



INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

Mahando, B., & Juma, D.

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Mahando, B.,^{1*} & Juma, D.²

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

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

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ABSTRACT

Employee performance contributes significantly to organization performance, thus many organizations especially public organizations like public universities face a number of challenges arising from poor employee performance. While Universities are expected to provide communities both local and international market with high-skilled graduates, there is evidence that public university performance in Kenya is low resulting to mass exodus of lecturers seeking green pastures. While some researchers point at low performance of university staff as the main cause of low public university performance, some researchers accuse poor human resource practices in most public universities as the main cause of poor employee performance in public universities. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of human resource management practices on employee performance in the Technical University of Kenya. The specific objectives included; to determine the effect of; interpersonal communication, employee recognition and employee promotion on employee performance in the Technical university of Kenya. The study was based on the Human Capital Theory and Interpersonal Need Gratification Theory. The study applied descriptive research design. The study used questionnaires and interviews as the data collection instruments. The research carried out a pilot study to pretest and validates the instruments. The data from questionnaires was coded, entered, cleaned and analyzed using a statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 23) and descriptive analysis such as percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies were computed while for variable relationships, inferential analysis were computed. The findings of the study were that all the three independent variables which are interpersonal communication, employee recognition and employee promotion had a positive and significance influence on the dependent variable which is employee performance. These findings helped public universities in developing prudent human resource management practices that boost employee performance.

Key Words: *Employee Performance, Human Resource Management Practices, interpersonal communication, employee recognition, employee promotion*

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INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a critical component when it comes to the performance of any organization (Makhanu, Mukanzi & Eshiteti, 2018; Singh, 2014; Taylor, 2007). According to Armstrong (2010), effective use and performance of the human resource in any organization will always determine its success. Organizations that do not perform as per the required expectations have employees that are ineffectively and inefficiently utilized. Similarly, employee performance is very relevant for the organization and the individual employee in showing that a high performance in accomplishing a task leads to one's satisfaction, feeling of self-efficacy and mastery of content (Nasiripour, Afshar & Izadi, 2012; Sonnentag, Volmer & Spychala, 2006). In addition, high performing employees get to be promoted, get opportunities for career growth get opportunities for career advancement, as well as get to be honoured based on a set of human resource practices as advanced by the organization.

Some of the most common HR practices that are well linked to the performance of specific employees include but not limited to effective interpersonal communication (Tamer & Suhaila, 2012; Nasiripour et al., 2012; Quirke, 2008; Taylor, 2007), employee recognition (Tinti, Luciano, Almir & Alexandre (2017; Njanja, Maina, Kibet & Njagi, 2013; Brun, & Dugas, (2008), and employee promotion (Njanja et al., 2013; Armstrong, 2010). Some of the benefits of these HR practices include; giving an overview of an organization's culture to all employees, acting as an official means to the communication between an organization and a recruit, providing details on terms of employment, forming a basis from which staff is oriented and trained, and also acts as a reference point for managers and staff in future engagements (Sandra, 2017). A recurring issue in HRM however, is the idea that a certain bundle or combination of HR practices when properly applied, can be a key requirement for the achievement of high

performance of the organization (Wright & Gardener, 2003). In addition, the continuing prosperity of a firm is likely to be enhanced by employees who hold attitudes and expectations that are closely aligned with the organizations vision (Chew, 2005). On the other hand, employees do require the motivation, combined with other factors to enable them work effectively and achieve the goals of the organizational.

Armstrong (2010) assert that human resource management is at its best when improved performance is achieved through the people in the organization. People are therefore considered as an important asset in any organization for better performance. Until the 1980's, performance was usually construed as the output of a combination of ability and motivation, given appropriate resources and hence motivating others became a key part of the most management, thus most scholars embarked on researches relating human resource management and employee performance (Armstrong, 2009). Further, high performance work systems can be defined as an integrated set of human resources management practices and practices that together produce superior employee performance like employment security, extensive training and selective hiring. Therefore, in as much as most organization want to achieve high performance through the system of work they adopt but these systems are managed and operated by people.

Ultimately, therefore, high- performance working is about improving performance through the people. The aim is to achieve high performance culture, one in which the values, norms and human resource practices of an organization combine to create a climate in which the achievement of high levels of performance is a way of life (Armstrong, 2009). People therefore have to be involved in the organizational activities to gain skills; information and experience to assist them improve their performance to meet the organizations goals and objectives.

Similarly, every organization sets clear vision and mission which leads employees to attain organizational goals. Managers develop job descriptions and job specifications to ensure that each employee is accountable for their responsibilities. Managers should therefore, consider the well-being of employees which affects their performance. When employee's performance is low, the organizational performance is affected negatively. Employees should also play an important role when decisions concerning the organizations are made; this is because most of the decisions affect the employees who are known to deliver some of the crucial activities (Sisson, 2008).

Ripley (2002) similarly reinforced that employee performance does not occur in a vacuum, hence managers should not only look at the employees but also at the environments in which the employees are expected to perform. In this regard required facilities (system factors) should also be made available to deliver quality services, they include information, resources and incentives. Employees should therefore ensure that their work is done effectively and efficiently hence helps them to improve their performance.

Foot and Hook (2008) also reinforces that during the recruitment and selection, managers should ensure that the right candidates are appointed based on the skills, experience and their level of education. Once employed, training and development is employed to add the required skills to the employees to achieve the vision and mission of the organization hence improving their performance since they have the necessary skills.

Consequently, employee performance appraisal exercise should also be conducted to measure the level of employee performance and compare with the set goals and objectives. Employee performance appraisal is carried out in organizations to identify an individual current level of performance and to enable

employees improve on their performance (Cole, 2002). Managers should thus be able to identify the weakness and strengths of their employees as a result of appraisal and craft viable human resource management practices to foster employee performance.

New employees need to know the organizational practices and practices which lead them to attain the objectives. The existing employees also need the training and development exercise to improve their performance by acquiring new skills and information. Competent employees do not remain competent forever; skills deteriorate and can become obsolete. Further, Thao and Hwang (2015) study in Vietnam, observed that employee performance was affected by leadership, coaching, empowerment, participation, organization culture, training and the general work environment.

Statement of the Problem

Employee performance in many public universities in Kenya is on the decline (Makori, 2016). Accordingly, many public universities have reported very poor performance in terms of meeting their obligations, which end up affecting the performance of their workforce. According to Mutahi and Busienei (2015), university education in Kenya is undergoing considerable changes in response to a multiplicity of factors like the development of information and communication technologies, globalization, an advancing network and knowledge society, and the marketization in higher education, among others. To ensure effective employee performance, most successful organizations implement credible human resource management practices (Patterson, West, Lawthom & Nickell, 2003). Furthermore, Universities are expected to provide communities, both local and international market with high-skilled graduates (Darleez et al., 2016) hence the need to adopt best practices of HRM to stimulate university employee's performance which in turn promotes university performance. Waithaka, (2010) agrees that university

performance in Kenya wanting due to employee performance related issues, researches done by Munjuri (2011); Busienei (2013); and Mutahi et al (2015) have mainly focused on HRMPs and performance of universities in Kenya without exploiting employee performance. Therefore, due to the inconsistencies in previous studies on the efficacy of the HRM practices in public universities and scanty empirical literature on employee performance in public universities motivated this study to investigate the influence of human resource management practices on employee performance in public universities in Kenya, a case of the Technical university of Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective was to establish the influence of human resource management practices on employee performance in the Technical University of Kenya. The specific objectives were:

- To determine the influence of interpersonal communication on employee performance in the Technical University of Kenya
- To evaluate the influence of employee recognition on employee performance in the Technical University of Kenya
- To determine the influence of employee promotion on employee performance in the Technical University of Kenya

The research hypotheses were;

- **H₀₁** There is no significant relationship between interpersonal communication and employee performance in Kenyan public universities
- **H₀₂** There is no significant relationship between employee recognition and employee performance in Kenyan public universities
- **H₀₃** There is no significant relationship between employee promotion and employee performance in Kenyan public universities

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interpersonal Need Gratification Theory

When discussing relationships at work, it is important to have an understanding of interpersonal need gratification theory and its significance to such relationships. The theory according to Anderson and Martin (1995) is a goal-oriented perspective for communicating that explains why people enter into relationships. The needs theory states that people have individual needs for inclusion, control, and affection (Kram & Cherniss, 2001). By definition, inclusion is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory relationship with another person, while affection concerns closeness and intimacy. The control need reflects dominance and power concepts. When employees' needs are met through satisfying communication (Pearce, 2003), are more than likely to build relationships, and experience satisfaction. Conversely, unfulfilled needs result in counterproductive communication behaviors, which contribute to feelings of dissatisfaction with superiors, jobs and organizations. Like all human beings, employees are a complex set of paradoxes and contradictory characteristics. Therefore, by understanding how they relate to each other, the organization would achieve a better and more effective working environment.

In understanding building relationships at work, two aspects are probably worth noting; first is building relationships with superiors, and second is building relationships with co-workers (Kram & Cherniss, 2001). It is also worth noting that both these aspects are linked to the importance of building good relationships with the organization. It is interesting to point out here to the Japanese style of relationships at work, their concept of tsukiai specifies one's obligation to develop and maintain harmonious relations with one's work colleagues hence, the application of this theory to the study on interpersonal communication.

Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory developed by Smith (1776). In the late 1950s and early 1960's Schultz played a crucial role in converting this idea of "human capital" from a suggestive metaphor to the basis for a wide-ranging and fruitful research program in economics. Schultz (1961) postulates that training and education are a form of investment in human beings. The underlying belief then is that training creates assets in the form of knowledge and skills, which in turn increases the productivity of the worker. He argued that skilled human resource has been able to acquire these skills as a result of training and development programs or investment in the existing human resource through appropriate on-the-job training both within and outside the organization for example seminars, workshops, conferences, and by creating conducive environment through appropriate welfare care like promotion (Biddle & Holden, 2014).

Human capital represents the human factor in the organization, the combined intelligence, skills and expertise that gives the organization its distinctive character. The human elements of the organization are those that are capable of learning, changing, innovating and providing the creative thrust which if properly motivated can ensure the long term survival of the organization (Armstrong, 2009).

According to Becker (2006), Human capital theory specifies three principles which include; Investment in employee development in terms of skills and knowledge is justified only when future productivity exceeds the cost; Firms should invest in employee firm specific skills and knowledge, whereas general skills should be developed by the employee; and Organizations need to protect their human capital from being transferred to other firms. Human capital theory explains the relationships between human resource practices and human capital accumulation. One example of these human resource practices is focusing on human capital elements such as skills,

firm specific knowledge, and rewards systems that enhance employee performance, and could lead to better organizational performance (Huselid, 2010).

Empirical Review

Interpersonal Communication

Effective interpersonal communication is one of the key drivers of employee engagement. It has proven to add significant value to organizations on all metrics from productivity to customer research. This is according to the UK government-sponsored MacLeod Report. In a study carried out by Quirke (2008), on 'Making the connections: Using Internal Communication to Turn Strategy into Action' it was found out that, traditionally, internal communications has focused on the announcement of management conclusions and the packaging of management thinking into messages for mass distribution to the 'troops. Research indicates a limit to the value of this 'broadcasting' model of interpersonal communication.

This positive influence of open communication is also found in a collaborative group context in which open communication helps improve participation of team members during strategic planning and enhances the upward flow of information to senior decision-makers for purposes of organizational change and development Breen, Fetzer, Howard, and Preziosi (2005). Openness in work communication is also found to have positive impacts on employees' attitudinal behavior, including attitude, subject norms, and perceived behavior control (Al-Gahiani and Himg-Pin 2009).

For instance, open communication facilitates the exchange of ideas and sharing of information among employees (Al-Omari 2008). On the other hand, if communication is impaired openness can be detrimental to organizational change and development. For example, if communication is constrained, people may feel isolated and alienated from their work (Al-Omari 2008), and low levels of

communication openness were found to be linked with increased destructive reactions to conflict, bullying, and emotional reaction to bullying in groups (Ayoko 2007).

The fact that workers are encouraged to express their opinions and recommendations, that someone listens to them, and seeks to find a fruitful resolution to the case, is a very inspiring event (Orpen, 2012). Managers should motivate their staffs, state that problems can be determined by collaboration, produce self-assurance in the company and generate an aspiration to follow the leader, because good cooperation can help to implement and accomplish the set goals. This reinforcement for teamwork makes peer to peer communication improve which is important for employee and team productivity.

Allen, Attner, and Plunkett (2017) define interpersonal communication as involving real time face-to-face or voice-to-voice conversation that allows instant feedback. They also add that interpersonal communication is appropriate for discussing matters that require give-and-take between participants. Such matters include discussion about performance appraisal; management by objectives (MBO) sessions conversations in which praise or criticism is given coaching, counseling or training sessions. Meetings and conferences are useful forms of interpersonal communication as well as brainstorming sessions, quality circles, committee meetings, and contract negotiations. It is important at this stage to distinguish between organizational communication and interpersonal communication. The former is defined clearly by Hitt, Tihanyi, Miller, and Connelly (2016), as the patterns of communication that occur at the organizational level. They point to the following motives of interpersonal communication: pleasure, which is for fun; affection, which means caring; escape is the filling of time to avoid other behaviors; relaxation which is an “unwinding” concept; control concerns power and; inclusion

means sharing of feelings and avoiding loneliness. Understanding people’s motives for communicating should lead to a better understanding of relationship outcomes (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 2012).

Several components makeup the interpersonal communication process: proximity, attraction, and contextual motives, sharing information, developing trust, and resolving conflict. The first component is “proximity”, which is developed through physical contact with the other person (Williams, 1989). Another component is “attraction”. People carry around attitudes that may immediately influence their perception of another individual. People with similar attitudes and values are more attracted to each other compared to those of dissimilar attitudes and values. The concept of cognitive dissonance attempts to explain how people reduce internal conflicts when they experience a clash between information they receive and their actions. The third component of interpersonal communication is “contextual motives”. Beyond factors of visual proximity and personal attraction, there can be relatively direct motives forgetting to know another person better. Similarly, it is a lack of motive, or a negative motive, that prevents many of our everyday encounters with others from developing to the interpersonal level of communication (Schermerhorn et al, 2012). Part of the process of interpersonal communication is an orientation to individual rather than to role or general stereotype motives. The fourth component involves “sharing information”, “developing trust” and “resolving conflict”. It is a known fact that communication cannot move to the interpersonal level unless the individuals involved gain information about others.

Employee Recognition and Employee Performance

This will assess whether valid employee recognition Practices, fairness of the reward system, employee benefit packages, fair distribution of opportunities, acknowledgements and recommendations for good work done influences employee performance. In a

research carried out by (Jansen, 2011) on The Effect of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards in Employee Motivation, it was found out that intrinsic rewards come from verbal rewards such as positive feedback and praise which lead to job satisfaction. Intrinsically motivated employees participate eagerly in their jobs for internal reasons. This is from pure enjoyment and satisfaction.

Behaviors brought about by intrinsic motivation can be better task – relevant focus, less distraction, less stress when mistakes are made and improved confidence. According to Mcrill (2011) on his study in 'Extrinsic Vs Intrinsic Employee Rewards', concluded that there are two kinds of rewards: extrinsic rewards which provide extrinsic motivation which in turn encourage better performance and intrinsic rewards which likewise promote intrinsic motivation which lead to better performance.

According to Donata (2011) extrinsically motivated individuals seek to be rewarded for doing what is expected of them. On the contrary, intrinsically motivated employees get pleasure out of completing a task, recognition or the job itself. Shah and Shah (2017) stated that recognition is a leadership tool that sends a message to employees about what is important to the leaders and the behaviors that are valued. Recognition may have monetary value, for example; luncheon, gift certificate or plaques. However, money itself cannot be given to recognize performance (Gale 2002). Additionally, every action which supports a company's goal is recognized whether through informal feedback or formal organization-wide recognition. The management in most cases should remain flexible in its methods of recognising its employees, since employees are motivated by different forms of recognition.

Brooke, Revell and Green (2011) argued that employees seek the achievement of their career goals and objectives (either through the meeting of expectations, the achievement of financial goals and

career goals), responsibility (taking on roles and effectively accomplishing the obligations attached to those roles) and growth (here referring to the personal advancement through the ranks in the organization) as the highest priority for incentives in their work. It can thus be argued that a reward and recognition system that addresses these areas produces the desired outcome. Goal setting (where the employee and the employer negotiate and agree on the targets to be aimed for) can provide a number of these employee rewards as individual employees can negotiate the desired outcomes with management (Muhoi, 2013). The employee who plays an integral part in the development of these goals is more likely to perceive the outcome as being achievable and to be committed to achieving it (Robbins, Millett, Cacioppe & Watersh, 2013).

In order for an organization to meet its obligation to its employees and society, it must have a relationship with its employees that will fulfill the continually changing needs for both parties (Ali & Ahmed, 2009). This is because, while the organization expects employees to fulfill their obligations to them, the employees expect their organization to provide fair pay (that is, a pay that is commensurate to the type of work or outputs expected from the employees), safe working conditions or providing a work environment which does not endanger the life or safety of the employees and fair and equitable treatment of the employees.

Employee Promotion and Performance

In a study by (Bohlander, 2001) on 'Managing Human Resources', it was found out that promotion practices aims at rewarding employing for their past performances and encouraging them to continue their effort toward the growth and development of the organization. It is usually based on the qualifications and the principle of merit with clear career opportunities and the prospect of accessing higher positions with greater responsibility as a prerequisite for an attractive career development

system. Promotion is used as a reward for better work performance and organizationally approved form of behavior. People will work harder if they feel that this will lead to promotion. It provides satisfaction to personnel who enhance their morale, productivity, and loyalty to the organization. Promotion provides avenues for continuous learning and developing of personnel as promotion depends on promotability which is a result of continuous learning and development. This process increases individual effectiveness and, consequently, organizational effectiveness as asserted by a study on "Work-Life Balance among Human Resources, Emerging Trends in select corporate Businesses in India and Abroad- A study" from (Prasad, 2012)

Several Researches have found out that there is a positive significant relationship between opportunities for promotion and job satisfaction (Owusu, 2012; Wan, Sulaiman, & Omar, 2012; Danish, & Usman, 2010). Wan, Sulaiman, and Omar, (2012) have argued that employees who perceive promotion decisions as fair are more likely to be committed to the organization, experience career satisfaction, perform better and subsequently have a lower intention to leave the organization. According to Danish (2010) human resources are the most important among all the resources an organization owns. To retain efficient and experienced workforce is very crucial on overall performance of an organization. Motivated employees can help make an organization competitively more value added and profitable. Bull (2005) asserts a view that when employees experience success in mentally challenging occupations which allow them to exercise their skills and abilities; they experience greater levels of job satisfaction. Incentives, rewards and recognition are the key parameters of today's motivation programs to the most of the organizations and these bind the success factor with the employee's performance.

The level of promotion has a stronger impact on job satisfaction as compared to recognition and

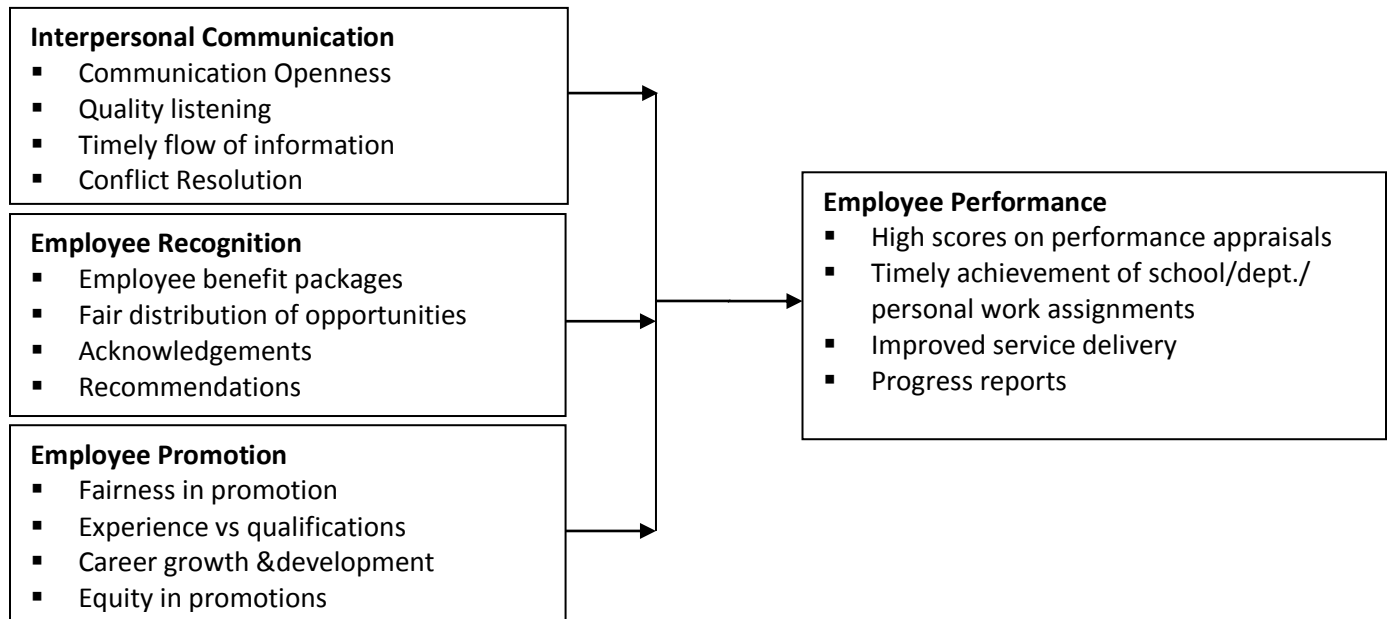
achievement. The promotion to the next level will result in positive changes such as pay, autonomy and supervision, (Naveed, et.al 2011). However, Mustapha and Zakaria, (2013) warns that those top achievers promoted too quickly can result in dissatisfaction amongst loyal, intelligent but less creative senior workers. The human resources department, at most times, is constantly asked the question "does the job position entails opportunity for advancement (promotion). Bohlander, (2001) advocates that the wish to be promoted stems from the desire for psychological growth, the desire for justice and the desire for social stays. Management should therefore bear in mind, that promotion can serve as a very positive motivating tool in ensuring that the employee attains goals at a higher level.

Danish (2010) also found that human resources are the most important among all the resources an organization owns. To retain efficient and experienced workforce is very crucial on overall performance of an organization. Motivated employees can help make an organization competitively more value added and profitable. Bull (2005) asserts a view that when employees experience success in mentally challenging occupations which allow them to exercise their skills and abilities; they experience greater levels of job satisfaction. Incentives, rewards and recognition are the key parameters of today's motivation programs to the most of the organizations and these bind the success factor with the employee's performance.

Prasad (2012) also found that seniority as the basis for promotion is based on objectivity and equality. The use of such criteria as performance appraisal, selection tests, and superiors' opinion leads many employees to feel that promotions are not made fairly, which ultimately result in declining morale and productivity. To avoid this difficulty, it is often suggested that promotions should be based on seniority which is objectivity determined. Experience contributes ability, if it is meaningful. Up to some

point, the longer an employee works at one job, the more qualified he becomes for promotion to the new job. Researches show that the employees with longest service often are better prepared for

promotion than management is initially willing to admit. However, beyond a certain level, continued service brings very little gain.



Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study targeted a population of 841 staff at Technical University of Kenya (TUK) comprised of directors of schools, chairpersons of departments, permanent teaching staff and senior administrative staff from registrar’s office, library, ICT, HRM, finance, security, procurement, estate management, legal office, health service system. The sampling frame comprised of all the top managers, supervisory employees and the lower cadre employees working within the Technical University of Kenya. Stratified random technique was used to sample 264 respondents. Questionnaires were self-administered to the top management, middle level managers and employees of the lower cadre working at the Technical University of Kenya. Questionnaires were designed in likert rating scale items on a five point likert scale from 1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= Neither Agree nor disagree,

4=Agree to 5= strongly agree. Both descriptive and inferential analysis was carried out by the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 24). Correlations and regressions analysis were used inferentially to test for the research hypotheses. Analyzed data was presented by use of tables and models.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Descriptive statistics of Interpersonal Communication

The study sought to investigate whether interpersonal communication practices influences employee performance in the Technical University of Kenya. Interpersonal Communication was operationalized by use of seven (07) questionnaire items. In line with this, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement about the interpersonal communication that they experience on

some given declarative statements. All measures used a five-point likert scale from 1= strongly disagree to

5= strongly agree. The output of their responses was as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Interpersonal Communication

5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neither Agree nor disagree, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD%
My supervisors listens and pays attention to me as they offer guidance for solving job related problems	31.0	29.3	14.0	10.3	15.3
I avoid disclosing my feelings or opinions to my supervisor about my job	26.0	26.9	19.4	17.4	10.3
I receive information needed to do my job in good time.	30.2	26.9	18.2	14.9	9.9
My organization handles conflicts appropriately through proper communication channels	26.4	32.2	16.5	14.4	9.9
My supervisor trusts me and is always open to new ideas	32.2	26.9	18.6	12.0	10.3
If I totally disagree with my boss I let him or her know how I feel	27.3	32.2	12.0	16.5	12.0
My organization has clear and concise written directives and reports	47.1	18.6	8.7	8.3	17.4

The results in table 1 revealed that a majority (31.0 per cent) of respondents strongly agreed with the view that they have supervisors who listens and pays attention to them, as they offer guidance in solving job related problems. Similarly, another 29.3 per cent agreed with declarative statement given. On the other hand, a paltry 15.3 per cent of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, while another 10.3 per cent simply disagreed and were of the view that their supervisors do not listen nor pay attention to them, and hence do not offer any guidance to solve problems related to their jobs. The results from table 1 also revealed that a majority of respondents (26.9 per cent) agreed that they avoid disclosing their feelings and opinions to their supervisors about their jobs. Another 26.0 per cent of those surveyed strongly agreed with the same statement. However, only 10.3 per cent strongly disagreed with another 17.4 per cent merely disagreeing with the same statement. On the other hand, 19.4 per cent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the said statement.

Cumulatively, a majority of respondents (30.2 per cent) strongly agreed that they receive information required to perform their jobs in good time. In addition, 26.9 per cent of respondents simply agreed with the said statement. On the contrary, a paltry 9.9

per cent of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement with another 14.9 per cent of them merely disagreeing with the same statement. 18.2 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with this statement and just remained indifferent to it.

Consistently, a majority of respondents (32.2 per cent) agreed with confidence that their organizations handles any arising conflicts appropriately as required as they use proper communication channels to handle the situations. A further 26.4 per cent strongly agreed with this same statement, despite the fact that a mere 9.9 per cent were strongly in disagreement with the statement. Another 14.4 per cent simply disagreed with 16.5 per cent neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement.

Results from table 1 revealed that a majority of respondents (A=32.2 per cent) strongly believe that their supervisors have trust in them and that they are always open to new ideas from them. Furthermore, another 26.9 per cent agreed that this declarative statement also hold true for them. On the other hand, 10.3 per cent of respondents strongly disagreed with this view, with another 12.0 per cent simply disagreeing and implying that they are not trusted at all with their supervisors. Similarly, 18.6 per cent

could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement.

Equally, a majority of respondents (32.2 per cent) also agreed that they let their supervisors know about their feelings in case they are in disagreement on an issue that is job related. Another 27.3 strongly agreed that they make this happen, while 16.5 per cent disagreed with this declarative statement and a further 12.0 per cent strongly disagreeing.

Similarly, the results obtained in table 1 also revealed that a majority of respondents (47.1 per cent) strongly agreed that their organizations have clear and concise written directives and reports on interpersonal communication practices within. Another 18.6 per cent of those surveyed agreed that this is available in their organizations. On the

contrary, 17.4 per cent strongly disagreed and was of the view that this kind of practices is not in existence in their organizations, while another 8.3 simply disagreed with the said view. Nonetheless, a further 8.7 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the statement but only remained indifferent to it.

Descriptive statistics of Employee Recognition

This study also sought to determine the extent to which the employees within the Technical University of Kenya perceive about the availability and effectiveness of the recognition of employees' practices at the University. Similarly, Employee recognition practices were measured by seven questionnaire items. The results obtained were presented in table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of Employee Recognition

5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neither Agree nor disagree, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD%
My university has a formal employee recognition practices	23.6	29.3	19.0	12.8	15.3
My university recognizes high achievers and performers	19.8	33.1	21.9	16.1	9.1
My university offers training opportunities to those who meet their targets	19.8	30.2	20.7	16.9	12.4
My organization gives more rewarding responsibilities to those with distinct performance	20.2	30.2	21.5	19.8	8.3
My university organizes small non-cash awards to its recognized members of staff	23.6	25.6	23.1	14.0	13.6
My university recognizes members who perform well by allocating them better office facilities	29.3	36.8	7.9	16.9	9.1
In my organization employee recognition boosts their performance	57.0	14.5	7.0	7.4	14.0

The results in table 2 showed the descriptive statistics on the employee recognition practices as practiced at the Technical University of Kenya. The results revealed that a majority (29.3 per cent) of respondents agreed that their organization has formal employee recognition practices, with a further 23.6 per cent strongly agreeing with the declarative statement. However, 19.0 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement. On the other hand, 15.3 per cent of the respondents in this survey strongly disagreed while another 12.8 per cent also disagreed

with it, implying that Technical University of Kenya has no practices on employee recognition.

Similarly, a majority of respondents surveyed (33.1 per cent) agreed that the university recognizes high achievers and performers among employees within the organization. A further 19.8 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed with the same statement, while 21.9 per cent of them remained indifferent to the statement (could neither agree nor disagree). On the contrary, 16.1 per cent disagreed with the statement as stated with another 9.1 per cent strongly disagreeing. In addition, a majority of

the respondents (30.2 per cent) also agreed that the university offers training opportunities to those who end up performing highly as they meet their targets. 19.8 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. Nonetheless, 20.7 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement, with an accumulated 29.3 per cent (D=16.1% and SD=12.4%) disagreeing with the same statement.

Equally, a majority of respondents (30.2 per cent) agreed that their organization gives rewarding responsibilities to those who show distinct performance, with another 20.2 per cent strongly agreeing that this does happen in their organization. Nevertheless, 21.5 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Inconsistently, 19.8 per cent of the respondents disagreed with another 8.3 per cent strongly disagreeing with the said statement. Furthermore, 25.6 per cent (majority) of the respondents agreed that the university organizes some small non-cash awards for their best performers such as having dinners together with members of the management or having trips abroad among other things. 23.6 per cent strongly agreed with this view, although another 23.1 per cent of respondents could neither confirm nor disconfirm as this to be true. However, 14.0 per

cent of the respondents disagreed with a further 13.6 per cent strongly disagreeing with the same.

Equally, a majority of respondents (36.8 per cent) agreed that the organization recognizes their best performers by allocating them more and better office facilities. Another 29.3 per cent strongly agreed with the statement. Nonetheless, only 7.9 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the said statement. Furthermore, an accumulated 26.0 per cent (D=16.9% and SD=9.1%) were of the contrary opinion to the said statement. A majority of respondents (57.0 per cent) were in agreement that in general employee recognition boosts their own performance in the organization with a further 14.5 per cent simply agreeing with the statement. On the contrary, only 14.0 per cent of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement and another 7.4 per cent simply disagreeing with it. Only 7.0 per cent of the respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement.

Descriptive statistics of Employee Promotion

This study also went forth to determine the extent to which the employees responded to the level of promotion practices in Technical University of Kenya. The predictor variable of Employee Promotion was operationalized using seven questionnaire items. The results obtained were presented in the Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of Employee Promotion

5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neither Agree nor disagree, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD%
My University has a valid promotion practices	22.7	29.3	20.2	11.2	16.5
My University bases its promotion opportunities on merit	24.0	30.2	18.6	16.9	10.3
My University also bases its promotional opportunities on work experience and professional qualifications	21.5	33.5	22.7	12.4	9.9
My University has a promotion practices that encourages career growth and development	22.7	32.6	21.9	12.0	10.7
My University has a promotion practices that captures compensation and reward programs	26.4	29.8	21.9	12.0	9.9
My University exercises equity in its promotional practices	28.1	38.4	8.7	15.7	9.1
My University has a promotion practices that encourages staff retention	53.3	12.8	7.0	6.2	20.7

From Table 3, in statement one; the cash flow reflects how an organization's cash is used to provide securities. (e.g. capital expenditures, property acquisition and to expand), out of 103 respondents, 52(50.2%) strongly agreed, 43 (4.7%) agreed, 7 (6.8%) were not sure, 1 (1%) disagreed while 0% strongly disagreed. The statement had a mean of 4.1942, which was above the composite mean and therefore should be enhanced to improve financial performance. In statement two; with the availability of cash to invest, external funds are not required, out of 103 respondents, 48 (46.6%) strongly agreed, 42 (40.8%) agreed, 1(1%) were not sure while 0% disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Majority of the respondents agreed with the availability of cash to invest, external funds are not required. The statement mean 4.1553 was above the composite mean and hence to improve financial performance in commercial banks, it should be enhanced. Statement three; re-investment decisions

often increase the value of securities. Out of those who participated in the study, 43 (41.7%) strongly agreed, 37 (35.9%) agreed, 15 (4.9%) were undecided, 5 (4.9%) disagreed while 3 (2.9%) strongly disagreed. Majority of the respondents agreed re-investment decisions often increase the value of securities. The statement mean 3.8155 was below the composite mean 4.055 and therefore need to be enhanced to improve financial performance of commercial banks.

Financial Performance

This study went further to determine the extent to which employees within the Technical University of Kenya perform their jobs, and how such performance was being affected by Human Resource management practices. The predicted variable of employee performance was operationalized by seven questionnaire items. The results obtained were as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Employee Performance

5= Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Neither Agree nor disagree, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD%
My University makes me achieve my targets in good time	22.3	31.0	16.1	12.8	17.8
My University gives me high scores in performance appraisal	20.7	28.7	18.6	16.9	10.3
My University helps me achieve my school and departmental work assignments	21.5	33.5	22.7	12.4	9.9
My University has helped me improve in my delivery	22.7	32.6	21.9	12.0	10.7
My University has encouraged me to always add my personal effort in my work assignments	26.4	29.8	21.9	12.0	9.9
My University always motivates me to work for extra hours	28.1	38.4	8.7	15.7	9.1
My University has encouraging and customized employee performance measures	53.3	12.8	7.0	6.2	20.7

The findings presented in table 4 revealed that a majority (31.0 per cent) of respondents agreed that the university makes them achieve their targets in good time, while 22.3 per cent strongly agreed with the same statement. On the other hand, 17.8 per cent of the respondents strongly disagreed that they are assisted by the university to meet their targets in a timely manner. Another 12.8 per cent disagreed with the same statement. Nevertheless, 16.1 per cent

of those surveyed could neither agree nor disagree with the statement.

Consistently, a majority of the respondents (28.7 per cent) of the respondents also agreed that the university gives them high scores in the performance appraisals, with another 20.7 per cent strongly agreeing that this statement is a true fact. On the contrary, 16.9 per cent of the respondents disagreed

with the statement, implying that they are usually rated lowly in their performance appraisals. A further 10.3 per cent of those surveyed strongly disagreed with the statement., although 18.6 per cent could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement.

Additionally, a clear majority of respondents (33.5 per cent) agreed that the university helps them in achieving the targets set by their respective schools and departments, with a 21.5 per cent of the said respondents strongly agreeing with the same statement. Only 9.9 per cent were strongly in disagreement with the same statement and another 12.4 per cent simply disagreeing with it. 22.7 per cent of those surveyed remained indifferent to the statement.

Equally, a majority of respondents (32.6 per cent) agreed that their university had helped them improve in their delivery service with a further 22.7 per cent of them strongly agreeing with the statement. On the other hand, 21.9 per cent did not agree or disagree with the statement, yet 12.0 per cent disagreed with it and 10.7 per cent disagreeing strongly. Further, the results in table 4 indicated that a majority of respondents (29.8 per cent) agreed that their university always encourage them to add their personal effort in the timely completion of their assignments at work. Another 26.4 per cent were strongly in agreement to the same view. However, an accumulative number of respondents (D=12.0 per cent and SD=9.9 per cent) at 21.9 per cent were in total disagreement to the same statement, yet another 21.9 per cent of respondents could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement.

Similarly, the results obtained in table 4 showed that a majority of the respondents (38.4 per cent) agreed

that their university always motivates them to work for extra hours. Additionally, 28.1 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed that they are always motivated to work beyond the call of duty. On the other hand, 157.7 per cent of those surveyed disagreed with the statement and another 9.1per cent strongly suggesting that the university as their workplace, does not engage in any activity that seems to motivate them to work for extra hours. Only 8.7 per cent of the respondents did not agree or disagree with the statement.

Consequently, a majority of respondents (53.3 per cent) were in a strong agreement that the university has encouraged on the use and customized performance measures for employees within. A further 12.8 per cent did agree that this view was true. However, 20.7 per cent of those surveyed strongly disagreed with the same statement and another 6.2 per cent merely disagreeing with it. Only 7.0 per cent could neither agree nor disagree with the same statement, implying that the university has not in any way encouraged the use and customization of performance measures for employees.

Inferential Statistics

Correlation Analysis

The study sought to investigate the influence of Human Resource Management practices (interpersonal communication, employee recognition and employee promotion practices) on the dependent variable (employee performance). The results obtained were presented in table 5 and discussed thereof as per the specific objective.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

		Interpersonal communication	Employee recognition	Employee Promotion	Employee performance
Interpersonal communication	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	242			

Employee recognition	Pearson Correlation	.303**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	242	242		
Employee Promotion	Pearson Correlation	.378**	.307**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	242	242	242	
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.241**	.841**	.648**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	
	N	242	242	242	242

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

The findings obtained from the correlation matrix in table 5 indicated that the influence of interpersonal communication as a practices on employee performance was positive and significant ($r=0.241^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). These findings were supported by Awad and Alhashemi (2012) who suggested that interpersonal communication is directly related to employee commitment and satisfaction which then leads to improved performance of the said employee. Physical employee recognition is positively, significantly and strongly associated with employee performance ($r=0.841^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). These results corroborate the previous findings about the relationship between employee recognition and employee performance (Atambo, Kabare, Munene & Nyamwamu, 2012; Lawler, 1981). Consistent with these findings, Tessema, Ready and Embaye's (2013) cross sectional survey about the effect of employee recognition, pay and benefits across the country indicated that employee recognition has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

The results obtained from the correlation matrix in table 5 revealed that the influence of employee promotion practices on employee performance among the employees working in the Technical University of Kenya is positive and significant (r

$=0.648^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). This finding was supported by previous researches (Saharuddin & Sulaiman, 2016; Morrison, 2014). Consistently, Saharuddin and Sulaiman, (2016) concurred by establishing that the variables of promotion and compensation have significant and positive impact on job satisfaction, morale and work productivity which is a function of organizational performance. In a Kenya Commercial bank case study about the effect of promotion practices on employee performance (Shillow, 2012) found out that effective implementation of these practices has a positive and significant effect on the performance of employees within the Kenya Commercial bank.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The general objective for the study was to investigate the influence of HR management practices on employee Performance in the Technical University of Kenya. To establish the specific nature of the influence, HR management practices variables (interpersonal communication, recognition and promotional practices) were jointly regressed as predictor variables with the composite index of employee performance and the results obtained presented in tables 6, and 7 and were interpreted thereof.

Table 6: HR Management Practices and Employee Performance

Model	R	Model Summary			Change Statistics		
		R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	Sig. F Change
1	.841 ^a	.707	.699	.61300	.707	82.183	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interpersonal Communication, Employee Recognition, Employee Promotional

The results obtained in table 6 indicated the amount of variation on the dependent variable (Employee performance) as explained by HR management practices. The multiple regression analysis for the relationship between the two variables yielded the coefficient R value of 0.841 and the R² of 0.707, which meant that 70.7 per cent of the corresponding variation in employee performance can be explained by HR management practices. In addition, the adjusted R square (.699) also attempts to give a more honest value that tends to estimate the R square for the entire population at 69.9 per cent.

In addition, the ANOVA test gave the F value of (82.183, p < 0.001) which was large enough to support the goodness of fit of the model in explaining

the variation in the predicted variable (employee performance) by HR management practices through a direct relationship. It also shows that with a p value of less than 0.001, then there is less than 1 in 1000 chances that the influence of HR management practices on employee performance could be described by a flat line. Therefore, this corroborates the view that HR management practices are useful predictor variables of employee performance. Also, the regression analysis results further revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between HR management practices and employee performance. It further implies that organizations that highly embrace will also exhibit high levels of employee performance.

Table 7: Coefficients for HR Management Practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.179	.348		.513	.609
1 Interpersonal Communication	-.014	.094	-.009	-2.148	.883
Employee Recognition	.965	.092	.857	10.463	.000
Promotion practices	-.018	.092	-.017	-.200	.842

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Similarly, the results in table 7 indicate the unstandardized regression coefficients β values of the computed (composite index) scores of HR management practices were -0.014 (interpersonal Communication), 0.965 (Employee Recognition), and -0.018 (Employee promotion practice). These coefficients showed the fitted model with the inclusion of the constant. Furthermore, this model was found to be significant and fit, expressed further in the regression coefficients as shown in table 7.

Hence, the raw regression equation model given was as shown;

$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$ and thus, the estimated model was given by;

$$Y (\text{predicted}) = 0.179 - 0.014* X_1 + 0.965* X_2 - 0.018* X_3$$

Where Y is Employee performance;

X₁ is Interpersonal Communication

X₂ is Employee Recognition

X₃ is Employee Promotional

In the establishment of how useful the predictor variables could be, Cohen and Cohen (1983) recommended that the t values should be less than -1.96 or greater than +1.96. Therefore, the results obtained in table 7 indicated the t-values of Interpersonal Communication (t= 2.148), Employee Recognition (t= 10.463), and Employee Promotion (t=2.084). This showed that all the t-values were within the range and hence, the variables were found to be significant predictors of Employee performance

since all of them had p values of less than 0.01. Equally, this also shows that when a given set of employees' experiences are increased in terms of the provision of HR management practices, then there would be a subsequent increase in their own performance by the given t values respectively.

Thus, having achieved the set objective, the study rejected the null hypothesis that; H_{01} : HR Management has no significant influence on Employee Performance in the Technical University of Kenya. These findings are in agreement with Agarwal and Garg (2012) who noted that effective communication plays a big role when it comes to organizational performance. Similarly, in a Meta analyses survey to examine whether interpersonal communication is related to employee performance at the Ghanaian Revenue Authority (Otoo, 2016) it emerged that the various constructs of employee performance were highly correlated with the measure of interpersonal communication. Hence, it was concluded that interpersonal communication is a powerful predictor of employee performance.

The study rejected the second null hypothesis that; H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between employee recognition and employee performance in Kenyan public universities. These findings are in agreement with Njanja, Maina, Kibet and Kageni (2013) who suggested that promotion opportunities acting as rewards are very strong predictors of employee performance. However, Ndungu (2017) in his article about the effects of rewards and recognition on employee performance in public education institutions, a case of Kenyatta University it was established that recognition on its own did not show a significant influence on performance..

The study rejected the third null hypothesis that; H_{03} : There is no significant relationship between employee promotion and employee performance in Kenyan public universities. These findings confirmed results from Ddamulira, (2009) who sought to

determine promotion as a motivation factor towards employee performance, a case of Uganda police forces. In his findings, it was established that promotion is a strong predictor of employee performance. Furthermore, Al-Hakim, Nazaruddin, Sadalia & Rossanty(2019) in their study about The effect of promotion, mutation and organizational culture on employees' performance: Evidence from a plantation company in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia, did find that promotion opportunities in the organization tend to enhance the performance of particular employees.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Objective one sought to establish whether interpersonal communication influences employee performance. The objective was attained and the study concluded that interpersonal communication had a positive and significant influence on employee performance. The study also sought to determine whether employee recognition influences employee performance. This objective was also achieved and a conclusion drawn that the influence of employee recognition on employee performance was positive and significant, and it was the highest among all the predictor variables used. Objective three sought to determine whether employee promotion practice influences employee performance at the Technical University of Kenya. The objective was attained with the results indicating a statistical significant influence of the predictor variable (employee promotion) on the dependent variable (employee performance).

The study recommended that the university management should improve communication policies that enhance interpersonal communication would take into account all employees irrespective of their background. The study recommended that the university management should use recognition practices as a way of enhancing the performance among employees at the technical university of Kenya. The findings of this research study also show

that employee promotion is positively and significantly related to employee performance. Therefore, it is the recommendations of this study that the university management should clearly open up the promotions that would take into account the performance of all employees irrespective of their background. Therefore, to promote superior working relationships, effective communication between the employee and his or her workmates and between the employees and their supervisors' need to be initiated in order to promote team based projects; where subordinates add reasonable share of their ideas and input through increased frequency of employee consultation, openness & quality of as the organization enhances recognition for admirable performances..

Suggestions for Further Research

The area of study has limited itself to HR management practices and employee performance at

the Technical University of Kenya. In future, data collection can be extended to include respondents from other public and even private universities in Kenya for purposes of generalization of findings. Furthermore, this study draws the attention of future researchers towards longitudinal studies of HR management practices and their measures to ascertain the causal relationship between employees 'performance and HR management practices and practices. Such a research design would provide a better assessment of the variables and how they improve over time. In addition, a replication of this study in other sectors other than public universities in Kenya, as well as countries could demonstrate the universality and significance of these particular HR management practices and how they relate to employees' performance in general.

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