



**REWARD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN
MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA**

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ABSTARCT

Purpose: The aim of this study was to establish the reward management practices on employee commitment within Machakos County, Kenya. The specific objectives were to determine influence of recognition schemes; and to assess the influence of career progression on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. The study was anchored on Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

Methodology: In this study, the research strategy adopted was descriptive survey approach. the target population consisted of 286 county government top management workers located in Machakos County. A sample of 166 was drawn using Yamane's formula. Questionnaire was the main data collection tool, both descriptive and inferential analysis were conducted.

Findings: The study found a positive, significant, and strong correlation ($r = 0.672$; $p < 0.001$) between recognition schemes and employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya as well as a significant strong correlation ($r = 0.895$; $p < 0.001$) between career progression and employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. From the regression analysis, recognition schemes significantly influenced employee commitment in Machakos County by 0.330 or 33.0% while career progression significantly influenced employee commitment in Machakos County in Kenya by 0.560 or 56.0%.

Recommendations: There should be a clear policy outlining the appropriate time for a promotion should be developed by county governments. As the study suggests, this will assist in addressing the problem of discrimination in job promotions. Furthermore, job promotions ought to come with a pay and benefits boost in addition to an expansion in duties and obligations.

Key words: Employee Commitment, career progression, recognition schemes, reward management practices, Machakos county.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

In order to garner support for organizational goals and interests, commitment plays a crucial role, surpassing techniques like participation in decision-making (Wambugu, 2017). Ambawa and Choudhary (2018) define organizational commitment as a psychological attachment that binds individuals to their organization. They argue that commitment entails a deep connection with the organization, where individuals are willing to go beyond their capabilities to contribute to its success. Commitment is characterized as more than mere devotion to an organization. The arguments presented indicate that commitment is a behavioral concept, with the employee being at the center of its control (Igella, 2018). Reward management is an effective strategy employed by organizations to cultivate a workforce that is motivated and committed. Drawing upon Isaack and Dinah (2019) reinforcement theory, this asserts that employees' performance increases with greater rewards, reward systems were implemented in both America and Europe as early as the 1950s. Skinner (1953) concluded that well-compensated personnel tend to demonstrate enhanced performance and earn higher incomes. Furthermore, Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs suggests that addressing employees' needs leads to improved performance. Rewards serve as a means to satisfy employee needs effectively.

Kenya's Vision 2030 policy plan has played a pivotal role in fostering the remarkable expansion of the country's education sector. As a result, a multitude of universities have been established, contributing to the growth. However, the quality of graduates entering the Kenyan job market has not kept pace with this rapid development. Marwa (2019) notes that higher education institutions are facing escalating demands from stakeholders, highlighting the challenges they encounter. Furthermore, these institutions have faced substantial financial instability, which in turn has caused significant disruptions in the implementation of compensation plans following industrial strikes (Waswa & Katana, 2019). In a study conducted by Chebii (2018) in the Nakuru Municipality, the impact of total compensation on job performance among bank employees was investigated. The findings revealed a robust relationship between compensation and job performance within the banking industry. Furthermore, the study identified a negative association between rewards and turnover, tardiness, and absenteeism, while demonstrating a positive correlation with work performance. This suggests that adequate compensation positively influences employee performance while reducing undesirable outcomes such as turnover and absenteeism.

Asia has seen that a focus on quality hiring, improved onboarding and education, realistic career options, and long-lasting incentive and payment systems have all contributed to very little employee attrition. According to a 2014 research study on turnover, the costs of turnover can be seen in a variety of ways, including dissatisfied customers, low staff motivation, lower output, poor service quality, poor business insight, and poor organizational performance (Zaman, 2022). According to Jackson and Schuler (2020) study conducted in South Africa, emphasizing the significance of intrinsic rewards is essential for fostering employee loyalty in South African firms. Effectively managing rewards programs increases the likelihood of attracting, retaining, and benefiting from a dedicated and skilled workforce. Similarly, Barnett and Davis (2018) found that implementing employee rewards and implementing effective human resource policies in Vodafone Ghana Limited can lead to increased employee retention.

Statement of the Problem

When the new constitution of Kenya was enacted in 2010, it aimed to empower county governments to play a significant role in fostering economic growth and development within the country. One of the key objectives was to achieve this through fair distribution and allocation of resources, coupled with active public engagement in county government affairs (Kenya Constitution, 2010). Consequently, the County Public Service Boards were entrusted with the

responsibility of managing human resources in light of these changes. However, various obstacles have emerged within these boards, hampering the efficient decentralization of human resource management. In the past years, county governments in Kenya have experienced significant growth, leading to their crucial role in the nation's economy. Consequently, these governments have set high expectations for the delivery of quality services. However, this is not always the reality. Within county governments, there have been instances of employee apathy, negligence, and substantial staff turnover, indicating a lack of commitment. Empirical research has specifically highlighted Machakos County as having the highest turnover rates among the counties.

A report from an international organization attributed 60% of labor turnover in Kenya's county administrations by 2016 to employee dissatisfaction with their positions. According to scholars and professionals, rewards play a significant role in motivating employees, which in turn can impact their commitment levels. The specific benefits that could influence employee engagement, especially in Machakos County, are not yet clearly understood. In light of this, the study was conducted to close this knowledge gap and offer more empirical data regarding the impact of reward management strategies on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to establish the reward management practices on employee commitment within Machakos County, Kenya.

Specifically, the study sought:

1. To determine the influence of recognition schemes on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya.
2. To assess the influence of career progression on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, proposed by Abraham Maslow, is widely recognized as the most frequently cited theory of motivation and satisfaction (Wehrich & Koontz, 2001). This theory draws upon humanistic psychology and clinical practice to suggest that an individual's motivating needs can be organized in a hierarchical manner. According to Maslow, once a certain level of needs is fulfilled, it ceases to serve as a motivator. Consequently, the person's next higher-level need must be satisfied in order to ignite motivation. Hence, it is crucial for businesses to acknowledge and strive to fulfill the needs of their employees at each stage. Furthermore, they should be mindful of the needs that have already been satisfied and avoid excessive fulfillment, as it could lead to an unbalanced combination of needs. According to several authors, if these needs are not addressed in the appropriate sequence, it can potentially affect an employee's performance as they attempt to fulfill their needs through alternative means. For instance, they might dedicate a significant portion of their time to seeking better opportunities elsewhere, where they can obtain a higher salary and additional benefits.

In a study conducted by Mishra and Dixit (2013), a strong correlation was discovered between employee performance and both financial and non-financial rewards and perks within an educational awards system. The presence of rewards was found to have a positive association with employee job satisfaction. Job satisfaction, in turn, fosters success, a sense of accomplishment, enjoyment, enthusiasm, and a feeling of fulfillment throughout the duration of employment (Kamau, 2019). Considering that the physical and emotional needs of employees remain consistent, Herzberg's theory remains applicable to the current state of employee commitment. It highlights two factors that influence job performance: extrinsic rewards, such as salary and promotions, and intrinsic factors, such as praise and recognition.

Conceptual Framework

This section demonstrates how the independent variables identified influence employee commitment in Machakos County.

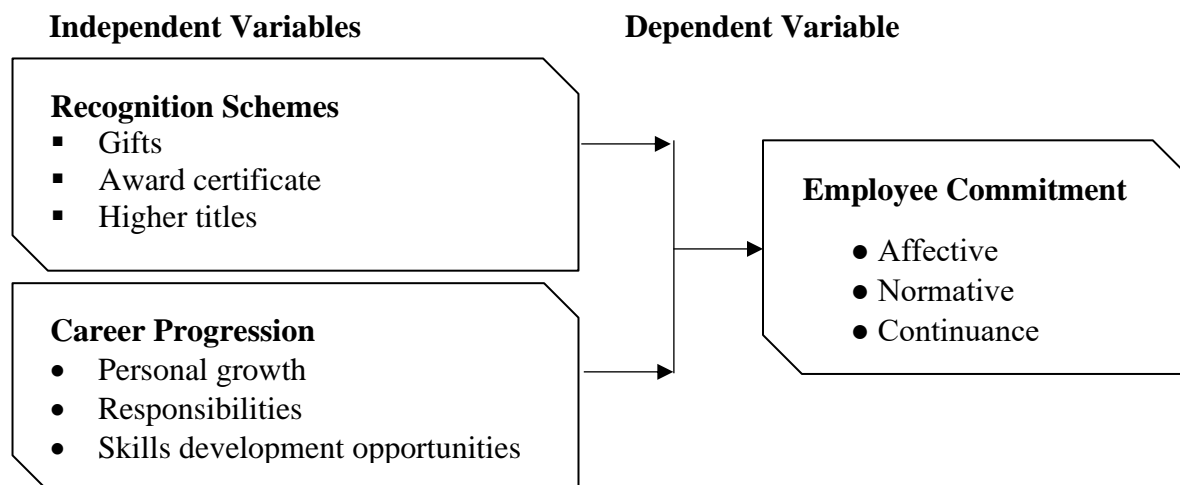


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Recognition Schemes

Acknowledging an employee's activities, efforts, behavior, or performance involves demonstrating gratitude or giving special attention to them. Recognizing specific behaviors, such as exceptional achievements, that contribute to organizational success is a means of reinforcing these behaviors and aligning them with business strategies. Recognition initiatives can take both formal and informal forms and are aimed at promptly acknowledging employee contributions, often accompanied by predetermined goals or performance standards. This recognition can occur on a daily basis and can be informal or official in nature. Various forms of recognition, including verbal praise, trophies, certificates, plaques, dinners, tickets, and other cash or non-cash rewards, can be utilized to show appreciation (Devaro, 2019). This aligns with RPI's 2007 definition of recognition, which describes it as an expression of gratitude or acknowledgement given after the fact for an individual or group's positive actions, work, or business outcomes that support the organization's objectives and values.

In their research, Kuvass (2019) arrived at very similar findings, indicating that non-cash rewards are not only more effective in motivating employees compared to cash rewards, but also offer additional benefits from the employer's standpoint. By utilizing non-cash rewards, employers can avoid the expenditure of limited financial resources. Stringer. (2020) argue that receiving acknowledgment creates employee awareness of the organization's inclination to recognize and reward enhanced performance, serving as an indicator of commitment. This perspective suggests that appreciation operates in a manner similar to the perceived support received from friends and family, fulfilling socio-emotional needs in interpersonal interactions. According to Mahaney and Lederer (2019), organizations offer both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to employees with the aim of enhancing the outcomes or results of their human resources endeavors. The authors further assert that when employees feel motivated, believe their contributions are valuable to the organization's success, and have challenging and satisfying roles, they develop a sense of pride in their work.

Shiato (2020) asserts that recognition and praise are potent motivators, supported by the universal desire for acknowledgement of one's contributions in the workplace. Furthermore, she argues that non-cash rewards can have a positive impact on staff morale, productivity, employee quality, and customer service, all while being cost-effective for the company. Ashardi (2019) suggests that

there exists a clear link between enhanced job motivation and non-cash incentives. According to Nelson, non-cash incentives have the potential to boost morale, productivity, competitiveness, revenue, and profitability, while also reducing stress, absenteeism, and turnover. Sarah (2022) argues that non-monetary incentives hold greater value than monetary incentives. In her analysis, she emphasizes that when employees are rewarded for their performance, it becomes an integral part of their compensation expectations.

Career Progression

To effectively harness the wealth of talent within an organization and align it with the business objectives, employees strategically explore, plan, and mold their professional trajectory through a career development process (Weng, 2021). This process involves creating a personalized learning plan that addresses individual needs while also supporting the organization's mission. By bridging the gap between employees' skills, past experiences, and aspirations, career development has emerged as a valuable approach for businesses to optimize internal talent for staffing and advancement purposes (Ngugi & Kihoro, 2019).

Career development programs have garnered significant attention from prominent scholars as a vital motivational tool that enhances employee engagement within organizations. With the aim of maintaining a steady stream of talent, career development initiatives provide employees with opportunities to advance through various stages in their professional journey (Hosen, 2023). As the focus shifts from merely identifying potential successors to actively nurturing and building talent pools, organizations are adopting career development as a formal strategy to achieve this objective (Mondy & Martocchio, 2019). By offering employees the means to enhance their careers through strategic career planning, job growth within the company can be fostered. Furthermore, according to Mugaa *et al* (2018), a significant number of companies utilize career development programs to assist employees in effectively planning their careers, as it is believed that employees generally respond positively to opportunities for career growth and advancement. Consequently, career development is viewed as a collaborative effort between the organization and individual employees (Herachwati 2019). By promoting commitment and enhancing employee retention, an organization's employee orientation program becomes indispensable. Providing employees with avenues to advance their careers not only reduces turnover but also cultivates loyalty (Herachwati, 2019).

Employee Commitment

In accordance with Martin (2019) perspective, commitment can be defined as a state wherein an individual is bound by their actions, and it is through these actions that their engagement and endeavors are reinforced. This definition implies that three key aspects of behavior namely, the observability of actions, the extent to which outcomes are irreversible, and the level of voluntary participation are crucial in motivating individuals to act. Additionally, the author suggests that fostering commitment and leveraging it to garner backing for organizational objectives and interests can be achieved through active involvement in decision-making processes. Based on Mowday (2020), commitment can be defined as the degree to which an individual identifies with and engages in a specific organization. Employee commitment represents the psychological connection between an employee and a company, and its strength is influenced by factors such as employee involvement, loyalty, and confidence in the company's values. Recognizing the significance of employee commitment is essential when considering human resource management.

In Martin (2019) perspective, employee commitment is described as the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization. As scholarly attention on workplace dedication has grown, Neckermann (2019) noted that commitment is now understood as a complex and multifaceted concept. Over the years, researchers and theorists have used diverse definitions and operationalizations of commitment, making it challenging to integrate the findings

of accumulated research. It is now recognized that dedication can manifest in various ways. Affective commitment is defined by Meyer and Allen (2019) as the employees' emotional connection, sense of belonging, and involvement with the company. Contrarily, commitment based on the estimated expenses that employee would incur in leaving the organization is referred to as continuity commitment. Finally, an employee's sense of responsibility or obligation to stick with the company defines normative commitment. Conversely, rational commitment is predicated on a worker's financial interests or chances for professional development and career success. Employees often consider factors such as the level of effort they invest in their work, whether they receive adequate compensation, and whether there are better alternatives available (such as higher-paying or more fulfilling jobs). In cases where employees believe their employer is heavily investing in their development, they are more likely to demonstrate loyalty and dedication (Arfat, 2018).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Recognition Schemes and Employee Commitment

In a descriptive study conducted by Nyakaro (2019), the focus was on influence of recognition on the job commitment of non-teaching personnel in public universities in Kenya. The rationale behind the study was the belief that non-teaching staff might not be receiving comparable non-monetary benefits as their teaching counterparts due to the unique nature of their work. Thus, the research aimed to explore the issue of work commitment within this particular group of university employees. The findings of the study revealed a significant positive correlation between employee commitment and supervisory recognition. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents expressed the belief that recognition had a notable impact on their dedication to the workplace. Importantly, the study concluded that this motivation derived from recognition was not limited to a specific hierarchical level within the university. Instead, it exhibits favorable impacts at every level of the hierarchy.

To effectively implement a recognition program, it is crucial to approach it as a well-designed and systematic initiative based on sound theory and aligned with the organization's business strategy. Such a program should primarily focus on rewarding behaviors that are most likely to contribute positively to the organization's value. Additionally, a thoughtful program should take into consideration the employees' desires and offer meaningful tangible or intangible benefits to motivate them in delivering value in return, as highlighted by Huff (2017). Currently, many recognition programs exist with the aim of cultivating a culture of appreciation within businesses. However, a significant issue arises as these programs often lack proper integration with the organization's business strategies, intended cultures, and even with one another. The various elements of these programs fail to synergize effectively, resulting in a lack of coherence and alignment. As a result, worker recognition programs' full worth is not fully realized.

Career Progression and Employee Commitment

A study by Simiyu and Mbithi (2019) looked at the degree of career dedication among Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology staff members. The researchers wanted to take 112 people as a sample size out of the 1,112 people in the population. They choose 10% of the administration, teaching, and non-teaching staff in order to accomplish this. The researchers used self-administered structured questionnaires to collect data. Pilot research was carried out to pretest and validate the survey tools before the main investigation. This study's descriptive research design made it possible to organize and compile the data. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized for the analysis of the quantitative data that was gathered. The study used a multiple regression model and linear regression analysis to improve the data's interpretability and analytical process. In the context of inferential statistics, regression modeling was applied to determine the degree to which the variables under consideration affected employee commitment.

To effectively communicate the findings, tables and explanations were used to present the data. A statistically significant relationship between career development and employee devotion was found by the investigation. Employees' dedication to carrying out their duties was found to strengthen as their skill set expanded and their level of job satisfaction rose.

Employees play a crucial role in the growth and success of a company (Usman, 2019). In the modern workplace, there is a greater frequency of mobility and career changes. According to Kumar (2019) theory, employees desire gradual advancement within the organizations they work for. Nowadays, individuals no longer remain tied to a single firm for their entire career, and it has become commonplace for people to undergo career transitions and switch jobs frequently. Furthermore, Savickas (2019) highlighted that individuals now have greater control over their careers, and if they do not receive the necessary support and opportunities for advancement within their current employment, they may opt to leave and seek better prospects elsewhere.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study the research strategy adopted a descriptive approach to comprehend the perspectives, attitudes, preferences, and perceptions of the research participants. In this particular study, the target population consisted of 286 county government top management workers located in Machakos County. In this study, a stratified sampling method was employed, focusing on the target population of 286 employees in Machakos County who are anticipated to meet specific criteria. To access the actual respondents' simple random sampling was employed. Purposive sampling was used in this study to choose 166 respondents from Machakos County. Table 1 shows the target population. The primary method employed in this study for data collection was questionnaires. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 26 was utilized to assist in the analysis of the data. The results were presented using frequency tables and descriptive statistics once the data analysis is complete. Furthermore, to explore the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, a multiple regression analysis model was employed.

Table 1: Target Population

Designation	Population (N)	Sample (n)
County Secretaries	1	1
County Executive Committee members	28	16
Chief officers	39	22
Sub-county administrators	8	5
Directors/deputy directors	174	101
Member of County Assembly	36	21
Total	286	166

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 166 questionnaires were distributed as part of the study to collect data. A total of 130 were correctly completed and returned, yielding a 78.31% response rate. Respondents by gender showed that 56.92% (74) were male and 43.08% (56) were female. On the age of the respondents, 56.91% who were the majority were between 18 to 35 years. Thus, the young people were the majority of county employees. In terms of experience, there was balance in the level of experience and county expertise with majority working for the county governments between 6-10 years (60.76%).

Descriptive Statistics

Measures of central tendency were employed in the study to characterize and evaluate the responses. The replies were coded using a Likert scale, with the following codes applied: Strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Strongly Disagree (1-1.8), Disagree

(1.9-2.6), Neutral (2.7-3.4), Agree (3.5-4.2), and Strongly Agree (4.3-5) are the ranges that will comprise the mean. The findings were examined, discussed, and displayed in tables. The following are the study variables' descriptive statistics:

Recognition schemes

The first specific objective of the study was to determine the influence of recognition schemes on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. The objective was also guided by the research hypothesis ‘There is no significant positive influence between recognition schemes and employee commitment’ The findings from Table 2 indicated recognition schemes influence employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya (M = 2.77, Sd = 1.10).

Table 2: Recognition schemes and Employee Commitment

Statement	S	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std
	%	%	%	%	%		
My employer verbally praises me for work well done	54	40	6	0	0	3.22	1.19
My employer gives congratulatory and recognition letters to exemplary performance	40	58	2	0	0	3.06	1.10
My employer allows me to participate in decision making in the department on work-related issues	40	40	20	0	0	3.59	1.36
My employer has confidence in me that I can work without supervision	50	30	10	10	0	3.70	1.32
My employer utilizes my talents and capabilities in the workplace appropriately	40	56	4	0	0	3.46	1.20
My supervisor is supportive and helps me accomplish difficult tasks	48	50	2	0	0	3.83	.98

The analysis of Table 2 revealed that the county government makes adequate use of employees' skills and competencies at work (M = 3.46, Sd = 1.20). My boss is helpful and encourages me to complete challenging assignments (M =3.83, Sd =.98). My employer believes that I am capable of working independently (M = 3.70, Sd = 1.32). My company permits me to take part in departmental decision-making regarding matters pertaining to my job (M = 3.59, Sd = 1.36). Exceptional performance receives letters of congratulations and appreciation from my employer (M = 3.06, Sd = 1.10). I receive verbal recognition from my boss for a job well done (M = 3.22, Sd = 1.19). According to Mahaney and Lederer (2020), organizations offer both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to employees with the aim of enhancing the outcomes or results of their human resources endeavors. The authors further assert that when employees feel motivated, believe their contributions are valuable to the organization's success, and have challenging and satisfying roles, they develop a sense of pride in their work. Wiscombe (2019) asserts that recognition and praise are potent motivators, supported by the universal desire for acknowledgement of one's contributions in the workplace. Furthermore, she argues that non-cash rewards can have a positive impact on staff morale, productivity, employee quality, and customer service, all while being cost-effective for the company.

Career Progression

The fourth specific objective of this study was to assess the influence of career progression on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. The objective also aimed at answering the research hypothesis ‘There is no significant positive influence between career progression and employee commitment’. From Table 3 below the study found that of career progression influence employee commitment (M= 3.75, Sd = 1.05).

Table 3: Career Progression and Employee Commitment

Statement	S	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std
	%	%	%	%	%		
With the world changing so quickly these days, counties should prepare ahead of time by creating a career plan to guarantee employee loyalty.	54	40	6	0	0	3.22	1.19
When a business provides a clear path for employees to pursue their personal ambitions while working for the firm's objectives, such workers experience a high level of motivation.	40	58	2	0	0	3.06	1.10
Are enough opportunities for employees to pursue their career goals and exploit their potential fully in the county government	40	40	20	0	0	3.59	1.36
Continuous growth and development through training is one of the most important factors in employee's motivation and commitment of talents.	50	30	10	10	0	3.70	1.32
The County government sponsors me to attend workshops, seminars and coaching programs to ensure that I'm able to carry out my duties and responsibilities with ease.	40	56	4	0	0	3.46	1.20
I'm involved in determining the best kind of training that suites me hence effective career progression and job satisfaction	48	50	2	0	0	3.83	.98
My supervisor gives me challenging tasks learn	50	20	20	10	0	4.58	.49

According to the study, one of the most crucial elements in determining an employee's motivation and talent commitment is ongoing growth and development through training (M = 4.58, Sd = 0.49). Are there sufficient possibilities in the county government for employees to follow their professional goals and fully utilize their potential? (M = 3.83, Sd = 0.98). To make sure I can easily perform my duties and obligations, the County government pays for me to attend workshops, seminars, and coaching programs (M = 3.46, Sd = 1.20). Counties should prepare ahead of time by creating a career plan to guarantee staff commitment in the quickly evolving environment of today (M = 3.22, Sd = 1.19). When an organization provides a clear path for employees to pursue their personal ambitions while working toward the organization's objectives, they feel extremely motivated (M = 3.06, Sd = 1.10). According to Khan, Zarif, and Khan (2019), a significant number of companies utilize career development programs to assist employees in effectively planning their careers, as it is believed that employees generally respond positively to opportunities for career growth and advancement. Consequently, career development is viewed as a collaborative effort between the organization and individual employees (Mugaa, 2019). By promoting commitment and enhancing employee retention, an organization's employee orientation program becomes indispensable. Providing employees with avenues to advance their careers not only reduces turnover but also cultivates loyalty (Mugaa, 2019).

Status of Employee Commitment in Machakos County

The main objective of the study was to establish the reward management practices on employee commitment within Machakos County, Kenya. The descriptive statistics aimed and describing employee commitment within Machakos County, Kenya. The findings are tabulated in Table 4.

Table 4: Employee Commitment in Machakos County

Statement	S	A	A	U	D	SD	Mean	Std
	%	%	%	%	%	%		
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization	40	40	20	0	0	0	3.22	1.19
I am happy with how employees perform their duties at work	50	30	10	10	0	0	3.06	1.10
I am highly committed to my work	40	56	4	0	0	0	3.59	1.36
I don't get bothered when absent from work	48	50	2	0	0	0	3.70	1.32
I feel satisfied with the extra duties assigned to me	50	20	20	10	0	0	3.46	1.20
I am punctual with reporting for duty	48	50	2	0	0	0	3.83	.980
I do feel emotionally attached to this organization	50	20	20	10	0	0	4.58	.490
My organization makes me continue to work for it because of the overall benefits that I have here	40	40	20	0	0	0	3.12	1.20
My organization makes feel like much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave	50	30	10	10	0	0	3.76	1.16
I feel like I have few options to consider leaving this organization	55	40	3	2	0	0	3.73	1.42
I feel a sense of moral obligation to remain with my organization	60	36	4	0	0	0	3.57	1.30
I would consider working elsewhere had I not put so much into this organization	40	40	20	0	0	0	3.94	.880

From Table 4 the study found that I feel a sense of moral obligation to remain with my organization (M = 3.57, Sd = 1.30). I would be happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization (M = 3.22, Sd = 1.19). I am highly committed to my work (M = 3.59, Sd = 1.36). I feel satisfied with the extra duties assigned to me (M = 3.46, Sd = 1.20). My organization makes feel like much of my life would be disrupted if I decided to leave (M = 3.76, Sd = 1.17). The results align with Manimalar's (2022) investigation examining the relationship between reward management and employee commitment. The second dimension of the incentive system, intrinsic rewards, was examined in terms of working environment, employee recognition, and employee responsibility. The dependent variable was employee commitment. In contrast, extrinsic rewards were evaluated based on promotion, benefits, and base pay. Rewards, which make up 41 of employee commitment, have a significant influence, according to the poll.

Correlations

The association between employee commitment and reward management techniques in Machakos County was demonstrated using Pearson correlation (r). Table 5 provides a summary of these findings.

Table 5: Correlation analysis

		Recognition schemes	Career progression
Employee Commitment	Pearson correlation	.672**	.895**
	Sig (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	130	130

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

The results of the study show that recognition schemes the study found a positive, significant, and strong correlation (r = 0.672; p<0.001) between recognition schemes and employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. This implies that recognition schemes are positively correlated to employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. In addition, the correlation between these

two variables was significant, that is $p < 0.5$ implying a linear relationship between recognition schemes and employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. Finally, there a significant strong correlation ($r = 0.895$; $p < 0.001$) between career progression and employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. This implies that career progression is positively correlated to employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. In addition, the correlation between these two variables was significant, that is $p < 0.5$ implying a linear relationship between career progression and employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. Muchibi et al., (2022) found positive correlation between career development and employee engagement in Kenya's public health sector. The results indicated that nurses and doctors in the sector are likely to have lower levels of engagement if they experience limited or no career growth opportunities. Failure to implement diversified and well-supported career development programs and learning opportunities could have detrimental effects on service delivery and overall performance within the industry.

Regression Coefficients

The findings in indicate that recognition schemes had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_1 = 0.330$ ($p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$). Also, the influence of recognition schemes is more than the effect attributed to the error as supported by the t values where $t\text{-calculated} = 8.840$ at a 5 per cent level of significance, thus we conclude that recognition schemes significantly influence employee commitment in Machakos County by 0.330 or 33.0%. The findings are in tandem with Mahaney and Lederer (2020), organizations offer both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to employees with the aim of enhancing the outcomes or results of their human resources endeavors. The authors further assert that when employees feel motivated, believe their contributions are valuable to the organization's success, and have challenging and satisfying roles, they develop a sense of pride in their work.

Finally, the findings indicate that career progression had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_2 = 0.560$. Also, the effect of career progression is more than the effect attributed to the error as supported by the t values where $t\text{-calculated} = .395 >$ at a 5 per cent level of significance, thus we conclude that career progression significantly influences employee commitment in Machakos County in Kenya by 0.560 or 56.0%. The findings are in tandem with Mondy and Martocchio (2020) who found that career development programs have garnered significant attention from prominent scholars as a vital motivational tool that enhances employee engagement within organizations. With the aim of maintaining a steady stream of talent, career development initiatives provide employees with opportunities to advance through various stages in their professional journey. As the focus shifts from merely identifying potential successors to actively nurturing and building talent pools, organizations are adopting career development as a formal strategy to achieve this objective.

Table 6: Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-.719	.236		-3.046	.003
Recognition schemes	.330	.134	.180	2.460	.015
Career progression	.560	.185	.526	3.029	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

The following multiple regression equation was obtained;

Employee Commitment = $-.7019 + .330 RS + .560 CP$

Where: nRS – Recognition schemes; CP- Career progression

CONCLUSION

The first specific objective was to determine the influence of recognition schemes on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. The study concludes that recognition schemes have a positive significant correlation with employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. The second specific objective was to assess the influence of career progression on employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya. The study concludes that career progression has a positive significant correlation with employee commitment in Machakos County, Kenya.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kenyan government ought to make sure that they have a written policy outlining the base pay and incentives. The high cost of living that exists today should be considered while reviewing the compensation structures of the county managements. Employees may choose to work in different industries due to the high cost of living and compensation. Workers may decide to move to other industries in search of higher incomes and compensation. The policy makers ought to improve employee appreciation by implementing a monthly or annual program. Furthermore, acknowledgment must to be accompanied by monetary compensation or job advancement rather than only diplomas, degrees and awards.

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