% | 8.50% | 7.40% | 2.28 | 1.11 |
| Those in management positions within the county government have undergone training on how use the appropriate tools and techniques in their work | 19.90% | 52.80% | 6.80% | 13.60% | 6.80% | 2.35 | 1.15 |
| There are regular on job trainings on technical areas for those in management | 15.30% | 54.00% | 14.80% | 10.20% | 5.70% | 2.37 | 1.04 |
| Possession of technical skills by those in management is a source of credibility and means to motivate and identify with other employees | 23.90% | 57.40% | 5.10% | 10.20% | 3.40% | 2.12 | 1.00 |
| Supervisors have the ability to when necessary, step in to competently do a job or they know their own job extremely well | 29.00% | 50.60% | 7.40% | 8.00% | 5.10% | 2.10 | 1.07 |
| Average | | | | | | 2.244 | 1.07 |

4.2.2 Human Skills

The second objective was to examine the effect of human skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on human skills.

Results in Table 2 revealed that majority of the respondents who were 68.7% (28.40%+40.30%) disagreed with the statement that those in management within the county government had adequate training on human relations. A majority of the respondents, 61.90%, also disagreed with the statement that those in management had actively participated in team building activities and programs. The results showed that a majority of the respondents, 69.30% did not agree that those in management within the county government had been trained and participated in leadership and mentorship programs. A majority of the respondents, 70.50%, were also in disagreement with the statement that those in management had training in conflict resolution. 64.80% of the respondents representing a majority also indicated that human skills were not evident in all levels of management within the county government. On a five point scale, the average mean of the responses was 2.236 which means that majority of the respondents were disagreeing with most of the statements and that the responses were clustered around the mean as shown by a standard deviation of 0.994.

Table 2: Human Skills

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std. Dvn |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Those in management within the county government have adequate training on human relations | 28.40% | 40.30% | 23.90% | 3.40% | 4.00% | 2.14 | 1.00 |
| Those in management have actively participated in team building activities and programs | 19.30% | 42.60% | 27.80% | 8.00% | 2.30% | 2.31 | 0.95 |
| Those in management have been trained and participated in leadership and mentorship programs | 14.80% | 54.50% | 14.80% | 9.70% | 6.20% | 2.38 | 1.05 |
| Those in management have training in conflict resolution | 22.20% | 48.30% | 20.50% | 5.70% | 3.40% | 2.20 | 0.96 |
| Human skills in all levels of management have been evident | 29.50% | 35.80% | 28.40% | 2.30% | 4.00% | 2.15 | 1.01 |
| Average | | | | | | 2.236 | 0.99 |

4.2.3 Conceptual Skills

The third objective of the study was to examine the effect of conceptual skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The respondents were asked to respond to the statements on conceptual skills. Results in Table 3 revealed a majority of the respondents, 77.90% (30.70%+47.20%) were of the view that most of the individuals in top management levels had not been trained or participated in strategic planning. Similarly, a majority of the respondents, 84.6%, disagreed with the statement that the management had implemented the vision and most of the goals within the county’s strategic plan. 87.55% of the respondents representing a majority stated that the management of the county government had no training in forecasting. The results also revealed that 68.8% of the respondents were in disagreement with the statement that most of the individuals in management had participated in making presentations in the policy process. On a five point scale, the average mean of the responses was 2.10 which means that majority of the respondents were disagreeing with most of the statements and that the responses were clustered around the mean as shown by a standard deviation of 1.0075.

Table 3: Conceptual Skills

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std. Dvn |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Most of the individuals in top management levels have been trained and participated in strategic planning | 30.70% | 47.20% | 12.50% | 6.80% | 2.80% | 2.04 | 0.98 |
| The management has implemented the vision and most of the goals within the county’s strategic plan | 26.10% | 58.50% | 6.20% | 5.70% | 3.40% | 2.02 | 0.93 |
| The management of the county government have training in forecasting | 29.50% | 58.00% | 3.40% | 6.20% | 2.80% | 1.95 | 0.92 |
| Most of the individuals in management have participated in making presentations in the policy process | 21.60% | 47.20% | 11.40% | 10.80% | 9.10% | 2.39 | 1.20 |
| Average | | | | | | 2.1 | 1.00 |

4.2.4 Informational Skills

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the effect of informational skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. Results in Table 4 show that 61.90% (24.40%+37.50%) of the respondents who represented a majority disagreed with the statement that the management of the county government regularly articulated its policies, goals and objectives to its employees. The results also showed that a majority of the respondents, 69.90%, did not agree to the statement that there were no barriers to communication within the county and that those in management normally communicated important issues to employees directly. 83.00% of the respondents, a majority, disagreed with the statement that most of the decisions of management within the county had been converted to action by employees after communication was done. 72.10% of the respondents also indicated that there was no adequate monitoring of employees by management since there was no adequate information. The results also showed that a majority of the respondents, 83.60%, disagreed to the statement that those in management positions effectively represented and articulated the issues of employees to the necessary bodies for action. On a five point scale, the average mean of the responses was 2.13 which means that majority of the respondents were disagreeing with most of the statements and that the responses were clustered around the mean as shown by a standard deviation of 1.10.

Table 4: Informational Skills

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std. Dvn |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| The management of the county government regularly articulates its policies, goals and objectives to employees | 24.40% | 37.50% | 13.60% | 15.90% | 8.50% | 2.47 | 1.26 |
| There is no barriers to communication within the county and that those in management normally communicate important issues to employees directly | 19.90% | 50.00% | 21.60% | 6.20% | 2.30% | 2.21 | 0.91 |
| Most of the decisions of management within the county have been converted to action by employees after communication was done | 36.40% | 46.60% | 4.00% | 8.00% | 5.10% | 1.99 | 1.09 |
| There is adequate monitoring of employees by management since there is adequate information | 30.10% | 42.00% | 10.80% | 7.40% | 9.70% | 2.24 | 1.23 |
| Those in management positions effectively represent and articulate the issues of employees to the necessary bodies for action | 50.60% | 33.00% | 10.20% | 2.80% | 3.40% | 1.76 | 0.99 |
| Average | | | | | | 2.13 | 1.10 |

4.2.5 Staff Productivity

The study also sought to assess the level of staff productivity in Wajir county government. The respondents were presented with and asked to respond to statements on staff productivity. The results in Table 5 reveal that a majority of the respondents, 76.1% (24.40%+51.70%) were in disagreement with the statement that the output per employee in the county government was satisfactory. Similarly, a majority of the respondents, 72.2%, indicated that they were in disagreement with the statement that there had been timely completion of set goals and work allocated to employees within the county government. The same number of respondents also disagreed to the statement that there was optimum use of allocated resources by employees within the county government. The results of the study also showed that 69.90% of the respondents were not in agreement with the statement that most of the employees were employable across jobs within the county. The results also revealed that 72.1% of the respondents, a majority, did not agree to the statement that there had been job satisfaction and stability of employment of employees within the county government of Wajir. On a five point scale, the average mean of the responses was 2.31 which means that majority of the respondents were disagreeing with most of the statements and that the responses were clustered around the mean as shown by a standard deviation of 1.13.

Table 5: Staff Productivity

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std. Dvn |
|---|-------------------|----------|---------|--------|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| The output per employee in the county government is satisfactory | 24.40% | 51.70% | 7.40% | 8.50% | 8.00% | 2.24 | 1.15 |
| There has been timely completion of set goals and work allocated to employees within the county | 21.60% | 50.60% | 14.80% | 9.10% | 4.00% | 2.23 | 1.02 |
| There is optimum use of allocated resources by employees | 18.80% | 53.40% | 8.00% | 12.50% | 7.40% | 2.36 | 1.14 |
| Most of the employees are employable across jobs within the county | 23.90% | 46.00% | 11.90% | 11.90% | 6.20% | 2.31 | 1.15 |
| There has been job satisfaction and stability of employment of employees within the county | 17.60% | 54.50% | 5.70% | 14.20% | 8.00% | 2.40 | 1.17 |
| Average | | | | | | 2.31 | 1.13 |

4.3 Inferential Statistics

Inferential analysis was conducted to generate correlation results, model of fitness, and analysis of the variance and regression coefficients.

4.4.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 6 below presents the results of the correlation analysis. The results revealed that technical skills and staff productivity were positively and significantly related ($r=0.445$, $p=0.000$). The results further indicated that human skills and staff productivity were positively and significantly related ($r=0.539$, $p=0.000$). It was further established that conceptual skills and staff productivity were positively and significantly related ($r=0.590$, $p=0.000$). Similarly, the results showed that access informational skills and staff productivity were positively and significantly related ($r=0.509$, $p=0.000$). This implies that an increase in any unit of the variables leads to an increase in staff productivity.

Table 6: Correlation Matrix

| | | Staff productivity | Technical skills | Human skills | Conceptual skills | Informational skills |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Staff productivity | Pearson Correlation | 1 | | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | | | | |
| Technical skills | Pearson Correlation | .445** | 1 | | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | | | | |
| Human skills | Pearson Correlation | .539** | 0.139 | 1 | | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.065 | | | |
| Conceptual skills | Pearson Correlation | .590** | .360** | .331** | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | | |
| Informational skills | Pearson Correlation | .509** | .214** | .226** | .242** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.000 | 0.004 | 0.003 | 0.001 | |

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

4.4.2 Regression Analysis

The results presented in Table 7 present the fitness of model used of the regression model in explaining the study phenomena. Technical skills, human skills, conceptual skills and informational skills were found to be satisfactory variables in explaining staff productivity. This is supported by coefficient of determination also known as the R square of 62.5%. This means that technical skills, human skills, conceptual skills and informational skills which represent managerial competencies explain 62.5% of the variations in the dependent variable which is staff productivity. These results also imply that the model applied to link the relationship of the variables was satisfactory.

Table 7: Model Fitness

| Indicator | Coefficient |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| R | 0.791 |
| R Square | 0.625 |
| Adjusted R Square | 0.616 |
| Std. Error of the Estimate | 0.244604 |

In statistics significance testing the p-value indicates the level of relation of the independent variable to the dependent variable. If the significance number is found to be less than the critical value also known as the probability value (p) which is statistically set at 0.05, then the conclusion would be that the model is significant in explaining the relationship; otherwise the model would be regarded as non-significant.

Table 8 provides the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicate that the overall model was statistically significant. Further, the results imply that the independent variables are good predictors of staff productivity. This was supported by an F statistic of 71.329 and the reported p value (0.000) which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level.

Table 8: Analysis of Variance

| Indicator | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|--------------|
| Regression | 17.071 | 4 | 4.268 | 71.329 | 0.000 |
| Residual | 10.231 | 171 | 0.060 | | |
| Total | 27.302 | 175 | | | |

Regression of coefficients results in Table 9 shows that technical skills and staff productivity are positively and significantly related ($r=0.238$, $p=0.000$). An increase in the unit change in technical skills would lead to an increase in staff productivity by 0.238 units. The results further indicate that human skills and staff productivity were positively and significantly related ($r=0.413$, $p=0.000$). These results imply that an increase in the unit change in human skills would lead to an increase in the staff productivity by 0.413 units. It was further established that conceptual skills and staff productivity were positively and significantly related ($r=0.327$, $p=0.000$) while informational skills and staff productivity were also positively and significantly related ($r=0.360$, $p=0.000$). This shows that an increase in the unit change in conceptual skills and informational skills would lead to an increase in staff productivity by 0.327 and 0.360 units respectively.

Table 9: Regression of Coefficients

| Variable | B | Std. Error | Beta | t | Sig. |
|----------------------|--------|------------|-------|--------|-------|
| (Constant) | -0.772 | 0.166 | | -4.663 | 0.000 |
| Technical skills | 0.238 | 0.056 | 0.214 | 4.232 | 0.000 |
| Human skills | 0.413 | 0.063 | 0.331 | 6.589 | 0.000 |
| Conceptual skills | 0.327 | 0.053 | 0.329 | 6.194 | 0.000 |
| Informational skills | 0.360 | 0.058 | 0.309 | 6.260 | 0.000 |

Thus, the optimal model for the study is;

Staff productivity = -0.772 + 0.238 technical skills+ 0.413 human skills+ 0.327conceptual skills+ 0.360 informational skills

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of technical skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The findings revealed that technical skills as part of managerial competencies have a positive and significant effect on the staff productivity. These findings are in line with that of Gana and Ifah (2012) who examined the effects of manager's managerial skills on staff efficiency and effectiveness in organization and found that there existed a strong relationship between manager's managerial skills and staffs efficiency and effectiveness in organization. The study emphasized the need for those in management to acquire basic skills approach such as technical skills to improve the productivity of their staff.

The second objective of the study was to examine the effect of human skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The findings revealed that human skills as part of managerial competencies have a positive and significant effect on staff productivity in Wajir county government. This is also supported by the statements in the questionnaire which majority of the respondents disagreed with and this translated to poor staff productivity. These findings were consistent with that of Ghalandari (2012) who found that human skills of those in management had a significant and positive influence on productivity of human resources in Iran. According to the study results, lack of attention to labor productivity and paying attention to other factors will not only reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, but also cause increase in loss and accidents and dissatisfaction of manpower. Therefore, paying attention to the human skills in order to increase labor productivity in the organization could be useful.

The third objective was to examine the effect of conceptual skills as part of managerial competencies on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The findings revealed that conceptual skills have a positive and significant effect on staff productivity in Wajir county government. This is also supported by the statements in the questionnaire which majority of the respondents disagreed with and this translated to poor staff productivity. These findings were consistent with that of Seyedinejat, Ebrahim, and Dousti (2014) who were ranking the managers based on their skills in offices of physical education in Mazandaran province. The study ranked conceptual skills as the most important or the area that needed to be prioritized by those in management followed by human skills and finally technical skills. This will ensure productivity in their place of work.

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the effect of informational skills on staff productivity in Wajir county government. The findings revealed that informational skills as part of managerial competencies have a positive and significant effect on staff productivity in Wajir county government. This finding was supported by Rajhans (2012) explored the interrelationship between communication and motivation and its overall impact on employee performance and found that if employees feel that communication from management is effective, it can lead to feelings of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization and increased trust in the workplace.

Effective downward communication allows decisions taken by the management of the organization to be converted into action by employees, also boosts teamwork, trust, better relations, productivity and fewer chances of rumours and miscommunication.

5.2 Conclusions

The main purpose of this study was to conduct an analysis of managerial competencies and their influence on staff productivity in Wajir County government. Based on the study findings, the study concluded that technical skills as part of managerial competences have a positive and significant influence on staff productivity. Similarly, the study concluded that human skills as part of managerial skills affected the productivity of staff in Wajir county government. Conceptual skills and informational skills of those in management position also influenced the productivity of staff in this county government. Based on the responses given by the staff participating in the study, it was concluded that key competencies or skills within these main competencies had been ignored to a large extent and this had translated in to low staff productivity within the county government.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the research findings the study recommended that urgent measures be undertaken to ensure that at least everyone in management had acquired some basic technical skills in their assigned task. It was also necessary to continuously improve the existing technical skills of those in management within the county government. This could be done through regular on job training for the management on the county government processes as well as basic skills on how to use various tools and techniques such as IT to increase efficiency in the work place.

The study also recommended that the process of selection and hiring of those in management should include a critical review of the experience and training of the selected candidate on the specified tasks given to them so that they can competently step in when necessary in cases of challenging processes or activities to help their juniors.

The study also recommended that short courses such as conflict resolution, strategic leadership and mentorship programs should be included the county government staff development agenda as well as team building activities where those in management should be highly encouraged to avail themselves. This is because most of these activities were mainly attended by their juniors and those in management rarely presented themselves for such. This would help in creating key interpersonal skills at all levels of management which is a motivation to employees since it creates crucial interrelations within the workforce.

Since conceptual skills were the most important competency for those in top management, the study recommended that it was crucial for those in management to acquire such skills even in lower management levels so that as they climbed up the ladder, it would be easier for them. These skills were crucial in translating the vision and strategic goals of the county government in to action and therefore, those in management needed to be trained and actively participate in strategic planning and policy processes within the county government.

The study also recommended that it was necessary for those in management positions to constantly acquire the needed information on the staff activities and performance in order to constantly and effectively monitor and evaluate the performance of staff in the county

government to ensure that they were actively involved in activities that led to increased productivity. It was also necessary for the management to improve how and the ways in which they disseminated information at levels in the county government to ensure that barriers in communication do not hinder the progress of the county government agendas. The management also needed to take serious consideration of the issues that affected the welfare as well as the work environment of their staff by effectively and objectively representing their queries in the necessary authorities for enhanced staff productivity.

5.4 Areas for Further Studies

The study focused on the analysis of managerial competencies and their influence on staff productivity in Wajir County government. This called for analysis of staff productivity in only one county in Kenya and thus area for further studies could consider other counties in Kenya that have been faced with the challenge of low staff productivity and comparison be made with the findings of the current study.

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