

EFFECT OF SELF GOAL SETTING ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF NGA OFFICERS IN KENYA (A CASE OF HOMA BAY COUNTY)

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Abstract: *Career Management Practices (CMP) is an important factor for achieving career wellbeing and is becoming increasingly crucial in career environments characterized by higher volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Organizations which aspire to be successful in today's extremely competitive markets need employees with the right competencies to assist in achieving a competitive edge in the industries. The general objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of career self-development practices on performance of NGA officers in Kenya with a specific objective to evaluate the effect of self goal setting on performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County. correlational research design was employed in the study. The population of the study was the 381 Chiefs and Assistant chiefs in the county from which 204 formed the sample. Questionnaires with five-point Likert scale were used to collect primary data. The test-retest coefficient was used to establish reliability of the research instruments while Content Validity Index (CVI) was used to determine the validity of the questionnaires. The findings from the study are important because they have the capacity of being used to formulate policy guidelines that are relevant and sensitive to the forces that effect the public sector performance in Kenya.*

Keywords: *employee performance, self-development practices, self goal setting*

Career Management Practices and Employee Performance

The international perspective of career self-management with reference to European Countries put it clear that everyone has a career to manage. This is the simple message in the new policy strategies for career guidance in Europe. Prevailing processes to re-shape career guidance in Europe began in the year 2000, when career guidance was highlighted as an instrument to implement the strategy for lifelong learning (CEC, 2000). Since then, various types of policy documents have produced new knowledge of career guidance and career development, at both European and national level, connected to the European Union (EU) strategy of lifelong learning. Unlike lifelong learning, new strategies for career development and career guidance have been scarcely discussed. Researchers and political debaters have objected to the strong coupling of lifelong learning and economic goals of growth in the knowledge economy of Europe. In 2008, the report from Policy to Practice: a systematic change to lifelong guidance in Europe (Cedefop, 2008) commented on critical analysis of the promotion of lifelong learning and training (Kuhn & Sultana, 2006), which the experts of the report interpret also to be criticism of re-shaping career guidance. The ever-changing business world has confronted new challenges in operating activities and business organizations recognize that addressing sustainability issues benefits the firms through reduced costs and risks of doing business, increased brand reputation, increased attractiveness to talent or increased competitiveness (UN Global Compact & Accenture, 2013).

Human resource management could make important contributions to corporate sustainable development to manage the challenges (Ehnert, 2012).

The Public Service Commission is mandated to ensure that the Public Service is efficient and effective; develop human resources in the Public Service; and review and make recommendations to the National Government in respect of conditions of Service, and qualifications of public officers. This is as provided for under Article 234 (e), (f) and (g) of the Constitution. Further, Section 55 (7) of the Public Service Commission Act, 2017 requires the Commission to establish the necessary structures that will among other purposes provide for career progression and mobility of public officers as part of the career management practice in the Civil Service. Currently, some of the aspects of career management are carried out on piecemeal basis and lack totality of the whole function. The Civil Service largely uses a number of career management tools to manage employees' careers and policy documents. Some of these include Schemes of Service, staff performance management system, training and development programmes, and the Diversity Policy for the Public Service, among others. The Kenya National Government Administration department is a department in the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government which is under public service. The department is the former Provincial Administration department. Its history dates back to colonial era. During these colonial times Provincial Administration will be used to subdue any form of political opposition as well as maintain law and order. Before the reforms by Governance, Justice, Law and Order Sector (GJLOS), initiated after 2002 General Election, which embarked on improving service delivery, the provincial administration followed orders from their superiors without questioning even when the commands were degenerating to the citizen's interest (Mbai (2013). This bottom-up accountability will therefore be exploited by those at the top to suppress those against their policies, thus the history of provincial administration officers personified subjugation, dictatorship, impunity and authoritarianism.

The change of Provincial Administration's name to National Government Administration department will be part of restructuring as advocated in the Kenyan Constitution promulgated in the year 2010. It stipulated in Section 17 of the Sixth Schedule on Transitional and Consequential Provisions, that within five years after the effective date, the National Government shall restructure the system of administration commonly known as the provincial administration to accord with and respect the system of devolved government established under this Constitution (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). The transformed system of administration was enacted through the National Government Coordination Act, No.1 of 2013. The objective of the Act was to institute an administrative and institutional framework for co-ordination of National Government roles at the National and County levels of government's operations, in accordance to the Kenyan Constitution.

Self-goal setting is the development of an action plan designed in order to motivate and guide a person or group towards a goal and can be used on job to identify the problem area where an employee is lacking, or solving the problem of an employee and to encourage and solve problems themselves. According to Champathes (2006), self-goal setting has become an important technique to improve performance. It is not a one-way communication and proves to be a two-way communication where coaches identify what can be improved and how it can be improved. Further self-goal setting addresses the beliefs and behaviors that hinder performance (Toit, 2007).

It can be further seen that self-goal setting is all about helping someone else to improve performance (Starr, 2004).

As observed by Ellinger, Ellinger and Keller (2013), the concept of self-goal setting has emerged as a new paradigm or metaphor for management. In contrast to a traditional command-and-control form of managerial

supervision, self-goal setting is characterized by an emphasis on constructive and developmental feedback for improving employees' work performance, and their ability to cope with routine and non-routine problems. Whitmore (2003) on the other hand argues that self-goal setting can be beneficial both for the organization and for the employees only if it is associated with managerial interventions for developing a supportive environment. Thus, self-goal setting oriented practices can be effectively observed in those organizational contexts that proactively construct the foundation for effectively changing toward a developmental managerial style.

In the changed system, the department is headed at the regional level by the Regional Commissioner (RC), previously known as Provincial Commissioner (PC); County headed by County Commissioner (CC); Sub-County previously known as District headed by Deputy County Commissioner (DCC), previously known as District Commissioner (DC); and Ward previously known as Division, headed by the Assistant County Commissioner (ACC) previously known as District Officer (DO). The Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs, who are in charge of locations and sub-locations respectively, retained their titles and areas of jurisdiction. The administrators' roles have evolved to fit to the devolved system of government and also to address emerging issues. However, the roles have remained decentralized to the grassroots in order to provide its framework which includes coordination and maintenance of public security; management of peace and conflict resolutions; leading campaign against drug and substance abuse; promotion of immigration and registration services; and coordination of National Government functions. These roles require strategic leadership gained through career-self management in all the levels of administration and also in tackling the challenges that face the society.

Influence of Self goal setting on Performance of National Government Administration in Kenya

The self-goal-setting strategy is used to set goals that are specific and challenging in order to enable individuals to be innovative and creative (Zeijen et al., 2018). Self-goal-setting will help employees to examine their long-term, intermediate, and short-term goals, also evaluating whether their goals are realistic (James & Evans-Kasala, 2009). It is essential that employees set specific and measurable goals that give them the opportunity to compare their performance with their set goals (Maria, 2015; Van der Hoek, Groeneveld, & Kuipers, 2018). Performance is defined as the accomplishment of goals, gauged by their effectiveness and efficiency of their attainment (Van der Hoek et al., 2018). Performance is important for organizations to ensure that employees work hard in contributing to the achievement of the organizational mission and objectives (Ying, 2004). Therefore, a goal-setting strategy is the guideline of how tasks should be carried out; it should help employees to perform and result in achieving set goals (Van der Hoek et al., 2018). The results driven from the research showed that there was a strong impact of leadership behaviors on organizational performance. The leadership behaviors were found out to be very important key factors for the growth of the companies in the service sectors.

Leng (2014) studied on the impact of leadership styles on employee performance in retail industry. Questionnaires were used as the research instrument. A total of 384 sampling size were chosen for the survey. The 400 questionnaires were distributed to collect the responses from the employees in the retail industry. The questionnaires were distributed to the retail employees from three states of Malaysia, including Perak, Johor, and Penang. The results of the research showed that there was a significant relationship between the leadership styles and employee performance, which means there was a significant impact of leadership styles towards the employee performance in the retail industry.

Kerario (2013) studied on the impact of transactional leadership on the performance of employees in Kenya: the case of Mumias Sugar Company. The study aimed at showing the impacts that this form of leadership had on the employees of an organization in terms of their performance rate. It was a representative study in design with a cross sectional component whereby all relevant parties were involved. The study population was specific employees of Mumias Sugar Company selected for the study. Questionnaires were used to collect relevant data. The findings indicated that there was a positive relationship between transactional leadership and subordinate job satisfaction which in turn yields performance.

The Kenyan Government Administration department has heavily invested in the restructuring of the provincial administration so that it is accorded with respect in the devolved system of government as per the new constitution. Restructuring strategic interventions being put in place according to the draft policy on restructuring and transformation of provincial Administration by interior ministry (2015) include: integrity, efficiency and quality in service delivery; promotion of citizen participation in government programmes; improvement of staff mobility, office space and housing facilities; promotion of intergovernmental relations and cooperation; transformation of image, public communication and advocacy; promotion and building of capacity in ICT; promotion of gender equity; rationalization of administrative units; and mainstreaming of research and development for improved service delivery. The NGA officers have also been encouraged to pursue career-self management practices such as self-goal setting, self-observation, self-queing and networking in order to improve service delivery. However, studies evaluating the effect of these service delivery are scanty.

A profile of Homa Bay County

Homa Bay County is one of the five counties in the former Nyanza province. The county has eight sub-counties; Homa Bay, Ndhiwa, Rangwe, Mbita, Rachuonyo East, Rachuonyo South, Rachuonyo North and Suba. Despite the sustained efforts by the National Government to improve performance through service delivery among the NGA officers, Homa Bay County has been ranked lowest in this metric. For instance, a report by the Kenya Human Rights Commission on human rights violation by the NGA officers ranks Homa Bay County at number 44 nationwide and the lowest in the former Nyanza Region (KNHRC, 2020). Previous empirical studies seeking to link this phenomenon to various factors have failed to include career self-management as a factor.

Problem Statement

The contribution of the National Government Administration to development globally cannot be underscored due to the many benefits, some of which include improved community health care and nutrition, low fertility and infant mortality rates. In recognition of this importance, the National Government Administration department has heavily invested in the restructuring of the provincial administration so that it is accorded with respect in the devolved system of government as per the new constitution.

Maina (2014) established that career planning, training and development and institutional framework had a positive effect on career self-development in JKUAT and it emerged that work-life balance had a negative effect on career self-development since employees could not balance their private and work lives effectively. Ngirande and Musara (2014) found a strong correlation between job enrichment, job design and job enlargement. Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou et al., (2015) demonstrated relatively high scores in all skills, strong positive relationships among them as well as significant differences at scores as to students' work status. Wong and Quek (2015) findings suggested that individual-related factors (self-efficacy and outcome expectations) and social-related factor (peer influences) have positive relationship with individual career self-development.

The review of past empirical studies shows that the effect of career self-development on employee performance is mixed. Moreover, studies isolating influence of career self-development practices and performance of NGA officers are scanty. This is the case for Homa Bay County whose NGA officers' performance is low compared to those of counties in the region and in the country. The present study will therefore seek to evaluate the influence of career self-development practices and performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of career management practices on employee performance of national government administration officers in Kenya with a specific objective to evaluate the effect of self goal setting on employee performance of NGA officers a case of Homa Bay County.

Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey enabled the researcher to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest. Stratified random sampling technique was employed at all the administrative levels in Homa Bay County. Respondents were sampled individually through simple random sampling. The study used the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) tables to determine the sample. According to the table, from the targeted 381 Chief and Sub-chiefs, 204 were selected. The study used the Content Valid Index (CVI) which is a scale developed by computing or rating the relevant items in the instrument or questionnaire by checking their clarity, their meaningfulness in line with all objectives stated dividing by the total number of items to test for validity of the research instrument.

Research Findings and Discussion

The researcher analysed the data descriptively in order to describe the general central tendencies of the responses concerning the study variables. The questionnaire was designed to have 5-point Likert scale measurement which is a measurement with five response categories ranging from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (5) which requires the respondents to indicate a degree of agreement or disagreement with each of a series of statements related to explanatory variables. The information is presented in the sub-sections below.

Self Goal Setting

The descriptive characteristics of the first independent variable of self goal setting are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Self Goal Setting

Statement	(SD)	(D)	(N)	(A)	(SA)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error
There are sessions where officers are directed on what to do	81	26	16	32	20	3.66	1.32	0.97
NGA officers self observation is done often	53	23	61	10	28	3.31	0.76	1.91

There is a clear program for directing NGA officers in the county

76

47

40

10

2

4.06

1.06

2.90

Grand Mean**3.53****1.35****1.18**

The information in *Table 1* shows that generally, the respondents agreed that self Goal Setting as a factor that affects performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County is present in Homa Bay County. This is shown by the average mean of 3.53, which is close to four. The average standard deviation, which shows the deviation from the mean, indicates that the responses are not far from each other. This shows that the respondents generally agree that Self Goal Setting as a factor is present in Homa Bay County.

Performance of NGAO officers

The dependent variable in this study was adherence to good performance of NGAO officers. The descriptive statistics on this variable is shown in *Table 2*.

Table 2: Performance of NGAO officers

Statement	(SD)	(D)	(N)	(A)	(SA)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error
I feel motivated when I perform my duties	13	11	31	34	86	2.03	1.92	0.38
As a NGA officer, I always do my best in executing my duties	19	21	25	67	43	2.09	2.10	0.97
The rate of service delivery by NGA officers' in the county is satisfactory	22	18	19	78	38	2.47	1.20	1.90
The county is ahead of its neighbors in terms of NGA officers development	18	13	34	65	45	2.39	2.01	1.92
Grand Mean						1.91	1.84	1.99

Table 2 shows that the level of performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County is low. The respondents generally disagreed that good performance of NGAO officers was available. The weighted mean of 1.91 shown in the table indicates that performance of NGAO officers' level is low. The standard deviation value of 1.84 further indicates that the responses were not far from each other.

Correlation coefficient Analysis

To establish whether there was a relationship between the variables, a correlation analysis was conducted. The correlation analysis shows the direction, strength, and significance of the relationships among the variables of the study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). A positive correlation indicates that as one variable increases, the other variables will also increase. On the other hand, a negative correlation indicates that as one variable increases the other variable decreases (Sekaran, 2003). The research model that was used in the study was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon \dots \dots$$

Where: -

Y = Employee Performance

X₁ = Self Goal Setting

β₀ = Intercept of Y

β = Coefficient of independent variables

ε = Error term

Results of the correlation are shown in *Table 3* below.

Table 3: Correlation between Study Variables

	Y	X ₁	X ₂	X ₃	X ₄
Y	1				
X ₁	.346***	1			

Note: * p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01

From the results in *Table 3* above, several conclusions can be drawn. First, the correlation coefficients are less than 0.80 in general and therefore there is no issue of multicollinearity between the independent variable. According to Gujarati and Porter (2009), multicollinearity exists in a set of data if the correlation coefficient is above 0.80 beyond which the variables will yield spurious results. Second, it has been indicated that Self Goal Setting is significantly and positively correlated with good performance of NGAO officers in Homa Bay County. This is indicated by the correlation coefficient of 0.346 that is significant (p < 0.01). The inference here is that if Self Goal Setting increases by one unit, there is likely to be a significant increase in the performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County by 0.346 units.

Table 4: Regression Analysis/coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t-stat	Sig.
	Beta	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	0.376	0.286			1.315	.002
self-goal setting	0.391	0.165	0.308		2.370	.038

Dependent Variable: Y

From *Table 4* above, several inferences can be derived. The constant term in the regression equation of 0.376 indicates the level of good performance of NGAO officers that is in existence in administrative area. On the regression between the identified factors and performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County, the first objective was to establish the effect of Self Goal Setting on performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County. *Table 4* shows that Self Goal Setting has a positive significant effect (β = 0.391, p = 0.002) on performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County. This implies that holding all factors constant, a unit increase in Self Goal

Setting leads to a 39.1% significant increase in performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County. This finding is in tandem with findings by Kimungunyi, Memba, & Njeru(2015)who evaluated the effect of self Goal Setting on performance of NGOs workers in Health Sector in Kenya. The study findings are however in contradiction to those of (Chado, 2015)who investigated the effect of self Goal Setting on the management of workers in the public sector in Kenya.

Summary of Findings

Regression results from the analysis based on the first objective show that Self Goal Setting has a positive significant effect on performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County. This implies that holding all factors constant, a unit increase in Self Goal Setting leads to a significant increase in performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County.

Based on findings for the study objective which showed that Self Goal Setting has a positive significant effect on performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County hence implying that holding all factors constant, a unit increase in Self Goal Setting leads to a significant increase in performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County, it is concluded that Self Goal Setting is an important factor in enhancing performance of NGA officers in Homa Bay County in the organizations.

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