



**REWARD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN FAITH BASED HEALTH FACILITIES IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Faith-based health facilities have had a high turnover rate for a long time. Today, the industry is grappling with a fluctuating demand for qualified workers. As a result, the high costs of hiring new personnel, replacing them, and separating departed employees have had a significant impact on faith-based health care operations. The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of reward management practices on employee retention in faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County, Kenya. Job advancement, was the subject of the study. The target population for the study was 527 workers. A descriptive survey design was used in this investigation. The population was divided into strata consisting of doctors, nurses, clinical officers, laboratory technologists/technicians, pharmacists, and administrative staff using a stratified random sample technique. The respondents who took part in the survey were chosen using simple random sampling techniques. Closed-ended questionnaires were used to collect data, which were preceded by a pilot study to assess the instruments' validity and reliability. Questionnaires were distributed to a group of 222 employees. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of a social science statistical tool (SPSS). Tables and figures were used to present the study's findings. Career growth and staff retention at faith-based health facilities have a favorable and significant relationship, according to the study. The research discovered that job advancement had a good and significant impact on employee retention in Kenyan faith-based health facilities. Employee retention in Kenyan faith-based health facilities is positively impacted by job advancement, according to the study. Based on the study, human resource managers in faith-based health facilities in Kenya should create Career growth Programs that define the many sorts of career options available and who qualifies for them. Job advancement should not only increase tasks and responsibilities, but they should also increase pay and benefits. Finally, the report recommends that faith-based health care organizations boost employee appreciation by instituting a monthly or annual recognition program that is communicated to all staff.*

**Key Words:** Reward Management, Employee Retention, Faith based Health Facilities

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## INTRODUCTION

Any healthcare system's most important input is human resources. According to a World Health Organization report from 2000, the human resources cost is frequently the most important single item in the health recurring budget. In many nations, labor costs account for two-thirds or more of capital recurrent spending. Several programs and publications have emphasized on the crucial role played by human resources for health since the introduction of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 to improve health outcomes in developing nations (WHO, 2000). Mureithii et al. (2007) reported a lack of health workers in Faith-Based Health facilities due to restricted training opportunities and an imbalance in terms and conditions of service with the government in a scenario analysis of Faith-Based Health services in Kenya. Human resources accounted for 60-70 percent of recurring spending, according to the report.

Employee retention is critical in the health industry since it employs a large number of people from both the public and private sectors, both locally and internationally (Peric, Mujacevic, Simunic, 2011). Dealing with organizational challenges, such as staff retention, necessitates collaboration between academia (Olson, 2010), industry (Cavico & Mujtaba, 2010), and government (Cobelli et al., 2015). Employee retention is possible if individuals are knowledgeable and skilled in their fields (Singh, 2012). Today's human resources, Millennial in particular, have a more diverse set of perspectives than those who came before them five or six decades ago. (Solnet Kralj, & Kandampully, 2012). Employees who are in their twenties and thirties are less likely to spend their entire careers with the same business or industry. The organization should distinguish itself by adopting bold actions and retaining outstanding employees (Parry & Kelliher, 2009; Abrudan et al., 2016). For many companies, employee retention is a strategic goal. Retaining critical abilities is essential

for an organization's medium- to long-term performance. As a result, acquiring the required skills and talent is critical to organizational performance and provides a considerable competitive advantage

### Statement of the Problem

Kenya's health sector is critical to the country's economic development. Labor turnover was found to be 68 percent in a study conducted by Kuria, Wanderi, and Ondigi (2012) in Kenya. In Kenya, many faith-based health facilities are in disarray. The shortage of health care employees demonstrates the need of recruiting, training, and workforce planning (Kilonzo, 2014). A lack of development strategy, migration, and attrition are all factors that contribute to a workforce imbalance (Adano, 2012). According to previous research, provincial hospitals lost 4% of their health personnel between 2004 and 2005, compared to 3% in district hospitals and 5% in health centers (Chankova, Muchiri & Kombe, 2011). Attrition due to retirement, death, dismissal, resignation, or migration is blamed for the Human Resource for Health Crisis (Chankova et al., 2011). Nzuve and Mwarey (2013) found that in order to solve staffing gaps and chronic labor shortages in the health sector, it is vital to intentionally focus on effective human resource practices, since health professionals are a critical human resource required to save lives. According to Fort, Mwarey, Mbindyo, and Yang (2015), most faith-based health facilities lack adequate human resource management policies and guidelines, which has led to informal or even inappropriate human resource practices, which has resulted in a lack of motivation, attrition, and lawsuits. The health-care business is currently confronted with the ever-increasing issues of retaining competent personnel and competitive staff on a permanent and pensionable basis. The study sought to establish the influence of reward practices on employee retention in faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County.

In Kenya's many sectors, employee retention has been empirically investigated. Studies by Onyango

(2014) found out that working environment, direct monetary bonuses, education and growth, and indirect monetary benefits were positively connected to employee retention. The study cannot be generalized to faith-based health organizations because it was limited to conservation NGOs. Kimunge (2014) discovered that incentive, work-life balance, skill learning, and career growth all had a beneficial impact on employees' decisions to stay or quit. The paucity of empirical studies on reward management strategies that effect employee retention in faith-based health facilities in Kenya created the study research vacuum. Empirical research focusing on other industries (Kimunge, 2014; Onyango, 2014; Wanderi & Ondigi, 2011) was insufficient. None of these research looked into Kenya's faith-based health care. As a result, this study set out to fill that void by conducting an empirical investigation into the impact of reward management practices on employee retention in faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County, Kenya.

### Objective of the Study

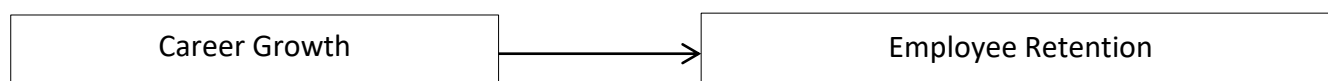
- To find out how career growth influences employee retention in faith based health facilities in Kakamega County.

### Hypothesis

- H<sub>a</sub>: There is a positive significant relationship between career growth and employee retention in faith based health facilities in Kakamega County.

### Scope of the Study

This study was carried out in Kakamega County, focusing on facilities that are registered and rated as level 4 and above according to the KMPDC health facilities register. The choice of facilities registered and rated as level 4 and above was because all cadres of health workers are available at hospitals at such a level. The research captured data for a period of five years with effect from 2015-2019. The study was limited to four reward management practices: career growth, salary, job advancement, and employee appreciation.



### Independent Variable

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**Source: Research 2019**

A theoretical framework is important to a researcher because it helps to narrow the scope of data relevant to the study by focusing on specific variables and points of view. A theory, according to Cherry (2015), is a fixed concept constructed to explain some aspect of the natural world. This study offered a number of theories that link employee retention to the study's independent factors. This study's theoretical evaluation was based on pertinent theories that explain how career growth, job advancement, salary, and employee appreciation affect staff retention in faith-based health facilities.

### Dependent Variable

The theoretical review of this study was based on Human Capital Theory. Thomas et al. (2013), who discussed people's performance and potential in the company, provided a modern definition of human capital. The word 'potential' is significant since it signifies that employees have the ability to enhance their professions and talents over time. Employees' effectiveness and adaptability are enhanced by professionalism, competence, and information, making them valuable human capital to the company. Its full potential significance can only be fulfilled with everyone's cooperation (Schuler & Jackson, 2007). To attract and keep intellectual capital, a class of

professional staff with specialized talents is required. As a result, firms must refocus on human capital rather than people resources. Schutz (1961) proposed the human capital hypothesis, which asserts that a worker's intellectual capacity and talent generate a specific pool of dynamic resources. Individuals are also considered as assets capable of adding value to their companies and, in certain cases, ensuring their continuing existence in the current tumultuous climate, rather than as revenue drain (Sutherland, 2011).

According to Armstrong (2009), human capital is the combination of brains, skills, and knowledge that gives a company its unique personality. The three categories of human capital are intellectual capital, social capital, and organizational capital Sutherland (2004) also includes emotional capital, which can help turn intellectual capital potential into committed action.

According to Sutherland (2004), key personnel own a considerable portion of an organization's value, which they take with them when they depart. Individuals' knowledge, abilities, and skills provide value, thus attracting, developing, maintaining, and conserving the human capital they represent is critical. This theory promotes varied career growth since employees must understand their professional path in order to be motivated to stay in the company and attain their own goals. Many Kenyan health organizations invest much in their employees' professional development, and this investment can pay off if employees stay longer.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Career Growth**

Individuals are motivated to stay on the job and be effective by career growth (Musa, Ahmed, & Bala, 2014). Career growth comprises ongoing efforts to analyze an employee's abilities, identify chances for advancement, and plan and implement various types of training programs and experience in order to

prepare that individual for job expansion and enrichment. Most organizations clearly cost-justify career growth programs using the same criteria as initial programs, indicating that each endorsement helps to improve the general functioning and growth of the organization's workforce (Mapelu & Jumah, 2013; Solnet, Kralj & Kandampully, 2012). The importance of career growth is to align an employee's professional path with the organization's possibilities and difficulties. A successful placement of individuals in roles that meet their needs and those of the company is also an important component of career growth. There is a correlation between employee career growth and organizational efficiency, which can result in more dedicated employees and higher retention rates (Slum, 2004). Furthermore, according to Jennings (2005), professional stagnation happens when a person does not advance in their career but stays in the same position for an extended period of time, impacting their loyalty, dedication, and motivation to survive.

Training as a means of distinguishing yourself is an option because it increases general appeal and monitors high levels of devotion (Barrow & Mosley, 2005). The organization's specific workplace training, in particular, increases employee perceptions of the company (Green et al., 2000). Career growth appears to have an impact on the projected level of employee satisfaction. Employees tend to stay longer in jobs where they may grow as individuals and learn specific abilities, according to previous research (Taylor, 2002; Gaffney, 2005; Chhabra & Mishra, 2008). Furthermore, Porter and Steers (1973) discovered that work, development opportunities are likely to boost retention because people who feel fairly compensated for their labor are more pleased and fulfilled (Hausknecht, Rodda & Howard, 2009).

Employees expect to discover meaning and direction in their daily job in order to continue working in a particular manner. Employees can engage in meaningful jobs and pursue greater career goals with

the help of career growth (Nadeem et al., 2019). Employees who have access to professional development resources and tools also feel more engaged and supported by their employers. Organizations that place a strong emphasis on employee development leave a lasting impression on their employees and earn their loyalty. Employees who are loyal to their employers are dedicated to their employers and tend to stay with them through good and bad times (Musa, Ahmed & Bala, 2014).

Most employees, especially younger applicants who believe that career growth is as vital as their pay, and consider career growth as an important employee benefit. According to Mapelu and Jumah (2013), carrying out employee assessments is a vital process of gauging employee career needs today. Assessment tools can assist identify employees' developmental needs and create a road map for future career growth, which is beneficial to both the individual and the company. Many businesses recognize the importance of retaining their best employees (Uddin, Das & Rahman, 2008). Providing possibilities for job advancement can help with this. It assures that employees are more inclined to look for a job change or promotion within the firm than they are to look elsewhere. There are high chances of employees likelihood to stay involved in their work and devoted to a business that invests in them and their career growth, according to Mapelu and Jumah (2013).

### **Employee Retention**

Retention, according to Pousa and Mathieu (2010), is defined as a continuing obligation to conduct business or trade with a single corporation. Customers' likes, commitments, identifications, trust, repurchase intentions, and readiness to recommend are all retention constructs. Culture, benefits philosophy, and career growth systems all play a role in the success of an organization (Latukha, 2011), and are critical variables that should be controlled in concert. The economic consequences of a company's inability to retain its staff could be disastrous. In an

exploratory study in Kuwait, Alkandari and Hammad (2009) looked at employee retention in the private sector. According to their findings, pay and compensation are the most essential benefits components for Kuwait's remote sector personnel, followed by perks for taking time off and differentiated salary. Rewards and recognition, annual performance appraisals, and training chances are the three most significant methods for the private-sector staff, according to them. Employee intentions to stay with an organization, according to Gaiduk and Gaiduk (2009), are determined by three primary groupings of variables: employee personal attributes such as gender, position level, and age; favorable working conditions Khan (2018) discovered that younger employees valued salary, education and development, career progression, demanding work, growth prospects, and employee appreciation in a study of employee retention in Australian organizations. Autonomy, opportunity to coach, and job difficulties were all important factors for older employees. According to Al-Omari, Qablan, and Khasawneh (2009), a research of 139 academicians from Jordanian University found that work satisfaction and organizational loyalty had a significant favorable effect on academic staff retention. Similarly, Daly and Bierly (2006) found that structural elements such as faculty work environment, autonomy, communication, overall fairness, and workload were connected to the intention to stay in a research on the purpose of departing academics in public metropolitan universities. According to Lucas and Deery (2004), firms implementing loyalty methods had much higher efficiency and a lower staff turnover rate than those using non-loyalty strategies. Employee retention is quickly becoming the most pressing labor management issue in the modern world. Since the mid-1990s, academic studies have focused not only on discovering why employees leave businesses, but also on the characteristics that encourage employees to stay and the advantages of

maintaining long-term employees. Employee retention programs and initiatives that are well-planned and enforced will increase employee incumbency more than salary by lowering turnover costs and increasing productivity.

## METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was used in this investigation. Descriptive research entails determining who, what, where, and how much of a phenomenon the study is interested in. A descriptive research design is appropriate when the purpose is to determine the amount of relatedness between the variables (Elahi & Dehdashti, 2011). The descriptive survey method was chosen in this study because it allows researchers to better understand the characteristics of a group in a given situation, which can aid in decision-making. It was appropriate for this study to use a descriptive approach because previous scholars who studied relevant themes had done so (Njoroge & Nzulwa, 2019). As a result, this approach was consistent with the study's philosophical direction and scope. The study's target group was 527 permanent staff working in Kakamega County's faith-based health facilities at level 4 and above. The study employed a stratified random sample technique, with each stratum being allocated proportionally.

The strata in this study were the employee cadres. A random sample from each stratum was taken in a number proportional to the stratum's size relative to the population in proportionate stratification (Greener, 2008). After that, the stratum subgroups were combined to generate a random sample. The study employed a stratified random sample technique, with each stratum being allocated proportionally.

The strata in this study were the employee cadres. A random sample from each stratum was taken in a number proportional to the stratum's size relative to the population in proportionate stratification (Greener, 2008). After that, the stratum subgroups

were combined to generate a random sample. A sample of 222 employees was obtained from a population of 527 employees. To obtain the sample size the following formula was used.

$$S = \frac{X^2NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)} \text{ (Krejcie and Morgan, 2012).}$$

A questionnaire for hospital employees served as the study's major data collection tool.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

### Background Information

From the findings which sought to know age brackets of the respondents, 33(19.41%) were aged 21-30 years, 72(42.35%) were aged 31-40 years, 50(29.41%) aged 41-50 years, 9(5.29%) were aged between 51-60 years while 6(3.53%) were aged 61 and above years. The majority of the workers were between the ages of 31 and 50 years. In terms of education, twenty six respondents had certificate qualification; seventy five (44.12%) had Diplomas; sixty four (37.65%) had bachelor's degrees and five (2.94%) had master's degree. The visual representation depicted that majority sixty four (37.65%) which are majority of the respondents had attained diploma level of education, followed by those who had bachelors, certificates and masters respectively. This implies that the organization had a homogenous pool of staff though skewed towards diploma holders. The researcher also wanted to know how long each employee had been with the facility. The results indicated that 91(53.53%) respondents had worked at the hospital for between 1-3 years, 58(34.12%) for between 4-6 years, 16(9.41%) for between 7-9 years and 5(2.94%) had worked for over 10 years. The study also sought to know the number of years each worker was willing to continue working in the hospital. On this, 50(29.42%) were willing to work for between 1-3 years, 78(45.88%) were willing to work for between 4-6 years, 38(22.35%) were willing to work for between

7-9 years while only 4(2.35%) were willing to continue working for over 10 years. This demonstrates that the majority of staff were unwilling to work in the hospital for an extended period of time.

### **Findings on the Influence of Career growth on Employee Retention**

The findings on the impact of career growth on employee retention in faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County, Kenya are discussed in this section. The dependent variable in this study was employee retention. The description of this variable was conceptualized using five statements. A series of questions designed to elicit responses were given to respondents, who were asked to score their level of agreement on the organization's career growth. When respondents were asked if employer regularly gives opportunity for personnel to advance their careers, most respondents disagreed 115(68%), 21(12%) were neutral while 34(20%) agreed. Similarly, when respondents were asked if their My boss is concerned about their professional development and advancement, 114(67%) disagreed, 26(15%) were neutral while 30(18%) agreed. On the statement This hospital offers opportunities for skill development 121(71%) disagreed, 19(11%) were neutral while 30(18%) agreed. On the statement Efforts are made in this facility to maintain excellent levels of professional growth 120(71%) disagreed, 20(11%) were neutral while 30(18%) agreed. In regards to whether the organization supports employees that desire to improve their skills 121(71%) disagreed, 21(12%) were neutral while 28(16%) agreed. On average 118(70%) disagreed, 21(13%) were neutral while 30(18%) agreed. The analysis above indicates that organization does not put a lot of effort in supporting career growth of employees.

The independent variable (career growth) had a positive and substantial link with employee retention, with ( $r=0.552$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.000$ ). The findings support Mapelu and Jumah (2013) argument that employee

career growth has significant negative influence on employee turnover in in Kenya. These findings agree with Bartlomiejczuk (2015) findings that while recognition is not new, it is finally becoming more strategic as programs align recognition with business objectives and desired behaviors. The R-squared for the connection between career growth and employee retention was 0.305, indicating that career growth may account for 30.5 percent of the dependent variable variance. The data suggest that career growth is an important factor in improving staff retention in faith-based health care facilities. Using the unstandardized coefficients the following equation applies:

$$Y = 2.554 + 0.358X_1$$

When career growth ( $X_1$ ) was maintained constant, employee retention had an index of 2.554, as shown in table 4.13 with 0.358 was the Beta coefficient, which implies that, a 0.358 increase in employee retention increases career growth by one unit. The relationship is significant as the P-value (0.000) was less than the significance level (0.05). Furthermore, the computed t value (7.125) was higher than the t-critical value (1.645). As a result, career growth has a beneficial impact on employee retention. These findings support Sangaran and Jeetesh's (2015) findings that career growth has a favorable and significant impact on work satisfaction and staff retention in Kuala Lumpur hospitals.

### **Findings on Employee Retention in the Faith Based Health Facilities**

The results show that employees disagreed with most statements. About 112(66%) disagreed, 25(15%) were neutral while 33(20%) agreed to 'the statement that My boss urges me to stay at the hospital for longer shifts. The statement, Every year, there is a retrenchment of employees,' 108(64%) disagreed, 23(14%) were neutral while 39(23%) agreed. The statement Some employees choose to leave the hospital' 107(63%) disagreed, 22(13%) were neutral



while 41(24%) agreed. On the statement Many employees are forced to leave the hospital 113(66%) disagreed, 21(12%) were neutral while 36(21%) agreed. On the statement Every year, the hospital has to lay off employees,' 103(61%) disagreed, 29(17%) were neutral while 38(22%) agreed. On average 109(64%) disagreed, 24(14%) were neutral while 37(22%) disagreed with the statement used to rate employee retention. According to a survey conducted by (Laff, 2006), 51% of respondents anticipated to change jobs in the next five years or less. In today's ever-changing global economy, businesses must grasp and apply essential ideas related to employee retention.

These findings support (Nedd, 2006), which states that characteristics related to an employee's intention to stay are also crucial for management to consider when developing measures to help employees stay in the same organization. At the moment, securing qualified human resources is a tight struggle. The competition for securing and maintaining skilled, high-performing people who will become the future key employees of organizations has risen due to increased employment mobility aided by possibilities to move jobs (Yamamoto, 2011). As a result, the issue for most businesses today is to develop successful employee retention strategies that will allow them to keep individuals who are vital to the company's success (Chiboiwa, Samuel & Chipunza, 2010). While there are various advantages to keeping staff, research has shown that turnover or losing key personnel is costly to businesses.

#### **Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results**

***H<sub>0</sub>: There is a positive significant relationship between career growth and employee retention in faith based health facilities in Kakamega County***

The Beta coefficient ( $\beta_1$ ) 0.358. The P-value (0.000) was less than the 0.05 significance

threshold, however the calculated t-value (7.125) above the t-critical value (1.645). Career growth and staff retention in faith-based health institutions in Kakamega County show a positive significant correlation," we discover when we adopt the alternative hypothesis.

#### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study's goal was to investigate reward management practices and employee retention in faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County, Kenya. According to the study, career growth influences employee retention at faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County, Kenya. There was a positive and substantial association between career growth and staff retention in faith-based health institutions. Employee retention rises when career growth chances improve, and it diminishes when career growth opportunities decline. Equally, there is a positive and substantial relationship between job advancement and staff retention in faith-based health facilities in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Career growth is one of the most important factors influencing employee retention in the health care business. Thus, the management of Kenya's faith-based health institutions should develop Career growth Programs that detail the many types of job possibilities available and who qualifies for them. In addition, through a variety of developmental and skill-building activities, career growth programs should be developed to assist employees in fulfilling new expectations. A planned career growth strategy should also be in place for organizations. Employees will be able to see their evolving function within the business in a more long-term perspective as a result of this. It will also allow the company to demonstrate its commitment to talent development, which will benefit both the employer and the employee.

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