The Relationship Between Mentorship and Performance of Ministry of Interior and National Administration Employees in Kajiado County

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Abstract

The Government of Kenya has continued to implement public service reforms to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery. A critical aspect of this reform agenda is motivating public servants through sustainable, non-cash incentives, in line with cost-cutting measures. This study explored how mentorship, as a form of non-monetary incentive, affects the performance of Ministry of Interior and National Administration employees in Kajiado County. Guided by Herzberg's Two-Factor, Expectancy, Equity, and Social Learning Theories, the study targeted National Government Administration Officers and selected a sample of 222 respondents through stratified sampling. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires and analyzed using regression techniques in SPSS (version 27). The findings revealed that mentorship significantly enhances employee performance by providing support, skill transfer, and constructive feedback. Structured mentorship programs were shown to improve competencies, adaptability, and motivation, thereby strengthening service delivery. The study concludes that mentorship is a critical non-monetary incentive that can foster productivity and commitment within the Ministry of Interior and National Administration. It recommends that the Ministry institutionalize structured mentorship programs, including one-on-one coaching, peer learning, and professional guidance, to improve employee capacity and sustain performance improvements.

Keywords: *Mentorship, Non-monetary incentive, Performance, Ministry of Interior and National Administration, Kajiado County*

1.0 Introduction

Employee motivation is a critical determinant of performance in public service, where service delivery depends heavily on personnel's productivity, commitment, and efficiency. While financial incentives have traditionally boosted motivation, resource constraints and the need for sustainable solutions have led governments and organizations to adopt non-monetary approaches increasingly. Among these, mentorship has emerged as an important strategy for enhancing employee engagement, productivity, and retention (Ofobruku, 2015).

Globally, mentorship has been recognized as a vital human resource tool that nurtures skills, transfers knowledge, and provides psychosocial support to employees. In the United States, mentorship programs in public institutions have strengthened career development and job satisfaction, thereby improving service delivery (Das, 2022). Similar findings in Ghana and South Korea indicate that employees who receive mentoring and career guidance exhibit higher motivation and commitment, which ultimately translate into improved performance outcomes (Amoatemaa & Kyeremeh, 2016; Kim, 2017).

In Africa, evidence suggests that mentorship has been used in the health and education sectors to orient staff to their roles, reduce turnover, and enhance productivity (Mathauer & Imhoff, 2006; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2019). In Nigeria, mentoring within the construction industry improved employees' role adaptation and performance efficiency (Ofobruku, 2015). These findings underscore the universal value of mentorship as a low-cost but high-impact non-financial incentive.

In the Kenyan context, the public service is a key driver of national development, and effective use of human capital is central to achieving Vision 2030. Within the Ministry of Interior and National Administration—previously known as the 'Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government' (MICNG)—employees such as County Commissioners, Deputy County Commissioners, and Assistant County Commissioners are responsible for critical administrative functions. However, motivating this cadre of staff has been challenging due to limited financial resources and an environment often marked by high workloads, complex community demands, and pressures to implement policy (Lavigna, 2014; Omollo, 2019).

Mentorship offers a practical response to these challenges by equipping administrators with the knowledge, skills, and guidance needed to perform their roles effectively. It also fosters confidence, creates accountability, and strengthens organizational identification, which in turn boosts performance outcomes. In Kajiado County, where administrators serve in diverse sociocultural and geographic contexts, mentorship can improve service delivery, strengthen policy implementation, and build resilience among public servants operating under resource-constrained conditions.

Despite its demonstrated value globally, the role of mentorship as a motivational strategy in Kenya's public service has not been adequately documented. Most existing

studies have emphasized financial incentives, job recognition, or career progression, leaving a knowledge gap about the extent to which mentorship influences public servants' performance. This study, therefore, seeks to examine how mentorship, as a non-monetary incentive, affects the performance of Ministry of Interior and National Administration employees in Kajiado County.

> *"Implementing comprehensive mentorship initiatives offers a strategic pathway for strengthening employee performance in the public sector."*

2.0 Materials and Methods

Research Design

A descriptive-explanatory research design was adopted, allowing the researcher to capture and describe the variables of interest at a specific point in time while examining the relationship between mentorship and employee performance (Allen, 2017; Setia, 2016).

Target Population

The target population consisted of National Government Administrative Officers (NGAO) working under the MICNG in Kajiado County. This included County Commissioners, Deputy County Commissioners, Assistant County Commissioners, Chiefs, and Sub-Chiefs. Only employees serving as public administrators were included in the study, while other ministry staff outside this category were excluded.

Sampling Design and Sample Size Determination

The study used Israel's (1992) sample size determination table, derived from Cochran's formula, to determine the representative sample size. From the total population of 343 public administrators in Kajiado County, a sample of 222 respondents was deemed sufficient to achieve a 95% confidence level. Stratified random sampling was used to select respondents. This approach ensured that each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected. Ultimately, 177 respondents participated, representing an 85% response rate. The proportional distribution of the sample across administrative ranks was based on their share of the population.

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed to elicit respondents' perceptions of mentorship and its impact on their performance. The questionnaire included both closed-ended items (Likert and multiple-choice scales) and a few open-ended questions to allow elaboration. The closed-ended questions enabled quantitative measurement, while open-ended responses provided richer qualitative insights (Elazia, 2019). Prior to data collection, approval was obtained from the Kenyatta University Ethics and Review Board, NACOSTI, and the Kajiado County Commissioner. Permission was also sought from Deputy County Commissioners to access chiefs, assistant county commissioners, and sub-chiefs. The researcher introduced the study to the

respondents, explained its purpose, and obtained informed consent before administering the questionnaires. Where respondents were unable to complete the questionnaires immediately, arrangements were made for collection at a later date. All returned questionnaires were reviewed, edited, and coded for analysis.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability was assessed using a test–retest design during the pilot phase. Ten respondents completed the questionnaire twice, with a 21-day interval between administrations. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to compare responses, yielding a score of 0.76, which exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Bardhoshi & Erford, 2017). This indicated that the instrument consistently measured the influence of mentorship on performance. Content validity was established through expert review by university research supervisors. The experts evaluated the questionnaire items to ensure they adequately captured the constructs of mentorship and performance. Feedback led to refinements in the phrasing and structure of the questions. Both internal and external validity considerations were addressed to enhance the generalizability and accuracy of the findings (Trochim, 2006).

Data Analysis

The study used both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, means, and percentages, were used to summarize and present the responses. In contrast, inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions and test relationships between mentorship and performance. Specifically, the study used Pearson's correlation to test the relationship between mentorship and performance, with significance set at $p < 0.05$. A simple linear regression was also conducted to determine the predictive influence of mentorship on performance, using the model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where, Y = Performance of public service employees, β_0 = Constant, β_1 = Coefficient of mentorship, X_1 = Mentorship, and ε = Error term. The results were presented in tables for clarity.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality (Nijhawan et al., 2013). Respondents were assured that their identities would remain anonymous, and questionnaires contained no personal identifiers. Data were securely stored and analyzed in SPSS (version 25) after removing any information that could compromise privacy.

3.0 Results and Discussion

Response rate

Response rates are a critical indicator of participation and the reliability of survey findings. Table 1 presents response rates by administrative designation within the MICNG in Kajiado County, reflecting both the effectiveness of data collection and the level of engagement achieved across the various ranks.

Table 1

Response Rate

Designation	Sample Size	Actual	Response Rate
County Commissioner	1	1	100%
Deputy County Commissioners	5	4	80%
Assistant County Commissioners	21	18	86%
Chiefs	64	55	86%
Sub-Chiefs	131	99	76%
Total	222	177	85%

The study achieved an overall response rate of 85%, exceeding the recommended 75% threshold for survey research (Fincham, 2008). Response rates varied by designation, ranging from 76% among Sub-Chiefs to 100% for the County Commissioner, reflecting broad participation across administrative levels. This high response rate enhances the representativeness of the findings, reduces the risk of non-response bias, and strengthens the study's validity. Strong engagement, particularly from key leadership positions, underscores ministry employees' commitment to contributing to research aimed at improving their work environment and performance. This level of participation provides a robust foundation for reliable and accurate analysis.

Demographic Characteristics

Understanding respondents' demographic characteristics provides valuable context for interpreting and understanding the study's findings. Analysis of gender distribution, length of service, and educational levels offers insights into workforce diversity and its potential influence on perceptions of mentorship within the public service. Table 2 presents the demographic characteristics of employees in the Ministry of Interior and National Administration in Kajiado County, offering insights into staff representation.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	69	39.0
Female	108	61.0
Length of Service		
Below 3years	22	15.5
3years	27	19.0
3 – 5years	36	25.4
6 – 10years	39	27.5
Above 10years	18	12.7
Education Level		
Diploma	116	79.45
Undergraduate	24	16.44
Masters	6	4.11
Ph.D.	0	0

The gender distribution indicates a female-majority workforce, with women comprising 61.0% of employees compared with 39.0% of men. This representation reflects efforts

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toward gender inclusivity, which can enhance team dynamics, reduce gender bias in administrative functions, and promote equity in the workplace. In terms of tenure, most employees have served between 6–10 years (27.5%) and 3–6 years (25.4%), suggesting strong retention and organizational stability. Such longevity contributes to the accumulation of expertise, continuity in policy implementation, and reduced turnover-related disruptions. Regarding education, the majority of respondents hold diplomas (79.45%), while 16.44% possess undergraduate degrees. This high level of educational attainment underscores the ministry's emphasis on qualifications, which may enhance performance, support evidence-based decision-making, and foster job satisfaction and retention.

Descriptive statistics for Mentorship as an Incentive for Performance of MICNG employees

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics on employees' perceptions of mentorship as a performance-enhancing incentive within the MICNG. The statements assessed key dimensions of mentorship, including one-on-one coaching, support during delegated tasks, fostering teamwork, providing constructive feedback, delegating tasks, and guiding skill development. The analysis highlights how these mentorship practices contribute to employee performance and situates the findings within the context of related Kenyan studies.

Table 3

Descriptive statistics for Mentorship as an Incentive for Performance of MICNG employees

Statement	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	Std Dev.
I receive regular one-on-one coaching sessions with my mentor	0 (0.0%)	17 (9.6%)	34 (19.2%)	86 (48.6%)	40 (22.6%)	3.84	0.884
My mentor provides adequate support when I am handling delegated tasks.	5 (2.8%)	6 (3.4%)	21 (11.9%)	92 (52.0%)	53 (29.9%)	4.03	0.901
My mentor encourages collaborative projects within our team.	1 (0.6%)	3 (1.7%)	12 (6.8%)	83 (46.9%)	78 (44.1%)	4.32	0.726
I receive constructive feedback from my mentor that helps me improve	0 (0.0%)	6 (3.4%)	12 (6.8%)	90 (50.8%)	69 (39.0%)	4.25	0.729
My mentor delegates meaningful tasks that challenge me.	11 (6.2%)	16 (9.0%)	30 (16.9%)	79 (44.6%)	41 (23.2%)	3.69	1.112
My mentor provides clear guidance on how to improve my skills.	15 (8.5%)	4 (2.3%)	50 (28.2%)	59 (33.3%)	49 (27.7%)	3.69	1.152

The findings in Table 3 highlight the influence of mentorship on employee performance. A majority of respondents (71.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that they receive regular one-on-one coaching sessions, yielding a mean of 3.84 (SD = 0.884). This reflects the positive role of personalized mentorship in enhancing work satisfaction and competence, consistent with Cherono et al. (2016). Only 9.6% disagreed, indicating broad acceptance of structured coaching as an

effective skill-development approach. Regarding task support, 81.9% reported receiving adequate mentorship when handling delegated assignments (M = 4.03, SD = 0.901). These results suggest that mentorship significantly contributes to task mastery and confidence, corroborating Mwangi's (2018) assertion that effective mentorship facilitates the execution of complex responsibilities.

Encouraging collaboration recorded the highest level of agreement, with 91% affirming that their mentors promote teamwork (M = 4.32, SD = 0.726). This underscores mentorship's role in fostering collective engagement, echoing Chilgong et al.'s (2021) observation that collaboration enhances workplace cohesion and operational effectiveness in the public sector. Constructive feedback was also highly valued, with 89.8% of respondents in agreement (M = 4.25, SD = 0.729). This aligns with Ndungu (2017), who emphasized that timely feedback strengthens motivation and performance outcomes, demonstrating that feedback mechanisms are well integrated within mentorship structures.

Regarding the delegation of meaningful tasks, 67.8% agreed or strongly agreed, while 15.2% disagreed (M = 3.69, SD = 1.112). The variation suggests differences in task complexity across administrative ranks. This finding aligns with Ndikumana et al. (2019), who highlighted the importance of challenging assignments in stimulating engagement and professional growth. Finally, perceptions of guidance clarity were relatively mixed, with 61% in agreement and 10.8% in disagreement (M = 3.69, SD = 1.152). The variability mirrors Okafor's (2014) observation that inconsistent guidance can affect mentorship outcomes, underscoring the need for more structured mentoring approaches to maximize effectiveness.

Relationship between Mentorship and Performance of MICNG employees

Table 4 reports the Pearson correlation between mentorship and employee performance within the MICNG. The coefficient indicates the strength and direction of the association, and statistical significance is evaluated at the 0.05 level to assess the reliability of the findings.

Table 4

Relationship between Mentorship and Performance of MICNG employees

		Mentorship	Performance of MICNG employees
Mentorship	Pearson Correlation	1	.825**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	177	177
Performance of MICNG employees	Pearson Correlation	.825**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	177	177

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

The results show a correlation coefficient of 0.825 and a p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05), indicating a very strong, statistically significant positive relationship between mentorship and the performance of MICNG employees. This suggests that increased mentorship efforts are associated with substantial improvements in service delivery within the ministry. These results corroborate Ndungu (2017), who found that structured

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mentorship programs significantly enhance performance, particularly in contexts demanding high service standards. The strength of this correlation underscores the critical role of mentorship in fostering continuous improvement and job satisfaction. Structured mentorship initiatives that prioritize skill development, task guidance, and constructive feedback create a supportive work culture that enhances productivity and engagement (Mwangi, 2018). Consequently, investing in mentorship emerges as a strategic approach for public service institutions seeking to strengthen both individual effectiveness and overall organizational performance.

Performance of MICNG employees

Table 5 presents descriptive statistics on employee perceptions of performance recognition and job satisfaction within the MICNG. Items measured included the effect of recognition on job satisfaction, the relationship between performance and job stress, opportunities for promotion, skill enhancement through challenging tasks, satisfaction with goal attainment, and clarity of performance expectations. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed to provide insights into how these factors shape job satisfaction and motivation among MICNG employees.

Table 5

Performance of MICNG Employees

Statement	SD F(%)	D F(%)	N F(%)	A F(%)	SA F(%)	Mean	Std Dev.
Recognition of my performance enhances my overall job satisfaction.	3 (1.7%)	6 (3.4%)	69 (39.0%)	72 (40.7%)	27 (15.3%)	3.64	0.841
My performance level helps in reducing job-related stress.	4 (2.3%)	13 (7.3%)	24 (13.6%)	112 (63.3%)	24 (13.6%)	3.79	0.852
My performance is recognized as a key factor for potential promotions.	3 (1.7%)	16 (9.0%)	22 (12.4%)	79 (44.6%)	57 (32.2%)	3.97	0.982
Completing challenging tasks enhances my professional skills.	1 (0.6%)	12 (6.8%)	50 (28.2%)	60 (33.9%)	54 (30.5%)	3.87	0.948
I feel more satisfied with my job when I achieve my performance goals.	7 (4.0%)	12 (6.8%)	26 (14.7%)	86 (48.6%)	46 (26.0%)	3.86	1.010
Clear performance expectations contribute to lower levels of job stress.	19 (10.7%)	17 (9.6%)	35 (19.8%)	59 (33.3%)	47 (26.6%)	3.55	1.274

The findings showed that recognition positively influenced job satisfaction, with 56.0% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing and only 5.1% disagreeing. The mean score of 3.64 (SD = 0.841) indicates that recognition is generally perceived as beneficial to job satisfaction, consistent with Ndungu (2017), who reported that recognition enhances morale and satisfaction

in Kenyan public institutions. Regarding performance and job-related stress, 76.9% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that higher performance reduces stress, while 9.6% disagreed. The mean score of 3.79 (SD = 0.852) suggests a favorable perception, supporting Mwangi's (2018) finding that employees with higher performance levels

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experience less stress due to greater competence in managing responsibilities.

Performance was also strongly associated with career advancement, as 76.8% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it is a criterion for promotion, while 10.7% disagreed. The mean of 3.97 (SD = 0.982) reflects a widely held belief in this association, echoing Cherono et al. (2016), who emphasized that linking performance to promotion motivates public sector employees to strive for excellence. Challenging tasks were viewed as beneficial for skill development, with 64.4% agreeing or strongly agreeing and 7.4% disagreeing. The mean of 3.87 (SD = 0.948) indicates broad agreement, in line with Ndikumana et al. (2019), who found that challenging assignments foster skill acquisition and career growth in public service.

Similarly, achieving performance goals was reported as a major source of job satisfaction, with 74.6% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing and 10.8% disagreeing. The mean of 3.86 (SD = 1.010) underscores the motivational effect of goal attainment, supporting Muchai and Mwangi (2014), who observed that fulfillment increases when employees meet performance targets. Finally, clear performance expectations were found to reduce job-related stress, with 59.9% agreeing or strongly agreeing and 20.3% disagreeing. The mean of 3.55 (SD = 1.274) suggests mixed experiences, likely reflecting variation in clarity across departments. This finding aligns with Okafor (2014), who reported that clearly defined expectations reduce workplace stress by providing employees with structured guidance.

Regression Analysis

This section presents a regression analysis examining the effect of mentorship on the performance of MICNG employees. The analysis includes the model summary, ANOVA, and a coefficient table, which collectively highlight the significance, strength, and direction of mentorship's effect on employee performance.

Model summary

Table 6 presents the model summary for the regression analysis assessing the effect of mentorship on employee performance. The R and R^2 values indicate the strength of association and the proportion of performance variance explained by mentorship. These results demonstrate the model's effectiveness in capturing mentorship's influence on MICNG employee performance.

Table 6

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.887a	.787	.782	.36128

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mentorship

The model summary reported an R value of 0.887, indicating a strong positive relationship between mentorship and employee performance. The R^2 value of 0.787 further indicated that mentorship explained 78.7% of the variation in employee performance, underscoring its substantial contribution. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.782,

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which accounts for model complexity, provides strong evidence that mentorship is a reliable and robust predictor of performance.

ANOVA

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results in Table 7 assess the overall significance of

the regression model and examine the effect of mentorship on MICNG employee performance. A high F-value coupled with a low p-value indicates that mentorship has a statistically significant influence on employee performance, thereby justifying its inclusion as a key predictor in the model.

Table 7

ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	83.132	4	20.783	159.225	.000[b]
Residual	22.450	172	.131		
Total	105.582	176			

a Dependent Variable: Performance of MICNG employees
b Predictors: (Constant), Mentorship

The ANOVA results produced an F-value of 159.225 and a significance level of p = .000, indicating that the model was statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. This finding demonstrates that mentorship has a meaningful influence on the performance of MICNG employees. The high F-value further suggests strong model fit, underscoring the critical role of mentorship in explaining variations in employee performance.

Beta Coefficients

The coefficients table presents the effect of mentorship on the performance of MICNG employees. It reports both unstandardized and standardized coefficients, along with significance levels, indicating the strength and statistical significance of mentorship as a predictor of employee performance.

Table 8

Beta Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.606	.130		4.643	.000
Mentorship	.157	.076	.180	2.057	.041

a. Dependent variable: Performance of MICNG employees

The following was the regression model.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

The results and model when substituting values based on the beta coefficient table are as follows.

$$Y = 0.606 + 0.157 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

The coefficients table indicates that mentorship has a positive, statistically

significant effect on MICNG employees' performance, with a standardized β of 0.180 at p = 0.041. Although the effect size was moderate, the finding confirms that mentorship contributes meaningfully to employee performance by fostering skill development, confidence, and professional growth. This result aligns with Ndikumana et al. (2019), who observed that structured

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mentorship programs enhance employees' capacity to perform effectively in public service settings.

4.0 Conclusion

This study establishes that mentorship significantly enhances the performance of MICNG employees in Kajiado County. Employees identified practices such as one-on-one coaching, teamwork facilitation, and task delegation as critical to their professional growth and job satisfaction. The strong positive correlation between mentorship and performance underscores the importance of structured mentorship programs in fostering competencies and motivation. Accordingly, implementing comprehensive mentorship initiatives offers a strategic pathway for strengthening employee performance in the public sector.

5.0 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, mentorship emerged as a critical non-financial incentive that significantly enhances employee performance in the public service. It is therefore recommended that the Ministry of Interior and National Administration institutionalize structured mentorship programs across departments. Such programs should include one-on-one coaching, guidance on teamwork, constructive feedback, and skill development opportunities, as these were identified as highly valued by employees.

To strengthen mentorship, managers and senior officers should receive the training needed to serve as effective mentors. This approach would facilitate knowledge transfer, encourage collaborative problem-solving, and build supportive professional relationships within teams. By embedding mentorship into organizational practice, the Ministry can create a sustainable mechanism for continuous learning, professional growth, and improved service delivery.

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