



Effect of Employee Coaching Practices on Universities' Performance in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the effect of employee coaching practices on the performance of universities in Tanzania. It was guided by one alternative hypothesis; there is a significant positive linear relationship between employee coaching practices and performance of universities in Tanzania. The Human Capital Theory (HCT) anchored the study. It was underpinned by positivism philosophy. The study was a census and the design was descriptive. 379 academic staff from Tanzanian Universities constituted the study's respondents. This study used a quantitative approach that made use of survey questionnaires in data collection. Data were collected from academicians in Tanzanian Universities (Mainland and Islands, Zanzibar) and analysed by using descriptive and inferential techniques. The study found that employee coaching practices had a significant positive effect on performance of Universities in Tanzania at $r=0.834$, and $p<0.001$, respectively. Universities should consider designing and implementing coaching programmes to help them perform better. To make this more effective, the need to show commitment to coaching practices should also be considered.

Keywords: Employee, Employee Coaching, Performance, Tanzania, University, University Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Globally, most organizations are besieged by numerous forces affecting their ability to survive and perform as expected. Trends of the 21st century have pushed organizations to seek superior ways to attain and retain competitiveness leading to such for ways to subdue the turbulence (McRae, 2023; Rego et al., 2022; Woo et al., 2021). Succession planning has been put forward as one of the initiatives that could enable organizational growth and sustainability hence good performance. Succession help organizations identify and develop talent to fill leadership roles, increases the availability of experienced staff and creates a pipeline for future higher responsibilities (Gillis et al., 2023; Ryba, 2023). One important succession planning strategy is employee coaching. Employee coaching is all about helping or guiding someone to achieve their goals and objectives without hampering their morale (Rabha, 2023).

Employee coaching in higher education has been playing a pivotal role in enhancing employee abilities by equipping people with relevant skills and knowledge. The fact that universities invest enormous resources in their human resources, knowledge and skills transfer should be given top priority (Hakro & Mathew, 2020). Through coaching, experienced staff may help those with little experience to acquire hands-on skills which could not be provided by using other approaches such as class lessons (Achi & Sleilati, 2016)

By considering that there is a higher rate of turnover in higher learning institutions in Tanzanian universities like in so many other higher learning institutions in Africa and beyond, those leaving these institutions should not leave before helping others through coaching (Mwita et al., 2023). This may help these institutions to retain valuable knowledge and skills and improve performance of these institutions.

With specific focus in Tanzania, universities have not been performing very well as expected by different stakeholders. Management experts and researchers have been looking for various performance drivers that can help Universities to perform exceptionally (Muya & Tundui, 2020). Numerous determinants of performance in universities have been uncovered by empirical studies. Succession planning practices particularly coaching has not been given



sufficient attention. This study focused on examining the effect of employee coaching practices on performance of universities in Tanzania.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Tanzanian Universities like any other organisations have been striving to ensure that they perform well. Various management practices have been put in place to ensure that these Universities are supplied with competent human resources particularly the academic staff (Kipesha & Msigwa, 2013). Undoubtedly, despite the efforts that any organisation may use to keep her competent employees, they will one day leave the organisation willingly or unwillingly. Competent academicians in universities retire, resign, get fired, get transferred or die (Lindfelt et al., 2018).

One of the questions that academicians and practitioners in management tend to ask themselves is how an organization can facilitate transfer of knowledge, skills, and competences from the experienced to the inexperienced staff. One of the most effective practices to do that is through coaching (Hill & Wheat, 2017). Coaching has been playing an important role to equip academic staff with relevant knowledge and skills. This practice has been commonly used in higher learning institutions globally. Employee coaching has been pivotal to organisational success in different ways including improving performance of universities. In the midst of these encouraging findings, Universities in Tanzania have been reported not to perform well (Muya & Tundui, 2020; Mwita, 2018). Little is known on whether employee coaching influences performance in Tanzanian Universities. This study was done to bridge this empirical gap.

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of this study was to assess the effect of employee coaching practices on performance of universities in Tanzania.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The study was guided by the following alternative hypothesis:

H_a : There is a significant positive linear relationship between employee coaching practices and performance of universities in Tanzania

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study used Human Capital Theory (HCT) in laying its theoretical foundation. The Human Capital Theory (HCT) is a 1960s addition to the body of knowledge by Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker (Ross, 2023). HCT acknowledges the immense value people can contribute and add to an organization and that it regards people as the most valuable asset of the organization and investing in them will generate worthwhile returns (Tan, 2014). The assertion embodied in the HCT is that, "It is more profitable to invest in individuals' education and training than in machines and factories, the return on investment is higher in the long term" (Andlil, 2017).

Becker (2006) and Teixeira (2014), advanced that education and/or training increases the productivity of workers by instilling useful knowledge and skills. Human capital embodies the combined intelligence, knowledge, skills, competencies, and expertise in individuals or groups of individuals that give the organization its distinctive character in its goods and services (Omwenga, 2017; Pettinger, 2017).

The human resources are capable of learning, changing, innovating, and creating and when properly motivated the organization's long term survival is guaranteed (Armstrong, 2009). The theory links with the study since its emphasis is on ensuring the employees have knowledge, skills, expertise, and varied experiences acquired through employee coaching. The aim of these is to ensure organizations have continued circulation of needed knowledge, skills, competencies, expertise, and experiences to best run their activities and perform better.

2.2 Empirical Review

The study by Utrilla et al., (2015) used the Spanish case study to establish the effects of coaching in employees and organizational performance. Structural equations modelling were used to test and analyze the hypotheses. 498 Spanish firms were studied using a sample of 2,303 sampled human resource managers from those firms. The researchers used questionnaires for gathering required data. The results confirmed that coaching had an influence on both employees' performance and organizational performance. This was established after the coefficient relationship between individual performance and organizational performance that confirmed a positive relationship between individual performance improvements because of coaching and organizational performance. Same as above established results come from a meta-analysis synthesizing by Jones et al., (2016) on the effectiveness of workplace



coaching on learning and performance outcomes from coaching. The study's results indicated the existence of positive effects of coaching on overall organizational outcomes such as performance.

Similar findings were found by Raza et al., (2017) in their study that sought to examine the impact of managerial coaching on employee performance and organizational citizenship behaviour: intervening role of thriving at work. The employed hierarchical regression analysis revealed managerial coaching directly influenced job and organizational performance. This study was quantitative and cross sectional and had 280 respondents sampled and obtained through a simple random technique from the pharmaceutical sector in Pakistan.

Survey questionnaires were used to collect data from the sample. The regression coefficients run through SPSS showed coaching to have a positive impact on in-role (job) performance and the general performance of the organization. However, the findings are contrary with the study of Kim and Kuo (2015) who found no positive relationship existing between managerial coaching and in-role (job) performance. Also, the study by Schermuly (2014) found negative effects of coaching for clients due to 10.7% of respondents citing lack of supervision from a coach, 10.6% pointing the lack of elaborate knowledge about the organization from a coach, 10.5% suggesting that coaches had too little professional expertise, and 9.5% of the respondents bemoaned to be overworked by the coach.

Schermuly (2014) undertook an explorative study on the negative effects of coaching for coaches in Germany. A total of 104 German coaches and 90 supervisors were quantitatively surveyed using questionnaires and expert interviews respectively to collect the information required. The study findings established a small negative relationship between supervision amount in the job and negative coaching effects perception. Furthermore, a study by Albizu et al., (2019) that focused on analyzing the effectiveness of executive coaching from a coachee perspective, found there to exist a positive and significant relationship between coachee's readiness and satisfaction and hence, improved performance. It was a survey study comprising of 176 sampled Spanish executives; 38.1% had responsibilities in the human resources area, 19.3% were middle managers or project leaders, 17.6% were chief executives, managing directors or presidents, and functional managers were 16.5%. Data was collected using electronic survey.

The findings of the previous study are in unison with those of Bozer and Sarros (2012). These examined the effectiveness of executive coaching on coachee's performance in the Israeli context. The study was quasi-experimental involving an experimental group and a control group and 197 participants from four Israeli firms that primarily provide professional executive coaching services to government, commercial and education sectors all over Israel participated. The 72 executives, and their coaches (68) and direct supervisors (28) formed an experimental group whereas 29 other executives from whence the experimental group was obtained formed a control group.

The mean results drawn from the two groups showed higher scores in the post coaching than the pre-coaching scores since $M=3.97$ and $M=3.67$, respectively. That means there was a significant improvement in job performance and the overall organizational performance after coaching was instituted. The study supported by the ANOVA results showing a significantly higher post-coaching effect on career satisfaction and job performance. Also, the ANOVA test by Losch et al., (2016) almost came up with similar but significantly higher results as the above, on individual coaching significant effect on job satisfaction and the general organizational performance when the coaches' transactional and transformational behaviours acted as intervening factors. The study also found job satisfaction to be significantly higher after individual coaching was done at ($M=7.52$, $SD=1.33$) $p<0.001$ as compared to the control group at ($M=5.23$, $SD=2.08$).

That is in line with the findings of Mühlberger and Traut-Mattausch (2015) with their experimental research that confirmed the significant effect of both the transactional and transformational leadership behaviours of coaches on the satisfaction of individual employees and the general organizational performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is used to establish behaviour patterns or relationships that exist between phenomenon by gathering, analysing and presenting data for studying variables and normally uses questionnaires as a tool for data collection to know peoples' perceptions, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that currently surround the phenomenon under study (Bhat, 2019; Remcos, 2019).

3.2 Target Population

This study's target population were 7071 academic staff from Tanzania full-fledged universities, which were thirty (30) (TCU, 2019, 2020). TCU (2020) report showed that among the 30 universities, 28 were accredited and chartered and 2 had provisional licence and not permitted to admit students yet.



3.3 Sample Frame

The study's sample frame included the academic staff from the 28 universities from Tanzania available in the list of universities from TCU. These were specifically targeted since they directly engage in the core activities and functions of universities and therefore gave reliable information.

Table 1

Sampling Frame

Country	Number of Universities	Sample frame (Academic Staff)
Tanzania	28	7071

3.4 Sample Size

The study used Yamane's formula to calculate the sample size which led to a sample size of 379. The study employed simple random sampling to arrive at the required sample of the study. Simple random sampling which is a probability type of sampling in which every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected (Grand Canyon University, 2019).

3.5 Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected by using a questionnaire and analysed by using descriptive and inferential statistics techniques.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

The respondents of this study were academic staff from the twenty eight (28) full-fledged universities in Tanzania, East Africa. A total of 306 copies of questionnaires were returned out of 379 questionnaires that were administered to respondents. This response rate is equivalent to 81%. A response rate of 50% and higher is considered excellent (Planet, 2022). Most responses came from male respondents (68.6%) followed by female (31.4%).

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

4.2.1 Descriptive Analysis for Employee Coaching Practices in Tanzania

The study's descriptive results were run, and Table 2 shows their thorough display.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics Results for Employee Coaching Practices in Tanzania

Statements	Mean	SD
There are normally different trainings done to all academic staff of the university	4.34	0.603
The job is performed best after trainings	4.36	0.574
Trainings that improve performance are preferred with all academic employees	4.45	0.543
Weighted Mean & SD	4.40	0.573
Skill specific programs organized by the university make academic staff perform their job better	4.45	0.530
With skill specific programs offered by the university, academic staff can readily take on future responsibilities	4.42	0.533
The job would have been difficult without skills improving programs	4.42	0.603
Weighted Mean & SD	4.43	0.555
Staff usually get opportunities to learn work related issues alongside experienced colleagues	4.33	0.593
Junior academic staff like to be assigned to work alongside experienced senior academic staff	4.42	0.557
There is always time for learning alongside experienced academic colleagues	4.40	0.599
Weighted Mean & SD	4.38	0.583

From Table 2, it was found that, Employee performance coaching garnered a weighted mean of 4.40 and standard deviation (SD) of 0.573. Similarly, employee skills coaching had a weighted mean and standard deviation of 4.43 and 0.555 respectively. Consequently, employee work shadowing gathered a weighted mean of 4.38 and standard deviation of 0.583. On a 1 to 5 points Likert scale, all the employee coaching practices scored a 4 weighted mean and above. Hence, the results showed that employee coaching practices are highly practiced in Tanzanian universities.



4.2.2 Descriptive Analysis for Performance of Universities in Tanzania

Table 3 depicts the descriptive results for the dependent variable. University performance was the dependent variable.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Performance of Universities in Tanzania

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Every academic staff does publications	306	1	5	4.08	0.813
The motivation to publish is high in this university	306	1	5	4.12	0.755
The university gets enough publications from academic staff	306	1	5	4.07	0.851
The enrolment of students is satisfying in this university	306	1	5	4.15	0.742
The academic staff help in the enrolment of students	306	2	5	4.19	0.717
This university has good enrolment trends	306	1	5	4.29	0.684
The academic staff help in graduating of students	306	2	5	4.35	0.616
The university environment supports a good number of students to graduate	306	2	5	4.31	0.653
The university's student's graduation rates are high	306	3	5	4.27	0.611
Weighted Mean & SD				4.20	0.712

Results from Table 3 show that the highest mean of 4.35 was obtained by the statement, "the academic staff help in graduating of students", whereas the lowest mean was with the statement, "the university gets enough publications from academic staff" at 4.07 mean score. On average, performance of universities in Tanzania scored the mean of 4.20. This means that most respondents highly agreed that university performance is well measured by levels of publications, enrolment, and graduation. This is in sync with King (2024) who suggests university performance to be measured along the parameters of publications, enrolment, and graduation among others.

4.3 Correlation Analysis

This segment presents the correlation analysis of the study variables, focusing mainly on employee coaching (EC) and university performance (UP) in Tanzania. The relationships between these two variables were assessed using Pearson's correlation analysis. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Correlation Matrix Results

Indicator		Employee Coaching	University Performance
Employee Coaching	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
University Performance	Pearson Correlation	.834**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	

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

Results from Table 4 indicate that employee coaching practices had a strong positive correlation with the dependent variable ($r=0.834$, $p<0.001$). This signifies that, as employee coaching practices increase, the performance of universities in Tanzania also positively increases.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The alternative hypothesis of the study was tested at a 5% significance level. The results summary of hypothesis testing is depicted in Table 5.

Table 5

Hypotheses Testing Results Summary

	Hypothesis	Results		Decision
		Beta (β)	p-values (sig.)	
H_a	There is a significant positive linear relationship between employee coaching practices and performance of universities in Tanzania	0.305	0.000	Accept



From Table 5, the hypothesis stated, *there is a significant positive linear relationship between employee coaching practices and performance of universities in Tanzania*. The beta coefficient test results statistically show a significant positive linear relationship between employee coaching practices and performance of universities ($\beta=0.305$, $p=0.000$). Consequently, the alternative hypothesis was accepted since there was a significant positive linear relationship between employee coaching practice and performance of universities in Tanzania ($\beta \neq 0$ and $p\text{-value} < 0.005$) (Ontario, 2023).

4.5 Regression Analysis

4.5.1 Model Summary

Results in Table 6 regarding the model summary, shows that employee coaching had a significant explanatory power on performance of universities.

Table 6

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.874 ^a	.764	.761	24760

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Practices b. Dependent Variable: University Performance

The findings in Table 6 show that university performance model as a function of employee coaching, yielded an R^2 value of 0.764. This is an indication that 76.4% of the variation in performance of universities in Tanzania can be explained by employee coaching, a position also maintained by the study conducted by Agarwal and Raghav (2023), who suggested that employee coaching was critical in ensuring organizations perform best.

4.5.2 ANOVA Results

Table 7 shows the goodness of fit, and the results clearly indicate the model was a good predictor of universities performance ($F_{3,302} = 325.543$, $p = 000$).

Table 7

ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	59.871	3	19.957	325.543	.000b
	Residual	18.514	302	.061		
	Total	90.097	305			

a. Dependent Variable: University Performance b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Coaching Practices

The results from Table 7 imply that the independent variable (employee coaching) is a good predictor of performance of universities; since employee coaching predict the dependent variable university performance, thus supporting a strong relationship, between the independent and dependent variable.

4.5.3 Multiple Linear Regression

Multiple linear regression for all the variables was done and Table 8 shows the results.

Table 8

Multiple Linear Regression Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.605	.086		18.589	.000
	Employee Coaching	.047	.010	.305	4.751	.000

a. Dependent Variable: University Performance

From Table 8, results show that, a unit increase in employee coaching practices corresponded to a 0.047 increase in university performance. The resultant regression equation is as shown:

$$UP = 1.605 + 0.047ECP + e.$$

Where: UP = University Performance, ECP = Employee Coaching Practices, and e = error term

Therefore, the regression model concluded that employee coaching practices had a significant effect on performance of universities in Tanzania. Employee coaching, as succession planning mechanism, had a significant effect on the performance of universities in Tanzania. These findings echo those of Hare (2023), who discovered that employee coaching boosted performance of organizations.



V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study found out that by implementing employee coaching practices performance of universities increase. The practice of employee performance coaching leads to measurable improvement in the overall performance of universities. This suggests that universities that invest in coaching initiatives that focus on enhancing employee work performance, they see a positive impact on their operational and academic outcomes. Moreover, the development of employee skills through coaching practices is also positively correlated with better university performance. This highlights the importance of continuous skills development and training for employee, as it directly contributes to the enhanced capabilities, efficiency, and effectiveness of universities' operations. By prioritizing employee coaching practice, universities in Tanzania can effectively consolidate their operational efficiency, academic quality, and overall institutional success.

5.2 Recommendations

Universities should consider designing and implementing coaching programmes to help them perform better. To make this more effective, the need to show commitment on the same should be considered. This includes, documenting these programs in various organizational operational documents including respective strategic plans. Secondly, since coaching is not something that everyone can do without being empowered, organizations must ensure employees are empowered to effectively undertake coaching. Also, experienced staff should be equipped with necessary coaching skills and techniques to make it more effective.

Henceforth, the study recommends universities to invest in comprehensive employee development programs, including employee performance coaching, employee skills coaching, and employee work shadowing. These programs should be tailored to the specific needs of the university and its staff, focusing mainly on areas that directly impact university performance such as levels of public, enrolment, and graduation. Equally, universities should establish a regular schedule for performance coaching sessions for all staff members. The sessions should cover performance goals, actual feedback, and strategies for improvement development. The coaches should be at the center stage in providing guidance to employees. Consequently, the performance of universities in Tanzania will improve.

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