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RESEARCH ARTICLE

TRAINING STRATEGIES AS AN ANTECEDENT FOR EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN KENYAN SETTING.

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Abstract

Employee training is intended to provide an opportunity for advancement and may be perceived as the organization values their employees and their sense of self-worth, therefore will result to building a stronger affective commitment. Thus also resulting to a function of close psychological attachment to the organization and its goals, (McElroy, 2001). The purpose of this study was to analyse the effects of employee training and development strategies on employee commitment. The research hypotheses for the study were; Ho1 training opportunities have no significant effect on employee commitment. The study employed a case study research design that was conducted at Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital. The target population was three thousand two hundred (3200) respondents were targeted because that was the group highly affected by commitment and turnover issues in the organisation. A sample size of 340 was extracted from the target population and the sampling techniques used were stratified sampling. Data was analyzed using Multiple regression analysis was performed to test the hypothesized relationships. Based on the observed correlation results, training ($\beta = 0.134$, $p < 0.05$) indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between employee training opportunities and employee commitment. This implies that the perceived empowerment of employees by the hospital was likely to impact positively on their commitment to the hospital.

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Introduction:-

Training is essential for the livelihood of any employee in the public sectors and it is the only way employment can be maintained over careers. (Tomlinson., 2002) suggests that, it is critical that organization keep the leading edge by having their employees stay in organizations that promote career opportunities through learning and the ability to apply their newly acquired skills (Klein and Kozlowski, 2000). Employees might also develop a moral obligation to give the organization its money's worth (normative commitment), particularly if the company finds the training (McElro, 2001). Therefore, the main objective of this study is one fold in determining the extent to which training and development opportunities affect employee commitment.

Review of literature:-**Employee Commitment:-**

In the competitive environment, most of the organizations have successfully developed, executed, evaluated, refined and perused employee empowerment and improvement as a prime human resource practice with business value (Kandula, 2004). So an employee committed and involved organization starts with the concept of strategic fit between people, tasks, technology, information processes, rewards and organization structure for which all must be in alignment before the organization can work efficiently(Kandula, 2004).

Training and employee Commitment:-

Training is defined as the opportunities provide by the organization to advance an individual's carrier prospects, such as challenging assignments, and being kept informed. Employee training is also likely to affect the employee commitment capacity. Continuous professional development is particularly important to knowledge workers. Firms need to offer internal and external training opportunities to develop and nurture required satisfaction and commitment of employees (Jaw and Liu, 2003). Fugate *et al.*, (2004) has encouraged organizations to assist employees to develop their careers through activities that are beneficial for both employees and the organization. Current literature points out variety of activities that are provided by organizations to assist in career development, this includes challenging work assignments, new learning opportunities Kinnie*et al.*, (2005), Career Counseling, (Leung, 2002), and access to information about the organization (Gubbin*et al.*, 2005).

Wetland (2003) asserts that training and development of employees is increasingly recognized as an important aspect of best human resource management practices. Training and development are commonly considered to be different forms of human capital invested for individual and organizational improvement. Organizations invest a large amount of its capital for training purposes and the development of its employees. It is worthy of probing whether the training is advantageous for the trainees, and to what degree can the process of training be enhanced. Stephen *et al.*, (2007) study shows the link between training associated with employee's productivity which further leads toward employee and customer satisfaction. Improvement in performance such as productivity, quality and services are the training outcomes provided that the job is strategically aligned to the organization's needs. Gold (2001) stresses that, the areas where training may be used in the enhancement of job specific skills, the correction of deficiencies in job performance and development may be provided to employees with abilities the organization might need in the future. However, higher degree of training increases employee satisfaction and loyalty towards the firm and decreases the chances of employee terminations and lay-offs (Choo*and* Bowley., 2007).

Landsman (2004), suggested that training is a valuable activity for enhancing skills and improving staff performance, and that training can address some of the factors contributing to staff retention, such as perceived support for the supervisor, the agency and community. Training can define roles more clearly to employees, thereby minimizing job stress. Organizations with sufficient training opportunities should have higher retention rate. Tomlinson (2002) asserts that, it is critical that organizations keep the leading edge by having their employees well trained in the latest technologies. While considering a training process it is essential to explore who is taking part in trainings, style and design of training and all about the main objectivity of the trainings being achieved or not, (Choo and Bowley., 2007). Stephen *et al.*, (2007) focus on the outcome of capital invested on training processes that further raise the efficiency of the employees and the organization. Employees may stay with an organization which promotes career opportunities, through learning and the ability to apply their newly learned skills (Cataldo*et al.*, 2000; Jiang *et al.*, 2000).

Methodology:-

Survey research design was employed in this study to investigate the effect of training and development strategies on employee commitment probability sampling design was used with a sample size of 320 employees from a target population of 3200 employees(Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003) Structured questionnaires were presented to the selected population in the hospital who were the respondents for the study data was done using descriptive statistics specifically mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics were Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis the multiple regression analysis models.

Results:-**Table 4.1:-** Distribution of Respondents Response.

Sample size	Administrators		Section Heads		Other Employees	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total sample size	10	100	30	100	300	100
Total responses	8	80	27	90	264	88.0
Total unusable	1	10	1	3.3	3	1.07
Total usable response	7	70	26	86.7	261	87.0
Description of unusable questionnaires						
Returned blank	1		0		1	
Incomplete questionnaire	0		1		2	

Source: Survey Data (2015)

Training Strategy and Employee Commitment:-

The second research objective focused on determining the extent to which training and development opportunities affect employee commitment. The six items proposed to measure this variable were all used in analyzing the prevailing status of training and development in the hospital. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on the selected items. Once again, responses were elicited on a five point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Table 4.2:- Descriptive Data on Prevailing Status of Training

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness Statistic	Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	Std. Error
The organization provides employees with job specific training	3.80	1.155	-1.286	.143	.945	.285
Allocation of sufficient time for product and solution training	3.46	1.235	-.688	.143	-.428	.285
Employees can apply the training they receive from the organization	3.96	1.150	-1.162	.143	.578	.285
The organization provides enough development opportunities	3.56	1.229	-.508	.143	-.804	.285
Sufficient money is allocated for product and solution training	2.89	1.303	.064	.143	-1.173	.285
Employees are involved in activities that promote their professional development	4.03	1.140	-1.313	.143	.974	.285

Source: Survey Data (2015)

These results clearly show that the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital underscores the importance of training and development for its employees. From table 4.2 above, it can be seen that in four of the six items, the mean response was approximately 4 which indicates that respondents tended to agree with most of the items. In particular, respondents tended to agree that the hospital provides employees with job specific training (M=3.80, SD = 1.155); that employees can apply training received from the hospital (M=3.96, SD=1.150); that the hospital provides through development opportunities (M=3.56, SD = 1.229) and that employees are involved in activities that promote their professional development (M=4.03, SD = 1.140). The respondents were however, neutral on whether sufficient money was allocated for product and solution training (M=2.89, SD = 1.303); and whether there was allocation of sufficient time for product and solution training. Once again, the responses regarding training and development were normally distributed as indicated by the skewness and Kurtosis statistics which fall in the range -3 to 3.

Table 4.3:- Descriptive Data on Prevailing Status of Employee Empowerment.

	Mean	Std. Deviation				
			Skewness Statistic	Std. Error	Kurtosis Statistic	Std. Error
Employees have the opportunity to determine how to do their job	3.59	1.215	-.832	.143	-.207	.285
The work makes good use of employees skills and duties	4.43	.663	-1.182	.143	1.930	.285
Employees make decisions about new ideas when doing their duties	4.08	.992	-1.187	.143	1.070	.285

Source: Survey Data (2015)

Conclusions:-

On the basis of the findings highlighted above, the following conclusions were made. Use of training in the hospital as an employee strategy has a direct effect on employee commitment. A 1% improvement in employee training and development could result in a 0.134% increase in employee commitment.

Contributions to academic debate and entire body of knowledge:-

These results clearly show that the organization in place underscores the importance of training and development for its employees. Consequently, by offering training and development opportunities, the hospital aims at upgrading the employee's abilities to cope with specific situations and performance of various specific tasks with a certain level of satisfaction. Furthermore, career development opportunities have been shown to result in higher levels of commitment among employees (Bashir and Ramsey, 2008; Paul *et al.*, 2004). Commitment has been proved to enhance employees (Browning, 2006), developing skills and competencies (Mahatanakoon 2007; Pettijohn, *et al.*, 2007; Lee & Bruvold 2003), as well as opportunities for growth (Armstrong *et al.*, 2008; Allen 2003).

Recommendations for further study:-

The study should use a mediator role in order to study the variables in more detail to enhance the study further.

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