



INFLUENCE OF CAPACITY BUILDING PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KAKAMEGA

Mulievi, R. N., & Juma, H.

INFLUENCE OF CAPACITY BUILDING PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KAKAMEGA

Mulievi, R. N.,^{1*} Juma D.²

^{1*} Msc. Scholar, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology [JKUAT], Kakamega, Kenya

² Ph.D, Director, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology [JKUAT], Kakamega, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Statistics in the health sector show that there is indeed a significant wage difference for the health sector staff. This study sought to establish the influence of capacity building practices on employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega with a view of proposing a mechanism to manage employee retention. The study was anchored on Kirkpatrick's Model. The study employed a descriptive survey design. The target population was 1,153 health workers in Kakamega County drawn from 11 health facilities and a sample size of 297 respondents was used. The Data was collected by the questionnaires which was the main instrument to collect primary data. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive inferential statistics (correlations and regression analyses). Results indicated that the relationship between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega was positive and significant. It was concluded that capacity building practices accounted for 68.3 percent of employee retention of employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega. The study recommended that organizations should proactively invest more in training their workforce at all levels of the health system. The study findings may help to streamline the retention of staff in the health sector in Kakamega County by providing strategies of employee retention. The study would provide a basis for future scholars, researchers and other stakeholders to use the results as a reference while also enabling researchers to carry out more investigation on other strategies that increase employee retention.

Key Words: Capacity Building, Employee Retention, County Government of Kakamega

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INTRODUCTION

Capacity building is a dynamic concept that covers the formal development of an employee within an organization by providing long term strategies for undertaking need analysis in terms of career growth and awareness to enhance retention of quality manpower in any organization, (Koigi & Waiganjo, 2015). Capacity building opportunities have a direct effect on employee retention because employees' career development is a trend which is formalized, prepared and it is a designed effort to achieve the balance between obligation of organization employees and retention of competent employees, (Kinyili, 2015). Many of the world's best successful organizations are aware that the provisions they make for capacity building activities lie at the heart of their ability to attract and retain the best employees in their organization, (ILO, 2010). Employees should also be acquainted with self-development training to groom their talent and improve knowledge, skills and attitude (Truckenbrodt, 2000). In his study, (Truckenbrodt, 2000) found out that managers must acknowledge each and every employee's specific abilities and ideas to generate productivity and creativity and keenly develop them and rely on them to automatically apply extra efforts to meet organizational objectives and more likely have life time relationship with them.

The study by Association for Talent Development (2013), which surveyed 738 managers worldwide, found that retention issues affect organizations differently from one geographic region to the next. The low number of health workers across Africa is a significant bottleneck to the provision of health care, (Osemeké, 2014). This is most apparent in remote, hard to reach parts of the continent. The geographical imbalance of health workers within countries and the lack of appropriate skills, training and support for existing workers are at the root of the health worker crisis in Africa, (Ministry of Health, 2013; WHO, 2013). In many countries the skills of limited and expensive

professionals such as doctors are not well matched to local health needs. In almost all sub-Saharan countries there are far higher concentrations of workers situated in urban areas than in rural areas, (Koigi & Waiganjo 2015). In Uganda about 70percent of medical doctors and 40percent of nurses are based in urban areas, serving only 12percent of the population, meaning that many rural facilities are served by untrained or less skilled workers, (WHO, 2012). There is no escaping the fact that the absolute numbers of skilled workers needs to increase, (Ministry of Health, 2013; WHO, 2013). However, addressing the appropriate skills mix for African countries and ways to train, motivate and retain lower to middle-cadres of workers should be an immediate priority.

Kenya is a developing country situated in the Eastern region of Africa. Three appropriate factors that interpret HRM patterns in Kenya are: a wide range of ethnic groups; high levels of population growth; and constrained economic development focused mainly in urban areas. In today's organizations, a stable workforce becomes a considerable competitive advantage, (Nyagudi & Juma, 2018; Magokha, 2015). Employee retention is one of the essential issues in competitive organizations in Kenya today as the employees are the most valuable assets in any institution. It is the institution's best interest to put its effort in retaining talented employees to ensure high productivity, (Kinyili, 2015).

Organizations that have unstable workforce conditions, are faced with challenges in investing a lot in recruiting, orienting, training, overtime and supervision which comes right off the organizations bottom-line (Namusonge, 2014). Social developments such as continuing globalization, technological innovation, and growing global competition places pressure on the health sector in Kenya and emphasize their need to maintain their competitive edge (Taplin, and Winterton, 2007). In his view, Odandi (2014) discovered that health care

facilitation within the counties has come up against numerous challenges in Kenya. The main challenges being posed by undistributed inter-county levels of growth, unequal sharing of resources for health particularly the distribution of health facilities, poorly developed communication infrastructure and human resources.

It is in this regard that the researcher analyzed capacity building practices influencing employee retention at the County Government of Kakamega. This would allow future researches to determine the importance of focusing on certain areas where very limited documentation has been done. The research presented baseline information for the healthcare sector in the County Government of Kakamega to illustrate the influence of capacity building practices on employee retention.

Statement of the Problem

World Health Organization has identified Kenya as having a critical shortage of healthcare workforce (WHO, 2013), set at minimum threshold of 23 midwives, nurses and doctors, per population of 10000 as a necessity for delivery of maternal health and vital child services. Kenya loses an average 20 medical doctors each month through either emigration or brain waste (Mullei *et al.*, 2010). Brain drain rate of doctors at present stands at 51percent and nurses at 8percent with main destination being the UK.

A number of studies have been carried investigating the influence of capacity building practices on employee retention in different organizations. However, a few studies have focused in the health sector, specifically in counties, In a study done by (Gachunga, 2010) undertook a research on influence of human resources management practices on retention of core employees in the media sector in Kenya, a case of Standard Group Ltd. The study showed that Standard Group values leadership qualities that are aligned with the retention strategies and recruitment process. In her study (Wangui, 2009)

looked at employee retention in local Kenyan banks with a focus on Equity bank. Her study established that Equity Bank uses both financial and non-financial incentives to encourage its employees to stay. Romano *et al.*, (2014) undertook a study on Effects of Employee Engagement on Employee Retention in Micro-Finance Institutions. The results indicated a declining trend of employee engagement that perhaps explains the current increasing rates of staff turnover. Although the medical officers earn the highest salary, this remains very low compared with international salaries, showing the poor competitiveness of Kenya on the international health labour market (WHO, 2013). Therefore, there were significant gaps between capacity building and employee retention scholarship in the health sector in Kenya, which the current study sought to address.

Research Objectives

The objective of this study was to establish the influence of capacity building practices on employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega.

Research Hypotheses

H₀1: There is no significant influence between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

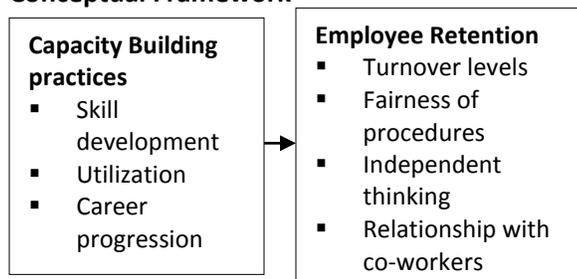
Kirkpatrick's Model

The Kirkpatrick model (1959) has been used extensively to evaluate capacity building effectiveness for the past years. Kirkpatrick's model shows what is considered as evaluation criteria to determine effectiveness of capacity building and employee retention. The model was developed by Donald Kirkpatrick (1924-2014). The model can be employed before, in the process and tracking capacity building to show its importance in an organization. It takes into account any style of training, both formal and

informal to determine capacity based on four levels criteria. Level 1 reaction measures how participants react to the training; level 2 learning analyses whether they truly understood the training; level 3 behaviour looks at the utilization of what they learned at work and level 4 results determines if the material had a positive influence on the organization, (Donald Kirkpatrick 1950).

According to Sanders (2011) presented a view of training to serve a role of an investment activity. An organization can achieve better results by investing in improving hard and soft types of skills. Capacity building means equipping employees with new methods or techniques to translate information to practices to improve effectiveness and enhance employee retention. Although several models have proposed evaluating the effectiveness of capacity building (Aziz, 2013); Kirkpatrick’s four level model is the most acceptable and recognised model that measures effectiveness of training in an organizations (Xue, 2015) According to Manyika (2014) capacity building achievements is usually determines by assessing some combination of the criteria presented in the four level model and training outcomes. Participants’ feedback, acquisition of knowledge and skills, application of learned knowledge and skills indicated the effectiveness. Capacity building achievements motivates employees and hence improves on their output and intention to stay longer in one organization, (Manyika, 2014).

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables Dependent variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Author (2019)

Review of Variables

Capacity Building Practices and Employee Retention

In the Health Sector Human Resources Strategy (2014) Published by Ministry of Health Afya House, the skilled health worker crisis is mainly acute in rural and hard to reach areas, where eighty per cent (80percent) of the population in Africa lives. The consequential low capacity at the peripheral level of the health system is a crucial barrier to good health. AMREF (2012) believes that developing capable, motivated and supported healthcare workers at all levels of the health system is important in ensuring the delivery of accessible and effective health care across Africa.

In her study, Kinyili (2015) on the role of human resource management practices on retention of staff in public health institutions in Machakos county) the study adopted a mixed methods research design and targeted all the 772 health care staff in the 152 public health facilities in the eight sub-counties in the county. The hospitals were selected purposively while stratified random sampling was used to select the health care and dispensaries from each of the sub-counties, (Kanyili, 2015). Stratified random and purposive sampling was used to select a total of 263 respondents from the various strata identified. Interviews were used to collect data from 12 officers in charge of sub county facilities and the four hospitals while self-administered questionnaires were used on the rest of the respondents, (Kanyili, 2015). The results showed a weak but statistically major positive relationship between career advancement practice and employee retention. Due to the poor career advancement and employee retention, level of commitment of employees was low.

Studies in (Strategic HRM, 2012) have is also confirmed that training is positively associated with intention to stay with the organisation. The sample size for this study was 152 which may make applying the findings to other organisations unacceptable. The above strategic studies however contradict the

findings of Chung-Ching (2015), after employing Structural Equation Modelling to test their hypotheses they established that employees may not necessarily increase commitment to their organisations because they are provided with increased training and development. Thus training and career development is not significantly related to intention to stay in many parts of Africa, the skills of health care professionals do not match the actual health needs, (WHO, 2013). Task shifting – giving more responsibility to lower cadres of health workers and ensuring sufficient training and support is much practices in post-conflict countries with extreme shortages of health workers.

Employee Retention

The study by Cherono (2017) on effects of human resource practices on employee retention in the real estate firms in Nairobi County was carried out in 5 out of 80 real estate firms in Nairobi. A sample size of 270 respondents from various real estate organizations was selected. The study used structured questionnaires to collect primary data. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviation, percentages and frequencies were used to analyse the data. Regression analysis was conducted to test the effect of HRM practices on employee retention. The findings of this study revealed that HRM practices such as compensation, training and development, performance management, supervisor support and work environment are vital to employee and indeed have significant influence on employee retention in real estate firms. The study results found that to an extent working environment affect employee retention at any level of management from top to lower management. An open comfortable, safe work environment and structure facilitates teamwork where employees are friendly. The study results did indicate a strongly positive relationship between HRM practices and employee retention.

Employee retention has become a daunting and highly challenging task for managers and human resource practitioners (Chiboiwa, Samuel, & Chipunza, 2010). It is challenging because employees have their own objectives and diverse needs to achieve which sometimes might be at variance with that of organisation. Such objectives and needs have to be accommodated for employees to continue in the organisation wholeheartedly and most often, through rewards, (Chiboiwa *et al.*, 2010).

Empirical Review

A study by Wangui (2009) investigated employee retention in local Kenyan banks with a focus on Equity bank. The study established that Equity Bank uses both financial and non-financial incentives to encourage its employees to stay. The results in both studies indicated a declining trend of employee engagement that explains the current increasing rates of staff turnover. Further, a study conducted by Gulzar, Advani, and Jalees (2017) on impact of performance appraisal on employee retention, on banking sector of Pakistan found out that the performance appraisal, career development, job and reward system all have positive impact on employee's retention if practiced regularly and adequately. The findings of this study were seen to be consistent in all variables.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive survey design. The design would enable the researcher systematically to collect data, present; analyse it before making conclusion and recommendation. The target population consisted of the following staff as illustrated in Table 1. Kakamega County Referral hospital did not have sufficient population to determine the influence of HRM practice and retention. This study adopted the level four hospitals in the County Government of Kakamega so as to arrive at the representative sample size and have a sufficient population to facilitate valid results.

Table 1: Target Population

S/No.	List of Level 4 Hospitals	Number of Staff
1	County Referral Hospitals	588
2	Butere Sub-county Hospital	105
3	Malava Sub-county Hospital	103
4	Lumakanda Sub-county Hospital	78
5	Matungu Sub-county Hospital	76
6	Likuyani Sub-county Hospital	59
7	Navakholo Sub-county Hospital	38
8	Iguhu Sub-county Hospital	39
9	Matunda Sub-county Hospital	28
10	Shibwe Sub-county Hospital	23
11	Mautuma Sub-county Hospital	16
TOTAL		1,153

Source: Human Resource Department, Health Sector Monthly Staff Returns, Kakamega County (September 2018)

The study gathered primary information by use of questionnaires which consisted of two parts and six sections. Section I had the demographic information of respondents such age, gender, education level and length of service. On the other hand, Section II captured information on human resource practices and employee retention. In this study, structured questionnaires were adopted to gather views from the respondents. The questionnaires were self-administered to the respondents by the Researcher.

RESULTS

Descriptive and Inferential Statistics of Capacity Building Practices and Employee Retention

The objective of the study was to establish the influence of capacity building practices on employee retention. Results were as shown in the Table 2. The questions were scored on a five point Likert scale. The question on whether the heads of departments allowed their employees to further their studies to

increase their educational levels, had a mean of 4.3036 and a standard deviation of 0.92979; the question on whether the employees attended workshops/seminars in their area of specializations had a mean of 4.2393 with standard deviation of 0.81423; on whether the company had a bonus/incentive plan had a mean of 3.9071 with standard deviation of 1.26376; trained employees were more committed had the mean of 4.16487 with standard deviation of 1.042989; training and development had improved employee retention had the mean of 4.1643 with standard deviation of 0.85182; trained and developed employees work better had the mean of 4.1036 with standard deviation of 0.88394; trained employees remained in the firm for long had the mean of 4.0321 with standard deviation of 0.92110; employees were taken for refresher courses to increase their skills and knowledge had a mean of 3.971 with standard deviation of 1.2295;

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Capacity Building Practices

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees are taken for refresher courses to increase their skills and knowledge	280	1.0	5.0	3.971	1.2295
Employees attend workshops/seminars in their area of specializations	280	1.00	5.00	4.2393	0.81423

Heads of departments allow their employees to further their studies to increase their educational levels	280	1.00	5.00	4.3036	0.92979
Management has provisions for scholarships and study leaves for the employees	280	1.00	5.00	4.0893	1.11163
Training and development has improved employee retention	280	1.00	5.00	4.1643	0.85182
Trained employees remain in the firm for long	280	1.00	5.00	4.0321	0.92110
Trained and developed employees work better	280	1.00	5.00	4.1036	0.88394
Trained employees are more committed	279	1.000	5.000	4.16487	1.042989
Trained employees have good attitude towards work and talk well of organization	279	1.00	5.00	3.7957	1.36681
Company allocates enough money towards training and development of its employees	280	1.00	5.00	3.6893	1.43180
Valid N (list wise)	278				

Source: Field data, 2019

Trained employees had good attitude towards work and talk well of organization had the mean of 3.7957 with standard deviation of 1.36681 and company allocated enough money towards training and development of its employees had mean of 3.6893 with standard deviation of 1.43180.

Out of the ten questions asked, seven variables had means of 4.0 and above while three variables had means of below 4.0. This was an indication that employees in the in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega were to some good extent exposed to capacity building practices and these may affect employees' retention in the health sector.

The means of capacity building practices were regressed with the means of employee retention and

the results were as shown in Table 3. In this regression analysis beta (β), was equivalent to the Karl Pearson correlation coefficient (r) (Sekaram, 2003) was used to measure the strength of the relationship. Furthermore, regression analysis, correlation analysis, ANOVA and t-tests were used to test the second hypothesis tested at 0.05 percent significance level, with 95percent confidence, which is acceptable in the social sciences.

First the study set out the following null hypothesis;

H₀1: There is no significant influence between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega.

Table 3: Regression Results of Capacity Building Practices and Employee Retention

Model Summary								
R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
					F Change	df1	df2	
0.827	0.683	0.671	0.58702	0.683	56.762	10	263	0.000
ANOVA								
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
Regression		195.596	10	19.560	56.762	0.000		
Residual		90.627	263	0.345				

Total		286.223	273		
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention					
b. Predictors: (Constant): Capacity Building Practices					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.458	0.302	1.520	0.000
	Capacity Building Practices	0.473	0.047	0.470	9.975

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention
b. Independent Variable: Capacity Building Practices
Significance level <0.05

Source: Field data, 2019

The test criterion was set such the study rejects the null hypothesis H_0 if $\beta_2 \neq 0$. The results were: regression coefficient ($B=0.473$), correlation coefficient ($\beta=0.470$), ANOVA ($F=56.762$) while t-test value ($t=9.975$). All these values were positive and significant since p-value was less than 0.05.

In the test criterion, the null hypothesis was accepted when the p-value was more than 0.05, an indication that the relationship between the two variables was not significant. Results in this study illustrated that the relationship between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega was positive and significant. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. The study revealed that capacity building practices accounted for 68.3percent ($r^2=0.683$) of employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega and the rest was explained by other factors.

The results were represented in the following model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon$$

Where Y= Employee Retention,

$$\beta_0 = 0.458$$

$$\beta_2 = 0.473$$

X_2 = capacity building practices

$$\epsilon = 0.047$$

Replacing in the equation above, gave the following model: $Y = 0.458 + 0.473X_2 + 0.047$. The results therefore clearly indicated that there exists a statistically significant positive relationship between capacity building practices and employee retention.

The study results were in congruent with past studies which revealed that training is positively associated with intention to stay with the organisation (Strategic HRM, 2012). In her research, Kinyili (2015) on the role of human resource management practices on retention of staff in public health institutions in Machakos County), the study adopted a mixed methods research design and targeted all the 772 health care staff in the 152 public health facilities in the eight sub-counties in the county. Due to the poor career advancement and employee retention, the employees' level of commitment was low. However, their intention to leave was equally low due to lack of finding alternative jobs among other reasons. The findings were that there was weak but statistically significant positive relationship between career advancement practice and employee retention.

Descriptive of Employee Retention

This gave results for the dependent variable (employee retention). The results were as shown in Table 4:

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of Employee Retention

Descriptive Statistics					
Questions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Workers participate in management activities	279	1.00	5.00	4.1792	1.06115
Employees are given a chance to have independent thinking and make workable decisions	279	1.00	5.00	4.3405	1.14843
I can see myself working here again and again	279	1.00	5.00	4.0179	1.22461
There is better co-ordination among co-workers	275	1.00	5.00	4.4436	0.81473
I feel like I am able to reach my full potential at the organization	276	1.00	5.00	4.2754	0.87609
I feel comfortable working with my teammates	276	1.00	5.00	4.2101	0.88587
I feel like I always get feedback.	276	1.00	5.00	4.2065	0.99312
I have a clear understanding about my career path and promotion plan.	276	1.00	5.00	4.2319	0.80715
I would apply for this job again in this organization.	276	1.00	5.00	4.2754	1.03936
I feel like my work is valued in this organization	276	1.00	5.00	4.4058	0.78752
Valid N (list wise)	275				

Source: Field data, 2019

The questions were scored on a five point Likert scale. It should be noted that all the variables had a mean scores of above 4.0. The variables with least varied views were: I have a clear understanding about my career path and promotion plan (mean =4.2319; standard deviation = 0.80715); there is better co-ordination among co-workers (mean =4.4436; standard deviation = 0.81473); I feel like I am able to reach my full potential at the organization (mean =4.2754; standard deviation = 0.87609); I feel comfortable working with my teammates (mean =4.2101; standard deviation = 0.88587) and I feel like I always get feedback (mean =4.2065; standard deviation = 0.99312).

CONCLUSIONS

Results indicated that the relationship between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega was positive and significant. Capacity building practices account for 68.3percent ($r^2=0.683$)

of employee retention in the health sector in the County Government of Kakamega.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The County Government of Kakamega hospitals should invest more in training their workforce at all levels of the health system to ensure the delivery of accessible and effective health care and enhance employee retention.

Suggestions for Further Research

Similar research was encouraged to be conducted in the other counties in Kenya to ascertain if consistent results can be achieved. Further research on the influence of capacity building practices on employee retention can be done in other organizations other than the health sector to ascertain if consistent results could be achieved. Research is encouraged to establish the moderating influence of organizational factors on the relationship between capacity building practices and employee retention in the health sector in other counties in Kenya.

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