



FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA. A CASE OF AFRICAN FUND FOR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE KENYA

Mbaabu, P. M., Litunya, R., & Makau, G.

FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA. A CASE OF AFRICAN FUND FOR ENDANGERED WILDLIFE KENYA

¹ Mbaabu, P. M., ² Litunya, R., & ³ Makau, G.

¹ Masters Candidate, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology [JKUAT], Kenya

^{2,3} Doctor, Lecturer, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology [JKUAT], Kenya

Accepted: September 24, 2021

ABSTRACT

The general objective of this study was to determine the factors influencing employee retention, in environmental conservation organizations in Kenya – a case of AFEW Kenya while the specific objectives of the study were to evaluate the influence of compensation on employee retention, to assess the influence of training on employee retention at AFEW Kenya. The target population of the study comprised all 47 employees from AFEW Kenya. The study adopted census approach to achieve the objectives of the study. A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments on a total of 7 respondents. During the main study a total of 40 questionnaires were administered to the respondents and 38 questionnaires were returned duly filled for analysis through drop and pick method. This represented 95 % response rate. Data was collected by use of questionnaires and was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to compute percentages of respondents' feedbacks while correlation and regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the research variables. The study established that there was a positive and significant relationship between the independent variables; compensation, training and the independent variable, employee retention at AFEW Kenya. The researcher recommended that the organization should: offer employees bonuses to appreciate their good performance; carry out salary surveys for benchmarking; compensate employees on the basis of performance and not length of service in the organization; allocate training opportunities fairly among all employees; ensure that training culminated to promotions for the employees and ensure that employees' grievances were handled and sorted out at the shortest time possible. These recommendations if adhered to would lead to higher employee retention level of employees in the organization. Lastly the researcher recommended a study of the same be carried out in public sectors for comparison purpose.

Key Words: Compensation, Training, Employee Retention

CITATION: Mbaabu, P. M., Litunya, R., & Makau, G. (2021). Factors influencing employee retention in environmental conservation organizations in Kenya. A case of African Fund for Endangered Wildlife Kenya. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 8 (2), 1086 – 1101.

INTRODUCTION

The inability of organizations to retain employees in today's economic unpredictability and uncertainty has become the biggest challenge faced by organizations worldwide. Despite increased globalization and fluctuating economy, most employers are struggling hard to retain good employees who are expecting more from their employers and can willingly shift if their needs are not met Rawal (2011). Employees' retention is important for organizations because the cost of replacing and retraining new employees is very costly especially for those who are highly talented and possess specialized skills that are hard to get (Irshad & Afridi, 2010). The sustainability of any organization will always depend on its ability to hire and acquire talented employees whereas its ability to retain its talented employees would be a better way of cutting cost incurred during selection, recruitment and training of new employees (Ahlrichs, 2000). However, most employers neglect the costs incurred due to high turnover of key employees.

There are many investigations that have been carried out to determine the reasons behind various employees turnover and the results from these studies show that there is no one key factor that influence employee intentions to leave organizations. Silva(2007), Hughes and Rog (2008), Pepe(2010), Parbudyal et al.(2010) attribute employees' perception of organizational support, employees' perception of organizational commitment and employees' perception of organizational complexity as the key factors that influence employee intentions to leave organizations. Saks (2006) attributes job engagement to employees' intention to leave an organization whereas Slocum and Hellriegel (2007) argue that job satisfaction is one of the factors that affect the employees' intentions to leave an organization. Smart and Chamberlain (2017) assert that poor pay, poor company culture and values, and

lack of career opportunities lead to increased employee turnover.

In order to improve the level of employee retention in organizations, employers need to come up with strategies that focus on increasing the levels of employee retention. The ability of an organization to retain its talented and valuable employees has become the key parameter to measure the strength of any organization (Kennedy & Daim, 2010) because the retention of the best employee ensures: customer satisfactions, contented coworkers, increase in product sales, effective progression planning and deeply embedded organizational knowledge and learning (Dutta & Banerjee,2014).

Retention of talented employees not only boosts the competitive edge of institutions, it also reduces the cost incurred during recruitment and reduces the loss of organizational knowledge through loss of talent employees (Kumar, 2012).Studies have shown that there are various ways which an organization can use to minimize employee turnover, therefore management is required to acknowledge factors that lead employees to quit their jobs so that the organizations can adopt proper strategies to that enhance employee retention and hence curb the increase of direct and indirect expenses incurred due to employees' turnover (Ongori, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Since independence Kenya has witnessed political and socio-economic transformation such as high population growth and shrinking productive lands that have contributed to degradation of the country's scarce natural resources. This is alarming because environment and natural resources in Kenya are valuable national assets that must be conserved sustainably for present and future generations (Wamicha, 2000). To preserve the scarce national resources, Kenya has endeavored to conserve them through the use of various education conservation awareness programs that are managed and run by

experienced and skilled team of employees in various environmental conservation agencies throughout the country (Omollo, 2012). However while the environmental conservation sector is doing tremendous work in environmental conservation awareness, the sector has been experiencing high labor turnover rates with employees quitting from one organization to another to look for greener pastures both in and outside Kenya because the employees feel that their needs are not being met adequately (Rawal, 2011).

A study carried out by Njoroge, (2007) on the factors influencing employee retention in manufacturing firms in Nairobi indicated that reward, working environment, career development opportunities and employee motivation influence employee retention. Rono et al., (2017) examined the factors affecting employee retention at the University of Eldoret, and the results revealed that, there is a significant relationship between compensation and employee retention. According to Mutiria et al., (2015), the factors influencing employee retention at Meru University of Science and Technology are training, performance appraisal, job mobility and welfare benefits. It is hence evident that most of these studies targeted the learning institutions, hospitality institutions and manufacturing industries in Kenya and none of the studies evaluated the factors that influence retention with reference to the environmental conservation organizations in Kenya, yet 70 percent of the country's workers are employed in agriculture and ecotourism which make up nearly 20 percent of the country's GDP (Omollo 2012). This study therefore sought to fill the gap by identifying the factors that influence employee retention in Environmental Conservation Organizations in Kenya.

Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to determine the factors influencing employee retention, in environmental conservation organizations in Kenya –

a case of AFEW Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- To evaluate the influence of compensation on employee retention at AFEW Kenya.
- To assess the influence of training on employee retention at AFEW Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is based on the assumption that an individual's motivational needs are arranged in a hierarchy and once a given level of needs is satisfied, it no longer helps to motivate an individual ,thus, the next higher level of need has to be activated in order to motivate and thereby satisfy the individual. This theory also assumes that as one need is satisfied, another need replaces it and a person moves to the next higher level of the hierarchy only when the lower need is satisfied. (Luthans, 2005). Maslows (1943) identified five levels in his need hierarchy; at the first level is the physiological needs which the need for oxygen, food, water, sex etc. the second level is safety security needs which include the need for protection against danger. Third is the social needs hierarchy which is the need for love and the need to be loved. The fourth level identified is Ego needs which is concerned with the need for social status, esteem and self-respect. Lastly Maslow identified Self-fulfillment (self-actualization) as the last level of needs. This is the need for personal status, self-realization and accomplishment, the need to develop potential and skills, to become what one believes one is capable of becoming. Daniels (2001) suggests that employees have a set of needs that they would like to fulfil and each of those needs is arranged in hierarchy of their importance. Phillips (2003) argues that employees who are satisfied with their jobs have higher intentions of staying with their organizations, which results in a decreased turnover

rate. Onah (2015) asserts that employees who are not motivated in their work are the employees who end up leaving the organizations and unfortunately those employees might be the ones with the best capacity in the organization.

Hertzberg’s Two Factor Theory

The basic assumption of Herzberg theory is that people have the capacity to report accurately the conditions that make them satisfied or dissatisfied with their jobs (Armstrong, 2007). Herzberg (1959) identified two sets of factors that influence an individual’s behavior at work. There are those factors that tend to lead to job satisfaction (satisfiers) and those which led to job dissatisfaction (dissatisfiers). The satisfiers are the motivators whereas the dissatisfiers are the hygiene factors. Motivators are closely connected to the job and include aspect like: achievement of work tasks, recognition for achievement, interesting work, advancement and growth all which lead to and produce motivated behavior such as interest,

challenge (Robbins, 2007).

On the other hand, hygiene factors are connected to the environment and include aspects like: pay, fringe benefits, job status and security, quality supervision, company policy and administration, working conditions and interpersonal relationships. Raju (2004) argues that understanding dimensions of a job that may increase satisfaction or at least reduce dissatisfaction would be the first step towards designing a strategy for retention of quality staff. According to Schaffner et al. (2013) the level of employee turnover is low when employees experience satisfaction with their work. In their study Gupta and Shaw (2014) showed how leaders increase employee retention with adequate levels of motivation. Smith et al. (2002) posits that organizations that strive to enhance employee motivation by providing factors like opportunities for growth, achievement and responsibility, achieve high level of employees retention in the organization.

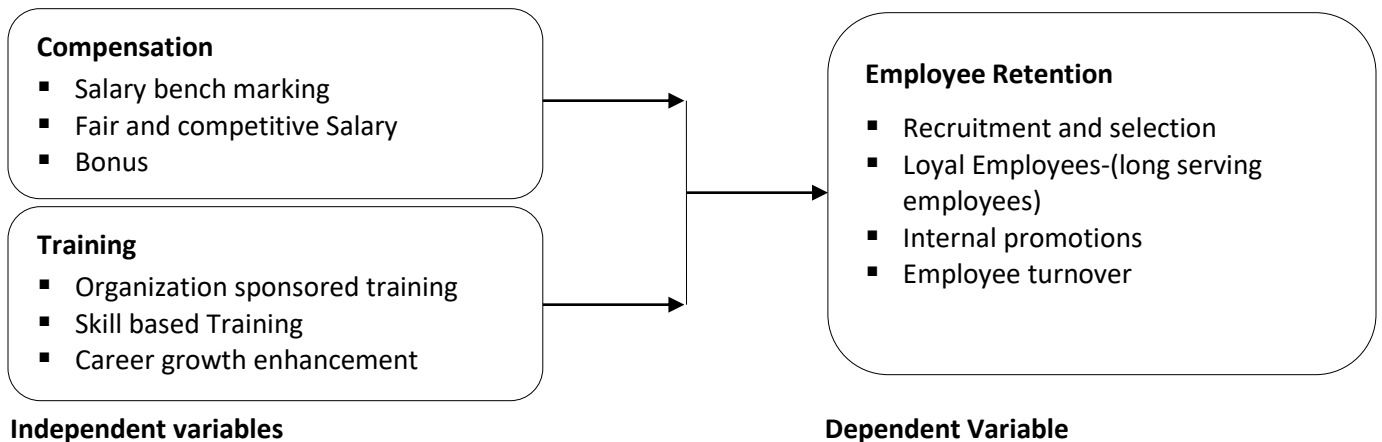


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Bhattacharyya (2014) defines compensation or pay as all forms of tangible services, financial returns, and benefits that an employee receives while they are in employment. Compensation is a system of rewards that motivates employees to perform; a tool used by organizations to promote the values, culture and the behavior they need in the organization; and

an instrument that enables organizations to achieve their business objectives. .Compensation includes direct cash payments and indirect compensation which refers to non-monetary benefits. Indirect compensation include aspects like: insurance, retirement benefits, paid holidays ,flexi working time, study leaves etcetera while monetary benefits

include; basic salary, gratuity, medical reimbursements, commissions, bonuses, overtime allowance, leave travelling allowance, hardship allowance, shift allowance, incentive, house allowance, gratuity, profit sharing bonus and commissions, etc. In addition indirect compensation is given at a regular interval at a definite time (Cascio, 2003).

Armstrong (2007) contends that the main objective of compensation is to reward people in a way that is just, regular and reasonable and in accordance with their value to the organization so that they can achieve the strategic goals of the organization. Zingheim et al. (2009) argues that the primary factor, which shows the commitment and intention of an employee to stay in an organization is the compensation, which an organization rewards them. In addition Zingheim et al. (2009), say that a competitive pay and benefit package is an important element that affects employee retention in an organization. Lewis et al. (2001) argue that employee retention can be achieved by the organizations that remunerate their employees with higher salaries. Employee compensation and benefits are necessary as it can be a tool to lure and retain capable, focused and productive employees in the organization. One of the reasons that employees leave organization is poor salaries; hence organizations should ensure that they pay employees fair and competitive salaries in order to retain them for long periods of time. Nawab and Bhatti, (2011) sited poor salary as one of the reasons employees leave organizations.

Job training is one of the most important factors in retaining employees in the organizations. Training is defined as a systematic process of changing the behavior, knowledge and motivation of present employees to improve the match between employee characteristics and employment requirements Armstrong, (2001). Training is a process for developing individual skills and effectiveness (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2008). Garavan (1997) define training as a

practical education through which expertise and knowledge are developed and inefficiencies are overcome .He says that training should be related to the current job and on an ongoing situation. There are mainly two modes of training namely: on the job training and off the job training. In the off the job mode of training, new employees and those who lack experience and skills in particular areas of work are trained from a designated area within the work place. The trainees observe what their peers and managers do and later imitate what they observed (Mullins, 2010). On the job training is a form of training that is carried out in a designated area away from the work place and hence there are less disruptions from work issues (Armstrong, 2009).

According to Griffeth et al. (2000), training reduces the turnover rate of employees. This is because training programs can increase retention when they meet the needs of the employees (Montgomery, 2006). Training must have a purpose that can be defined only if the learning needs of the organization, the group and individuals within it have been systematically identified and analyzed (Armstrong, 2007). Organizations that extensively train their employees create a reputation for valuing employees and are able to attract and retain high caliber of highly skilled employees (Kipkebut, 2010).It is essential for an employer to give appropriate training to their employees in order to encourage them to stay in the organization (Poulston, 2008). Employees who receive specific training for are more likely to stay in employment, than those who do not receive any training at all (Brum, 2007).

Empirical Review

Prabusankar (2017) carried out a study on factors affecting employee retention in manufacturing enterprises in Coimbatore district. The results revealed that in addition to career development and proximity, compensation was one factors that had a significant relationship with employee retention. In another study, Sarmad et al. (2016) did a study on

the motivation and compensation as predictors of employees' retention, the results of the study indicated that substantive enhancement in motivation level and practical handling of compensation yields a correspondingly improvement in employees retention . Msengeti and Obwogi (2015) carried out a study on the effects of pay and work environment on employee retention in hotel industry in Mombasa County. From their findings it was revealed that while work environment had a strong influence on employee retention pay had no influence whatsoever on retention. Rono and Kiptum (2017) carried out a study on factors affecting employee retention at the University of Eldoret and the results indicated a significant relationship between compensation and employee retention.

Al-sharafi and Alam, (2018), conducted a study on the effect of training and career development on employees' retention .The aim of the study was to investigate the mediating role of that job satisfaction in the training, career development, and employees' retention relationship. The results show the importance of training in enhancing employees' satisfaction as well as improving their retention in the organization. In their study, Renaud et al. (2015) used five major factors on human resources practices in their study namely: incentive compensation, innovative peripherals, training and development, respectful work environment, and Work-life balance to investigate the best HRM practices for retaining experts. The result from their study indicate that four out of the five HRM practices- incentive compensation, innovative peripherals, training and development, respectful work environment are positively related to employees' retention.

However not all studies show positive relationship between training and employee retention. For instance Haider et al. (2015) conducted a study on the impact of human resource practices on employee retention. Among the HR practices used

were training and development, compensation and culture .The results of their study revealed that Compensation and culture has a positive relationship with employee retention whereas training and development has a negative relationship with employee retention. Krishnan et al (2016) in their study examined the impact of work environment, supervisor support and training and development in workforce retention. The results of the study revealed that work environment, supervisor support enhanced work commitment which influences retention however regression analysis indicated that training and development did not have any significance influence on retention.

METHODOLOGY

The study used descriptive research design. The population was composed of all employees of African Fund for Endangered Wildlife Kenya (AFEW Kenya) who were drawn from all the departments of the organization which included: Education department, Security department, Gift shop department, Tea House department, the Finance department and the Human resource and administration department. The population of the organization comprised of forty seven employees, this being a small population led to the researcher to include all the employees as target population and therefore the researcher used a census inquiry. Questionnaires were used to collect the data from the respondents which were administered through a drop and pick method and respondents allowed two weeks before they were collected. Data gathered was analyzed through the use of SPSS software version23. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis to determine the extent of relationship and degree of relationship of the variables under study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 40 questionnaires administered, 38 were returned fully filled by the respondents reflecting a

95% response rate. The response rate was considered excellent as it was within the recommended scope by Mugenda (2003) who asserts that a response rate should be 70% and above. Only 2 were unreturned that represented a mere 5% non-response rate.

Factor Analysis

Compensation and Employee Retention

Compensation as an independent variable had a total of six (6) items. The results are depicted in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Compensation

Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M	ST/D
The organization carries out salary surveys	50	47	03	00	00	1.57	0.56
I am satisfied with my current salary	45	42	02	11	00	1.84	0.94
The organization gives bonus to employees for good performance	40	58	02	00	00	1.68	0.54
The salary offered in the organization is based on the employees' competence	37	42	05	11	05	2.11	1.16
The salary offered in the organization is based on the employees' length of service	08	03	03	60	26	4.05	1.07
The salary offered in the organization attracts and retains the most competent employees	07	66	05	11	11	2.57	1.14
Average						2.30	0.90
Key:							

SD: Strongly Disagree D-Disagree N-Neutral A-Agree SA- Strongly Agree M-Mean ST/D- Standard Deviation

The study sought to evaluate whether there were salary surveys carried out in the organization. The results of the finding indicated that 50 % of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, 47 % of the respondents disagreed, and 2 % of the respondents were neutral, however none of the employees either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. On average (M= 1.57, ST/D = 0.56). the respondents indicated that the organization carries out salary surveys.

Respondents were asked to provide information on whether they were satisfied with the salaries the organization offered them. The results indicated 45 % of the respondents strongly disagreed that the

salaries they given by the organization was equivalent to the market rates, 42 % disagreed , 2 11% were neutral to this aspect, 11 % agreed and 0 % of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement. On average, the respondents indicated that they satisfied with the salaries the organization offered them (M= 1.84, ST/D = 0.94).

The study sought to evaluate if organization gave bonus to the employees for good performance. The results indicated 40 % of the respondents strongly disagreed that the organization gave bonus to the employees, 58 % disagreed, while 2% were neutral to this aspect that organization gave bonus to the employees. None of the respondents strongly agreed

to the statement. On average, the respondents indicated the organization gave bonuses to the employees for good performance (M= 1.68, ST/D= 0.54).

When the respondents were asked if the salary offered in the organization was based on the employees' competence, 37 % of the respondents strongly disagreed that salary offered in the organization was based on the employees' competence, 42 % disagreed with the notion, 5 % were neutral to the statement, 11 % agreed while 5 % strongly agreed to the statement. On average (M= 2.11, ST/D = 1.16) the respondents indicated that the salary offered in the organization was based on the employees' competence.

The fifth question sought to evaluate whether the salary offered in the organization was based on the employees' length of service in the organization. 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed followed by 3 % who disagreed. 3 % were neutral, 60 % agreed while 26 % strongly agreed that salary offered in the organization was based on the employees' length of

service in the organization. On average, the respondents indicated that the salary offered in the organization was based on the employees' length of service in the organization (M= 4.05, ST/D= 1.07).

Finally when the respondents were asked if the salary offered in the organization attracted and retained the most competent employees, 5 % of the respondents strongly disagreed while 66

% disagreed with the statement, 6 % of the respondents were neutral, 11 % of the respondents agreed with the statement while 11 % of the respondents strongly agreed with statement .On average, the respondents indicated that the salary offered in the organization did attracts and retains the competent employees in the organization (M= 2.57, ST/D = 1.14).

Training

Training as an independent variable had a total of six (6) items. The results are depicted in the table 2 below.

Table 2: Training

Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M	ST/D
The trainings offered in the organization has prepared me adequately for more challenging duties and responsibilities.	05	08	03	50	34	4.11	1.10
The trainings opportunities are fairly allocated among employees of all levels	32	55	03	05	05	2.03	1.03
Training offered in the organization opens promotion opportunities for the employees	37	47	08	03	05	1.97	1.02
Employee training and development programs offered are linked to each employee's career needs	05	03	05	42	45	4.30	1.04
The organization offers frequent training programs to enhance employee skills for better performance	03	03	05	55	34	4.27	0.86
The organization pays for trainings as a way to motivate and retain employees in the organization	05	11	00	47	37	4.11	1.14
Average						3.46	1.03

Key:

SD: Strongly Disagree D-Disagree N-Neutral A-Agree SA- Strongly Agree M-Mean ST/D- Standard Deviation

The study sought to assess if the training and development programs offered to the employees helped prepare them for more challenging duties and responsibilities. From the findings in table above 2, minority, 18% of the respondents disagreed, 50 % of the respondents agreed while 34 % of the employees strongly agreed that the training and development programs they received helped them for more challenging duties and responsibilities. On average, the respondents indicated that the training and development programs offered they were offered helped them prepare for more challenging duties and responsibilities (M= 4.11, ST/D = 1.10).

When the respondents were asked if the training opportunities offered were fairly and evenly allocated among all levels of employees in the organization whereby the results revealed that, 32 % strongly disagreed, 55 % disagreed, and 3 % of the respondents were neutral, 5 % of the respondents agreed while 5 % of the respondents strongly agreed. On average, (M= 2.03, ST/D

= 1.03) the respondents indicated that training opportunities offered were fairly and evenly distributed among all levels of employees in the organization.

The study also sought to assess if the training offered in the organization opened promotion opportunities for the employees. The study found out that 37 % of the respondents strongly disagreed, another, 47 % disagreed, 8 % were not sure or were neutral, and 3 % agreed while 5 % strongly agreed that the training offered in the organization opened promotion opportunities for the employees On average, the respondents indicated that the training offered organization opened promotion opportunities for the employees (M= 1.97, ST/D = 1.02).

The respondents were asked if the training programs offered were linked to each employee's career needs. The results from the study generally indicate that 5 % of the respondents strongly disagreed, 3 % of the respondents disagreed, 5 % were neutral, while 42 % agreed and 45 % strongly agreed. On average, the respondents indicated that the training programs offered were linked to each employee's career needs (M= 4.30, ST/D = 1.04).

The study also sought to assess if the organization offered frequent training programs to enhance employee skills for better performance, of which 3 % of the respondents strongly disagreed, 3 % disagreed, 5 % were neutral sure, 55 % agreed, and 34 % strongly agreed. On average (M= 4.27, ST/D = 0.86), the respondents indicated that they were trained on frequent basis to enhance their skills for better performance.

Finally the respondents were asked if the organization paid for employees' trainings as a way to motivate and enhance retention of the employees in the organization. The findings indicated that 5 % of the respondents strongly disagreed, 11 % disagreed, while 47 % agreed, and lastly,

37 % strongly agreed. Generally, 16 % of the respondents disagreed, while 84 % agreed that organization paid for employees' trainings as a way to motivate and enhance retention of the employees in the organization. On average, the respondents indicated that the organization paid for their trainings as a way to motivate and enhance retention of the employees in the organization (M= 4.11, ST/D = 1.14).

Employee Retention

Retention as a dependent variable had a total of six (6) items. The results are depicted in the table 3 below.

Table 3: Retention

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	M	ST/D
	%	%	%	%	%		
I have all the tools I need to perform my work efficiently and effectively	10	05	08	45	32	3.92	1.25
I am satisfied with my current position in the organization	47	34	03	08	08	2.00	1.25
Many of my colleagues have left the organization in the last two years	47	42	08	03	00	1.70	0.75
The training programs offered in AFEW Kenya motivate me to stay in the organization	11	05	02	40	42	4.08	1.29
I will be working here in the next coming year	03	08	02	50	37	4.22	0.99
I would apply for a higher position if a vacancy arose in the organization	05	08	03	47	37	4.14	1.11
Average						3.34	1.11

Key:

SD: Strongly Disagree D-Disagree N-Neutral A-Agree SA- Strongly Agree M-Mean ST/D- Standard Deviation

When asked whether in their opinion they had all the tools they needed to perform their work efficiently and effectively, 10 % strongly disagreed, 5 % disagreed 8 % neutral, however 45 % agreed while 32 % strongly agreed to this statement. On average, the respondents indicate that they had all the tools they needed to perform their work efficiently and effectively (mean = 3.92, ST/D =1.25)

The respondents were asked about their satisfaction with their current position in the organization, 47% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 34% of the respondents disagreed, and 3% were neutral, 8% of the respondents agreed while 8% strongly agreed. On average of (mean = 2.00, ST/D =1.25) the respondents indicated they satisfied were with their current position. Majority of the respondents 47% strongly disagreed that many of their colleagues had left the organization in the last two, 42% disagreed while 8 % were neutral and 3% respondents agreed while none strongly agreed about fellow colleagues who left the organization. On average, of (mean = 1.70, ST/D = 0.75) the respondents indicated that

many of my colleagues had left the organization in the last two years.

The study also sought to examine if the training programs offered in AFEW Kenya motivated the employees to stay in the organization of which 11 % of the respondents stronglydisagreed, 5 % disagreed, 2 % were neutral, 40 % agreed, and 42 % strongly agreed that the training programs offered in AFEW Kenya motivated the employees to stay in the organization. On average, the respondents indicated that training programs offered in AFEW Kenya motivated the employees to stay in the organization (mean = 4.08, ST/D =1.29).

The research also sought to assess if the respondent would be working in AFEW Kenya in the next year whereby 3 % of the respondents strongly disagreed, 8 % disagreed, 2 % were neutral, 50 % agreed, and 37 % strongly agreed that they would be working in AFEW Kenya come the following year. On average, the respondents indicated that they would be working in AFEW Kenya come the following year (mean = 4.22, ST/D =0.99).

Finally when the respondents were asked if they would apply for a higher position if a vacancy arose in the organization whereby 5 % of the respondents strongly disagreed, 8 % disagreed, 3 % were neutral, 47 % agreed, and 37 % strongly agreed that they would apply for a higher position if a vacancy arose in the organization. On average, of (mean = 4.14, ST/D = 1.11) the respondents indicated that they would be they would apply for a higher position if a vacancy arose in the organization.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study established that there is a correlation between compensation and employee retention at AFEW Kenya. The correlation test was conducted to express the strength of relationship between compensation and employee retention and correlation coefficient of 0.450 value indicates a positive relationship in which change in compensation will produce a change in employee retention.

The study revealed that most of the employees were of the opinion that organization did not carry out salary surveys to ensure the salaries were in line with the market rates, and most the employees were not satisfied with the salaries they were offered by the organization. The study also established that employees were remunerated on the basis of their length of service in the organization as opposed to their job competence. The study also revealed that the organization did not give out bonuses to appreciate the good performance of the employees. Lastly most of the employees held the opinion that the salary offered in the organization did not attract and retain highly competent employees.

The analysis of the results indicated a significant weak correlation between compensation and employee retention ($r = 0.450$) and significant = 0.000. This shows that when the compensation is not up to the required level according to the needs of the employees their retention levels in the organization

is affected. The finding of this study is consistent with the results of previous research conducted by John and Teru (2015) on effect of compensation/ pay on staff retention in selected commercial banks in Adamawa state, Nigeria. The study findings of the previous study indicated there was positive effect of compensation/pay on staff retention .The current study is also collaborated by previous study done by Bibi, et al. (2017) on the impact of compensation and promotional opportunity on employee retention in academic institutions The results of their study posits that compensation and promotional opportunities had imperative relationship with employees' retention. The current study is also consistent with the study of Sarmad et al. (2016) on the motivation and compensation as predictors of employees' retention, whose results indicated that substantive enhancement in compensation yields a correspondingly improvement in employees retention This suggests that when organizations provide proper compensation package and care about the employees, it makes the employees stay for longer period of time and enhances the organization's employee retention level.

The study established that there is a strong relationship between training and employee retention at AFEW Kenya (correlation coefficient 0.731 P value 0.000). The study established that training significantly influenced employee retention at AFEW Kenya. The study findings revealed that employees perceive AFEW Kenya support for staff training as major contributor to employee retention. Majority of the employees were of the opinion that the trainings they received in the organization prepared them for more challenging roles and responsibilities in the organization and also most of the respondents agreed that the training skills they received from the trainings they were offered helped them improve on their performance in the organization. The employees also appreciate the relevance of the training to their career

development since the training programs were in line with their careers. However, the employees held the opinion that the training offered at AFEW Kenya did not open doors for promotion opportunities in the organization. The study findings also revealed that employees were motivated to stay in organization because the organization footed the bills incurred during their trainings. Nevertheless, the study found out that majority of the employees at AFEW Kenya has a perception that training opportunities were not allocated fairly within the organization among employees of all levels of employment.

The study findings were in tandem with the previous studies that established training and development significantly influence employee retention. For instance, Hassan et al. (2013) conducted a study on the effect training on employee retention and the results from their study indicated that training plays a very important role in employee retention. In addition this study is consistent with Ldama and Bazza (2015) who conducted a study on effect of training and development on employees' retention and the results from their study revealed that training and development had positive effect on staff retention. The results of their study also indicated that an increase in internal training and an increase in fairness of the training policy led to an increase in employee retention. This study is also consistent with the study of Al-sharafi and Alam, (2018), who conducted a study on the effect of training and career development on employees' retention and the results of their study revealed there was an importance of training in enhancing employees' satisfaction as well as improving their retention in the organization.

The findings of the study revealed there was a positive relationship between compensation and retention, however the organization fell short in some areas which led to employees' dissatisfaction. Most of the employees disagreed that the

organization carried out salary surveys to ensure salaries were in harmony with market rates. The majority of the employees also disagreed that they were satisfied with the salaries that were offered in the organization. Majority of the respondents agreed that the organization compensated employees on basis of length of service in the organization as opposed to the employees' competence in their work. Majority of the employees also were of the opinion that the salary offered in the organization did not attract highly competent employees. These factors will more often than not lead to demotivated employees who will start looking employment in other organizations which leads to decrease of employee retention.

The study also established that there was a strong relationship between training and retention. Majority of the employees were happy about the trainings offered in AFEW Kenya however there is an area in training that the employees were unhappy about. Majority of the employees has the perception that training opportunities were not allocated fairly within the organization. This area if not addressed will lead to employee turnover and hence low employee retention

On recommendations, the study revealed that the employees of AFEW Kenya were not satisfied with the salaries the organization offered, hence organization should carry out salary surveys so that it gauges the market rate of salaries against other organizations of equal footings. The employees would appreciate if the organization gave them bonuses to show appreciation for work well done, the organization can come up with fair ways of remunerating employees' who have good performance. This can be done by the organization setting SMART targets for the employees and if by the end of the period (during employees performance appraisals) agreed upon employees have accomplished their set targets, the organization should give bonus to the most deserving employees.

In addition the employees perceived that weight is given more on length of service an employee has been in the organization rather than the competence employee possess and this is used as basis for setting employee compensation package. The organization should consider employees' competence as a basis for setting compensation rather than basing compensation on the length of service an employee has served in an organization.

Employees perceive the organization's support in payment of the cost of training offered as a major contributor to employee retention. However the training opportunities should be fairly allocated so that all employees have a chance of being trained. Training programs should include the management, middle level employees and low level employees. To enable accommodation of members of all levels of employment in the organization, a training policy should be put in place for guidance of the same.

Although majority of the employees agreed that the trainings they were offered were linked to their careers lines and also agreed that the training

programs they were offered improved their skills, most respondents disagreed that the trainings offered led to promotion opportunities in the organization. The organization should hence come up with strategies that will enable employees get promoted once they have been trained and also when promotion opportunities arise in the organization rather than hiring external candidates.

Suggestions for Further Research

The main objective of this study was to determine the factors influencing employee retention, in environmental conservation organizations in Kenya – a case of AFEW Kenya. This research was conducted in a private organization, the public sector was not involved in the research hence the results obtained cannot allow for generalization of the results in other sectors. In addition there were also no studies that have been carried out on factors influencing employee retention in any environmental conservation sectors. The study therefore recommended a study of the same to be carried out in public sectors out for comparison purpose.

REFERENCES

- Ahlich, N.S. (2000). *Competing for talent. Key recruitment and retention strategies for becoming an employer of choice*. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black Publishing.
- Ahmed, B. N., & Jehanzeb, K. (2013). Training and Development Program and its Benefits to Employee and Organization. *A Conceptual Study European Journal of Business and Management*, 5, 67-88. Retrieved from <https://www.iiste.org>.
- Al-sharafi, H., Hassan, M., & Alam, S. (2018). The effect of training and career development on employees retention – A study on the telecommunication organizations in Yemen. *The Journal of Social Science Research*, 1, 420-430. doi:10.32861/jssr.spi2.420.430
- Armstrong, M. (2007). *A handbook of employee reward management and practice* (2nd ed.). London, England: Kogan Page Limited.
- Bhattacharyya, D. (2014). *Compensation Management*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Brum, S. (2007). *What Impact does training have on Employee Commitment and Employee Turnover?* Schmid Labour Research Center, Rhodes: University of Rhodes.

- Cascio, W.F. (2003). *Managing human resources: Productivity, quality of work life, profits*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Inc.
- Dutta, A.B. , & Banerjee, S. (2014). Study of employee retention. *International Journal of Business Management & Research*, 4, 83-88.
- Griffeth, R., & Hom, P. (2001). *Retaining valued employees*. Thousand oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Gupta, N., & Shaw, J. D. (2014). Employee compensation: The neglected area of HRM research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 24, 1-4. doi:10.1016/j.hrmmr.2013.08.007
- Heathfield, S.M. (2016). *Bonus Pay*. Retrieved from <https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-bonus-pay-1918069>
- Herzberg, F. (1959). *The motivation to work*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Hughes, J. C., & Rog, E. (2008). Talent management: A strategy for improving employee recruitment, retention and engagement within hospitality organizations. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(7), 743-757.
- Kadir, A., Begam, M., Salim, M., & Kamarudin, H. (2012). The relationship between educational support and entrepreneurial intentions in Malaysian higher learning institution. *International Conference on Education and Educational Psychology*, 69, 2164 – 2173.
- Kennedy, E., & Daim, T.U. (2010). A strategy to assist management in workforce engagement and employee retention in the high tech engineering environment. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 33, 468-76.
- Kipkebut, D. J. (2010). *Organizational commitment and job satisfaction in higher educational institutions: The Kenyan Case*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Middlesex University. London, England.
- Krishnan, H., Miller, A. & Judge, W. (1997). Diversification and top management team complementarity: Is performance improved by merging similar or dissimilar teams. *Strategic Management Journal*, 18, 361–374.
- Kumar, J. (2012) .HRM practice on the retention of employees of the information technology sector. *International Journal of Scientific Research*, 1(4), 108-110.
- Ldama J., Mohammed I., & Bazza, M. (2015). Effect of training and development on employees' retention in selected commercial banks in Adamawa State-Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 7,36. Retrieved from <https://www.iiste.org>
- Lewis, P.S., Goodman, S.H., & Fandt, P.M. (2001). *Management Challenges in the 21st Century*. New York, NY: Southwest Publishing Company.
- Logan, J. K. (2000). Retention tangibles and intangibles: More meaning in work is essential, but good chair massages won't hurt. *Training & Development*, 54 (4), 48-50.
- Luthans, F. (2005). *Organizational behavior*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Maslow, A. (1943). Motivation and personality: A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review Journal*, 50, 370-396.

- Msengeti, D., & Obwogi, J. (2015). .Effects of pay and work environment on employee retention: a study of hotel industry in Mombasa County.*International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 5, 26-35. Retrieved from <http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-0415.php?rp=P403951>.
- Mugenda, M.O, & Mugenda, G.A.(1999). *Research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*.Nairobi, Kenya:Acts Press.
- Njoroge, S.W. (2007). *A survey of factors that influence employee retention in manufacturing firms in Nairobi*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Onah, F.O. (2015). *Human resource management*. Enugu, Nigeria: John Jacob’s Classic Publishers Ltd.
- Ongori, H. (2007). A review of the literature on employee turnover. *African Journal of Business Management*, 1(3), 49-54.
- Omollo, E. (2012).*National Environmental Policy No. 2013*. Retrieved from <http://www.environment.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/NATIONAL-ENVIRONMENT- POLICY-20131.pdf>
- Phillips, J.J., &Connell, A.O. (2003).*Managing employee retention: A strategic accountability approach*. Oxford, England: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann Publications.
- Poulston, J. (2008). Hospitality workplace problems and poor training: A close relationship. *InternationalJournal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(4), 412-427.
- Prabusankar, D. (2017). A study on factors affecting employee retention in manufacturing enterprises in Coimbatore district. *International Journal of Management (IJM)*, 8(2), 123-128.
- Rawal, P. (2011). Employee retention: an art of keeping the people who keep you in business. *HRM Review*,1, 10-17.
- Renaud, S., Morin, L., Saulquin, J.Y.,& Abraham, J. (2015). What are the best HRM practices for retaining experts? A longitudinal study in the Canadian information technology sector. *International Journal of Manpower*, 36(3), 416–32.
- Robbins, S. P. (2001). *Organizational behaviour*. New York,NY: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Rono,E.J.,& Kiptum, G.K. (2017). Factors affecting employee retention at the University of Eldoret, Kenya. *Journal of Business and Management*, 19, 109-115. Retrieved from www.iosrjournals.org
- Saks, A.M. (2006).Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21(7), 600-619.
- Sarmad, M., Ajmal, M.M., Shamim, M., Saleh, M. Malik, A. (2016). Motivation and Compensation as Predictors of Employees’ Retention: Evidence from Public Sector Oil and Gas Selling Organizations. *Journal of Behavioural Sciences*, 26(2), 174-188.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students*. London, England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Sharma, M., Gupta, S., Sharma, P. (2018).Impact of employee empowerment on retention of knowledge workers in higher education sector. *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature*, 1, 6-4.

- Silva, P. (2006). Effects of disposition on hospitality employee job satisfaction and commitment. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18 (4), 317- 328.
- Smart, M., & Chamberlain, A. (2017) .*Why do employees quit? The factors that predict employee turnover*. Mill Valley, CA: Glassdoor Hwy.
- Smith, P.C., Kendall, L.M., & Hulin, C.L. (1969).*The measurement of satisfaction in work and retirement*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.
- Wamicha, W.N. & Mwanje, J.I. (2000). *Environmental Management in Kenya. Have the national conservation plans worked?* Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: OSSREA.