

DETERMINANTS OF RETENTION OF DIVERSE GENERATIONAL COHORTS IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF MOMBASA, KENYA

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Abstract: This research paper reviews determinants of Retention of Diverse Generational Cohorts in today's organizations both private and public sectors. The study specifically seeks to determine effects of variables Rewards, Training, Leadership styles and Work environment and how they influence retention of diverse generational cohorts in the County Government of Mombasa. The literature review includes past literature relevant to this study. The purpose of this study is to examine the outlined variables as a measure of retention strategies in the County Government of Mombasa and how they contribute to overall performance of employees in this County. The literature review explains three relevant Motivational theories, Maslow's Theory of Needs Herzberg Two-Factor Theory and Expectancy Theory. Empirical review explained the challenges other organizations face while trying to retain their employees, the review outlined among others factors that varied employees indicated as determinants of retention.

Keywords: Determinant, Retention, Generational, Cohorts and County Government.

I. INTRODUCTION

Retention is today's organizational challenge and it is not limited to retaining talented people, but fully engaging them as well, thus capturing their minds and hearts at each stage of their working lives. Tolbize, (2008) noted that there are diverse generational cohorts in the same workforce within the confines of work set-ups. A generational cohort, he asserted, is a cohort born within a specific set of years that shares common experiences and characteristics.

Bevan, Barber & Robinson, (1997). Johnson et al. (2000), defined employee's retention as the ability to hold on to those employees that you want to keep for longer than your competitor. On the other hand, Chaminade, 2007 defined retention as a voluntary move by an organization to create an environment which engages employees for long term. The key aspects of retention include rewards, training, leadership styles and work environment as indicated in (Abraham Maslow's Theory of Needs (1943), Fredrick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) and Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory of (1964). Tolbize, (2008) established that different experiences and generational characteristics are said to create core values that influence a generation's work values in any given organization.

Employees' values and needs have changed over the decade and employees of each generation bring new expectations and values to the workplace which they have acquired over time Twenge (2010). Campbell, Bush, Brunell and Shelton, (2005) pointed out that with the twenty-first century moving forward, organizations are experiencing more than one generation working together in the workplace, which has not been experienced before. He further observed that the reason behind the simultaneous presence of all these generations in the workplace was importantly due to working beyond the retirement age. Abraham Maslow in his Theory of Needs (1943), Fredrick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) and

Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory of (1964) all observed that retention and performance of employees is based on both financial and non-financial factors that revolved around rewards, training, leadership and work environment and that this aspects informed employee's decision to remain in the organization or move to better places.

Kenya, being a market economy that is now impressing devolved governance as a democratic political system of leadership, expects counties to be innovative enough to provide increased employment opportunities to majority of the citizens at grassroots. These opportunities should target more so the younger generations as a way of managing high unemployment gaps are experienced in this era. However, there are challenges in obtaining and retaining the right people/workforce endowed with the appropriate skills, knowledge and potential for future efficient deployment (Bevan, Barber & Robinson, (1997).

World over, organizations majorly learn from one others success and failures, retention being an interrelationship of HRM practices, Kenyan organizational need to domesticate local cultures and attitudes as practiced by immediate leaders nevertheless, these has evidently been captured through research. Gravelter &Throckmorton,(2007) noted that most studies on retention of varied generational cohorts and turnover are mainly focused to highlighting western scenarios isolating the rest of the world yet ignoring the fact that different events across the world shaped people of different generations uniquely hence the different characteristics in varied generational cohorts in varied geographical localities.

Studies highlighting African perspective on aspects that determine retention are truly limited hence providing deficiencies in acquisition of literature to necessitate putting in rigorous research contribution for an understanding of the best determinants of retention of diverse generational cohort. Therefore the study subjected rewards, training, leadership styles and work environment to test as a way of determining how they influence retention of diverse generational cohorts similarly understanding the effect of each on retention of employees of the Mombasa County Government with a focus at the headquarters.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The speed of communications, the pace of change to meet customer demand and more rigorous Public sector accountability, have made generational diversity a unique aspect of the workplace, Netswera (2005). As the older generations moves closer towards retirement, organizations have the responsibility of attracting and retaining members of the younger generation for the necessary skills that will replace these retiring older staff members (Accenture, (2001). However, the challenge of dealing with the demographic changes within the workplace and specifically recruiting, retaining and managing Yer's and Xers's has emerged as one of the biggest issues facing employers today (Real, Mitnick and Maloney, 2010).

Abraham Maslow's Theory of Needs (1943), Fredrick Herzberg's two-Factor Theory (1959) and Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory of (1964) all highlighted on aspects that needs to be observed by organizations for successful retention practice. As time goes by, different generations display varied needs that employers need to continuously ensure that they monitor. Organizations have the challenge of having the right numbers, skills and talents to remain competitive in this technological era are real. To remain relevant, this should be carefully observed by any organization that values service or product delivery. Organizations have to remain alert to aspects that influence employee mobility and at the same time to implement acceptable human resource practices that allow productive retention.

Knowledge held by older generations needs to be passed over to the incoming younger generations with ease for effective organizational continuity. Due to these reasons, the study sort to fill the gap in knowledge by subjecting factors such as rewards, training, and leadership style and work environment to test and establish the effects as far as determinants of retention of diverse generational cohorts is concerned. This research paper provides appropriate standards for quality retention approaches based on rewards, training, work environments and leadership as aspects that influence retention in the County government of Mombasa.

3. MAIN OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this study was to determine factors that influence the retention of diverse generational cohorts in the County Government of Mombasa.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews relevant literatures that are already in existence and indicates how this particular study fits in the discussion surrounding the topic of retention. It gives light to relevant aspects that if well observed would assist in influencing retention either positively or negatively. The researcher reviewed three motivational theories related to the topic under study and that focused on aspects of rewards, training, work environment and leadership styles as determinants of employee retention. These theories include, Maslow's Theory of Needs, Herzberg's two-Factor Theory and Expectancy Theory.

A. Maslow's Theory of Needs:

In this theory, Maslow hinted that employees will always have a higher need as time moves on. It encourages managers to remain proactive in preparing for retention by forecasting on the hierarchy in an ascending manner. In his theory Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs of (1943), found out that people would often suffer from psychological complaints in their later life if they grew up in an environment where their basic needs were not met. From this, he concluded that if employee needs are not met at work they will not be able to work as effectively as they possibly could; this observation was also supported by (Werner, Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter and Viedge, 2007).

This theory encourages employers to understand that employee needs keep emerging and that they must be met appropriately if employers value retention. It emphasises that exercising motivational skills attracts employees to organizations. The theory advises employers not to overlook any aspects that influence employee motivation but rather to take responsibility by creating conducive working environment in which employees can realize achievement of their diverse needs hierarchically to their fullest potential. Conversely, in the absence of conducive working climate, employees would be dissatisfied hence resulting to poor performance or high turnovers, Steers & porter, (1983).

B. Herzberg's two-Factor Theory

This theory is also known as Hertzberg's motivation-hygiene theory or Dual-factor Theory. The theory has clearly attempted to explain that presence and absence satisfaction and motivation is responsible for informing employee retention or quitting any jobs, Mausner and Snyderman (1999). This theory has highlighted satisfaction and dissatisfaction as realities facing organizations adding that organizational delay to manage the two aspects leads to turnovers in which key employees are lost.

It has highlighted that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are critical issues in informing employee decision to quit or remain, Hertzberg urges employers to continuously improve on aspects that influence employee attitude at work as a way of increasing production. The theory suggest that immediate responses on employee needs saves organizations from losing important employee, Harman, Tee, Mitchell, Felps & Owen,(2007). The theory clearly differentiates factors that form employee motivation from those that form satisfaction and shows the implication of either as far as employee decision making is concerned.

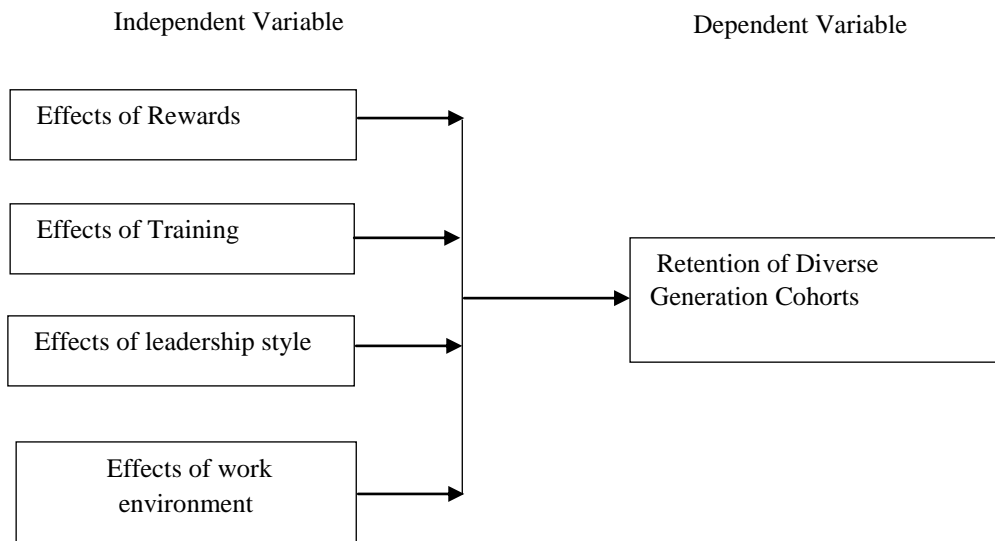
C. Expectancy Theory

The theory emphasises on the initial employee expectation that informs his/ her choice on available opportunities, Porter and Lawler, (1968). The theory adds that if employees are dissatisfied, they can opt to quit or just remain members of organizations a move that negatively affects production. Sutherland, (2004).

The findings of the theory established that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are not necessarily motivators to organizational loyalty and cannot also be influencers of retention, Sutherland, (2004). However, employee's consideration of a balance between the emerging and most favourable policies coupled with physical environment affects the individual changing needs hence influencing decisions, Claydon & Beardwell, (2007) & Torrington et.al. (2008). The theory specifically indicates that rewards and leadership are among the factors that contribute to employee retention Yap et.al. (2009).

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework will consist of the independent variables of Reward, Training, Leadership styles and Work environment. These relationships are represented in Figure below. The dominant direction of influence is illustrated by the direction of the pointed arrows where the independent variables directly influence the dependent variable of Retention of diverse generational cohorts.



In this study reward refers to both financial and non-financial recognitions that the organization offers to the employees in response of the work as well as performance and something which is desired by the employees, Agarwal (2005). Different generation values different responses from their organizations as rewards, generation Y prefer bonuses which include, having a fun work environment, informing them of opportunities and making them aware of the path to the top with the organization, Dorsey, 2010 while generation X have a high considerations are in the believe that it doesn't matter how work gets done or where it gets done as long as it gets done and that the outcome needs to be noticed and appreciated by individual or team bonuses, Glass, (2007).

Training refers to functions of Human Resource Management that are concerned with organizational activity aimed at bettering the performance of employees in any organizational set up, it's also referred to as Human Resource Development, Human Capital Development and Learning and Development, Hammer,(2000). The best avenue for appreciating retention is to look into the alternatives of not retaining staff. It is therefore crucial for managements to understand the preferred career development paths of the different generational cohorts for them to satisfy their unique needs. They should also appreciate that employees from different generational cohorts may have different styles and modes of learning for effective knowledge acquisition. Akinyele, (2007).

In this study, Leadership can be looked at as “a model of integrity and fairness, setting clear goals, having high expectations, encouraging people and providing support and recognition, Warrick, (2011). Leadership can also be viewed as stirring the emotions and passions of people, and getting people to look beyond their own self-interests and reach for higher goals”, Geib and Swenson, (2013). Leadership can also be referred to as ability to offer others something that goes beyond self-interest: they provide others with “an inspiring mission and vision and give them an identity, Eisenberger et.al. (1990).in his view of leadership, Eisenberger suggested that employee's perception regarding an organization is strongly influenced by their relationship with the organizational leadership. A type of leadership also contributes to employee retention or quit, McGregor, 1996. Both generations X and Y prefer knowledge based leadership which focuses of enhancing relationship between employee and employer, David, Gliddon, 2006. On emerging leaders and a study by the United Nations , 2006 on leadership styles, it was observed that the two Gen. X and Y have more elements in common and that Democratic leadership style/ participatory was more suitable for the two generations.

Work environment refers to a dynamic alignment of organizations strategies, workplace patters and space and organizations culture that enables employees achieve high performance Audrey, Schriefer, 2005. A great work environment is described as that which influences achievement of the organizational goals through inspiring, speaking and listening and on the other hand, employees give the best by thanking, developing, caring, and embracing teamwork through hiring, celebrating success and sharing, Tolbize,(2008). Generation X have been observed to desire a hands-off, self reliant and unbureaucratic work environment for effective performance while generation Y prefers team-oriented, interpersonal and gregarious colleagues at workplaces so as to promise their retention, Bartley et.al (2007).

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this paper spells out the research design, target population, sampling & sampling technique, sampling size, sources of data, pilot test, data collection methods & instrument, data analysis, processing & presentation. The research design for this study was a descriptive case study consisting of 12 departments of the County Government of Mombasa and a sample size of 405 was selected as a representation of a population of 4053 permanent employees. A pilot study was conducted in the neighbouring County of Kwale where 20 copies were distributed to three of her department to determine validity, reliability and accuracy of the questionnaire hence ensuring Mombasa county remained at a target sample of 405. The reason of choosing the neighbouring Kwale county was based on fact that the two counties have the same characteristics. The sampling method used was simple stratified random technique so as to give every member a chance of being selected as a subject of study. Data used in the study was obtained by means of questionnaires distributed to the Top, Middle and Lower level employees across the 12 departments comprising of Water & Environment, Education & Children, Youths, Sports & Gender, Transport & Infrastructure, Tourism & Development, Health Services, Agriculture, Livestock & fisheries, Finance, Procurement & ICT, Public Relations, Legal, Inspectorate, Human Resource & County Secretary, Public Service Board and Lands, Planning & Investment that form the County Government of Mombasa in Kenya. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize and describe important characteristics of the sets involved. Inferential statistics was used to make inference to population characteristics information obtained from the sample population. ANOVA was used since there were more than three independent variables and one dependent variable. Data was analysed using Statistical package for social science (SPSS data editor), and regression analysis illustrated the extend of effects of independent variable on dependent variable when an input is applied to each independent.

7. RESEARCH FINDINGS

This section presented key findings of this study. The section includes the descriptive analyzes of the general data from the respondents in systematic way as obtained based on the questionnaire. The section analyzed Rewards, Training, Leadership style and Work environment as determinants of retention of diverse generational cohorts. The demographic information that was analyzed included respondents gender, age, education level and tenure in the County. 46% of the respondents were female while 55.8% were male, 32% of the respondents were between the age of 18-34, 47% were between 35-50 and 19% were above 50 indicating that majority of the respondents were between 35-50 years. Information collected on education indicated that 10% of the respondents were of primary level, 20% were O-level, 5% respondents were A-level and 33% held certificates/ diplomas, 20% were undergraduates, 11% were Postgraduates this indicated that majority of the respondents held certificates/ diplomas. 46% of the respondents were inherited from the former municipal council while 54% of the respondents had been employed at the beginning of the County governments. 27% of the respondents had worked for less than 2 years, 35% had worked for 5 years, 6% had worked for less than 10 years, 24% had worked for more than 15 years hence indicating that the majority respondents had worked for less than 2-5 years.

Testing Relationships between Variables:

Correlation analysis between the variable and retention of diverse generations:

Correlations		Retention of the diverse generation of the employees	Rewards	Training	Leadership	Work environment
Retention of the diverse generation of the employees	Pearson Correlation	1	.590**	.492**	.450**	.515**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	220	218	216	216	212
Rewards	Pearson Correlation	.590**	1	.728**	.501**	.643**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	218	221	219	219	214
Training	Pearson Correlation	.492**	.728**	1	.588**	.569**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.000
	N	216	219	219	218	213
Leadership	Pearson	.450**	.501**	.588**	1	.573**

	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000
	N	216	219	218	219	213
Work environment	Pearson Correlation	.515**	.643**	.569**	.573**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	212	214	213	213	214

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

The correlation between the dependent (retention of diverse generation of employees) and the independent (rewards, training, leadership style, and work environment) exhibited a positive of correlation with the SPSS indicating rewards (0.590), work environment (0.515), training (0.492), and while leadership styles indicator at (0.450). In the correlation scale of (-1>=X<=1) between the dependent (retentions of the diverse generations of employees) and the independent factors, there was a strong correlation in reward as the determiner of the retention of employees which scored 0.590 while the correlation between dependent and leadership styles was weak at 0.450. The P value (0.000) was statistically significant at the correlations level of 0.01. This was reflected in the bivariate correlation but also picked up in the model fit of 0.352. This represents a coefficient level of 35.2%.

Regression analysis results

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.621 ^a	0.385	0.373	0.70193
a. Predictors: (Constant), Work environment as determinant, Training as determinant, Leadership style as determinant, Rewards as determinants				
b. Dependent Variable: Retention of diverse generations				

The table shows the coefficient of correlation(R) and the coefficient of determination (R²). The adjusted R square value of 0.373 implied that the 37.3% of the variations in the retention level were influenced by the 4 variables leaving 62.7% to be influenced by other factors.

ANOVA RESULTS

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.288	4	15.822	32.112	.000 ^b
	Residual	101.004	205	0.493		
	Total	164.292	209			
a. Dependent Variable: Retention of diverse generations						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Work environment as determinant, Training as determinant, Leadership style as determinant, Rewards as determinants						

The result shows that the outcome of analysis of Variance (ANOVA) indicates that, the F static was 32.112 with a significant change of 0.000%. This implied that the impact of retention level is statistical significant.

Coefficients									
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients			Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	Lower Bound			Upper Bound	
1	(Constant)		1.233	0.202		6.115	0.000	0.836	1.631
	Rewards as determinants	X1	0.365	0.090	0.367	4.078	0.000	0.189	0.542
	Training as	X2	0.047	0.076	0.054	0.619	0.537	-0.103	0.198

determinant									
Leadership style as determinant	X3	0.125	0.086	0.106	1.453	0.148	-0.045	0.295	
Work environment as determinant	X4	0.189	0.078	0.187	2.434	0.016	0.036	0.342	

Dependent Variable: Retention of diverse generations

The above results indicate that all the variables have positive effect on the retention level. The most influential variable is the reward with a regression coefficient of 0.365 and a P value of 0.000. Work environment follows with a coefficient of 0.189 and a P value of 0.016. It is followed by leadership style with a coefficient of 0.125 and a P value of 0.148. Training has the least coefficient level of 0.047 and a P value of 0.537. From this Model, regression model can be derived as follows: Y (Retention level of diverse generation of employees) = $1.233 + 0.365(\text{Rewards}) + 0.189(\text{work environment}) + 0.125(\text{leadership style}) + 0.047(\text{Trainings}) + 0.202$. The above data reflects that, assuming all the variables are zero, the reward performance will be 1.233. Keeping all the other variables constant, it also indicated that a unit increase in work environment would lead to 0.189 increases in the retention level of the diverse generations at the County Government of Mombasa. Equally keeping all the other variables constant, a unit increase in the leadership skills would lead to 0.125 increases in the retention level. Lastly, keeping all the variables constant, a unit increase in trainings would lead to 0.202 increases in the retention level of the diverse generations of the employees.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study revealed that there was fairly strong relationship between the independent variables and the retention level. This implies that the independent variables (rewards, working environment and leadership styles) are predictors of the retention level of employees at the county government of Mombasa. However there was a clear indication that the steps of retaining employees at the County Government of Mombasa have not been fully implemented. A further analysis using regression analysis to establish the relationship between rewards, trainings, leadership styles, working environment as the independent variables and the dependent variable retention of diverse generations of employees indicated that there is need for improvements. In view of the findings, study therefore recommends that the County should consider addressing the working conditions and leadership styles. They also need to emphasize on the importance of trainings and make the employees to own it instead of making it an idea of the management. Resources are needed to improve on the rewards. They County Government need to consider investing on the resources to retain the employees or look for alternative non-financial rewards to retain them. This non-financials ways may include sense of responsibility, independence at work, recognition of the work done, personal and career growth, and participatory in the decision making.

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