Factors Affecting Induction of New Employees: A Case of Tea Factories in Nyamira County, Kenya

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Abstract: Tea factories contribute significantly in revenue creation in many developing countries such as Kenya where agriculture is the backbone of the economy. However, this vital contribution is diminishing with time owing to competition based on the quality of tea at the global market. An induction process which is well organized minimizes errors and improves the quality of the output. This study focused on factors affecting induction of tea factory employees in Nyamira County, Kenya. The objective of the study was to evaluate factors affecting induction of new employees in tea factories specifically in Nyamira County. The factors affecting employee induction included characteristics of new employees, release time, mentorship, and management support. This study was a descriptive study of factors affecting induction of new employees. The accessible population was 350 employees in the seven tea factories in Nyamira County. The study used stratified random sampling to group the employees into homogeneous groups. A random sample was then drawn from each group. A questionnaire with both open and closed-ended items was used to collect data. The findings of the study were then presented using tables with the aid of SPSS. Pearson’s correlation was used to establish the relationship between induction of new employees and the factors affecting induction.

Key words: Factors, induction, tea factories, Nyamira, Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

Beginning employees experience many challenges when transitioning to professional roles. As such, induction is a crucial part of the transition process, and should be effectively implemented, to help beginning employees settle down quickly, and start working (Armstrong, 2006). An effective induction process motivates employees, broadens knowledge and skills range making them more adaptable and less likely to waste resources (Hierbert, Gallimore, & Stigles, 2002). Moreover, employee induction reduces start-up costs, anxiety, and staff turnover. In addition, it saves time and helps employees develop realistic job expectations, job satisfaction, and a positive attitude to their work. Induction of new employees should be comprehensive, systematic, continuously monitored and evaluated. Many studies have shown that in most organisations induction is often handled haphazardly. It may take a day or two where the new employees may have interviews, participate in short courses, and receive some literature about the organisation (Tyson, 2006). Induction of this nature could be more harmful than helpful to an organisation in the long-run. This is because when too much information is given within a short time, vital information may be overlooked.

Studies on induction of beginning employees in Australia and UK have revealed that the induction processes in place do not adequately address specific needs of beginning employees such culture shock, self-confidence, and development good workplace social relations (Johnson & Burden, 2003). In the UK most employers strongly belief that young people lack employability skills. However, the induction programmes in place do not address this need (Johnson & Burden, 2003). That is, the induction systems used do not take into account experience of the new employee, and emphasize on provision of information on procedures and obligations. In addition, formal induction offered by large organisations mainly address terms and conditions of work, safety, and workplace induction (Tresize-Brown, 2004).
Informal induction offered by smaller enterprises address specific needs of new recruits (Johnson & Burden, 2003). In addition, induction of beginning employees is given limited time ranging from half a day and a week or a couple of weeks (Johnson & Burden, 2003).

In the USA, induction is commonly referred to as on-boarding. Many organization engage in intensive on-boarding (Bauer, 2010). For example, Zappos.com provides an intensive five-week training course where new employees learn about organizational values and procedures and are given an option to quit if they feel they are not a good fit for the organization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2010). In the USA, on-boarding is more developed for higher level employees than for part-time workers. This is because employees in leadership position can have significant influence on lower level employees (Bauer & Elder, 2006). The bank of America has an effective on-boarding program with emphasis on minimising costs of executive derailment, accelerating executive performance results, and facilitating smooth integration experience for new comers (Conger & Fishel, 2007).

In South Africa, there are induction and orientation programmes in place. The programmes are a result of a decision made by the national cabinet of South Africa on August 2004 with a view of providing its civil servants with exposure and training on service delivery and the development agenda of the nation as a whole (Kunene, 2009). However, according to Kunene (2009), the induction recruited health professionals in South Africa is not effectively implemented.

In Kenya, there is a handbook for civil service staff induction (Management, 2006). The handbook covers aspects such as orientation and management of the induction process, office organisation and practices, security and safety standards in government practices, public relations, service delivery, and customer care among others. However, induction of employees in factories and other private sector organisations is not clearly spelt out. In other words, the nature of induction varies from one organisation to another.

Statement of the problem

There are many tea factories across the country producing similar products of varying quality and prices. As such, tea factories have to develop strategies, which can give them a competitive edge, and ensure they remain relevant in the global market. Tea factories can only develop and implement these strategies effectively through their employees. An organisation can strengthen its competitive edge through effective induction of its employees (Runola, 2013). Thus, for tea factories, employees who are invaluable assets to an organisation (Armstrong, 2006) ought to be inducted effectively. Despite various organisations inducting their new employees, there is evidence that induction of new employees in Kenya is mainly haphazard and informal (Indoshi, 2003). This will result in ineffective induction of employees.

Ineffective induction of employees will in turn negatively affect the implementation of strategies for getting a competitive edge and this will give competitors an opportunity of overtaking the concerned factory. This will result in reduced revenue, and growth of the affected factory. Ineffective induction increases the risk of errors, increases employee turnover, threatens the quality of products and customer services, increases wastage, increases anxiety, and operational costs (Fullan, 2001). Understanding the factors affecting induction of employees will enable tea factories gain commitment of employees by giving them an effective induction (Runola, 2013), which in turn will give it a competitive advantage. Therefore, it is a problem when a tea factory does not induct its new employees effectively. In order to address this problem, there is need of detailed knowledge of factors affecting induction and the extent to which they affect employee induction. This study addressed this problem by investigating factors affecting induction of tea factory employees in Nyamira county.

Specific objectives

i. To find out the effect of characteristics of new employees on induction of tea factory employees
ii. To investigate the effect of release time on induction of tea factory employees
iii. To find out how mentorship affects induction of tea factory employees
iv. To establish the extent to which management support affects induction of tea factory employees

LITERATURE REVIEW

Zey’s mutual benefit theory

The mutual benefit theory, which is based on the social exchange theory, was found to be suitable for this study. There are various strategies used in employee induction. These include mentoring, internships, workshops, handbooks and informal guidance. However, the most commonly used strategy for employee induction is mentoring. Countries such as the United States, Japan, Singapore and New Zealand use mentoring as the...
main induction strategy (Moskowitz & Stephen, 1997). Mentoring involves assigning a veteran employee to a beginning or newly recruited employee. The veteran employee guides and supports the new employee with a view of making the beginning employee competent. Moreover, mentorship is a relationship aimed at developing a person. In this relationship, a more experienced or knowledgeable person guides a less experienced or less knowledgeable person. The mentor may be older or younger than the mentee, but the mentor must have a particular area of expertise.

The theoretical framework for this study is Michael Zey’s mutual benefits model (Zey, 1991). Zey’s mutual benefits theory is the main theory on which employee induction is founded. The mutual benefits theory was developed from the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964). The social exchange theory has a central premise, which asserts that the exchange of material and social resources is the basic form of human interaction (Review, 1978). Social exchange theory suggests that people weigh benefits against the costs of relationships. Moreover, the theory proposes that social behaviour is the outcome of an exchange process. This exchange process seeks to maximize benefits and minimize the associated costs. In case the risks outweigh the benefits, people are likely to terminate or quit a relationship. Cost is associated with things considered negative to the individual. These include having to put money, effort and more time into a given relationship. On the other hand, the benefits are the things an individual gains from a relationship. These include happiness, company, and social support.

According to Zey, individuals get into a relationship and remain in the relationship as long as the individuals in the relationship continue to benefit. Moreover, the organisation where the mentor and the mentee interact, benefits from this relationship. In Zey’s mutual benefit model, there are three major beneficiaries of mentorship relationship. That is, the mentee, the mentor and the organisation as a whole. Zey’s mutual benefit theory has been used by many researchers. According to this model, a successful mentorship relationship will create a sense of belonging to the organisation, loyalty, reduce anxiety, and support the new employee. Moreover, mentorship functions include teaching, psychological counselling and personal support, organisational intervention, and sponsoring (Zey, 1991), and that each function to some extent benefits the new employee and has some risks to the mentor. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) in their study on the impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers used zey’s mutual benefits theory as the typical theory underlying induction. Moreover, Zey’s mutual benefits theory was used by Craig as a theoretical framework for a study on strategies of an effective mentorship program for critical care nurses (Graig, 2011). Therefore, Zey’s mutual benefit theory is the appropriate theory for this study.

![Figure 1: Theory of employee development](Source: (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011))

Induction is one of the employee professional development programs. Other employee development programs include pre-service and in-service employee development. Pre-service development refers to the training an individual receives prior to employment. On the other hand, in-service refers to the regular personal development while employed. Induction involves guidance and support of beginning employees to ensure they settle quickly and start working efficiently and effectively (Armstrong, 2006). However, there are factors that affect induction of tea factory employees. This study assumes that the major factors affecting induction of factory employees include employee characteristics, release time, mentorship, and management support.

Effect of characteristics of beginning employees on induction of tea factory employees

When beginning employees have mentors in the initial work period, they are likely to have a feeling of clarity of their jobs. Employees have individual differences. As such, an effective induction process is that which employs an individualized approach, which provides information in a more personalized way, and is adapted to the needs, and learning process characteristics of individual employees (Costache, 2011). The success of employee induction to some extent depends on the traits of the beginning employee. These characteristics include gender, age, and social background among others. The new employee’s motivations, sources of support, attitudes, and expectations may result in
new employees who are motivated to work, open to getting support, and more focused on the main task during their initial years (Odella, 1988).

Effect of release time on induction of tea factory employees
For the induction of employees to be effective, all the major stakeholders involved in the induction process should be given ample time to play their roles effectively. Comprehensive and detailed induction that takes longer time is relatively better. However, there is no specific time span for comprehensive induction (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In the United States, the states of South Carolina and Utah provide their beginning teachers with reduced workload and workshops (Education, 2011). This provision ensures that the beginning employees have adequate time at their disposal to effectively attend to other needs of the induction programme such as common planning.

Effect of mentorship on induction of tea factory employees
Mentorship is the most commonly used method for employee induction whereby a newly recruited employee is assigned a mentor. Mentoring is meant to provide support and guidance to the new employee during the initial period of employment. This enables the new employee to settle into their roles more effectively, develop confidence in what they do, and develop networks and contacts within or even without the organisation. Motivation of tea factory employees in Kisii county is inadequate, and this is coupled with limited employee training and development (Oroni, 2014). This implies that mentorship training in tea factories is limited.

Effect of management support on induction of tea factory employees
Management support is the assistance and guidance given to the employee with a view of helping the employees settle as quickly as possible and carry out their duties effectively and efficiently. Beginning employees need three forms of support (Directorate for General Education and Culture, 2010). The three forms of support are personal support, social support, and professional support. An effective comprehensive induction programme should provide all the three forms of support. In the United States, the most common activity beginner teachers engage in is supportive communication with their principal, other administrators and HODs. Moreover, a large percentage of beginning employees receive ongoing guidance and feedback from their mentors (Ingersoll & Kappan, 2012).

Critical review
From the foregoing analysis of literature, it is evident that most of the studies have mainly sought to determine the impact of induction training on work practices. Some of the studies are induction and staff attitude towards retention (Odunayo et al., 2014), and the impact of induction on productivity (Katsuro et al., 2010). In addition, most of the studies have mainly investigated major areas covered in the induction process such as health and safety, and basic skills. Moreover, in some factories particularly in Vietnam, induction programmes are not systematic. Therefore, there are factors affecting induction process of new employees. However, the studies considered in the preceding section have not exhaustively investigated all the factors affecting induction of tea factory employees and the extent of their effect on induction. That is, the findings in the existing studies indicate varying degrees of the effect of various factors on employee induction. Furthermore, most of studies on induction in Kenya have mainly focused on induction in the teaching profession with little attention to other sectors of the economy. This study seeks to address this gap.

METHODOLOGY
Research design
This study used a survey design. The study evaluated factors affecting effective induction of tea factory employees. These factors were investigated exhaustively using a descriptive survey (Mugenda, M.O & Mugenda, A.G, 1999). This design enabled the researcher to determine and report the situation of tea factory employee induction in Nyamira County. In addition, a survey design was advantageous since it enabled the researcher to collect substantial data from a population economically (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). As such, the researcher was able to establish the relationship between the study variables.

Target population
The target population for this study was 350 tea factory employees both in permanent and contractual terms in Nyamira County. From this population, 4 managers, 12 managers, and 56 new employees were randomly selected. Managers and HODs were used because they comprised of the top and middle level management and are in contact with new employees. On the other hand, new employees were at a better position to explain if
they were inducted and to what extent. This population was preferred because it was representative of the tea factory workforce in Kenya. That is, the employees were of varying age groups, experiences, backgrounds. Therefore, this population was appropriate for the study on factors affecting induction of tea factory employees Nyamira County.

Sample and sampling techniques
This study used stratified random sampling. According to Odhiambo et.al (2000) stratified sampling is used when representatives from each subgroup within a population need to be represented in the sample. The sampling fraction for each subgroup was taken in an equal proportion as the subgroup has in the population. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), in stratified random sampling, minority groups in the population are included in the study. In most cases, minority subgroups may be omitted entirely by other sampling methods. Therefore, this study used stratified random sampling to ensure minorities were included.

Research Instruments
This study used questionnaires to collect data from beginning employees, and a separate one that was used to collect data from management. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended items. This ensured consistency of data and ease in coding of responses. In addition, the items in the questionnaire were based on a five point Likert’s scale. Since the study focused on variables which were not observed directly, the questionnaire was best suited instrument for this study considering the impact of time constraints. Questionnaires are the common instruments used to obtain information concerning a given population (Mugenda, M.O & Mugenda, A.G, 1999). Moreover, each item in the questionnaire was developed to address specific research questions.

Validity
In order to enhance the validity of the research instruments, the researcher consulted experts and exploited peer-review mechanisms to test the validity of the instruments. Moreover, the researcher held major extraneous variables constant by using homogeneous categories of the subjects for a given extraneous variable. In addition, the sample for the study was representative of the target population so that the findings of the study may be generalized to other populations (Mugenda, M.O & Mugenda, A.G, 1999).

Reliability
To improve the reliability of the instruments, the researcher used the test-retest technique on a sample. The sample for piloting was 10% of the study sample and was not be part of the research respondents. The researcher administered the same instrument twice to the same group of respondents. The time difference between the two tests was about three weeks. The scores from the two test periods was then correlated to obtain the correlation coefficient of reliability. The coefficient was found to be more than 0.80 then the instrument was highly reliable (Mugenda, M.O & Mugenda, A.G, 1999). The result of the test-re-test was used to improve the instrument to accommodate all responses for the study.

Data collection procedures
The researcher personally administered the questionnaires and sampled managers where possible. Moreover, the researcher sought the help of research assistants who administered and collected the completed questionnaires from the factories. In addition, the researcher gave assistance pertaining interpretation of questions where necessary.

Data processing and analysis
The collected data was edited, categorized, coded for analysis. Descriptive statistical techniques was used for analysis in order to establish dispersion of data, and frequency distribution which was presented using tables and percentages. Percentages were of great importance in comparison of groups that differ in size. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to establish and explain the relationship between induction of new tea factory employees and the independent variables.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Response rate
The study targeted a total of seven tea factories. However, four were selected by simple random sampling. In addition a total of 72 respondents were picked by stratified random sampling. Data collection instruments were administered to all the respondents. The response rate was 100%.

Effects of employee characteristics on induction
All the top management respondents 5 (100%) believed that characteristics of new employees affect induction to a very great extent, 6 (50%) of the middle level management respondents believed new employee characteristics affects induction to a great extent whereas the remaining 6 (50%) believe that they moderately do.
Moreover, study revealed that 15 (50%) of the technical staff respondents thought that characteristics of new employees moderately affect induction, 9 (30%) believed the effect was small, but only 6 (20%) of the technical staff respondents thought the effect was to a great extent. This implies that employee characteristics is a key factor in employee induction.

Effect of release time on induction

According to the study, 5 (100%) of the top management respondents agreed that release time affects employee induction to a small extent. 12 (100%) of the respondents in middle level management believed that release time affects induction to a very great extent. The half of the technical staff interviewed 15 (50%) thought release time affects induction to a very small extent. This implies that release time may not have a great effect on employee induction.

Effect of mentorship on induction

From the study, 5 (100%) of the top management respondents believed that mentorship affects employee induction to a great extent. 12 (100%) of the middle level management respondents thought it affects induction to a very great extent. 8 (32%) of the support staff thought it affects induction to a great extent whereas 17 (68%) of the same category believed the effect was to a very great extent. However, 24 (80%) of the technical staff believed mentorship affects induction but to a small extent. This implies that majority of the respondents, 48 (66.7%) thought that mentorship training greatly affects employee induction.

Effect of management support on employee induction

According to the study, 17 (100%) of the Top and Middle level management agreed that Management support affects employee induction to a very great extent. 18 (25%) of the respondents, whom were from technical and support staff thought managemen support affects employee induction to a small extent. Only 26 (36.1%) of all the respondents thought management support very greatly affects induction. This implies that management support may not have a major effect on induction.

Inferential analysis

Correlational analysis was used to examine the perceived relationship between characteristics of new employees and induction, release time and induction, mentorship and induction, and management and induction. The relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable, induction are summarized in table1. N is the total number of respondents from whom data was successfully collected.

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<th>Induction of new employees</th>
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Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
The first objective of the study was to find out the effect of characteristics of new employees on induction. The analysis resulted in a correlation coefficient of 0.931 which was significant at 1% significance level (p-value=0.000) which is less than 0.01. This shows that there was a very strong positive relationship between employee characteristics and induction. For release time, a correlation coefficient of 0.914 was obtained. The coefficient was significant at 1% significance level (p-value=0.000) which is less than 0.01. This implies that there existed a strong positive relationship between release time and induction. However, on mentorship, the analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.956. The coefficient was found to be insignificant at 1% significance level (p-value=0.065) which is greater than 0.01. In other words, the relationship between the variables was not causal or it was just by chance. However, it is worth noting that there existed a strong positive relationship between mentorship and induction. This implies that mentorship affects induction to some extent.

Finally, with regard to management support, the analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.998 which was found to be significant at 1% significance level (p-value=0.000) which is less than 0.01. This revealed that there was a very strong positive relationship between management support and induction since the magnitude of the coefficient is almost equal to 1.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of findings
The study revealed that there were major factors which affected employee induction. The respondents rated other factors outside the study variables that may affect induction. That is, 41(56.9%) thought financial constraints greatly affects induction while 35(48.6%) thought workload has a major effect on induction.

Employee characteristics
The study established that there existed a very strong positive relationship between employee characteristics and induction as shown in table 1. This shows that characteristics of beginning employees which include gender, age, experience, and level of commitment if well exploited can positively affect induction. Moreover, 33.3% of the respondents thought employee characteristics had a small effect on induction while 48.6% thought induction had a great effect on induction.

Release time
From the study, it was established that there was a strong positive relationship between release time and induction (r= 0.914 and p-value=0.000) as shown in table 4.35. This implies that if adequate release time is provided both the mentor and mentee to engage in specific induction activities, there will likely be a positive effect on induction. However, it should be noted that 37(51.4%) of the respondents thought release time affected induction but only to a small extent while 35(48.6%) thought that release time greatly affected induction.

Mentorship
The third objective of the study was to find out the effect of mentorship on induction. It was established that there was a statistically insignificant relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficient was 0.956 (p-value=0.065) which was greater than 0.01 significance level. The relationship was not causal or might have existed just by chance. However, it is worth noting that that there existed a strong positive relationship between the two variables since the magnitude of the coefficient is closer to 1. In addition, majority of the respondents, 48(66.7%) indicated that mentorship affects induction to a great extent.

Management support
Moreover, the study revealed that there existed a relationship between management support and induction. The two variables had a statistically significant positive correlational coefficient of 0.998 (p-value=0.000). This implies that there existed a very strong positive relationship between management support and induction. This is because the magnitude of the coefficient is approximately equal to 1. In addition, 25% of the respondents thought management support affected induction to a small extent, 38.9% moderately, and 36.1% to a very great extent. This implies that management support to some extent has a significant effect on induction.

Conclusions
The general objective of this study was to investigate factors affecting employee induction. The results obtained indicate that there existed strong relationships among between the independent variable and the dependent variable. However, one of the variables mentorship did not have a statistically significant relationship. As a result, the relationship may not be causal. Although the relationship was statistically insignificant, it is worth noting that there existed a strong positive
relationship between mentorship and induction. Therefore, mentorship affects induction to some extent. According to the results obtained, it is clearly evident that employee characteristics have a major effect on induction. That is, employee characteristics had a strong positive relationship with employee characteristics. In addition, release time had a strong positive relationship with induction. Hence, release time is a significant factor affecting induction. Moreover, the study established that there was a very strong positive relationship between management support and induction. This is because the magnitude of the correlation coefficient was approximately equal to 1. The study concludes that the major factors affecting induction are employee characteristics, release time, and management support.

Recommendations

Employee characteristics
The findings of this study are of great importance to factories and mentor involved in the induction process. Therefore, before induction can start, knowledge of the new employee’s characteristics is inevitable. This is because new employee characteristics such as experience, exceptional interpersonal skills, self-motivation and commitment enable them learn faster and better about their new jobs during induction compared to their counterparts who lack these characteristics.

Release time
For induction to be effective, the study recommends that organisations should provide adequate release time for the process. However, this can only be realised if appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that the provision of this time does not negatively affect the productivity of the units as well as that of the entire organisation.

Mentorship
Although the relationship between mentorship and induction was not statistically significant, it was established that there exist a strong positive relationship between mentorship and induction. This study recommends that mentorship should involve equipping mentors with vital skills. These include observation skills, assessment skills, interpersonal skills, and ability to work with adults.

Management support
The management of any organisation is a major stakeholder in all the activities taking place in the organisation. Therefore, for induction to be effective there is need for entire management to be actively involved in the induction process at all stages. The study recommends that management personnel should participate in workshops which equip them latest developments in induction and skills to manage the process effectively. In addition, the management should ensure availability of resources such as finances for induction, induction policy, and timely feedback to employees. Furthermore, management should conduct regular meetings with mentors and mentees so that they can make significant contribution to induction process.

Areas for further studies
The study recommends that future studies should investigate the relationship between mentorship and induction, and if possible identify the intervening variables mediating this relationship.

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