

Human resources training and development, value creation, and employee performance in the public service

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between human resource training and development (HRTD), involving training (HRT) and employee development (EMD), and employee performance in Uganda's public service, focusing on the mediating role of human resource value creation (HRVC), comprising perceived HR strategic role and HR service quality. Using an explanatory quantitative survey, data were collected from 416 respondents across three ministries and seven local governments. Established measurement scales demonstrated strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.820\text{--}0.885$), while exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses supported construct reliability and validity. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, hierarchical regression, and PROCESS bootstrapping. The findings indicate that training, employee development, perceived HR strategic role, and HR service quality are positively associated with employee performance. HRTD dimensions were also significantly associated with HRVC dimensions. Furthermore, perceived HR strategic role and HR service quality partially mediated the relationship between HRTD and employee performance. Drawing on Human Capital Theory, the Harvard HRM model, and the Resource-Based View, the study demonstrates how HRTD contributes to employee performance through HR value creation. The findings underscore the importance of strategic, value-driven HRTD systems that strengthen employee capabilities, HR service quality, and public sector performance.

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Introduction

Employee performance in the public service has remained a major concern not only for governments as employers and principal service providers, but also for employees and the general public (Knies et al., 2024; Ulrich & Dulebohn, 2015; Wanyama et al., 2022). In many developing countries, employee performance remains characterised by inefficiency, low productivity, and limited focus (Ahenkan et al., 2018). In Uganda, although reforms in people-management practices, including sourcing and hiring, training and development, performance appraisal systems, and salary restructuring have been introduced (Bigabwenkya, 2020), the expected improvements in employee performance have not been fully realized (Ndanyi, 2019). This paradox raises questions about the adequacy of public sector human resource (HR) practices and the extent to which they create value for employees and other stakeholders. Particularly, whereas human resources training and development (HRTD) measured through human resources training (HRT) and employee development (EMD) has been advanced and emphasised as part of the best management strategies (Albrecht et al., 2015) for enhancing employee skills, knowledge and capacity to deliver (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009; Garavan et al., 2012; Otoo, 2019), their efficacy in the public service

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