Determinants of Employees Retention in Institutions of Higher Learning in Kenya: A Case Study of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

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Abstract: The research sought to establish the organizational determinants of employees' retention in institutional of higher learning in Kenya a case study of Jomo Kenyatta University of agriculture and technology. The general objective of this study was to assess the determinants of employees' retention in institutions of higher learning in Kenya: The specific objectives of the study were to investigate the influence of: remuneration, training, job security, promotion and their influence on employees' retention.

Literature was reviewed to seek various opinions and views from the different authors in the area under study. The conceptual framework was presented giving a relationship between dependent and independent variables. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The target population was 3000 employees of the University, the study used the stratified random sampling to pick a sample size of 90 respondents. Data was collected using the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics was used aided by statistical packages for social science version 21 to computes respondents answers. Chi-square analysis was used to describe the significance of relationship between the variables under study. From the findings, it can be presumed that retention of competent employees' is a crucial task, high turnover rate is a problematic and has a negative impact on institutions of higher learning performance. This was evidence by the fact that majority of the respondents (40.6%) were in agreement that retention of staff is practiced by JKUAT as a way of retaining a skilled human capital. The study recommends that the Universities should implements a good remuneration policy, embrace short and long term training and implement a policy stating an employee to get promoted after every three years of working, top priorities being the retention of his staff.

Keywords: Determinants, Remuneration, Training, Job security, Promotion.

1. INTRODUCTION

The most valuable asset available to an organisation is its people, thus retention of employees in their jobs is essential for an organisation. Indeed there is a paradigm shift from human resource to human capital which consists of the knowledge, skills and abilities of the people employed in an organisation which is indicative of their value (Armstrong, 2010). The turnover of key employees can have disproportionate impact on any organization. The people the organization wants to retain are often the ones most likely to leave. Reed (2001) claimed that every worker is five minutes away from handling over their notice and 150 working hours away from resigning for a better job. Today's workers have no qualms about leaving employers for greener pastures. Concerted action is required to retain talented people, but there are limits to what an organization can do. It is also necessary to encourage the greatest contribution from the existing talent and to value them accordingly. (Armstrong, 2012).

A key constraint to achieving the Vision 2030 is the absence of properly trained and motivated workforce. Loss of employees form low to middle-income countries is crippling already fragile institutions of higher learning system. Employees retention is critical for institutions of higher learning system performance and a key problem is how best to

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retain those employees. There is a need to undertake a systematic review to consolidate existing evidence on the impact of financial and non-financial incentives on retention of employees. (Nzuve 2010). Due to high turnover, retention strategies should be put in place based on an understanding of the factors that affect whether or not employees leave or stay. Nowadays, in institutions of higher learning in Kenya younger workforce have been changing jobs and employers frequently and there are organizational factors that influence retention including organization image, remuneration, recognition, promotion and leadership, training, performance recognition and reward.

Employees' values and needs have changed over the decade and employees' have new expectations and values to the work place which they have acquired overtime Twenge (2010). Abraham Maslow in his Theory of needs (1943), Fredrick Herzberg's Two factor theory all observed that retention and performance of employees is based on both financial and non-financial factors that revolved around remuneration, training, promotion and job security and that this aspects informed employees' decision to remain in the organization or move to better places,

According to Lewa (2009), Kenyan institutions of higher learning do not train for retention of their staff and have no retention strategy. They operate on the assumption that there will always be people ready to join their institutions of higher learning as Supervisors, line managers, technicians, tutorial fellows, lecturers, associate professors and professors. Clearly, there is need for policy direction in regard to staff retention in these institutions if they aspire to be competitive locally and internationally.

Globalisation is another issue which has led to liberalisation of trade and commerce hence opening the country to competition which is notable in the institutions of higher learning. There is increased regional and international competition for qualified university employees which leads to brain and loss of some of the most highly qualified staff (GoK, 2006). An appropriate understanding of employees' expectations of their work environments is a critical issue in higher institutions of learning' ability to retain employees; hence, the problem of employees retention is a global one, which affects both developing and industrialised countries (Musah & Nkuah, 2013).

Studies highlighting African perspective on aspect that determine retention are truly limited hence proving deficiencies in acquisition of literature to necessitate putting in rigorous research contribution for an understanding of the best determinants of retention of employees. Therefore the study subjected remuneration, training, job security and promotion to test as a way of determining how they influence retention of employees similarly understanding the effect of each on retention of employees of Jomo Kenyatta University of agriculture and technology with the focus of the main campus headquarters,

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Retaining efficient and experienced workers in an institution of higher learning is very essential in the overall performance of the institution. Long term success of an organization depends largely on its ability to effectively manage and utilize its human resource which are considered as the crucial. Today, however, retention of valuable employees is a global challenge. Managers and top level authorities are constantly met with the issue of retaining employees, and there is a wealth of evidence that worldwide, retention of skilled employees has been of serious concern to managers in the face of ever increasing high rate of employee turnover (Armstrong 2010). In the present ever changing world, current knowledge are basically inadequate to meet up with the dynamic and technical business world. It is therefore a major priority of organisations to acquire skills in accordance with the changing technologies Chew (2004).

Abraham Maslow's Theory of Needs (1943), Fredrick Herzberg's two factors theory (1959) and Adams Equity theory (1965) all highlighted on aspects that needs to be observed by organizations for successful retention practices. As the time goes by, there is high turnover rate in many organizations, needs that employers need to continuously ensure they monitor and take the necessary action. Nowadays, the organizations have the challenge of having the right numbers, skills and talents to remain competitive in this technological era of real. To remain important, this should be carefully observed by any organization that values excellent service delivery. Organization have to remain alert to aspects that influence employees' retention and at the same time to implement acceptable HR practices that allow productive retention.

In the present ever changing world, current knowledge are basically inadequate to meet up with the dynamic and technical business world. It is therefore a major priority of organisations to acquire skills in accordance with the changing technologies. For this reason most organizations take proactive measures for maintaining a reservoir of high technology staff, by continuous retaining them. Due to this reasons, the study sought to fill the gap in retention of employees by subjecting determinants such as remuneration, training, job security and promotion to establish the influence as far determinants of employees' retention is concerned. This research paper provides appropriate standards for quality

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retention approaches based on remuneration, training, job security and promotion as aspects that influence retention in the institution of higher learning in Kenya.

3. GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of this study was to assess the determinants of employees' retention in institutions of higher learning in Kenya.

3.1 Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives of the study were:

- 1. To establish the influence of remuneration on employee retention in Jomo Kenyatta university of agriculture and technology.
- 2. To determine the influence of training on employees retention in Jomo kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.
- 3. To determine the influence of job security on employees retention in Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology.
- 4. To examine the influence of promotion on employees retention in Jomo kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviews relevant literatures that are already in existence and indicates how this particular study fits the discussion surroundings the topic of employees' retention. The study reviewed three theories related to the topic under study and that focuses on aspects of remuneration, training, job security and promotion as determinants of employees' retention. These theories includes Herzberg's two factors Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Need Theory and Equity theory.

A Herzberg's two factors 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 retention or quitting any jobs, (Samuel et al., 2009). The theory highlighted satisfaction and dissatisfaction as realities facing the organizations adding that organizational delay to manage the two aspects leads to turnovers in which key employees are lost, (Ruth,2016).

It has highlighted that motivation would only occur as a result of the use of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors and if they are lacking the employees are likely to leave the organization. Hertzberg urges employers to continuously improve on aspects that influence employees' attitude at work as way of increasing the production. This theory is relevant in that it recognizes that employees have two categories of needs that operate in them and that both should be addressed. If intrinsic needs are not met, the employee will seek ways to satisfy them and similarly with the extrinsic needs. The theory suggest that immediate responses on employees needs saves organizations from losing vital employee, (Harman, 2007).

B. Maslow's Hierarchy of Need Theory:

In this theory, Maslow hinted that people are motivated by the desire to achieve or maintain the various conditions upon which these basic satisfactions rest and by certain more intellectual desires as the average number of society is most often partially satisfied and partially unsatisfied in all of one's wants. He believed that human beings aspire to become self-actualized and viewed human potential as a vastly underestimated and unexplained territory (Stephens, 2000). Maslow's theory was based on the premises that higher-level needs are not important and is not manifested until lower-level needs are satisfied (Steers & porter, 1991).

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

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organizations. The theory advises employers not to overlook any aspects that influence employee motivation but rather to take responsibility by creating devise programs 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, lower job satisfaction and increased withdrawal from the organization, (Steers & porter, (1983).

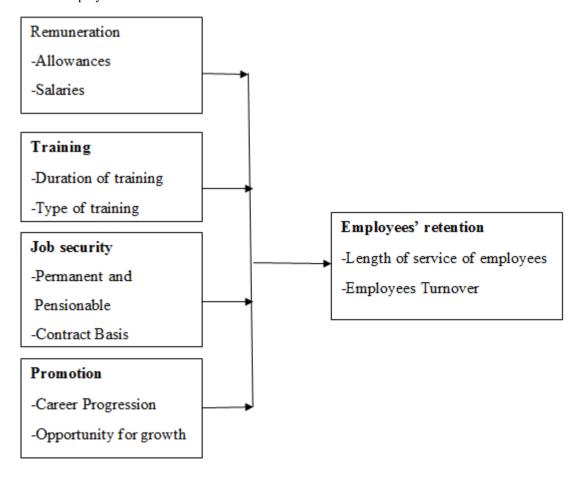
C. Equity Theory:

This theory is concerned with the perceptions employees have about how they are treated compared to others. Adams (1965), suggest that employees seek to maintain equity between the input they bring into a job and the outcome they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of other employees. This theory proposes that employees who perceive themselves as either under-rewarded or over-rewarded will experience distress, and that this leads to employers efforts to restore equity within the organization. Failing to find equity may make employees behave in ways that harm the organization by quitting.

When high performers leave the organization, the company loses its productive talent and the capacity to gain competitive advantage since majority of those who leave join competitors (Chiboiwa et al., 2010). The strength of this theory is that employers should recognize the employee input such as education, experience and effort, should be recognized in such a way that equity is achieved. The theory also displays that individual employees are part of the larger system.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and Smith (2004), a conceptual framework is a hypothesized model used in identifying the concepts under study and their relationships. It provides an outline of the preferred approach in the research, also outlines the relationships and the desired effects, forming independent and dependent variables respectively. The study was guided by the independent variables; remuneration, training, job security and promotion and their effect on the dependent variable which is employees' retention.



Independent variables

Dependent Variable

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Remuneration on employees Retention:

Remuneration is clearly central to employment relationships. How much we are paid and in what form is an issue that matters hugely to us, (Byars & Rue, 2008, Torrington, Hall, Taylor and Atkinson, 2011). For commercial organizations, it is a major determinant of both profitability and competitive advantage. The aim is to design competitive reward packages which serve to attract, retain and motivate staff, while at the same time keeping a lid on the costs so as to ensure the organization's commercial and financial viability, (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson, 2011). Attractive remuneration packages are one of the very important factors of retention because it fulfils the financial and material desires (Shoaib et al., 2009). Tettey (2006) concurs with this when he states that dissatisfaction with salaries is one of the key factors undermining the commitment of employees to their institutions and careers, and consequently their decision to stay or intent to leave.

According to Nawab and Bhatti (2011), compensation plays significant role in attracting and retaining good employees specially those employees whose give outstanding performance or unique skill which is indispensable to the organization because company invest more amounts on their training and orientation. (Bergiel et al., 2009) noted that in research findings suggest that there is a significant and positive relationship between compensation and job embeddedness. Accordingly, it seems that the higher the compensation, the greater the losses employees would feel if they leave the organization (Holtom & O'Neill., 2004). Some researchers argue that on the company side competitive compensation package is the only strong commitment and also build strong commitment on the workers side.

Training on employees Retention:

Latham (1988), training is defined as the systematic acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by employees to adequately perform an assigned job or task to boost performance in the job environment. If the training is relevant and if it is efficiently and effectively designed and delivered, it should impart new knowledge and skills as well as meet the employees' and organizational needs. When the results of training is reflected by improvements in relevant knowledge and the acquisition of relevant skills, employee job performance should also improve provided that the skills learned in training transfer to the job (Salas, 1999).

Michael, 2008), in today's competitive global market the only strategy for organizations to improve workforce productivity radically and enhance retention is to seek to optimize their workforce through comprehensive training and development programmes. To accomplish this undertaking, organizations will have to invest in vast resources to ensure that employees have the information, skills and competencies they need to work effectively in a complex and rapidly changing environment. It is therefore important for organizations to invest in their human resource or human capital development which in general terms is the process of helping employees become better at their tasks, their knowledge, and their experiences and add value to their lives. This is achieved through training, education and development.

The purpose of training in the work context is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future manpower needs of the organization. Many scholars agree that organizations that train their employees consistently have better outcomes than those that do not. An organization that invests in training of its employees remains competitive

Job security on employees Retention:

If employees are satisfied and content with the job security they will automatically be committed to and loyal to their organizations (Lane et al., 2010). According to Mohr, 2000 a growing body of literature suggests that perceptions of job insecurity may have detrimental consequences for employee attitudes and intention to stay.

According to Sverke and Hellgren (2002), job insecurity has received growing recognition in connection with the rapidly changing organizational environment over the past two decades. In their struggle for survival, organizations are faced with the necessity of making their operations more effective with fewer resources. The unpredictable economic situation and the tougher competitive standards have resulted in downsizing, mergers, acquisitions, and other types of structural change, all of which tend to produce increased feelings of insecurity among the workers, not only pertaining to their jobs but also about the future in general. (Sverke, Hellgren &Naswall, 2002).

Promotion on employees Retention:

According to Nzube, 2010, Promotion is a change of assignment from a job at a lower level to another at a higher level within the organization. It provides an employee with an increase in pay and improved status. The purpose of promotion is to fill a vacant post by an employee from within the organization and who possesses the required skills and abilities to

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match the duties and responsibilities of the post. This act as incentive to retain employees in the hope that they will move up the ladder.

Promotion provides opportunities for career progression, more responsibilities and that individual are generally promoted on the basis of seniority which often experience job satisfaction but not as much as on the basis of performance, (Katiyal et al., 2012). The organization Management should have a promotion guide line inform of policy which state the intension to promote from within whenever this is appropriate as a means of satisfying its requirements for high quality employees thus retaining them. The Management should define the approach it will adapt to engaging its employees when promoting them.

Retention of Employees:

Employees' retention is define as a systematic effort by employers to encourage valued employees to remain with their organization. A core belief in Human Resource Management is to retain and develop employees to obtain a competitive advantage. According Phillips et.al, 2003, retention of human resource is critically important in organizations and institutions where financial sustainability and survival in a competitive environment depend on the scarce human and specialist skills. Purcell (2003) points that retention it's the ability of an organization to keep its highly skilled and qualified staff through motivation in diverse ways, it's a systematic effort by employers to encourage valued employees to remain in the organization. Organizations therefore, must continuously discover current retention factors and integrate them in the organization.

According to Armstrong, 2010, employee turnover can be costly and disruptive. Retention strategy should takes into account the retention issues the organization is facing and sets out ways in which these issues can be dealt with. The management should make the work place a pleasant and rewarding place in which working is possible. Problems that might push people towards exit should be fixed. The pull factors cannot be countered, employees cannot be shield from attractive opportunities and aggressive recruiters but overall employee turnover can be minimized by influencing who leaves and when.

6. METHODOLOGY

The case study design combining quantitative and qualitative approaches was adopted for this study. According to Yin (2009), a case study involves an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. This design has several advantages namely; the continuous reality check since the process is iterative between theory and data; secondly, the possibility to use quantitative and qualitative techniques and thirdly, the boundaries that the case creates in the study (Harrison, 2002).

Sekaran and Bougie (2010) define population as the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. The target population were all Institutions of higher learning in Kenya. JKUAT which was the focus of the study has a total of 3,000 employees, comprised of both Teaching and Non-teaching Staff. The study focused on 90 employees categorized into their respective designations; the teaching staff was further classified into four categories namely professors, senior lectures, Lecturers and Teaching Assistants, while the non-teaching staff was classified as the administrative staff at main campus in Juja.

Data was coded for ease of classification where categories were aligned to the research questions the study aims to answer. Descriptive statistics was applied to analyse quantitative data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 2I. Qualitative data was coded in line with the study's research questions, summarized and analysed to determine frequency of emerging themes. Visual displays such as tables, graphs and charts were used to present findings of the study. Then a Chi-Square test was used to establish the significance of relationship between two variables.

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 Remuneration, Training, Job security and promotion as determinants of employee's retention in institutions of higher learning. The demographic information that was analyzed included respondents gender, age, work experience, education level and staff designation in

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the university.41.3% of the respondents were females while 58.9%, were males, 35.9% of the respondents were between the age of 20-35,46.2% were between 36-50, 16.7% were between the age of 51-60 and 1.2% were above 61 indicating that majority of the respondents were between 36-50 years, 21.8% had working experience of 0-5 years,38.5% had working experience of 6-10 years, 21.5% staff had working experience of 11-20 years while 17.8% had working experience of 20 years and above indicating that the university is a good employer. Information collected on education indicated that 13% of the respondents were of certificates level and 26% of the respondents each held diplomas and degrees, 25% were masters level and 10% were PHD indicated that more training of teaching staff is needed and university has to put in measures in retaining them. 62.82% were administrative staff, 29.79% of the respondents were professors, senior lectures and lectures while 15.38% were the teaching assistants indicating that the university management have to employ more teaching staff and implement a policy to retain them.

Testing significance relationships between variables:

Chi-Square Analysis on remuneration, training, job security and promotion and employees retention at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology of Juja, Kenya are shown in table below.

Chi-Square Analysis		T_ :		
Variables	T	Remuneration		T
		Value	df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
I am satisfied with the amount of salary I earn compared	Pearson Chi-Square	30.482 ^a	4	.000
to other employees in other organizations with similar				
qualifications				
Salary and allowances provided are adequate in this	Pearson Chi-Square	18.030 ^a	4	.001
university	D 011.0	2 - 2 - 4 - 2		000
Salary, remuneration policies are clearly stated to all	Pearson Chi-Square	26.341 ^a	4	.000
The salary I earn is adequate to meet my basic needs	Pearson Chi-Square	8.511 ^a	4	.037
I feel adequately compensated for the work I do	Pearson Chi-Square	31.476 ^a	4	.000
		Training		
	Pearson Chi-Square	Value	df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
The University encourage on-the-job training to everyone	Pearson Chi-Square	20.076 ^a	4	.000
What is stated in the training policy is fully practiced	Pearson Chi-Square	36.332 ^a	4	.000
Short and long term training opportunities are offered	Pearson Chi-Square	26.341 ^a	4	.000
regularly in the university	•			
Training encourage sustenance and retention of	Pearson Chi-Square	8.511 ^a	4	.000
employees	•			
There are regular seminars and workshops organized by	Pearson Chi-Square	31.476 ^a	4	.000
the university	•			
		Job Security		•
		Value	df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
Permanent jobs are the key determinant of employees	Pearson Chi-Square	28.736 ^a	4	.000
retention	•			
I am satisfied with the overall job security in the	Pearson Chi-Square	28.886 ^a	4	.000
University	•			
I enjoyed my work regardless of terms of employment or	Pearson Chi-Square	26.174 ^a	4	.009
contract	•			
Job security has no impact on employees retention	Pearson Chi-Square	35.467 ^a	4	.000
Permanent or contract basis employment, what matters is	Pearson Chi-Square	17.731 ^a	4	.000
my take home salary at the end of the month.				
Variable		Promotion		
		Value	df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
Employees promotions are frequency in the university	Pearson Chi-Square	50.782 ^a	4	.000
There is a clear promotion policy in place and employees	Pearson Chi-Square	38.403 ^a	4	.000
are aware of.				
Promotions are based on merits in this university	Pearson Chi-Square	33.130 ^a	4	.001
Regular career progression would make employees more	Pearson Chi-Square	36.310 ^a	4	.000
motivated and want to stay longer	_			
What is stated in the promotion policy is what is	Pearson Chi-Square	19.016 ^a	4	.000
		1	1	i e

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From the findings on the table above the calculated Chi-Square tests for remuneration, training, Job security and promotion was significantly above the critical values determined at a degree of freedom of four. Hence the results concluded that although statistically, there was an evidence of significance relationship between the four variables under study and the employees' retention. The study confirms that the four variables are factors that ensures employees commitment in the organizations thus maintaining employees up to retirement age. These findings are similar to previous research findings of Purcell (2003) urged that organizations therefore, must continuously discover current retention factors and incorporate them in the organization.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that there was significance relationship between the independent variables and the employee's retention. This implies that the independent variables (remuneration, training job security and promotion) are predictors of the retention level of employees at the Universities. However there was a clear indication that the steps of retaining employees at the institutions of higher learning have not been fully implemented. A further analysis using Chi-Square analysis to establish the relationship between remunerations, trainings, job security, and promotion as the independent variables and the dependent variable of employee's retention indicated that there is need for improvements. In view of the findings, study therefore recommends that the Universities should consider harmonizing the allowances to all the employees in the universities. They also need to emphasize on the importance of training of employees in short and long term training to retain them and improve service delivery in the universities. On the influence of promotion the study recommend the universities to promote their staff after three years' experience in each cadre and should be done on merits. On the influence of job security, the University management need to consider staff working in hazardous departments to be provided with protective clothes, better working equipment's and construction of more infrastructures within much to operate in the university.

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