



**INFLUENCE OF FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN KENYA'S DEVOLVED UNITS: A
CASE STUDY OF KISUMU COUNTY**

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ABSTRACT

Retaining talented employees has become one of the major priorities of organizations and the key differentiator for human capital management. Handling of employee grievances may have a bearing on employee retention in county governments. The objective of the study was to assess the influence of formal grievance handling practises on employee retention in devolved units in Kenya. The study was pegged on the theory of dispute resolution, while the research design was correlation research design. This study was limited to Kisumu County Government and was done between March and April 2019. The target population of the study was 2,087 employees of Kisumu County government from which a sample of 125 was involved. The selection of the respondents was done through purposive sampling so that only those cases or respondents who had grievances and had made attempts to resolve them through the available mechanisms were considered. The researcher used a closed ended questionnaire as the data collection instrument since the research was largely quantitative. Validity of the research instrument was done through a pilot test at Homa Bay County. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire with Cronbach Alpha of 0.7 and above was adopted. Data analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics through use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The regression analysis and ANOVA was used to test the influence of formal grievance handling procedures on employee retention. From the analysis most studies showed empirical evidence that there is significant influence of formal grievance handling practices on employee retention in devolved units. It was concluded that efficient grievance handling enhance more employee retention in Kisumu county and the study highly recommended the supervisors to be organizing meetings to settle the disputes before they spill over to bigger issues, as direct resolution has a significant influence on employee retention.

Key Words: *Grievance Handling, Employee Retention, Kisumu County*

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INTRODUCTION

A grievance is specific, formal dissatisfaction expressed through an identified procedure (Gupta, 2006). Also grievance can be defined as any discontent or dissatisfaction, whether expressed or not and whether valid or not, arising out of anything connected with the organization which an employee thinks, believes, or even feels is unfair, unjust or inequitable (Dwivedi, 2009). The International Labour Organization also defines that a grievance is a complaint of one or more workers in respect of wages, allowances, conditions of work and interpretation of service stipulations, covering such areas as overtime, leave, transfer, promotion, seniority, job assignment and termination of service. Further, Scarpello (2012) stated that a grievance is an act, omission or occurrence which a permanent classified employee feels constitutes an injustice and can be established on factual information. It may relate to any condition arising out of the relationship between an employer and an employee, including but not limited to, compensation, working hours, working conditions, and membership in an organization of employees or the interpretation of any law, regulation or disagreement which does not include position allocation, involuntary transfers, dismissals, demotions, or suspensions.

According to Rollinson (2010) grievance would include any discontent or dissatisfaction experienced by employee which affects the performance of the organization. An employee can be aggrieved at the treatment meted out to him by his superiors or the management, on his conditions of service, the nature of job and a host of other organizational factors. But the feeling of dissatisfaction sometimes may be verbally shared or kept within or it may be expressed in written or oral forms. Nevertheless, as long as the dissatisfaction with the system persists, an employee's performance may be adversely affected (Ratnam & Srivastava, 2008). There are some employees who are unwilling to express their

dissatisfaction before any one in any form but discontent exists. It may be because of their personality characteristics, childhood experiences, position in the family and social- economic and cultural background.

Arising from the growth in collective bargaining of employees in the public sector, many organizations have embraced the use of grievance handling procedures to mitigate in resolving work place grievances. According to Randolph and Blanchard (2010) protests are symptoms of absence of feedback and recognition, unfair standards, lack of proper compensation and benefits amongst many others. Potgieter and Muller (2011) and Kochan (2004) on the other hand have identified promotion, job content and conditions of work, treatment by supervisor as other causes of grievances. All these factors cumulatively cause poor employee relations in organizations which in turn translate to increased grievance reports. To help mitigate against all these shortcomings and as one of the enablers to good employee relations, organizations need to have grievance handling procedures in place which serve as a guide in case of grievances or need for dispute resolutions.

A functional and effective grievance system comprises five kinds of ways that include step-review method, peer-review method, open-door policy, ombudsman procedure and hearing officer system. Many organizations prefer graduating grievances from a lower level to the top level and this process agrees with Francois (2004) that advances in steps from lower to higher levels of management (Step-review). This method assists to process grievances smoothly. Different organizations have different kinds of grievance handling procedures but it is the duty of management to guarantee that employees understand the grievance procedures. For better understanding, such procedures should be written and communicated so that in situations where there are adverse effects on the well-being of individual

employees in terms of working environment and conditions one would know exactly what steps can be taken. According to Bagraim (2010) the rationale for grievance procedures is to help individual organization attain its best in terms of employee's performance and service delivery. However, in most cases the procedures are management centered and may not allow employees to initiate expression of their dissatisfaction with regard to their work situations.

According to Kibui, Gachunga and Namusonge (2014), retaining talented employees has become one of the major priorities of organizations and the key differentiator for human capital management. Global dynamic trends and competitive markets are making it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain talented employees and there is the constant risk of losing them to competitors. According to Armstrong (2014) talent management is hinged on the belief that those organizations with the best workforce are the winners in their industries. Talent management is therefore considered a tool to strengthen organizational capability (Kibui *et al*, 2014). Talent management refers to the 'systematic attraction, retention and deployment of individuals' who are valuable to an organization with regard to current critical roles or for future endeavours (Kibui *et al*, 2014).

In human resources context, employee turnover or labour turnover is the rate at which an employer loses and gains employees. According to Tett and Meyer (1993) in Rumery (1997), turnover intention refers to the 'conscious and deliberate wilfulness of the workers to leave an organization'. Vandenberg and Nelson (1999) defined intention to quit as an individual own estimated probability (subjective) that they are permanently leaving their organisation at some point in the near future. High turnover may be harmful to a company's productivity if skilled workers are often leaving and the worker population contains a high percentage of novice workers. Dess and Shaw

(2001) stated that voluntary turnover has significant cost, considering direct cost (management time, replacement temporary staff, recruitment and selection) and also indirect costs (cost of learning, organizational memory, pressure on remaining staff, morale and product/service quality) and the loss of social capital. According to Issa *et al*,(2013) lower levels of turnover is likely to be associated with higher levels of participation while higher levels of turnover is likely to be associated with lower levels of participation. This means that having highly satisfied employees will result in reduction of turnover intention. Armstrong (2001) observes that long-term employees generally have higher productivity and efficiency on the job than newer employees, due to their length of experience with the firm. Loyal employees also improve operational processes and train incoming employees.

Mendez and Stander (2011) emphasize the importance of employee retention in organizational success. Employee turnover is detrimental to a company's productivity due to the costliness of transitioning attraction of new employees, loss of production, reduced performance levels, overtime due to staff shortage and low employee morale (Lyria, Namusonge & Karanja 2014). Hughes and Rog (2008) found that a number of organizations globally have adopted talent retention strategies whose make up had both similarities and differences. Examples include Brazil, France and Netherlands who employ stimulation while Japanese employers intimidate employees to yield 'trust and respect'. Italian organizations conduct effective performance assessments whereas South Korea bases employee retention on performance targets, while Canada pegs employee retention on satisfaction and motivation.

Statement of the problem

According to Obwoyere and Kipkebut (2016) employee retention issues are coming up as the most critical human resource management challenges facing the county governments in Kenya. The work

environment has been manifested through a diverse population comprised of individuals whose motivations, beliefs and value structures differ broadly from the past and from one another. This phenomenon is especially true in light of current economic uncertainty and following corporate restructuring when the impact of losing critical employees increases substantially (Caplan & Teese, 1997). A critical analysis of employees reveals trends towards an impending shortage of highly skilled employees who possess the requisite knowledge and potential to perform at high levels. Companies that fail to retain high performing workers will become understaffed and have to deal with a workforce with diminishing skills. This will ultimately hinder their ability to hold on to competitive workers (Rappaport, Bancroft, & Okum, 2003). Managers face a challenge of inspiring and retaining their workers in an environment of increased uncertainties (Mitchell, 2002). Retention rates usually fall as employees become distracted, confused and preoccupied with potential outcomes immediately following planned or unplanned organizational changes.

Employee retention is a significant aspect of an organizations' success (Lyria, Namusonge & Karanja (2014). It is one of the challenges facing many organizations both public and private occasioned by globalization that has intensified competition and increased movement of highly skilled employees (Ng'ethe, Iravo & Namusonge, 2012). Dynamic trends in the international markets and competitive markets are making it increasingly difficult to seek and hold talented employees. This makes the risk of losing them to competitors high (Kibui, Gachunga & Namusonge, 2014). The implication of globalization is that organizations are competing for the same pool of talents in the world market for talents leading to standardization of talent recruitment, development and management. This means that organizations need to reshape themselves to global best practices of talent management and at the same time embrace

the local requirements for local labour markets (Lyria *et al*, 2014). While a majority of managers consider retention of their best employees to be an important part of their long term business strategy, many organizations do not have a framework in place to effectively keep their employees. This study, therefore, assessed the influence of formal grievance handling practices on employee retention in the devolved governments in Kenya.

Objective of the study

The objective of this study was to evaluate the influence of formal grievance procedures on employee retention at Kisumu County. It was supported by the following hypothesis:

H0: Formal grievance procedures have no significant influence on employee retention in Kisumu County,

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

Theory of dispute resolution

The Theory of Grievance and Conflict Management proposed a theory of 'dispute systems design'. There are three primary methods of dispute resolution which counties can adopt so as to influence employee retention. First, disputes might be handled and ultimately resolved through 'power-based methods', such as strikes, lockouts or other coercive sanctions. Second, they might be handled through 'rights-based methods', where the parties seek a resolution on the basis of rules or principles, such as those set down in collective agreements or in legislation concerning employment rights. Examples of this are provided by the operation of grievance procedures, mediation and arbitration. Finally, disputes could be addressed on the basis of 'interest-based methods', where the parties seek to identify and accommodate their needs or 'interests' through joint problem solving and associated techniques.

Therefore the rights-based method which involves the practices as mediation, facilitation and joint

problem solving initiatives was the most relevant to this study since the county government employees ought to be subjected to mediation, facilitation and joint problem solving to overcome any grievance amicably. Further the method was less costly as compared to the other techniques of managing workplace conflicts. It was more satisfactory and versatile by being capable of addressing more of the concerns of disputants than other methods (Ury *et al.*, 1988). It is also recognized that rights-based methods may not always be optimal or effective and that dispute resolution systems needed to be designed to provide low-cost rights-based methods as a backup to rights-based methods (Costantino *et al.*, 1996). The theory of rights-based method bases the resolution procedure to base in the rules and principles. This can help the selected organizations to solve their grievance and conflict base on their laws.

Review of study variables

Formal Grievance Handling and Employee retention

Armstrong (2009) noted that If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally, employees have the right to lodge a formal grievance by completing the Grievance Form and that it may be beneficial for the employee to take advice from a trade union representative, manager or colleague as they will be able to help complete the form, and can advise on the likelihood of the proposed remedy being achievable. A proposed remedy cannot suggest that someone be subject to a formal process, lose their job, or that you be financially compensated, so people should think carefully about what will actually resolve the situation and what is achievable. The grievance form should be submitted to the HR Advice Centre.

Further Dwayne (2010) suggested that where more than one person has a grievance concerning an organizational or employment matter the Disputes Policy and Procedure should be used. The employee will need to provide evidence to support their case. In

most cases it is helpful to keep a log of incidents if the grievance relates to behaviour that has been on-going. It is important for someone to be clear about what the issues are that are concerning them and how they would like them resolved (the remedy) (Kahnweiler, 2006). The HR Advice Centre will check that all possibilities for resolving the grievance informally have been exhausted, and may speak to the line manager (or their line manager if the grievance is against the employee's line manager) as part of that process. HR will also check whether raising a grievance is the appropriate process to resolve the issues (for example, if someone is not happy with a recent disciplinary sanction, they must use the appeal process within the appeal policy), and they will check that the suggested remedy is feasible. If not, they will let the employee know that the grievance is not accepted, and will advise on what to do instead (Kochan, 2004).

If a grievance is accepted as requiring further action by HR, they will forward it to an appropriate manager to deal with, usually the line manager, unless that it was deemed inappropriate (Mendez & Stander, 2011). They will advise the employee when this has happened, and who the manager is. The manager will be given a named HR contact, which will have an initial meeting with them to advise on possible courses of action to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. The manager will look into the facts of the situation. This will often involve speaking to the person who raised the grievance, and the person that they have raised the grievance against. When they are satisfied that they have enough information, they will take action to attempt to resolve the grievance as soon as possible (Ngetich, 2016). A formal grievance meeting will be held and the employee advised that they can be accompanied by a trade union representative or workplace colleague. The employee will be given the opportunity to explain their grievance and how they think it can be resolved. If the grievance can be resolved at this meeting, the

manager will confirm the outcome in writing with appeal rights. The meeting will be adjourned if further information or an investigation is required. In some cases the manager may need to discuss with HR whether the investigation should be a grievance or disciplinary investigation and this should be confirmed with the employees involved (Obwoyere & Kipkebut 2016).

However, Randolph & Blanchard (2010) state that if the employee's grievance is a counter claim against someone who has raised a grievance against them, or a reaction to another policy being applied to them such as Improving Performance, Disciplinary, or Supporting Attendance then the two may be dealt with together if appropriate. Any counter claim should not be allowed to stop the original proceedings. In the event that the facts of the grievance are not clear, the manager will need to obtain further information or conduct or commission an investigation, following the Code of Conduct for Investigations (Scarpello, 2012). They must set up the investigation panel within stipulated number of working days of receiving the grievance form. The manager must confirm in writing to the employee that they are conducting an investigation and who is on the investigation panel (Hughes & Rog, 2008). They need to keep all parties informed of what is happening, update them regularly, and tell them the reason for any delays but if an employee is absent due to sickness while their grievance is being dealt with, they must follow the normal sickness absence reporting procedures. The manager will stay in touch with an employee if they are going to be absent for a long time. It is important for employee's to understand that sickness absence will be dealt with in the usual way, and that it will not stop the grievance from being progressed. It is in everyone's interests to resolve it as quickly as possible (Kochan, 2004).

As soon as possible after receiving a grievance, the employer should carry out an investigation. In many cases, this will be a relatively straightforward fact-

finding exercise. If the grievance involves other members of staff, they should be informed and given an opportunity to provide their own evidence (Kemuma, 2016). The investigation process will depend on the specific circumstances of the case. Ultimately, the aim of the investigation is to establish the full facts of the grievance before any decision is taken. If there is a need to conduct a grievance investigation it will include speaking to witnesses and any individuals implicated in the matter (Bagram, 2010). This will help to shed light on the grievance and to establish the facts of the case. Once the investigation has concluded and all of the facts established and considered a decision will then be made about whether to uphold all or part of the grievance or if to reject it. The decision should be communicated to the employee. If the grievance is upheld, it may be resolved at this stage (Lewin & Richard, 2009). However, if it is part upheld or rejected or the employee remains aggrieved, the process may move on to the next stage. The grievance outcome should notify the individual of their right to appeal. The appeal hearing chair should then establish why the employee is appealing the decision and what resolution the employee is seeking. The case should be reviewed, the grounds for appeal investigated and fairly considered before an appeal outcome is reached. The appeal is usually the final stage of the grievance process (Kahnweiler, 2006).

Employers should have a written grievance procedure that tells their employees what to do and what happens at each stage of the grievance process. This facilitates effective grievance handling and sensitizes employees on what they must do if they find themselves with any grievances to address (Rollinson, 2010). This will involve holding a grievance hearing with an employee. The employee has a statutory right to be accompanied at a grievance hearing by a trade union representative or work colleague. The meeting is an opportunity for the employee to explain the grievance and provide

details, information or evidence to support the complaint. The employer should aim to establish the facts such as who, what, where, when, why and how the issue came to being. After the employee has fully explained their grievance it may sometimes be possible at this stage, depending on the nature of the complaint, to resolve it (Potgieter & Muller, 2011).

The grievance handling process may help indirectly to improve relations between the parties to the collective agreement (Kochan, 2004). The grievance process can act as a 'diagnostic device' whereby both parties can be made aware of underlying problems in the workplace with a view to improving the situation. As well, it can provide a medium of communication and consultation. 'Not only do the two sides exchange a good deal of information about their plans, hopes, and feelings in the course of discussing grievances, but such discussions can provide a basis for a positive policy of consultation, especially if regular grievance meetings are held' (Kochan, 2004). Furthermore, due to the need for considerable consistency in resolving workplace disputes, the presence of a grievance procedure can significantly improve the quality of decision making. Senior management also benefits because the process represents an excellent means for achieving consistency in policy formulation and application and can ensure compliance with corporate policy by middle management and supervisors since their decisions are subject to the grievance procedure and will be reviewed by their superiors (Amah, 2009). As well, the grievance procedure saves senior management's time and energy since the procedure 'weeds out' issues of local or less importance at the lower levels and funnels upwards only those issues of major importance, while still providing them with ultimate control and coordination of the organization (Mendez & Stander, 2011).

Motivation to continue working or maintain the job can be specified as a management process which encourages people to work better and longer for the

overall benefit of the organization, by providing them motives, which are based on their unfulfilled needs (Randolph & Blanchard, 2010). Extrinsic motivations are factors external that causes an employee to act toward fulfillment of a work task or goal. They are usually punishments or rewards. A punishment motivates an employee to act in order to avoid the punishment, while rewards motivate an employee to act in order to receive the reward. It's easy to remember because extrinsic motivations come from external forces

Amah (2009) contributed to this statement by arguing that it is necessary for managers and leaders of organization to learn to understand and effectively deal with their employee's motivation; since motivated employees' are the pillars of successful organization in present and future century. She also indicates that unmotivated employees may probably contribute little effort in their jobs, stay away from workplace as much as possible, go out of the organization and make low quality of work. When employees are well motivated, they help the organization to grow and survive in fast changing workplaces (Lindner 1998). Lindner also indicates that the most difficult role of managers is to motivate employee, because what motivates employees changes always.

Employee retention

Retention is the process of physically keeping employees in an organization (Armstrong 2009). Retention is one of the key fundamentals that are necessary for organizational success. In a globalized environment, retention of high prospective employees is a huge challenge to organizations especially in times of high turnover rates. In many cases, even engaged employees are sometimes dissatisfied with the outcomes of organizational performance which may lead them to search for employment elsewhere. Thus, organizations should formulate appropriate retention strategies in a holistic manner to reduce turnover rates. Managing

retention of promising employees is considered as fundamental in achieving competitive advantage amongst organization (Amah, 2009).

Finding and hiring competent, capable and quality staff and retaining them is a constant challenge in many organizations. Although at times advertisement and interviews are carried out as expected, the hired individuals may be unable to perform and have to undergo further training or may stay for a very brief period before moving on (Mohanasundaram, V. & Saranya, N. (2013). Many organizations at times find it very challenging to retain staff in a competitive work environment. This has resulted in many hiring new staff quickly just to have somebody fill a vacancy. This often leads to the expensive consequences of a bad hire, which may include workplace disruption, lost productivity, increased stress, and decreased morale. In addition, firing a "bad hire" creates workplace anxiety and legal and personal complications and expenses. Retention and staff turnover are issues of importance because they impact on an organization in several ways. The visible turnover costs are items such as leave capitalization, recruitment costs, training costs and induction expenses. Invisible costs include increased human resource and payroll administration, loss of productivity, transition meetings and informal training.

Koikai (2014) states that recruiting people to meet the organization's human resource needs is only half the battle in the war for talent, rather the other half is keeping these people. Organizations that keep their employee turnover rates lower gain an advantage against their competitors by reducing overall labour costs and improving productivity. Retention of key employees is important in that it fosters clients satisfaction, increases sales, promotes working relationships, improves employee-manager relationships and enables valuable succession planning. In such a system, Institutional knowledge and learning is successfully preserved and advanced.

Failing to retain key employees' especially new graduates is costly for any business.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design was used in this study because of the need for sufficient and precise data relevant to meet the specific objectives of the study by guarding against bias and ensure maximum reliability as Kothari and Garg (2014) recommend. The populations were drawn from all the employees of the County Government of Kisumu who had had some experiences of grievance situations relating to their work. The County Government of Kisumu had a total of 2086 employees carrying out tasks at the county headquarters. Out of these, a sample of 10% was drawn resulting in 208 respondents for the study. The selection of the respondents was done through purposive sampling. A self-administered questionnaire was the data collection instrument. The research instrument was pilot tested in the neighboring Homabay County with 21 respondents representing 10% of the sample population. Research experts were consulted to check the contents of the instrument thereby established its content validity. The errors and inconsistencies which were detected were rectified before the actual study as recommended by Kothari and Garg (2014). Reliability of the questionnaire was established by using Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency. Cooper and Schindler (2008) have indicated 0.7 to be an acceptable reliability coefficient. For this study the questionnaire with Cronbach Alpha of 0.7 and above was adopted. Data was analyzed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The model adopted was:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$. Where; The dependent variable was Employee Retention (Y) and (X_1), formal grievance practices (X_2), β_0 ε is the error or stochastic term.

RESULTS

Table 1 below presented the descriptive results for formal grievance practices.

Table 1: Formal grievance procedures

	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
There are clear procedures on how individuals and groups are to resolve work problems at the county	42(33.6%)	44(35.2%)	18(14.4%)	16(12.8%)	5(4.0%)	3.82	1.153
a grievance handling team exists at the county	17(13.6%)	39(31.2%)	30(24.0%)	23(18.4%)	16(12.8%)	3.14	1.242
employees and management are aware of the procedures for grievance resolution	36(28.8%)	43(34.4%)	27(21.6%)	11(8.8%)	8(6.4%)	3.70	1.164
management carry out thorough investigations when staff report work problems to them	50(40.0%)	36(28.8%)	23(18.4%)	12(9.6%)	4(3.2%)	3.93	1.123
when a work problem is reported, there is clear documentation and follow up on the same	36(28.8%)	43(34.4%)	23(18.4%)	16(12.8%)	7(5.6%)	3.68	1.182
grievances are usually resolved using appropriate processes and mechanisms	32(25.6%)	51(40.8%)	18(14.4%)	18(14.4%)	6(4.8%)	3.68	1.147
the office of the ombudsman is active and county staffs use it to address their work related problems	36(28.8%)	43(34.4%)	16(12.8%)	20(16.0%)	10(8.0%)	3.60	1.276
i feel my grievances cannot be fully resolved by the ombudsman	16(12.8%)	22(17.6%)	44(35.2%)	28(22.4%)	15(12.0%)	2.97	1.184

Grand mean =3.56

Valid N (listwise) =125

From the descriptive results in Table 1, most respondents agreed (35.2%) as (33.6%) strongly agreed there were clear procedures on how to individuals and groups are to resolve work problems at the county followed by (31.2%) who responded that a grievance handling team exists at the county. Further, (34.4%) of respondents had a view that

employees and management are aware of the procedures for grievance resolution, (while 40.8%) were of the view that generally, grievances were usually resolved using appropriate process and mechanisms. On whether the office of the ombudsman was active and county staffs used it to address their work related problems, (34.4%) agreed

to this as (35.2%) of the respondents were uncertain whether the ombudsman could not fully resolve their

grievances. Table 2 also presented the results for employee retention.

Table 2: Employee retention

	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
i feel am giving my full potential in achievement of county goals	48(38.4%)	44(35.2%)	16(12.8%)	6(4.8%)	11(8.8%)	4.47	.642
i am happy to report to work daily since i started my work at the county	68(54.4%)	51(40.8%)	4(3.2%)	2(1.6%)		4.48	.643
my energy and strength keeps growing everyday as i continue working for county	58(46.4%)	55(44.0%)	9(7.2%)	3(2.4%)		4.34	.720
i would take on new changes when they happen in the county without any fear	46(36.8%)	60(48.0%)	15(12.0%)	3(2.4%)	1(0.8%)	4.18	.794
i would not hesitate to leave for another job if i get then chance to do so soon	42(33.6%)	53(42.4%)	14(11.2%)	8(6.4%)	8(6.4%)	3.90	1.132
the customers we serve speak highly of us and i would continue providing the same service to them	59(47.2%)	50(40.0%)	9(7.2%)	5(4.0%)	2(1.6%)	4.27	.883

Grand mean =4.36

Valid N (listwise) =125

From the descriptive results in Table 2 on employee retention, most respondents strongly agreed (38.4%) followed by (35.2%) who agreed that they felt that they were giving full potential achievement of county goals. (54.4%) of respondents strongly agreed to be happy to report to work daily since they started their work at the county. While (46.4%) strongly agreed that their energy and strength kept growing everyday as they continued working for county. When asked whether the employee would take on new changes

when they happen in the county (48.0%) of respondents agreed as (36.8%) strongly agreed. (47.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed while (40.0%) agreed that the customers they serve speak highly of them and they would continue providing the same to them.

The regression results are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Linear Regression Results; Influence of formal grievance procedures on employee retention

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.879 ^a	.772	.770	.465

a. Predictors: (Constant), formal grievance procedures

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	90.193	1	90.193	416.947	.000 ^b
Residual	26.607	123	.216		
Total	116.800	124			

a. Dependent Variable: employee retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), formal grievance procedures

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	1.886	.128		14.726	.000
	formal grievance procedures	.695	.034	.879	20.419	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee retention

The model summary above shows that that R squared; $R^2 = 0.772$ implying that 77.2% of variations in the dependent variable (employee retention) is explained by the independent variable (formal grievance procedures) while other confounding variables not in the model contribute for 22.8% of employee retention. The unstandardized beta coefficient is 0.695, which implies that a unit change in formal grievance procedures, leads to 0.695 unit increase in employee retention. Thus the linear regression model is;

$$(i) Y = 1.886 + 0.695X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- Y = employee retention
- X_1 = formal grievance procedures
- ϵ = error term

Testing of Null Hypotheses

From multiple regression analyses, the study's null hypotheses were tested as follows;

H₀: Formal grievance procedures have no significant influence on employee retention in Kisumu County.

H_A: Formal grievance procedures have significant influence on employee retention in Kisumu County.

T-test statistics results: (t = 4.186; $p=0.000 < 0.05$)

Verdict: The null hypothesis **H₀** was rejected.

Results interpretation: Formal grievance procedures have significant influence on employee retention in Kisumu County, Kenya.

H₀: Formal grievance procedures have no significant influence on employee retention in Kisumu County

and the hypothesis was rejected as the analysis results showed that formal grievance have significant influence on employee retention as supported by Armstrong (2009), noted that If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally, employees have the right to lodge a formal grievance by completing the Grievance Form and that it may be beneficial for the employee to take advice from a trade union representative, manager or colleague as they will be able to help complete the form, and can advise on the likelihood of the proposed remedy being achievable.

CONCLUSIONS

From the literature review, most studies showed empirical evidence that there is significant influence of grievance handling practices on employee retention in devolved units, therefore it was concluded that efficient grievance handling would enhance more employee retention in Kisumu county.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To begin with, direct resolution has significant influence on employee retention; therefore the study highly recommends the supervisors to be organizing meetings to settle the disputes before they spill over to bigger issues as this approach would make the employees to quickly and directly address issues affecting them to the supervisor or the colleague concerned.

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Secondly, from the findings of the study it was clear that informal grievance handling practices as well influences the employee retention in Kisumu county , therefore the bosses should create more conducive environment for the issues affecting the staff to be discussed at personal and group levels. The conducive environment would make the informal discussions of work related problems to yield satisfactory solutions thus facilitating faster grievance handling before it gets out of hand hence enhanced employee retention. The bosses can create on open forums where employee issues that affect work are presented or departmental meetings.

Lastly, the study highly recommended management of the county offices to be fully engaging external mediators who should carry out thorough investigations when staff report work problems and the management fails to resolve it to the employee's satisfaction, and the office of the ombudsman be kept more active to deal with issues beyond the management.. From the responses during data collection and analysis, majority of the respondents were uncertain whether the management carries out thorough investigation, and this clearly indicates that most of the grievances must have not been amicable resolved and this may lead to low employees retention in the county.

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