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THE INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEE VALUES ON PROJECT SUCCESS RATE IN THE KENYAN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS: LESSONS FROM KENYA CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of employee values on project success rate in the Kenyan Public sector organizations, from the perspective of Kenya Civil Aviation Authority. Four aspects of employee values were assessed as follows; employee integrity, employee commitment to the organization, fairness in treating employees, teamwork, and employee responsiveness.

Methodology: The research has adopted a Descriptive research design which was used to plan the study and a target population of 442 staff members of 8 departments of Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA) who are directly involved with implementation of projects was used. A sample of 156 respondents was selected and questionnaires were used to collect primary data from them. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and presented in tables and bar charts. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 assisted in generating results. The tool was found to be very reliable with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.965.

Findings: The study revealed that employee values as an element of organizational culture had a significant influence on the success rate of public sector projects (Karl Pearson correlation coefficients of 0.901).

Policy recommendation: The finding further showed that implementation of projects in KCAA was largely successful. The study recommends the need to develop and adopt a culture that promotes employee values such as integrity, team work and commitment to the vision and goals of the organization in order to enhance success rate in implementation of projects in public sector entities. Further research can be conducted to show the influence of employee remuneration on project success rate in public sector organizations.

Key Words: *Shared values, Projects, Public sector organizations, integrity, employee values, project success rate, Kenya Civil Aviation Authority*

1.0 Introduction and Background

Projects are a principal means by which governmental organizations use to achieve key development objectives. In recognition of the vital role which public sector entities play in realizing the foregoing objective, many governments across the world have endeavoured to carry out reforms aimed at creating a conducive organization culture for efficient and effective delivery of services (Africa Economic Commission Report, 2010).

For instance since 1995, the Australian public sector has undergone managerial reforms aimed at achieving cost efficiency, budget accountability and improved customer focus on service delivery, Parker (2000). The reforms undertaken by the Government of Australia were significantly informed by the role that organizational culture plays in attainment of strategic objectives. According to the OECD Report of 1985, public sector organizations have been encouraged to adopt market based mechanisms as they infuse professionalism and efficiency in their operations. Further, many countries have been making a shift from a system based on traditional public administration to one that adopts private-sector-style management, as the later has explicit standards and performance measures which are able to increase efficiency and accountability in the public sector (World Public Sector Report, 2005). The Commonwealth Secretariat offers a similar view by noting that public sector reforms are an integral part of the efforts of governments to inculcate a culture of efficient and effective delivery of services (Commonwealth Secretariat Report, 2016).

In Africa, a number of Countries have carried out reforms in the public sector in bid to entrench a culture of efficiency and effectiveness and enhance the overall responsiveness of governments in meeting needs of the citizenry, Kilelo (2015). Many public sector institutions in developing countries are characterized by weak systems of accountability, bureaucracy in decision making and lack of effective utilization of resources (Africa Economic Commission Report, 2010). Consequently there is need to evolve a public service organizational culture which enhances employee involvement, rewards team work, recognizes individual effort and is more focused on the needs of the customers. The Report categorizes Kenya as a committed reformer. The categorization is based on the reforms which the country has been implementing during the last two decades in order to improve performance of public sector entities. The Presidential Taskforce on Parastatal Reforms Report of 2013, has reviewed the challenges facing State Corporations and made recommendations geared towards establishing institutional structures and systems that easily facilitate efficiency and effectiveness in provision of services. The report notes that the parastatal sector in Kenya *inter alia* is characterized by poor governance leading to resource loss and weak human resource and institutional capacity. In order for parastatals to effectively play their envisaged role of instruments of delivery of public services, there is need to transform parastatals in order to make efficiency and effectiveness as part their organizational culture.

1.1 Public sector in Kenya

The public sector encompasses the services offered by the government and this includes services offered not only by ministries and parastatals but also by the judiciary, legislature, security forces, local governments and regulatory bodies (Economic Commission for Africa, 2010). The

public sector plays a critical role in the social-economic development of the country. According to Muthaura (2010), one of the key function which the public sector is expected to play, is implementation of the vision 2030, a development agenda which seeks to transform Kenya into a newly industrialized, middle income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens. Vision 2030 has prioritized 224 flagship projects which are considered as transformative and which the public sector is required to steer the implementation process.

Since the 1990s, a number of reform initiatives have been made in order to the transform the country's public sector (Hope, 2012). According to the researcher, the reform efforts have been driven mainly by the need to enhance performance of the state bureaucracy and improve delivery of services and goods. As part of the public sector reform agenda, in 2007, the Results Based Management was adopted as strategy to improve and measure performance (Kilelo et al., 2015). This was operationalized with the help of Rapid Results Initiative which helped to deliver tangible results. The Results Based Management strategy was followed by the public sector transformation strategy which the government initiated in 2010, with a view to enhancing their performance (OPM/PSTD, 2010). In line with the foregoing strategy, every government ministry, department and agency is expected to adopt a result-based approach to delivery of services and for this to be achieved, it must have in place systems, tools and an organizational culture that is capable to deliver effectively and efficiently goods and services to the citizenry. After 2007, the Results Based Management was adopted as strategy to improve and measure performance. This was operationalized with the help of Rapid Results Initiative which helped to deliver tangible results.

In August 2010, Kenya enacted a new constitution that has articles that lay a lot of emphasis on public sector performance, reform and transformation (hope, 2012). Chapter 13 of the constitution spells the functions of the public service with values and principles of public service which include; high standards of professional ethics and efficient and effective and economic use of resources.

1.2. Employee Values

The values which are held commonly by employees, depict what is regarded as important in an organization (Uttal, 1993). According to Kennedy et al (1982), the values espoused in a particular organization serves a number of purposes. First, they convey a sense of identity and belonging to its members. Second, values enhance the stability of social systems. Last, values focus the attention of managers to issues which are important to the organization and also offer guidance in the decision making process by managers.

Values are a critical component for the success of any organization and towards this end, organizations endeavour to establish and promote a particular set of values. For instance the values commonly espoused by many organizations include; integrity, prudence, temperance and fairness (Belak et al., 2010). Garcia-Marza (2005), collaborates the foregoing view by contending that values help to establish and maintain standards that demarcate the right things to do. When values are widely shared the success of an organization is enhanced. An organization with a strong culture is one with high level of values. The two values which are regarded most highly by the American Management Association members is integrity and being responsible

(Fritzsche, 1991). The researcher notes that the other values adopted by a number of organizations include; excellence, customer focus, innovation and teamwork (Fritzsche, 1991).

1.3. Problem and Scope

According to Tripathi (2009), projects operate within an organizational culture that influences how decisions are made, outcomes evaluated and the steps followed during project implementation. Project implementation is the phase where visions and plans become reality. Employee shared values influence culture since employees are the building blocks of organizations and the objects through which culture is manifested. The two values which are regarded most highly by the American Management Association members is integrity and being responsible (Fritzsche, 1991). The researcher notes that the other values adopted by a number of organizations include; excellence, customer focus, innovation and teamwork (Fritzsche, 1991).

It is during project implementation phase that employee input is highly desired. Thus organizations with a culture that facilitates effective implementation of projects tend to have high project success rates since culture plays a vital role in successful implementation of projects. Organizational culture is increasingly becoming a key determinant of failure or success of projects as organizations which adopt appropriate project management practices as part of their culture, tend to outperform those that do not inculcate similar practices (Kotler, 2007). Many public sector projects in Kenya gulped enormous public resources but with little or insignificant return on investment. Thus the key challenge faced in Kenya is effective utilization of project funds in achieving effective delivery (Afande, 2013).

Employee values has been identified as one of the factors that determine the success rate of project implementation in public sector organizations. Effort has been put toward research on success rate of public sector projects in Kenya but still this remains inconclusive. The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of employee values on the success rate of public sector projects at Kenya Civil Aviation Authority. It focused on the extent to which the employee shared values which are entrenched within the organizational culture help in realizing project success. These values are portrayed through integrity, taking responsibility, fairness, commitment and teamwork, aspects that are crucial in organizational performance especially for projects which are designed to fall within a specified time frame. These aspects therefore have a strong bearing to a large extent on employee performance on their tasks. This study hence sought to explore the extent to which employee shared values influence the project success rate in the context of public sector organizations in Kenya where projects have been found by previous researchers to have a completion rate challenge.

1.4. Objective of the study

This study sought to investigate the influence of employee values on the success rate of projects in the public sector in Kenya.

Specifically the study addressed the following questions:

1. To what extent does employee integrity influence project success rate in the Kenyan Public organizations sector?
2. To what extent does employee responsibility influence the project success rate in the Kenyan public sector organizations?

3. How does treating employees with fairness influence project success rate in the Kenyan Public sector organizations?
4. To what extent does employee commitment influence project success rate in the Kenyan Public sector organizations?
5. To what extent does employees' team work contribute to project success rate in the Kenyan Public sector organizations?

1.5. Conceptual Framework of study variables

The study was conceptualized on the premise that the success of projects in the public sector is a function of employee values which are represented in observing certain levels of integrity as they work, taking responsibility of their actions, treating each other with fairness especially for management, being committed to the organization goals as well as working as team, as depicted in Figure 1.

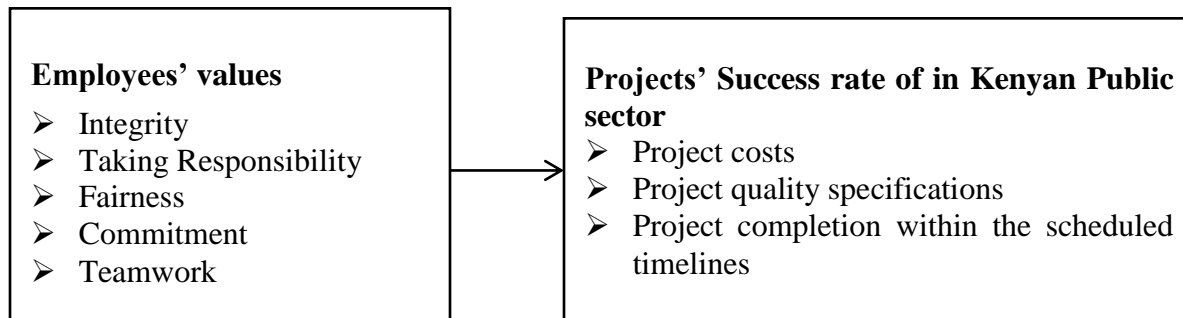


Figure 1: conceptual framework

2.0: Theoretical Foundations and Literature Review.

2.1: Structural-Functional Theory

Structural-Functional Theory postulates that the organization's value system is a subvalue system of the more comprehensive social system in which it operates. This implies that an organization cannot have a culture that is fundamentally different from the society in which it operates in. According to Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955), who is one of the foremost proponents of this theory, the values of the society in which a particular organization functions, deeply permeate it and ultimately influence its goals and activities.

Employee shared values will therefore to a large extent be influenced by the organization while the organization also gets influenced by its employees. This theory informs the current research in that it lays the foundation for interpreting employee shared values as a contributor to good or bad performance.

2.2. Literature Review

The values which are held commonly by employees, depict what is regarded as important in an organization (Uttal, 1993). According to Kennedy et al (1982), the values espoused in a particular organization serves a number of purposes. First, they convey a sense of identity and belonging to its members. Second, values enhance the stability of social systems. Last, values focus the attention of managers to issues which are important to the organization and also offer guidance in the decision making process by managers.

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The two values which are regarded most highly by the American Management Association members is integrity and being responsible (Fritzsche, 1991). The researcher notes that the other values adopted by a number of organizations include; excellence, customer focus, innovation and team work. This study contributes to this body of knowledge by investigating more set of values and relating them to project success rate as opposed to testing them to the performance of more permanent organization work processes.

3.0. Methodology and Design

The study was descriptive in nature and used questionnaires to collect data from 156 employees of Kenya Civil Aviation Authority involved in implementation of projects. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analysis.

4.0. Results and discussions

4.1. Influence of employee values on success rate of public sector projects

The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that employee values influenced the success rate of public sector projects. According to the results of the analysis, 43.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that a high level of integrity was a leading value that influenced the rate of project success, followed by taking responsibility in decision making (37.5%). Team work among employees and commitment to organizations goals were also noted strongly to influence the success rate of public projects at (35.8%) and (32.5%) respectively. Cumulatively over 70% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that integrity, employee taking responsibility, commitment and teamwork contributed to project success rate in Kenyan public sector organizations.

Fairness in addressing employee issues and needs recorded the lowest mean rating of 3.53, with only (15%) of the respondents strongly agreeing that it influenced project success in the public sector. Fairness in addressing employee issues however was rated lowly (53.8%), with 34 % of the respondents being neutral on this aspect, implying that this was not considered as an

important factor to affect project success rate. The findings are presented in Table 1 below and figures 2,3, 4, 5 and 6.

Table 1: Influence of employee values on the success of public sector projects

Employee Values that influence success of project	SD %	D %	N %	Agree%	SA %
High level integrity	0.8	4.2	19.2	33	43.3
Responsibility for decisions made	2.5	3.3	15	41	37.5
Fairness in addressing employee issues and needs	3.3	9.2	34.2	38.8	15.0
Commitment to organizations vision and goals	1.7	6.7	18.3	40.8	32.5
Teamwork	2.5	6.7	15.0	40.0	35.8

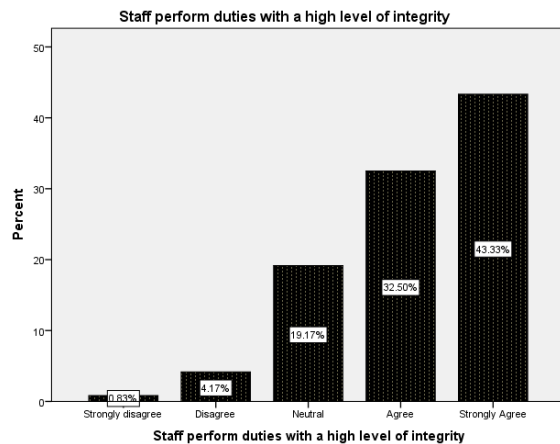


Fig.2: Staff Integrity

From the figure 2 above, it is evident that staff integrity was considered important in ensuring project success rate. This is shown by the few (5%) number of respondent who disagreed.



Fig. 3: Staff Responsibility

Staff responsibility as far as their actions are concerned is another aspect shown to contribute greatly to project success rate with 79.2% of the respondent affirming so. This shows that project will succeed where people are held accountable for their actions.

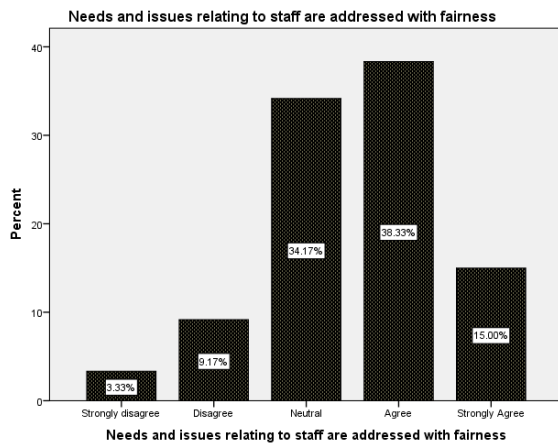


Fig. 4: Fairness in Dealing with Employee Matters

Figure 4 shows that fairness in dealing with staff issues was considered moderately important in ensuring project success rate as 34% were neutral and approximately 13 % disagreeing with only 53% being of the affirmative view.



Fig. 5: Staff commitment

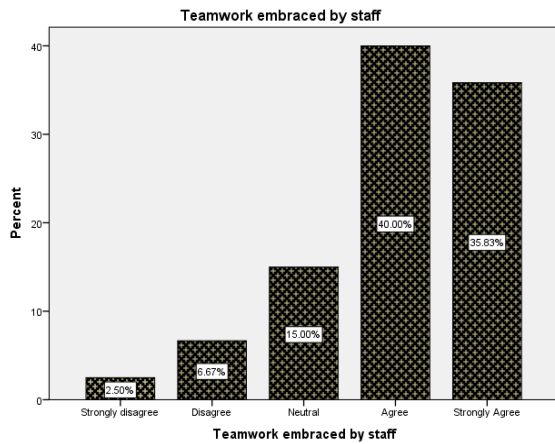


Fig.6: Employee Teamwork

Figures 5 and 6 shows the importance attached to teamwork, commitment further affirms that teamwork and commitment contributed substantially to project success rate.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Shared Values

	Staff perform duties with a high level of integrity	Staff take responsibility for the decisions they make	Needs and issues relating to staff are addressed with fairness	Staff committed to vision and goals of organization	Teamwork embraced by staff
N	120	120	120	120	120
Mean	4.13	4.08	3.53	3.96	4.00
Mode	5	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	.925	.940	.970	.965	1.004

Table 2 above shows further analysis of mean, mode and standard deviation. From the findings, it is evident that most people agreed that all the aspects of shared values influenced project success rate with the mean lying between 3.5 and 4.2 which was inclined towards the agreeing with this view. The mode value of 4 and 5 further confirms this finding showing most people agreed. The standard of less than 1 for most of the aspects shows high consensus among respondents, with only team work among employees showing slightly higher than 1 standard deviation indicating some variability among respondents.

4.2. Success rate of public sector projects

The study revealed that the success rate of projects in KCAA was above average at KCAA. Project success constructs received approval of more than half of the respondents. The results are presented in subsequent tables.

Table 3. Extent of project success rate in relation to project cost

Project costs	Very large extent (%)	Large extent (%)	Mean
Cost overrun occur frequently	9.2	21.7	3.11
Costs managed prudently	45.8	31.7	4.15
Value for money	40.0	35.8	4.13
Project budget not exceeded	46.7	30.0	4.23

With respect to project costs, 45.8% of the respondents indicated to a very large extent that project costs were managed prudently, while 31.7% of the respondents affirmed that it only happens to a large extent. In regard to the parameter of value for money, 40.0% and 35.8% of the respondents, indicated that value for money was realized to a very large extent and large extent respectively. In so far as project implementation within budget is concerned, 46.7% of the respondents gave approval of a very large extent while 30% of respondents gave approval of to a large extent. Less than half of the respondents indicated that project cost overrun occur frequently with a corresponding mean of 3.11.

Table 4. Extent of project success rate in relation to project quality specifications

Project Quality specifications	Very large extent (%)	Large extent (%)	Mean
Projects meet customer satisfaction	23.4	48.3	3.89
Projects adhere to internal adherence standards	35.0	38.3	4.06
Projects adhere to technical specifications	33.4	40.8	4.03

Findings in Table 3 above, show that 35.0% of the respondents indicated that to a very large extent KCAA adhered to internal standards while 38.3% of the respondents affirmed that this happens only to a large extent. This was followed by 33.4% of the respondents who indicated that to a very large extent projects adhered to technical specifications while 40.8% respondents felt that this only happens to a large extent. In so far as meeting customer satisfaction, 23.4% of the respondents indicated that this happens to a very large extent while 48.3% felt this only happens to a large extent.

Table 5. Extent of project success rate in relation to project completion timelines

Project Completion	Very large extent (%)	Large extent (%)	Mean
Projects completed on schedule	40	35.9	4.04
Project planning and implementation timelines met	50	20	4.12
Monitoring and evaluation done to meet timelines	42.5	29.2	4.06

With respect to project completion timelines, the study found out that the majority of the respondents (50%) felt that to a very large extent, project planning and implementation timelines are met. Project planning and implementation timelines also had a mean of 4.12. This was followed by project monitoring and evaluation to meet timelines in which 42.5% of the respondents indicated to a very large extent, while 29.2% of the respondents affirmed to a large extent. In regard to projects being completed on schedule, 40% and 35.9% of the respondents indicated that this happened in KCAA to a very large extent and a large extent respectively.

4.3. Regression Analysis

The regression analysis for employee values in relation to success rate of projects in the public sector depicted a strong relationship. The results were computed at 95% confidence level and are summarized and presented in Table 5.

Table 6: Employee values in relation to success rate of projects in the public sector

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.872 ^a	.760	.742	.105

a. Predictors: (Constant) High level of integrity, Responsibility for decisions made, Commitment to organizational vision and goals, Team work, Fairness in addressing employee issues.

b. Dependent Variable: Success rate of public sector projects

The R value of 0.872 indicates a strong positive relationship between employee values and success rate of projects in the public sector. The computed coefficient of determination, R Squared was found to be 0.760, implying that 76.0 % variability in the success rate of projects in the public sector is attributed to employee values.

4.4. Correlation Analysis

The findings showed a very high positive correlation between employee values and success rate of projects in KCAA, which confirms the results of regression analysis explained in the earlier section and is in line with the assertion by Belak *et al* (2010) that many organizations have espoused certain values to enhance delivery of services. The results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 7. Correlation coefficient

Independent variable	Karl Pearson coefficient	Significance (2 - tailed)	Interpretation	Comment
Employee values	0.901	0.001	Very high correlation	Significant

4.5. Discussion of Findings

The study deduced that employee values significantly influenced the success rate of projects in KCAA. With a Karl Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.901, it is clear that employee values is a critical component realizing successful implementation of projects in the public sector. The key employee values which were considered under the study namely; high level of integrity, commitment to the vision and goals of the organization, taking responsibility for decisions made, fairness in addressing employee issues as well as team work all showed a strong correlation with project success rate. The results indicated that overall the project teams in KCAA had endeavoured to adopt these values and consequently this had helped to enhance implementation of projects.

The study found out that the success rate of projects was above average at KCAA. Most aspects of project success received high approval from the respondents. These results are in concurrence with the findings of Fritzsche (1991) who revealed that employee values if adopted can help the organization achieve its set vision and goals. Successful project implementation was therefore a clear function of employee values among other factors.

5.0. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study concluded that to a large extent employee values significantly influenced the success rate of projects being implemented in the public sector in Kenya. The findings further demonstrate that development and effective implementation of standard project management practices in public sector institutions is heavily dependent on the set of values practiced by both employees and senior management.

Given the complexity of implementing public project sector projects due to involvement of many stakeholders it is critically important to ensure that appropriate project management practices and tools are used to assure efficient use of resources including people working on the project. This therefore makes it imperative to develop and adopt a culture that promotes and entrenches appropriate employee values. The values should elaborately boarder on integrity of employees, team work, commitment to vision and goals among other values in order to minimize interference and resource wastage during project implementation. The shared values will enable harmonization of the organization's goals and objectives with employees own aspirations hence reducing dissention levels. Public entities should pay more attention to values that seek to enhance success within acceptable project timelines, project cost and project quality specifications.

There is need for project managers to guide their teams in attaining the set values that are geared towards achieving the set goals of the organization. The project team is not limited to employees only but rather extends even to stakeholders who are interested in the outcome of the project.

Future researchers can look into the contribution of employee remuneration on project success rates especially in public sector projects. Remuneration has been shown to lift morale among employees so it is important to prove whether the same in the project setup and in public sector environment.

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