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INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN SELECTED STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA

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Citation: Kinoti,A, & Ombui, K,.(2018). "Influence of Human Resource Management Strategies on Employee Retention in Selected State Corporations in Kenya". International Journal of Current Business and Social Sciences, Volume,1 Issue,7 pp, 141-176

ABSTRACT

Employee retention is becoming a real challenge in today's work environment as employers begin to realize the value of people that make up the organization. It has been noted that lack of effective SHRM practices leads to increased rate employee turnover in many organizations. Many Kenyan state corporations have been characterized with high employee turnover rates. Recent surveys show that over 75% of state corporations experience low level of employees' retention and face high staff turnover rates. Despite the fact that the Kenyan government has made efforts towards achievements of various development goals, the rate of employee retention in many state corporations has remained low for the past ten years. Notwithstanding the significant influence of Human Resource Management strategies on employee retention in organizations, most studies on SHRM and employee retention that have been undertaken in public and private organization and are not linked with employee retention in state corporations. The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee retention in selected state corporations in Kenya. The study specifically aimed to; assess the influence of employee recruitment strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya; determine the influence of employee compensation strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya; assess the influence of employee training strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya and to establish the influence of employee relations strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design and the target population was a total of 372 human resource and development staff working in the selected state corporations with headquarters offices in Nairobi. The study applied a stratified random sampling technique to select 124 respondents as the sample size for the study. Questionnaires were used as the main data collection instruments and a pilot study was conducted to pretest questionnaires for reliability. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis will be used to analyze the gathered data and the results were presented on tables, figures and graphs. The study findings showed that employee recruitment strategy; employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy and employee relations strategy influence employee retention in State Corporations in Kenya. The study concluded that recruitment strategy is the major human resource strategy that influences most employee retention in state corporations with a coefficient of 0.389, followed by compensation strategy with a coefficient of 0.185, then employee relations strategy with a coefficient of 0.128 and lastly training strategy with a coefficient of 0.123. The study recommended for application of recruitment strategy that emphasizes on higher and right academic qualifications, hiring of management trainees and use of head hunting to recruit the most experienced and skilled staff. The management of state corporations should formulate and implement effective employee compensation strategy through regular review employee salary structures, provision of good benefits and implementation of effective merit pay methods. The management of state corporations should adopt effective employee training strategy by regularly conducting on-the-job training; off-the-job training and leadership development training. The management of state corporations should adopt effective employee relations strategy through application of effective communication channels, use of effective conflict resolution methods, encouraging team building activities and providing better working conditions.

Key Word: Human Resource Management, Employee Retention, Strategic and State Corporations.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Worldwide, in the last two decades, employee retention has emerged as the most critical workforce management challenge in many organizations (Barnes and William, 2011). Human resource managers in many organizations have thus been striving to embrace the best human resource management practices and strategies as a measure to increase on employee retention rates and reduce turnover rates (Stuart, 2011). The concept of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has thus attracted huge attention in many organizations as managers attempt to formulate and embrace various human resource management strategies that leads to increased rate of employee retention. High rate of employee retention have been found by various researchers and witnessed in many organizations to contribute towards improvement of the overall organization performance and competitiveness in the global market place (Adams, 2007).

Strategic HRM is a process that involves the use of overarching approaches to the development of HR strategies, which are integrated vertically with the business strategy and horizontally with one another (Fitzenz, 2009). These strategies define intentions and plans related to the overall organizational considerations, such as organizational effectiveness, and to more specific aspects of people management, such as; resourcing, learning and development, reward and employee relations. Strategic HRM focuses on actions that differentiate the firm from its competitors (Armstrong, 2009). It is suggested by Boyens (2007) that SHRM has seven meanings notably; the use of planning; a coherent approach to the design and management of personnel; systems based on an employment policy and workforce strategy; often underpinned by a “philosophy”; matching HRM activities and policies to some explicit business strategy; seeing the people of the organization as a strategic resource; achievement of competitive advantage (Armstrong, 2008).

Strategic HRM has a clear focus on implementing strategic change and growing the skill base of the organization to ensure that the organization can compete effectively in the future (Holbeche, 2009). SHRM facilitates the development of a human capital that meets the requirements of business competitive strategy, so that organizational goals and mission will be achieved (Guest, 2007). Employee retention refers to policies and practices companies use to prevent valuable employees from leaving their jobs. It involves taking measures to encourage employees to remain in the organization for the maximum period of time (Armstrong, 2009).

Armstrong (2008) states that the retention of such employees has been shown to be significant to the development and the accomplishment of the organization’s goals and objectives especially in building competitive advantage over other organizations in the phase of increased globalization. Zineldin (2007) defines retention as an obligation to continue to do business or exchange with a particular organization on an ongoing basis. According to Fitzenz (2009), retention is driven by several key factors, which ought to be managed congruently: organizational culture, strategy, pay and benefits philosophy and career development systems. Day (2007) argued that if companies cannot retain their employees, the economic results could be devastating for an organization since for the organizations the high cost of recruitment and selection, the lag and productivity loss during the assimilation period, the likely loss of business opportunity, poor customer relationship and hidden cost of loss productivity have subsequently highlighted the importance of retaining committed employees as an aspect of survival for organizations. Therefore, SHRM practices are important since they help in enhancing realization of increased rate of employee retention in organizations hence leading to increased employees productivity and overall organization performance (Boxall and Purcell, 2009).

Global Perspective of Human Resource Management Strategies

Globally, strategic human resource management strategies such as employee compensation and employees recruitment practices have been found to contribute greatly towards improvement of the overall rate of employee retention and organization performance (Ramlall, 2009). Since the mid-1990s, in UK and other developed countries scholarly research investigations have been focusing not only on determining why employees leave organizations but also concentrating on those factors positively influencing employees to stay with an organization as well as the benefits associated with retaining tenured workers (Hoisch, 2007). A study by Simons (2009) revealed that in Canada, effectively designed and well implemented employee retention programs that increase employee tenure more than pay for themselves through reduced turnover costs leads to increased productivity (Simons and Hinkin, 2007).

In Germany, increasing significance of people to organizational success has been observed to have corresponded with the rise of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) as a field of study on a global scale. In the last two decades researches have shown that the strategic human resource management (HRM) is likely to be one of the most important determinants of organizational performance as observed by Taylor and Francis (2008).

Katou and Budhwar (2007) in their study of 178 Greek manufacturing firms found support with the universalistic model and reported that HRM strategies of recruitment, training, promotion, incentives, benefits, involvement and health and safety are positively related to employee retention and increased overall organizational performance. Innovative SHRM practices have been linked to higher rate of employee retention in many Japanese firms. According to Som (2008), most of the work on SHRM undertaken in the US and UK have demonstrated that SHRM practices leads to increased rate of employees retention of improvement of the overall organization performance.

Regional Perspective of Human Resource Management Strategies

In Africa, the concept of SHRM is still in its early stages in many organizations especially in public corporations and this has been one of the major issues that contribute to high staff turnover rates and declined performance of many state corporations (Hartel, 2007). In South Africa, strategic human resource management practices such as employees compensation and employee relations plays a major role towards realization of increased rate of employees retention and overall organization performance in many multinational firms while in many public corporations lack of effective employees relations strategies leads to increased rate of employee turnover and low rate of employee retention.

In Nigeria, there are several factors that influence employees’ decision to leave or stay with an organization. The decision to stay or leave an organization involves evaluating cost and benefits. If the present value of the returns associated with turnover exceeds both monetary and psychological costs of leaving, workers will be motivated to change jobs. If the discounted stream of benefits is not as large as costs, workers will resist changing jobs. The explicit and implicit benefits associated with staying/retaining a job will be reduced if a worker is unhappy in the current job, if the immediate cost of leaving is low, if the utility from the new job is great, or if the new job offers a comparable compensation package (Ehrenberg, 2009).

In Ghana, major government reforms have brought in its wake the need to properly manage the human resources in the extractive industry in order to improve performance as well as retain core human resources. Human beings are the basic resources operating in the mining industry, thus the survival of the industry depends to a large extend on its ability to develop and retain its human resource base (Landford, 2009).

Local Perspective of Human Resource Management Strategies

In Kenya, the rate of employee’s retention in both public and private organizations have been low for the past two decades, many organizations have been recording high staff turnover rates and this have had a negative impact on the overall organizations performance and competiveness in the market. The concept of SHRM has not been effectively embraced in many organizations and this explains the reason for high staff turnover rates leading to low employee retention. In many state corporations, there lacks effective employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy; employee recruitment strategy and employee relations strategy and these affect employee retention and overall organization performance.

In Kenya, the need for human resource managers to keep up with effective management of employees in state corporations cannot be overemphasized. It is thus imperative on the human resource managers to manage, develop and maintain the workforce in order to meet the new state corporations’ performance demands. In Kenya, Oyugi, (2009) asserts that employee retention has never been important until recent years. He adds that the costs of employee turnover are skyrocketing and seriously impact an organization’s bottom line. Given the importance of retaining employees in today’s work environment, some researchers have made available some employee retention articles to give organizations a helping hand in curbing unwanted employee turnover. The importance of retaining top organizational talent cannot be understated. Few managers or companies debate that employee turnover hurts their organization’s bottom line.

State Corporations in Kenya

State Corporations are government agencies established for implementation of government policies and programmes for socio-economic development. In 1965 the Kenya Government, through Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya, resolved to establish state corporations with a view to: accelerating economic and social development, redress regional economic imbalances, increase Kenyan citizen’s participation in the economy, promote indigenous entrepreneurship, and promote foreign investments through joint ventures. State Corporations are operationally autonomous from mainstream civil service in that they operate at arms’ length and may be partially or even fully funded by Government

or financially independent on account of profits, fees, commissions and other internally generated funds. State Corporations that receive exchequer funding are those that by nature, are not-for-profit but perform specific functions that need to be funded by Government. This study will be undertaken in six state corporations which include; Kenya Revenue Authority; Public Procurement Oversight Authority; Insurance Regulatory Authority; Kenya Investment Authority; Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporations and National Social Security Fund (Okumu, 2012).
The Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) was established by an Act of Parliament, Chapter 469 of the laws of Kenya, which became effective on 1st July 1995. The Authority is charged with the responsibility of collecting revenue on behalf of the Government of Kenya. A Board of Directors, consisting of both public and private sector experts, makes policy decisions to be implemented by KRA Management. The Chairman of the Board is appointed by the President of the Republic of Kenya. The Chief Executive of the Authority is the Commissioner General who is appointed by the Minister in charge of Finance. The purpose of KRA is assessment, collection, administration and enforcement of laws relating to revenue (KRA, 2018).
The Public Procurement Oversight Authority was established by the Public Procurement and Disposal Act of 2005. Public procurement in Kenya is overseen by the Public Procurement Oversight Authority (PPOA). The Public Procurement and Disposal Act of 2005 also established the Public Procurement Advisory Board (PPAB), the continuance of the Public Procurement Complaints, Review and Appeals Board as the Public Procurement Administrative Review Board (PPARB). The PPOA vision is to provide a vibrant procurement and disposal system for attainment of Kenya's Vision 2030. The mission is to facilitate access to procurement opportunities through enabling regulation that fosters value for money for national socio-economic development (PPOA, 2018).
The Insurance Regulatory Authority is a statutory government agency established under the Insurance Act (Amendment) 2006, CAP 487 of the Laws of Kenya to regulate, supervise and develop the insurance industry. It is governed by a Board of Directors which is vested with the fiduciary responsibility overseeing operations of the Authority and ensuring that they are consistent with provisions of the Insurance Act. The Authority was established in 2007 to regulate, supervise and develop the insurance industry. The Insurance Regulatory Authority of Kenya is the sole authority charged with regulation and supervision of the insurance industry. It ensures compliance by insurance companies protects consumers and promotes a high degree of security for policy holders (IRA, 2018).
Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest) is a statutory body established in 2004 through an Act of Parliament (Investment Promotion Act No. 6 of 2004) with the main objective of promoting investments in Kenya. It is responsible for facilitating the implementation of new investment projects, providing After Care services for new and existing investments, as well as organizing investment promotion activities both locally and internationally. The core functions of KenInvest include; policy advocacy; investment promotion; investment facilitation which includes investor tracking and after care services (KIA, 2018). The Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation (KDIC) is a Kenya government corporation providing deposit insurance to depositors in Kenyan banks and deposit-taking microfinance institutions. The KDIC was created by act of parliament in May 2012. At the time KDIC was established in 2012, it was an integral part of the Central Bank of Kenya which is the country's central bank and banking regulator. The law also established the Deposit Insurance Fund (the Fund), replacing

the Deposit Protection Fund. KDIC, by law is mandated to administer the Fund, by collecting contributions for the Fund from member institutions; and holding, managing, and applying the Fund (KDIC, 2018). The National Social Security Fund (NSSF) was established in 1965 by an Act of Parliament (CAP 258 of the Laws of Kenya) in order to administer a provident fund scheme for all workers in Kenya. Initially the fund operated as a government department under the Ministry of Labour but as its membership grew and its operations became complex, the NSSF Act was amended in 1987 to transform it into an autonomous State Corporation. Since 1988, the Fund has been operating under a Board of Trustees, which is constituted by representatives of 3 key stakeholders: the government, workers, and employers (NSSF, 2018).

Statement of the Problem

Employee retention is becoming a real challenge in today's work environment as employers begin to realize the value of people that make up the organization. It has been noted that lack of effective SHRM practices leads to increased rate employee turnover in many organizations (Armstrong, 2010). It has been established that the ability of organizations to retain human resource depend largely on the level of their SHRM capability. The purpose of strategic human resource management is to improve business performance through retention of high performing employees (Schuler, 2012).

Many Kenyan state corporations have been characterized with high employees turnover rates (Loise, 2011). Recent surveys show that over 75% of state corporations experience low level of employees' retention and face high staff turnover rates. This has resulted to increased cost of recruitment and training and inability for many state corporations to meet performance targets (Muiruri, 2010). Despite the fact that the Kenyan government has made efforts towards achievements of various development goals, the rate of employee retention in many state corporations has remained low for the past ten years (Onyancha, 2014). For the past ten years, many state corporations have not effectively embraced Strategic Human Resource Management practices and this poses as critical problem to increasing the rate of employee retention. The problem therefore is how to improve the rate of employee retention by implementing various human resource management strategies such as employee compensation strategy, employee training strategy and recruitment and relations strategy.

Notwithstanding the significant influence of Strategic Human Resource Management practices on employee retention in organizations, most studies on SHRM and employee retention that have been undertaken in public and private organization and are not linked with employee retention in state corporations. In addition, the existing literature on SHRM is not adequately linked with employee retention within Kenyan state corporations. Therefore, to the best of researcher's knowledge, no known study that have critically shown the link between SHRM and employee retention in Kenyan state corporations hence leaving a major knowledge gap. Drawing on the extensive body of research on Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM), this study therefore, sought to establish the influence of human resource management strategies on employee retention in selected state corporations in Kenya.

General Objective

The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of human resource management strategies on employee retention in the selected state corporations in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives were:

1. To assess the influence of employee recruitment strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.
2. To determine the influence of employee compensation strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.
3. To establish the influence of employee training strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.
4. To establish the influence of employee relations strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory

Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory was proposed by Fredrick Herzberg in 1987 when he was a professor of management at Case Western Reserve University USA. Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory suggests that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not two opposite ends of the same continuum. Instead, they are two separate and, at times, even unrelated concepts. 'Motivating' factors like pay and benefits, recognition and achievement need to be met in order for an employee to be satisfied with work. On the other hand, 'hygiene' factors such as, working conditions, company policies, organization structure, job security, interaction with colleagues and quality of management are associated with job dissatisfaction (Juliet 2016). Because both the hygiene and motivational factors are viewed as independent, it is possible that employees are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. This theory postulates that when hygiene factors are low the employee is dissatisfied, but when these factors are high it means the employee is not dissatisfied (or neutral), but not necessarily satisfied (Juliet, 2016).

Whether or not an employee is satisfied is dependent on the motivator factors. Moreover, it is thought that when motivators are met the employee is thought to be satisfied. This separation may aid in accounting for the complexity of an employee's feelings, as they might not feel both satisfied and dissatisfied at the same time; or neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Whilst the Motivator-Hygiene theory was crucial in first distinguishing job satisfaction from dissatisfaction, the theory itself has received little empirical support. Herzberg's original study has been criticized for having been conducted with a weak methodology. As a result, subsequent attempts to test this theory have obtained mixed results with some researchers supporting it and others not (Stone, 2013). The theory will be applied to assess the influence of employee recruitment strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Vroom Expectancy Theory

The expectancy theory was proposed by Victor Vroom of Yale School of Management in 1964. Vroom stresses and focuses on outcomes, and not on needs unlike Maslow and Herzberg. The theory states that the intensity of a tendency to perform in a particular manner is dependent on the intensity of an expectation that the performance will be followed by a definite outcome and on the appeal of the outcome.

The Expectancy theory states that employee's motivation is an outcome of how much an individual wants a reward (Valence), the assessment that the likelihood that the effort will lead to expected performance (Expectancy) and the belief that the performance will lead to reward (Instrumentality). In short, Valence is the significance associated by an individual about the expected outcome. It is an expected and not the actual satisfaction that an employee expects to receive after achieving the goals. Expectancy is the faith that better efforts will result in better performance. Expectancy is influenced by factors such as possession of appropriate skills for performing the job, availability of right resources, availability of crucial information and getting the required support for completing the job (Furnham, 2009).

Instrumentality is the faith that if you perform well, then a valid outcome will be there. Instrumentality is affected by factors such as believe in the people who decide who receives what outcome, the simplicity of the process deciding who gets what outcome, and clarity of relationship between performance and outcomes. Thus, the expectancy theory concentrates on the following three relationships: Effort-performance relationship: What is the likelihood that the individual's effort be recognized in his performance appraisal? Performance-reward relationship talks about the extent to which the employee believes that getting a good performance appraisal leads to organizational rewards. Rewards-personal goals relationship: It is all about the attractiveness or appeal of the potential reward to the individual. Vroom was of view that employees consciously decide whether to perform or not at the job. This decision solely depended on the employee's motivation level which in turn depends on three factors of expectancy, valence and instrumentality (Furnham, 2009).

Equity theory

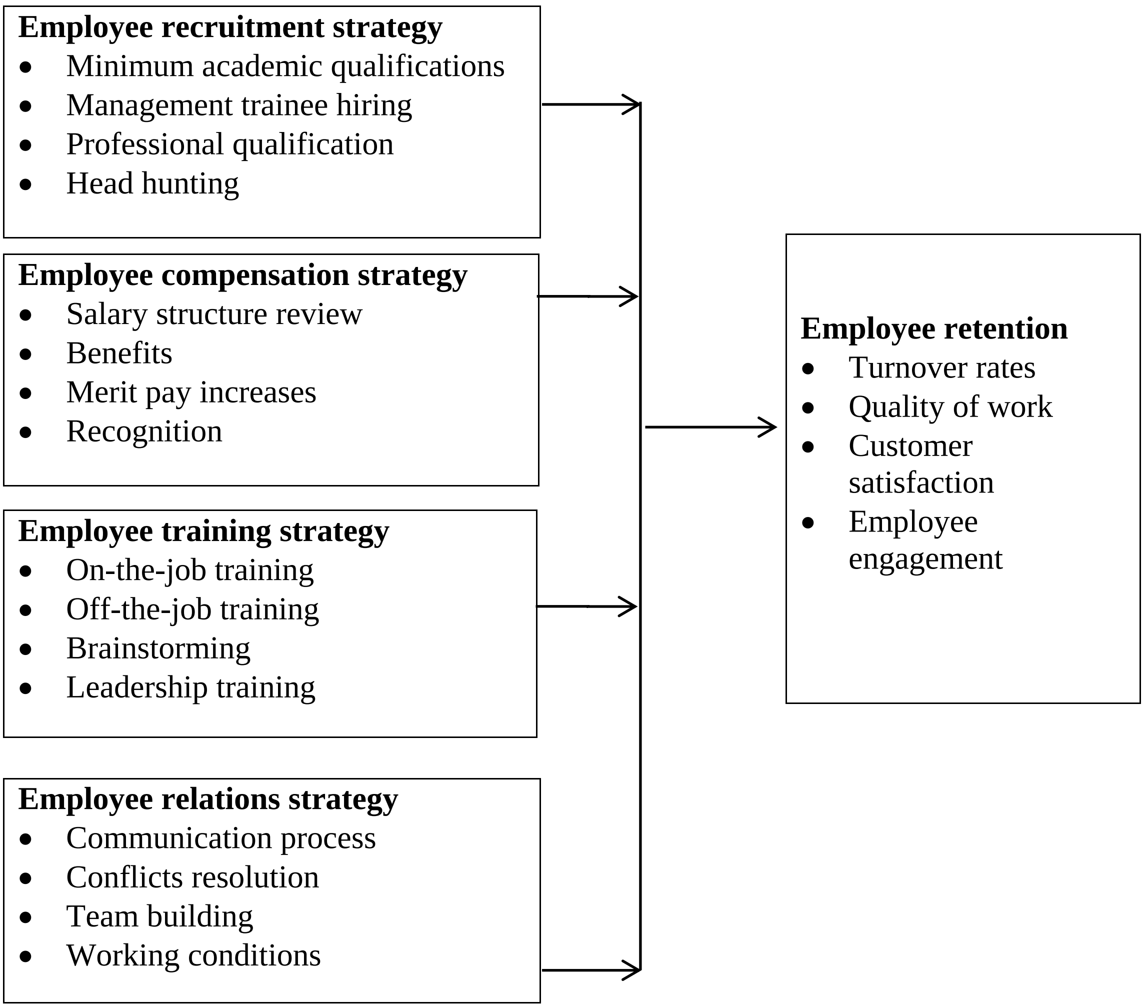
Equity theory was proposed by John Stacey Adams in 1963 who was a behavioral psychologist in USA. Equity theory, as reviewed by Huseman, Hatfield and Miles (2007) shows how a person perceives fairness in regard to social relationships. The theory presupposes that during a social exchange, a person identifies the amount of input gained from a relationship compared to the output, as well as how much effort another person's puts forth. Based on Adam theory, Huseman, Hatfield and Miles (2007) further suggest that if an employee thinks there is an inequity between two social groups or individuals, the employee is likely to be distressed or dissatisfied because the input and the output are not equal. Inputs encompass the quality and quantity of the employee's contributions to his or her work. Examples of inputs include: time, effort, hard work, commitment, ability, adaptability, flexibility, tolerance, determination, enthusiasm, personal sacrifice, trust in superiors, support from co-workers and colleagues and skills (Astrauskaite, 2011).

Output (outcomes) on the other hand is the positive and negative consequences that an individual (employee) perceives a participant has incurred as a consequence of his relationship with another. Examples of outputs include job security, esteem, salary, employee benefits, expenses, recognition, reputation, responsibilities, and sense of achievement, praise, thanks, and stimuli and so on. The major concern in equity theory is about payment and therefore the cause of concern of equity or inequity in most cases in organizations. In any position in the organization, an employee wants to feel that their contributions and work performance are being rewarded with their pay. If an employee feels underpaid, he would be dissatisfied and therefore becomes hostile towards the organization and co-workers which may ultimately result to lack of motivation and low performance (Astrauskaite, 2011).

Equity is multidimensional in nature. For example, it does not depend on our input-to-output alone. It depends on people's comparison between own input-output ratio and the ratio of others. Since equity is all about perception, employees form perceptions on what constitute a fair (balance or trade) of inputs and outputs by comparing their situation with other 'referents' in the market place as they see it. From this comparison, when they perceive that their inputs are fairly rewarded by outputs, then they are satisfied, happier and more motivated in their work. They are de-motivated to their job and the organization when they perceive that their ratio of inputs-outputs is less beneficial than the ratio enjoyed by referent others (Ball, 2014).

According to Adams (2007), when a person becomes aware of inequity, it causes a reaction in them, potentially some form of tension that is 'proportional to the magnitude of inequity present'. It is because of this tension that an individual might react in a way that reduces the tension in him. Equity theory further identifies four mechanisms for job satisfaction (dissatisfaction) as follows: Employees seek to maximize their outcomes (rewards minus outcomes). b. Groups can maximize collective rewards by developing accepted systems for equitably apportioning rewards and costs among members. That is, systems of equity will evolve within groups, and members will attempt to induce other members to accept and adhere to these systems (Adams, 2007).

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables **Dependent Variable**

Employee Recruitment Strategy
Employee recruitment strategy is strategy employed by an organization to hire, select and employ employees in various job positions in an organization. Effective employee recruitment strategies through selective hiring procedures are necessary to ensure effective retention of the most qualified employees while lowering employee turnover in the long term. Employee recruitment strategy in many organization is determined by; academic qualifications; employees work experience; employee selection methods; employees job description and career development opportunities within the organization (Barnes & William, 2011).

Employee Compensation Strategy

Employee compensation strategy is a form of reward scheme awarded to the employees by an organisation to pay for the employees work perfromance, injury, loss or any suffering faced by the employees during perfromance of their duties. Compensation strategy may involve typically money, awarded to someone as compensation for injury, loss or suffering or money received by an employee from an employer as a salary or wage. Compensation strategy may not only be in the form of money it can also be in non-cash form. Benefits, such as pension, life and health insurance, retirement plans and allowances that include company cars or subsidized transportation all represent a significant form of employees' compensation strategy in many organizations (Wright, 2009). Employees' compensation strategies are tools for attracting and retaining desired employees (Reville, Boden & Biddle, 2013). Employee compensation strategy in many kenyan state coporations is determined by salary; benefits; employees' rewards; bonuses and available financial resources.

Employee Training Strategy
Employee training strategy designed to achieve an educational goal, such as teaching a new skill or updating employees on changes to company policy. Creating training strategies delivers focused information that offers value to the employees by creating an improved skill set, and to the company by developing a better-prepared staff. Designing and implementation of employee training strategies is key strategic human resource management practice employed by many organizations as measure to retain experienced skilled and highly talented employees. In many state corporations in Kenya employee training strategies are determined by on-the-job training; off-the-job training; employee behavior training; brainstorming and leadership training.

Employee Relations Strategy
Employee relation strategy refers to a method employed by an organization to manage relationships between employers and employees. An organization with a good employee relations strategy provides fair and consistent treatment to all employees and this leads to high employees retention rates. Designing and implementation of employees' relation strategy is a key strategic human resource management practice that leads to high employees retention rates. Employee relation strategy in many organization is determined by; communication process; conflicts resolution methods; team work activities; employee work life balance and working conditions.

Employee Retention

Employee retention strategy refers to policies and practices companies use to prevent valuable employees from leaving their jobs. It involves taking measures to encourage employees to remain in the organization for the maximum period of time. Employee retention refers to the ability of an organization to retain its employees. Employee retention can be represented by a simple statistic (for example, a retention rate of 80% usually indicates that an organization kept 80% of its employees in a given period.

In many organizations, strategic human resource management practices notably; employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy; employee recruitment strategy and employee relations strategy plays a critical role in determining the state of employees retention. Employee retention in many organizations is determined by; turnover rates; quality of work and customer satisfaction (Gupta, 2008).

Empirical Literature

Influence of Employee Recruitment Strategy on Employee Retention in State Corporations in Kenya.

A study by Johnson (2010) found out that many organizations in USA employed different employee recruitment strategies as a measure to retain high performing employees and be competitive in the market place. Katzell (2012) on employees recruitment process and strategies in Canadian firms confirmed that firms that employed effective employees recruitment strategies such as internal recruitment and recruitment of employees with talent and more work experienced played a major role towards retention of the most competent staff and this contributed towards realization of increased organization performance. Armstrong study (2008) on employees recruitment in many developing nations established that employee recruitment strategy in many organization is determined by; academic qualifications; employees work experience; employee selection methods; employees job description and career development opportunities within the organization.

Huselid, (2015) study examined HR practices of high performance companies in Japan and found that attracting and selecting the right employees increase the employee productivity, boost organizational performance, and contribute in reducing turnover. A study by Cummings (2010) in New Zealand established that, selective hiring procedures are necessary to ensure effective retention of the most qualified employees while lowering employee turnover in the long term. One tool that can assist with ensuring proper screening of candidates is pre-employment tests. Barnes and William, (2011) study on employee recruitment and selection in South Africa noted that effective employee recruitment strategies through selective hiring procedures are necessary to ensure effective retention of the most qualified employees while lowering employee turnover in the long term. A study by Spector (2007) on employees recruitment strategies in Egypt theorized that the practice of pre-employment tests and the result of candidates passing such skill based tests can heighten new hires' sense of organizational commitment and increased rate of employees' retention.

A study by Kiunsi, (2008) found out that many state corporations in Ghana lacked effective employees' recruitment strategies and this affected recruitment and selection of skilled personnel hence making it difficult for many state corporations to attract, recruit and retain best performing employees. Oshagbemi (2010) study noted that many government corporations in Nigeria lacked effective employee recruitment strategies and this contributed to high rate of staff turnover rates.

A study by Kinyanjui (2012) identified that many state corporations in Kenya lack effective employee recruitment strategies and this negatively affects attraction and retention of the most competent employees. Onyancha (2014) study affirmed that employee recruitment strategies in many government organizations in Kenya were determined by academic qualifications; employees work experience; employee selection methods; employee job description and career development opportunities within the organization.

Influence of Employee Compensation Strategy on Employee Retention in State Corporations

A study by Armstrong (2009) on employees compensation strategies in UK firms found out that employees compensation strategy played a major role in enhancing the retention of employees in many firms, however firms that lacked effective employees compensation programs were found to experience increased rate of employees turnover rates and this affected firms performance. Findings from another study by Wright (2009) in Canadian government organizations affirmed that employee' compensation programs such as benefits, like pension, life and health insurance, retirement plans and allowances that included company cars or subsidized transportation led to increased rate of employees retention and employee productivity.

Belfield and Marsden (2013) study on employees' compensation strategies in Singapore public organizations discovered that non-financial compensation or the quality of the work environment played an important part on employee turnover intentions. Companies are in danger of creating an unsatisfactory working environment if there is no any compensation planning.

Williams (2007) study in Australian firms found that if employees were satisfied with how the company operates and communicates its compensation policies, they remained committed to the organization. Furthermore, an organization's reward system affected the performance of the employee and their desire to remain employed. A recent study by Cho (2007) investigated the relationship between the use of strategic human management practices and organizational performance in Chinese firms. The study found that companies providing incentive plans to employees were more likely to experience lower turnover rates among non-managerial employees. The study theorized that a firm would further reduce its turnover rate if it applies reward systems in the form of incentive plans to more employees across the organization. The study also indicated that compensation in the form of base or variable pay may not be sufficient to attract or retain employees.

Milman (2003) and Milman and Ricci (2014) study concluded that the most significant retention predictors included intrinsic fulfillment and working conditions rather than monetary rewards. Similarly, the study by Walsh and Taylor (2007) revealed that although compensation and work-life balance were important, it is the absence of opportunity for professional growth and development that affected retention of senior management employees.

Barnes and William (2011) postulated that employee compensation strategy in many South african state coporations was determined by salary; the type of employees benefits; employees' rewards programs; bonuses and available financial resources and these played a major role in determination of the rate of employees retention and turnover. Astrauskaite (2011) study in Ghana on employees compensation and employee retention revealed that employees compensation programs such as higher salaries, better benefits such as medical insurance and free housing played an important role in retention of employees in many public corporations.

Nyojom (2013) undertook a study to establish the factors influencing employee retention in the state corporations in Kenya. A summary of the findings showing the relative importance of factors influencing employee retention in the state corporations in Kenya ranked employee training and career development first as the most important factor followed by performance appraisal, employee empowerment, employee commitment and lastly employee compensation. In another study by Kariuki (2012) found out that lack of effective employees compensation strategies such as better rewards and benefits affected employees retention in many Kenyan state corporations.

Influence of Employee Training Strategy on Employee Retention in State Corporations.

Study by Furnham (2009) revealed that, in Germany designing and implementation of employees training strategies is key strategic human resource management practice employed by many organizations as measure to retain experienced, skilled and highly talented employees. In another study by Ball (2014) identified that many UK government organizations employed employees training strategies such as leadership and on the job training programs as measure to equip employees with managerial training skills required for their future senior managerial job roles. Adams (2014) study in Australian state corporations corroborated with these findings when he established that employees training strategies like leadership training helped in retaining employees who assumed future organization senior management roles.

A study by Hanif (2009) identified that employee behavior training strategies in many USA firms included sensitivity, harassment and employee communication training and these helped in employee retention. Eijgendaal (2009) study in Malaysian firms suggested that when organizations are developing a strategy for an employee behavior training strategy, they should have specific goals. For example, sexual harassment training should be more than just reading employment law and reciting company policy. Eijgendaal (2009) further stated that managers should develop a training strategy that helps employees to understand the effects of harassment on the victim, and the effects it can have on an offending employee's career.

A study by Igalens and Roussel, (2009) identified that in Australia organizations interested in promoting from within and making sure that they are offering a viable career path to proactive employees often created leadership training programs. The programs may consist of training classes on management and then perhaps a seminar held by a third-party that specializes in management training. Hausknecht (2009) study on leadership training strategy suggested that part of organization leadership training strategy should be to train prospective managers on detailed aspects of their departmental operation. The study also suggested that a management trainee for the accounting department should be trained to understand every job duty in the department rather than being subjected to generic training sessions that do not offer insight into how the company is run.

A study by Nguyen (2009) in South Africa suggested that training is a valuable activity for enhancing skills and improving staff performance and that training can address some of the factors contributing to staff retention, such as perceived support from the supervisor, the agency and community. Training can define roles more clearly to employees thereby minimizing job stress. Organizations with sufficient training opportunities should thus have a higher retention rate. Training alone, however, cannot address all of the factors contributing to staff retention such as excessive caseloads and promotional opportunities within the organization. It is therefore reasonable to say that training can play a role in improving retention but it may not be sufficient to improve retention if other systematic barriers are not addressed.

Nyojom (2013) undertook a study to establish the factors influencing employee retention in the state corporations in Kenya. The study concluded that employee's retention is influenced by training and career development. The study also concluded that giving employee educational subsidies influenced the retention to a great extent and that their level of adoption at the state corporations is great. A study by Linda (2012) indicated that in many state corporations in Kenya employees training strategies includes; on the job training; off the job training; employees behavior training; brainstorming and leadership training and these leads to increased rate of employee retention.

Influence of Employee Relations Strategy on Employee Retention in State Corporations.

Adams (2007) when conduction a study on strategic human resource management practices in UK firms, identified that employees relation strategy was key factor that affected employee relations in many organizations. A study by Stephen (2014) established that in many firms worldwide, employee relations' relation strategy involved organizations efforts to manage relationships between employers and employees. An organization with a good employee relations program provided fair and consistent treatment to all employees so they will be committed to their jobs and loyal to the company.

A study by Stephen (2014) identified that in USA many organizations with better employee relation strategies such as effective communication process, effective conflicts resolution methods and team work activities experience a high rate of employee's retention. A study by Ball (2014) in UK public corporations also noted that good employee relations helps in application of better communication process, helps in avoiding employee's conflicts and helps in promoting employees team work hence leading to realization of increased rate of employee retention and the overall organizational performance. These findings were echoed by findings from a study by Lambert (2007) that many firms in USA that offered better employee relation strategies had better communication process, experienced low cases of employee's conflicts and promoted team work hence leading to increased overall organizational performance. Brown and Mcintosh (2013) found that better SHRM practices systems helped to improve employee relations in many European firms and this minimized case of industrial strikes hence leading to realization of the overall organizational performance.

Okpara (2014) conducted the study in Nigeria and found that employee' relations amongst organization employees can be increased by implementation of effective SHRM practices. The study also showed that there was a strong correlation between employees relations and employees retention. A study by Okalo (2012) revealed that

lack of better employee's remuneration systems in many Kenyan state corporations was major reason that led to poor employees relations and declined rate of employee retention.
A study by Kinuthia (2013) also identified that many Kenyan state corporations lacked better employee relation strategies and this led to poor employees and employer relations, a situation that led to cases of industrial strikes and declined rate of employee retention which negatively impacted on organizational performance. A study by Okumu (2012) identified that employees relations in may Kenyan state corporations was determined by the employed communication process, employee's conflicts resolution methods, team work activities, employees work life balance and employees working conditions.

Employee retention

Kim (2009) in their study on corporate orientation found that organizational direction and support had a significant impact on employee job satisfaction and overall commitment. Findings from Susskind et al.'s (2010) research also suggested that implementation of effective SHRM practices strongly influences job satisfaction and employees' commitment to their organizations and this leads to increased level of employee retention

According to Becker and Huselid (2009), culture creates competitiveness since it changes employee behavior by making them act consistently with the firm's desired corporate culture, thereby influencing employee retention. Results of empirical studies of federal organizations in Central Florida confirmed that hourly employee retention was predicted by self-fulfillment and working conditions, even over monetary rewards (Milman & Ricci, 2014). These studies found that employees who had a positive experience with regards to working hours, a sense of fulfillment with their jobs and a higher level of job satisfaction are more likely to stay with their current employer.

One tool that can assist with ensuring proper screening of candidates is pre-employment tests. Brunetto and Farr-Wharton (2012) theorize that the in UK, in many UK firms practice of pre-employment testing and the result of candidates passing such skill-based tests can heighten new hires' sense of organizational commitment. However, their research also found that once employees are on-board and seek upward mobility, promotions can actually increase turnover rates of non-managerial employees if not practiced appropriately. For example, in instances in which inadequate employee training and development exist, employees can become frustrated and stressed by assuming greater responsibility for which they are ill equipped.

A study by Murhoy in Canada (2010) found out that compensation, job characteristics, training and development opportunities, supervisor support and promotion were identified as the top five retention factors. Companies try to keep valuable employees with their cutting-edge knowledge and skills, but the demand for high technology employees with skills has increased substantially, e.g. for ten positions only eight candidates with the required skills qualify.

In Malaysia, Arthur (2011) study noted that competitors use aggressive recruitment tactics to try and woo away valuable employees. Employees make efforts to change dissatisfying work situations that would otherwise be major factors in their decisions to leave their organizations. Employees who succeed in changing dissatisfying work situations will lower their dissatisfaction and with intent to leave changed to intent to remain, the likelihood increases that these employees will ultimately remain with their organization Study by Steers & Mowday, (2011) confirmed that in most revealed that in China lower compensation and poor benefits also increase the rate at which employees voluntarily leave their employers.

Critique of Existing Literature Relevant to the Study

The empirical review gave an account of past major studies and theoretical explanations on SHRM practices and employee retention. However, evidence from the empirical studies reveals that previous studies failed to give much emphasis on influence of SHRM practices on employee retention in terms of employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy; employee recruitment strategy and employee relations strategy. A study by Okalo (2012) revealed that lack of better employees remuneration systems in many Kenyan state corporations was major reason that led to poor employee relations and declined rate of employee retention. A study by Kinuthia (2013) also identified that many Kenyan state corporations lacked better employee relation strategies and this led to poor employees and employer relations, a situation that led to cases of industrial strikes and declined rate of employee retention which negatively impacted on organizational performance.

Empirical evidence hence points out that the reviewed empirical studies gave limited understanding on how SHRM practices influences employee retention in Kenyan state corporations. The critical influence of SHRM was not elaborated in the empirical literature and this makes the explored literature to be of little significance towards establishing the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee retention in state corporations. Since effective SHRM is a key human resource management strategy for attracting and retaining high performing employees, a more comprehensive study is required. Thus, this study aimed to establish the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher used a descriptive design because the method is used to test current status of a phenomena or an activity, since the events or conditions have already occurred, the researcher selects the relevant variables for an analysis of their relationships (Kasomo, 2007). Descriptive research design facilitates gathering of quantitative data through the use of the questionnaires and the core goal of the descriptive research is to verify the developed hypotheses that reveal the current situation. The study hence found the design appropriate since it facilitated application of stratified random sampling technique to obtain data which can be generalized to establish the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee retention in selected state corporations in Kenya.

Target Population

The study was undertaken at 6 state corporations with headquarter offices situated in Nairobi. The target population was a total of 372 human resource management and development staff working in the organizations offices situated in Nairobi. The state corporations included; Kenya Revenue Authority; Public Procurement Oversight

Authority; Insurance Regulatory Authority; Kenya Investment Authority; Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation and National Social Security Fund.

Population

State Corporations	Target population
1) Kenya Revenue Authority	126
2) Public Procurement Oversight Authority	42
3) Insurance Regulatory Authority	52
4) Kenya Investment Authority	48
5) Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation	32
6) National Social Security Fund	72
Total	372

Source: HRM Department of the respective State Corporations (2017).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sampling Frame

The sample frame for the study was the list of 372 human resource management and development staff working in the six state corporations offices situated in Nairobi. The six state corporations were the unit of observation and the 372 human resource management and development staff was the unit of analysis. A unit of observation is an object about which information is collected. A unit of observation is the unit described by the data that one analyzes.

Sampling Frame

State Corporations	Category of Staff	Total	Total Target population
1) KRA	Top Management	46	126
	Middle Level Management	80	
2) PPOA	Top Management	12	42
	Middle Level Management	30	
3) IRA	Top Management	20	52
	Middle Level Management	32	
4) KIA	Top Management	18	48
	Middle Level Management	30	
5) KDIC	Top Management	12	32
	Middle Level Management	20	
6) NSSF	Top Management	22	72
	Middle Level Management	50	
Total		372	372

Source: HRM Departments of the respective State Corporations (2017).

Sampling Techniques

The study adopted a probability sampling design by using a stratified random sampling technique to select the sample size for the study. A sample size represents the number of respondents who are selected from the target population to constitute a sample, the sample size therefore represents the actual number of respondents who were picked from each population category and issued with the data collection instruments to gather data on influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee retention in financial state corporations. This study applied a stratified random sampling technique.

The formula to calculate the sampling size was Yamane sample calculation technique (Yamane, 1967) which main aim is to determine the sample sizes of the study based on the population size chosen. In a finite population, when the original sample collected is more than 5% of the population size, Yamane's formula is appropriate in determining the sample size (Kasomo, 2007). The Yamane sample size states that: n = N / (1 + Ne^2) Where n= corrected sample size, N = population size and e = error term or Margin of error (MoE), which is 0.05. It assumes a 95% confidence level and a probability of 0.05. Using this formula, the research sample size was calculated as follows:

n = 372 / (1+1200 (0.05^2)
n = 372 / 3.0025
n = 124

Sample Size

State Corporations	Category of Staff	Total	Sample Percentage	Sample Size
Kenya Revenue Authority	Top Management	46	12%	15
	Middle Level Management	80	22%	27
Public Procurement Oversight Authority	Top Management	12	3%	4
	Middle Level Management	30	8%	10
Insurance Regulatory Authority	Top Management	20	5%	6
	Middle Level Management	32	8%	10
Kenya Investment Authority	Top Management	18	5%	6
	Middle Level Management	30	9%	11
Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation	Top Management	12	3%	4
	Middle Level Management	20	5%	6
National Social Security Fund	Top Management	22	6%	8
	Middle Level Management	50	14%	17
Total			100%	124

Source: HRM Department of the respective State Corporations (2017).

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires were the main data collection instruments. Open ended and close-ended questionnaires were used. The questionnaires were administered to a total of 124 respondents and later picked for data analysis and tabulated through the use graphs, charts and reports.

Data Collection Procedures

The study collected primary data using questionnaires. According to Morris (2001), data collection procedure is the process of gathering pieces of information that are necessary for research process. Data collection started by obtaining a letter from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology introducing the researcher to the state corporations' management**.** The letter was attached to the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered through drop-and-pick-later method. A covering letter was attached to each questionnaire explaining the objectives of the study and assuring respondents of confidentiality in order to get the data and information required. Answered instruments were collected after two weeks and data analysis done.

Pilot Study

The researcher selected a pilot group of (12) respondents, that is (10%) of the sample population to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments. According to Ramsey (2012) 10% of the sample population is a good representative to test the validity for the whole population. This helped to determine if the instruments are important in obtaining the required data from the field and make valid conclusions.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis is the process of packaging collected information in a way that it can be understood by the researcher. The researcher first evaluated the accuracy and relevance of the data after which then the data was coded and tabulated. The researcher employed both quantitative and qualitative method of data analysis. The tabulated data was entered in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) which was be used to analyze the data. This assisted to generate data array that was used for subsequent analysis of the data. The data was cleaned, coded, categorized per each of the research variables and then analyzed using descriptive analysis. The research used descriptive statistics to describe the data. In descriptive statistics data frequency distribution was generated in percentages, mean, standard deviation and variance results. Further, inferential statistics data analysis method was used to analyze quantitative data through the use of multiple Linear Regression model to establish the significance of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

The following multiple regression model was be applied
$Y = B_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$
Where:
Y= Employee Retention (Dependent Variable)
B_0 = constant of regression (Independent Variable)
X_3 = Employee Recruitment Strategy (Independent Variable)
X_1 = Employee Compensation Strategy (Independent Variable)

X_2 = Employee Training Strategy (Independent Variable)
X_4 = Employee Relation Strategy (Independent Variable)
ε_i = Error term
Qualitative data drawn from open-ended questions was analysed through summarising the set of observations drawn from the respondents. Common set of observation were assigned numerical value and entered into the statistical package for the social science (SPSS) computer software. The instruments for data presentation were frequency tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Employee Recruitment Strategy

From the analyzed majority of the respondents agreed that their organizations set graduate level as minimum academic qualifications as indicated by a mean score of 4.164 and standard deviation of 0.9318. Majority of the respondents also agreed that their organizations recruits and hires management trainees as indicated by a mean score of 4.288 and standard deviation of 0.8774. Majority of the respondents further agreed that their organization recruit's employee with professional qualification/accreditation as indicated by a mean score of 4.226 and standard deviation of 0.8478. Finally, majority of the respondents agreed that head hunting process of recruitment was applied in their organizations to recruit prospective employees with experience and skills of certain jobs as indicated by a mean score of 4.041 and standard deviation of 0.8650. On average all the recruitment strategy statements had an average mean score of 4.180, standard deviation of 0.08805 and variance of 0.776.

These findings indicate that majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that all the employee recruitment strategy statements in terms of minimum academic qualifications; management trainee hiring; professional qualification and head hunting influences employee retention in state corporations. Only few respondents had varied or divided opinions since all the standard deviation and variance results were less than 1 and this indicates that most of the respondents gave similar responses and not many respondents had divergent views. Graham (2012) affirms that standard deviation and variance are both measures of variation for interval-ratio variables. They describe how much variation or diversity there is in a distribution (Sekeran, 2003). If the standard deviation and variance were each greater than 1 it means that the respondents had divergent views and if they are each less than 1, then this means that the respondents had similar opinions on the issues concerned (Ramsey, 2003).

These findings confirmed findings by Locke (2012) where he affirmed that employee recruitment strategy that gives much emphasis on factors such as higher academic qualifications, recruitment of management trainees and gives emphasis on professional accreditation contributes towards realization of increased rate of employee retention in organizations. The findings also echoes findings by Okumu (2013) where he noted that organizations that sets graduate level as minimum academic qualifications; recruitment of management trainees and use of head hunting process to recruit prospective employee with experience and skills of certain jobs are some of key recruitment measures that increases the rate of employee retention in organizations. The study therefore inferred that minimum academic qualifications; management trainee hiring; professional qualification and head hunting are recruitment strategies that influences employee retention in state corporations.

Recruitment Strategy Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance Results

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
a) My organization sets graduate level as minimum academic qualifications	95	2.00	5.00	4.164	0.9318	0.868
b) My organization recruits and hires management trainees	95	1.00	5.00	4.288	0.8774	0.77
c) My organization recruits employee with professional qualification/accreditation	95	2.00	5.00	4.226	0.8478	0.719
d) Head hunting process of recruitment is applied in my organization to recruit prospective employee with experience and skills of certain jobs	95	2.00	5.00	4.041	0.8650	0.748
Average	95			4.180	0.8805	0.776

Employee Compensation Strategy

The study aimed to determine the influence of employee compensation strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study requested respondents to indicate how they agreed or disagreed on the major key statements in relation to whether employee compensation strategy influences employee retention in state corporations using a scale of 1-5 (1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3-Neutral, 4-Disagree 5-Strongly disagree). The key employee compensation strategy statements included; salary structure review; benefits; merit pay increases and recognition. The means, standard deviation and variance results were used to make inferences.

Majority of the respondents agreed that their organizations offers salaries that are competitive in the market in comparison to other organizations as indicated by a mean score of 4.631and standard deviation of 0.5269. Majority of the respondents also agreed that their organizations offers employee with bonuses and good benefits packages such as medical, insurance and pension plans as indicated by a mean score of 4.378 and standard deviation of 0.6219. On the other hand majority of the respondents showed divided opinion on merit pay and recognition since majority of the respondents moderately agreed that employee are provided with merit pay increases once they reach performance targets as indicated by a mean score of 3.715 and standard deviation of 1.3341 and further majority of the respondents moderately agreed that employees are given good recognition when they perform well and are promoted as indicated by a mean score of 3.842 and standard deviation of 1.0946. On average all the compensation strategy statements had an average mean score of 4.180, standard deviation of 0.8805 and variance of 0.776.

These findings imply that majority of the respondents agreed that all the compensation strategy factors in terms of salary structure review; benefits; merit pay increases and recognition influences employee retention in state corporations. The average mean results, standard deviation and variance results indicate that most of the respondents had no divergent views and most of the respondents gave similar responses. According to Ramsey (2013) standard deviation and variance are both measures of variation for interval-ratio variables. They describe how much variation or diversity there is in a distribution (Sekeran, 2003). Both the variance and standard deviation increase or decrease based on how closely the scores cluster around the mean. Standard deviation provides an indication of how far the individual responses to a question vary or deviate from the mean. It tells the researcher how spread out the responses are from the mean and explains if the respondents' responses are concentrated around the mean, or scattered far & wide (Graham, 2012). If the standard deviation and variance are each greater than 1 it means that the respondents had divergent views and if they are each less than 1, then this means that the respondents had similar opinions on the issues concerned (Ramsey, 2003). Therefore, based on the analyzed results majority of the respondents agreed that all the compensation strategy statements influence employee retention in state corporations.

These findings are in agreement with findings Barnes and Williams (2011) where they found out that compensation strategy that is based on offering of competitive salaries in the market and provision of employee with bonuses and good benefits packages such as medical, insurance and pension plans leads to increased rate of employee retention in many organizations. The findings also concurs with findings by Katzell (2012) where he identified that employees benefits and merit pay increases determines the extent to which the employed employees compensation strategy contributes to improvement of the rate of employee retention in organizations. The findings also corroborate with findings by Guest (2012) where he showed that compensation strategy that leads to better employees benefits and bonuses and emphasis on recognition of performing employee leads to increased rate of employees retention in an organizations.

Employee Compensation Strategy Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance Results

Compensation Strategy	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
a) My organization offers salaries that are competitive in the market in comparison to other organizations	95	3.00	5.00	4.631	.5269	.278
b) My organization offers employee with bonuses and good benefits packages such as medical, insurance and pension plans	95	2.00	5.00	4.378	.6219	.387
c) Employee are provided	95	1.00	5.00	3.715	1.3341	1.780

	with merit pay increases once they reach performance targets						
d)	Employees are given good recognition when they perform well and are promoted	95	1.00	5.00	3.842	1.0946	1.198
e)	Average	95			4.142	0.8944	0.910

Training Strategy

The means, standard deviation and variance results were used to make inferences. From the analyzed results in table 4.5, majority of the respondents agreed that their organizations provide employees with on-the-job training programmes as indicated by a mean score of 4.273 and standard deviation of 0.9502**.** Majority of the respondents also agreed that their organizations provide employees with off-the-job training programmes as indicated by a mean score of 4.210 and standard deviation of 0.7975. Further, majority of the respondents moderately agreed that their organizations provides employees with brainstorming sessions as indicated by a mean score of 3.578 and standard deviation of 0.1.3255 and finally majority of the respondents agreed that in their organizations leadership training is provided to all management staff in the organization as indicated by a mean score of 4.021 and standard deviation of 0.1.1848. On average all the training strategy statements had an average mean score of 4.0210, standard deviation of 1.0645 and variance of 1.175.

These findings thus indicates that majority of the respondents agreed that all the training strategy factors in terms of on-the-job training; off-the-job training and leadership training influences employee retention in state corporations and majority of the respondents moderately agreed that brainstorming influences employee retention in state corporations. The average mean results, standard deviation and variance results indicate that most of the respondents gave similar responses and had no divergent views on training strategy factors. Standard deviation provides an indication of how far the individual responses to a question vary or deviate from the mean (Graham, 2012).

These findings are in agreement with findings by Livingstone (2009) where he found out that training strategy that emphasizes on-the-job training and off-the-job training contributes towards realization of increased rate of employee retention in organizations. The results also are in line with findings by Okpara (2014) where he found out that on-the -job training and brainstorming sessions and leadership training helps to improve the rate of employee's retention in state corporations The study therefore deduced that training strategy factors included; on-the-job training; off-the-job training; brainstorming and leadership training influences employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Training Strategy Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance Results

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance

a) My organization provides employees with on the job training programmes	95	2.00	5.00	4.273	0.9502	0.903
b) My organization provides employees with off the job training programmes	95	2.00	5.00	4.210	0.7975	0.636
c) My organization provides employees with brainstorming sessions	95	1.00	5.00	3.578	1.3255	1.757
d) Leadership training is provided to all management staff in the organization	95	1.00	5.00	4.021	1.1848	1.404
Average	95			4.0210	1.0645	1.175

Employee Relations Strategy

The analyzed results shows that, majority of the respondents agreed that the employed communication process promotes good employee relations as indicated by a mean score of 4.368 and standard deviation of 0.9231. Majority of the respondents also agreed also agreed that effective conflicts resolution is employed in the organization as indicated by a mean score of 4.252 and standard deviation of 0.9561. Further majority of the respondents agreed that team building activities were regularly undertaken in the organization as shown by a mean score of 4.157 and standard deviation of 0.9146. Finally, majority of the respondents agreed that employees are provided with good working conditions as indicated by a mean score of 4.336 and standard deviation of 0.9180. On average all the employee relations statements had an average mean score of 4.278, average standard deviation of 0.9279 and variance of 0.8615.

These results indicates that majority of the respondents agreed with all the employee relation strategy statements and this implies that the employed communication process; conflicts resolution methods; team building activities and working conditions helped to promote employee relations in the organization and this influenced employee retention in state corporations. All the employee relations strategy factors recorded Standard Deviation and Variance results which were less than 1 and this indicates that most of the respondents gave similar responses and not many respondents had divergent views. Graham (2012) affirms that standard deviation and variance describe how much variation or diversity there is in a distribution (Sekeran, 2003). If the standard deviation and variance are each greater than 1 it means that the respondents had divergent views and if they are each less than 1, then this means that the respondents had similar opinions on the issues concerned (Ramsey, 2013).

These findings are in agreement with Armstrong (2010) where he found out that employee relations strategy factors notably; communication process; conflicts resolution methods and team work influences the level of employee retention in organizations. Livingstone (2012) opined that application of effective communication channel, use of effective conflict resolution methods, emphasis on team work and provision of better working conditions promotes employee's relations and this plays a major role in increasing the level of employee retention in organizations. The findings were also in agreement with Kariuki (2012) where he found out that good communication process, effective conflict resolution mechanisms and use of effective teambuilding activities creates good employee's relations and this contributes towards increased rate of employee retention in organizations. The study therefore deduced that communication process; conflicts resolution; team building and working conditions are key employee relations strategy factors that influences employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Employee Relations Strategy Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance Results

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
a) The employed communication process promotes good employee relations	95	1.00	5.00	4.368	0.9231	0.852
b) Effective conflicts resolution are employed in the organization	95	1.00	5.00	4.252	0.9561	0.914
c) Team building activities are regularly undertaken in the organization	95	2.00	5.00	4.157	0.9146	0.837
d) Employees are provided with good working conditions	95	1.00	5.00	4.336	0.9180	0.843
Average	95			4.278	0.9279	0.8615

Employee Retention

Findings shows that, majority of the respondents agreed that their organizations have reduced employee turnover rates as shown by a mean score of 4.421 and standard deviation of 0.7797. Majority of the respondents also agreed that the quality of work delivered by the employee is high in their organizations as shown by a mean score of 4.473 and standard deviation of 0.7415. Further majority of the respondents agreed that the level of customer satisfaction is high in their organizations as shown by a mean score of 4.536 and standard deviation of 0.7964. Finally, majority of the respondents also agreed that the level of employee work engagement is high in their organizations as shown by a mean score of 4.284 and standard deviation of 0.8587. On average all the employee retention statements had a mean score of 4.428, standard deviation of 0.7941 and variance of 0.6325.

These findings are a clear indication that majority of the respondents agreed that all the employees retention factors notably; turnover rates; quality of work; customer satisfaction and employee engagement determined employee retention in state corporations. These findings are in agreement with findings by Okumu (2012) where he found out that employees retention in state corporations is determined by turnover rates; quality of work; customer satisfaction; achievement of organizational goals and employees loyalty. The study therefore inferred that turnover rates; quality of work; customer satisfaction and employee engagement determine the rate of employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Employee Retention Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance Results

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
a) My organization have reduced employee turnover rates	95	2.00	5.00	4.421	0.7797	0.608
b) The quality of work delivered by the employee is high in my organization	95	2.00	5.00	4.473	0.7415	0.55
c) The level of customer satisfaction is high in my organization	95	2.00	5.00	4.536	0.7964	0.634
d) The level of employee work engagement is high in my organization	95	2.00	5.00	4.284	0.8587	0.738
Average	95			4.428	0.7941	0.6325

Regression Analysis

From the findings of the study it shows that the regression model in table 4.8 coefficient of determination (R2) is 0.812 and R is 0.901 at 0.05 significance level. This is an indication that the four independent variables notably; (X_1) recruitment strategy; (X_2) compensation strategy, (X_3) employee training strategy and (X_4) employee relations strategy significantly influences the dependent variable (Y) which is employees retention in state corporations in Kenya. The coefficient of determination (R2, 0.812) indicates that 81.2% of the variation on employee retention in state corporations is influenced by employee recruitment strategy; employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy and employee relations strategy. The remaining 18.8% of the variation on employee retention is determined by other variables not included in the study model. This shows that the model has a good fit since the value is above 75%. This concurred with Graham (2012) that (R2) is always between 0 and 100%: 0% indicates that the model explains none of the variability of the response data around its mean and100% indicates that the model explains all the variability of the response data around its mean. In general, the higher the (R2) the better the model fits the data.

Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.901(a)	.812	.804	.22251

Predictors: (Constant), X4, X2, X3, X1

The study further used one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in order to test the significance of the overall regression model. Green & Salkind (2003) posits that one-way Analysis of Variance helps in determining the significant relationship between the research variables. Table 4.9 indicates that the high value of F (97.406) with significant level of p-value 0.00 which is less than 5% level of significance is enough to conclude that all the independent variables significantly influences employee retention in state corporations. This implies goodness of fit of the model and thus the variables can be carried on for further analysis to determine with significance the level of influence of each variable.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		*Sum of Squares*	*df*	*Mean Square*	*F*	*Sig.*
1	Regression	19.291	4	4.823	97.406	.000(a)
	Residual	4.456	90	.050		
	Total	23.747	94			

Predictors: (Constant), X4, X3, X2, X1

Table above further presents the results of the test of beta coefficients which shows the extent to which each independent variable influences employee retention in state corporations. As presented in table 4.10; (X_1) recruitment strategy coefficient of 0.389 was found to be positive at significant level of (P=0.000<0.05) and this indicates that recruitment strategy positively influences employee retention in state corporations; (X_2) compensation strategy coefficient of 0.185 was found to be positive at significant level of (P=0.000<0.05) and this indicates that compensation strategy positively influences employees' retention in state corporations; (X_3) training strategy Coefficient of 0.123 was found to be positive at significant level of (P=0.004<0.05) and this indicates that training strategy positively influences employee retention in state corporations. Lastly, (X_4) employee relations strategy coefficient of 0.128 was found to be positive at significant level of (P=0.003<0.05) and this indicates that employees' relations positively influences employee retention in state corporations. This clearly demonstrates that all the independent variables significantly influence employee retention in state corporations but the relative importance of each independent variable is different. However, since the significance values were less than 0.005, all the coefficients were significant an thus the regression equation was;

$Y=0.836+ 0.389X_1 + 0.185X_2 + 0.123X_3 + 0.128X_4 + e$

Coefficients

Model		*Unstandardized Coefficients*		*Standardized Coefficients*	*t*	*Sig.*
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.836	.190		4.391	.000
	X1	.389	.063	.477	6.146	.000
	X2	.185	.049	.238	3.791	.000
	X3	.123	.058	.150	2.100	.004
	X4	.128	.042	.179	3.038	.003

Dependent Variable: Y

$Y=0.836+ 0.389X_1 + 0.185X_2 + 0.123X_3 + 0.128X_4 + e$

The regression model above has established that taking all the independent variables into account notably; (X_1) recruitment strategy; (X_2) compensation strategy, (X_3) training strategy and (X_4) employee relations strategy at Zero constant determine employee retention in State Corporation (0.836). The results presented also show that taking all other independent variables at constant zero; a unit increase in recruitment strategy leads to 0.389 increase in employee retention; a unit increase in compensation strategy leads to a 0.185 increase in employee retention; a unit increase in training strategy leads to 0.123 increase in employee retention; and a unit increase in employees' relation strategy leads to 0.128 increase in employee retention. These findings thus implies that that recruitment strategy is the major human resource strategy that influences most employee retention in state corporations with a coefficient of 0.389, followed by compensation strategy with a coefficient of 0.185, then employee relations strategy with a coefficient of 0.128 and lastly training strategy with a coefficient of 0.123. These findings concurs with findings by Armstrong (2010) where he identified that the key human resource management strategies that influences employee retention in organization includes; employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy; employee recruitment strategy and employee relations strategy.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Employee Recruitment Strategy

The study aimed to assess the influence of employee recruitment strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study found out that employee recruitment strategy was major factors that influenced employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study revealed that emphasis on graduate level as minimum academic qualifications; hiring of management trainees; recommendation of professional qualification and head hunting significantly influenced employee retention in state corporations. These findings were supported by the majority of the respondents who agreed that their organizations their respective organizations sets graduate level as minimum academic qualifications during recruitment; their recruited and hired management trainees; their organizations recruited employees with professional qualification/accreditation and head hunting process of recruitment was applied in their organizations to recruit prospective employee with experience and skills of certain jobs. The study therefore inferred that academic qualifications; work experience; employee selection methods; job description; career development determines how employee recruitment strategy influences employee retention in state corporations.

Employee Compensation Strategy

The study aimed to determine the influence of employee compensation strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study found out that employee compensation strategy was a major factor influencing employees' retention in state corporations. The study findings showed that salary structure review; benefits; merit pay increases and recognition influenced employee retention in state corporations. The study established that majority of the respondents agreed that their organizations offered salaries that are competitive in the market in comparison to other organizations and their organizations offered employee with bonuses and good benefits packages such as medical, insurance and pension plans. However, it was also noted that respondents showed divided opinion on merit pay and recognition since majority of the respondents moderately agreed that employee were provided with merit pay increases once they reach performance targets and employees were given good recognition when they perform well and are promoted. The study therefore inferred that employee compensation strategy factors notably, salary structure review; benefits; merit pay increases and recognition influences employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Employee Training Strategy

The study aimed to determine the influence of employee training strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. Findings from the study indicated that training strategy was a key factor that influenced employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. It was identified that the key training strategy factors notably; on the job training; off the job training; brainstorming and leadership training influenced employee retention in State Corporations. Findings showed that majority of the respondents agreed that their organizations provided employees with on-the-job training and off-the-job training but moderately agreed on brainstorming sessions but also agreed that in their organizations offered leadership training to all management staff in the organization. The study therefore deduced that training strategy factors included; on-the-job training; off-the-job training; brainstorming and leadership training influence employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Employee Relations Strategy

The study sought to establish the influence of employee relations strategy on employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. Findings showed that employee relations strategy was major factors that influenced employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study identified that application of effective communication channel, use of effective conflict resolution methods, emphasis on team building activities and provision of better working conditions promoted employees relations and this played a strategic role in increasing the level of employee retention in state corporations. These findings were supported by the majority of the respondents who agreed that the employed communication process promoted good employee relations; there were effective conflicts resolution is employed in the organization; team building activities were regularly undertaken in the organization and employees were provided with good working conditions. The study therefore deduced that communication process; conflicts resolution; team building and working conditions are key employee relations strategy factors that influences employee retention in state corporations in Kenya.

Employee Retention

The study aimed to determine the major factors that determine employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study findings showed that majority of the respondents agreed that the major factors that determined employee retention included; turnover rates; quality of work; customer satisfaction and employee engagement. The study therefore inferred that turnover rates; quality of work; customer satisfaction and employee engagement determines how employee recruitment strategy influences employee retention in state corporations.

Conclusion

Based on the study findings, the study drew conclusions that employee recruitment strategy, employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy; and employee relations strategy influence employee retention in state corporations in Kenya. The study also concluded that recruitment strategy is the major human resource strategy that influences most employee retention in state corporations, then employee compensation, then employee relations strategy and lastly training strategy. These findings concur with findings by Armstrong (2009) where he identified that the key human resource management strategies that influence employee retention in organizations include employee recruitment strategy, employee compensation strategy; employee training strategy; and employee relations strategy.

Recommendations

Employee Recruitment Strategy

To improve on employees recruitment strategy, the management of state corporations should adopt effective employee recruitment strategy that emphasizes on higher and right academic qualifications; hiring of management trainee; high work experience; applies effective employee selection methods; give emphasis on professional qualification and use of head hunting to recruit experienced and most skilled staff.

Employee Compensation Strategy

To improve on employees compensation strategy, the management of state corporations should formulate and implement effective employee compensation strategy through regular review employee salary structures, provision of good benefits, implementation of effective merit pay methods; provision of effective employees bonuses and recantation of hire performing employees for promotion. These will lead to increased level of employee job satisfaction and this reduces employee turnover rates hence resulting to increased rate of employee retention in state corporations.

Employee Training Strategy

To improve on employee training strategy, the management of state corporations should adopt effective employee training strategy by regularly conducting on-the-job training; off-the-job training; employee behavior training; brainstorming and leadership development training.

Employee Relations Strategy

To improve on employee relations strategy, the management of state corporations should adopt effective employee relations strategy through application of effective communication channel, use of effective conflict resolution methods, encouraging team building activities and providing better working conditions. This will help in promoting employees relations played a strategic role in increasing the level of employee retention in state corporations.

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