

Team Work Practices and Employee Performance in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the effects of team work practices on employee performance of local government authorities in Tanzania. The specific objectives were to; determine the influence of shared vision, employee respect, employee ethics, collective decision, team level trust, intrapersonal skills and team cohesiveness on employee performance in LGAs. The study used multiple regression analysis to test the set hypotheses and construct the model. The study was based on cross sectional survey design in which the quantitative approach was used to collect and analyse data from 368 employees. Research data was collected using a structured survey questionnaire as a research instrument where both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to arrive at conclusions. The study findings showed that shared vision, intrapersonal skills, trust and cohesiveness had statistically positive and significant relationship between team work practice and employee performance. Further, findings revealed that shared decision, respect and workplace ethics were statistically insignificant. The study concluded that LGAs should create an environment that assist shared decision, respect and workplace ethics since this in turn will increase performance of employees. The study recommends team work practices be considered as part of organisations strategy to improve employee performance.

Keywords: Team work, team work practices, employee performance, Local Government Authorities

INTRODUCTION

In the knowledge management world, in order to provide better services to the people team work practices is known as an important approach to influence employees' performance (Shao, 2020; Elgin, 2021). Human Resources Development as the organisation activities is directed towards improving the skills and capacity of employees and hence increasing emphasis on team work training (Maley & Kiessling, 2021). It also fosters development for common vision, shared decision making, work ethics and workplace trust. (McEwan & Crawford, 2022). Organisations around the globe are realizing the importance of Team Work Practice (TWP) and how it leads to high performance within their organisations. Team members have different skills such as technical, interpersonal, problem-solving and decision making skills; these skills complement each other. (McEwan & Crawford, 2022) If team members have the same ideas, opinions, skills or knowledge, there would be the absence of innovation. Therefore, organisations need to create an atmosphere that fosters team work. (Phina *et al.*, 2018).

On the view of public organisation, employee's performance and competitiveness improves services provision to the people (Saiz *et al.*, 2021). Likewise, in local government authorities, employees' performances are concerned with providing standards services (Performance *et al.*, 2020). Team Work Practices as the act of owning your responsibilities and staying accountable Walker, *et al.*, 2021). Team members rely on one another, so if one person drops the ball, an entire project can fail. (Walker, *et al.*, 2021, Reeves & Zwarenstein, 2018) have noted that members of the team must trust one another and have a strong rapport. In the context of this study team work is regarded as a process whereby employees in LGAs work together to complete their task in the most effective and efficient way. Team enables people to cooperate, enhance individual skills and provide constructive feedback without any conflict among individuals. According to McEwan and Crawford, (2022) most of the organisation activities become complex due to advancement in technology. Maley and Kiessling, (2021), views team members enhance the skills, knowledge and abilities of the working teams.

Statement of the Problem

Local Government Authorities (LGAs) have been taking a lead on the implementations of team work practices by using guidelines and policies aimed at improving employee's performances, like the Public Service Act No. 8 of 2002, and District Authorities Act number 7 of 1982. In addition, LGAs knowledge transfers practices is governed by LGAs strategy (2010) and Public Service Policy. Despite the implementation of such guidelines and policies in Tanzania, employees in LGAs have continued to perform below expectations President's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government(PO-RALG), (2020); Controller and Auditor General (CAG) (2020); Shitindi, (2020). Previous studies (Kalemba *et al.*, 2017; Septian & Gilang, 2017). Through local government reforms that were undertaken by the Government since 1998, the capacity of LGAs employees were worked on. Despite of all the initiatives that have been made, still Employee Performance (EP) is still low in selected LGAs as was complained by CAG (2019, 2020) reports. This study was guided by one major objective and seven specific objectives. The general objective was to examine the effects of team work practice on Employee Performance in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania. Specifically, objectives were to determine the influence of shared vision, employee respect, employee ethics, collective decision, team level trust, intrapersonal skills and team cohesiveness on Employee Performance in LGAs. Thus this study attempted to fill the identified gap by examining the effect of team work practise employment performance in LGAs in Tanzania. The structure of the paper is as follows.

Literature Review

This section provides in-depth information on literature relate to the effect of team work practise on Employee Performance in Local Government Authority.

Theoretical Review

Dynamic Theory of Organisational Creation (DTOKC) as used by Nonaka (1994) asserts that the ideal knowledge is transferred through socialization, internalization and externalization through combination of socialization and team work practices. Its central theme is that organisational knowledge is created through a continuous dialog between tacit and explicit knowledge. It

argued that while new knowledge is developed by individuals, the organisation plays a critical role at articulating and amplifying that knowledge (Nonaka, 1994: Adbulle, 2019). The theory suggests that individual employees and their team mate performance mostly rely on the level of their shared vision, work ethics, collective decision, level of trust, conference and interpersonal skills. Their commitment to LGAs employees tends to increase the level of their working personalities experience and ability to perform their duties. DTOKC helps the study to understand a team work practices effects on Employee Performance towards their LGAs performance.

Empirical Review on Effects of Team Work Practices on Employees Performance

Septian and Gilang (2017) examined the influence of team work on Employee Performance in state-owned enterprise in Bandung, Indonesia. The study used descriptive method. It used primary data that was obtained from interviews and questionnaires and secondary data such as literature books and documents. Techniques for sample data collection was simple random sampling while data processing analysis methods used were descriptive analysis, simple linear regression, hypothesis test (test t) and coefficient of determination using (Statistical Package for Social Sciences-SPSS). Results indicate team work had influence of about 23.5% on the performance of employees, while rest of 76.5% other factors that affects the Employee Performance is not examined in this research. Kalemba *et al.*, (2017), examined influence of team work practices on Employee Performance in public service in Kenya. Quantitatively the sample was 225 employees and used descriptive statistics. The findings become the base in policy formulation and further studies in the field of business management and human resource. It was revealed that team work ensures democracy at the workplace, enhances change, encourage innovation and creativity and allow for effective decision-making and networking. It was recommended that organisations should enhance capacity building of employees and appraisal; prompt promotion of employees, provide higher remuneration and good rewards to higher achievers to enhance commitment and improvement in work environment; effective communication and involvement of employees

in decision making. Kilindo (2015), examined factors that affected the establishment and practice of Team work of 50 teachers selected from secondary school in Kilwa district Tanzania. Questionnaires were used and analysed by quantitative data analysis. It was found out that structure, team, trust and performance had a significant and positive impact on the Employee Performance. The study concluded that practice of Team work of teachers in secondary schools have revealed that there are several factors that can be positive or negative towards the establishment and practice of team work. Study recommended team work for good results and performance. These findings need to be analysed in LGAs for final decision based on the effect of Team work practice on Employee Performance. This study proposed a conceptual framework where theories and empirical studies have been used to explain the phenomena.

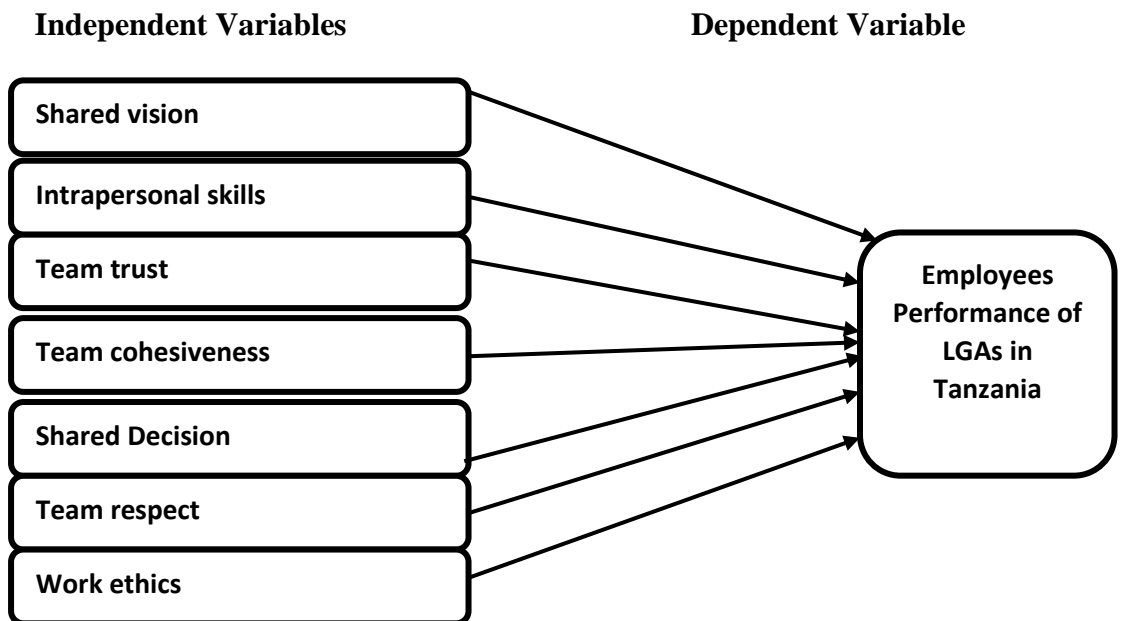


Figure 4: Conceptual Framework

Reeves and Zwarenstein (2018), evaluated the effect of Team work using effective group leadership, trust among members, team members'

recognition, group reward, team work, confidence and skills development. Walker *et al.*, (2021), used trust, engagement, team leadership, solving challenges, shared vision, clear communication, shared experience and practices. This study borrows shared vision, employees respect, employees' ethical, collective decision, team level of trust and intrapersonal skills. Howard and Hurley (2016), evaluated the effect of Team work using effective group leadership, trust among members, team members' recognition, group reward, team work, confidence and skills development. Hartenian (2013), used trust, engagement, team leadership, solving challenges, shared vision, clear communication, shared experience and practices. This study borrows shared vision, employees respect, employees' ethical, collective decision, team level of trust and intrapersonal skills. The study hypothesized that;

H₁: Team Work Practice(shared vision; work place ethic; intrapersonal skills; trust; respect; shared decision making and team cohesiveness) has positive and significant effect on employee performance in LGAs.

Methodology

Sample and Data Collection

This study was anchored on positivism research philosophy approach. A deductive approach was employed. It has been suggested that a deductive approach is suitable for positivism philosophy and utilizes empirical data (Baran, 2022). The approach is concerned with formulation of research hypotheses based on the theory under study and the research strategy is designed to test the formulated hypotheses (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). The deductive research approach examines and tests a known theory or phenomenon if that theory is relevant under certain circumstances (Kothari, 2017). According to Baran, (2022), empirical testing, simple random sampling method and controlled variables, such as; dependent and independent, are also part of a deducted approach. So, due to the quantitative nature of the data for this study, the quantitative research strategy was adopted to test the developed hypothesis. Explanatory research emphasizes to study the relationship between variables.

In explanatory studies, the researcher is faced with “cause-and-effect” problems with the major task for the researcher being the separation of such causes (Saunders & Lewis, 2017; Tegan & Merkus, 2022). The explanatory research design was chosen because the current study attempted to test and analyse the power of relationship among the hypothesized variables in the construct. Furthermore, the study used survey questionnaire since it is connected to positivism philosophy and deductive approach (Kothari, 2017). A cross-sectional survey was employed because it allows data to be collected at one point of time of the specific study (Williams *et al.*, 2022). To give the potential respondents equal chances of being selected and nature of the respondent’s population, the 368 employees were randomly selected from four (4) districts councils namely; Mbeya City Council, Iringa Municipal, Tunduma Town Council and Makete District Council. Others were representatives from LGAs team work on EPLGAs in each district.

Measurements

This research adopted measurements variables that had statistical significance basing on other scholars. Five point Likert scale was taken into account in the measurements of the items. The chosen scale for this study was supported by previous researchers who conducted studies on team work practices towards employee performance (Reeves & Zwarestein, 2018; Phina *et al.*, 2018). The five-point Likert scale responses were rated as strong disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strong agree. This study used primary data. Primary data were directly collected using a structured questionnaire. Quantitative data for all four research objectives were tabulated and analysed by the relevant statistical tools. IBM Software SPSS version 26 supported data analysis from the questionnaire by using the relevant data analysis tools such as; Chi-square, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis to identify the nature of relationship. Primary sources were used to collect data from directors; heads of departments, heads of sections, and other supporting staff at the department level. Statistical tests such as; reliability and validity were used to analyse the collected data.

Results and Discussion

From descriptive statistics relating to Employee Performance in LGAs findings in Table 1 indicate that knowledge transfer was important on enhancing employee's performance. To examine the significant relationship of all variable's regression analysis was conducted. Further, normal relationship of variables correlation analysis was also done. The results of the analysis showed that confidence yields a high mean value of 4.24 followed by anti-corruption, motivation, engagement, accountability, altitudes, Satisfaction and service delivery with their mean 4.23, 4.22, 4.206, 4.2, 4.19, 4.14, 4.11, 4.06 and 4.05 respectively. From these findings, it means that the higher the mean value the more impressions on mentoring practices towards contributing on employee's performance in LGAs in Tanzania.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Employees Performance (EP)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Services deliverance	2	5	4.05	.852	-.760	.139	.127	.278
Satisfaction	2	5	4.06	.905	-.830	.139	.014	.278
Motivation	2	5	4.22	.809	-1.011	.139	.787	.278
Accountability	1	5	4.14	.833	-.960	.139	.805	.278
In my work place corruption is strictly prohibited	1	5	4.23	.950	-1.249	.139	.985	.278
Level of work engagements is high to accomplish my duties	2	5	4.19	.783	-.842	.139	.476	.278
I am confidence enough to accomplish my responsibility	1	5	4.24	.800	-1.147	.139	1.495	.278
I accomplish all directives from my supervisor/ leaders in my work place	2.0	5.0	4.206	.8058	-.883	.139	.392	.278
Employees respond quickly on assignments	1	5	4.11	.843	-.813	.139	.350	.278
Employees have positive attitudes on work	1	5	4.20	.820	-1.247	.139	2.289	.278
Valid N (listwise)								

Source: Field Data, (2021)

Descriptive Statistics on Team Work Practices

Table 2 shows that work ethics had higher effects on employee's performance compared to other measurements because its mean value was $M = 4.19$, $SD = .930$ followed by respect which got $M = 4.17$, $SD = .909$. Also shared decision scored mean value of $M = 4.08$, $SD = .909$ while common vision scored $M = 4.06$, $SD = .946$. The least item was cohesiveness which obtained $M = 3.98$, $SD = .907$ mean values. The higher the mean value the more impressions on Team Work practices towards contributing on performance. The findings are in agreement with Walker *et. Al.*, (2021), who averred that team work received more attention as a process of knowledge transfer and sharing on team performance in Malaysia.

This is further in consistence with a study carried out by Septian & Gilang (2017), on the effect of knowledge sharing on team performance through Lens of team culture in Malaysia and evidenced that workers belong to particular team structure, their behaviour and attitude ultimate influence on team performance. However, this is inconsistent with Phina, *et. al.*, (2018), that team work inspires and develops sharing builds trust, recognition, confidence and skills in solving challenges. This implied that, team work practices enhance employee's performance. Despite these results cannot be applicable to justify the cause to effect relationship between team work practices and employee's performance. Thus, regression analysis was employed to determine the significant relationship of Team Work practices and Employee Performance in LGAs for inferential conclusion.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Team Work Practices

N=306, Minimum=1, Maximum=5	Mean	Std.	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Deviation Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statisti c	Std. Error
Shared Vision (TWP1)	4.06	.946	-1.100	.139	1.174	.278
Shared Decision (TWP2)	4.08	.909	-1.289	.139	2.083	.278
Respect (TWP3)	4.17	.909	-1.564	.139	3.120	.278
Work ethics (TWP4)	4.19	.930	-1.551	.139	2.838	.278
Intrapersonal Skills (TWP5)	4.01	.880	-.899	.139	.890	.278
Trust (TWP6)	4.10	.925	-1.496	.139	2.802	.278
Cohesiveness (TWP7)	3.98	.907	-1.162	.139	1.859	.278
Valid N (listwise)						

Source: Field Data, (2021)

Results of Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis between Team Work practices and employee's performance in LGAs was also conducted. Result indicates that Team Work had positive association with employee's performance in LGAs with ($r = .809^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). In addition, all items measuring Team Work practices had strong association with employee's performance. For example, TWP7 was found having strong association with Employee Performance ($r = .592^{**}$, $p < 0.05$) while TWP2 was the least in strength with ($r = .518^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). Correlation analysis indicated that measurements variables of Team Work practices had positive association with measurements of employee's performance. Therefore, based on the result from correlation analysis it is important to examine the cause to effects relationship of Team Work and Employee Performance by using regression analysis. Table 3 shows the relationship of Team Work practices and employees performance in LGAs based on all variables.

Table 3: Results of Correlation Analysis

		EP	TWP1	TWP2	TWP3	TWP4	TWP5	TWP6	TWP7
EP	Pearson Correlation	1	.628**	.618**	.636**	.627**	.623**	.657**	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Shared Vision	Pearson Correlation	.628**	1	.620**	.560**	.509**	.539**	.454**	.490**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Shared Decision	Pearson Correlation	.618**	.620**	1	.678**	.607**	.536**	.482**	.463**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Respect	Pearson Correlation	.636**	.560**	.678**	1	.709**	.502**	.561**	.493**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
Work Place Ethics	Pearson Correlation	.627**	.509**	.607**	.709**	1	.478**	.561**	.451**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
Intrapersonal Skills	Pearson Correlation	.623**	.539**	.536**	.502**	.478**	1	.442**	.514**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
Trust	Pearson Correlation	.657**	.454**	.482**	.561**	.561**	.442**	1	.506**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
Cohesiveness	Pearson Correlation	.592**	.490**	.463**	.493**	.451**	.514**	.506**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	

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

Source: Field Data, (2021)

Multiple Regression Results

The regression model summary in Table 4 was developed to explain the proportion of variance on Employee Performance in local governments whereby R square = .668. This implied that 66.8% of the proportion on employee's performance in local government's authorities could be explained by Team Work practices (Shared vision; Employees respect; Employees ethical; Collective decision; Team level of trust; Intrapersonal skills; and Team cohesiveness). In addition, the findings express that R value = 0.818 which indicated that the predictor variable which is Team Work practices were effective by 81.8% on providing change to dependent variable which was employees performance in local government authorities. Thus, the relationship between Team Work Practice under its seven measurement variables with employee's performance can be expressed as follows:

$$EP = 1.2601 + .113TWP1 + .057TWP2 + .051TWP3 + .085TWP4 + .138TWP5 + .178TWP6 + .092TWP7 + \epsilon_i$$

Basing on the research model five Team Work practices i.e. shared vision; Work place ethics; Intrapersonal Skills; Trust; and Cohesiveness had positive and significant effects on employee's performance in LGAs; because their respective P-Values of 0.000; 0.012; 0.000; .000; and 0.002 were less than 0.05 level of significance. While, two Team Work Practices i.e. shared decision and respect were found to have insignificant impacts on employees' performance in LGAs. This indicated that Employee Performance in LGAs were significantly influenced by team work practices such as; shared vision; work place ethics; intrapersonal skills; trust; and cohesiveness. Contrary to these significant results, leaders 'employees respect was insignificant because was ($\beta = .051, p = .173$). This was due to the facts that p value was found to be above 0.05 which indicated that it was insignificant. Likewise shared decision was insignificant ($\beta = .057, p = .102$). From these results two items which form Team Work practices was insignificant on providing best results of employee's performance in LGAs since the *p value was greater 0.05* as described in Table 4.

Table 4: Coefficients Relationship of TWP and EP

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.260	.121		10.434	.000		
Shared Vision (TWP1)	.113	.030	.174	3.742	.000	.517	1.934
Shared Decision (TWP2)	.057	.034	.084	1.642	.102	.427	2.342
Respect (TWP3)	.051	.037	.075	1.366	.173	.371	2.695
Work ethics (TWP4)	.085	.033	.128	2.530	.012	.433	2.309
Intrapersonal Skills (TWP5)	.138	.031	.198	4.500	.000	.576	1.737
Trust (TWP6)	.178	.029	.268	6.066	.000	.572	1.749
Cohesiveness (TWP7)	.092	.029	.136	3.161	.002	.599	1.670
Summary R	.818						
R-Square	.668						
ANOVA F-Statistics	85.835						
Sig,	.000						

a. Dependent Variable: EP

Source: Field Data, (2021)

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

From the findings, the study concluded that team work practice had positive and significant effects on employee performance of LGAs in Tanzania. Results went further to conclude that team work practice is an important strategy in improving employee performance. The study showed that shared vision, intrapersonal skills, trust, work place ethics and cohesiveness had statistically positive and significant relationship between team work practice

and employee performance. Moreover, shared decision, and respect were statistically insignificant. The study concludes that LGAs should create a workplace atmosphere that enhances shared decision, respect and workplace ethics so as to enhance employee performance. The study hence strongly recommends team work practices be considered as organisations strategy to improve performance.

Recommendations

Though work ethics was the strongest predictor of variation in employee performance, results showed team work played a critical role in EPLGAs in Tanzania. Reeves & Zwarenstein (2018) argue that collaborative effort of a group to achieve a common goal enables them to cooperate hence enhance individual skills and provide constructive feedback to performance of an organisation. It is hence recommended that LGAs create a favourable work environment for team work practice. However, regardless of study findings, in order to attain and maintain employee performance LGAs have to seriously consider all contributing factors. Maley and Kiessling, (2021) defined employee performance as commitment and satisfaction of employees in the jobs they are doing. Employees will be mostly committed and satisfied if factors such as; a compensation policy scheme, promotion scheme, employee recognition and participation scheme are in place. When these factors are realized, employees would feel connected to their jobs hence more accountable, leading to satisfying service delivery, self-motivation, corruption prohibition, confidence and achieving directives.

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