# Influence of Recruitment, Selection and Talent Development on the Performance of Civil Servants in Kenya

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*Abstract:* The study focused on the influence of recruitment, selection and talent development on the performance of civil servants in Kenya with focus on the State Department for Labor. It specifically emphasized on recruitment, selection and talent development. This study was guided by the Human Capital theory; Resource based theory, Universalist theory and the Vroom's Expectancy theory. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population for this study was all staff of the state department for Labor in the Ministry of East African Community, Labor and Social Protection which has a total population of 461 staff. A smaller sample of 209 respondents was obtained using a Fisher formula. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The study concluded that recruitment, selection and talent development have a positive and significant effect on the performance of civil servants in the department of state labor. The study recommends of state labor to put in place cohesive Recruitment and Selection process that defines means of attracting and retaining employees. Moreover, the study recommends the department of state labor to ensure there is an all-inclusive talent development policy.

Keywords: Recruitment, Selection, Talent Development, Performance, Civil Servants.

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

The increasing interest in human resources is due to the assumption that civil servants and the way they are managed is critical to the success of public institutions and can be a source of sustainable competitive advantage (Omolo, Oginda & Otengah 2013). HRM practices is an innovative view of workplace to express their goals with specificity so that they are understood and undertaken by the civil servants and to provide the resources needed for them to successfully accomplish them (Armstrong, 2010). They further note that HRM practices when strategically implemented will be the key components that will drive spur the creation of competitive value in current and future organizations. When these HRM practices are well adopted, they lead to achievement of the goals and operating efficiency of institutions (Coppelli, 2008). Public institutions must therefore be aligned with various HRM practices to achieve their long term strategic goals.

HRM practices in the UK have impacted significantly on the performance of civil servants as well as job satisfaction and the range of these practices include human capital management, knowledge management, organization development, resourcing (human resource planning, recruitment and selection, and talent management), performance management, learning and development, reward management, employee relations and employee well-being (Armstrong 2010). The impact of human resource management practices, popularly known as HR practices, on organizational performance and employee attitudes has been a leading area of research in the developed world for years (Simmons, 2008). According to Armstrong (2010), commitment, motivation and job satisfaction were higher when people positively experienced the application of HR policies concerned with creating an able workforce, motivating valued behaviours and providing opportunities to participate.

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In china, HRM practices are among factors that influence civil servants in their decision to leave an institution as well as their levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Huang 2000).Human resource management practices have been found to be central to the improvement of the quality of services offered by government institutions. The institutions have viewed HRM practices as crucial assets that are geared towards creating and maintaining skilful and committed workforce for achieving organizational goals. In South Africa, the need for the HRM policy, strategy and systems to underpin the business strategy has never been greater. Organizations have downsized, right-sized and transformed to enable them to compete in the 21st century. According to Lee and Wu (2010), HRM systems have not always responded and often lag behind in organizational transformation. It is the HRM policy and strategy that underpin the business strategy, not the other way around.

In Nigeria, the public service has undergone radical transformation in the management of human resource, beginning with the human resource managers themselves (Agoi2017). They are critical, not only because they manage the most important resource (public servants), but also because they are at the vanguard of shaping the leadership capabilities, professionalism, ethics and integrity in the Public Service. Public Service leaders are not in ministries alone; they are in local governments, in big hospitals, small clinics and health centres as well as several other sectors of the public. According to a research that was conducted by Balozi (2011) on the influence of HR practices on employee satisfaction in Tanzania Public Service College (TPSC) it was found that six dimensions of HR practices, namely, career development, staffing, training and development, performance appraisal, incentives and employee relations, were positively related to employee satisfaction, with training and development showing the strongest contribution to employee satisfaction in the country.

According to a survey that was conducted by MSPS on HRM practices, the day-to-day work of HRM practitioners in the civil service in Kenya revolves around activities like commutation of leave; confirmation in appointment, preparation of the payroll, deployment of staff, attending meetings, verification of personnel data, pension matters, statutory deductions and arranging for staff training, among others (MSPS, 2007). The survey disclosed the challenges that the civil servants face which include not so cordial interdepartmental relationship, little interaction with other departments, unless they wanted HR to do something for them; inadequate capacity; and lack of a forum to address issues and exchange ideas or bond with other departments (Awino and Mutua, 2014).

The current disposition of HRM is largely associated with the drastic expansion of businesses globally, technological innovations and fierce competition that characterizes the environment in which businesses operate today and the Kenyan business environment is no exception to this global development. Kenya has recently developed into one of the stable and growing economies on the African continent. The growth can be attributed to the diversification of agriculture, infrastructural development and increased expansion of the telecommunication sector. Other growth areas include tourism sector, manufacturing and retail sector. Human resource professionals involved in the civil service, collaborating with other executives and line managers, have developed strategies to adapt to global human resource improvement requirements (Wahida, 2016).

The Public service and in particular the civil service plays an indispensable role in the effective delivery of public services that are key to the functioning of a state economy. In the reformed public sector in Kenya, human resource management plays a significant role in the management of Civil Servants. Civil servants are expected to embrace the provisions of HRM and practice it in a professional way(Ndubai, 2016). In a bid to improve service delivery and improve the larger economy, the Kenyan government has formulated and implemented various reform agenda which included Performance contracting in the civil service and Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) for Wealth and Employment Creation (2003-2007) policy document. In an effort to achieve the objectives and targets of ERS and to manage performance challenges in public service, the Government adopted Performance Contracting (PC) in public service as a strategy for improving service delivery to Kenyans (MTEF, 2004).

The government accords high priority to economic recovery and improving the performance of public service to deliver results to the people and cost containment. This entailed staff right sizing initiatives that reduced the core civil servants size from 272,000 in 1992 to 191,670 in 2003 and rationalization of government ministries and departments to determine appropriate structures and optimal size of the civil service for effective performance of the government's core functions within budgetary limits (MTEF, 2004). An efficient, motivated and well trained public service is expected to be one of the major foundations of the vision The Labour Department is East Africa Community Ministry's principal point agency

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responsible for implementation of the three major labour laws namely: The Employment Act, 2007, The Labour Institutions Act, 2007 and The Labour Relations Act, 2007. This is carried out through construction and implementation of the National Labour Legislation policy through the National Labour Board and sectoral wages councils as well as the National Tripartite Consultative Council. Further, the department is equally charged with the responsibility of operationalizing the tripartite mechanism in tackling labour issues through a tripartite dialogue process which involves consultation between employees, employers and government representatives ((Ministry of labour, strategic plan, 2013-2017).

Human Resource Development, Labour and Employment feature prominently across all the three pillars of Kenya vision 2030. Each of the pillars falls squarely within the policy mandate of the Ministry of East African Community, Labour and Social Protection. The Ministry plays a role in contributing towards organizational productivity and the Kenya development agenda. The ministry also has the mandate to promote efficient utilization of skills by putting in place a framework that supports the matching of supply and demand for labour; promote linkages between industry, technical training and research institutions; facilitate the review of curriculum and syllabi in education and training institutions; develop a policy framework to promote industrial attachment and apprentice system; identify, attract and retain talent in key sectors of the economy (Ministry of labour, strategic plan, 2013-2017).

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Kenya recognizes that a modern, and results based public service is a prerequisite for the country's social economic transformation as envisaged under vision 2030. The capability and capacity within the public service have improved, but to deliver the kind of services envisaged in vision 2030, they need to be better and there should be a shift to reward merit. The capacity of public servants determines the quality of service delivery (Sessional paper No. 10 of 2012 on Kenya vision 2030). A quality assessment and service delivery improvement strategy report by the Kenya School of Government (2015) revealed low employee performance and productivity which had led to decline in the customer satisfaction level in the Kenyan Public Sector from 73% in the year 2012/2013 to 65% in the year 2014/2015. Among other recommendations for improving service delivery, the report recommended a need to overhaul the human resource practices such human capital management practices.

A number of measures have been taken by the government to improve the performance of the civil servants. These measures include: training; performance contracting and performance appraisal system; code of regulations; service delivery charters; international standards certification (ISO). However not much has been achieved through these measures. The Government keeps on introducing more measures without assessing the impact and the success of the measures already introduced.

According to Sessional paper No. 10 of 2012 on Kenya Vision 2030, Human capital in the civil service needs to be well managed in order to improve performance and productivity (Ndubai, 2016). According to Koech and Namusonge (2012), research on human capital management and their link to firm performance has extensively been done in the US and the UK with a neglect of the developing economies. Several authors point out that research needs to be conducted in other contexts (Ericksen& Dyer, 2015). Despite the overall implications of human capital management practices are a cause of employee satisfaction and performance, human capital management practices still remain a tactic not employed much by public institutions to improve employee performance (Koech and Namusonge, 2012). Another motivation of this study was some existing knowledge gaps in previous studies. Studies by Omolo *et.al* (2012), Kepha *et.al.* (2012), Mangusho *et.al.* (2015), Amendi (2015) and Axelsson *et.al.* (2009) have focused on the effect of specific human capital management practices on employee performance thereby ignoring the fact that these practices don't influence performance in isolation but they do so as a unit. The studies have therefore left knowledge gaps that this study sought to bridge.

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

Recruitment is defined as the process of finding and engaging individuals for the organization needs (Armstrong, 2014). It can be construed as a human resource practice in which organization gauge and choose from among job candidates. Recruitment is adopted by organizations to locate and attract job applicants for particular positions. This practice entails developing an employee value preposition, and building an employer brand. It consists of aspects that enable the

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organization to have the suitable people, doing the right jobs at the right time. Managers face massive challenges in staffing their organizations and therefore apply recruitment process to avert these limitations. It is about planning for the number and quality of employees required under different job categories and to make sure that staffing process such as recruitment, selection, placement, promotions, transfers and downsizing are effective. Recruitment and selection form part of the process of attracting and obtaining suitable employees for the organization. This is a crucial practice in staffing function because it determines the quality of human resources that the organization will have. It is usually a long process that starts with advertising for vacant posts, receiving applications, short listing the most qualified applicants, and selecting the best candidates by using various selection techniques (Tyagi, 2012).

It is imperative that organization hire employees with vast, relevant and appropriate levels of knowledge, skills and capabilities. Learning and development fundamentally aids an organization in the process of collective advancement through concerted expert and ethical replication and expedition of learning and knowledge that support business goals and develops an employee's potential, and respect and build on diversity (Mathis & Jackson, 2003). Odhong et al.(2014) argue that an elegant training program translates to vast improvements in business outcomes and that return on investments in training programs is very high. The practice also deals with the conduct of learning and development activities in organizations. Additionally, it reflects on how learning essentials are identified and adopted. As performance of the organization is determined by the ability of the employees, training and development are vital, not just for the present-day job needs but also for the future job and organization (Ogunade, 2011). The head of the personnel department has to design tools for assessing the need for training that will be used to identify training and development gaps and develop effective strategies and programs for training and developing staff.

Omolo, Oginda and Oso (2012), investigated the influence of recruitment and selection on the performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality in Kenya. The findings of the study showed that the overall average performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality was 60.71%. There was a significant positive correlation between recruitment and selection, and performance of SMEs at  $\alpha = 0.01$ . The average performance of SMEs with good recruitment and selection was 81.90%; with moderate at 67.94% and poor at 53.90%. Recruitment and selection account for 40.8% of the total variance in performance of SMEs. The conclusion drawn from the study findings therefore was that recruitment and selection had a significant influence on the performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality.

Agoi, (2017) conducted a study that investigated the Influence of Human Resource Management practices on employee satisfaction in Public Sugar Manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study was guided by the following independent variables: performance appraisal practices, recruitment practices, training practices, reward management practices and talent management practices. The research design employed in the study was the Mixed Research Design. Simple random sampling procedure was used to pick the sample size of 219 employees. This study used questionnaires and interview schedule to collect primary data. Results disclosed that training practices, rewarding management practices and talent management practices had a positive and significant influence on employee satisfaction.

Kepha, Mukulu and Waititu(2012), conducted a study to establish the influence of recruitment and selection on the performance of employees in research institutes in Kenya. Their study adopted descriptive and correlation research designs. The study conclusions revealed that the correlation between employee performance and recruitment and selection were highly significant, at 0.374 (P=0.000). The study recommended that research institutes strictly adhere to job specifications when filling vacant positions. Mangusho, Murei and Nelima (2015), sought to examine the influence of talent retention on employee performance, assessing how talent attraction impacts, and influences learning and development on employee performance in the beverage industry in Kenya. The study used stratified sampling method to select 83 employees according to their job cadres. Descriptive statistics such as the standard deviation, percentages and frequency distribution were used. The study established that the job retention motivated the employees of Del Monte, leading to ultimate performance. The study recommended that the management should ensure the work environment was attractive to the employees so as to motivate, thus leading to better performance.

Amendi (2015) conducted a study on the influence of human resource management practices on performance of Savings and Credit Cooperatives in Vihiga County, Kenya. The study was guided by Resource Based View and Human Capital theories. The study adopted descriptive research design in form of a survey. The study used primary data by use of questionnaires developed in form of a five point Likert scale. Data was analyzed by use of SPSS and a regression model

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was used to determine the perceived effect of human resource management practices on employee performanceof Savings and Credit Cooperatives in Vihiga County. The findings conclude that there is a positive strong correlation between human resource management practices and performance of Savings and Credit Cooperatives.

## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population for this study was all staff of the state department for Labor in the Ministry of East African Community, Labor and Social Protection which has a total population of 461 staff. A smaller sample of 209 respondents was obtained using a Fisher formula. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The sampling frame consisted of the entire staff of the state department for Labour in the Ministry of East African Community, Labour and Social Protection. Quantitative data was collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered through a drop and pick method. The questionnaires were dropped by the researcher who then gave the respondents a period of one week to respond to it before they were picked. This study however conducted a pilot test on 8% of the sample size which made up to 17 respondents. The researcher tested and re-tested the data collection tools to increase reliability of the study. To increase validity and protect the research from threats of validity, the researcher pre-tested the research instrument to ensure that the questions were constructed in line with the objectives of the study, no ambiguities in instructions, terms and questions. Quantitative data collected was analysed using descriptive statistical techniques which included frequencies, mean and standard deviation. The significance of the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable was established using simple linear regression model.

### 5. FINDINGS

The study sought to establish the influence of recruitment and selection on the performance of civil servants in Kenya. The study asked the respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements on recruitment and selection based on five point Likert scale where; 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Disagree, 5 =strongly agree. The findings of the study are as indicated in Table 1. The results of the study indicated that 41.8% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the State Department for Labour has a cohesive Recruitment and Selection process that defines means of attracting and retaining employees, those who indicated agree were also 27.6%, those who moderately agreed were 15.7% while only 7.8% of them indicated disagreed. Moreover, majority 80.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that the State Department for Labour provides the same chances to all, irrespective of age, sex, race, creed, disability or marital status while 19.6% of them moderately agreed. Additionally, results of the study revealed that majority 84.3% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree with the statement that the Recruitment and selection is based on professional and academic qualifications while 15.7% of them indicated agree. Further, the findings of the study revealed that 16.3% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that Highly skilled individuals who can help the department attain its objectives are acquired during recruitment process, 26.8% of them indicated agree, those who moderately agreed were 40.5% while those who indicated disagree were 6.5% and 9.8% of them indicated strongly disagree. Furthermore, the results of the study showed that 13.1% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that job selection methods used at the department are acceptable, those who indicated agree were 31.4%, those who moderately agreed were 26.1% while those who disagreed were 16.3% and those who strongly disagreed were 13.1%. Finally, results of the study showed that majority 80.4% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree with the statement that placement procedure in the organization is effective while only 19.6% of them indicated agree.

On average the respondents agreed with the statements on recruitment and selection as indicated by a mean of 4.11. The responses given by the respondents were less varied as shown by a standard deviation of 0.88. The results agree with the findings of a study by Omolo, Oginda and Oso (2012) which showed that the overall average performance of SMEs in Kisumu Municipality was 60.71%. There was a significant positive correlation between recruitment and selection, and performance of SMEs at  $\alpha = 0$ .01. The average performance of SMEs with good recruitment and selection was 81.90%; with moderate at 67.94% and poor at 53.90%. Recruitment and selection account for 40.8% of the total variance in performance of SMEs. The findings are also consistent with that of Kepha, Mukulu and Waititu (2012) who established the influence of recruitment and selection on the performance of employees in research institutes in Kenya and revealed that the correlation between employee performance and recruitment and selection were highly significant.

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	Strongly		Moderately		Strongly		Std
Statements	disagree	Disagree	agree	Agree	agree	Mean	dev
The State Department for Labour has a							
cohesive Recruitment and Selection							
process that defines means of attracting							
and retaining employees	0.0%	7.8%	15.7%	34.6%	41.8%	4.10	0.94
The State Department for Labour							
provides the same chances to all,							
irrespective of age, sex, race, creed,							
disability or marital status	0.0%	0.0%	19.6%	0.0%	80.4%	4.61	0.80
Recruitment and selection is based on							
professional and academic qualifications	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	15.7%	84.3%	4.84	0.36
Highly skilled individuals who can help							
the department attain its objectives are							
acquired during recruitment process	9.8%	6.5%	40.5%	26.8%	16.3%	3.33	1.13
The job selection methods used at the							
department are acceptable	13.1%	16.3%	26.1%	31.4%	13.1%	3.15	1.23
The placement procedure in the							
organization is effective	0.0%	0.0%	19.6%	0.0%	80.4%	4.61	0.80
Average						4.11	0.88

#### Table 1: Recruitment and selection

The study also sought to determine the influence of talent development on the performance of civil servants in Kenya. The study asked the respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements on talent development based on five point Likert scale where; 1 =strongly disagree, 2 =Disagree, 3 =moderately agree, 4 =Agree, 5 =strongly agree. The findings of the study are as indicated in Table 2.

The results of the study indicated that 30.1% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that the State Department for Labour has an all-inclusive talent development policy, those who indicated agree were also 30.7%, those who moderately agreed were 10.5% while only 19% of them indicated disagreed and only 9.8% of them strongly disagreed. Moreover, majority 43.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the Employees are trained in capacities that support their roles enhancing customer relations and career progression,19% of them moderately agreed while 24.8% of them disagreed and only 13.1% strongly disagreed.

Additionally, results of the study revealed that majority 55.6% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree with the statement that the most of the training and development initiatives are focused on skill and capability development of employees, 12.4% of the respondents indicated agree, those who moderately agreed were 9.2% while 13.7% of them indicated agree and those who strongly disagreed were 9.2%. Further, the findings of the study revealed that 27.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that there are incentives provided at the department for those employees that pursue career development, 12.4% of them indicated agree, those who moderately agreed were 28.1% while those who indicated disagree were 15.7% and 16.3% of them indicated strongly disagree.

Furthermore, the results of the study showed that 12.4% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that there is a well-structured career management programmes at the department, those who indicated agree were 39.9%, those who moderately agreed were 30.1% while those who disagreed were only 3.3% and those who strongly disagreed were 14.4%. Finally, results of the study showed that 30.1% of the respondents indicated that they strongly agree with the statement that there is presence of mentorship programmes that aim to improve talent development of the employees, 30.7% of them indicated agree, those who moderately agreed were 10.5% while 19% of them indicated disagree and only 9.8% of them strongly disagreed.

On average the respondents moderately agreed with the statements on talent development as indicated by a mean of 3.47. The responses given by the respondents were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.38. The results agree with the findings of a study by Amendi (2015) which concluded that there is a positive strong correlation between human resource management practices and performance of Savings and Credit Cooperatives. The findings are consistent with Mangusho, Murei and Nelima (2015) who sought to examine the influence of talent retention on employee performance, assessing how talent attraction impacts, and influences learning and development on employee performance in the beverage industry in Kenya and established that the job retention motivated the employees of Del Monte, leading to ultimate performance.

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Dis Strongly Moderately Std Strongly **Statements** disagree agree agree Agree agree Mean dev The State Department for Labour has an all-inclusive talent development 9.8% 19.0% 30.7% policy 10.5% 30.1% 3.52 1.35 Employees are trained in capacities that supports their roles enhancing customer relations and career progression 13.1% 24.8% 19.0% 0.0% 3.35 1.55 43.1% Most of the training and development initiatives are focused on skill and capability development of employees 9.2% 13.7% 9.2% 12.4% 55.6% 3.92 1.42 There are incentives provided at the department for those employees that pursue career development 16.3% 15.7% 28.1% 12.4% 27.5% 3.19 1.42 There is a well-structured career management programmes at the 14.4% 39.9% 1.19 department 3.3% 30.1% 12.4% 3.33 There is presence of mentorship programmes that aim to improve talent development of the employees 9.8% 19.0% 10.5% 30.7% 30.1% 3.52 1.35 Average 3.47 1.38

 Table 2: Talent development

The findings of the study revealed that recruitment and selection had a strong positive and significant association with the performance of civil servants in Kenya as indicated by a Pearson coefficient of 0.657 and significance level of 0.000. This shows that an increase in the presence of cohesive Recruitment and Selection process that defines means of attracting and retaining employees, providing the same chances to all, irrespective of age, sex, race, creed, disability or marital status, Recruitment and selection is based on professional and academic qualifications, recruiting highly skilled individuals who can help the department attain its objectives are acquired during recruitment process, using acceptable job selection methods at the department and presence of effective placement procedure in the organization leads to a positive significant influence on performance civil servants in Kenya. The study findings are consistent with the findings of a study by Agoi, (2017) which disclosed that training practices, rewarding management practices and talent management practices had a positive and significant influence on employee satisfaction.

Result also showed that talent development had a positive and significant association with the performance of civil servants in Kenya as indicated by a Pearson coefficient of 0.253 and significance level of 0.002. This shows that an increase in presence of all-inclusive talent development policy, training employees in capacities that supports their roles enhancing customer relations and career progression, presence of training and development initiatives focused on skill and capability development of employees, provision of incentives at the department for those employees that pursue career development, presence of well-structured career management programmes at the department and presence of mentorship programmes that aim to improve talent development of the employees leads to a positive significant influence on the performance civil servants in Kenya. The study findings are consistent with the findings of a study by Amendi (2015) which concluded that there is a positive strong correlation between human resource management practices and performance of Savings and Credit Cooperatives.

# 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study concluded that recruitment and selection positively and significantly affect the performance of civil servants in the department of state labour in Kenya. An increase in the presence of cohesive Recruitment and Selection process that defines means of attracting and retaining employees, providing the same chances to all, irrespective of age, sex, race, creed, disability or marital status, Recruitment and selection is based on professional and academic qualifications, recruiting highly skilled individuals who can help the department attain its objectives are acquired during recruitment process, using acceptable job selection methods at the department and presence of effective placement procedure in the organization positively affect the performance of civil servants in the department of state labour in Kenya.

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Moreover, the study concluded that talent development have a positively and significantlycorrelate with the performance of civil servants in the department of state labour in Kenya. Presence of all-inclusive talent development policy,training employees in capacities that supports their roles enhancing customer relations and career progression, presence of training and development initiatives focused on skill and capability development of employees, provision of incentives at the department for those employees that pursue career development, presence of well-structured career management programmes at the department and presence of civil servants in the department of state labour in Kenya. The study recommends the department of state labour to put in place cohesive Recruitment and Selection process that defines means of attracting and retaining employees. There is also need for the provision of the same chances to all civil servants, irrespective of age, sex, race, creed, disability or marital status. The study also recommends the state department of labour to ensure their Recruitment and selection of employees is based on professional and academic qualifications.

The study recommends the department of state labour to ensure here is an all-inclusive talent development policy. There is also need totrain employees in capacities that supports their roles enhancing customer relations and career progression. Also the study recommends the state department of labour to put in place training and development initiatives focused on skill and capability development of employees. In addition, the study recommends for the provision of incentives at the department for those employees that pursue career development.

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