

EFFECT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON RETENTION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS' EMPLOYEES IN DADAAB SUB-COUNTY

¹ALI SHEIKH MURSAL, ²DR, SAMSON NYANG'AU PAUL

Abstract: Non-governmental organizations in Kenya were among organizations facing high rates of employee turnover to the tune of over 26%. In many of these organizations, there has been prevalence of employee turnover for formal engagement in other organizations, rendering these organizations less effective in service delivery. Dadaab sub-county is one of the areas with huge presence of non-governmental organizations in Garissa County. Retention of employees was a critical issue facing these organizations where dominant agencies such as CARE International Kenya recorded employee turnover rates as high as 31%. This called for the investigation of the various factors within these organizations that influenced such turn of events. The purpose of this study therefore was to investigate the effect of human resource management practices on retention of non-governmental organizations' employees in Dadaab Sub-County. The study sought to examine the effect of compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication on retention of employees in the non-governmental organizations operating in Dadaab Sub-county. The study was founded on the Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Social Exchange Theory. The study employed a descriptive research design. The study targeted the all the 25 NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. A census of these organizations was taken where 3 employees one from senior management, one from middle level management and one general staff from each organization participated in the study. The study used primary data collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. The data from the open-ended questions was analysed through thematic analysis. Quantitative data analysis was undertaken using the statistical package for social sciences computer software. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were generated. A multiple liner regression was used in showing the relationship between human resource management practices and employee retention in the organizations under study. The study found that compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication positively and significantly affected the retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. The study concluded that human resource management practices in particular compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication played a great role in the retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. The study also concluded that employee work life balance had the largest effect on the retention of employees working with the NGOs in this sub county while compensation had the least effect among the four HRM practices under study. Hence, if the NGOs in Dadaab Sub County were to witness significant retention of their employees, emphasis had to be placed on having competitive compensation systems, enhancing career management in these organizations, having in place favourable employee work life balance policies besides enhancing the level of organizational communication. Several recommendations were given based on the study findings.

Keywords: Compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication.

1. INTRODUCTION

Many organizations face challenges related to employee retention majorly as a result of market competition. Generally, organizations employ highly competent staff so as to achieve increased competitive advantage. Nevertheless, the retention of these highly competent staff is much more crucial than hiring them (Haider et al., 2015). Duda and Žůrková (2013) posit that even though difficult to quantify, there are many costs that linked to employee turnover which are of particular concern to organizations and are generally 2.5 times higher than the individual's salary. Therefore, organizations are continuously developing an environment within the workplace in a bid to motivate their staff to continue working for them. Khan et al. (2014) highlight that organizations have put in place various measures including the adoption of different human resource practices with an aim of improving their employee retention levels

Statement of the problem

Every trained person becomes an asset of considerable value and presents management with the challenge of keeping him/her satisfied and settled. Excessive turnover is costly, disruptive and self-perpetuating. It is clearly known that an organization cannot survive if the staff are not retained and focused about their work (Irema, 2015). According to the National Council of NGOs Report (2015), while responding to the governments threat to close down most NGOs, it was also indicated that NGO work was being hampered by low employee retention with these organizations recording an average turnover rate of 26%.

Asante Africa foundation was reported to have a turnover of 12%, PATH organization had a turnover of 15% while Jhpiego organization had a turnover of 28% which was above the average turnover rate according to the 2015 National Council of NGOs Report. CARE International Kenya operating in Dadaab recorded employee turnover of over 31% for the period 2014-2015 (Njama, 2016). This therefore implied that the quality of the service they provided to the beneficiaries was affected and the financial and nonfinancial cost of replacing vacant posts was significantly increased. In addition, when non-governmental agencies like Care International face high staff turnover, they will be behind the schedule in utilizing budget and unable to implement quality programs for their beneficiaries. As a consequence, their relationship with donors, regulatory bodies and beneficiaries becomes questionable and existing staff will be stressed due to the additional responsibilities to cover the vacant posts.

A review of existing literature showed that a considerable number of studies had been conducted to show how various organizational factors such as HRM practices affected employee retention in NGOs. Nevertheless, the review showed that HRM practices such career management and organizational communication and their linkage with employee retention had not been adequately assessed within the context of NGOs. Mohamad (2008) assessed this relationship within the hotel industry, Nwagbara et al. (2013) and Mensah (2014) focused on the banking industry while Boateng (2010) focused on the construction industry. Therefore, these studies depicted a contextual gap.

The review also showed a contradiction in the findings of various authors, for instance, Bakuwa, Chasimpha and Masamba (2013) and Ikunyua (2016) found that compensation did not significantly influence employee retention in NGOs which was contrary to the findings of Kitur (2015) and Irema (2015). In addition, Mensah (2014) found a negative relationship between career management and employee retention while the study by Hlanganipai and Mazanai (2014) found a positive relationship. Therefore, this study was crucial in clarifying these findings. The review also shows that even though Dadaab Sub-county was one of the areas with heavy presence of NGOs, studies showing the link between HRM practices and employee retention in these organizations had not been conducted. This study therefore sought to fill these gaps by focusing on NGOs in the sub-county.

Objectives

- i. To examine the effect of compensation on the retention of non-governmental organizations' employees in Dadaab Sub-County.
- ii. To determine the effect of career management on the retention of non-governmental organizations' employees in Dadaab Sub-County.

- iii. To establish the effect of employee work life balance on the retention of non-governmental organizations' employees in Dadaab Sub-County.
- iv. To examine the effect of organizational communication on the retention of non-governmental organizations' employees in Dadaab Sub-County

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory

This theory was advanced by Frederick Herzberg in 1959 and is also referred to as the motivation-hygiene theory. This theory is resourceful in providing a basis through which the managements of companies can comprehend the various dynamics that influence staff motivation and dissatisfaction (Sirota & Klein, 2013). On the basis of responses given 200 employees that participated in detailed interviews that sought to get insights about the employees' times of both positive and negative feeling regarding their jobs, Herzberg highlighted that there existed particular aspects that were associated with job content and which enabled employees to get satisfaction in their experiences (Rao & Rao, 2009).

Theory The Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

This theory was developed in 1943 by Abraham Maslow. As per Maslow, motivation is a function of a sequence of five basic needs which are physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization (Jerome, 2013). This theory was founded on the basis of the principle that the needs in the higher levels are not crucial and are only manifest once the needs at the lower levels are met (Badubi, 2017). When the basic needs of workers pertaining to food, clothing and shelter are met, the become more concerned with their ego, esteem and self-actualization (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014).

Social Exchange Theory

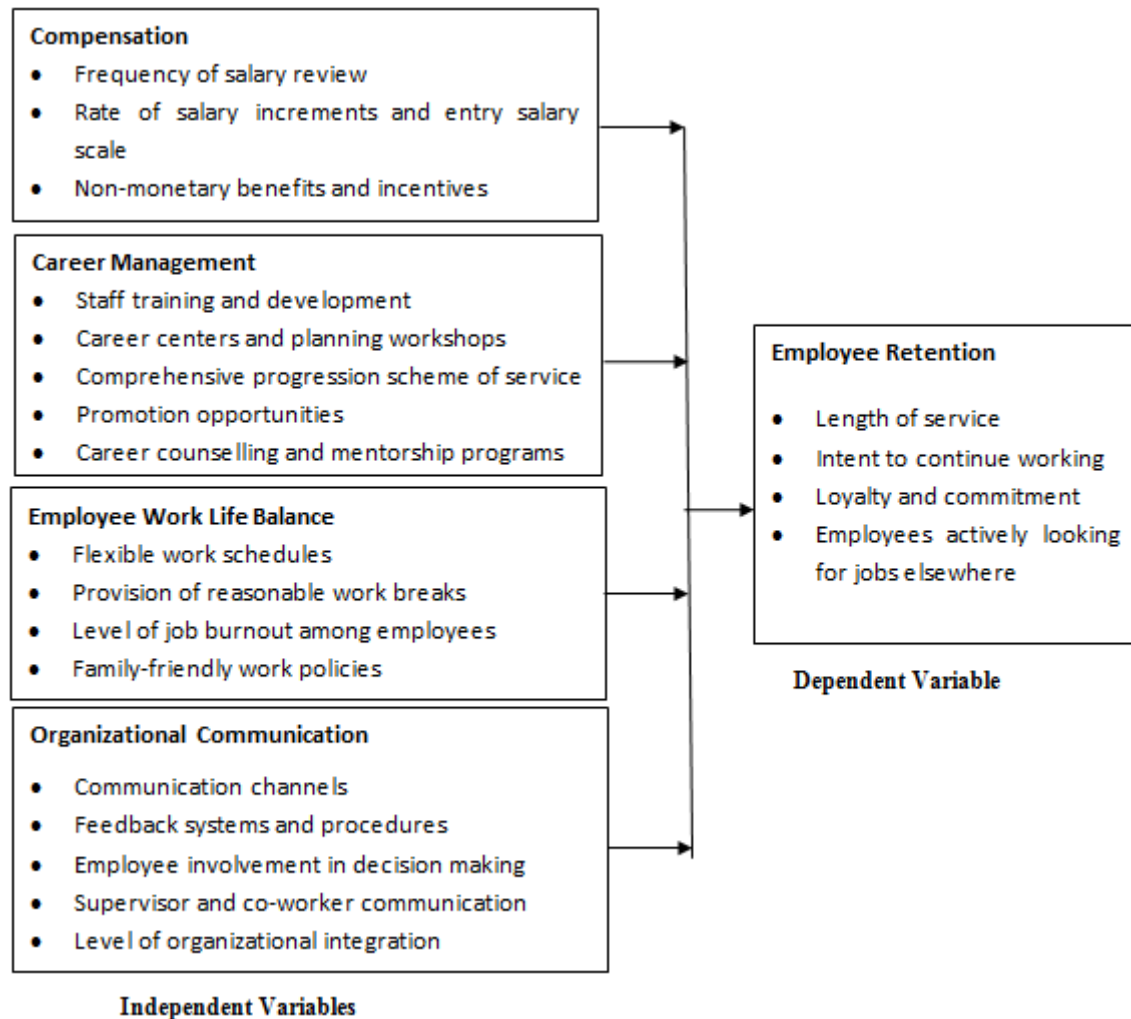
This theory was advanced by Blau in 1964. The basis of this theory is the social psychological and sociological perspective explaining the social change and stability as a process of negotiated exchanges between parties (Shahsavarani et al., 2016). According to this theory, the formation of human relationships occurs through the utilization of a subjective cost-benefit analysis besides comparing the alternatives (Roeckelein, 2006). As it pertains to HRM practices and staff retention, this theory perceives the employment relationship as comprising of social or economic exchanges (Shaw, Dineen, Fang, & Vellella, 2009). Economic exchange relationships consist of the exchange of economic benefits in return for employees' efforts and often depend on formal contracts which are legally enforceable. On the other hand, social exchanges are "voluntary actions" which may be initiated by an organization's treatment of its employees with the expectation that the employees will be obligated to reciprocate the good deeds of the organization (Nyarieko, 2018).

Adams Equity Theory (1965)

This theory was proposed by Adams in 1965 and points out that individuals not only worry about what they are rewarded for their hard work, but also make comparisons of what they get with what is received by others (Tudor, 2011). The basis of this theory is individual's views on fairness or equity which is normally personal (Mensah, 2014). This theory notes that workers strive to sustain equity between the input directed to a job, for instance, time, educational qualification and their experience, and the rewards they get, for example promotional and recognition opportunities or even

a rise in compensation against the supposed efforts and rewards of other workers (Spector, 2008). The proposition of this theory is that individuals feeling under-rewarded or over-rewarded will be distressed and this may result to efforts to reinstate fairness within the firm. When such equity is not found, the individuals may act in ways that are harmful to the firm (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016).

Conceptual Framework



Critique of Existing Literature

A review of literature showed that a number of studies had been conducted showing the link between various HRM practices and employee retention in NGOs, for example, Akinyi (2014), Kitur (2015), Wane (2016) and Ikunyua (2016). Nevertheless, the review showed that HRM practices such career management and organizational communication and the linkage with employee retention had not adequately been assessed within the context of NGOs. Mohamad (2008) assesses this relationship within the hotel industry, Nwagbara et al. (2013) and Mensah (2014) focus on the banking industry while Boateng (2010) focused on the construction industry.

The review also showed a contradiction in the findings of various authors, for instance, Bakuwa, Chasimpha and Masamba (2013) and Ikunyua (2016) found that compensation did not significantly influence employee retention in NGOs which was contrary to the findings of Kitur (2015) and Irema (2015). In addition, Mensah (2014) found a negative relationship between career management and employee retention while the study by Hlanganipai and Mazanai (2014) found a positive relationship. Therefore, this study was crucial in clarifying these findings. The review also showed that even though Dadaab Sub-county was one of the areas with heavy presence of NGOs, studies showing the link between HRM practices and employee retention in these organizations had not been conducted.

Research Gaps

Following a critical review of existing literature, contextual and methodological gaps were identified. Contextual gap was depicted in the studies focusing on HRM practices such career management and organizational communication and their linkage with employee retention undertaken in other contexts and not in NGOs. Mohamad (2008) assessed this

relationship within the hotel industry, Nwagbara et al. (2013) and Mensah (2014) focused on the banking industry while Boateng (2010) focused on the construction industry. A methodological gap was also depicted in the literature where Kitur (2015) and Irema (2015) adopted mixed methods research design while Bakuwa, Chasimpha and Masamba (2013) utilized a case study design which were different from that of this current study which utilized a descriptive research design.

There also existed a contradiction in the findings of various authors, for instance, Bakuwa, Chasimpha and Masamba (2013) and Ikunyua (2016) found that compensation did not significantly influence employee retention in NGOs which was contrary to the findings of Kitur (2015) and Irema (2015). This study sought to confirm or disapprove the findings of the different authors based on the study conducted in Dadaab Sub-County.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out using a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way (Degu, 2006). This study targeted all the 25 NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub-county (National Council of NGOs of Kenya, 2017). Employees in all cadres of management were the units of observation since HRM practices and retention issues affected each employee within the organization. Given the small number of NGOs which was manageable, a census of all the 25 NGOs was taken. Three employees from each organization, one from each cadre of management namely senior level, middle level and general staff participated in the study. The study used primary data that was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire containing both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents by the research assistants engaged by the researcher. Follow up reminders through phone calls were made after two weeks in the event that a respondent did not fill the questionnaire. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was subjected to thorough examination by two human resource managers, who were randomly selected and were not be part of the main study as well as the supervisor of the research. The two human resource managers and the project supervisor were asked to evaluate the questions in the questionnaire for relevance and whether they were meaningful, clear, loaded of offensive. On the basis of the evaluation, the instrument was adjusted appropriately before subjecting it to the final data collection exercise. The questionnaire was subjected to overall reliability analysis of internal consistency. 15 questionnaires were administered to individuals working in 5 NGOs and who did not take part in the main study. Quantitative analysis will be carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 software. Data was coded and analyzed simultaneously as collected. In this case, both descriptive and inferential statistics were generated. Frequencies percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to describe the data collected. Inferential analysis namely Pearson's correlation analysis and regression analysis were undertaken.

Model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

Where:

Y = Employee Retention

β_0 = Constant Term, β_1, β_2 and β_3, β_4 = Beta coefficients

X_1 = Compensation

X_2 = Career management

X_3 = Employee work life balance

X_4 = Organizational communication

ε = Error term

In order to test for causal connection between the dependent and predictor variables, evaluation of the R² statistic, F statistic, beta coefficients for significance was undertaken using p values. The analyzed data was presented in frequency tables and charts as per the study objectives.

4. RESULTS

Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis in this study consisted of correlation analysis and regression analysis. Correlation analysis was carried out in order to association between human resource management practices and the retention of non-governmental organizations' employees in Dadaab Sub-County. Regression analysis on the other and was undertaken to quantify the effect of each human resource management practices on the retention of employees in the NGOs under study.

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.1 outlines the correlation results for this study. The direction, strength and significance of the correlation between compensation, career management, employee work life balance, organizational communication and employee retention among NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub-County was tested. Pearson correlation coefficient was used in this study and it ranges from -1 to +1. The strength of these coefficients were interpreted using the criteria outlined by Sedgwick (2012) as follows: +/- .00 to .19 is very weak, +/- .20 to .39 is weak, +/- .40 to .59 is moderate, +/- .60 to .79 is strong while +/- .80 to 1.0 is very strong. The tests were conducted at the 95% confidence level or the 0.05 significance level. The rule of the thumb was that a calculated p value greater than the critical p value which was set at 0.05 for this study implied that the correlation between the variables was insignificant and vice versa.

The findings showed that compensation was strongly, positively and significantly correlated with employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County as shown by ($r=0.698$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). The findings also revealed that career management and employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County were positively and significantly correlated and that this correlation was strong given ($r=0.736$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). Similarly, employee work life balance was found to be strongly, positively and significantly correlated with employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County as supported by ($r=0.764$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). Last but not least, the study found that organizational communication had a strong, positive and significant correlation with employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County as supported by ($r=0.703$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). These findings implied that human resource management practices were positively and significantly associated with the retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County.

The findings agreed with that of Hong, Hao, Kumar et al. (2012) that compensation had a positive association with the retention of employees in organizations. The findings also supported that of Hlanganipai and Mazanai (2014) who found that career management practices and employee retention were positively correlated. The findings further support that of Kinyili (2015) who found a significant positive association between work-life balance practices and retention of staff. The study findings were also in agreement with that of Munish (2017) that there was a high correlation between feedback from supervisors and co-workers and the level of staff retention and also that of Ashfaq et al. (2012) that communication positively impacted on employee retention in organizations.

Table 4.1: Correlation Matrix

		Employee Retention	Compensation	Career Management	Employee Work life Balance	Organizational Communication
Employee Retention	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	69				
Compensation	Pearson Correlation	0.698**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000				
	N	69	69			
Career Management	Pearson Correlation	0.736**	0.616**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000			
	N	69	69	69		
Employee Work life	Pearson Correlation	.764**	.647**	.693**	1	

Balance	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000		
	N	69	69	69	69	
Organizational Communication	Pearson Correlation	0.703**	0.631**	0.665**	0.598**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	69	69	69	69	69

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

Source: Research Data (2019)

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was carried out in order to quantify the effect of compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication on employee retention among NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub-County. A multivariate regression analysis was conducted to show the combined effect of the four human resource management practices on employee retention among NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub-County.

Table 4.2 provides the model summary results. The results show that the human resource management practices under study namely compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication explained a considerable variance or changes in the retention of employees working in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. This is portrayed by the coefficient of determination (R square) of 0.724 which implied that 72.4% of the changes in employee retention in the NGOs under study. The results also implied that 27.6% of the changes in employee retention in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County were attributed to other factors not considered in this model.

Table 4.2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.851a	0.724	0.707	0.40967

a Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Communication, Employee Work life Balance, Compensation, Career Management

Source: Research Data (2019)

The ANOVA results as outlined in Table 4.3 were also evaluated in order to determine the significance of the model showing the relationship between human resource management practices and retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. The significance of the F statistic was assessed using the p values where if the significance value associated with the F value was less than 0.05, the model was considered significant, otherwise insignificant. The findings as indicated that the model used to link compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication to employee retention among NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub-County was significant given ($F=42.071$, $p=0.000$, $p<0.05$). These findings also implied that compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication were satisfactory predictor variables in explaining employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County.

Table 4.3: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.243	4	7.061	42.071	.000b
	Residual	10.741	64	0.168		
	Total	38.984	68			

a Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

b Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Communication, Employee Work Life Balance, Compensation, Career Management

Source: Research Data (2019)

The regression coefficients as presented in Table 4.4 show the regression estimates that assisted the researcher in establishing whether the four human resource management practices under study had a significant effect on the retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. This was facilitated by observing the t statistics and their associated p values. For a variable to be significant in explaining a dependent variable, the associated p value should be less than the critical p value which is set at 0.05 in this study.

Table 4.4: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.402	0.295		-1.365	0.177
	Compensation	0.201	0.100	0.191	2.014	0.048
	Career management	0.223	0.099	0.230	2.251	0.028
	Employee work life balance	0.340	0.097	0.349	3.508	0.001
	Organizational communication	0.260	0.113	0.220	2.297	0.025

a Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

Source: Research Data (2019)

The findings as presented in Table 4.4 revealed that compensation had a positive and significant effect on the retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County given ($\beta = 0.201$, $t = 2.014$, $p = 0.048$). These findings implied that a unit increase in compensation would result to increased employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County by 0.201 units holding all other factors constant. These findings concurred with that of Kitur (2015) who found that competitive payment packages motivated employees to remain working in a given organization. The findings were also in agreement with that of Irema (2015) who found that salaries as well as other benefits were a significant factor that motivated the employees to continue working in NGOs hence a strong positive relationship between salary and benefits and employee retention in these organizations. However, the findings were contrary to that of Ikunyua (2016) who found that financial rewards did not significantly affect employee retention in NGOs. The findings also contradicted that of Bakuwa, Chasimpha and Masamba (2013) who found that the intent to still remain working for NGOs was significantly influenced by the non-financial rewards that the employees received and not the financial package.

The study also found that career management positively and significantly affected the retention of employees in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County as shown by ($\beta = 0.223$, $t = 2.251$, $p = 0.028$). The findings implied that increasing career management by one unit would result to increased employee retention in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County by 0.223 units holding all other factors constant. The findings agreed with that of Hlanganipai and Mazanai (2014) who found that career management practices had a positive effect on employee retention. The findings were also in line with that of Wane (2016) who found that career development programs positively and significantly affected the retention of employees in NGOs. The findings however, contradicted that of Mensah (2014) who found a negative and insignificant relationship existed between career management practices and the retention of staff.

It was further established that the retention of employees in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County was also positively and significantly affected by employee work life balance as supported by ($\beta = 0.340$, $t = 3.508$, $p = 0.001$). The findings meant that a unit increase in employee work life balance would result to increased employee retention in the NGOs under study by 0.340 units holding all other factors constant. The findings were in line with that of Njenga (2014) who found that the implementation of work-life balance policies influenced the retention of employees in organizations positively. The findings were also in agreement with that of Kinyili (2015) who found that WLB practices affected employee motivation hence their retention in organizations. Nevertheless, the findings contradicted that of Ikunyua (2016) who found that there existed a weak insignificant positive relationship between work life balance and employee retention in NGOs.

Lastly, the study found that organizational communication had a positive significant effect on employee retention in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County given ($\beta = 0.260$, $t = 2.297$, $p = 0.025$). These findings implied that increasing organizational communication by one unit would result to enhanced employee retention in NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County by 0.260 units holding all other factors constant. The findings were in agreement with that of Nwagbara et al. (2013) who found that effective communication created an atmosphere of communication satisfaction that fostered low intention for employees to leave an organization. The findings also concurred with that of Ashfaq et al. (2012) who discovered that communication positively impacted on employee retention in organizations. The findings were also in agreement with that of Boateng (2010) who found that communication and information sharing practices significantly influenced employee retention.

Hence, the following model was fitted in showing the relationship between human resource management practices and retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County after obtaining the β coefficients associated with each variable.

Retention of Employees in the NGOs Operating in Dadaab Sub County = -0.402 + 0.201 Compensation + 0.223 Career Management + 0.340 Employee Work Life Balance + 0.260 Organizational Communication

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the study findings, the study concluded that human resource management practices in particular compensation, career management, employee work life balance and organizational communication played a great role in the retention of employees in the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County. The study also concluded that employee work life balance had the largest effect on the retention of employees working with the NGOs in this sub county while compensation had the least effect among the four HRM practices under study.

The study also concluded that the organizations had majorly emphasized on having fair and equitable salary and benefits policies, offering rewards and benefits that were proportionate with amount of work and also reviewing the compensation of their employees from time to time within their compensation systems. Regarding career management, the study concluded that the NGOs operating in Dadaab Sub County had placed more attention on providing staff training and career development on continuous basis, providing opportunities for career advancement besides ensuring that their career and learning opportunities were better than those offered in other organizations though this was done to just a moderate extent.

The study further concluded that the NGOs under study had greatly emphasized on caring for employees' welfare, health and safety, providing reasonable breaks for employee rest and recuperation, ensuring that their employees had the time and energy to fulfil their responsibilities outside work besides ensuring that they can easily take time off to deal with various home crisis within their work life balance policies.

It was concluded that the NGOs under study had strived to enhance effective organizational communication particularly by emphasizing on ensuring employees were informed on crucial organizational matters, ensuring regular communication with employees to get their feedback, adopting effective communication structures and channels, ensuring that supervisors offered guidance to their juniors besides ensuring employees were informed on information on departmental policies and goals.

The study concluded that if the NGOs in Dadaab Sub County were to witness significant retention of their employees, emphasis had to be placed on having competitive compensation systems, enhancing career management in these organizations, having in place favourable employee work life balance policies besides enhancing the level of organizational communication.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study recommends for a similar study in different environmental conditions in order establish whether there were regional differences in employee retention among NGOs in Kenya. The study also recommends a study which assesses the factors or challenges affecting the implementation of various human resource management in NGOs.

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