Original Research Article

ASSESSMENT OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE HEALTH SECTOR IN ISIOLO COUNTY.

ABSTRACT

Developing employees for future positions enables organizations to develop and place employees in positions compatible with their career interests, needs, and goals. However, most previous studies on career development did not focus on the private sector. It is against these that the study sought to assess the influence of career development on employee performance in the private sector in Isiolo County, Kenya. The study was anchored under social exchange theory: job embeddedness theory and burnout theory of engagement. The study adopted a descriptive survey design that targeted 397 private medical practitioners in Isiolo County. Stratified and basic random sampling methods were used to choose the population sample of 199 respondents. A standard questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were calculated using test-retest methods on a sample pilot of 20 medical practitioners chosen from private hospitals in Isiolo County. They were not included in the main study and computed using the alpha coefficient of Cronbach and supervisor guidance. The study established an alpha coefficient of 0.831. A mixed-method approach was used to collect both Qualitative and quantitative data Frequencies, means, and standard deviations were given by descriptive analysis. Multiple linear regression analyses were used to base inferential statistics. ANOVA was used as inferential tools to evaluate the relationship between the study variables with the help of IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (IBM SPSS) version 24. Descriptive results indicated a majority of the employees strongly agreed that there are coaching and mentorship programs for career development (M=4.50, SD=1.229). However, there were mixed reactions to the existence of a well-established career path planning aligned with personal goals and interests in the organization where most of the employees remained neutral (M = 3.36, SD =1.215). With a regression analysis established an R squared of 62.1%, the study suggested another study to establish the other factors that contribute 37.9% to employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County.

Keywords: career development, employee performance, Job embeddedness, theory burnout theory, and descriptive survey design.

Background of the Study

According to Greenhaus et al. (2000), career development is a continuous process of work life.

Career development benefits not only the individual employee but also the organization. With

the development of employees for future positions, an organization is assured of a supply of qualified, committed employees to replace the higher-level employ. In addition, a career development practice enables organizations to develop and place employees in positions compatible with their career interests, needs, and goals. This promotes employee satisfaction and optimal use of employee abilities. Moreover, career development helps retain and motivate employees through the career development process; employees are assisted in setting realistic goals and developing the required skills and abilities for target positions (Hall and Lorgan, 1979).

Career development practices are key strategic considerations for all organizations regardless of size, sector, market or profile. The development of the capacity and capability of the organization "s managers has a fundamental impact on the efficiency, effectiveness, morale, and profitability of an organization. High-performing organizations increasingly pay close attention to the validity of their recruitment practices. They are becoming equally vigilant about developing their employees" careers to ensure optimum performance both in the present and the future Mwanje (, 2010). Balaji (2004) emphasizes the practice of providing internal promotions to create a feeling that career development offers good career growth opportunities, which, in his opinion, will motivate employees to remain in the industry. Motivation concerns "motives" and "needs," and Beardwell, Holden, and Claydon (2004) point out that career advancement is a form of motivation that managers increasingly see as a mechanism for improvement. Other career development practices have been confirmed by Mwenebirinda (1998), who acknowledges that employees'" performance can be enhanced by formal education and training that addresses and identifies employees'" weakness.

Employee performance has become more important in today's economic Climate, particularly for companies that want to retain their most valuable workers (Wiley, 2010). As Markos and Sridevi (2010) point out, businesses are more appreciative of the need for empowered employees who arrive at work each day ready to generate new ideas, create new strategies, and make significant progress. It is believed that an active employee puts forth physical effort as well as discretionary effort and vigor, enthusiasm, care, and commitment and that an active employee is more likely to be cognitively and emotionally attached to work tasks, to feel pleased to be a part of the organization, to perceive meaning in their work, and to contribute to the organization's objectives (Basbous, 2011; Mase & Tyokyaa, 2014). Fully engaged employees go beyond the job requirements enabling the organization to triumph, have fewer health issues, are less stressed, and are more satisfied with their personal lives (Albrecht, 2012).

According to Basbous (2011), companies have started to see their workers as internal assets that can achieve a competitive edge in the marketplace by capitalizing on their employees' talents and abilities. Accordingly, employee performance has emerged as an important corporate driver, and structural success is dependent on it in many cases. According to Leblebici (2012), it is in the best interests of businesses to explore methods to increase employee involvement to guarantee that workers' actions are consistent with the organization's aims and goals.

Statement of the problem

A laser-like emphasis on employee performance and measures to enhance it is crucial in the health sector, especially in the private health sector. When it comes to any business, employees are significant assets, but the importance of an employee is especially great when it comes to the healthcare industry. The vast bulk of healthcare workers' actions and behavior are centered upon direct interaction with patients. An important multi-dimensional notion, performance is concerned with achieving goals. It is closely linked to the company's strategic goals. Employee performance encompasses both the duties and the quality of the work done by the employees. Not all employees' actions or behavior are rewarded with a high-performance rating. A company's performance is unlikely to improve if its activities and behavior have little to do with its aim of increasing sales and profits.

Several studies concur on the fact that there exists a positive link between relational rewards and human resource outcome aspects in organizations such as retention, performance, commitment, satisfaction, and engagement (Makokha & Nyagechi., 2016); However, where there is a negative relationship between rewards and human resource outcomes, it may lead to counterproductive work behaviors such as high turnover, lack of commitment, demotivation and disengagement (Allam, 2017). The Private sector in Kenya admits that human resources for health clampdowns are critical components impeding Kenya's health sector planning, service delivery, and, finally, national health results (HFF, 2012). Worldwide testament points to a direct relationship between the size of a country's health employees and its health results. WHO (2006) reveals that Kenya is among the 57 countries in the world and 36 within sub-Saharan Africa that face a severe health workforce catastrophe with insufficient crucial health employees like doctors, nurses, and diagnostic scientists and a regional imbalance in the distribution of the existing healthcare employees.

General Objective

To assess the influence of career development on employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County.

Significance of the Study

The results of the research, if adopted, may offer policymakers with evidence that supports the significance of employee involvement in attaining organizational objectives. The findings of the study may be used to develop policies and programs. Performance improvement plans for the private health sector may be developed that consider the importance of employee engagement as a critical component of their execution.

The research findings are also beneficial to human resource practitioners since the data produced will support the important role that human resource management techniques play in increasing employee overall performance. With this knowledge, it may be possible to advocate for increased involvement of human resource specialists in strategic decision-making processes inside organizations.

Scope of the study

This research focused on the effects of rational rewards on employee performance. The scope of the study targeted Doctors, Nurses, laboratory technicians, clinical officers, pharmacists, and hospitals. Administrators were working in private hospitals in Isiolo County. The views were collected from respondents covering five years from 2017 to 2021, and to get a solid result in this study, it will need six months to complete the research.

Theoretical Framework

Job Embeddedness Theory

Scholars agree that Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, and Erez (2001) were the first to bring the concept of work embeddedness into management literature to understand better why employees stay in their current jobs (Nafeli, 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2010; Zhang, Fried, & Griffeth, 2012). One of the most effective illustrations provided by the theory's proponents was its three primary components: Relations, Fit, and Sacrifice. In light of the limitations of conventional retention models of job satisfaction and organizational engagement, the hypothesis was expanded to include non-job factors such as dedication to the social community and family, as well as on-the-job factors such as dedication to working groups, office facilities, relationships with colleagues, target congruence, and earlier employee retention models of job satisfaction and organizational engagement. As stated in the title, this theory proposes that the extent to which people have connections with others within and outside of the organization or are compatible or comfortable with other interests in the community influences their decision to continue working for or volunteering for the organization or community (Zhang et al., 2012).

Job Embeddedness has been shown to impact work-related behaviors such as performance, absenteeism, turnover, citizenship behaviors, and employee engagement, amongst other things (Ng et al., 2010, Ringl, 2013). It addresses three core elements, each of which is envisioned as both "off-the-job" and "on-the-job" factors that have been described to create an atmosphere of retaining forces that guide an employee's decision to remain on the job or remain with an organization or community, as described in the literature (Ahaiuzu and Asawo, 2016; Mitchell et al., 2001; Nafei, 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2010; Ringl, 2013; Zhang, Fried and Griffeth, 2012). Links, Fit, and Sacrifice are the retaining components used (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Burnout Theory of Engagement

Employer burnout is hypothesized to be caused by two job characteristics: job demands and job resources. Job demands cause emotional exhaustion by draining employees' mental and physical energy. In contrast, the absence of job resources prevents employees from achieving meaningful work goals and personal development, which negatively impacts employees' motivation and, as a result, causes employee burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). According to burnout, when workplace demands such as unpleasant events, role ambiguity, role conflict, work pressure, role stress, and workload outstrip workers' abilities, they will feel that their autonomy has been taken away and will become more vulnerable to emotional fatigue (Alarcon, Lyons, & Tartaglia, 2010). To put it another way, the sense of being stuck in a scenario has the potential to deplete workers' emotional reserves (Ortqvist & Wincent, 2006).

To the extent that it applies to this study, the burnout theory of engagement suggests that interpersonal resources present in the workplace, such as management support and the work environment (Baard et al., 2004; Deci et al., 2001), are important in describing employees' functioning as a result of the fulfillment of psychological needs (Baard et al., 2004; Deci et al., 2001). Specifically, measures aimed at reducing work demands while simultaneously increasing job resources are suggested from the perspective of the health sector via job design. To create a conducive work environment, managers should explain employee duties and responsibilities. They should also promote work-life integration to alleviate job stress and enhance employee performance. As a result, they may enhance work resources by providing employees with more decision-making autonomy and assistance to minimize emotional fatigue and depersonalization while also adding to an overall sense of personal success.

Empirical Review

Career Development

All workers in the company are concerned about their professional growth. Individuals who have advanced in their careers and have a sense of purpose are more likely to be motivated, retain their jobs, and even have job stability later in life. (Armstrong, 2011). Evans, Pucik & Barsoux (2012) argue that, as a result of political and economic conditions, globalization, and technological changes, companies face intensified competition and are therefore encouraged to improve their workers as one of the ways to train them to respond to the growing demands for better skills, knowledge, and attitudes.

Career strategies are based on two philosophies, according to Armstrong (2011), which advance careers to fulfill organizational and individual criteria and the need to optimize the efficiency and happiness capacity of people in the organization under conditions of transition. Filippo (2014) advocates that career development is gaining recognition from various organizations to facilitate job satisfaction and organizational commitment. While the employees are developing themselves, they continue to offer their success. The opportunities furnished by the organization for employee development will cause greater job satisfaction, which is a stronger commitment to the organization's service.

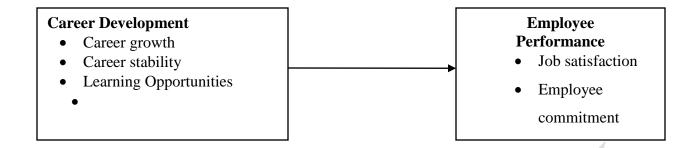
Koech (2011) and Wetland (2012) indicated that investing in employee training and career growth is essential for employee engagement and minimizes turnover. Job training, experience, short courses, professional courses, and postgraduate degrees are part of career development. Employees can advance in their position by continuously acquiring management and professional skills and gaining valuable experience in rewards and promotions (Hall, 2010). As a

result, companies must offer training for new workers while also assisting current employees in their development via an effective career structure.

As Pininnington (2011) pointed out in his research on the growth of attorneys' competence and career progression, all job experience, and professional knowledge are theoretically considered potential human and relational capital that may be used to clients' advantage. In a study in the telecommunications field, Hassan et al. (2013) advocated that companies should induce a reward-giving culture and provide workers with an atmosphere where they can accept career growth and professional skills to improve employee encouragement and loyalty. In general, appropriate training positively endows reduced employee turnover intentions as it makes employees feel appreciated for their skills and creates opportunities to develop their qualities (Kyndt, Dochy, Michielsen, & Moeyaert, 2010). Employee training and growth have been a perfect response to business challenges and the leadership of human resources in modern management, according to (Kamau 2014).

Conceptual Framework

Independent Dependent
Variables Variable



METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive survey design was used for this investigation. According to Cox and Hassard (2010), descriptive surveys are a kind of research strategy that allows a researcher to gather data without altering or changing the study subject or environment. The researcher may also use statistical techniques such as the mean, frequencies, and regression to explain the study results, which helps support the researcher's choice to choose the particular study design.

Location of the study

The research was carried out in Isiolo County, emphasizing private health institutions in the area. According to the Kenyan constitution, Isiolo County is one of 47 established and listed in 2010. Low semi-arid plains characterize the county's geography. In the north, it shares borders with Marsabit County; in the east, it shares borders with Wajir County; in the south, it shares borders with Garissa and Tana River counties; in the south, it shares borders with Meru County; in the south-west, it shares borders with Samburu County.

Target Population

The study's target population included the entire aggregation of elements that meet the designated set criteria and information required (Sarantakos, 2005). This study targeted all

medical practitioners who included; doctors, registered and enrolled nurses, pharmacists, laboratory technology, and clinical officers working in private hospitals in Isiolo County. The population included 397 private medical practitioners working in the private hospitals within Isiolo County (MOH, HIS 2018). Table 1 shows the distribution of the target population.

Table 1: Distribution of Target Population

Population
20
169
56
64
88
397

Source: County Health Sector Statistics (2018)

Sample size

The sample sizes for this research were determined using the Denscombe (2007) sample size formula, which was as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N\sigma^2}$$

Where N the target population

- n desired sample size
- δ^2 estimated standard error equal to 5% for 95% confidence level

With the above method and a target population of 397 respondents, a sample size of 199 respondents can be calculated. A stratified random sampling technique will be used in

conjunction with a probability design to choose participants for the research. Divide the population into homogeneous subgroups (strata), and then take a simple random sample from each subgroup, will be the technique used as indicated in table 2 below:

Table 2 sample size

Population	Sample size	
20	10	
169	85	
56	28	
64	32	
88	44	
397	199	
	20 169 56 64 88	

Source: Researcher (2021)

Research Instruments

This study relied on semi-structured questionnaires to collect primary data. The instrument provided section where section A was used to explore demographic characteristics of the study respondents and obtain views and opinions on the variables under study. The remaining sections were based on research objectives. Responses provided on the various variables of the study were measured on a Likert scale for the closed-ended.

Data Analysis

Cleaning of data was done before analysis by doing the corrections or removal of data that had errors due to contradictions, duplications, answers that are ambiguous and incomplete information. Collected data was then put together, given codes and responses examined concerning research questions. Data from the field notes and the transcripts of the audiotapes were analyzed. Data that is quantitative was processed using the Statistical Package for Social

Science (SPSS) Version 25. The quantitative data were presented in frequency and percentage distribution tables.

A regression model was applied to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where

Where: Y is the performance of employees; β_0 is the constant or the intercept of the regression line; β_1 is regression coefficients for predictor variables; X_1 is Career Development; ϵ is the error term.

Response Rate

A total of 199 questionnaires were sent out to people in Isiolo County's private health care industry as part of the study. Sixty-six percent of the total survey questionnaires, or 152 out of the 199 sent out, were properly completed and returned. The study's response rate of 76.38 percent was judged sufficient for data analysis. This meant that the data gathered was sufficient for further investigation and conclusion.

Descriptive Results

Career development on employee performance

They sought to assess the influence of career development on employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County. Respondents were presented with statements on career development and indicated their level of agreement in each. Results of the average scores recorder are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Career development on employee performance

Opinion statement o career development	N	Mean	Std.

			Deviation
There is a well-established career path planning aligned with	152	3.36	1.215
personal goals and interests in the organization			
Financial support for learning programs motivates me to	152	3.94	1.208
perform better at work			
All employees are given growth opportunities in training and	152	3.59	1.263
development			N
The organization has a policy of employee career	152	4.01	1.261
development			
There are coaching and mentorship programs for management	152	4.50	1.229
development			
At my place of work, there is control over own work methods	152	4.03	1.239
All employees are given equal opportunities for promotion	152	3.98	1.182
Valid N (listwise)	152		

Sources Researcher 2021

The researcher was interested in learning about the ages of the people she surveyed. Figure 4.2 shows that respondents between the ages of 20 and 30 accounted for 30.3% of the total, followed by those between the ages of 31 and 40 at 37.5%, those between the ages of 41 and 50 at 19.7%, and those above the age of 50 at 12.5%. From the findings on career development, the results revealed that respondents relatively agreed with the statements provided. The majority of the respondents strongly agreed that there are coaching and mentorship programs for management development with a mean of 4.50 and standard deviation of 1.229; respondents also agreed that there is control over their work methods (M = 4.03, SD = 1.239). With the recorded average mean of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 1.261, respondents also agreed that the organization has a policy of employee career development. All the employees are given equal opportunities for promotion scored a mean of 3.98 a standard deviation of 1.182. The respondents also agreed that financial support for learning programs motivates them to perform better at work (M = 3.94, SD = 1.239).

1.208). All employees given growth opportunities in training and development scored a mean of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 1.263. However, there were mixed reactions to the statement that there is a well-established career path planning aligned with personal goals and interests in the organization (M = 3.36, SD = 1.215)

The results above imply that the private health sector in Isiolo county has made efforts to enhance the employees' career development. Notably, the organizations provide coaching and mentorship programs for management development and a policy of employee career development to the staff. The implication is that employees are likely to be motivated and increase employee performance. The finding is similar to Norah, Susan, and Waititu (2016). They noted that career development structures are interrelated and work together to advance efficiency, retention, and output of workers.

4.6 Results of Regression Analysis

They sought to assess the influence of career development on employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County. Table 4 provides the result of the model summary. Insights into the general influence of the predictor variable on the dependent variable revealed that the regression model goodness of fit was satisfactory. This is reflected by the constructive correlation of 0.788 and a coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.621. An R Square of 0.621 implies that the study's analytical variables can explain up to 62.1% of the variations in employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.788 ^a	.621	.054	0.4034

Source: Researcher (2021)

Further, the combined consequence of the predictor variables was presented, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). From Table 5, predictor variables significantly influenced the dependent variable since p<0.05 indicates that relational rewards are good predictors of employees' performance.

Table 5: ANOVA analysis

	Sum of				
Model	Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	135.783	30	4.526	1.094	.000 ^b
Residual	82.727	20	4.136		
Total	218.510	50			

Dependent Variable: Employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County

Predictors: Career development.

Source: Researcher (2021)

Table 6: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.205	2.192		.322	.752
Career	.301	.125	.251	1.323	.019
Development					
work environment	1.131	.144	.267	2.310	.028

Work-Life integration	.434	.136	.232	1.525	.003
Job design	2.216	.161	.211	2.139	.013

Dependent Variable: Employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County Source: Researcher 2021

From the findings, the equation becomes

Employee performance = 1.205+0.301 Career Development.

The regression findings in Table 6 revealed that career development had a positive but insignificant effect on employee performance (β = 0.301, P = .019).

Summary of the Findings

The study sought to assess the influence of career development on employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County. Descriptive results indicated the majority of the employees strongly agreed that there are coaching and mentorship programs for career development (M=4.50, SD=1.229). However, there were mixed reactions to the existence of a well-established career path planning aligned with personal goals and interests in the organization where most of the employees remained neutral (M=3.36, SD=1.215). Career development significantly added up to employee performance p=0.019 < 0.05.

Conclusion

Research shows that workers who can balance their professional and personal lives are more likely to perform at their highest level. Employers that allow their employees to connect to their work network from home also positively influence employee performance. Career advancement has a major impact on performance. The research found that employee performance in the private health sector in Isiolo County was impacted by coaching and mentoring programs as part of career development.

Recommendations

To ensure the performance of employees in the private health sector in Isiolo County, this study recommends the following measures; on career development, the private health sector in Isiolo County to provide a well-established career path planning aligned with employee's goals and interests to enhance employee performance.

Recommendations for Further Study

More research is needed to uncover the other aspects impacting the employee performance of relational incentives, such as the R squared of 62.1 percent, found in the regression analysis.

COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist. The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors

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