

## **THE EFFECT OF MOTIVATION PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA**

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of motivation practices on employee performance in public secondary schools in Kenya. This study was guided by Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The target population consisted of 23,147 employees in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study adopted a mixed research design. A sample size of 393 respondents was used through stratified random sampling. The strata represented all the teachers. The instruments used in the study were the questionnaires. Structured questionnaires were developed and pretested; a pilot study was conducted to help establish content validity and reliability of the instrument. Content validity of the instruments was verified by experts from the university department while reliability of the research instruments was assessed using Cronbach Alpha coefficient that needed to be at least 0.7 in social sciences. From the findings, the reliability test of motivation practices test was 0.760, hence the research instrument was reliable. Both descriptive and inferential statistics that included the mean, frequencies, correlation and regression analysis were used. From the study findings, the correlation between motivation practices and employee performance in Public secondary schools in Kenya was positive and significant. This means there is a statistically significant positive relationship between motivation practices and employee performance. The study encourages management of public secondary schools to proactively motivate teachers to improve their performance. The study was done in public secondary schools in Kenya.*

**Keywords:** *Motivation Practices, employee performance, public secondary schools*

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### **Background**

Motivation and performance are very important factors that greatly influence the organization success and achievements. If changes occur in external environment, it therefore becomes important for an institution to adopt that change because it may motivate it to gain a competitive advantage over other institutions. Therefore, skilled and competent employees are assets that are needed most in a school (Chung, 2017). Motivation plays an important role in the institution because it increases the productivity of employees and its goals can be achieved in an efficient way. The behavior of employees can change through motivation. From situation to situation, the level of motivation differs within an individual (Kirusa and Mukuru, 2018).

According to Cross (2017), employee remuneration includes all forms of pays packages given to the employees arising from rendered services. Remuneration management policy is one of the elements organizations use to

attract and retain its most valuable and worthy assets. Literature has identified various human resources management practices which are considered to be the best practices for retaining and motivating human capital in an organization. A good rewards management practice is one of such practices. Cross (2017) further notes that Human Resources are the key drivers of the prosperity and success of any institution. Unless the organization offers salary, rewards and due benefits to its employees, such an institution will not be able to achieve the highest level of efficiency and competency of its employees.

Organizations exhibit higher performance when they recruit and acquire employees possessing competencies consistent with the organization's strategies. Recruitment is central to any management process and its failure can increase difficulties for any organization including an adverse effect on its profitability and inappropriate levels of staffing or skills (Armstrong and Taylor, 2018). The basic idea in selection process is to solicit maximum possible information about the candidates to ascertain their suitability for employment and given the fact that there are factors which affect the seeking of such information (Prasad, 2005). Armstrong (2018) observes that candidates can be selected using different methods in order to assess their suitability for a certain role. These methods include; individual interviews, interviewing panels, selection boards, and assessment centers. Despite a well-drawn plan on recruitment and selection and involvement of qualified management team, recruitment processes adopted by organizations can face significant obstacles in implementation.

It is widely believed that money helps to stimulate job efforts. This is particularly true of most of the developing countries where physiological needs of most workers are yet to be satisfied. Money is instrumental in achieving workers' desired needs and in obtaining high order needs such as recognition in the society and in buying essential and luxury goods and services that lead to comfortable life. One major reason why people work is to earn income in money terms. This is needed to meet some personal and domestic need such as, clothing, feeding, and payment of rent, school fees etc. Salaries have a large motivating tendency in it. It is not the increase in salaries, wages that only matters but also, prompt and regular payment of it.

According to Perce and Robinson (2012) reward power is available when the manager confers rewards in return for desired actions and outcomes. Rewards systems are often implemented within organizations as a key management tool that can contribute to a firm's effectiveness by influencing individual behavior and motivating employees at work (du Pessi, 2017). Organizations that tend to focus on financial rewards, and non-financial rewards have become increasingly being overlooked (du Pessi, 2017). Rewards can be extrinsic or intrinsic, extrinsic rewards are tangible rewards and these rewards are external to the job or task performed by the employee. External rewards can be in terms of salary/pay, incentives, bonuses, promotions, job security, among others. Intrinsic rewards are intangible rewards or psychological rewards like appreciation, meeting the new challenges, positive and caring attitude from employer, and job rotation after attaining the goal (du Pessi, 2017).

To motivate behavior, the organization needs to provide an effective reward system. A reward strategy is a declaration of intent that defines what the organization wants to do in the longer term to develop and implement reward policies, practices and processes that will further the achievement of its business goals and meet the needs of the stakeholders (Armstrong, 2018). An effective reward system has four elements: rewards need to satisfy the basic needs of all employees; rewards need to be included in the system and be comparable to ones offered by a competitive organization in the same area; rewards need to be available to people in the same positions and be distributed fairly and equitably (Goel, 2018). A reward is a work outcome of positive value to the individual (Armstrong, 2018). A reward strategy should enhance commitment and engagement and provide more opportunities for the contributions of people to be valued and recognized.

International Labour Organization (2017) recommended that there should be a clear scheme of service and promotion procedures and those measures should be taken to achieve greater commitment through changes in the teaching environment. The governments should seriously consider training, working and living conditions of teachers. However this is not the case since the employment policies laid down by the employer about how certain issues should be undertaken have been neglected. Some of these crucial issues which have greatly demotivated teachers includes the issue of upward mobility. The employer in most cases does not adhere to the laid or written policies on how many years a teacher should work or stay in one job group before he is moved to the next, neither do they follow clear procedures supposed to be used in doing the same. This has become more serious where some teachers stay in one job group or even retire before they become anything better than a class teacher.

The relevance of job satisfaction and motivation are very crucial to the long-term growth of any educational system around the world. They probably rank alongside professional knowledge and skills, center competencies, educational resources and strategies as the veritable determinants of educational success and performance. Professional knowledge, skills and center competencies occur when one feels effective in one's behavior (Bate and Robert, 2018).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Knowing why employees are motivated is important to understand what drives them to work and realize high job satisfaction levels. Since job satisfaction is important for employee's feelings and their job environment, it should therefore be a priority for managers to understand this concept in order for individuals to grow. Chung (2017) argues that while many jobs have problems that are inherent to the position, it is the problems that are inherent to the person that normally cause us to lose focus from our main task of getting results. These motivational problems could arrive from personality conflicts, family pressures as well as lack of understanding on how behavior affects other people. It is important to note that when something breaks the psychological contract between the employee and the organization, it is imperative for the leader to find out what is the exact problem is by looking beyond the symptoms, finding a solution, focusing on the problem, and then implementing a plan of action (Chung, 2017).

Existing literature indicates that factors such as employee motivation, friendly leadership, employee training, healthy work environment, attractive remuneration as well as school culture build a sense of belongingness among employees especially in a school setting which prevents them moving from one institution to another and subsequently improves their job performance which is important for smooth and effective functioning. Hair et al., (2018) emphasized the importance of employee job satisfaction as a factor influencing employee work performance. He argues that happy workers are not necessarily productive workers. There are other factors that influence productivity in an organization. This argument is in line with Peter (2016) observation that satisfied employees are not necessarily productive employees. Cross (2018), however, suggests that the opposite might be more accurate that productivity will probably lead to satisfaction.

Sang (2018), touches on the feeling employees have of losing control over their work when they argue that it has become a challenge for organizations to create an organizational culture where all employees would want to work to their full potential and where they can take initiative and act as the owner of the institution. They claim that organizations that can create such a culture will attract and keep the best and motivated employees who perform highly and hence generate a competitive advantage. However, there is still much confusion about which factors really influence employee performance. This study focuses on effect of motivation practices on employee performance in Public Secondary schools in Kenya.

## **Research Objective of the Study**

The aim of the study was to establish the effect of motivation practices on employee performance of public secondary schools in Kenya.

## **Research Question**

What is the effect of motivational practices on employee performance in public secondary schools in Kenya?

## **Research Hypothesis**

To achieve the research objectives, the following null hypothesis was posited and was tested at 0.05 significance level:

**H<sub>01</sub>**: Motivational practices does not have a significant effect on employee performance in Public secondary schools in Kenya.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Employee's performance refers to the observable behaviors and actions which explain how a job is done as well as the results that are expected for satisfactory job performance (Mazaki, 2017). Abraham Harold Maslow proposed a theory that outlined five hierarchical needs which could also be applied to an organization and its employees' performance (Para-Gongalez and Martinez- Lorente, 2018). According to Maslow's theory, one does not feel the second need until the demands of the first have been satisfied or the third until the second has been satisfied, and so on. Firstly, individuals are motivated by Physiological needs: The Physiological need form the basic need for survival and this may include food, warmth, clothing and shelter. When people are hungry, lack shelter or clothing, they are more motivated to fulfill these needs because they influence their behavior. But on the other hand, when people don't have a deficiency in these basic needs (Physiological needs), their needs tend to move to the second level where it is equally seen by Maslow as the higher order of needs.

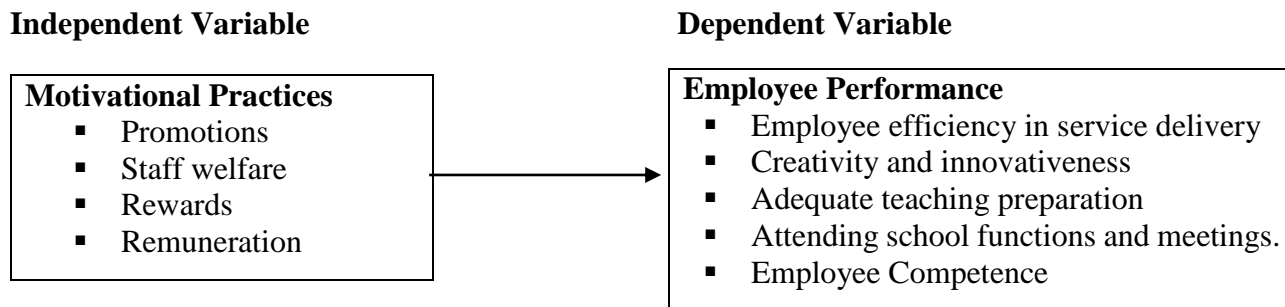
The second level is seen as the security needs: Security tends to be the most essential need to people at this level. This is expressed in the safety of the employee's health and family. The third level of needs by Maslow is the social needs. When employees feel secured and safe at work, they tend to place job relations as their focus by trying to build up a good friendship, love and intimacy. As we keep moving up the ladder we will have self-esteem needs: This fourth level of needs by Maslow presents the recognition to be accepted and valued by others. The highest or last level of Maslow's need is self-actualization needs: Self-actualization was to develop an individual to become all that one is capable of becoming.

The theory is applicable to the roles of organizational cultural and human resource management in improving employee's performance despite some criticism or limitations of the theory. While some research has shown support for Maslow's (1970) in (Rosenbach, 2018) need-based theory of motivation is the most widely recognized theory of motivation. According to this theory, a person has five fundamental needs: physiological, security, belonging, esteem and self-actualization. The physiological needs include: pay, food, shelter, clothing, education and comfortable work conditions. Maslow's opinion is that until these needs are satisfied to a degree to maintain life, no other motivating factors can work. Security needs are those needs such as, need to be free from physical danger and of the fear of losing a job, property, food and shelter. It also includes protection against any emotional harm. Belonging or social needs include: need for attention, acceptance and friendship. Esteem needs include the need for recognition, respect, achievement, autonomy, independence etc. Finally, self-actualization needs, which are the highest in the level of Maslow's need theory include: realizing

ones full potential of self-development. According to Maslow, once a need is fulfilled, it is no longer a need. It ceases to motivate employees' behavior and they are motivated by the need at the next level up the hierarchy. The theory is relevant to the study because it informs motivational practices in organizations.

**Conceptual Framework**

The following conceptual Framework guided the study.



*Fig 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study showing interplay between Variables*

**Source: Researcher's own conceptualization, 2019**

**Research Design**

This study employed a mixed research design, which is a type of research undertaken with the aim of describing characteristics of variables in a situation. Mixed research design employs various design methods to obtain information that describes existing phenomena. It involves collecting, analyzing and integrating of both qualitative and quantitative data. The integration of qualitative and quantities methods provides a better understanding of the research problem than either of each alone. In so doing, it seeks individuals' exact perceptions; attitude, behavior or values to determine and report the way things are to enable description of characteristics associated with target population, estimation of proportions of a population that have these characteristics and discovery of associations among different variables. These two approaches are vital to enable an understanding of the effect of motivational practices on employee performance of public secondary schools in Kenya.

**Target Population**

The study targeted the management and teachers of Public secondary schools in all the public secondary schools in the 5 counties namely Bungoma, Trans-Nzoia, Kakamega, Vihiga and Busia. These are the people in the organization who will provide the information required for the study. The study population in public secondary schools included Education county director's office and Principals. The study targeted a total of 23,147 teachers from all the 5 counties in Kenya.

**Sampling and Sample Size**

This study adopted the stratified sampling technique. The population was divided into homogeneous subgroups and a simple random sample was taken from each group. The sub group included the County director's office, Principal and Teachers of the public secondary schools. Kombo and Tromp (2006) recommend a sample size of between 10% - 30% is adequate for study. Therefore the sample sizes of 5 counties were selected to participate in the study. Therefore the study used Yamane 1967 formula to obtain the sample size 393

employees who were randomly selected from all the participating schools and distributed proportionately within the five counties namely Bungoma, Kakamega, Tranzoia, Vihiga and Busia. The counties were selected owing to the proximity of the researcher to carry out the study. This reduced the cost of carrying out the research and saved time.

Multiple regression models fitted the study to test the independent variables (motivation, training, and leadership style and work environment) affect the dependent variable (employee performance) as represented in the regression equation below.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where

Y = Employee performance

$\beta_0, \beta_1$  – are regression coefficients to be estimated

$X_1$  = Motivation Practices

$\varepsilon$  = error term

### Key Findings

The correlation between motivation practices on employee performance was calculated using Pearson’s Correlation in order to establish the relationship between the two variables. The results are as shown in the Table 1.

**Table 1: Correlation between motivation on employee performance**

Variable		Motivation Practices	Employee performance
<b>Motivation Practices</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.485**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	360	360
<b>Employee performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	.485**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	360	360

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

The correlation between motivation on employee performance in Public secondary schools in Kenya is 0.485 (p = 0.000). This means there is a moderate positive relationship between motivations on employee performance. We thus fail to accept the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance.

The study used simple regression analysis to establish the effect of motivation on employee performance. The results of the model summary were as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Model Summary of Motivation Practices on Employee Performance**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.485 <sup>a</sup>	.235	.201	3.25498	1.122

a. Predictors: (Constant), Motivation  
 b. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

From the results, the R coefficient was 0.485 while R square was 0.235. That meant 23.5 percent variance in employee performance was explained by motivation practices. We therefore fail to accept the null hypothesis. The ANOVA summary results were as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: ANOVA results for Motivation against Employee Performance**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5747.429	1	5747.429	542.472	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3792.971	358	10.595		
	Total	9540.400	359			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Motivation

From the results in Table 3, the F test value was 542.472 and it was significant at p=0.000. That implied that the model nicely fitted and there was a probability of 0.0 percent to accept the null hypothesis. The student t test summary was as shown in Table 4.

**Table 4: Coefficients of Motivation Practices**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.972	1.199		4.983	.000
	Motivation	.752	.041	.485	23.291	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

From the results in Table 4, the student t test increased from 4.983 at p=0.000 to 23.291 at p=0.000. In other words, every single unit of motivation practices account for additional 23.291 units' positive change in employee performance. Thus the summary of the model was expressed in the equation;

$$Y = 0.752 + 0.485 x_1 + \epsilon$$

Where Y = Employee performance,  $\beta_0 = 0.752$ ,  $\beta_1 = 0.485$ ,  $X_1 =$  Motivation Practices and  $\epsilon$  is the error term.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The correlation between motivation practices on employee performance in Public secondary schools in Kenya is 0.485 (p = 0.000). This means there is a moderate positive relationship between motivations on employee performance. We thus fail to accept the null hypothesis and state that there is a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance. The study recommends that the management of public secondary schools should come up with a good motivational system which enhances employee performance in public secondary schools in Kenya. They should focus on employee empowerment and encourage employee recognition to exert their efforts towards achievement of their objectives.

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