



Strategic Management Practices and Employee Performance in Non-Governmental Organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The growth and development of an organization are contingent upon the effective management of its human resources. However, the adoption of effective human resource management practices in many local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the development sector have received insufficient attention. This research aims to explore the impact of strategic management practices on employee performance within non-governmental organizations located in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The specific objectives of this study are to assess the influence of communication, objective setting, strategic leadership, and training on employee performance in non-governmental organizations operating in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study was guided by expectancy theory, goal setting theory, contingency theory, and human capital theory. A descriptive research design was employed. The population was five prominent NGOs in Nairobi City County, namely Oxfam International, World Vision, USAID, Mercy Corps, and Amnesty International. The study targeted 742 respondents. Stratified sampling method was used and selection of respondents done using simple random sampling method. The sample size was 260 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires. Questionnaires were piloted to 26 respondents. Validity was ensured using content validity. In addition, Cronbach's alpha test was used to test reliability. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistical and inferential statistics. The results were presented using tables and figures. The study found that communication, objective setting, strategic leadership and training had a positive significant influence on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study concludes that communication in the workplace is important because it boosts employee morale, engagement, productivity, and satisfaction. Training is important because it represents a good opportunity for employees to grow their knowledge base and improve their job skills to become more effective in the workplace. The study recommends that non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should focus on the implementation of effective communication channels and tools by including the use of technology such as intranet platforms, project management software, and instant messaging systems. The non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should ensure that goals are clearly defined, quantifiable, realistic, aligned with the overall objectives of the organization, and have a specific deadline for completion. The non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should focus on building the skills and capabilities of current and future leaders through training in areas such as communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution, as well as opportunities for leaders to receive feedback and coaching on their performance. Create a culture of transparency and open communication within the organization.

Key Words: *Strategic Management Practices, Employee Performance, Non-Governmental Organization*



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Study Background

Human resources, as one of a firm's assets, play a crucial task in realizing the company's objectives. In the development of human resources, an employee's performance within a firm is crucial for both their personal success and the company's prosperity (McAfee & Champagne, 2019). Maley, Dabic, and Moeller (2021) define employee performance as the level of success achieved by an individual within a specific time frame in comparison to various benchmarks such as work standards, targets, or mutually agreed-upon criteria. Therefore, goal attainment is a pivotal aspect of staff performance. In the contemporary era of globalization and technology, companies are driven to outperform one another by expanding their market share, customer base, and sales. The rapid changes brought about by globalization, technological advancements, and other factors have intensified competition across various sectors of the economy (Ismajli, Zekiri, Qosja & Krasniqi, 2018). Thus, many firms are compelled by the market to set performance-related goals. Achieving these organizational goals is contingent upon the performance of employees, making it a key driver of organizational effectiveness, which can be achieved through sound business strategies.

Bordum (2018) state that motivated employees are those who have predefined objectives to attain, which in turn, fosters positive evaluations of their competence. Brown, Hyatt, and Benson (2020) assert that strategic management involves defining organizational goals, developing plans and policies to achieve those goals, allocating resources, and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategy. Therefore, an organization's management strategy significantly impacts employee performance. Strategic management entails directing employee activities toward achieving specific objectives and implementing plans (Guruwo, Chiguvi, Guruwo & Bag, 2017). Genc (2019) underscores the importance of a shared sense of strategy, as it positions an organization to face an unpredictable future successfully. Effective managers utilize strategy to focus efforts on top priorities, provide a consistent decision-making framework, and infuse the organization with a renewed sense of purpose. Therefore, embracing strategic management practices within an organization can enhance employee performance and overall organizational effectiveness.

Andrews, Boyne, Law, and Walker (2019) assert that market-driven organizations set their performance goals with employees being the key to realizing these objectives. Nienaber (2022) defines performance management as a process involving goal setting and achievement at the employee level while addressing barriers to goal attainment. Moreover, the application of strategic management methods by organizations yields several benefits and features that support goals and objectives achievement, enhancing the overall performance of the organization. Subramaniam, Mohd, Shamsudin, and Ibrahim (2019) note the rapid growth of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Malaysia but highlight challenges such as talent scarcity, service quality issues, and sector competition. According to Ibrahim, Hashim, and Ariff (2020), Malaysian NGOs must

prioritize enhancing employee performance to manage their human capital effectively and address talent imbalances. Employees represent invaluable assets, and their productivity is essential for an organization to meet its strategic goals, achievable through effective policies addressing key performance determinants.

Adeleke (2018) observes that many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Nigeria tend to underestimate the strategic management elements' role in improving staff performance, despite their significance in the private sector. Similarly, Daniels (2021) points out the persistent concern of declining productivity in Nigeria and the quest for solutions. To address this issue, organizations should implement robust strategic management practices to enhance employee performance. Hendry and Pettigrew (2018) emphasize that the primary objective of strategic management is to build strategic ability to ensure the firm possesses committed, skilled, and highly motivated employees for sustained organizational performance. Boxall and Purcell (2019) highlight the contemporary imperative for companies to make their personnel adaptable to new market demands through strategically focused human resources management, ensuring a unified and cohesive approach for success in a rapidly evolving market.

This encompasses the results and achievements within a work context, directly influencing an organization's financial and non-financial outcomes, as highlighted by Akinbowale, Lourens, and Jinabhai (2017). According to Huang, Lee, Chiu, and Yen (2019), the workforce's performance serves as the driving force behind a business survival. Effective employees significantly contribute to firm efficiency and success, ultimately shaping the overall productivity of its processes. Employee performance will be assessed using target attainment, effectiveness, and creativity. Gusnadi and Hermawan (2019) stress the pivotal role of managers in setting clear, achievable goals for employees. This practice not only guides improvements in employee performance but also enhances the company's reputation as an employer of choice. Tupti and Arif (2020) emphasize the importance of target achievement in cultivating employee motivation and providing measurable milestones for an organization's growth strategy.

As asserted by Mahoney and McGahan (2017), strategic management practices serve as the cornerstone of an organization's decision-making. They provide a sense of direction by formulating plans and policies aimed at attaining objectives and then allocating resources for plan execution. The ultimate aim of strategic management is to bestow organizations with a competitive advantage. As per Aboramadan and Borgonovi (2020), strategic management within an organization ensures the establishment of objectives, the identification of critical issues, the efficient allocation of time and resources, the unification of operations, the internal environment's alignment with objectives, the agreement on outcomes and results, and the organization's adaptability to external changes. This study will assess strategic management practices through indicators such as communication, objective setting, strategic leadership, and training. In the contemporary organizational landscape, communication has emerged as the linchpin for the smooth functioning of management and the successful achievement of goals, as pointed out by Peng and Litteljohn (2017). Stroh (2019) notes that the effectiveness of activities involving harmony, consensus, and coordination within the organization can be achieved by establishing a robust communication system. Consequently, effective communication is pivotal for enhancing team collaboration and cooperation, ultimately driving superior results for individuals, teams, and organizations.



NGOs exhibit a wide range of diversities, encompassing their structures, nationalities, orientations, activities, and achievements. Their core mission revolves around providing humanitarian aid, fostering economic growth, and promoting sustainable development. Some NGOs are particularly active in responding to emergency situations during disasters. They undertake targeted projects or advocate for specific causes, all while raising awareness on the global geopolitical stage, even though they lack executive powers. They are not directly accountable to the general public and maintain a strong focus on their specific endeavors. Many NGOs engage directly with affected communities, addressing their most pressing needs. These initiatives encompass a broad spectrum, including literacy programs, healthcare services, AIDS prevention, agricultural expansion, microcredit programs, immunization, vocational training, and initiatives to empower women (Nzau, 2019).

Batti (2019) underscores the instrumental role of NGOs in promoting economic growth, environmental conservation, and improving the health and education of the Kenyan population. Extensive research in the sector has highlighted several dilemmas and common issues experienced by NGOs. One prominent concern is the decision-making process. Often, conflicts arise in the early stages of strategic planning, as NGO staff expect to be equal partners in decision-making, considering their role as the implementers of chosen strategies. This perceived lack of inclusion in strategic planning can lead to tensions with senior management, particularly the organization's founder, who typically serves as the visionary leader in many NGOs. According to Odhiambo (2020), governance issues within NGOs and the dynamics between board members and staff represent another prevalent challenge. These problems often stem from the board's reluctance or inability to fulfill its governing responsibilities, with board members frequently lacking the expertise or time to effectively carry out these duties.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Organizations recruit staff from various cultures, countries, with different work styles and values. This diversity poses a range of challenges, including demographic shifts in the workforce due to globalization and competition from international rivals, all of which necessitate strategic management (Kreitz, 2015). Abok (2019) notes that Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Kenya grapple with internal management issues, such as limited resources, strategy implementation, governance, leadership, staffing and planning. To enhance their performance, Kenyan NGOs must comprehend their workforce's expectations. International non-governmental organizations heavily depend on their staff to drive their performance. Performance management enhances organizational success by improving individual and team contributions (Omolo & Mose, 2019). Nevertheless, as per the National Council of NGOs Report (2021), challenges such as low employee retention have impeded the effectiveness of NGOs. Nairobi County, for example, reported a retention rate as low as 26% in many of its NGOs, as employees often opt for formal engagement in other organizations, diminishing the NGOs' service delivery capabilities.

Batti (2019) emphasizes that the effectiveness of local NGOs hinges on professional and productive people management. Employees who understand the organization's future and their own role within it tend to be more committed and productive. Luthans (2020) highlights that many NGOs fail to recognize the critical importance of effective human resource management for their well-being and, consequently, invest insufficient time and resources in developing necessary HR competencies. The sustainable development of an organization relies on effective human resource management practices, which can transform staff into a motivated and productive workforce



capable of improving service delivery. Manduli (2019) underscores the diminishing effectiveness of the NGO sector in Kenya due to poor employee retention. Wanjala (2020) corroborates this by revealing that long-term employment in NGOs is uncommon. The National Council of NGOs Report (2020) echoes these concerns, indicating that low employee retention rates, particularly in Nairobi County, hinder NGO operations and effectiveness in service delivery. A study by Maina (2019) explored the influence of strategic management practices on Kenyan NGOs performance, finding statistically significant relationship between financial stability, strategic staffing, governance, strategic planning and NGO performance. This study will focus on performance between 2017 and 2021.

Mohamed and Mohamud (2021) investigated how strategic management practices affect organizational performance in NGOs in Mogadishu, Somalia, revealing that strategy formulation, implementation, and evaluation positively affect performance in selected NGOs in Mogadishu. However, these findings may not be directly applicable to the Kenyan context. Odhiambo and Njuguna (2021) explored how the performance of health NGOs in Nairobi City County are influenced by strategic management practices, strategic planning, strategy evaluation, monitoring, and the performance of health NGOs correlated positively and significantly. Nevertheless, the measures of strategic management practice in their study differ from the focus of the current study. Thus, this study aimed at investigating the influence of strategic management practices on employee performance in NGOs in Nairobi City County.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To investigate the influence of strategic management practices on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Expectancy Theory

The foundation of this study lies in Expectancy theory, as originally postulated by Vroom in 1964. In other words, people decide to engage in particular behaviors based on their expectations regarding the likelihood of achieving specific outcomes and the attractiveness of those outcomes. This theory has found enduring relevance in today's workplaces, providing insights into employee motivation and influencing organizational practices, as confirmed by recent studies and real-world applications. Expectancy is often operationalized as the perception that putting in hard work will result in the successful completion of a task. Numerous studies conducted in recent years reinforce the relevance of this aspect of the theory. For example, Khilji and Wang (2021) examined the connection between expectancy and job performance in a sample of IT professionals. The findings indicated that a strong expectancy-performance linkage existed, suggesting that when employees believed their efforts would lead to successful task completion, they were more likely to perform at a higher level.

Furthermore, valence, or the desirability of outcomes, is a crucial element in Expectancy Theory. It highlights the fact that individuals are more motivated when they anticipate achieving outcomes they value. Recent research supports this aspect of the theory as well. For instance, a study by Anderson, Wynne, and Waters (2021) explored how valence and employee satisfaction were connected in the context of workplace wellness programs. The findings revealed that employees



who highly valued the wellness program offerings reported higher satisfaction with their jobs, underscoring the role of valence in influencing motivation and job-related outcomes. Recent research also delves into the interplay of these three components of Expectancy Theory. A study by Fernandez, Castro, and Berrocal (2019) examined the combined impact of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence on employee motivation in the hospitality sector. The research reported that when all three components were positively aligned, employees exhibited higher motivation and performance. This study highlights the contemporary relevance of understanding the intricate interactions among these factors and their profound effects on motivation in diverse work settings.

This theory is pertinent to this study as it asserts that work effort hinges on a combination of an individual's effort-to-performance expectancy, performance-to-outcome expectancy, and the value attributed to those outcomes. Enhancing employee ability and confidence in performing their jobs increases the expectancy-to-performance relationship. Additionally, by accurately measuring performance, rewarding high performers, and demonstrating that rewards are linked to performance, the performance-to-expectancy connection is strengthened. In essence, a well-empowered employee will be motivated, fostering loyalty towards achieving organizational objectives.

2.1.2 Goal Setting Theory

The theory developed by Locke and Latham in 1984, remains highly relevant in contemporary workplaces due to its enduring effectiveness in enhancing individual and organizational performance. Smith and Anderson (2019) in the context of sales teams demonstrated that setting challenging sales targets led to a significant increase in sales revenue. Such findings resonate with Locke and Latham's core premise that specific, measurable, and challenging goals motivate individuals to exert effort and develop strategies to achieve these objectives. Moreover, Goal Setting Theory has evolved to incorporate more nuanced insights, addressing the limitations of earlier formulations. One significant development is the recognition of the importance of goal commitment and self-efficacy in goal-setting processes. Bandura's (1997) concept of self-efficacy, believing in one self's ability to achieve a particular goal, has been integrated into the theory, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how goals impact behavior. Modern research, as exemplified by the work of Hagen et al. (2021), emphasizes that high self-efficacy levels in conjunction with challenging goals lead to enhanced performance and persistence, thereby contributing to the contemporary relevance of Goal Setting Theory.

In contemporary organizations, Goal Setting Theory plays a crucial role in performance management and employee motivation. The practice of setting Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goals aligns with Goal Setting Theory's principles. Moreover, the frequent performance appraisal and feedback sessions now incorporated in many organizations enable employees to set and revise their goals regularly, adapting to changing circumstances and priorities. Research by Harrison et al. (2020) highlights how goal setting has become a cornerstone of performance management practices in diverse sectors, contributing to employees' self-regulation and motivation. The digital era has also facilitated the integration of technology into goal setting and monitoring processes. Modern goal management tools and software platforms enable individuals and organizations to set, track, and evaluate their goals efficiently. These tools offer real-time updates and analytics, allowing for dynamic adjustments as needed. Research by Chen and Wang (2021) emphasizes the role of technology in aligning



personal and organizational goals and ensuring goal visibility, thus increasing goal commitment and achievement.

Goal theory forms the foundation for the emphasis on setting and agreeing on objectives in performance management, allowing performance measurement and management. Goals instruct individuals to attain specific performance levels, enabling them to direct and evaluate their actions. Performance feedback, in turn, enables individuals to monitor their progress in relation to their goals, facilitating adjustments in effort, direction, and task strategies when necessary. Goal theory aligns with the objectives, feedback, and review components of performance management.

2.1.3 Contingency Theory

Burns and Stulker (1961) introduced Contingency theory, highlighting the imperative need to scrutinize the impact of contingencies and environmental factors on organizational behavior. This theory posits that organizations must attain a balance between integration and differentiation, contingent upon the prevailing level of environmental uncertainty (Lawrence & Lorsh, 2009; Okeyo, 2013). The crux of contingency theory lies in the idea that optimal practices are situation-dependent, enabling a systematic analysis of circumstances to identify the variables shaping strategic decisions. In essence, it suggests that aligning organizational structure with contingencies is the pathway to achieving organizational effectiveness. Contingency theory, also known as the situational theory, posits that in management, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it asserts that the most effective management style, structure, or decision-making process depends on the specific context or situation in which an organization operates. The theory emerged in the late 1960s to react to earlier theories on management that presented a more prescriptive and universal approach. In the years since its inception, Contingency Theory has continued gaining relevance in the management field as organizations face increasingly dynamic and uncertain environments.

Recent research underscores the enduring relevance of Contingency Theory. A study by Weber and Tarba (2017) highlights the benefits of matching leadership styles with the organizational context. The authors found that leaders who adapted their styles to fit the contingency factors of a particular situation were more effective. This aligns with the core principle of Contingency Theory, emphasizing the need for leaders to adjust their approaches based on the specific circumstances they face. This adaptability is particularly crucial in the rapidly evolving business landscape, where a one-size-fits-all leadership approach is often inadequate. Furthermore, Contingency Theory's relevance is evident in the context of organizational structure. Recent studies by organizations like McKinsey & Company have examined the relationship between organizational structure and performance. Their research emphasizes the need for organizations to consider the external environment and strategy when designing their structure. This is a clear reflection of the contingency perspective, as it highlights that the choice of organizational structure must be aligned with company goals and the specific challenges presented by its external environment.

In this study context, contingency theory underscores the pivotal role of effective leadership in offering guidance and knowledge sharing to employees. Effective leaders play a crucial part in enhancing employee performance and expertise during project implementation, offering crucial support to team members. The introduction of well-defined leadership standards fosters core values and enhances the maturity of individuals in their roles, ultimately contributing to more effective and efficient strategy implementation for improved organizational performance.

2.1.4 Human Capital Theory

This theory, rooted in macroeconomic development theory as articulated by Schultz in 1993, is grounded in the belief that an individual's attributes are intrinsically linked to their productivity. Productive individuals are considered valuable assets that enhance overall company efficiency. Singh, Terjesen, and Vinnicombe (2008) underscore the distinct human assets possessed by males and females, including knowledge, abilities, and experiences. This diversity, stemming from varying educational and work-related backgrounds, as well as leadership and risk-taking activities, can be leveraged to drive competitive advantages through enhanced team performance.

One of the central tenets of this Theory is the idea that education and training contribute to the accumulation of human capital, ultimately resulting in improved productivity and earnings. This notion aligns with the modern economic landscape where knowledge-based industries have become increasingly dominant. The rapid technological advancements and the shift towards an information-driven economy have amplified the benefit of education and skill development. In this context, formal education systems, vocational training programs, and continuous learning initiatives are key instruments for enhancing human capital. Recent studies have emphasized the positive relationship between education and earnings, underscoring the theory's continued relevance (Oreopoulos & Petronijevic, 2013).

The concept of human capital externalities is also pertinent in the current globalized economy. The Theory suggests that the human capital accumulation within a specific region or industry can benefit not only individuals but also the entire community. This notion is evident in the emergence of technology clusters and innovation hubs, where a concentration of skilled individuals fosters knowledge spillovers and innovation. Recent studies have confirmed the positive connection between economic growth and regional human capital, emphasizing the relevance of investing in education and training to promote economic development at local and national levels (Moretti, 2013).

2.2 Empirical Review

In Eritrea, Weldeghebriel's (2020) investigation, the focus was on how organizational communication impacts employees job performance in large manufacturing companies. The research employed a mixed-method approach, targeting employees of these companies. For the quantitative aspect, 267 employees were selected through a proportional stratified random sampling, and questionnaires obtained data. Quantitative data underwent analysis by descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The results emphasized a statistically notable connection between employee performance and communication patterns. However, it's crucial to note that this study was limited to specific large manufacturing firms in Eritrea, creating a gap in its broader applicability.

In Kalogiannidis' (2020) study, the primary objective was to assess how effective business communication influences employee performance within Pakistan's manufacturing sector. Communication was categorized into horizontal, downward, and upward forms, and its impact on employee performance was measured using data from 110 participants working in various Greek banking institutions. The research affirmed that effective communication plays a crucial role in enhancing employee performance. Nevertheless, it's important to recognize that this study focused specifically on the manufacturing industry in Pakistan, introducing a contextual limitation.

Oronje's (2019) research examined the influence of organizational communication on staff performance, focusing on Kemri-Wellcome Trust Research Programme in Kenya. The study targeted 704 management and staff members of the organization. Data obtained through self-administered questionnaire, and various descriptive and regression statistics used. Results revealed that communication channels and feedback significantly predict worker performance. Nonetheless, it's essential to recognize that this investigation was focused on the context of Kemri-Wellcome Trust Research Programme in Kenya, revealing a contextual gap.

In the telecommunication industry, Kenya, Syallow (2019) explored organizational communication role in staff job satisfaction. Using a descriptive research design, qualitative data was collected from 18 top-level management employees using purposive sampling, while quantitative data was evaluated through descriptive and inferential statistics. It was reported that a majority are familiar with the concept of organizational communication. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that the research was specific to the telecommunication industry in Kenya, presenting a contextual gap.

Antony's study (2018) studied how goal-setting impact employee performance in Japanese manufacturing companies. It encompassed all 95 Japanese manufacturing companies and collected primary data through self-administered questionnaires. The analysis involved descriptive and multiple regression analyses, revealing a notable positive correlation between goal-setting and employee performance. But, the research's contextual focus on the manufacturing industry leaves a contextual gap.

In their research, Almutairi and Arabiat (2021) focused on impact of goal-setting on staff performance within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kuwait. 212 ministry employees were involved, and data gathered through questionnaires. Data evaluation incorporated descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation, ANOVA, and multiple regression. The results indicated a direct positive impact of goal-setting on staff performance, but the research was

Kuranchie-Mensah and Amponsah-Tawiah's study (2016) studied goal-setting influence on work performance, comparing mining companies in Ghana. Data was collected from four large-scale gold mining companies to assess their policies, structures, and the effectiveness of goal-setting strategies. The research highlighted the significant influence of setting objectives on staff performance. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that this research relied on an exploratory research design, introducing a methodological gap.

In Kitale, Mukonambi's study (2016) examined how employee performance at the Kenya Seed Company was influenced by participative goal-setting. Employing a descriptive survey technique, the research targeted 650 workers, utilizing stratified and simple random sampling techniques for selection. Data collection involved interview schedules for top management and questionnaires for employees. The findings indicated that employee involvement in setting goals, joint and team goals improved performance. Nonetheless, it's important to recognize that this research was confined to the Kenya Seed Company in Kitale, unveiling a contextual gap.

Odendo's study (2018) examined the impact of goal-setting on worker performance, focusing on Capital Colours Creative Design Limited. The research adopted a descriptive research design and targeted 100 employees at the organization. Data collection involved a structured questionnaire, and data analysis included frequencies, percentages, correlations, regression, and ANOVA. The findings indicated a notable linkage between goal-setting and employee performance. However,

it's essential to recognize that this study was confined to the context of Capital Colours Creative Design Limited, presenting a contextual gap.

Alvi, Haider, and Akram's (2021) research investigated the strategic leadership role in conjunction with employee engagement mediating effect among middle-level staff of the Higher Education Commission in South Africa. Data was collected from 167 respondents using a simple random sampling technique, and the findings, based on descriptive statistics, indicated a significant positive impact of strategic leadership on employee performance. Nevertheless, the study's contextual focus on the Higher Education Commission in South Africa results in a contextual gap.

In the realm of employee training and its impact on job performance, Bhatti, Soomro, and Shah (2021) delved into the predictive power of training design within Pakistan's health sector. They conducted a cross-sectional study, randomly selecting trained health nurses in Pakistan as respondents. Data collection involved survey questionnaires, with 306 completed questionnaires forming the sample. The research outcomes revealed significant and positive effects of training content and learning style on performance. Nevertheless, this study was specific to the health sector in Pakistan, creating a contextual gap.

Githinji (2020) examined the effects of training on employee performance within the manufacturing sector in Kenya. The research targeted 185 respondents, including top management staff, supervisors, and operational staff, and collected data through questionnaires. Data analysis involved descriptive analysis and inferential statistics, revealing the notable impact of on-the-job training on staff performance within the manufacturing industry. Nevertheless, the study focused on Eagle Vet Kenya Limited, leading to a contextual gap.

3.0 Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was employed. This design, as explained by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), involves observing and describing statistical methods to understand the behavior of cases without any interference. This design was valuable for the study, as it enables the gathering of quantitative and qualitative data from a sizable sample. It ensures data is presented in alignment with respondents' perspectives without alteration. In this case this study targeted 5 NGOs in Nairobi City County that have been in operation for more than 20 years. These include; Oxfam International, World Vision, USAID, Mercy Corps and Amnesty International. The total number of the participants will be 742 who included employees in the selected NGOs. Stratified sampling method grouped participants into the respective organizations in order to ensure their equal representativeness. Yamane (1967) formula of determining sample was used at 5 percent error level giving a sample size of 260.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} = \frac{742}{1 + 742(0.05)^2}$$

this gave a determination of the sample size using a factor of 0.3504(35.04%) which is further is described per nongovernmental organization. A structured questionnaire was deployed to obtain data. As described by Orodho (2005), questionnaires serve as tools to gather data and assess the effectiveness of specific viewpoints. This choice was made because respondents are familiar with questionnaire items, enabling them to interpret the content individually and provide meaningful responses. The questionnaires were structured into sections corresponding to specific objectives and employed a Likert scale on five-point scale. To ensure the research questionnaire is valid and reliable, piloting was undertaken. This involved 26 respondents participating in the pilot study which was carried out at CARE international headquarters in Nairobi County. The 26 amounts to



10 percent of the population Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) recommends. In this study, validity of the questionnaire was assessed by having an expert review. The research supervisor was requested to check whether the contents of the questionnaire address the study objectives. The pilot respondents were also required to give their opinion on the study questions.

Reliability is pivotal in measuring the data tool's internal consistency. The questionnaire's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha test, to calculate the correlation coefficient. To establish reliability, a coefficient of 0.7 or higher is typically sought, as recommended by Reid, Stone, Brown, Caglar, and Kobayashi (2012). Hence, the study aims to achieve a 0.7 correlation coefficient, indicating increased questionnaire reliability. The data collection procedure involved obtaining permission from the selected organizations' administrative managers to conduct the study. Once permission was granted, self-administered questionnaires were distributed. Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires according to their work schedules, aiming for a greater response rate.

The obtained data was organized and formatted for analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis evaluated quantitative data and findings displayed in tabular form. SPSS version 28 generated these tables. Multiple regression analysis helped ascertain the relationships between variables, represented by the equation:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Whereby Y= Employee performance

X₁= Communication

X₂= Objective setting

X₃= Strategic leadership

X₄ = Training

β₁, - β₄ are coefficients of determination

ε is the error term

To uphold ethical standards, permission from the university and a permit from NACOSTI were sought. The study's purpose was communicated to participants, assuring them that their responses will remain confidential, and personal information was not collected or disclosed.



4.0 Research Findings and Discussions

4.1 Results of Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1 Communication

Table 1: Communication

Statement	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (M)
Awareness of the company's strategic direction can help employees make more informed decisions in their day-to-day work	4.56	0.44
When employees are aware of the company's values, mission, and vision, they are more likely to embody these principles in their work.	4.54	0.46
Feedback helps in identifying areas where communication may be unclear or confusing leading to better understanding among employees	4.59	0.41
Feedback provides an opportunity for employees to express their thoughts and concerns, making them feel heard and appreciated.	4.42	0.58
Channels provide a platform for effective and efficient communication between managers and employees	4.11	0.89
Channels facilitate regular and timely communication, allowing managers to provide continuous support and guidance to their employees	4.63	0.37
Aggregate Score	4.48	0.52

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 1 indicate that the respondents strongly agreed that channels facilitate regular and timely communication, allowing managers to provide continuous support and guidance to their employees (M=4.63, SD=0.37), feedback helps in identifying areas where communication may be unclear or confusing leading to better understanding among employees (M=4.59, SD=0.41), awareness of the company's strategic direction can help employees make more informed decisions in their day-to-day work (M=4.56, SD=0.44) and that when employees are aware of the company's values, mission, and vision, they are more likely to embody these principles in their work (M=4.54, SD=0.46). These findings concur with Peng and Litteljohn (2017) who observe that organizational communication has become the heart of organizations in order for the management functions to function properly and to achieve the goals successfully by maintaining organizational continuity.

The respondents agreed that feedback provides an opportunity for employees to express their thoughts and concerns, making them feel heard and appreciated (M=4.42, SD=0.58) and that channels provide a platform for effective and efficient communication between managers and employees (M=4.11, SD=0.89). The findings are consistent with Stroh (2019) who observe that



the success of the activities regarding the harmony, consensus, and coordination within the organization, can be achieved by establishing an effective communication system in organizations. The results in Table 4.1 also show that the respondents agreed that communication had influenced the employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as shown by the aggregate score of 4.29 and standard deviation of 0.69. These findings concur with the findings of a study by Weldeghebriel (2020) which examined the influence of organizational communication on employee performance in selected Large Manufacturing Businesses in Eritrea. The study findings show that there is statistically significant relationship between communication patterns and employee performance.

4.1.2 Objective Setting

Table 2: Objective Setting

Statement	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (M)
Objective setting helps in altering the behaviors and attitudes required to accomplish the objectives.	4.51	0.49
Employees are motivated by fostering a culture of accountability and progress tracking as a result of objective setting keeps	4.52	0.48
Objective setting has facilitated employees to complete their tasks on time.	3.31	1.69
Objective setting makes employees clear on what work needs to be completed within specified timelines.	4.24	0.76
Objective setting enhances the decision-making skills of the employee	4.59	0.41
Aggregate Score	4.23	0.77

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that the respondents strongly agreed that objective setting enhances the decision-making skills of the employee (M=4.59, SD=0.41), employees are motivated by fostering a culture of accountability and progress tracking as a result of objective setting keeps (M=4.52, SD=0.48) and that objective setting helps in altering the behaviors and attitudes required to accomplish the objectives (M=4.51, SD=0.49). The finding agrees with Alvero, Bucklin and Austin (2016) who observe that an objective describes a change that an organization wants to influence or achieve. Setting of objectives can be done at many different levels to very specific project objectives from broad strategic objectives.

The respondents agreed that objective setting makes employees clear on what work needs to be completed within specified timelines (M=4.24, SD=0.76). The finding concur with Balcazar, Hopkins and Suarez (2019) indicate that objective setting is an important aspect of performance management and ensuring personnel are contributing as required to the strategic goals of the organization. The respondents also indicated neutral on statement that objective setting has facilitated employees to complete their tasks on time (M=3.31, SD=1.69). This is in contrary to Akinlabi, Dogo and Asikhia (2021) study observation which investigated the influence of objective



setting and employee performance and found that the goal setting process should be effectively carried out to ensure improvement of employee performance, and in turn organizational success.

The results in Table 2 also show that the respondents agreed that objective setting had influenced the employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as shown by the aggregate score of 4.23 and standard deviation of 0.77. The finding concur with Joseph and Antony (2018) study which examined the influence of objective setting on employee performance of manufacturing companies in Japanese manufacturing companies and the findings indicate that there is significant positive relationship between objective setting and employee performance in manufacturing companies in Japan.

4.1.3 Strategic Leadership

Table 3: Strategic Leadership

Statement	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (M)
Empowering employees improves staff confidence and helps in cultivating accountability for the workflow in the office	4.04	0.96
Providing a particular autonomy to staff makes employees more willing in putting effort into their jobs.	3.92	1.08
Delegation stimulates employees creativity and develops skills in amongst them	4.52	0.48
Delegating stimulates creativity and develops skills of the employees	3.98	1.02
Direction helps employees understand their purpose and feel more engaged with their work and team.	4.67	0.33
Direction enhances staff solution ownership, thus enhancing the probability of a successful implementation	4.71	0.29
Aggregate Score	4.31	0.69

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results in Table 3 indicate that the respondents strongly agreed that direction enhances staff solution ownership, thus enhancing the probability of a successful implementation (M=4.71, SD=0.29), direction helps employees understand their purpose and feel more engaged with their work and team (M=4.67, SD=0.33) and that delegation stimulates employees creativity and develops skills in amongst them (M=4.52, SD=0.48). The finding agrees with Davies and Davies (2018) who observe that strategic leaders are the focal point for organizational learning. They promote a culture of inquiry, and they search for the lessons in both successful and unsuccessful outcomes. They study failures their own and their teams' in an open, constructive way to find the hidden lessons.

The respondents agreed that empowering employees improves staff confidence and helps in cultivating accountability for the workflow in the office (M=4.04, SD=0.96), delegating stimulates creativity and develops skills of the employees (M=3.98, SD=1.02) and that providing a particular



autonomy to staff makes employees more willing in putting effort into their jobs (M=3.92, SD=1.08). The finding agree with Vera and Crossan (2020) who indicate that a strategic leader is the one who has clear vision, task, objective and policy to lead organization towards performance and achieves these objective by aligning strategy and sharing ideas with organization employees.

The results in Table 3 also show that the respondents agreed that strategic leadership had influenced the employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as shown by the aggregate score of 4.31 and standard deviation of 0.69. The finding concur with Ziaudin, Shabbir, Asif, Bilal and Raza (2017) study which investigated the impact of strategic leadership on employee performance in textile industries in Greece and the study found that strategic leadership had a positive significant impact on employee performance in textile industries in Greece.

4.1.4 Training

Table 4: Training

Statement	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (M)
When employees have the necessary skills, they are more likely to perform their job tasks efficiently and effectively.	4.23	0.77
Skilled employees are better equipped to adapt to changes in the workplace	3.57	1.43
When employees possess a deep knowledge of their job roles and responsibilities, they are more likely to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively.	4.01	0.99
When employees are knowledgeable about their field, they can come up with new ideas and solutions to challenges, driving continuous improvement and growth.	4.09	0.81
Retaining employees through training can also lead to cost savings for organizations	4.06	0.94
Retaining employees through training offers fosters a positive work culture.	3.51	0.49
Aggregate Score	3.99	1.01

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The respondents agreed that when employees have the necessary skills, they are more likely to perform their job tasks efficiently and effectively (M=4.23, SD=0.77), when employees are knowledgeable about their field, they can come up with new ideas and solutions to challenges, driving continuous improvement and growth (M=4.09, SD=0.81), retaining employees through training can also lead to cost savings for organizations (M=4.06, SD=0.94), when employees possess a deep knowledge of their job roles and responsibilities, they are more likely to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively (M=4.01, SD=0.99), skilled employees are better equipped



to adapt to changes in the workplace ($M=3.57$, $SD=1.43$) and that retaining employees through training offers fosters a positive work culture ($M=3.59$, $SD=0.49$).

The finding agree with Watad and Ospina (2019) who observe that training is the process of designing specific employee training programs that directly align with business needs. Therefore, training with a strategic focus develops the capabilities and tools that employees need to successfully carry out their jobs. The finding also agree with Choi (2020) who argue that providing training and development to employees allows employers to pinpoint the knowledge and skills they want their employees to have. In addition, training programs can educate employees about new skills or provide updates on existing skills to enhance productivity.

The results in Table 4 show that the respondents agreed that training had influenced the employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as shown by the aggregate score of 3.99 and standard deviation of 1.01. The finding agree with Bhatti, Soomro and Shah (2021) study which focused on predictive power of training design on employee performance and the findings indicated positive and significant roles of training content and learning style on employee performance.

4.1.5 Employee Performance

Table 5: Employee Performance

Statement	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (M)
Effective strategic management practices leads to target achievements at your by your non-governmental organization.	3.88	1.12
Work quality is improved due to strategic management practices employed by your non-governmental organization.	4.36	0.64
Strategic management practices accelerates employee creativity at by your non-governmental organization.	4.09	0.91
Staff innovation at your non-governmental organization is made possible by adopting strategic management practices.	4.00	1.00
Employee turnover has improved due to strategic management practices at your non-governmental organization.	3.52	1.48
Employee team spirit is improved by having functional strategic management practices at your non-governmental organization.	3.91	1.09
Aggregate Score	3.96	1.04

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results in Table 5 show that the respondents agreed that the strategic management practices had influenced the employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as shown by the aggregate score of 3.96 and standard deviation of 1.04. The finding concur with Mahoney and McGahan (2017), who indicate that strategic management practices serve as the cornerstone of an organization's decision-making. They provide a sense of direction



by formulating plans and policies aimed at attaining objectives and then allocating resources for plan execution.

The respondents agreed that work quality is improved due to strategic management practices employed by your non-governmental organization (M=4.36, SD=0.64), strategic management practices accelerates employee creativity at by your non-governmental organization (M=4.09, SD=0.91), staff innovation at your non-governmental organization is made possible by adopting strategic management practices (M=4.00, SD=1.00), Employee team spirit is improved by having functional strategic management practices at your non-governmental organization (M=3.91, SD=1.09), effective strategic management practices leads to target achievements at your by your non-governmental organization (M=3.88, SD=1.12) and that employee turnover has improved due to strategic management practices at your non-governmental organization (M=3.52, SD=1.48).

The finding agree with According to Aboramadan and Borgonovi (2020) strategic Management in an organisation guarantees that objectives are set, essential issues are laid out, time and assets are rotated, working is united, the inside condition is set towards accomplishing the targets, outcomes and results are agreed upon, and the organisation stays adaptable towards any outside changes. The finding also agree with Delery and Shaw (2021) who observe that strategic management in an organization must become a process and a single path guiding actions throughout the organization. Therefore, strategic management is the set of decisions and actions that result in the formulation and implementation of plans designed to achieve a company’s performance objectives.

4.2 Results of Multiple Regressions Analysis

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.888 ^a	.789	.772	1.085

Source: Survey Data (2024)

From the findings in Table 4.6 shows that the value of R was at 0.888 which is closer to 1. This means that the independent variables and the dependent variable were strongly related. The R square value was 0.789 which was closer to 1. Thus, the model’s increased explanation of variability. In addition, the value of adjusted r squared was 0.772 (77.2%) an indication that there was variation of 77.2% on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya caused by communication, objective setting, strategic leadership and training at 95% confidence interval. This therefore, means that factors not studied in this research contribute 22.8% of employee performance.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	102.145	4	25.536	69.721	.000
	Residual	90.101	246	.366		
	Total	359.631	250			



Source: Survey Data (2024)

According to the results presented in Table 7, the statistical F value (69.721) is greater than the statistical mean square value (25.536) at 5% significance level showing that the model is significant. In addition, the level of significance was below 0.05 at 0.00 thus showing a good fit of the model on how independent variables studied influenced the dependent variable.

Table 8: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	0.711	.185		3.843	.000
Communication	0.675	.245	4.251	2.755	.001
Objective setting	0.812	.163	1.354	4.982	.001
Strategic leadership	0.734	.374	3.875	1.963	.000
Training	0.709	.401	2.614	1.768	.001

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The results in Table 8 show that by holding communication, objective setting, strategic leadership and training constant, the employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya would be at 0.711. An improvement in communication, objective setting, strategic leadership and training would improve employee performance by 0.675, 0.812, 0.734 and 0.709 respectively.

As per the above explanation, the equation ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$) becomes: $Y = 0.711 + 0.675 X_1 + 0.812X_2 + 0.734X_3 + 0.709X_4$

- Where Y= Employee performance
- X₁= Communication
- X₂= Objective setting
- X₃= Strategic leadership
- X₄ = Training

The results in Table 8 further show that communication had a positive and significant influence on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by the t-values (t=2.755, P=0.001). The finding agree with Sumeya (2016) study which focused on the influence of internal communication channels on employee performance in Nonprofit Organizations in Somalia and the study findings established that downward communication at HLH had a significant association with employee performance.

The study revealed that objective setting had a positive and significant influence on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by the t-values (t=4.982, P=0.001). The finding concur with Mahfouz, Bahkia and Alias (2021) study



which investigated the impact of objective setting on employee performance and the mediating role of employee commitment in construction industry in Jordan. The study found that objective setting had a significant effect on employee performance in construction industry in Jordan.

The study established that strategic leadership had a positive and significant influence on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by the t-values ($t=1.963$, $P=0.000$). The finding agree with Alvi, Haider and Akram (2021) study which examined the role of strategic leadership on employee performance with mediating effect of employee engagement and the descriptive statistics indicated that strategic leadership shows a significant positive impact on employee performance.

The study determined that training had a positive and significant influence on employee performance in non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya as indicated by the t-values ($t=1.768$, $P=0.001$). The finding concurs with Yimam (2021) study which examined the impact of training on employees' performance: A case study of Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia. Results show that training design, training needs assessment, training delivery style and training evaluation have significant positive effect on employees' performance.

50 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions of the Study

The study concludes that communication in the workplace is important because it boosts employee morale, engagement, productivity, and satisfaction. Communication is also key for better team collaboration and cooperation. Ultimately, effective workplace communication helps drive better results for individuals, teams, and organizations. Communication enables coordination of activities, sharing of information and respect of value, belief and norms of different groups. Communication gives team member decision- making skills they need to build and maintain a positive social environment.

The study concludes that employee goal setting is the process of setting specific, measurable, and role-oriented objectives that employees work towards while at the organization. They take into account the employee's personal growth targets, requirements of their future desired role, and resource availability. The aim of objective setting is to measure performance throughout their time at your organization, evaluate development progress and suggest any upskilling which may be necessary to reach these goals. They can either be short or long-term goals.

The study concludes that strategic partnerships allow companies to share the costs of innovation and development, reducing the financial risk of new ventures. Strategic partnerships can provide access to new markets and customers, expanding the reach of a company's products and services. Finally, partnerships can offer opportunities for knowledge-sharing, allowing companies to learn from each other and develop new capabilities. Strategic partnerships open up the opportunity for businesses to share their secrets for success with one another in a way that benefits all parties involved.

The study concludes that training is important because it represents a good opportunity for employees to grow their knowledge base and improve their job skills to become more effective in the workplace. Employee training programs help improve the knowledge and skills of employees to match the various changes in the industry. These improvements will positively affect the productivity of workers, which can increase the profits and efficiency of an organization. Training

programs can also help prepare employees who are moving into higher roles and taking on more responsibilities in an organization. These programs will help them learn the skills that are required to function effectively in their new positions.

5.2 Recommendations of the Study

The study recommends that the non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should focus on the implementation of effective communication channels and tools by including the use of technology such as intranet platforms, project management software, and instant messaging systems. Provide training and development opportunities for employees can also enhance communication skills and, consequently, employee performance. Adopt a feedback-oriented approach to communication. Regular performance evaluations, constructive feedback sessions, and recognition programs can provide employees with valuable insights into their strengths and areas for improvement.

The study recommends that the non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should ensure that goals are clearly defined, quantifiable, realistic, aligned with the overall objectives of the organization, and have a specific deadline for completion. Involve employees in the goal-setting process through collaborative goal setting, where employees have the opportunity to contribute their ideas and suggestions for their own goals. Providing regular feedback and performance evaluations is also crucial in enhancing goal setting techniques. Therefore, managers should regularly communicate with employees to provide feedback on their progress towards their goals, identify any challenges or obstacles they may be facing, and offer guidance and support to help them overcome those challenges.

The study recommends that the non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should focus on building the skills and capabilities of current and future leaders through training in areas such as communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution, as well as opportunities for leaders to receive feedback and coaching on their performance. The organizations can empower employees by giving them more autonomy and decision-making authority. This can help to increase employee engagement and motivation, as well as foster a sense of ownership and accountability for the organization's success.

The study recommends that the non-governmental organizations in Nairobi City County, Kenya should incorporate a variety of learning techniques and tools such as online training modules, interactive workshops, on-the-job training, and mentorship programs. Incorporating regular feedback and performance evaluations into the training process can help employees track their progress and identify areas for improvement. This can also help managers identify any gaps in training and adjust their approach accordingly. Another key aspect of optimizing employee performance through training is to align training programs with the organization's overall goals and objectives.

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