

# Influence of Employee Training on Organization Learning in Private Chartered Universities in Kenya

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**Abstract:** Organizational learning (OL) is increasingly being adopted by many organizations in today's fast-paced, highly competitive world to explore ways to design organizations so that they fulfil their functions effectively, encourage people to reach their full potential, and, at the same time, give their organizations the edge it needs to survive thereby keep fulfilling their purpose. This paper sought to determine the influence of employee training on organizational learning. The study reviewed the theories of organizational learning focusing mainly on the human capital theory and Kanter's theory as well the empirical literature relevant to the study. The study adopted a descriptive research design and both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This ensured complete description of the situation, making sure that there is minimum bias in the collection of data. The target population for the study was from 18 private chartered Universities authorized to offer higher education in Kenya, through stratified sampling technique. The sample population comprised 180 respondents, comprising participants in the rank of managerial staff grade 13-15. The study obtained data by use of interview schedules and drop and pick questionnaire, and analysed to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics. The study obtained a response of 87%. The study findings points out that training is a key driver of organizational learning as it helps employees develop themselves with appropriate skills, knowledge and ability. Training presents a good opportunity to increase the knowledge base of the employees and is beneficial to the institution as it steers up organizational learning; thus, this is a worthwhile investment. The study revealed that in private universities in Kenya, employee training is a significant predictor of organizational learning. In view of the findings, the study recommends that that top management in private chartered institutions and other institutions of higher education be required to provide the right organizational environment that allows the development of individuals, groups and teams to learn.

**Keywords:** Human capital, Employee Training, Organizational Learning, Private Universities, Stratified Sampling

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## 1. Introduction

Kenyan Private Universities have progressively become more competitive, and like other organizations in the world, they have found the need to improve performance in order to get by in the present serious climate [1, 2]. To adapt up to the changing authoritative assumptions, diverse human asset the executives rehearses can be integrated to improve their efficiency and success [3-5]. Competition serves as the driving force for a number of strategic change policies, this competitive pressure has motivated many of Kenyan Private Universities to evaluate their human asset the executives practices to get imaginative, receive current practices and

improve execution [6]. Various human asset the board rehearses, named as best practices, which could improve hierarchical execution. These are in particular; specific recruiting, broad preparing, business security, dissemination of data, group working, decrease of status contrasts, execution related and motivation pay.

The primary assignments of human asset the board rehearses are to screen gauge and mediate in development, epitome, dispersal and utilization of information by workers [3]. Related examinations have expressed the every day undertaking of human asset advancement in working of a learning association as: helping representatives in making and utilizing information; building up suitable organizations;

and taking part in twofold circle learning [4].

Organizational learning is conceptualized as the ability to make sense of the environment and develop new understandings which ultimately manifest in improved organizational performance through internal and external actions of the firm [7]. A learning organization is one that is committed to collective learning and within which people, work practices, and policies develop in harmony with its changing environment. Creative thinking is nurtured, collective aspiration is encouraged, and collective learning occurs [8]. Because organizational learning is essentially based on the behavioral and cognitive perspectives, it is expected that an organization chooses to adapt the beliefs and behaviors that offer the best competitive advantage [9]. Learning is the force of business development. Authoritative learning is about association's preparation, expanding abilities, work insight, and formal schooling [10]. Learning association ought to urge all workers to lead in the learning interaction, experimentation, discourse and gaining from one another. Hierarchical learning is a continuous utilized substitute with the term to learning association. Learning associations are a focal component of information the board [11]. Authoritative learning is the age of hierarchical individuals' investment in the collaboration and sharing of information and encounters. Hierarchical learning is the best approach to develop new and imaginative thoughts [12].

In order to endure and get benefits in the learning climate, it is important for the organizations to have the option to improve and acclimatize new information, which permits them to adopt an alternate strategy. Learning and innovativeness become fundamental to ensure the manageability of upper hand. Monitoring this, numerous foundations construct specialized frameworks that permit the recovery and circulation of information while simultaneously the firm focuses on angles like methodology, quality control and stock control. Nonetheless, the motivation behind why most establishments fizzle is because of unreasonable spotlight on specialized issues to the detriment of HR [13]. One aspect of organization learning is continuous learning and it occurs outside the dominion of conventional training and development. Continuous learning is significant for the improvement of human resources assets. The main facets of continuous learning are: workplace learning, deliberate practice, informal learning, incidental learning and personal self-development [14]. Nearly, informal learning takes up to 75% of learning within organizations [15]. It constitutes both cognitive activities and behaviors, oscillating from learning from oneself, by self-reflection; learning from other people like peers, leaders at work places, and role models; and learning from non-interpersonal sources, like reading materials online and on print [17]. Informal learning allows persons to get knowledge and skills on the job, giving potential for more valuable learning experiences than from formal trainings and development [18].

The development of human resource capital requires taking into account ways on how to cataract expertise and skills from the experts and more knowledgeable staff to new

ones and trainees who need it [19]. One guaranteed way of doing this is through sharing of knowledge. Sharing of knowledge can happen directly through person-to-person or through interactions aided by technology with professionals. It can also happen indirectly through recording, organizing, and apprehending knowledge for future use by other people [20]. Sharing of knowledge among employees and across teams enables organizations to use existing knowledge-based resources [21]. Sharing of knowledge can influence an organization's competitive advantage in many ways, through reduction cost, fast completion of products development, improvement of innovation capabilities, expanded deals development and income acquire from new items and administrations [22].

Current literature on organizational learning is tilting towards continuous improvement [23]. Organizational learning focuses on continuous processes rather than a single product [24]. Organizational learning (OL) occurs when individuals consistently grow their ability to make the outcomes they really want; when new and far reaching examples of reasoning are sustained; when aggregate desire is liberated and where individuals ceaselessly learn how to learn together [25].

Today, OL is critical because of the current acceleration of technological changes, explosion of available market data and importance of anticipatory action [26]. In essence, a firm's capacity to learn, acquire and use of learning resources is difficult to replicate due to the complexity, cost and time required [27]. OL also facilitates behavioral change that leads to improved performance and long-term competitive advantage arising from internal resources and capabilities that cannot easily be replicated [28].

#### *Problem statement*

Kenyan Private Universities have faced challenges in the recent decades such as reduction of employment rate of university graduates, deficit in terms of quality staff, insufficient research, labor turnover followed by increasing competition and market-orientation activities among others [29]. Effectively, Kenyan Private Universities must formulate strategies to attract larger student enrolments; collaborate with the private sector and development partners so as to be self-sufficient [30]. Therefore there is need to explore ways of reversing and addressing the above challenges through sound responses, to meet the best HRM practices for private universities to remain competitive [31]. The objective of this study was therefore to examine the influence of employee training on association learning in Private Chartered Universities in Kenya.

## **2. Writing Review**

In contemplating the impacts of human asset the board rehearses on authoritative learning in private contracted colleges in Kenya, Human Capital hypothesis was viewed as suitable as it gives the hypothetical foundation to this examination [32]. The hypothesis expresses that the information and ability a worker has delivers some supply of

gainful capital. This methodology additionally views at representatives as resource equipped for increasing the value of their organizations as well as much of the time ensuring its very endurance in a serious climate and not as a cost thing on their financial statements [33]. People generate, retain and apply knowledge and skill that generate intellectual resource [34]. The person's knowledge and skill is then improved through interactions between them, that is, social resource capital which creates institutionalized knowledge that firms have. This theory therefore, looks at employee as assets and that firms which invest in employee enhance their performance that ultimately produces positive results to the firm. The current universe of work esteems the significance of human asset capital and focuses authoritative climate on it to maintain the scholarly capital. Hence firms need to move from HR to the idea of human resources. The redesigning of human resources needs considering ways on the best way to waterfall aptitude and abilities from the specialists and more educated staff to new ones and students who need it [35]. Human resources is viewed as the human factor in the organizations, the mix of insight, abilities and mastery that gives the firm its obvious character [36]. The human parts of the firm are the ones fit for picking up, changing, advancing and giving the imaginative power that when accurately spurred guarantees long haul endurance of the firm. Human resources sets up the scholarly capital (which are the unique and specific information and abilities that individuals have), social capital (which is the interpersonal organizations among individuals that empower associations interface, insert and influence its different information) and the authoritative capital (which is the refined information created by an association and kept in manuals and data sets). A lot of associations esteem is controlled by its workers [37]. It is without a doubt the information, abilities and capacities of people that make esteem, which is the reason the spotlight must be on methods for drawing in, holding, creating and keeping up the human resources they address. Human resources hypothesis predicts that if representatives are put on understanding of preparing and advancement, acknowledgment, prize, inclusion and permitting worker to take an interest as a type of good worker connection, quality execution evaluation, the mien to work and the association will improve and subsequently improve profitability and upgrade worker responsibility and prompt hierarchical learning [48]. In any case, this hypothesis has been censured in light of the troubles related in "estimating key ideas, including future pay and focal thought of human resources itself".

For any association to acquire a serious advantage, it requires dedicated and engaged employees with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and capabilities. Linking Human capital theory to the organizational learning in Private Chartered Universities in Kenya, the study notes that investment in training of staff in acquiring and improving knowledge, skills and abilities are needed to improve organizational learning.

Related research have noted that the work environment

structures and perceived staff access to power and opportunity structures is linked to workers' attitudes and behaviors in an organization [38, 39]. Kanter believed that staff show attitudes relative to alleged availability of power and opportunities. According to Kanter, there are four work empowerment configurations: access to information, opportunity, resources and support. Access to information refers to possessing formal and informal knowledge that is essential to be effective in the workplace. Access to resources refers to one's ability to acquire the financial means, materials, time, and supplies required to do the work. Access to opportunity is the availability of a chance for growth and movement within the organization as well as the opportunity to enhance knowledge and skills [47]. Access to support involves receiving feedback and guidance from subordinates, peers, and superiors. Defining power as "the ability of individuals to get things done", Kanter clinched that power in organizations was derived from structural conditions in the work environment, not from an individual's personal characteristics or socialization effects. Consequently she highlights that the obligation of management should be creating conditions for work effectiveness by guaranteeing employees have access to the information, support, and resources necessary to undertake work and that they are provided with ongoing opportunities for development. Employees who believe their work environment provide access to these factors is empowered [40]. The emphasis of Kanter's theory is on the employees' perception of the actual conditions in the work environment, and not on how they understand this information psychologically. This 'structural' empowerment has been found to predict job satisfaction and organizational commitment [41, 42]. Access to opportunities to learn and grow in the job is particularly significant for job satisfaction [43]. In a study of empowerment effect on nurses it was observed that the more nurses perceive they have access to workplace empowerment structures, the more satisfied they are with their work, and report higher performance [44]. Hence, holding all other variables constant, structural empowerment is the power to create and sustain a work environment by providing the ability to access and mobilize opportunities, information, support, and resources from one's position in the organization [45].

Based on this evidence fronted by the Kater's theory on structural training and organization commitment, the study suggests that when employees are able to access the constructs of structural development within their organizations: access to opportunity, support, resources and information they will be committed to their roles within their organizations. Kanter alleged that if employees within an organization perceive opportunities for success is present, the employees' attitude, job satisfaction, and overall organizational commitment will be improved, which will eventually enhance organization learning. In order for an employee to perceive that opportunity exists, the employee must be in a position that allows access to information, resources and support [46].

### 3. Methodology

The study adopted positivism also known empiricism as the research philosophy to achieve its objectives. The choice is based on the fact that in order to empirically establish the relationships between the variables, hypotheses will be formulated and tested and findings will be generalized. This philosophy has been used by other researchers [46]. This allowed use of survey approach whose benefits are easier administration of research instruments to a large and geographically spread population and greater coverage of the population which may provide greater validity through a larger and more representative sample.

Positivism postulates that the researcher is independent of what is being observed. As such the choice of the study and how it was handled was determined by objective measures associated with quantitative data. The researcher formulated hypotheses and operational definition about the characteristics of phenomena being observed based on existing theory, testing hypotheses based on statistical methods leading to approval or rejection of hypotheses [48]. Phenomenology research involves gathering large amounts of rich information based on belief in the value of understanding the experiences and situations of a relatively small number of subjects [49]. The strength of phenomenology research is that it enables researchers to gain a depth of understanding of the cases and situation studied [49].

A pilot test was carried out with eighteen conveniently selected respondents from two private universities that did not form part of the sample, nine from each private university. Of the nine respondents two senior officers were also taken through interview to test the interview schedule. The senior officers were requested to analyze the interview schedule and propose any amendments in the structuring of the questions. The private universities that were used were, the Management University of Africa and Zetech University. The researcher used eighteen respondents for pilot testing which meets the threshold of 10% of the sample size as recommended [16].

Pilot testing was therefore carried out to assess the face and content validity and reliability of the research instruments (questionnaire and interview schedule) being used in the study. The pilot testing also helped to ascertain the average time taken by the respondents to complete the questionnaires. Several other issues with regard to instruments were addressed such as whether; the instruments adequately generated the required information, the instruments contained proper wording of questions the items were logically arranged to facilitate the required response, whether there were any redundancies and repetitions that called for elimination of some questions; the data collected was quantifiable, analyzable and useful for further analysis. A regression model was then used to test the hypothesis of the study.

### 4. Results and Discussions

The results in Table 1, showed that on the question of whether management conducts comprehensive induction for new employees 39.1 percent of the respondents disagreed as indicated by a mean of 2.36 and the standard deviation was 1.270. A total of 42.3 percent of the respondents were in agreement that management has mentorship programs as indicated by a mean of 3.97 and the standard deviation was 1.037. Accordingly a total of 48.7% of the respondents agreed that Management highly emphasizes development of human resource and encourages team learning as indicated by a mean of 3.92 and the standard deviation was 1.101. On the statement that the institution offers study leave with pay for the 45.5% of the respondents strongly agreed. The mean was 4.15 and the standard deviation was 1.108; it was also observed that 44.2% of the respondents were in agreement on the statement that conferences and seminars were organized regularly by the institution to enhance job delivery as indicated by a mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 1.1113.

A total of 67.3 percent of the respondents agreed on the statement that management encourages on the job trainings for continuous learning, with a mean of 3.90 and standard deviation of 0.965. From the study findings a total of 42.3% of the respondents agreed that their supervisors delegate some of their responsibilities to them at times as indicated by a mean of 3.95 and standard deviation of 1.228. On the statement that I have training opportunities to learn and develop on my job, 38.5 percent of the respondents were in agreement with a mean of 3.97 and the standard deviation was 1.083. Overall from the measurements below in Table 1, we can conclude that indicators used to operationalize the variables had an approximate mean of 3.98875. This meant that most respondents agreed.

The study sought to establish the magnitude and direction of the effect of employee training using the model  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 ET + \varepsilon$ . The regression results were as shown in Table 2.

The regression results in Table 2 show that the effect of employee training on organizational learning was significant ( $F(4,151)=115.911$ ,  $p=0.000<0.05$ ). With  $R=0.869$  and  $R^2=0.754$ , the model implies that about 86.9% of organizational learning were contributed by employee training while a variation of 75.4% in organizational learning were brought about by employee training.

The F test was significant with a p value=0.000 which was less than the standard p value of 0.05 and this meant that the model was significant. From ANOVA, since p value=0.000 and was lower than  $p=0.05$  ( $p\text{ value}=0.00<0.05$ ), then the contribution of employee training on organizational learning was significant. The equation that was fitted for the model was

$$OLN = 0.258 + 0.119 ET$$

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics for influence of Employee Training on Organizational Learning.

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	SD
Management conducts comprehensive induction for new employees	48 (30.8)	55 (35.3)	10 (6.4)	35 (22.4)	8 (5.1)	2.36	1.270
Management have mentorship programs	4 (2.6)	15 (9.6)	17 (10.9)	66 (42.3)	54 (34.6)	3.97	1.037
Management highly emphasizes development human resource and encourages team learning	8 (5.1)	15 (9.6)	8 (5.1)	76 (48.7)	49 (31.4)	3.92	1.101
The institution offers study leave with pay for the employees	12 (7.7)	2 (1.3)	7 (4.5)	64 (41.0)	71 (45.5)	4.15	1.108
Conferences and Seminars are organized regularly by my institution to enhance job delivery	8 (5.1)	14 (9.0)	13 (8.3)	69 (44.2)	52 (33.3)	3.92	1.113
Management encourages on the job trainings for continuous learning	7 (4.5)	13 (8.3)	0 (0)	105 (67.3)	31 (19.9)	3.90	0.965
My supervisors delegate some of their responsibilities to me at times	15 (9.6)	8 (5.1)	7 (4.5)	66 (42.3)	60 (38.5)	3.95	1.228
I have training opportunities to learn and develop on my job	4 (2.6)	17 (10.9)	18 (11.5)	57 (36.5)	60 (38.5)	3.97	1.083
Overall						3.768	0.098

**Table 2.** Regression Results of employee training on Organizational learning.

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.869 <sup>a</sup>	.754	.748	.29974	

  

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	41.655	4	10.414	115.911
	Residual	13.566	151	.090	
	Total	55.222	155		

  

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	.258	.161		1.610
	Employee training	.119	.049	.137	2.429

## 5. Conclusions

The study affirmed that training policies, recognitions, rewards, employee participation and involvement were apparent as means of staff development private chartered universities in Kenya. The study established that employees training enhances job commitment. It was also established that employees are keen on sharing knowledge when they get empowered. However, the respondents disagreed that when employee empowerment takes place, it leads employees in becoming adaptive to present circumstances and more disposed towards innovative behavior. It was also established that staff training and development gives employees the opportunity to apply their understanding and skills effectively thus promoting organization learning. The respondents were of the view that when staff development takes place, employees are encouraged to learn new skills that eventually increases job efficiency and performance. According to the study when staff development gives employees optimism about their job and sharing of ideas is enhanced which leads to organizational learning.

Work environment characterized by trust was eminent to be very significant by majority of the respondents. Most of the respondents in the qualitative interviews showed the importance of being responsible and with autonomy on their duties and roles and noted it to be vital in enhancing creativity. Lack of responsibility for the staff was noted to be

a threat for limiting creativity and innovations. According to responses in the qualitative interviews in human resource, professionals orate that awareness of the need for staff to be responsible is important. Due to these findings, the principle of delegation of responsibilities rather than work tasks was noted to be a key issue in leadership development programmes. Consequently, the study found out that there is positive and significant relationship between employee training and organization learning in private chartered universities in Kenya.

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