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ABSTRACT

Organisational climate has been viewed as a set of attributes specific to a particular organisation that may be induced from the way that organisation deals with its members and its environment. It is a relatively enduring quality of the internal environment that is experienced by its members, influences their behaviour and can be described in terms of the value of a particular set of characteristics of the organisation. It influences to a great extent the performance of the employees because it has a major impact on motivation and job satisfaction of individual employees. It may also determine the work environment in which the employee feels satisfied or dissatisfied. This study set out to determine the influence of Organizational Climate on Employee Commitment. The sample size was 80 respondents drawn from a target population of 301 employees from various professional health workers in a chosen county in Western Kenya. A questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. Stratified random sampling was used to select the respondents. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Data collected was logged into the computer and analyzed using SPSS version 16. Descriptive analysis techniques were used which will included mean, standard deviation, and frequency while the inferential analysis technique included Spearman's rank correlation analysis. The study was guided by the Social exchange theory. From the findings, there was a significant relationship between organisational climate and employee commitment. The study thus recommended that the Management should provide a conducive work environment hence this will lead to increased productivity. The Management should promote professional growth and development of its employees through communicational of the expected goals at the beginning of the year. The Management should understand, shape, nurture, and proclaim cultural aspects that can increase an organization's profitability and growth

Key Words: *Organizational Climate, Organizational Culture, Staff Commitment, Health Care Professionals*

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INTRODUCTION

Commitment is defined as a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization (John, Meyer & Elyse, 2010). Employee commitment is a feeling of dedication to one's employing organization, willingness to work hard for that employer, and the intent to remain with that organization. The high levels of effort exerted by employees with high levels of organizational commitment would lead to higher levels of performance and effectiveness of both the individual and the organizational levels.

Researchers such as Conway, Edell, Kathy and Monks, (2010), propose one such conceptualization of commitment comprising three separable components which include Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment and Normative Commitment. Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. In traditional, ongoing employment relationships, a high level of affective commitment has been found to be related to low employee turnover, low absenteeism and improved job performance hence employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they want to do so (Wang, 2010).

Continuance commitment describes an individual need to remain with the organization resulting from her/his recognition of the costs such as tenure, pay, benefits, vesting of pensions and family commitment associated with leaving the organization. It may also refer to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so (Loi & Foley, 2008). Normative commitment reflects an individual's feeling of obligation to maintain organizational membership because he/she believes it is morally right to be loyal to, and stay in, the organization. Although normative commitment is widely recognized as a salient dimension of employee commitment, it has

been found to be substantially interrelated with affective commitment (Coyle-Shapiro, 2008). Different authors suggest that individuals may display each of these three forms of commitment to varying degrees.

Employers expect that frontline employees are cheerful and positive in the face of any situation. To have sincerely happy, cheerful, and positive employees, requires that owners, managers, and supervisors communicate effectively, learn happiness, and create a positive environment (Leonsis, 2010; Miller, 2006). Ultimately, it is reflected in the bottom line – organizational success (Leonsis, 2010; Miller, 2006).

Ted Leonsis (2010) emphasized the importance of happiness when he spoke of Google. He said that Google is "a prime example of a double bottom line company – an organization that measures its success by both its fiscal results and its positive impact on humanity" (Leonsis, 2010, p. 16). Leonsis (2010) said, "Google protected its status as a happy company at peace with its values – and happy companies are more, not less, likely to continue being successful.

Problem of the Study

In Kenya, there has been a continuous tussle between the government and Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Union (KMPDU) and Nursing Council of Kenya (NCK). In the year 2016 for example, the ever witnessed longest medical strike in Kenya lasted slightly over one hundred days. This did not go well with other professionals and students in the medical fields who joined the strike. The issues that led to the strike included pay, career progression, working conditions and the work and service environment. Most of the issues that were raised have never been effectively addressed (Kigathi, 2018)

Holagh et al. (2014) analysed the effect of organisational structure on organisational creativity and commitment using staff of Tabriz municipality in Iran as units of analysis. Their regression results showed a significant positive relationship between

organisational structure and commitment. Lambert et al. (2006) examined the various forms of centralisation and formalisation in to understand their impact on organisational commitment of staff at a Midwestern high security state prison in the USA. Regression analysis established that centralisation had significant negative effects on organisational commitment, but formalisation had a significant positive impact on organisational commitment.

Mutunga (2009) did a research on the factors that contribute to the level of employee commitment in the telecommunication industry in Kenya at Zain Kenya and it was concluded that several factors contribute to commitment but, salary and benefits was the largest contributor. Wachira (2013) recently did a research on the relationship between employee engagement and employee commitment at Barclays Bank of Kenya and she concluded that employee engagement may not be effective if not aligned with proper rewards and feedback for employee commitment and that there is evidence that employee engagement has a direct relationship with employee commitment.

World Health Organization (2013), global human resources crisis coupled with poor performance of health workers in the health sector in low and middle-income countries is receiving increased global attention. This is a major drawback to the health service delivery since the hospital acts as a referral to the county 's sub district, private hospitals and clinic (KDH Kenya, 2015).

Previous studies that have been carried out focused in different sectors and carried out in different environments as opposed to County hospitals. This study therefore sought to fill this gap by establishing the influence of organizational climate on employee commitment in County referral Hospitals in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

The study sought to establish the influence of organizational climate on employee commitment in

County referral Hospitals in Kenya. The research was guided by the following research hypothesis;

- H₀: There is no significant relationship between organizational climate and employee commitment among Health care staff in County Referral Hospitals in

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

This research was guided by the social exchange theory.

Social Exchange theory

The exchange theory views employment relationship as consisting of social or economic exchanges (Aryee, Budhwar, Chen, 2002; Cropanzano, Rupp & Bryne, 2003). Economic exchange relationships involve the exchange of economic benefits in return for employees' efforts and are often dependent on formal contracts which are legally enforceable. On the other hand, social exchanges are 'voluntary actions' which may be initiated by an organization's treatment of its employees, with the expectation that the employees will be obligated to reciprocate the good deeds of the organization (Aryee et al., 2002; Gould & Davies, 2005). The exchange approach view of organizational commitment or engagement posits that individuals attach themselves to their organizations in return for certain rewards from the organizations. According to this view, employees enter the organization with specific skills, desires and goals, and expect to find an environment where they can use their skills, satisfy their desires and achieve their goals. Perceptions of favorable exchange or rewards from the employees' viewpoint are expected to result in increased engagement to the organization. On the other hand, failure by the organization to provide sufficient rewards in exchange for employee's efforts is likely to result in decreased organizational engagement. From this perspective, social-exchange theory suggests that employees respond to perceived favorable working conditions by behaving in ways that benefit the organization and

or other employees. Equally, employees retaliate against dissatisfying conditions by engaging in negative work attitudes such as absenteeism, lateness of preparing to quit the organization (Haar, 2006). The exchange theory has also been used to explain the employees' attitudinal engagement to the organization. The theory offers a theoretical basis to explain why employees choose to become more or less engaged in their job. The theory contends that responsibilities are generated through a series of interactions between parties who are interdependent (Shiauter & Luo, 2012). A basic tenet of SET is that relationships grow over time into trusting, loyal and mutual pledges as long as parties stand by certain 'rules' of exchange. According to the exchange perspective, employees exchange their identification, loyalty and attachment to the organization, in return for incentives from the organization. This implies that an individual's decision to become and remain a member of an organization, is determined by their perception of the fairness of the balance of organizational inducements and the employee contribution. Meyer and Smith (2000) argue that unless employees believe they have been treated fairly, they will not be committed to the organization.

Geetha and Mampilly (2012) argue that the basic principle with SET is that employees view satisfying HRM practices as an organisation's commitment towards them. Employees thus reciprocate this through positive behaviours like employee commitment. They are thus more likely to exchange their commitment for resources and benefits provided by their organisation. For example, when individuals receive economic and socio-emotional resources from their organisation they feel obliged to respond in kind and repay the organisation. SET argues that obligations generate through a series of interactions between parties who are in a state of reciprocal interdependence. The core belief in SET is that relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as long as the parties abide by certain "rules" of exchange. The

rules of exchange usually involve reciprocity or repayment rules such that the actions of one-party lead to a response or actions by the other party. Studies such as the study by Chew and Chan (2008) have SET as their theoretical basis. In summary, the propositions of SET indicate that social exchanges employees obtain from organisations such as HRM practices may lead to employee commitment.

This theory relates to Organizational Climate. It posits the importance of maintaining a friendly atmosphere in a workplace. If people feel that an environment will be hostile to them in any way, it gives them much less of an incentive to be engaging and seek out relationships. The motivation that people have for seeking out relationships is directly proportional to the extent to which they feel they will be positively received, so they can receive various benefits.

Social exchange theory has been criticized for focusing too much on individual perspectives and ignoring social aspects of the relationship such as how partners communicate and interests on shared events.

Organization Climate and Employee Commitment

Organizational climate is the set of measurable properties of the work environment that is either directly or indirectly perceived by the employees who work within the organizational environment that influences and motivates their behaviour (Holloway, 2012). Organizational climate is defined as the recurring patterns of behaviour, attitudes and feelings that characterize life in the organization more related to atmosphere and values (Aiswarya and Ramasundaram, 2012). An organizational climate refers to the values, beliefs that are not visible but exist within the employee's behaviour and action (Moghimi & Subramaniam, 2013).

In literature, there is no generally accepted definition of organizational climate. Because it is a complex, multilevel, and multidimensional phenomenon derived from employees' perceptions of their experiences within an organization, stable

over time and widely shared within an organizational unit (Dawson et al., 2008).

Organisational climate is a description of the members' perception of their work environment (Zhang & Liu, 2010). It is a set of properties of the work environment, perceived directly or indirectly by the employees, that is assumed to be a major force in influencing employee behaviour (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2007). Two basic perspectives of organisational climate are apparent. The first is the macro mode, which focuses on the organisational climate individuals perceive in the entire work environment (Hunter, Bedell & Mumford, 2007). The second is the micro mode, which is aimed at a certain dimension or a certain environment of the organisation (Tang & Chen, 2001). In the last two decades, human resources management situations have emerged as the climate issues that members of organisations were most concerned about (Bushell, 2007). These issues which include inter alia; recruitment, selection, training, remuneration, performance management relationship with managers, workplace conditions, management appraisal and benefits, are all closely associated with the crucial interests of employees (Rose & Waterhouse, 2004). For this reason, human resources management style and its operational approach are crucial to the way employees perceive organisational climate, and are regarded as significant factors affecting organisational climate (Jackson & Schuler, 1995).

Organizational climate is based on the premise that the overall health of an organization can be assessed by measuring individual employees' perceptions of their work environments. Together these individual observations serve as aggregate data describing how well the organization performs and how well it treats its employees (Giles, 2010). In other words, organizational climate represents how the employees feel about the atmosphere in the organization. For the development of an organization, it is necessary to make employees feel good, as employees are the key resources of an organization. With changing scenarios in the world

economy, if companies want very smart, professional, innovative, and positive team members, companies will promote a healthy work environment and organizational climate so that the employees feel free to exhibit positive behaviours (Choudhury, 2011).

In a fiercely competitive global setting, achieving organizational effectiveness and organizational survival is based on employee's attitudes and behaviours. For this reason, organizational climate has gained importance in organizational behaviour researches. Researches in this area have examined organizational climate in various organizational contexts and related it to several outcomes at an individual, group, and organizational level. In particular, researchers have found links with organizational climate and employee performance, organizational effectiveness, productivity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational justice, work motivation, organizational alienation, anxiety, propensity to leave (Dickson, Resick & Hanges, 2006; Bellou and Andronikidis, 2009). However, researchers suggest that organizational climate promotes positive behaviours in organizations such as organizational citizenship behaviour, innovative behaviour, creative and proactive behaviours (Patterson et al., 2004; Lin and Lin, 2011).

Communication has the meaning of exchanging information, opinions, ideas, or ideas accompanied by mutual trust with each other that is direct or indirect or through other media (Liliweri, 1997). Whereas Uchayana (2002) states that communication is the process of exchanging ideas and ideas between leaders and employees in private or public organizations both vertically and horizontally. Communication in organizations is also called organizational communication, this is in accordance with the opinion of Pace and Faules (2006) states that organizational communication is the process of sending and receiving messages in the organization, and is the attitude and actions of leaders and subordinates who interact with each other. Thus, organizational communication is a

necessity for any organization because of its very important role in an organization. Companies or organizations that have employees or members with high competence may not be able to make a positive contribution to the organization if it is not supported by good behavior in the organization. Therefore, the existence of good organizational communication will be able to drive towards improving organizational performance. Talking about organizational climate issues will not be separated discussing the climate of organizational communication. Organizational communication climate is an organizational condition that includes the process of sending and receiving messages carried out by people in the organization itself (Muhammad.2004: 86). Pace and Faules (2006: 156) emphasize that the organizational communication climate is very important and must receive serious attention and will support commitment to the organization and often results in the implementation of excellent organizational management and guidelines. There are five dimensions that can be used to analyse the organizational communication climate, namely 1) trust, 2) joint decision making, 3) openness in downward communication, 4) honesty, 5) ability to listen in upward communication, and 6) attention to high performance goals (Muhammad.2004: 86).

Based on the description above that the organizational communication climate is very important, because it can bring or change the way of life of members of the organization, the way employees communicate with other employees, how to deliver and receive messages both with superiors and with subordinates. Thus, if there is a condition in an organization or climate of good organizational communication, it will encourage the achievement of organizational performance.

Considerable research has been carried out on organizational climate and commitment and their relationship with other variables. For example, Mercer and Bilson (1985) confirmed the existence of a significant positive relationship between organizational climate and outcomes induced by

employees including job satisfaction and commitment. In addition, Ferris *et al.* (1998) corroborated that climate possesses constructive implications on employee behavior and attitude, not to mention individual and organizational performance as well. A relationship was found between the climate dimensions and variables, such as job satisfaction, job performance and leadership styles and behaviours (Schnake, 1983). El-Kassar, et.al (2010) found a positive correlation between the leadership dimension and the five organizational climates: structure, responsibility, reward, warmth, and support, and expect approval. In addition, the study identified that the structural guideline factor in a structural climate had the highest impact on the leadership dimension in an organization. Organizational climate is believed to have great influence on employees' discernment towards knowledge management and is more likely to prompt creativity and increased productivity of employees (Litwin and Stringer, 1968). The relationship between the various types of commitment to the human resource related organizational characteristics was investigated (Simola, 2011). The results showed a positive relationship between affective commitment and organization providing good opportunities of career development. Also, it was shown that the normative commitment is positively associated with companies having high interest in societal values.

METHODOLOGY

The design of this research was case study accompanied by a descriptive survey. This design facilitates exploration of phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but through a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Robert, 2003). The target population of this study comprised of health care workers at a chosen County Referral hospital in Western Kenya. A sample of 80 respondents was used in the study. These were selected randomly using the simple random sampling technique. Questionnaires were

used in carrying out the data collection. Data was analysed using SPSS and presented using descriptive and inferential methods.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Results

Half of the respondents (50.0%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the organization has a conducive work environment. 21.1% could neither agree nor disagree with the statement while 28.9% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Majority of those who either agreed or strongly agreed were females aged below 30 years old (34.2%). 46.8% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the organisation communicates goals at the beginning of the year and around 26.0% of them could neither agree nor disagree with the statement. Of those who either agreed or strongly agreed, females aged below 30 years old were the majority (36.1%). Majority (28.6%) of those interviewed could neither agree nor disagree that the management promotes professional growth and development of its employees. Of those who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, majority were females below 30 years old (27.6%). On whether the management constantly provides feedback on

employee performance, 39.0% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. 36.7% of those who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement were females aged 30-39 years old. Only 6.7% of the respondents that either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement were above 40 years old. Almost a third of the respondents (32.5%) were neutral on whether they are aware of the procedures required to nominate an employee for a reward. Only a quarter of the respondents (25.8%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Of these 25.8%, majority were females below 30 years old (35.0%). Lastly, almost a third of the respondents (29.9%) could neither agree nor disagree that the management provides both financial and non-financial rewards as a motivation tool. 27.3% disagreed while 26.0% strongly disagreed with the statement. Of the 16.9% who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, majority were either males aged 30-39 years old (30.8%) or females below 30 years old (30.8%).

Correlation Results

The correlation results in the table below show that organizational climate had a positive influence on employee commitment with a p value of .779.

Table 1: Correlation Results

		Determinants	Project Implementation
Determinants	Pearson Correlation	1	.
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	80	
Project Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.779**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	80	80

Linear Regression Results

The regressions tested the relationship between organizational climate (independent variable) and employee commitment (dependent variable). The

results showed that a unit change in organizational climate results in an increase in commitment by 60.6 per cent.

Table 2: Linear Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.779 ^a	.606	.605	.524

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational climate

Table 3: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients Beta		
1	(Constant)	.198	.095		2.079	.041
	Determinants	.767	.022	.779	44.021	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project Implementation

Regression analysis between independent variables and the dependent variable had coefficient of relationship $R = .779$. This shows the existence of a high positive relationship. The coefficient of determinant, R^2 was .606, the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (Employee commitment) was explained by the independent variables. This indicates that a total of 60.6% of variations in employee commitment can be explained by organizational climate while 39.4% can be explained by other factors which were not considered in this study.

There was no statistically significant relationship between dimensions listed in organisational climate. However, a closer examination of the distribution of the responses revealed a positive response across the four dimensions of organizational climate. Explored. Majority of the respondents believed Siaya county Referral Hospital provided a conducive work environment. This concurs with Mehboob and Bhutto (2012) the concept of work environment is comprehensive one including the physical, psychological, and social aspects that mark up the working condition. Work environment involves all the aspects which act and react on the body and mind of an employee. Workplace environment plays a vital role in motivating employees to perform their assigned work (Chandrasekar, 2010). The working environment factors are: Space and facilities required doing the job, Relationship with superiors at the workplace, Equality of treatment at the workplace, Communication system at the

workplace, Environmental actors are conducive to work, Procedures to identify and control hazards (Chandrasekar, 2010).

The findings also revealed that the Management communicated goals at the beginning of the year. Previous studies by Goleman (2000) and Hay Group (2000) reported that positive climate can contribute to strong employee motivation. Creating an appropriate organizational climate is considered one of the most important factors in improving and developing the performance of the organization efficiently; it would also consolidate and strengthen the confidence and satisfaction among employees. (Deconick, 2011)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study concluded that the Health Worker environment contributes significantly to employee commitment.

The researcher recommended that the Management should provide a conducive work environment hence this will lead to increased productivity.

Areas for Further Studies

There is need to do a research on other factors like age and career development on employee commitment. Therefore, further research on the influence of Leadership Management, Organisational Climate, and Organizational on employee commitment should be conducted with new dimensions of the latest study.

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