

# INFLUENCE OF SELECTED HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED SUGAR COMPANIES IN WESTERN KENYA

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**Abstract:** Human resource management practices have a significant role in the enhancement of employee performance. Several studies in Kenya have indicated low employee performance due to various reasons in the sugar industry. Organizations pursue proactively human resource practices and systems to capitalize on strength of this vital asset for sustained competitive advantage. In human resource management employee performance forms the basis of most organizations performance too. Therefore, the main objective of this research is to find out the influence of human resource practices on employee performance in selected sugar Companies in western Kenya. The research objectives are; employee on job training practices, employee recruitment practices, employee compensation practices and performance appraisal practices on employee performance in selected sugar companies western Kenya. Human capital, Expectancy theory, equity theory and goal theory underpinned the study. This study will adopt descriptive research design. The study population will involve all the employees in selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya who are 5000 in total. The sample size for this population would be 357 employees. Data will be collected by a questionnaire and analyzed using a statistical package for social sciences. Both descriptive and inferential statistics will be used in analysis of the data. The reliability of the research instrument will be ascertained by using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.7 whereas the validity of the research instrument will be determined by the test-retest technique. When the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient is 0.7 or above, the research instrument is said to be reliable. The findings of the study resulted in an understanding that on job training practices, employee recruitment practices, employee compensation and performance appraisal influence employee performance. Although some organizations have realized the importance of implementing measures in human resource practices, often they exactly not understand what to implement for long-term benefits. This is due to lack of understanding of what constitutes a comprehensive set of human resource practices. The findings of this study have a number of significant implications for managers. First, managers can use the results to assess what decision-making processes they can use to increase employee job performance. It also provides managers with an indication on areas that requires higher or lower investment to support responsiveness. The research findings will contribute to formulation of human resource practices policies by the sugar firms and The research findings will contribute to formulation of human resource management policies by the sugar firms and human resource professionals.

**Keywords:** Human Resource practice, On job Training Practices, Employee Job Performance, Sugar Companies.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Human resource management (HRM) practices have a significant role in the enhancement of employee performance (EP). Organizations pursue proactively HRM practices and systems to capitalize on strength of this vital asset for sustained competitive advantage (Jackson & Schuler, 2000). Becker, Huselid and Ulrich (2001) argued that because organizations consider human capital one of the most salient organizational assets in establishing and maintaining a competitive advantage, many are investing considerable resources to support employee and organizational development activities such as training and development, employee reward schemes, performance appraisal among other activities. The sugar industry worldwide is faced by complex problems affecting both developed and developing countries (FAO, 2012). Most of these problems result from poor HRM practices that greatly influence employee performance.

Human resource has been recognized as a strategic tool, essential to organizational profitability and sustainability. This realization has led to the new role of human resource managers as strategic partners in formulation and implementing organizational strategy (Myloni, Harzing & Mirza, 2004). Much research has demonstrated statistically relationships between measures of HRM practices and firm profitability (Guthrie, 2001). While these studies have been useful for demonstrating the potential value created through HRM practices, they have revealed very little regarding the processes through which this value is created (Wright & Gardner & Wright, 2003).

### Global Perspective of HRM Practices

This section examines some of the researches carried out on HRM practices and their influence on global scene. Employee performance is an area of focus for most organizations worldwide since employees are the prime movers of organizational activities (Proctor, 2014). Wright and McMahan, (2011) showed that use of specific HRM practices in local government organizations in the United Kingdom (UK) was associated with a greater degree of employee performance, workplace trust, commitment, effort, and perceived organizational performance. Armstrong (2010) posits that the HRM practices that impact on employee performance include human capital management, knowledge management, organization development, resourcing (human resource planning, recruitment and selection, and talent management), performance management, learning and development, reward management, employee relations and employee well-being.

In New Zealand Gruber (2010) surveyed corporations and found that their HRM practices were related to turnover and profitability. MacDuffie (2011) found that “bundles” of HRM practices were related to productivity and quality in his sample of worldwide auto assembly plants. Delery and Doty (2004) found significant relationships between HRM practices and accounting profits among a sample of banks. Youndt, Snell, Dean, and Lepak (2005) found that among their sample of manufacturing firms, certain combinations of HRM practices were related to operational performance indicators.

In Singapore Huselid, (2015) conducted research on the impact of human resource practices on employee performance pointed out that human resource practices is a paramount component required to perform effectively at their places of expertise. A research conducted by Partlow, (2010) on the role of core human resource practices on organizational performance, expounds that employee competence plays an important role in creating synergy between organizational units. The author points out that human resource practices plays an important role in promoting ones morale while performing his duties at the job place.

In Tanzania Balozi (2011) researched on the influence of HR practices on employee performance Public Service College (TPSC) and established that six dimensions of 6 HR practices, namely, career development, staffing, training and development, performance appraisal, incentives and employee relations, were positively related to employee performance, with training and development showing the strongest contribution to employee performance.

Human Resource Management (HRM) are a bundle of policies, programmes and plans which these organisations adopt with the objective of making full use of the people they employ (Coyle-Shapiro, Haque, Kissle, Pepper, Richardson, & Walker, 2013). Likewise, Minbaeva (2005) viewed HRM practices a set of practices used by organization to manage human resources through facilitating the development of competencies that are firm specific, produce complex social relation and generate organization knowledge to sustain competitive advantage.

Guest (2002) has argued that the Impact of HRM on performance depends upon worker's response to HRM practices, so the impact will move in direction of the perception of HRM practices by the employee. Ghebreorgis and Karstan (2007) said that the perception of the employees provide broader evaluation of HRM systems. He also evaluated a positive picture of HRM practices including Training, reward systems and disciplinary procedures. Qureshi *et al.*, (2007) concluded that HRM practices are positively correlated with employee's performance.

### **HRM Practices in Kenya**

In Kenya, human resource management practices is faced with its fair share of challenges that have hindered its success and development. There is a need for these challenges to be tackled so that organization can succeed in the modern day market. The main challenges of implementing HRMP in Kenya are limited resources for training, challenges from trade unions, recognition of human resource practices in contributing to business access and achievement, retrenchment and downsizing, organizational work ethic and limited research in the field of HRM (Caliskan, 2010). In this regard Nyakundi (2016) noted that with the exception of human resource in an organization, all the other resources present are rendered static (Okpara & Wynn, 2010).

Traditionally, the core functions of the human resource department in Kenya had been hiring and retaining staff. However, these core functions of the human resource were only emphasized in the private sector. This has however changed in recent days as public servants are called upon to be more accountable in service delivery. The changing dynamics of employment terms in the civil service has led many employees to regard public service employment as less lucrative thus leading to a mass exodus of talented staff from the public service. For this to be evaded, the human resource in the various departments should come up with best practices on how to recruit and retain the right staff (Nyakundi, 2016).

### **HRM Practices in Sugar Sector**

The sugar sector is one of the significant contributors to the marketed production for Agricultural crops. It plays a critical socio- economic role among the sugar cane farming communities. The government aims at converting the sugar Industry into a vibrant 5 commercial enterprise in line with the National Vision 2030. In this regard several sugar factories have been established, both private and public owned. Despite these investments, self sufficiency in sugar industry has remained illusive over the years as consumption continues to outstrip supply. There however exists potential for Kenya to become and retain self sufficiency in sugar production and also produce surplus for export (Kenya Sugar Board Strategic Plan, 2009 - 2014).

The employees have riddled the sugar companies with various human resources practices problems ranging from strikes and factory shut downs due to problems like poor pay for the employees and poor patronage based management systems resulting to poor internal management Reynolds, (2014). Due to political influences and general mismanagement, the sugar companies employed workers who did not really add value to the organizations but instead increased their operational costs Shabbir, (2014). The government introduced stricter supervision through performance-based contracts for the top management and this has made the organizations resort to massive retrenchment of employees who did not meet the skills and knowledge required by the sugar companies so as to manage their costs and compete effectively (Longenecker & Fink, 2011). Against the background of increasing competition from a liberalized market, and especially from the COMESA region, sugar firms need prudent human resource management practices that will enable them to rise above these problems that affect their capacity to compete effectively.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In Kenya, it has been reported that poor conditions affect employee performance in many manufacturing firms. According to the performance audit of manufacturing firms (2014), the poor working conditions of the employees put excessive pressure on the personnel and put them under severe stressful conditions hence affect their performance. Theoretical and empirical studies have shown that there are many push and pull factors affecting employee performance among them human resource management practices such as remuneration (Munyiva, 2015), career advancement (Gupta, S., Karpowicz, I., & Tareq, 2015), work-life balance (Kar and Misra, 2013) and work environment (Winterton, 2011). Human resource management practices have a significant role in the enhancement of employee performance. Organizations pursue proactively HRM practices and systems to capitalize on strength of this vital asset for sustained

competitive advantage (Jackson & Schuler, 2000). The sugar sector has faced a steady decline in its growth over the years, resulting in systematic increase in poverty among farmers. Kidero, (2004) cites decline has been on a myriad of problems including policy failures; poor institutional framework and inadequate training of the human resource and un-competitiveness of local sugar given the high cost of production more so employee strikes which are inevitable. Most studies that centre on the linkage between strategic human resource management practices and firm performance have been conducted in the United States and United Kingdom (Gerhart, 2005; Ericksen & Dyer, 2005). Previous studies done in Kenya are limited and hence a need for more evidence from the Sugar Industry to support the link between human resource management practices and employee performance. Other Studies conducted in this area include: Kiboi (2006) focused on management perception of performance contracts in State Corporation. Tuitoek (2008) studied performance appraisal practices among mass media in Nairobi. Lang'at (2006) evaluated factors that are necessary for the design of good performance contracts in state corporations. Obare (2006) focused on implementation of strategic plans in the public sector with reference to personnel management of the Government of Kenya. These studies have not considered employee performance management practices. It is important to conduct a study to determine employee performance management practices in Kenya Sugar Board. For any business organization to have a sustained competitive advantage, an effective performance management system needs to be put in place. Infusion of employee performance management practices is vital to improve performance. This research seeks to determine the influence of selected HRM practices on employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya.

### Research Objectives

i) To examine the influence of on job training practices on employees performance in Selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya.

### Research Hypothesis

**H<sub>01</sub>:** On-job training practices has no influence on employee performance in Selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya.

### Significance of the Study

The findings of study are of great importance in providing insight into the various human resource management practices needed to successfully perform in the manufacturing sector in Kenya. In particular, this study proposes to fill the gap in practices of human resource practices in the Kenya Sugar manufacturing Industry. The study will enable the management of the companies to appreciate the significant role played by human resource hence support it in improving employee performance. The Human resource managers will integrate the findings of this study in their planning. The study findings will also provide the employees of the sugar companies with an insight in the need to improve on their capability. Finally, the findings of the study will provide Kenya Sugar Board with information on how to develop and promote the Kenya Sugar Industry.

### Scope of the Study

The selected area of study will be selected sugar companies in Western Kenya. The study will be on the influence of human resource practices on employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya which will include Muhoroni, Butali, West Kenya and Nzoia sugar companies. It will be conducted between August 2019 and June 2020. The researcher will target a target population of 357 employees working in human resource departments in the sugar companies who will be selected using simple random sampling technique. Data will be collected from the sugar companies offices and will utilize all resources needed to achieve its objectives estimated at a cost of eighty thousand.

### Limitation of the Study

The study experienced challenges in terms of data collection in that the respondents wanted to know how the study would of importance but the researcher assured them the effect of the implementation in terms of their recommendation was going to help them improve their working conditions and it was to improve their performance. Some respondents felt not free in sharing their knowledge because of victimization but confidentiality was assured by the researcher in that the information shared was meant for academic purpose only. Lack of commitment or disclosure of some certain "sensitive" information from the financial institutions. The researcher may clarify the purpose of research to ease any tension

concerning research mission which may hence prompt reveal all the required information. Lack of cooperation from the various business fraternity. Cooperation was sought through obtaining the work schedules for respondents and hence enabled find them easily to cooperate in research. Respondents withheld information due to fear of being victimized. However, the researcher assured them that the information was kept confidential. Unwillingness of respondents to fill questionnaires. The researcher ensured consistency in conducting the respondents and made sure reminders were sent to them to fill the questionnaires. Respondents had a view of not obtaining any direct benefit from the research results. However the researcher assured them that they benefit in the long run when the pertinent issues are raised to management and acted upon

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

This study was guided by two theories in its investigation of whether employee management practices influence employee performance in Selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya. These theories will be discussed to help establish a link between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

### Human Capital Theory

Human capital theories have developed rapidly since Mincer (1958, 1962), Schultz (1960, 1961), Becker (1962) and Ben-Porath (1967), laid their foundations. Since training is regarded as an investment, it involves costs and benefits, which can be assessed by using financial criteria such as present value and the internal rate of return. Initially, Becker (1962) studied the impact on wage levels of two types of human capital operating in a perfectly competitive labor market that had no imperfections or distortions. One type of human capital can be transferred to other organizations, which encourages employees to cover the costs and to obtain all the benefits of training. The second type of human capital is regarded as specific to a company and cannot be transferred to other companies, which incentivizes employers and employees to share the costs and benefits of training (Becker, 1962). Human capital theory is based on neo-classical theories of labor markets, education and economic growth. It takes for granted that employees are productive resources and attempts to find out whether highly trained staff are more productive than other personnel (Simon, 2008). According to Garcia (2005), as employees do not obtain considerable pay increases due to increased productivity after attending specific training sessions, they will not be motivated to finance their own training requirements. On the other hand, companies will be keen to cover these training costs, as they will obtain almost all the returns from the enhanced productivity produced by the new skills generated (Garcia, 2005).

### Empirical Review

This involved the review of various studies relating the specific objectives under the study namely on job training practices, employee recruitment practices, employee compensation on employees and performance appraisal practices.

### On Job Training Practices

Gordon (1992), defines on-the-job-training as the planned and systematic modification of behavior through learning events, activities and programs which result in the participants achieving the levels of knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities to carry out their work effectively.

Training refers to a planned activity aimed at improving employee's performance by helping them realize an obligatory level of understanding or skill through the impartation of information (Forgacs, 2009). Armstrong (2009) on the other hand defines training as an application of the formal process to impart knowledge and skills that are pivotal to the realization of high output levels. It is the process of increasing knowledge and skills of employees required for the efficient performance of a particular job.

Training is focusing on fixing a specific issue. Training is related with current performance and progress of an employee (Miller, 2006). Training is anything offering learning experience (Paul & Anantharaman, 2003). Training helps employees to be more specific with their job and organization and, as a result, increases employee job satisfaction and makes them work better. In today's business world, employee skills which are necessary to do their job are only possible through training.

This involves training and development of workforces and managers (Briscoe 1995). Trainings are often used to close the gap between current performances and expected future performance. Training falls under HRD function which has been argued to be an important function of HRM (Weil & Woodall 2005). Amongst the functions activities of this function is the identification of the needs for training and development and selecting methods and programmes suitable for these needs, plan how to implement them and finally evaluating their outcome results (McCourt & Eldridge 2003). It is worth noting that, as researchers continue with their quest into the training research area, they also continue their arguments into its importance. Some of these researchers argue that the recognition of the importance of training in recent years has been heavily influenced by the intensification of competition and the relative success of organizations where investment in employee development is considerably emphasized (Beardwell *et al.*, 2004).

Related to the above, Beardwell *et al.*, (2004) add that technological developments and organizational change have gradually led some employers to the realization that success relies on the skills and abilities of their employees, thus a need for considerable and continuous investment in training and development. As one of the major functions within an organization, on-the-job-training has for long been recognized and thus attracted great research attention by academic writers (Gordon 1992, Beardwell, Holden & Claydon 2004). This has yielded a variety of definitions of on job training.

Most of the companies train their employees in such a manner that would help them to retain them throughout their careers. This kind of training can lead to high levels of motivation and job satisfaction by the employees, who actually see the opportunity they are given (Chiaburu & Tekleab, 2005). Training offered to employees may help them reduce their anxiety or frustration, brought on by work demands that they are not familiar with and are lacking the skills to handle influencively (Chen *et al.*, 2004). Although there has been no direct link in the literature between training and job satisfaction, Rowden (2002) and Rowden and Conine (2005) propose that training may be used as a tool to increase job satisfaction. Tsai *et al.*, (2007) found that employees committed to learning showed a higher level of job satisfaction, with a positive influence on their performance. Most of researches including Colombo and Stanca (2008), Sepulveda (2005) and Konings and Vanormelingen (2009) showed that training is a fundamental and influential instrument in successful accomplishment of the firm's goals and objectives, resulting in higher productivity. But there is one important thing which should be taken into account: training leads to productivity if the unobserved heterogeneity and potential endogeneity are controlled.

Training may influence workplace satisfaction directly by raising output per worker, or be measured indirectly through its impact on the wage on the assumption that this is equal to the marginal productivity of labour. However, this is not the case if there are imperfections in the product or labour markets. Deaden *et al.*, (2000, 2006) were able to measure the impact on productivity directly using a panel of British industries over the period 1983 to 1996. They found out that a one percentage point increase in training was associated with an increase in value added per hour of about 0.6 per cent but an increase in wages of only 0.3 per cent, consistent with employer monopoly power in the labour market, so using wages as a proxy for productivity would tend to under-estimate actual productivity. This is because training increased the level of job satisfaction among employees, raising their performance. Over-education or overskilling could also moderate the influence on job satisfaction.

Mutua, Karanja and Namusonge (2012) indicated that training is an important part of the various HRM practices, which are used for retention and development of employees. The different kinds of training given to employees, include on-the-job training, vocational training, general and specific training. They found that satisfaction with short-term rewards and long-term prospects were far more influential in determining overall satisfaction than contentment with social relationships or work intensity.

Battu, Belfield and Sloane (2000) found a negative correlation between training and job performance. Further, they established that overqualified workers had less job satisfaction than the less qualified. Green and Tsitsianis (2005) in a similar study found from a cross-section of employees that job satisfaction was lower for untrained employees. Verhaest and Omev (2004) reported that untrained staff were less satisfied, more mobile, participated less in training and gained less than trained employees. On the contrary, Buchel (2002) found no significant difference in job satisfaction between the over-educated and the adequately educated workers in his study of German firms. Training raises staff morale, reduces absenteeism and labour turnover, as training employees find their jobs interesting, satisfying and prefer to retain them (Saleemi, 2009)

### Employee On Job Training Practices and Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the final fulfillments of an employee with respect to meeting certain targets within the prescribed period of time. Gibson *et al.*, (2010) argue that employee performance can be perceived to be the ability of an employee to realize high profit, quality production, large market share for the product produced and the ability to survive in a competitive field. Koontz and Donnell (2013) see employee performance as the manifestation of the productivity of the employees in terms of revenue, profit, growth, development and expansion of organization. Enhancing performance requires a balance between employee motivation and achieving organization's goals and objectives. Proper human resource management practices will by extension result in managing organizational performance. It is also vital to note that employee performance determines survival of organization in a competitive world of business

#### Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a concise description of the phenomenon under study accompanied by a graphical or visual depiction of the major variables of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). According to Young (2009), a conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation that shows the relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. The study will be based on human resource practices as independent variables and organizational performance as a dependent variable.

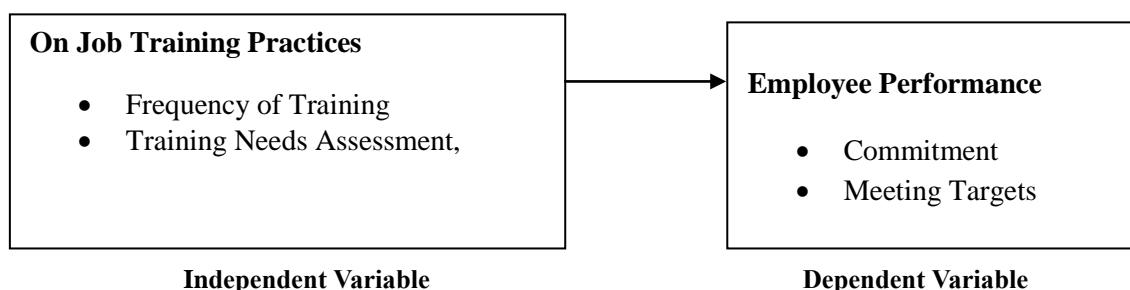


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework.

#### Critique of Existing Literature of the Study

A study by Astrauskaitė (2011) indicated human resource practices has been broadly researched yet still there are several issues that persist among many researchers like misunderstandings for reasons being varied definitions, complexity in measurement because of plentiful instruments, and inconvenience between measurement instruments and the sample researched. Ahmet (2010), Ghosh and Ghorpade (1991) denote that despite the number of research on the human resource practices concept, theories related to this concept are not highly developed and furthermore most are generated from motivation theories. Mulinge and Mueller (1998) stated that human resource practices studies have mainly utilized one or a combination of three broad theoretical approaches. Nurullah (2010) explained that more studies of employees performance have been published globally, examining the effect of different psycho-socio-economic factors on employee performance. These have examined the role of self-esteem, gender, education, income and happiness. According to fulfilment theory as stated by James and Hannah (2013) it measures performance in terms of rewards a person receives or the extent to which one's needs are satisfied. Further it is thought that there is a positive relationship between employee performance and the actual satisfaction of the expected needs. It approaches employee performance as willingness and a function of what a person receives as well as what one feels he should receive because as there could be considerable difference in the actual and expectations of persons.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Research design

The study adopted descriptive survey research design since it explained the relationship between the study variables. According to Sekaran and Bougie, (2011) descriptive study is undertaken in order to ascertain and be able to describe the characteristics of the variable of interest in a situation hence it is relevant in this study. A research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection, measurement and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy and procedure (Kothari, 2010). On the other hand Oyando, (2014) asserts that it is the basic plan that indicates an overview of the activities that are necessary to execute the research.

### Target Population

Population refers to the entire group of people or objects having common observable characteristics and is of interest to the researcher (Cooper & Schinders, 2008). The study targeted 5000 employees working in the sugar companies namely Muhoroni, Butali, Westkenya and Nzoia sugar.

### Sampling Frame

In order to get a representative sample the study included all employees who are directly linked to identify key informants. The sampling frame refers to the complete list of all the members of the population that the researcher wishes to draw the study sample from (Currivan & Rose, 2012). The sampling frame in this study was derived from western Sugar companies.

**Table 3.1: Sampling Frame**

<b>Name of the department</b>	<b>Number of employees</b>
Human Resource Muhoroni	1000
Human Resource Butali	1200
Human Resource Westkenya	1300
Human Resource Nzoia	1500
<b>Total</b>	<b>5000</b>

### Staff Establishment Report Muhoroni, Butali, WestKenya & Nzoia Sugar, 2014.

#### Sample Size and Sampling technique

In calculating the sample size the study will use Morgan & Krejcie 1970 table that indicates a sample size for a given population which according to population of 5000 the sample size is 357 as shown in appendix five. Kothari, (2009) asserts that a sample size is a definite plan for obtaining a sample from the sampling frame. Sampling is the process by which a relatively small number of object or event is selected and analysed in order to find something about entire population from which it is selected (Wanjohi, 2010). The study will adopt simple random sampling so as to give equal chances of the respondents to participate in the study.

#### Research Instruments

The study used questionnaire as a tool for collecting the data. The primary data was gathered using questionnaire for closed-ended and open ended questions to collect data from respondents. The advantage of using this type of instrument is the ease that it accords the study during the analysis (Okello, 2015). The information that was obtained from questionnaire was free from bias of researchers influence thus accurate and valid data will be gathered (Festing, 2017). A five point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree) was used for all the constructs with 5 being the highest. The Likert scale measures the level of agreement or disagreement and is good in measuring perception, attitude, values and behaviour. The Likert scale has scales that assist in converting the qualitative responses into quantitative values (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) Secondary data was gathered from past published scholarly articles. The results was presented in form of tables.

#### Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires was sent to the respondents attached with a forwarding letter from the University. Follow ups will be made and the fully completed questionnaires was later picked from the respondents. Completed questionnaires was collected after completion of the exercise is over in a period of two weeks. The questionnaires will be distributed to the respondents by hand delivery.

#### Pilot test

Pre-testing of the primary data instrument will be done using a small representative sample based on convenience to test the adequacy of the research instruments (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). A pilot study aims at showing the validity and reliability of the study (Okello, 2015). In this study the researcher used a pilot group of 20 respondents from Nzoia sugar company to facilitate identification of the potential errors or biasing effect of different questions and procedures who will not form part of the sample. The pilot helped to discover the clarity and objectivity of the chosen questions and to correct



inconsistencies arising from instrument, which ensured that they measured what was proposed (Nyumba, 2015). This was done by test retest to establish reliability of the research instruments.

### Reliability

Reliability of an instrument being the consistency of an instrument in measuring what it is intended to measure was established by first ensuring internal constancy approach followed by carrying out a pilot study. A questionnaire is considered reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is greater than 0.70 (Katou, 2008). The four independent variables and the dependent variable were subjected to reliability test using SPSS and the results obtained are shown in Table 4.1. The results indicated that all the variables obtained had Cronbach's Alpha greater than 0.7 thereby achieving the recommended 0.7 for internal consistence of data (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008).

**Table 4.1: Reliability test**

Variable	Cronbach alpha
Employee performance	.852
On Job training practices	.769

### Validity

Data validity is the degree to which a test measures that which it is supposed to measure (Porter, 2010). Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) define validity as the degree to which the research results obtained from the analysis of the data represent the phenomenon under study. According to Table 4.2 Kaiser -Meyer -Olkin measure of sampling adequately indicated KMO value of greater than 0.5 meaning thereby that the sample size was good enough to treat the sampling data as normally distributed. Bartlett's test sphericity which tested the null hypothesis item to item correlation matrix based on the responses received from respondents for all the effective variables was an identity matrix. The Bartlett's test was evaluated through chi-square test having as shown in Table 4.2 for the entire variables and were all significant at 0.000 level of significant, indicating that null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 4.2: Test for Validity**

Factors	KMO test	Barlett's test of sphericity		
		Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Employee performance	0.784	171.40	4	0.000
On Job training practices	0.954	126.46	4	0.031

### Data processing and analysis

Before processing the responses, the filled questionnaires was edited for completeness and consistency. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Primary data was analysed in percentages form and presented in table format. Descriptive analyses is important since they provide the foundation upon which correlational and experimental studies emerge. They also provide clues regarding the issues that should be focused on leading to further studies (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Descriptive analysis was used due to numerical data gathered using closed-ended questions. Correlation and regression analysis was also be used to determine the relationship of the variables. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer software will be used for analysis to generate data for subsequent data analysis and it has descriptive statistics features that assisted in variable response comparison to give clear indications of response frequencies. Data was collected and coded to enable responses to be grouped into various categories where descriptive statistics will be used. Tables were used appropriately to present data collected for ease of understanding and analysis. Data analysis is an examination of what has been collected and making deduction and inferences (Kothari, 2010). Regression analysis was used and the regression model was as follows.

$$Y_{SD} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where

$X_1$  = Employee Training Practices

$X_2$  = Employee Recruitment and Selection Practices

$X_3$  = Employee Compensation Practices

$X_4$  = Employee working Environment Practices

EP = Employee Performance

$\alpha$  = the constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4 = \beta_3$  = Regression constants

$\epsilon$  = Error term

#### 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

##### Response Rate

In this study, out of a total of 357 questionnaires that were distributed to the sampled respondents, 307 of them were filled and returned. Therefore, 307 were correctly filled and these were the once used for the analysis, which made up a response rate of 86.0%.

**Table 4.3: Questionnaire Return Rate**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Returned	307	86.0
	Not Returned	50	14.0
	Total	357	100.0

The study established that the researcher employed various strategic techniques that were attributed to the high response rate. For example, the researcher recruited a research assistant who was tasked with the distribution and collection of the questionnaires

##### Background Information

This section contains the analysis of information on respondent's gender, age, level of education, and length of service in the organization. The main purpose of this was to find out any trend from the respondents profile that was directly linked to the variables of the study.

##### Gender of the respondents

The study sought to establish the gender of the respondents in the study, Table 4.4 shows the distribution of the respondents according to their gender.

**Table 4.4: Gender of the Respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male	182	59.3	0.945	.782
Female	125	40.7		

According to the study findings, majority of the respondents were male 59.3% while female respondents were 40.7% with a deviation of 0.782. The study attributed this to the existing gender gap in the employment in the public sector in Kenya which is predominantly dominated by the male gender.

##### Age in years

The study sought to establish the age in years of the respondents in the study, Table 4.5 shows the distribution of the respondents according to their age.

**Table 4.5: Age of the Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
25-34 years	37	12.0	2.24	1.161
35-44 years	133	43.2		
45-54 years	86	28.0		
55 years and above	51	16.2		

### Level of Education of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the level of education of the respondents in the study, Table 4.6 shows the distribution of the respondents according to their education level.

**Table 4.6: Level of education of the Respondents**

Age	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Certificate	35	11.6	1.783	0.762
Diploma	103	33.5		
University	137	44.6		
Masters	32	10.3		

### Distribution of Respondents by Length of Service in the organization.

The study also sought to establish the working experience of the respondents. This was very important because previous studies indicated that there was strong relationship between experience and employee performance. Table 4.6 shows the findings.

**Table 4.7: Years of service in the organization**

Age	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Deviation
Less than 1 year	33	10.8	3.21	1.436
1-3 years	119	38.6		
4-6 years	93	30.3		
7-9 years	46	15.1		
10 years and above	16	5.2		

### Descriptive Statistics of the Variables

The study used the parameters where: 1= Strongly Disagree (SD), 2 = Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U) , 4 = Agree (A) and 5= Strongly agree (SA). A summary of the findings is as shown in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics of on-job Training Practices**

	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Max	Min
My organization provides training opportunities to meet the changing needs of my workplace.	307	35 (11.4)	39 (12.8)	56 (18.3)	138 (45.0)	39 (12.5)	4.13	1.192	5	1
Training enhances performance.	307	35 (11.4)	31 (10.0)	88 (28.7)	115 (37.4)	38 (12.5)	4.09	1.113	5	1
I have training opportunities to learn and grow.	307	25 (8.0)	56 (18.3)	84 (27.3)	107 (34.9)	35 (11.4)	4.01	1.142	5	1
Most training programmes able to fulfill my expectation of needs	307	53 (17.3)	81 (26.3)	107 (34.9)	52 (17.0)	14 (4.5)	3.99	1.089	5	1
Most of training programmes are practical and do relate to the actual problems at work.	307	35 (11.4)	55 (17.7)	86 (28.0)	90 (29.4)	41 (13.5)	4.02	1.136	5	1

My organization provides training opportunities to meet the changing needs of my workplace(mean =4.13; std dev. = 1.192).Training enhances performance(mean =4.09; std dev. = 1.113).I have training opportunities to learn and grow(mean =4.01; std dev. = 1.142).Most training programmes able to fulfill my expectation of needs(mean =3.99; std dev. = 1.089).Most of training programmes are practical and do relate to the actual problems at work(mean =4.42; std dev. = 1.136).

## Employee Performance

Table 4.12: Descriptive Statistics on Employee Performance

	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Max	Min
Employees in our organization are able to meet target by producing the units allocated	307	32 (10.4)	40 (13.1)	46 (14.9)	106 (34.6)	83 (27.0)	4.21	1.142	5	1
Employee performance is indicated by the number of units produced	307	31 (10.0)	43 (13.9)	76 (24.9)	100 (32.5)	57 (18.7)	4.03	1.066	5	1
The employees time taken per task is an indicator of performance	307	35 (11.4)	54 (17.6)	86 (28.0)	91 (29.5)	41 (13.5)	4.16	0.944	5	1
Employee performance enhances profits	307	41 (13.4)	47 (15.2)	58 (18.8)	89 (29.1)	72 (23.5)	4.02	0.865	5	1

Employees in our organization are able to meet target by producing the units allocated (mean =4.21; std dev. = 1.142) Employee performance is indicated by the number of units produced (mean =4.03; std dev. = 1.066) The employees time taken per task is an indicator of performance (mean =4.16; std dev. = 0.944) Employee performance enhances profits (mean =4.02; std dev. = 0.865)

## Inferential Statistics Analysis

## Correlation between onjob training and employee Performance.

The results of correlation analysis are as shown in Table 4.13. The findings indicated that there was a strong positive and significant relationship between On Job training practices and employee performance. This is depicted by a Pearson correlation coefficient  $r=0.961$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.001 < 0.05$  which was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that improved On Job training practices results in increase of employee performance. There was strong positive and significant relationship between employee recruitment practices and employee performance with a Pearson correlation coefficient  $r=0.818$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.037 < 0.05$  which was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that increased Employee recruitment practices results in an increase of employee performance. The results indicated that there was strong positive and significant relationship between compensation and employee performance. This is depicted by a Pearson correlation coefficient  $r=0.986$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.00 < 0.05$  which was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that improved employee compensation results in an increase in employee performance. There was strong positive and significant relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance with a Pearson correlation coefficient  $r=0.857$ ,  $p\text{-value}=0.021 < 0.05$  which was significant at 0.05 level of significance. This implies that increased work place ergonomics practices results in an increase of employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya.

Table 4.13: Correlation analysis of the study variables

Correlations		Employee performance	On Job training practices	Employee recruitment practices	Employee compensation	Performance appraisal
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)	1				
On Job training practices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)	<b>.961</b> <b>.001</b>	1			
Employee recruitment practices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)	<b>.818*</b> <b>.037</b>	.863* .007	1		
Employee compensation	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)	<b>.986*</b> <b>.000</b>	.963 .003	.859* .027	1	
Performance appraisal practices	Pearson Correlation Sig. (1-tailed)	<b>.857*</b> <b>.021</b>	.739 .000	.964 .005	.671* .042	1
	N	307	307	307	307	307

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

### Collinearity Tests

Collinearity is the measure of the degree of association between the variables. Serial correlation was performed using the Durbin Watson test statistic. The summary of the findings is as shown in Table 4.14.

**Table 4.14: Summary table on Collinearity Tests**

Strategy	Collinearity statistics
On Job training practices	1.673
Employee recruitment practices	1.829
Employee Compensation	1.720
Performance appraisal practices	1.978
Durbin Watson (D-W) statistic=1.841	
Employee performance	1.892

Study findings shows that there is a positive autocorrelation as depicted by (D-W=1.841 < 2). The result of the Durbin Watson (D-W) statistic measure was 1.841 which is less than the threshold of 2. This shows that the dependent variables and the independent variables are positively autocorrelated.

**Table 4.15: Correlations of On Job training practices on Employee Performance**

		Employee performance	On Job training practices
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.461**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.013
	N	307	307
On Job training practices	Pearson Correlation	.461**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	
	N	307	307

### Testing Hypothesis

This section of the research provides information about testing of the research hypotheses.

#### Hypothesis 1: On-job training practices and employee performance

$H_{01}$  On-job training practices have no influence on employee performance in Selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya.

**Table 4.19: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.510 <sup>a</sup>	.429	.827	1.70112

From the study findings in Table 4.19, the value of R-square is 0.429. This implies that, 42.9% of variation of employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya was explained by on job training practices.

**Table 4.20: ANOVA Test**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1149.030	1	1149.030	397.067	.002 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	237.291	306	2.894		
	Total	1386.321	307			

a. Dependent Variable: employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), On job training practices

From the findings in Table 4.20, at 0.05 level of significance the ANOVA test indicated that in this model the independent variable namely; on-job training practices is important in predicting of employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya as indicated by significance value=0.002 which is less than 0.05 level of significance ( $p=0.002 < 0.05$ ).

**Table 4.21: Coefficients Model**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	4.476	.712		6.285	.000
On job training practices	.510	.026	.910	19.927	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

From Table 4.21, the study findings revealed that on job training practices had significant influence on employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya (t-statistic=19.927, p-value=0.002< 0.05). Therefore at 5% level of significance the null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that on job training practices have significance relationship with employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya. Thus, for every unit increase in on job training there was a corresponding increase on employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya by 0.510.

**Table 4.31: Regression ANOVA Table**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5826.804	4	1456.701	33.122	.021 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	13721.669	303	43.980		
	Total	19548.473	307			

a. Predictors: (Constant), On-job training practices, employee recruitment practices, compensation, and performance appraisal practices

b. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

The ANOVA test is used to determine whether the model is important in predicting the employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya. At 0.05 level of significance the ANOVA test indicated that in this model the independent variables namely; On-job training practices, employee recruitment practices, compensation and performance appraisal practices variables were predictors of employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya as indicated by significance value=0.021 which is less than 0.05 level of significance ( $p=0.021 < 0.05$ ).

**Table 4.32: Regression Model coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.522	.501		5.038	.000
On-job training practices	.315	.078	.473	4.045	.040
Employment recruitment practices	.200	.053	.239	3.779	.007
Compensation	.731	.173	.857	4.226	.000
Performance appraisal practices	.328	.109	.585	3.019	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

Letting  $Y$  be employee performance,  $X_1$  be on-job training practices,  $X_2$  be employment recruitment practices,  $X_3$  Compensation practices, and  $X_4$  be performance appraisal practices, using the regression coefficients in Table 4.31, we have;

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

$$Y = 2.522 + 0.315 * X_1 + 0.200 * X_2 + 0.731 * X_3 + 0.328 * X_4$$

From the equation above when on-job training practices is increased by one unit employee performance will increase by 0.315, a unit increase in employee recruitment practices will result to 0.200 increase in employee performance, a unit increase in compensation will result to 0.731 increase in employee performance, and finally a unit increase in performance appraisal practices will result to 0.328 increase in employee performance.

## 5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary of the Findings

The main objective of the research was to determine the influence of selected human resource practices on employee job performance in selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya.

### Influence On Job Training Practices on Employees Performance

The study findings indicate that the value of variation of employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya was explained by on job training practices. At a level of significance the ANOVA test indicated that in this model the independent variable namely; on-job training practices is important in predicting of employee performance in selected sugar companies in Western Kenya as indicated by significance value.

### Conclusions of the study

Influence of selected human resource practices on employee job performance in selected Sugar Companies in Western Kenya was studied in terms of on job training practices, employee recruitment practices, compensation practices, performance appraisal practices and their influence. The study will make a number of important contributions into sugar companies. The findings of the study resulted in an understanding that among the human resource practices on job training practices, employee recruitment practices, compensation and performance appraisal practices respectively have influence on employee job performance.

The intention of this study is to produce relevant results which are practical for organizations. The findings of the study indicate human resource practices if controlled are important drivers to employee job performance. In particular, organizations need to enhance and manage their human resource practices for them to survive.

Although some organizations have realized the importance of implementing measures in human resource practices, often they exactly not understand what to implement for long-term benefits. This is due to lack of understanding of what constitutes a comprehensive set of human resource practices. The findings of this study have a number of significant implications for managers. First, managers can use the results to assess what decision-making processes they can use to increase employee job performance. It also provides managers with an indication on areas that requires higher or lower investment to support responsiveness.

The practitioners may gain more understanding as well as direction in the academic body of knowledge, which involves employee job performance. The findings of the study will also assist policy makers in providing justification for allocation of resources and maintenance.

### Recommendations

In today's dynamic market environment employee job performance is perceived to be a significant. The study therefore recommends that for organizations to be more competitive so as to cope with more highly changing environments there is need in enhancing their human resource practices. The study recommends that firms should streamline with all parties in human resource practices matters in order to improve employee job performance. In growing technological advances and the emergence of the global information organization there is need to embrace technology like human resource management information systems in streamlining human resource practices. Hence a more in-depth analysis is required to further the findings about human resource practices, therefore further research is recommended to confirm the findings of the study in developing economy. Based on the findings, sugar companies should focus on human resource practices as a key element of employee job performance.

**Recommendations for future studies**

- i. The research focused on selected public sugar companies so it can also be done on a wider perspective to include all sugar companies in Kenya.
- ii. The relationship between strategic human resource practices and employee job performance in Kenya.
- iii. Across-boundary research on other human resource practices other than what was mentioned. In future studies should collect data from a larger population and compare with other firms to further validate or extend theories and variables identified in this study.

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