

INFLUENCE OF WORK LIFE BALANCE BENEFITS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA

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Abstract: This study sought to establish the influence of work life benefits on employee performance in state corporations in Kenya. Various theories were reviewed during this study to assess and enhance understanding on the variables. These include Abraham Maslow's, Vrooms' expectancy and Reinforcement theory. The study used descriptive and explanatory research with a sample size of 642. The Cronbach's alpha was used to check the reliability of the questionnaire. Data was analyzed by use of SPSS and presented through percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. The study used regression analysis to test the significance of the variables at 5% significance level on the dependent variables. The study also tested for multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, Normality and goodness of fit of the regression model. The findings showed that work life balance rewards moderately influence employee performance. The study concluded that most state corporations in Kenya recognized work life balance programs, however, these organizations hardly budgeted for the work life programs. The study therefore recommends that work life programs should be considered and budgeted for. Offering gym facilities to employees provides a healthy life style and also counters stress. Organizations can also offer child care facilities so that the parents can work comfortably without worrying about their children and hence maximum concentration at work place that would lead to better productivity.

Key words: Reward Management Practices, Work Life Benefits, Employee Performance, State Corporations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resources or the people are the organizations' most valuable assets (Tessema, Ready & Embaye, 2013). Notably, employees create a major source of competitive advantage for companies. Hence the need for every firm, private or public, to acquire and retain committed, skilled and motivated personnel. Barney and Hesterly (2012) indicated that firms that utilize capabilities and resources to seize business opportunities and neutralize threats are likely to realize an increase in their net revenue or a decrease in their net costs or both or vice versa.

Qureshi, Akbar, Khan, Sheikh and Hijazi (2010) examined the relationship between rewards and employee performance in cement industry in Pakistan. They found that there is a direct relationship among extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards and employee performance.

Iveta, (2014) found that work environment is an important determination of job satisfaction and performance of employees. Russell (2016) noted that offering work life balance attracts individuals to an organization and result in increased positive related attitudes, work effort and behaviors. In Kenya various companies have instituted work life balance facilities to mitigate work family related conflict that can have a negative impact on employee performance.

For instance Safaricom limited, Nestle Kenya Limited, Britam and standard chartered bank have all instituted work life balance facilities like day care facilities, flexi time, health facilities to enhance performance and productivity. Nekoranec (2013) conducted an empirical study on basic aspects of management and organizational behavior and noted that the working environment in which people spend most of their active life is challenging due to the recurrent changes that occur in life. The responsibilities and demands from employment and family have therefore contributed to an increase in role overload due to the employee's desire and struggle to accommodate the various responsibilities placed on them by their personal and professions lives (Sheppard, 2016). It is against this background that the study sought to establish the influence of work life benefits on Employee Performance in the State Corporations in Kenya.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

According to Necoranec (2013), role overload is responsible for diverse stress related outcomes such as burnout, anxiety, decreased satisfaction, and fatigue. Hence, work-life balance has become a broadly investigated phenomenon in educational and organizational literature where studies establish various ways of balancing work and private life. Lack of a comprehensive reward management system in a majority of Kenyan state corporations has created dissatisfaction among employees leading to decreased staff morale and consequently decreased employee performance.

The consequent poor results are evident in the GDP report that contrarily to Vision 2030's projection of annual GDP growth rates of 10% until 2030; the growth rate has been slow at 4.56% in 2012, 5.69% in 2013 and 5.33% in 2014, 5.65% in 2015 and 5.99% in 2016 (Statista, 2015). The score of global labour standard of percentage available man hours used for productive work in Kenya is 35.4%, while the global standard is at 75% (KIPPRRA, 2013). The percentage gap of 39.6% is a reflection of low achievement levels in employee performance which depicts the struggle in attainment of the GDP growth rate. This study therefore sought to establish the influence work life benefits on employee performance in the State Corporations in Kenya.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study was to establish the influence of work life benefits on employee performance in the state corporations in Kenya.

Research Hypotheses

H_A: Work life benefits significantly influence Employee Performance in the State Corporations in Kenya.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work life employee benefits refer to the work incentives that are given to the employees in order to work hard and perform up to their level best. Work life balance policies and practices come in handy in managing employees' work and family lives. Work is considered as the paid employment and life balance refers to non-work, and more free time spent on leisure or with family (Divyabharathi, Balakrishnan & Vettriselvan, 2014).

According to Necoranec (2013), role overload is responsible for diverse stress related outcomes such as burnout, anxiety, decreased satisfaction, and fatigue. Hence, work-life balance has become a broadly investigated phenomenon in educational and organizational literature where studies establish various ways of balancing work and private life. In a study to explore the work-life balance programs that organizations in school settings use to improve employee performance, Sheppard (2016) collected data on among 20 participants using semi-structured interviews. The data gathered also included organizational performance track documents on issues such as turnover, employee absenteeism, productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Among the work-life balance themes that emerged was that supportive working environments, consideration of employee productivity and wellbeing, changes in organizational culture, and development of job sharing program was effective. It is therefore arguable that organizations should consider developing work-life balance programs that help improve organizational culture and overall employee performance.

In South Africa, Downes and Koekemoer (2011) examined on the work life policies on international auditing and consulting organization in Johannesburg. The study applied qualitative research design and collected data from a sample consisting of 15 employees from the research field, an international auditing and consulting organization in Johannesburg. Data was collected using semi-structured individual interviews. The findings revealed that flexible work time have an important impact on the performance of the employees. As a result, the study recommended that companies need to implement flexible work time in order to reap most from the employee work.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used both the descriptive and explanatory designs as they encompass the quantitative and qualitative research designs. According to Dane (2011), the mixed methods methodology, which will be used in this study, entails determining the frequency with which phenomenon occurs or the relationship between variables.

The primary benefit of using the mixed method research design is that it helps the researcher to gain an in depth of understanding and corroboration between the variables. The study was carried out in the 178 state corporations in Kenya (ROK, 2012) with 642 respondents being sampled. The state corporations are categorized as commercial, regulatory, tertiary, research and service. The unit of analysis was the 2 top managers reporting to the Chief Executive Officer, 2 officers or assistant managers and 2 assistant officers.

In addition of primary data secondary data was also included to aid achievement of the objectives. Questionnaires are used to capture data or information from respondents and data considered secondary is taken from internet, libraries and other publications of the organization.

Data analysis took place at two levels – descriptive statistics level and inferential statistics level. Descriptive analysis aims at summarizing distributions and describing a set of data on variables of the study. This analysis was used to profile respondents. It was carried out by producing percentages, means and standard deviation and results were displayed in tables. Simple and multiple linear regressions were used to test the hypothesis. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the strength or degree of a relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Sekaran, 2013). All the statistical tests were conducted at 95 percent confidence level. P-value was used to ascertain the significance of each construct in the regression model. The variables were taken to be statistically significant if the p-value ≤ 0.05 .

6. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study tested the effect of work life benefits on employee performance through hypothesis that H_A : *Work life benefits significantly influence Employee Performance in the State Corporations in Kenya*. The average indexes for all the dimensions for both work life benefits on employee performance were determined and a regression analysis carried out.

Table 1: Effect of Work Life Benefits on Employee Performance

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .337 ^a | .113 | | .112 | .69669 | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Life balances | | | | | | |
| ANOVA ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| 1 | Regression | 30.949 | 1 | 30.949 | 63.763 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 242.200 | 499 | .485 | | |
| | Total | 273.149 | 500 | | | |
| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.820 | .141 | | 19.977 | .000 |
| | Work Life balances | .342 | .043 | .337 | 7.985 | .000 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance | | | | | | |

The results in the model summary show that $R=.337$ suggesting that there exists a moderate relationship between work life balance and employee performance. Coefficient of determination $R^2=.113$ implies that work life balance influence employee performance by 11.3%. This is significant since $p\text{-value}<0.05$ at 95% confidence level.

The results shows that the overall model is significant ($F=63.763$, $p<0.05$) and the coefficient also shows that work life balance contributes significantly on employee performance ($\beta=0.342$, $t=7.985$, $p>0.05$). This implies that work life balance significantly influence employee performance and therefore the hypothesis that work life balance do not significantly influence Employee Performance in the State Corporations in Kenya was nullified. The findings of this study

were in line with the findings of (Sentamilselvan & Delecta, 2016; Nekoranec, 2013; Johnson, 2015; Mayberry, 2006; Morgan, 2009; White, Hill, McGovern, Mills & Smeaton, 2003) who suggested that employee work balance benefits have a significant influence on how employee perform at work.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that state corporations in Kenya offer conducive working environment to employees one of them being by offering leaves and offs' to their employees. Additionally, the findings also concluded that State Corporations in Kenya recognizes work life balance programs. Moreover, the study further concluded that despite benefits of work life balance, most organizations hardly budgeted for work life programs. It was also concluded that organization did not offer flexible working schedules to employees.

The study therefore recommends that work life programs should be considered and budgeted for. Offering gym facilities to employees provides a healthy life style and also counters stress. Organizations can also offer child care facilities so that the parents can work comfortably without worrying about their children and hence maximum concentration at work place that would lead to better productivity. The study concluded that motivation positively influences the employee performance.

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