



## **Influence of Trade Union on Employee's Performance in Government Health Institutions of Siha District, Tanzania**

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**Abstract:** This study sought to establish the influence of trade union on employee's performance in government health institutions of Siha District, Tanzania. The study employed the descriptive-correlational research design. The study involved Government Health Institutions in Siha District namely Kibong'oto Infectious Diseases Hospital and Siha District Hospital. The study population was 521 employees. From those, a sample of 226 staff members was selected through simple random sampling procedures. Data was collected through a questionnaire and treated through descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Based on the findings, the study concludes that trade union did not do much to convince employees of its role in improving performance. However, the performance was high as employees demonstrated a strong sense of commitment by dispensing health services to clients and there was high client satisfaction with service delivery. Based on the conclusions, the study recommends that there is a need to encourage and motivate employees to maintain their good performance. Since communication and sensitization have been found to be significant factors that influenced the performance, it is recommended that institutions should work hard to improve communication strategies so that performance can be improved.

**Keywords:** Communication; collective bargaining; sensitization; employee's performance; benefit.

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### **Introduction**

Trade Unions are legitimate representative organizations for working people, reflecting their aspirations, and translating their concrete material needs into collective action (Trade Union Congress Report (2021). According to Trades Union Congress - Rosa Luxemburg Foundation (2012), a trade union is an everlasting partnership of employees or salary earners for the aim of preserving their working conditions. The influence of Trade union on

employee performance has gained significant attention globally.

In Finland, a study revealed no relationship between the role played by the trade union and the employees' performance (Shrestha, 2012) while in Denmark and UK, trade unions support the employees' performance. In some developed countries, such as the United States, Trade Union have departed from the traditional norm of just pushing for salary increase but instead have set up their own health and pension plans, established

insurance and banking institutions and extend assistance to members with direct access to individual financial services (Koven, 2012).

In Africa, trade unions have revitalized security, wage augmentation, occupational safety, social wellbeing and working conditions. Trade Union in Cameroon protected employees against exploitation by employers, organized collective bargaining, and maintained a cordial working relationship with employers (Dinyuy & Sener, 2021).

In Kenya, the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions and Hospitals reported 1,105 trade disputes to the Ministry of Labor during the year 2017-2021 of which 852 were settled at the conciliation level, 61 were settled through the Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanism and 192 were forwarded to the Employment and Labor Relations Court. The Union further instituted several legal proceedings at the Employment and Labor Relations Court including the dispute between it and the Ministry of Education on the universal Collective Bargaining Agreements that cover all schools. As a result, the Employment and Labor Relations Court ordered the employer to recognize the Union and to pay the Union KSh. 2.6 million, being the cumulative membership dues that the employer refused to deduct from the workers and remit to the Union as per the labor law.

In Tanzania, Trade unions have struggled to address impeding workers' welfare in the Occupational Safety and Health Authority (OSHA) and have bargained for reduction of taxes for employees' remuneration (Mgaya 2021). Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers has depicted remarkable improvements in employees' working conditions by advocating for desirable standards of living, providing educational, cultural and recreational facilities and facilitating technological advancement by broadening employees' understanding the underlying issue (Kitundu, 2015). According to Tanzania Labor Relation Act of 2004, Trade Union should not only represent members in grievances and disciplinary hearings but should ensure that the health, safety and welfare of employees at places of work are of good quality.

According to Marti et al. (2022), Trade Unions play a significant role in spearheading workers' rights. Ibrahim, (2013) noted that trade unions advocate for workers' higher pay, acceptable working hours and better working conditions. Furthermore, Trade

Unions play a crucial role in making work places safe (Mwanyenza, 2015).

The International Labor Office (2005) highlights that Trade Unions have been instrumental in poverty reduction and in promoting employees' social justice. By forming a union, employees cultivate collective strength, rights are defended, interests are protected and platforms for social dialogue are established for the sake of improving their working conditions. Trade unions have always been about the search for better well-being and social justice for all. Other roles include maintaining occupational health and safety standards, fighting HIV/AIDS, promoting socio-economic security and rights of migrant workers.

Trade unions have the vital role of maintaining good relationships between management and employees as they represent employees at work places. Trade unions are a legitimate system for organizing workers to voice their rights and grievances. Without Trade Unions, employers would become too dictatorial due to absence mechanisms to ensure checks and balances on the exercise of the entrusted powers. Responsible unions play an important role in maintaining cordial relations between management and employees (Mkuwa & Lelo, 2018).

Trade unions have the vital role of maintaining good relationships between management and employees as they represent employees at work places. Trade unions are a legitimate system for organizing workers to voice their rights and grievances.

## **Methodology**

### **Design**

This study employed the descriptive-correlational research design to explore the influence of trade unions on employees' performance. Descriptive Correlational design endeavors to explain the relationship between two or more variables.

### **Population and Sampling**

The study involved Government Health Institutions in Siha district namely Kibong'oto Infectious Diseases Hospital and Siha District Hospital. The study population was 521 employees. From those, a sample of 226 staff members was selected through probability simple random sampling procedure.

### **Validity and Reliability**

One of the researchers, who is an expert in management and was the research supervisor

critically looked into the proposed questionnaire and made some suggestions on how it could be improved. The research supervisee, who is one of the researchers, incorporated the changes to improve the questionnaire before it was used in the field. Analysis of the pilot study data from 30 respondents yielded the Cronbach's Alpha of greater than 0.7 as reflected in table 1. Therefore, the questionnaire was reliable for data collection.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation were employed to descriptively analyze and summarize the data. Furthermore, Regression Analysis and Analysis was utilized to determine the influence of Trade Union (independent variables) on employee performance (the dependent variable).

**Table 1: Reliability Test Result**

| SN | Variable        | Items | Cronbach's Alpha | Comment  |
|----|-----------------|-------|------------------|----------|
| 1  | Social Economic | 5     | .860             | Reliable |
| 2  | Communication   | 5     | .926             | Reliable |
| 3  | Sensitizing     | 5     | .938             | Reliable |
| 4  | Organizing      | 5     | .944             | Reliable |
| 5  | Performance     | 5     | .849             | Reliable |

### Ethical Considerations

The researchers obtained the approval for data collection from the Institute of Accountancy Arusha. They further maintained anonymity, confidentiality of respondents. The respondents were given freedom to participate or withdraw at any time.

### Demographic findings

Male respondents were 134 (53.30%) while female counterparts were 92 (40.70%). Therefore, the majority of respondents were females. The age of respondents ranged from 20 to 50 years and above. Respondents with secondary education background were 20 (8.8%), those with certificate education were 58 (25.70%), those with diploma were 41 (18.10%), those with bachelor's degrees were 88 (38.90% and those with postgraduate education were 8 (3.50%).

### Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study based on the study's objectives.

**Objective 1:** To determine the contribution of the Trade Union in terms of selected factors in the Government Health Institution in Siha District.

The first objective was to determine the contribution of Trade Union in terms of selected factors in the Government Health Institution in Siha District. To reach this objective, responded were exposed to items that measured the contribution of the Trade Union in terms of promoting socioeconomic status of workers, improving communication between employees and the management and sensitizing workers on the benefits of performance and organizing collective bargaining.

**Table 1: Promoting Socioeconomics Status of Workers**

| SN                   | Promoting Socioeconomics Status of Workers  | Mean        | Std. Dev.     | Interpretation |
|----------------------|---|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1                    | The presence of trade Unions has led to the establishment of occupational health and safety standards within the institution                        | 3.36        | 1.231         | Neutral        |
| 2                    | Due to the presence of Trade Union the level of salary and wages I receive are fair and competitive.  | 3.17        | 1.142         | Neutral        |
| 3                    | The trade union for the past five years has demonstrated the protection of employees' rights at various levels including dismissed employees        | 3.08        | 1.319         | Neutral        |
| 4                    | The Trade Union has been the leading instrument in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the workplace to ensure a healthy workforce                        | 2.99        | 1.144         | Neutral        |
| 5                    | The Trade Union presence in my organization has improved the social relations among employees as well as clients thus harmonious working atmosphere | 2.76        | 1.103         | Neutral        |
| <b>OVERALL SCORE</b> |   | <b>3.07</b> | <b>.95363</b> | <b>Neutral</b> |

In the questionnaire, respondents had to indicate their agreement or disagreement by ticking one of the following options for each item in the

questionnaire: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The interpretation of the obtained mean score was as

follows: 1.00-1.49 = strongly disagree (very low), 1.50-2.49 = disagree (low), 2.50-3.49 = undecided (moderate), 3.50-4.49 = agree (high) and 4.50-5.00= strongly agree (very high).

### Promoting Socioeconomics Status of Workers

The first way of determining the contribution of the trade union was in terms of promoting the social economic status of workers, whereby respondents had to indicate their agreement of disagreement with five items. The overall mean score as well as the score for specific items in table 1 was between 2.50 and 3.49.

This means that respondents were neutral about the contribution of trade union in promoting social economic status of workers. In other words, the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whether promoting socioeconomic status of workers was

effective. This would suggest that the trade union had not played a significant role to convince respondents to declare its effectiveness. Therefore, it was not clear whether promotion of socioeconomic status of workers was effective. It is therefore difficult to draw a distinctive line of tangible impact of trade union on the employee’s socioeconomic perspectives.

### Improving Communication

The second way of determining the contribution of the trade union was through improvement of communication between employees and the management whereby respondents had to indicate their agreement of disagreement with five items. The overall mean score of the respondents as well as the score for specific items in the table was between 2.50 and 3.49.

**Table 2: Improving Communication between Employees and Management**

| Improving Communication |   | Mean        | Std. Dev       | Interpretation |
|-------------------------|---|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1                       | Employees provide vital information to the management             | 3.34        | 1.040          | Neutral        |
| 2                       | The Institution Hold employee's full council meeting as scheduled | 3.27        | 1.277          | Neutral        |
| 3                       | Employees are involved in the management decision-making.         | 3.23        | 1.083          | Neutral        |
| 4                       | Management disseminates vital information to employees            | 3.17        | 1.213          | Neutral        |
| 5                       | A meeting was held to improve employees' performance              | 3.12        | 1.262          | Neutral        |
| <b>OVERALL SCORE</b>    |   | <b>3.23</b> | <b>1.03415</b> | <b>Neutral</b> |

**Table 3: Sensitizing Workers on the Benefits of Performance**

| SENSITIZING WORKERS  |   | Mean        | Std. Dev.      | Interpretation |
|----------------------|---|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1                    | The trade Union conducts consultation surveys on employees' performance                                       | 3.19        | 1.216          | Neutral        |
| 2                    | Trade unions meet frequently with employees to sensitize them to the benefits of performance                  | 3.08        | 1.127          | Neutral        |
| 3                    | Trade unions always disseminate the best practices on employees performance based on their surveys            | 3.06        | 1.129          | Neutral        |
| 4                    | Trade Union understands the requirement for employee’s performance  | 2.92        | 1.191          | Neutral        |
| 5                    | Trade unions organize and sponsor employees to various workshops aimed at transforming employees' performance | 2.83        | 1.243          | Neutral        |
| <b>OVERALL SCORE</b> |   | <b>3.01</b> | <b>1.05677</b> | <b>Neutral</b> |

This means that respondents were neutral about the improvement of communication between employees and the management. The respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whether improvement of communication between employees and management was effective. This suggest that the trade union had not played a significant role to convince respondents to decide about its effectiveness in improving communication between employees and management The findings do not concur with findings of a study at Muhimbili National Hospital by Mkuwa and Lelo (2018) that Trade Unions influenced the employees’ Welfare.

### Sensitizing Workers on the Benefits of Performance

The third way of determining about the role of trade union was through sensitizing workers on the benefits of performance whereby respondents had to indicate their agreement of disagreement with five items. The overall mean score of the respondents as well as the score for specific items in the table was between 2.50 and 3.49.

This means that respondents were neutral about the role of trade union toward sensitizing workers on the benefits of performance. In other words, the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whether trade union sensitized workers on the benefits of performance. This would suggest that the trade union had not played a significant role to convince

respondents about its role in sensitizing workers on the benefits of performance effective.

### Organizing Collective Bargaining

The fourth way of determining about the role of trade union was through organizing collective bargaining whereby respondents had to indicate their agreement or disagreement with five items. The overall mean score of the respondents as well

as the score for specific items in the table was between 2.50 and 3.49.

This means that respondents were neutral about the role of trade union toward organizing collective bargaining. In other words, the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed whether trade union organized collective bargaining. This would suggest that the trade union had not played a significant role to convince respondents about its role in organizing collective bargaining effective.

**Table 4: Organizing Collective Bargaining**

| SN                   | Organizing Collective Bargaining  | Mean        | Std. Deviation | Interpretation |
|----------------------|---|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1                    | Trade Union has bargained for enabling working conditions                             | 3.28        | 1.059          | Neutral        |
| 2                    | Trade Union has bargained for acceptable working hours                                | 3.11        | 1.151          | Neutral        |
| 3                    | Trade Union has bargained for employee incentives.                                    | 2.96        | 1.254          | Neutral        |
| 4                    | Trade Union has bargained for competitive salary and compensation for employees       | 2.95        | 1.200          | Neutral        |
| 5                    | I am satisfied with the range and variety of incentives provided by the organization. | 2.93        | 1.250          | Neutral        |
| <b>OVERALL SCORE</b> |   | <b>3.04</b> | <b>1.06418</b> | <b>Neutral</b> |

**Table 5: Employee Performance at Health Institutions in Siha District**

| SN                    | Employee Performance at Health Institutions in Siha District   | Mean        | Std. Deviation | Interpretation          |
|-----------------------|--|-------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1                     | Employees are time-conscious and regularly punctual to designated areas for Service dispensation.  | 3.72        | .887           | High Performance        |
| 2                     | Employees demonstrate a strong sense of commitment to dispensing health services to deserving clients.   | 3.68        | .974           | High Performance        |
| 3                     | There is high Client Satisfaction with service delivery at all points of care in your institution  | 3.66        | .907           | High Performance        |
| 4                     | The services delivered to the clients are of high-quality output conforming to the standard operating procedures, policies, treatment guidelines, and Client Charter | 3.65        | .873           | High Performance        |
| 5                     | Our institution has met the threshold of revenue generation beyond the projected targets in the past five years.   | 3.11        | 1.047          | Undecided               |
| <b>OVERALL SCORES</b> |  | <b>3.56</b> | <b>.74041</b>  | <b>High Performance</b> |

**Objective 2:** To assess employees' performance in terms of selected indicators in the Government Health Institution in Siha District.

The second objective in this study was to determine the performance of trade union in terms of selected indicators in the Government Health Institution in Siha District as reflected in table 5. To reach this objective, respondents were exposed to five items in the questionnaire where they had to indicate their agreement or disagreement by ticking one of the following options for each item in the questionnaire: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

The interpretation of the obtained mean score was as follows: 1.00-1.49 = strongly disagree (very low), 1.50-2.49 = disagree (low), 2.50-3.49 = undecided (moderate), 3.50-4.49 = agree (high) and 4.50-5.00= strongly agree (very high).

The overall mean score regarding the performance of employees at the health institutions in Siha District was 3.56, which means that the performance of the employees was high. Particularly, employees were time-conscious and regularly punctual to designated areas for service dispensation, they demonstrated a strong sense of commitment to dispensing health services to

deserving clients, there was high client satisfaction with service delivery at all points of care in the institution and the services delivered to the clients was of high-quality output conforming to the standard operating procedures, policies, treatment guidelines and client charter. Finally, the institution had met the threshold of revenue generation beyond the projected targets in the past five years. Therefore, the performance of employees was high effective.

**Objective 3:** To determine the relationship between the role of trade unions and the employees' performance.

The third objective in this study was to determine the relationship between the role of trade unions and the employees' performance. This research question called for testing of the following null hypothesis: there is no significant relationship between the role of trade unions and the employees' performance. This hypothesis was tested through regression analysis because there were multiple independent variables against one dependent variable as seen in table 6 to 9.

**Table 6: Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>**

| Model | Variables Entered | Variables Removed | Method  |
|-------|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1     | SENSITIZING       | .                 | Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100). |
| 2     | COMMUNICATI<br>ON | .                 | Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100). |

a. Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE

**Table 7: Model Summary**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .565 <sup>a</sup> | .319     | .315              | .60629                     |
| 2     | .587 <sup>b</sup> | .344     | .338              | .59623                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), SENSITIZING

b. Predictors: (Constant), SENSITIZING, COMMUNICATION

**Table 8: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 36.111         | 1   | 36.111      | 98.238 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 77.193         | 210 | .368        |        |                   |
|       | Total      | 113.304        | 211 |             |        |                   |
| 2     | Regression | 39.008         | 2   | 19.504      | 54.865 | .000 <sup>c</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 74.296         | 209 | .355        |        |                   |
|       | Total      | 113.304        | 211 |             |        |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE

b. Predictors: (Constant), SENSITIZING

c. Predictors: (Constant), SENSITIZING, COMMUNICATION

Table 6 shows that sensitizing and communication significantly predicted performance while the rest of the independent variables were excluded. The multiple correlation coefficient, which is the relationship between independent and dependent

variables is .587 as appears in the model summary which is in table 7. The coefficient of determination is .338 in table 7, which is interpreted as 33.8% of the variance in performance is accounted for by sensitizing and communication.

**Table 9: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model |               | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized | t      | Sig. |
|-------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------|------|
|       |               | B                           | Std. Error | Beta         |        |      |
| 1     | (Constant)    | 2.402                       | .124       |              | 19.367 | .000 |
|       | SENSITIZING   | .385                        | .039       | .565         | 9.912  | .000 |
| 2     | (Constant)    | 2.237                       | .135       |              | 16.575 | .000 |
|       | SENSITIZING   | .233                        | .065       | .342         | 3.555  | .000 |
|       | COMMUNICATION | .192                        | .067       | .274         | 2.855  | .005 |

a. Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE

The p-value of .000 in table 8 and 9 lead us to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between the role of trade unions and the employees' performance. Particularly, the independent variables that correlated with employee performance were sensitizing and communication.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The study concludes that trade union did not do much to convince employees of its role in improving performance. However, the performance was high. Based on the conclusions, the study recommends that there is a need to encourage and motivate employees to maintain their good performance. Since communication and sensitization have been found to be significant factors that influenced the performance, it is recommended that institutions should work hard to improve communication strategies so that performance can be improved.

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