

COMMUNICATION IN A MATRIX ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON TEAM PERFORMANCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT CENTERS IN LAIKIPIA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of Study: This study examined the role of communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers (CYDCs) in Laikipia County, Kenya.

Statement of Problem: Despite the critical role CYDCs play in supporting holistic child and youth development, many centers face challenges in meeting goals, deadlines, and budget constraints. Previous research highlights that weak communication systems in matrix structures contribute to role ambiguity, conflict, and inefficiencies.

Methodology: The study used a descriptive survey design anchored on social exchange theory and targeted 69 participants, applying a census approach due to the small population. Data were collected using semi-structured questionnaires and analyzed in SPSS 25 through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis.

Result: Findings revealed that CYDCs have relatively well-structured communication and feedback mechanisms. Correlation results showed a strong positive relationship between communication in a matrix structure and team performance ($r = 0.605$, $p = 0.021$). Regression analysis indicated that communication explained 76.6% of the variance in team performance.

Conclusion: The study concludes that communication within matrix structures significantly enhances team performance by fostering clarity, coordination, and collaboration.

Recommendation: The study recommends strengthening existing communication systems by sustaining regular formal meetings, ensuring smooth information flow across vertical and horizontal lines, and adopting interactive communication tools to improve feedback processes

Keywords: *communication, matrix organization structure, team performance and Children and Youth Development Centers.*

INTRODUCTION

Newman, Ford, and Marshall (2020) defined team performance as the collective effectiveness and efficiency of a group working towards a common goal. Team performance is also defined as productivity, collaboration, innovation, and goal achievement. Team performance is therefore key to ensuring the goal attainment of child and youth development centers. According to Hafeez, Bhatti & Zaman (2022), most organizations assess team performance by observing goal completion, productivity, work quality, collaboration effectiveness, and innovation. Team performance is influenced by factors that are mostly determined by aspects such as communication, decision-making, multiple chains of command, and role clarity.

Slevin (2021) emphasizes that organizational structure significantly shapes employee performance, with effective structures adapting to both internal and external changes. To address the demands of managing large projects, the matrix organizational structure emerged in the 1960s, formally adopted in the U.S. aerospace industry in 1966 (Müller, 2003). This structure combined horizontal project groups with traditional vertical functional organizations to enhance efficiency (Kuprenas, 2003). Over time, the matrix structure has gained global traction as it allows team members to report to both functional heads and project managers. The intersecting lines of authority, often illustrated in a grid, give rise to the term “Matrix Organization” (Kuprenas, 2003).

Globally, the relevance of communication, decision-making, and multiple chains of command role conflict is widely recognized as being crucial to enhancing team performance. Morrison and Ruiz (2020) note that communication difficulties and lack of role clarity pose a challenge to many firms that use matrix structures. The author goes on to note that the use of multiple chains of commands and lack of clear pathways for the flow of information and feedback have seen teams operating within a matrix structure not perform optimally. This unsatisfactory performance due to the use of multiple command chains is because it becomes hard for team members to reconcile requirements from various managers. A situation where a team member is expected to answer to several managers leaves them stretched out and unable to effectively deliver expected outputs especially where the managers did not harmonize their requests to the team member.

Regionally, the use of the matrix structure in Africa is increasingly on the rise. In his study that focused on comparing the power and influence of functional managers with that of project managers in matrix organizations, Moodley et al, (2016) found out that communication and clear decision-making are key in resolving wrangles that may arise from the use of the matrix structure and thus promoting team performance. If clear communication channels are established then conflict resolution is made easy and due to the opening of feedback channels decision-making among team members becomes easy.

Locally, the use of the matrix structure in Kenya is gaining popularity, especially in community-based organizations and the business sector. In their study on the effect of employee Communication on Organization Performance in Kenya's Horticultural Sector, Otieno et al (2015) concluded that communication is a major determinant of performance. The studies noted that organizations need to come up with proper communication avenues to ensure that teams effectively share information and feedback thus facilitating their success.

In Child and Youth Development Centers across Laikipia County, teams' performance is paramount to successfully nurturing and supporting the holistic development of children and youth. The teams working in the CYDCs aim to release children and youth from the four dimensions of poverty: economic, physical, cognitive, and social-emotional (Wess, 2007, as cited in Ndungu, 2012). The teams perform a wide array of activities to support this and they range from: educational programming, spiritual development, economic empowerment, social-emotional development, and health promotion. Despite the crucial role these teams play, there is a notable challenge in maintaining optimal performance levels, with significant implications for the delivery of services and the achievement of developmental outcomes. According to (Compassion, 2015, as cited in Nziva, 2018) most of the CYDCs do not meet outcomes, deadlines, and budget constraints. In addition, the author notes that Children and youth should exit the centers after having attained holistic development outcomes, but this is usually not always the case.

Statement of the Problem

Children and Youth Development Centers are vital institutions in supporting vulnerable populations, yet many struggle to achieve their operational objectives. According to Claire (2020, as cited in Mulama, 2023), the success rate of most Children and Youth Development Centers is below 50% within the first year of operation, with numerous projects failing to meet their intended performance targets on schedule. These shortcomings often point to challenges

within implementation teams, who are central to project execution. Claire's study on Children and Youth Development Centers in Nairobi City County revealed that high staff turnover and burnout were common, leading to reduced morale, instability, and overall team inefficiency. Such internal dynamics undermine the attainment of meaningful outcomes for children, youth, and key partners like CIK.

While these organizational challenges are well-documented in urban contexts, there is a significant lack of research on similar issues affecting Children and Youth Development Centers in rural counties such as Laikipia. Teams in these settings often operate under different constraints, including limited resources, dispersed populations, and less institutional support. Furthermore, the role of organizational structure particularly matrix structures that involve dual reporting lines and shared responsibilities has not been sufficiently examined in relation to team performance in local Children and Youth Development Centers. This leaves a critical gap in understanding how these frameworks function in small, community-based organizations operating outside major cities. Therefore, this study is key in determining communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County.

Research Objectives

To assess communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Social Exchange Theory

Communication in a matrix structure is explained using the social exchange theory. Homans (1958) developed the Social Exchange Theory, It explains social behavior in terms of rewards and costs. The central tenet of the theory is that in any group, organization, society, or community, communication is vital in ensuring relationships between team members (Benitez et al., 2022). The theory shows how key communication is in influencing team performance by encouraging reciprocity, fostering mutual dependence, and cutting down on costs gained from poor communication such as misunderstandings.

Thomas and Gupta (2021) observed that Social Exchange theory applied to organizational management and can shed light on the performance of teams. They observed that individuals

engage in social interactions and relationships based on the principles of reciprocity and resource exchange, seeking to maximize rewards while minimizing costs, in organizational management, it offers insights into team dynamics, motivation, and performance. In a matrix structure, effective communication fosters reciprocity and creates trust among various departments. Increased trust is a recipe for increased knowledge sharing and cohesion building and in the long run, improving the team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers.

Within a matrix, communication across functional and project lines is key in promoting collaboration among teams. Perceived equal exchange of information, knowledge, and resources among teams encourages open communication where members feel valued and respected for the insights that they bring in. This by extension promotes team performance.

Cortez and Johnston (2020) established that team members expect to receive certain rewards from their participation in the team, such as recognition, support, skill development, and a sense of belonging. Team members may sometimes evaluate whether their contributions to the team are adequately rewarded by the benefits they receive from the team, and may be dissatisfied when their contributions are not recognized. In matrix structures, effective communication reduces conflicts and ineffectiveness while increasing coordination, problem-solving and goal attainment. Clear communication helps in goal setting, role clarification, resource allocation, and decision making, thus promoting team performance. Functional and project teams in a matrix structure often depend on each other to facilitate goal attainment. The social exchange theory postulates that effective communication ensures feedback and information sharing, thus facilitating collaboration that aids goal attainment.

They also argued that leaders provide resources and support to team members, and in return, they expect dedication, commitment, and high performance from their team members. The quality of this exchange relationship can impact team members' motivation and performance. The theory emphasizes that individuals are more likely to be motivated and committed to the team when they perceive that their contributions are being reciprocated with rewards. This suggests that team leaders and managers should ensure that team members receive recognition and tangible rewards for their efforts. According to Meira and Hancer (2021), within teams, trust is crucial for collaboration and effective communication. Teams with higher levels of trust may exhibit stronger cohesion and, consequently, better performance. Team members and team members often assess the fairness of these systems based on the perceived exchange between their contributions and the rewards they receive. Team members may evaluate whether the

costs of staying on the team outweigh the benefits. High turnover may result from a perceived imbalance in this exchange.

The major strength of the theory is that is easy to comprehend since it has simple concepts. The theory is also easily applicable in many contexts since it offers insights into social phenomena. The theory also makes it easy to predict behaviors based on perceived rewards and costs. A major criticism of this theory is that it does not take into account the different cultural contexts in which organizations work. Cultural norms can shape how individuals interact with each other, thus potentially limiting knowledge sharing. In addition, when it comes to reciprocity and perceived rewards, the theory takes into account tangible rewards that teams might get while overlooking intangible rewards such as emotional support and motivation. These are also key in promoting relationships. The theory also assumes that teams engage in interactions expecting equal resource sharing, which is not always the case, as the theory did not take into account real-life issues such as power imbalances.

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) best aligns with the objective on communication within a matrix organizational structure. SET, as proposed by Homans (1958), posits that social behavior is the result of an exchange process aiming to maximize benefits and minimize costs. In the matrix structure of Children and Youth Development Centers, communication is vital due to the dual lines of authority and cross-functional collaboration. SET explains how effective communication fosters trust, mutual respect, and reciprocity among team members, which strengthens interpersonal relationships and improves team cohesion. This mutual exchange of information and feedback enables teams to function smoothly despite the complexity of reporting lines, leading to improved performance. As such, Social Exchange Theory offers a strong lens through which the influence of communication on team performance in matrix settings can be understood and evaluated.

Empirical Review

Communication and Team Performance

Communication is the act of passing or conveying information from one individual to another. It is a significant tool that can result in different outcomes. Indeed, it is the primary driving force behind the expansion of any company. It is vital for the interaction and comprehension of management to employee interactions, which leads to better team performance.

Communication is essential to the operation of any organization. It is used to inform the staff about the decisions, goals, and visions of the company, together with its rules, processes, obligations, and other organizational activities (Musheke and Phiri, 2021). Poor communication can undermine the survival of an organization, while effective communication increases the chances of survival.

There are two distinct communication routes in an organizational system organized using a matrix. It can occur vertically, horizontally, or both. In Vertical Information Sharing, managers in matrix organizations communicate and push down information from the top level. Horizontal information sharing uses parallel links for communication and collaboration across different organizational departments. Schnetler et al., 2015 case study points out that communication was the most important aspect of matrix organizations than any other elements. The number of times that communication was cited was twice as high as any other concept. According to the study findings, communication is at the core of all management ideas that apply to matrix organizations. Therefore, an organizational structure with an effective communication framework (correct, clear, and through the appropriate channels) is fundamental for the success and survival of an organization (Bucăța and Rizescu, 2017). Communication is among the top integrating concepts that bridge many other concepts. It connects the decision-makers to all team members. Interpersonal conflict in companies can arise when communication is inadequately done within the organizational structure.

In his article titled Predictors of Change, Makumbe (2016) noted that communication is a key component for effective change management throughout the transition process in organizations. The concerns and problems associated with the desired changes must be communicated clearly by managers before initiating the changes to the staff to ease their acceptance and curtail any resistance. In a study to formulate the relationship between communication strategies and organizational performance at the Kenya Ports Authority, (Kibe 2014 as cited in Okora, 2021) found that encouraging open, inclusive, two-way, result-oriented, and multi-channeled communication within an organization should be promoted to foster effective organizational performance. The author continues to note that it is hard to completely do away with the communication barriers, and therefore they should be reduced. Productivity improves within the organization once team members can freely communicate their opinions and ideas, and criticize elements not going well at any level of the organization.

Similarly, Otieno et al. (2015) investigated employee communication's impact on the performance of organizations operating in the horticulture industry in Kenya. The study sought responses from a total of 2460 participants. Based on the study's findings, communication helps

promote the sharing of information and opinions within an organization leading to operational efficiency. As a result, the performance of an organization is enhanced. The study concluded that communication is among the significant factors fostering the effective functioning and success of an organization.

Oronje and Wainaina (2019) in their analysis of the study 'Organizational Communication and Employee Performance: A Case of KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme, Kenya' a descriptive research design was used. The study targeted 704 management and staff members. Using Slovin's formula, a sample size of 255 respondents was determined. Data obtained using self-administered questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS. The findings established that communication channels, feedback mechanisms, employee attitudes, and organizational communication culture are some of the factors that contribute to team performance and by extension the success of the organization. To achieve effective team performance in an organization, several elements have to be in place, including conflict in communication, a good chain or channel, conciseness in communication, accuracy in communication, and completeness. Hence, this study is vital as it investigates and documents how communication in a matrix organization structure influences team performance.

Siam (2017) did a research to investigate the impact of communication strategy on organizational performance from the viewpoint of middle-level managers in higher education institutions. The research was based on general system theory and contingency theory. A total of 236 respondents were employed at higher education institutions in Palestine. The study's findings indicated a favorable correlation between communication strategy and organizational success. The research indicated that implementing a communication strategy enables workers to use a consistent framework for engaging with supervisors, colleagues, and customers. The research indicated that a communication strategy guarantees that all participants possess sufficient knowledge to discuss the matter, so ensuring uniformity in the workplace and eliminating uncertainty. The report advocated for the use of a communication strategy to improve performance.

Omondi, Onyango, and Museve (2020) aimed to investigate the impact of communication method on plan execution regarding water service supply in Kakamega County. The primary aim of the research was to ascertain if advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, direct marketing, and public relations are used to enhance plan execution. Data was obtained from 781 workers. The study design was inherently descriptive. A stratified proportional random sampling method was used to choose the sample. The research used a simple random sampling method to pick 328 respondents from each strata. The data gathering tool included questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions. Research indicates that advertising, direct marketing, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations improve performance by increasing customer attractiveness, loyalty, sales volumes, branch growth, and product awareness among consumers. The research advised management to prioritize methods that enhance the implementation of integrated communication, since it is vital to the company's success.

Conceptual Framework

The figure below is the conceptual framework that illustrates the study variables and their presumed relationships.

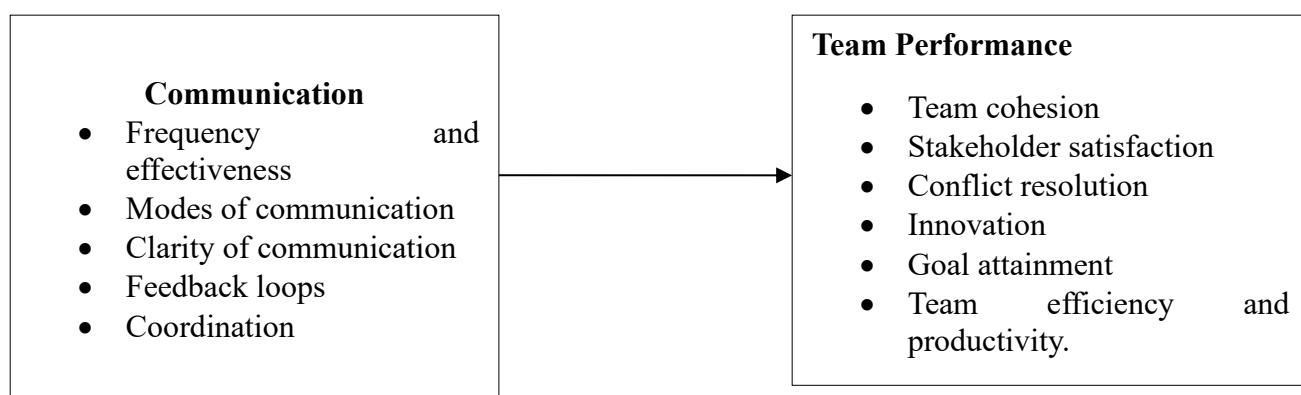


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

structure on the performance of teams in child and youth development centers in Laikipia County. This design helped to describe the characteristics, behaviors, opinions, or attitudes of the study population by answering questions such as where, when, what, who, and how. This research design is crucial in helping to determine the influence of the matrix structure used on the performance of teams in child and youth development centers in Laikipia County, since it

helps to analyze the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, which is team performance.

Target Population

The target population of the study consisted of 69 participants, comprising all the team members from the child and youth development centers (31), staff from the CIK head office who interacted directly with child and youth development centers staff (10), and two executive board members from each of the child and youth development centers (28).

Sample Size and Sampling Design

Due to the small target population, the researcher employed the census approach instead of a sampling method. Fowler (2013), as cited in Bii, Maina, & Sporta (2023) stated that when the population is small, sampling is not possible, and a census is advised to provide accurate and reliable findings. A census approach involves collecting data from every member of the population as opposed to picking a sample (Parker & Gallivan, 2011; Nirel & Glickman, 2009; Thrusfield & Brown, 2017, as cited in, Mulama, 2023). In this case, the target population was small in number (69) and the census approach would give a complete coverage of data. A census approach takes into account all members of the sample size thus eliminating the sampling error, giving and giving of statistical confidence.

Data Collection Tools

The study used semi-structured questionnaires to obtain data. Questionnaires were chosen because the researcher could adjust the questions to align with the study objectives. Closed-ended questions were employed to gather quantitative data. The questionnaire was administered physically, and participants were asked to respond to questions designed to address the research questions. The questionnaire was developed according to the study's objectives, conceptual framework, and research questions.

Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out at one child and youth development centers in Meru County as a pre-test, involving eleven participants. The pre-test area was selected due to its proximity to Laikipia County, which helped minimize resources and time spent during the exercise. Pre-test interviews were conducted to assess whether the questions were easily understandable and aligned with the study's research questions and objectives..

Reliability of Research Instruments

The reliability test for this study was conducted through the use of well-informed and trained interviewers during data collection, ensuring the reliability of the data quality. Pre-testing was done at child and youth development centers in the neighboring Meru County with nine randomly selected participants, allowing for further improvements to the data and instruments used, thus ensuring the quality of data collected during the actual study. Each questionnaire was thoroughly checked for consistency, errors, conflicts, accuracy, and completeness both before and after receiving responses. Poor-quality data was discarded during screening before analysis.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of SPSS 25, to examine the dynamics of communication, decision-making, multiple chains of command, and role conflict within teams. Responses from the five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree) were coded, and composite scores for each variable were calculated by averaging item scores. Descriptive statistics, including percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviations, summarized the data, while Pearson correlation assessed relationships between variables. A multivariate regression model tested the influence of communication on overall team performance in child and youth development centers in Laikipia Count.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

Communication in a matrix organization structure and team performance.

The researcher sought to determine level of agreement on communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County. Table 1 shows the respondent's views.

Table 1: Communication in a matrix organization structure and team performance

| Statement | | | Strongly disagree | Agree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------------------|-------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|
| There | exist | well- | 3% | 3% | 10% | 48% | 36% | 4.099 | 0.943 |
| defined | | | | | | | | | |
| communication | | | | | | | | | |
| channels | for | both | | | | | | | |

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Agree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std |
|--|-------------------|-------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|
| vertical and horizontal communication that allow for clarity of information passed. | | | | | | | |
| There are regular effective formal meetings, briefings or updates between the team and managers to touch base | 5% | 7% | 3% | 41% | 44% | 4.131 | 1.087 |
| There are effective mechanisms in place for passing feedback upward and downward between the team, functional, and project managers. | 2% | 7% | 3% | 46% | 42% | 4.213 | 0.915 |
| The Flow of information is coordinated between Team members and the various managers that they report to. | 5% | 8% | 3% | 46% | 38% | 4.032 | 1.094 |

From the findings, a significant proportion of respondents agreed that communication and feedback mechanisms are well-structured in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County. A majority of respondents agreed (mean = 4.099; std = 0.943) that there exist well-defined communication channels for both vertical and horizontal communication, allowing for clarity of information, with 84% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Furthermore, 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that regular and effective formal meetings, briefings, or updates between teams and managers are conducted (mean = 4.131; std = 1.087). Similarly, the findings show that 88% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that effective mechanisms for passing feedback upward and downward between teams and managers exist (mean = 4.213; std = 0.915). Lastly, 84% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the flow of information is well-coordinated between team members and the various managers they report to (mean = 4.032; std = 1.094). Overall, the consistently high agreement levels across all four items point to a relatively mature communication infrastructure within the Centers. This suggests that despite the complexities associated with matrix structures, communication is not a major constraint to team performance in this context. However, the presence of standard deviations ranging from 0.915 to 1.094 indicates some variability in experiences, possibly influenced by the specific roles or departments of the respondents.

Team Performance.

The researcher sought to determine level of agreement on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County

Table 2: Team Performance

| Statement | Strongly disagree | Agree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree | Mean | Std |
|--|-------------------|-------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|-------|
| Teams Are always meeting and exceeding the set goals | 5% | 7% | 3% | 54% | 31% | 4.000 | 1.032 |
| Teams are efficient in resource use and they produce outputs | 3% | 5% | 0% | 49% | 43% | 4.229 | 0.937 |
| Project stakeholders are always satisfied with the outputs | 0% | 2% | 2% | 41% | 56% | 4.508 | 0.622 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|-----|-----|-------|-------|
| There are high levels of team cohesion and positive dynamics within teams, including mutual support, collaboration, and the ability to work effectively together | 3% | 5% | 3% | 38% | 51% | 4.278 | 0.985 |
| Teams have the capacity to innovate and solve problems creatively, particularly in response to the unique challenges presented by working within a matrix structure. | 5% | 7% | 0% | 41% | 48% | 4.197 | 1.077 |
| Teams manage and resolve conflicts, particularly those arising from the dual reporting lines and intersecting responsibilities | 3% | 7% | 5% | 29% | 56% | 4.278 | 1.050 |

The researcher sought to determine the level of agreement on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County. Table 4.8 shows that a majority of respondents (85%) agreed or strongly agreed that teams consistently meet and exceed set goals (mean = 4.000; std = 1.032). Additionally, 92% agreed or strongly agreed that teams are efficient in resource use and produce outputs (mean = 4.229; std = 0.937). Furthermore, 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that project stakeholders are always satisfied with the outputs (mean = 4.508; std = 0.622). Respondents also highlighted high levels of team cohesion and positive dynamics, with 89% agreeing or strongly agreeing that teams exhibit mutual support, collaboration, and effective teamwork (mean = 4.278; std = 0.985). Moreover, 89% agreed or strongly agreed that teams have the capacity to innovate and solve problems creatively (mean = 4.197; std = 1.077). Lastly, 85% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that teams effectively manage and resolve conflicts arising from dual reporting lines and intersecting responsibilities (mean = 4.278; std = 1.050). These findings depict a high-

performing team environment marked by output quality, stakeholder satisfaction, adaptability, cohesion, and conflict management. While there are areas of variance in experience, the overall strength of performance suggests that the matrix structure, when supported by effective communication, clear role definition, and collaborative culture, can drive robust team outcomes.

Correlation Analysis Results

Correlation between communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance

The correlation between communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County. The table shows the results of the correlation analysis.

Table 3: Correlation between communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance

| | | Team Performance |
|--|-----------------|------------------|
| Communication in a matrix organization structure | Pearson | .605** |
| | Correlation | |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .021 |
| N | | 61 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

According to the findings, there is a positive association between communication in a matrix organization structure and its influence on team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County, as indicated by a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.605 and a p-value of 0.021. The correlation coefficient of 0.605 demonstrates a strong positive relationship, suggesting that improved communication within a matrix organization structure is associated with enhanced team performance. Furthermore, the p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the association is statistically significant. This means that the observed relationship is unlikely to have occurred by chance, providing evidence of a meaningful link between the variables.

Regression Analysis

The study conducted a regression analysis to find out the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

Table 4 Regression Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted Square | R | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------|----------|-----------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | 0.875 | 0.766 | 0.749. | | 0. 371 |

The R-squared value in the model is 0.766, indicating that 76.6% of the variance in the dependent variable (team performance in Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County) can be explained by the independent variables influence of communication in a matrix organization.

CONCLUSION

The research concludes that communication and feedback mechanisms within Children and Youth Development Centers in Laikipia County are generally well-structured and effective. A significant proportion of respondents indicated that clear communication channels exist for both vertical and horizontal communication, ensuring the clarity of information. Regular and productive formal meetings, briefings, and updates between teams and managers were reported as essential for maintaining effective communication. Additionally, respondents highlighted the presence of efficient feedback mechanisms that facilitate upward and downward communication between teams and managers. The coordination of information flow between team members and their managers was also positively assessed, reflecting an organized system that supports smooth interactions. Overall, the research emphasizes the strength of communication systems within Children and Youth Development Centers, which contribute to effective management and collaboration.

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that communication systems be further strengthened to maintain and enhance their effectiveness. Regular formal meetings, briefings, and updates between teams and managers should be sustained, with an emphasis on ensuring that information flows smoothly across all levels. Additionally, it is advisable to incorporate more interactive communication tools that can facilitate more dynamic exchanges of feedback, enabling both upward and downward communication. These efforts will help to further enhance clarity,

coordination, and collaboration within teams, ultimately leading to improved team performance and organizational efficiency.

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