



Employees Involvement as Agent of Change Management and Performance of Local Governments in Eastern Uganda: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Performance of Local Governments is key in delivering essential services to the citizens of the Country. Citizen get health, education for children thus developing the human resource, roads to enable movement of people and goods to markets, and technical assistance for farmers. However, the citizens are not getting the appropriate levels of services: evidenced by poor health facilities, low grades in schools, impassable or no roads despite Government and donor funding. The question, therefore, is; how can Local Governments improve performance in service delivery? The study investigated the relationship between employee involvement and performance of Local Governments in Eastern Uganda. A cross-sectional study design was used involving both quantitative and qualitative approaches with a sample of 48. Stratified, simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics of Spearman Product Moment Correlation and regression. The findings indicated a strong positive relationship ($r=0.724^{**}$) between employees involvement and performance of Local Governments. Employees involvement accounted for 55% (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.550$) of variance in performance of Local Governments in Eastern Uganda. The study concludes that there is a strong positive relationship between employees involvement and performance of Local Governments. It is recommended that the managers and practitioners of Local Governments in Eastern Uganda should involve employees as change agents so as to improve performance.

Key words: *Change Management, Employee Involvement, Performance, Local Governments*

Introduction

Performance improvement in public sector in Uganda was expected to have improved after decentralisation which started to take place in early 1990s and got implemented in 1997 with the core objective of taking services nearer to the communities (Obwona, et. al., 2000, Onyach-Olaa, 2003). However, the issue of improved performance through decentralisation was not achieved as expected (Tumushabe et. al., 2010 and Aupal, 2017). Enormous studies regarding employees' involvement in the day-to-day running of private organisations so as to achieve improved performance, but little of the same has been done in public sector. Similarly, in the same field, a lot of research has been done targeting concepts like funding, procurement, accountability among others, with little say about employees who are critical change management agents in performance of public sector. This paper therefore examines employee involvement and performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda. Performance was measured in relation to quality and quantity of services received by the communities where some of these services include; education, health, infrastructure, agricultural services water and sanitation. Employee involvement in this paper was viewed in terms of; decision making, recognition and team work. After extensive literature review, it was hypothesized that; there is no relationship between employee and performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda.

The concept of employee involvement as business strategy is not new as it dates as far back as the 1920s and early 30s Cabrera-Suarez (2005). Employee involvement is defined as having the dual aim of engaging 'the support, understanding and contribution of all employees in an organization' and 'seeking to ensure their commitment and cooperation in the achievement of its objectives'. The definition of employee involvement was further broadened by Sofijanov and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) as a process of participation and empowerment of employees in order to use their input towards achieving higher individual and organization performance. Apostolou (2000) put his voice by defining employee involvement as, "regarding employee as a unique human being, not just a cog in a machine, and each employee is involved in helping the organization meet its goals and each employee's input is solicited and valued by his/her management and both employees and management recognize that each is involved in running the business".

When employees have set their own objectives, chances are very high that they work tirelessly to ensure that the objectives they set themselves are achieved and this improves organizational performance. The Hawthorne studies gave rise to an increasing interest in human or employee involvement as determinants of productivity (Cabrera et al., 2002 and Mayo). Doucouliagos (1995) observed that employee involvement increases effort which subsequently increases service delivery; it reduces costs of monitoring employees and leads to increased commitment. Jette, Breck and Johns (2015:6) note that involving employees in planning enhanced accountability and transparency, spurred creativity, allowed for more adaptive strategic processes, engaged employees and increased the commitment to implement strategies. Similarly, Cabrera-Suarez (2005) observed that there is significant relationship between organizational size and employee involvement, whether collaborative or delegate. This paper spells the dimensions of employee involvement as decision making, recognition and teamwork.

Continuous measurement of a projects performance allows the team to fix attainable and realistic targets (Chen and Manley, 2014; Khan, 2016). . Leong et. al. (2014) notes that measures of project performance include time, cost, scope and the quality of work and targets or indicators. This paper used quality and quantity of services delivered as a measure of performance. Customer or beneficiary satisfaction is an important indicator of success or failure. Hence at the end of a project, it is recommended to send a questionnaire to all the stakeholders (senior management, customers, final users, the full project team,

subcontractors, etc.) to get some valuable feedback (Khan, 2016). The importance of employee involvement in influencing performance is investigated under the hypothesis:

H₀: There is no relationship between employee involvement and performance of selected Local Governments in Eastern Uganda.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical underpinning

The Service Quality Model (SERVQUAL Model) developed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) helped in underpinning the study as an attempt to measure service quality, the model applies dimensions such as communication, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles among others to achieve service quality (Trocchia and Janda, 2003) in local governments.

2.2 Decision making participation

When change management practices -- executive support, employee involvement and effective communication -- are exercised, they boost controlling, coordinating and planning which is key in achieving performance of local governments. Planning enhances performance and in the long run has the impact on its survival and the strategic planning is intensified by managerial, environmental and organizational factors (Akinyele & Idunnu, 2010). Akinyele and Idunnu further strengthened their arguments by adding that, business planning focuses on specific direction to specific units such as financial focus and required human resources management and decision making which later improves productivity and performance. Wilkinson (1998:44) argued that participation of employees in the decision making process would satisfy human growth needs of self-actualisation and fulfilment and through this mechanism increase motivation, individual performance and improved performance of the entity.

According to Olumuyiwa and Oluwatosin (2012), who studied about organizations in Nigeria, they confirm that planning is critical for organizational performance and further emphasise that if organizations are to perform well, resources need to be well utilized and customers must receive quality service. The purpose of data analysis is to convert raw data into performance information and knowledge so that organisations can make informed decisions about what happened and why it might vary from the expected and also arrive at the corrective action (Artley, Ellison & Kennedy, 2001). They further stressed that, “information is random and miscellaneous, but knowledge is orderly and cumulative”. Before information can be used, it must be analyzed, interpreted and assimilated.

In the journal article titled, “Procurement planning and accountability of local Government procurements systems in developing countries: Evidence from Uganda”, Basheka (2008) stated that the contribution of planning in facilitating efficient and effective performance of public sector and private organizations cannot be disputed in both developed and developing countries and its contribution can be both at central and local government levels of public sector management. In establishing the relationship between work-planning and performance of local governments in Uganda Tumushabe, et. al, (2010) and Ssekate (2011) agreed that there is a direct positive relationship between work planning and performance of local governments. These findings are in agreement with the early study by Simith and Goldon (1989) where they discovered in their literature review that the classic studies on planning against performance established a positive relationship between the extent of planning and Organisational performance. Their findings revealed that there was a very strong positive relationship between planning and a team’s performance which can easily be translated to organizational performance. The local governments in Uganda need to have a long-term strategic plan of about five to ten years to enable councils to set long-term development targets and periodic performance benchmarks on the basis of which they can evaluate their performance and progress, (Tumushabe et al., 2010).

The study conducted by Ongonge (2013) had empirical findings that strategic planning directly contributes to organizational performance. This is in line with Pirtea, Nicolescu and Botoc (2009) who explained the need for planning as setting and achieving goals at the employee level and identifying and fixing barriers related to achieving these goals. They further stated that there is a very strong relationship between planning and performance management. They however cautioned that skepticism about planning and achievement of the organisational goals is currently on the rise because of the uncertainty regarding political and technological change.

Bhattacharya et al. (2014:705) noted that there are many decision points and variables within the company's decision-making processes which are complex and need consideration of multiple factors and the involvement of various stakeholders and employees. Bhattacharya, et al. further observed that although the decisions are currently being made with the involvement of concerned stakeholders, an appropriate collaborative decision-support system could help to standardize decision-making processes for making the right decision quickly. It is also believed that organizations whose aim is to produce high-quality products extend the decision making strategy to include the suppliers of raw materials with regard to specification, design option selection and production planning.

Traditional single criteria decision making is normally aimed at maximization of benefits with minimization of costs (Pohekar & Ramachandran, 2004:366). Pohekar and Ramachandran revealed that organizations now need to adopt decision making methods which provide better understanding of inherent features of decision problem, promote the role of participants in decision making processes, facilitate compromise and collective decisions and provide a good platform for understanding the perception of models' and analysts' in a realistic scenario. This enables to help improve quality of decisions by making them more explicit, rational and efficient to improve the performance of organizations.

Considering delegation of authority as one of the management styles, Graham, Harvey and Puri (2015:458) observed that in order to benefit from employees' information or proximity to certain activities, the executives should consider sharing control via delegating decision-making authority down the corporate ladder. Batsakis and Burns (2005:100) earlier noted that delegation of decision making motivates employees and improves performance and this can as well be achieved by use of appropriate information technology (Aupal & Oleja, 2017)

According to Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley (2000:508) executives need to employ practices that enhance the involvement of employees in problem-solving and decision-making through work and job design (i.e. upward rather than downward communication, employee consultation, problem-solving groups, team autonomy, involving employees in quality management, job control). During the decision making process, there are contingent factors that affect the decision maker which are both individual and organizational, and these factors can only be streamlined when a large section representing all employees are involved in decision making (Jones, 1991:368)

H₀₁: There is no relationship between decision making participation and performance of selected Local Governments in Eastern Uganda.

2.3 Recognition

Picho (2014:3) observed that recognition increases the frequency of an employee's action points to a desired outcome and leads to improved performance. Bradler, Dur, Neckermann and Non (2016:14) concluded that recognition has a strong positive impact on subsequent performance, in particular when recognition is scarce, but not too scarce and the effect is primarily caused by the improvement in performance of those who did not receive recognition. Bradler, Dur, Neckermann and Non (2016) further observed that recognition significantly increases subsequent performance, and particularly so if recognition is exclusively provided to the best performers. Recognition to the best three performers in a group yields the largest effect on workers' productivity in comparison with either recognition to all employees or recognition to the best performer.

Similarly, the government of Uganda has made numerous efforts through the Ministry of Public Service to motivate its public servants through several modalities including encouraging employee involvement and recognition of outstanding performance and also providing prompt and quality involvement (Ijosiga & Odubuker, 2016:20). Recent literature by Picho (2017:150) pointed out that leaders exercising power are able to have strong influence on the political climate of an organization through their decisions, their way of handling conflict and providing recognition, support and inspiration to their teams. This is in line with earlier findings by Dugguh and Ayaga (2014:12) who revealed that publicly appreciating employees for finding solutions to a problem, writing a note of praise, establishing a formal recognition programme like 'employee of the month or year', making periodic reports directly available to the employees themselves rather than to management, are some of the ways of recognizing employees and improving performance of the organization.

Existing literature further reveals that human resource can be preserved within the organization and optimally utilized through inspiring it using different strategies such as working condition, leader's influence, training and development, learning culture, organization reputation, and rewards and at the same time recognizing the employees for achieving the set targets (Edirisooriyaa, 2014:313). Positive recognition is reward which can psychologically enable an employee to exercise his/her potential to improve on performance. Dobre (2013:53) noted that if the empowerment and recognition of employees is increased, their motivation to work will also improve, as well as their accomplishments and the organizational performance.

While looking at it from the medical perspective and specifically considering nurses, Phillips, Esterman and Kenny (2015:123) revealed that effective organizational socialization of newly qualified graduate nurses should be built on a culture of respect and recognition of care delivery, and being a valued member of the healthcare team, and staff professional development programmes should reinforce this to create a positive working environment so as to support transition and (Sikora & Ferris, 2014:275) recognition encourages line managers' achievement of their responsibilities.

H₀₂: There is no relationship between recognition and performance of selected Local Governments in Eastern Uganda.

2.4 Teamwork

Salas, Sims, and Burke (2005:555) defined teamwork in terms of the behaviors (for example, backup behaviour, closed-loop communication), cognitions (shared mental models), and attitudes (cohesion, collective efficacy) that make interdependent performance possible in an organization. Yang, Huang, and Wu (2011:258) revealed that teamwork exhibits statistically significant influence on project performance.

As employees work in teams, teamwork enhances employee effectiveness and promotes performance (Judeh, 2011). In a paper titled, "Employee Involvement: A literature Review", Metha and Mether (2013) observed that motivated and engaged employees who work in teams tend to contribute more in terms of organizational productivity and support in maintaining the higher commitment leading to higher customer satisfaction. The most significant results or improvements in companies perceived from the use of employee involvement programmes and teamwork include: improved productivity, improved quality, reduced costs/expenses and improved employee morale and motivation (Aerospace Industries Association [AIA], 1994).

Aupal (2017) noted that given the importance of a highly skilled workforce for organizational performance and economic growth, there is need to develop systems for teamwork organization to foster employee motivation and well-being and it is organizations with high levels of employee involvement and teamwork which will succeed and become sustainable. Sofijanovna and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) revealed that the effective use of teamwork and employee involvement is positively related to perceived organization performance. Sofijanovna and Zabijakin-Chatleska further explained that employee participation and empowerment programmes and the use of self-managing teams has a direct and statistically significant

correlation to the managerial perception of organizational performance. The high level of engagement with stakeholders, the management, the Board and employee participation in the strategic planning process leads to improvement of strategic planning effectiveness, ownership of strategies, accountability and implementation of ultimate organization performance (Ongonge, 2013).

Teamwork improves quality, and for organizations to realize the effectiveness of teams there is need to use team training as a viable methodology for improving the quality of teamwork in health care, specifically in the operating room service line in the health sector and hospitals (Weaver, et al., 2010:141). Teamwork is seen as a mediating variable between leader personality and performance (Aronson, Reilly & Lynn, 2006:221). Teamwork appears to be a unifying factor in all organization units and needs to be handled with maximum care if performance is to be improved. Easley, Devaraj and Crant (2003:265) concluded that the use of teams is increasingly prevalent phenomenon in organizations and collaborative systems designed to support teams' work is one way companies attempt to improve effectiveness of teams and performance.

The review of literature of employee involvement variable led to the formulation of the study hypothesis thus; "there is no relationship between employee involvement and performance of selected Local Governments in Eastern Uganda", which was later tested using inferential statistics in chapter four

H₀₃: There is no relationship between teamwork and performance of selected Local Governments in Eastern Uganda.

3. METHODOLOGY

It is critical to note that the springboard of research is an endeavour to find out, to investigate, confirm, probe, test, see or view, measure, correlate, compare, evaluate, find meaning, gain understanding, or to discover new emerging properties (Mouton, 1996; Bless, Higson & Kagee, 2006). As such, methodology needs to be clear Spark (2007) and this will only be achieved with clear research philosophy (Saunders et. al., 2003 and Bolm, 2015) especially exploring ontology and epistemology (Chalmers, 200; Bryman, 2008 and Kovalainen, 2008). This philosophy led to adoption of cross-sectional (Cooper & Schindler (2011) and both quantitative and qualitative approaches using pragmatism philosophy (Patton, 1980 and Creswell & Creswell, 2017:19). The use of both approaches strengthened one another and enabled the corroboration of findings (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006; Hussein, 2015 and Venkatesh, Brown & Bala, 2013), where quantitative data was backed up with qualitative which was real experience from the practitioners (Clement et. al., 2015 and Richard, 2013).

In order to carry out investigations and make inferences, Sekaran and Bougie (2010), suggested selection of a population and in this study, a population of 48 local governments following agreed sampling techniques (Curtis, Gesler, Smith, & Washburn, 2000 and Reynolds, Simintiras, & Diamantopoulos, 2003) was selected in Eastern Uganda. From this population of 48, a sample of 44 local governments was selected to represent the population Barlett, Kotrlik and Higgins (2001) using Yamane (1973) formula of sample determination, and 36 local governments responded with filled self-administered questionnaires. Unit of inquiry constituted the beneficiary representatives (Council III chairpersons) and technical team at district and sub county level. A sample of 313 respondents was selected and only 268 returned the questionnaires which were aggregated into the unit of analysis. From a total of eight key informants five were interviewed, but representing all the study regions to avoid bias of findings (Smith, 2015).

Despite having some disadvantages such as low response rate and failure to understand some question by respondents, self-administered questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data (Colton & Covert, 2007; Marcano-Belisario et. al., 2014; Nishiyama et al., 2014 and Radhakrishna, Francisco & Baggett, 2003) while interview guide was best fitted for qualitative data (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Validity and reliability was ensured with CVI of 8.1 and CAC for all variables being more than 0.70 (Akoko, Okibo & Atambo, 2016; Drost, 2011; Heale & Twycross, 2015; Balunywa et al., 2013 and Silverman, 2015:20). Using SPSS V.22 data analysis package, factor analysis (Table 1) was also carried out to validate data (Kamukama, Ahiauzu & Ntayi, 2010, Habiayemye, Aye bale & Wayama, 2016:8) where measurement items with loading

less than 0.5 were eliminated in analysis. The factor analysis was confirmed by (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity values (Asomaning & Abdulai, 2015:74; Yildirim & Tezci, 2016:198 and Hegedus, et. al., 2016:3). As guided by Mukaka (2012:69) and Gogtay, Deshpande and Thatte (2017:48) inferential statistics were used to determine the associations and whether employee involvement predicted performance. Qualitative data was analysed based on concepts of credibility, neutrality, conformability, consistency, transferability and dependability which were earlier on posted by Lincoln and Guba (1985), Lincoln, Lynham and Guba (2011) among others.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study objective was, “to investigate the relationship between employee involvement and performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda”. It was hypothesized that, H_0 There is no relationship between employee involvement and performance of selected Local Governments in Eastern Uganda. The discussion is therefore based on the current study findings (both quantitative and qualitative) and comparing with the findings of previous scholars. As a relational study, the inferential statistics correlation and regression analysis were the most appropriate and the results of the analysis are shown in Tables 2 and 3 respectively.

The study findings in Table 2, reveal that there is a statistical significant positive relationship ($r=0.724^{**}$) between employee involvement and performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda. This finding leads to the null hypothesis to be rejected. The implication of this finding is that a positive shift in employee involvement is likely to cause a corresponding positive change in performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda. Conversely, the implication of the results is that, a reduction in employee involvement is likely to cause a corresponding decrease in performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda.

The three sub constructs of employee involvement (decision making participation, recognition and team work) showed significant positive relationship with the performance. The qualitative results positively corroborate with the quantitative findings to support the existence of a relationship between employee involvement and the performance of selected local governments. Similarly, the regression model (Table 3), was found to be well specified ($F=17.73$, $p<.01$), implying the sub variables are significant predictors of Performance and the independent sub variables combined caused up to 55% variation in performance.

The study findings concur with scholars like Caberera et al. (2002), Mayo (1933) and Roethlisberger and Dickson (1939) who revealed that employees need to be involved in ensuring that performance is improved. As new machines are brought into the organization, employees should be given new skills through training, motivated so that they think towards improved performance. Employees should not be performing tasks alone but need to go as far as setting objectives and decision making in the organization. When employees have set their own objectives, chances are very high that they work tirelessly to ensure that the objectives they set are achieved and hence improve organization performance. One of the respondents corroborated these findings with the statement: “employee involvement is important at various levels in this district, so that employees get to know in advance the set priorities to enhance improved performance”.

The current study findings agree with Doucouliagos (1995) who used meta-analytical techniques on 42 published studies and revealed that employee involvement in terms of decision making increases their efforts which subsequently increases service delivery. It conforms with the findings by Judeh (2011) who uses descriptive and inferential statistical analysis and concluded that as employees get involved in decision making and work in teams, team effectiveness is enhanced which improves organization performance. Furthermore, the findings from the two scholars agree with the current study's qualitative findings where one of the participants stated:

Our district decisions are taken during the technical planning committee (TPC) which is composed of the heads of departments and other sectors so they are involved and this has helped to achieve proper coordination which has improved our service delivery in various sectors of the district.

The current study's findings with the blended approaches of quantitative and qualitative are in agreement with Mehta and Mehta (2013) with the methodological approach of reviewing literature and secondary data collected from various websites, journals, magazines, newspapers and reference books and revealed that involvement of employees tends to contribute more in terms of organizational productivity and support in maintaining the higher commitment level, leading to higher customer satisfaction which improves organization performance. Additionally, Ullah (2013) who used different methodology from Mehta and Mehta (2013) by collecting data through self-administered questionnaire from 290 banking personnel of Pakistan and used structural equation modelling revealed that practices such as employee involvement appear to be linked to internal customer satisfaction and organizational performance. It has therefore proved that different methodologies by the earlier researchers portray positive relationship between employee involvement and organization performance. It is therefore critical for executives in local government to embrace employee involvement in the day to day running of activities.

Furthermore, this study finding is consistent with AIA, et al. (1994) who revealed that employee involvement programmes in organizations frequently resulted to improved productivity and improved quality. The current study findings are also in agreement with Sofijanovna and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) who observed that the effective use of employee involvement is positively related to perceived organization performance. Employee involvement and empowerment programmes and the use of self-managing teams have a direct and statistically significant correlation to the managerial perception of organizational performance, and Ongonge (2013) who observed that employee involvement in the strategic planning process leads to ultimate increased organisation performance.

Regarding the relationship between involving the employees in decision making process, the research findings are in agreement with the findings by Akinyele and Idunnu (2010) and Wilkinson (1998:44) who observed that involving employees in decision making improves productivity and performance. Participation of employees in decision making process would satisfy human growth needs of self-actualization and fulfilment and through this mechanism increase motivation, individual performance and overall organization performance.

Furthermore, the study findings agree with Artley, Ellison and Kennedy (2001) who observed that if productivity and performance in organizations is to be improved, there is need for organizations to make collective decisions by involving a representative section of all the employees so that they own what they have come up with. It therefore follows that the involvement of employees in the decision making is for organizations to create buy-in from the employees who later own the tasks.

The current study findings are supported by Tumushabe, et al (2010) and Ssekate (2011) who observed that there is a direct positive relationship between employee involvement through work planning, decision making and performance of local governments. These findings are in agreement with Smith and Goldon (1989) who used simulation method and established a positive relationship between the extent of employee involvement in planning and decision making to performance. The two scholars from Uganda and United States of America did not show different results, it is therefore worth pointing out that some of the challenges selected local governments in Eastern Uganda are facing in relation to service delivery could be caused due to lack of involving employees in decision making.

Similarly, the study findings are in agreement with Bhattacharya, et al. (2014:705) who indicated that there are many decision points and variables within the company's decision-making processes which are complex and need consideration of multiple factors and the involvement of various stakeholders and employees. Furthermore, there is need by local governments to establish and or strengthen an appropriate collaborative decision-support system so as standardize decision-making processes in order to make the right decision quickly (Bhattacharya et al, 2014). Additionally, Pohekar and Ramachandran (2004:366) revealed that traditional single criteria decision making was targeted at maximizing profits with minimization of costs, a goal which is normally associated with the private sector. The public sector and especially local governments

whose mandate is to provide services to the communities should therefore look at involvement of employees and other stakeholders in decision making so as to improve performance.

The study findings are also commensurate with Graham, Harvey and Puri (2015:458) who observed that decision making should not be a monopoly of top executives and should be delegated to the lower ladder of the organization to make the lower cadres feel that they have authority in the organization and hence enabling them to invest all their worth leading to improved performance. The findings by Batsakis and Burns (2005:100) agreed that executives should not control the decision making process but involve employees so that they get motivated and aim to increase productivity and improve performance.

Furthermore, the current study findings tally with Ramsay, Scholarios and Harley (2000:508) who concluded that executives need to employ practices that enhance the involvement of employees in problem-solving and decision-making through work and job design (i.e. upward rather than downward communication, employee consultation, problem-solving groups, team autonomy, involving employees in quality management, job control). This finding is also in agreement with Jones (1991:368) who noted that during the decision making process, there are contingent factors that affect the decision maker which are both individual and organizational, and these factors can only be streamlined when a large section representing all employees are involved in decision making. Nevertheless, much as findings depict that there must be involvement of employees in decision making, the father of management, Drucker (2004) holds that much as there is involvement of other stakeholders in decision making, executives play an important role of decision making in the organization and they must take responsibility for their actions. This could be a practical element where in an attempt by the executives to exercise delegation in local governments, they should always practice hands off but eyes on approach.

The study findings also show that employees' involvement through recognition have positive relation with performance which is consistent with findings from Picho (2014:3) who observed that recognition increases the frequency of an employee action points to desired outcome and leads to improved performance. The findings also concur with Bradler et al. (2016:14) who concluded that, recognition has a strong positive impact on subsequent performance, in particular when recognition is scarce, but not too scarce and the effect is primarily caused by the improvement in performance of those who did not receive recognition. Recognition significantly increases subsequent performance; there is therefore need for selected local governments in Eastern Uganda to exclusively provide it to the best performers and recognition to the best three performers which would end up yielding the largest effect on workers' productivity and improve performance.

Furthermore, the study findings are supported by Ijosiga and Picho (2016:20) who pointed out that the government of Uganda has made numerous efforts through the Ministry of Public Service to motivate its public servants through several modalities including encouraging employee involvement and recognition of outstanding performance and also providing prompt and quality involvement. Additional findings by Picho (2017:150) revealed that leaders exercising power are able to have strong influence on the political climate of an organization through their decisions, their way of handling conflict and providing recognition, support and inspiration to their teams.

Similarly, the study findings are in agreement with Dugguh and Ayaga (2014:12) who revealed that publicly appreciating employees for getting solutions to a problem could by way of writing a note of praise, establishing formal recognition programmes like 'employee of the month or year', making periodic reports directly available to the employees themselves rather than to management would go a long way in recognizing employees and improving performance of the organization. Selected local governments in Eastern Uganda would interact with the private sector to be able to make their own judgment regarding recognition of employees in relation to improvement of performance.

The current study findings are in agreement with the findings by Edirisooriyaa (2014:313) and Dobre (2013:53) who observed that human resource can be preserved within the organization by recognizing the employees for achieving the set targets and positive recognition is reward which can psychologically enable an employee to exercise his/her potential to improve on performance of the organization. This agrees with

findings from scholars such as Salas, Sims, and Burke (2005:555) and Yang, Huang, and Wu (2011:258) who observed that teamwork makes interdependent performance possible in an organization and it further exhibits statistically significant positive influence on project performance. It can automatically be reflected that if local governments in Eastern Uganda invested their strategies into teamwork improvement, performance in terms of service delivery and quality services would have been improved.

Additionally, study findings are confirmed by Judeh (2011) and Metha and Mether (2013) who observed that teamwork enhances employee effectiveness and promotes performance; and motivated and engaged employees who work in teams tend to contribute more in terms of organizational productivity and support in maintaining the higher commitment level leading to the higher customer satisfaction. This is consistent with the earlier findings by AIA (1994) who concluded that improvement in companies is perceived from the use of employee involvement programmes and teamwork and the main results include improved productivity and improved quality.

The findings also agree with Gallie et al. (2013) who observed that for organizational performance and economic growth, there is need to develop systems for teamwork to foster employee motivation and well-being. Similar to the findings is the observation by Sofijanovna and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) that effective use of teamwork and employee involvement is positively related to perceived organizational performance. The findings in the same year by Ongonge (2013) revealed that employee participation through teamwork improves the strategic planning process, leads to ownership of strategies, accountability and ultimate organization performance.

Lastly, the study findings have the same bearing with Weaver et al. (2010:141) who concluded that teamwork improves quality and for organizations to realize the effectiveness of teams, there is need to use team training as a viable methodology for improving the quality of teamwork. Similar to this finding is the research by Easley, Devaraj and Crant (2003:265) who concluded that teamwork is seen as a mediating variable between leader personality and the use of teams is an increasingly prevalent phenomenon in organizations which are striving to improve performance.

The current discussion in this section regarding employee involvement tallies well with Lippitt's Phases of change theory developed by Lippitt et al. (1958) to address the gaps in Lewins three-step change theory which did not take into account personal factors. It is therefore evident that for performance to be improved in Local Governments, employee involvement should be emphasized by taking care of personal factors such as employee recognition, involvement in decision making and encouragement of teamwork.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based the current study, both quantitative and qualitative findings show that there is positive relationship between employee involvement and performance of selected local governments and this is also substantiated by the findings of the previous scholars on the same field. It is therefore concluded that employee involvement has a statistically significant positive effect on performance of selected local governments in Eastern Uganda.

In line with the findings, the following recommendations were made; department heads in local governments should involve employees in decision making regarding the activities they are supposed to implement as this leads to motivated team which will improve service delivery and hence performance of local governments. On employee recognition, the ministries of Public Service and Local Government should develop policies to recognize employees on their efforts to improve performance of the districts. These policies could be in form of encouragement of quality work by rewarding groups for good performance, creation of incentives which can either be financial or in-kind as an appreciation for good performing teams or individuals. The findings have shown that teamwork has positive implications to performance of local governments, it is therefore further recommended that, the executives and supervisors therefore need to increase and develop strategies which foster teamwork; it could be through team building retreats, generating social activities such as district football teams.

Table 1: Rotated Component Matrix

Scale and measurement items	Component		
	Decision making	Team work	Recognition
1. Decision making			
There is a good planning unit in the district	.694		
My supervisors are knowledgeable in planning and analysis	.705		
My supervisors help a lot during the planning process	.689		
Plans are always followed in performing the tasks and duties	.696		
Planning programs are always relevant to my job	.645		
My district carries evaluation on every activity as agreed in the plans	.641		
During planning process, the stakeholders are consulted by the planning unit.	.574		
Planning has helped my workgroup to improve on its performance	.715		
2. Team work			
There is trust for one another in my work place		.788	
In my workplace, everyone's job provides him/her with growth and development		.595	
In my workplace the tasks which you are assigned makes you to exploit your skills better		.694	
Any conflicts that arise in my work group are quickly resolved		.701	
In my workplace different work groups support one another		.716	
People in my workgroup respect those things which make each individual unique		.737	
I am satisfied with my job		.508	
3. Recognition			
All employees know organisation Vision			.884
All employees know organisation Mission			.931
All employees know district objectives			.839
Eigen Value	3.99	3.70	2.65
Percent of variance explained	22.14	20.53	14.74
Cumulative percent of variance explained	22.14	42.67	57.41
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations. High factor loadings for respective constructs are indicated in bold.			

Source: Primary Data (2018)

Table. 2: Correlation Analysis



Variables	Descriptive Statistics		1	2	3	4	5
	Mean	S D					
Performance (1)	3.609	.618	1				
Employee Involvement (2)	3.590	.535	.724**	1			
Decision Making (3)	3.870	.673	.652**	.774**	1		
Teamwork (4)	3.491	.705	.516**	.816**	.462**	1	
Recognition (5)	3.013	1.035	.463**	.591**	.443**	.341**	1

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

N = 268

Source: Primary Data (2018)

Table 3. Regression Model

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.638	.173		3.682	.000
	Decision Making	.453	.061	.450	7.408	.000
	Recognition	.421	.071	.358	3.862	.000
	Team Work	.312	.085	.302	3.660	.000
	R	.745 ^a				
	R ²	.555				
	Adjusted R ²	.550				
	F Change	17.725				
	Sig.	.000 ^b				

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Team Work, Decision Making, Recognition

N = 268

Source: Primary Data (2018)

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