



**MODERATING EFFECT OF LABOUR MOBILITY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN RESOURCE SUCCESSION PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE OF COUNTY GOVERNMENTS IN WESTERN KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Through devolution, Kenya has made significant progress politically, structurally and economically. According to Kenya Accountable Development Programme report of 2019, counties made a significant contribution of 60% to Gross Domestic Product. However, counties in western Kenya contributed comparatively low average of 1.9%. There is limited evidence linking the same to human resource succession planning and labour mobility which are important drivers of performance. Past studies investigated effects of individual constructs of Human Resources Succession Planning on performance, leaving composite effect unattended. Labour mobility has not been considered as a moderator, yet its direct effect on organization performance has been established. This study examined the moderating effect of labour mobility on the relationship between human resource succession planning and performance. Acquired Needs Achievement and Resource Based View theories guided this study. It adopted a correlational research design. Primary and secondary data was collected. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Using regression model, the findings revealed that labour mobility positively moderated human resource succession planning and performance ( $\beta=.287$ ,  $R\text{ square}=.054$ ,  $p<.05$ ) correlation. It was concluded that labour mobility moderates the relationship between human resource succession planning and performance of counties. The study recommended an improvement in human resource succession planning and well as labour mobility in order to enhance performance.*

**Key Words:** Human resource succession planning, Labour Mobility, Performance, Effectiveness, Efficiency

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## INTRODUCTION

A key component of Human resource Management is human resource succession planning which ensures organizational and institutional readiness, flexibility and responsiveness in delivery of services. A robust relationship between Human Resource Management and Labour Mobility aids organizations to influence the mobile workforce to take up available positions and provide developmental chances to internal candidates, keeping them busy avoiding costly turnover. Labour mobility is the ability and capacity of labour to go from one place to another; from one occupation to another; one job to another, or from one industry to another. Through mobility of labor, there is increase in proficiency and employee productivity because they take up occupations that they are best suited, (Campbell et al. 2011).

Contingency Theory (Fiedler, 1958), posits that, internal subsystems dynamics determines the ideal structure and form of any system. It proposes that an organization's operations and outcomes are contingent on factors and forces within the system's internal and external. A company's relationship with its future, is highly determined by its organizational structure. Therefore, contingency theory becomes highly relevant to succession management and organizational performance. Structures are architectural representations that aid human resource success of succession management and give formulas for performance through the right leadership being applied in every situation. Before determining the best structure to adopt, it is important to check whether the structure meets future challenges in management. Contingency theories focus on the leadership bit of an organization, and matches leaders to the appropriate situations and their efficiency is dependent on leaders' style fitting in the context within which they function.

Contingency theory is relevant to this study because an organization may be having committed and well developed staff but high performance may not be realized if there is no good will and total backing

from the top management or organizational leadership. The leadership must give the general direction of where the organization is heading in terms of performance by setting clear goals. Therefore, leadership is an important intervening variable to ensure high performance is realized.

Studies on HRSP and performance have revealed mixed results. This points to a possible moderator in the relationship. For instance, Avanes, (2011), revealed a positive correlation between organizational effectiveness and succession planning through performance. While Nwosu, (2014), and Pandey et al., (2014), reported that succession planning negatively impacted employee productivity which in turn led to decreased organizational performance. From the empirical studies above, it is clear that several studies have been carried out in succession planning and labour mobility, however, most of them have focused on effect of human resource succession planning and organizational performance. For example, Adhiambo, (2014), looked at some non-governmental health service organizations, that are in Winam Division, Kisumu County, Kenya; Odongo (2016) on Kenya Power Limited Company and Rotich (2014) on family-owned supermarkets in Nairobi County. Whereas these studies enriched the researcher's understanding on first the subject of human resource succession planning and organizational performance and secondly on subject of labour mobility on organizational performance, there is need to carry out further investigations on this relationship with labour mobility as a moderator.

Previously, studies have considered moderators such as talent development, leadership development, performance appraisal and career development in this relationship as possible moderators on performance. It has not been established whether labour mobility has a moderator effect on performance or not. Secondly, there is hardly any evidence of a study that dealt with effect of labour mobility as a moderating variable on both human resource succession planning and performance. It is therefore important

to analyze effect of human resources succession planning on productivity of selected county governments in Western Kenya, and how labour mobility as a moderating variable, affects between the dependent and independent variable correlation.

Organizations all over the world are faced with succession challenges prompted by lack of development of human resource succession plans. Human resource succession planning is a critical but often overlooked by most organizations leading to major organizational crisis. For an effective process of, Organizational leaders must identify clearly the objectives and purposes of human resource succession planning and management and must participate dynamically to attain the aims of this process, Yadav and Dabhade (2013).

Kenya's public sector including county governments, practice human resource succession planning through programmes such as; extensive training to prepare public sector personnel with necessary skills, schemes of service, junior officers promotions fast tracking to avoid top management leadership crisis when top managers retire, (Kibui et al., 2014). Whereas this is important, a strong competition for knowledgeable, educated and talented workforce in the public and private sectors of the economy exists. Current employee retention, and finding competent replacements is a concern for top management, and when the current workers leave either to other organizations or through natural attrition, it becomes a challenge to most organizations. This trend, also known as "war of talent", (McKinsey 2001), calls for organizational leadership to employ good strategies in employment and retaining of employees. This progress has made human resource succession planning a hot topic in human capital management in many organizations.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Human resource succession planning process and labour mobility are key and important factors in the development of an organization. When experienced workers resign, they leave with massive knowledge

which is not acquired by reading a guide. Knowledge transfer and experience should be done before they leave. A survey by Infotrak that ranked the country's 47 counties based on their performance in responsibilities assigned to the devolved units for the financial year 2019/2020 indicated that the general performance of counties was average. The leading county nationally was Kakamega with a performance index of 57.2%. From the report, it is further noted that most of the counties in western Kenya scored below 50% and had an average of 48.6% which was just slightly above the national average of 47.5%. Previous studies and reports have attributed poor performance of county governments in western Kenya to inconsistent financing from National Government and overemployment but has not been attributed to Human Resource Succession Planning (HRSP) and Labour mobility. It is also noted that studies on HRSP and performance have revealed mixed results, which points to a possible moderator of labour mobility on the relationship between HRSP and performance. Previously, studies have considered talent development, leadership development, performance appraisal and career development as possible moderators. Labour mobility, even though having direct effect on performance, has been introduced as a moderator in human resource succession planning and performance of organizations relationship between. It has not been established whether it has a moderator effect or not.

### **Study Objective**

This study's main objective was to examine the moderating effect of labour mobility on human resource succession planning and performance relationship of Western Kenya County Governments

### **Research Hypothesis**

H<sub>01</sub>: Labour mobility has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between human resource succession planning and performance of County Governments in western Kenya

### Conceptual Framework

The Figure below shows Human Resource Succession Planning (HRSP) which has four elements that include workforce planning; Career path development; Talent Retention and Staff Performance Management as an independent variable. Secondly, Labour Mobility (LM) described by both Geographic and Occupational mobility is moderator variable. Thirdly there is Performance of County Governments which comprises two elements that include Effectiveness and Efficiency

as dependent variable. It is expected that both HRSP and LM have effect on performance. Further, LM is proposed as a moderator in the main relationship as above. The argument for the interaction of these variables is guided by Acquired Needs Achievement Theory and Resource Based View Theory. The theories help in; predicting, explaining, and understanding a phenomena, and to counterprevailing knowledge, within the parameters of the critical bounding assumptions. Conceptual framework is presented in figure below.

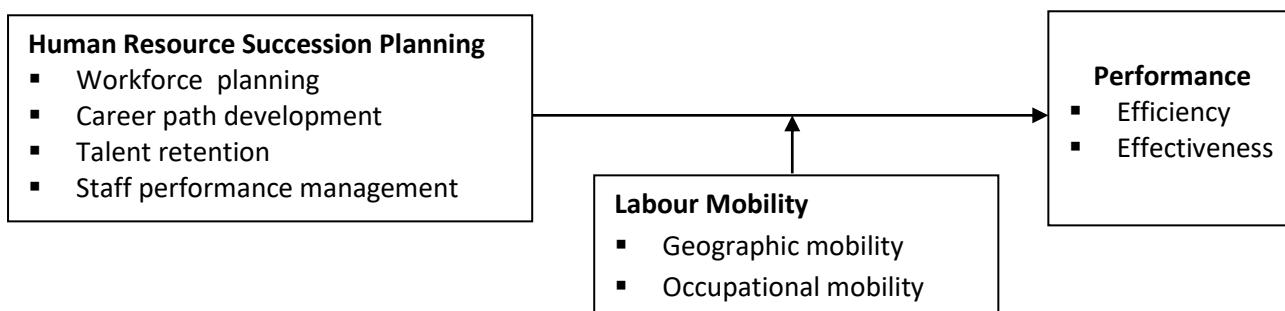


Figure1: Conceptual Framework

### METHODOLOGY

The study used correlational study design which was used to capture information based on data gathered. The study area was carried out in selected western Kenya region counties comprising Busia, Siaya, Vihiga, Homabay and Migori. The study targeted western Kenya counties because the total contribution of the ten western Kenya counties which covers the former Nyanza and Western provinces contributed the least percentage of 16.7% to the GDP. The Targeted population of this study was 370 senior employees of the selected County Governments in western Kenya. The senior employees in counties include County Executive Committee members, County Public Service Board members, County Secretaries, Chief Officers, Directors and Deputy Directors, where a sample of 192 employees was drawn using Taro Yamane’s formula and sampled using proportionate stratified sampling technique

Primary and secondary data was gathered by administering structured questionnaires while secondary data was collected through document

review. Questionnaire reliability was assessed through testing of internal consistency of the measures, by computing Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients at a threshold of 0.7 for workforce Planning ( $\alpha=.856$ ), Career Path Development ( $\alpha=.758$ ), Talent Retention ( $\alpha=.979$ ), Staff performance management ( $\alpha=.775$ ), labour mobility ( $\alpha =0.788$ ) as well as that for performance ( $\alpha =0.944$ ). Validity was ascertained using criterion related validity which was used as a standard of judgment accounted for the different approaches that were used. Collected data was analysed with the aide of multiple linear regression analysis model as follows,

$$\text{Additive model: } Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{HRSP}_i + \epsilon_i \dots\dots\dots 1$$

$$\text{Additive model: } Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{HRSP}_i + \beta_2 \text{LM}_i + \epsilon_i \dots\dots\dots 2$$

$$\text{Multiplicative/Moderator Model: } Y_i = b_0 + b_1 \text{HRSP}_i + b_2 \text{LM}_i + b_3 \text{HRSP}_i \text{LM}_i + \epsilon_i \dots\dots\dots 3$$

Source: Cohen and Cohen (1983) Fairchild and Mackinnon (2009) and Whisman and McClelland (2005).

Y= Dependent Variable (Performance)

X= Independent Variable (HRSP)  
 Z= Moderator Variable (LM)  
 XZ = Interaction Term (HRSP and LM)  
 $\beta_0$  =Standardized Y intercept in the additive model (model without the interaction term)  
 $\beta_1$  =Standardized coefficient of X in the additive model  
 $\beta_2$  = Standardized coefficient of X in the additive model  
 $b_1$  =Un-standardized coefficient of X in the moderator model (Main effect of X on Y if Z is zero or Simple effect of X on Y if Z is above zero).  
 $b_2$  = Un-standardized coefficient of Z in the moderator model (Simple effect of Z on Y)  
 $b_3$  =Un-standardized coefficient of XZ in the moderator model (The interaction measure for moderation)  
 $\epsilon$  = Residual in the equations  
 $i$  = Number of firms under consideration

The moderator model coefficients are expressed as *b* because their interpretation is supposed to be based on un-standardized values.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study wanted to find out whether Human Resource Succession Planning and Performance relationship is moderated by quality labour mobility. This included Null hypothesis

testing which was stating;  $H_0: \beta_1 = 0$  Labour mobility has no significant moderating effect on the relationship between human resource succession planning and performance of County Governments in Western Kenya was tested, and actualized by use of Moderated Regression Analysis (MRA). The interaction between human resource succession planning and Labour mobility was tested. Hierarchical regression, which involves entering the mean composite human resource succession planning, in step one, was used to establish the magnitude of variance it accounts for in performance. The second step entailed adding labour mobility, which is the moderator variable to the model in order to establish the R square change it adds to the model and also find out whether it is significant or not. Finally, the third model or final step entailed adding the interaction term, which is the gross product between human resource succession planning and labour mobility, to the model, which tells us whether there is moderation or not in step 3. To reduce multi-collinearity threats, the magnitude of any high correlation of human resource succession planning and labour mobility, with the new interaction, values that were standardized were used for the interaction variable. The summary regression coefficients are shown below.

**Table 1: Moderating Role of Labour mobility of the relationship between human resource succession planning and Performance**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.226	.156		7.851	.000		
1 Human Resource Succession Planning	.720	.053	.722	13.647	.000	1.000	1.000
(Constant)	.526	.166		3.172	.002		
2 Human Resource Succession Planning	.462	.058	.463	8.015	.000	.636	1.571
Labour Mobility	.436	.059	.429	7.421	.000	.636	1.571
(Constant)	.338	.157		2.149	.033		
3 Human Resource Succession Planning	.327	.059	.328	5.552	.000	.523	1.913
Labour Mobility	.389	.055	.383	7.065	.000	.621	1.611
Interaction term	.521	.096	.287	5.444	.000	.657	1.522

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of counties

Table 1 illustrates the standardized ( $\beta$ ) and unstandardized (B) coefficients for human resource succession planning and labour mobility with and without the interaction term. Initially, human resource succession planning contributes makes a positive and significant contribution to performance by a magnitude of ( $\beta=.722$ ) at 0.05 significant level. This is also indicated by unstandardized coefficient of (B=.720) units. Introducing LM to the model resizes the magnitude of effect of HRSP to a standardized coefficient of ( $\beta=.463$ ) and unstandardized coefficient of (B=.462) which are still significant at 0.05. At this point, LM also contributes significantly to the model such that it positively and significantly affects performance by a magnitude of ( $\beta=.429$ ) for standardized coefficient and (B=.436) for unstandardized coefficient, which are both positive and significant at 0.05.

At the final step, the interaction term is introduced to the model. The resulting consequences are that human resource succession planning contribution to performance remains significant while labour mobility is further resized to a magnitude of ( $\beta=.383$ ) for standardized coefficient and ( $\beta=.389$ ) for unstandardized coefficient. The interaction term significantly and positively contributed to the model ( $\beta=.287$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Un-standardized coefficient is used when discussing coefficient for moderation because they signify small changes compared to the main changes shown in the additive regression model (Whisman & McClelland, 2005).

Without  $\beta$  which is the interaction term for human resource succession planning and labour mobility are; 0.722 and 0.429 respectively, the two being significant at ( $p=0.05$ ). On introducing interaction terms between human resource succession planning and labour mobility (moderator) in the model, both labour mobility and succession planning remained significant. Resultantly, hypothesized moderation model was confirmed to be;

$$\hat{Y} = 0.042 + 0.327X + 0.389M + 0.521XM + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots 4$$

Where:

Y is the dependent variable (Performance of County Governments in western Kenya),

X is the independent variable (HRSP)

M is the moderator variable (LM and XM is the interaction term between HRSP and LM.

Intercept and the XY slope are influenced by the moderating variable intercepts (M) and slopes of line  $\hat{Y} X$ . The un-standardized co-efficient of the moderator model  $b_3$  is 0.521, meaning, for each unit increase in labour mobility (M), the slope relating X(human resource succession planning) to Y(performance) increases by 0.521. Further, this implies that, as human resource succession planning increases by one unit, the performance levels increases by 0.521 in addition to the increment of 0.327 solely contributed by human resource succession planning. The summary statistics for moderator regression model.

**Table 2: Moderating Role of Labour Mobility on the Relationship between Human Resource Succession Planning and Performance**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.722 <sup>a</sup>	.521	.519	.58010	.521	186.236	1	171	.000
2	.799 <sup>b</sup>	.638	.634	.50564	.117	55.068	1	170	.000
3	.832 <sup>c</sup>	.692	.687	.46778	.054	29.634	1	169	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Human Resource Succession Planning  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Human Resource Succession Planning, Labour Mobility  
c. Predictors: (Constant), Human Resource Succession Planning, Labour Mobility, interaction term

From the results in model one of the moderation, the findings showed that HRSP and performance have a strong multiple correlation coefficient ( $R=.722$ ) which implies that even in the multiple regression, performance of Western Kenya's County Governments is positively associated with HRSP. However, squaring the multiple correlation coefficient ( $R$ ) results to a coefficient of determination value of ( $R^2 = .521$ ), indicating the variance in performance of Western Kenya's County Governments accounted for by HRSP. Therefore, it can be noted that HRSP accounts for 52.1% variance in performance of Western Kenya's County Governments when the value is multiplied by 100 percent. Since at this point, in model one, another variable is yet to be introduced, the  $R^2$  change remains same as  $R^2$ . However, in order to control for over-estimation of the variance, a shrinkage of 0.002 (0.2%) is applied to the  $R^2$  value resulting to a net variance of 51.9 % in performance of Western Kenya County Governments resulting from HRSP.

The first  $df_1$  value indicates implies that in model one, only one independent variable (HRSP was introduced in the model), thus 1, whereas  $df_2$  implies the sample size minus one independent variable minus 1 thus resulting to 171. The overall model one results were significant as indicated by  $F$ -ration which measures the model goodness of fit and implies that the model fitted, not by chance but out of careful research of the HRSP as a significant determinant of performance of Western Kenya's County Governments, hence, there is a value of  $F(1, 171)=186.236$ ,  $p<0.05$ . The standard error of estimate value of 0.656 is less than one thus small, further implying that the observation values in the regression are closer to the fitted line

In the second model, the moderator variable (labour mobility) was introduced and this improved the strength of the multiple correlation coefficients between human resource succession planning and labour mobility to an  $R$  value of 0.717. Therefore the total variance in County Governments in Western Kenya performance, accounted for by

both human resource succession planning and Labour Mobility is 63.8%, ( $R^2 = .638$ ), which when adjusted reduces to 63.4 percent. This means that the value added in performance variance by Labour Mobility was 11.7% as indicated by the  $R^2$  change value ( $R^2 \text{ Change} = .117$ ) which is significant,  $F(1,170)=55.068$ ,  $p<.05$ .

Finally, the total multiple correlation coefficients between all the three variables (human resource succession planning, labour mobility and interaction term) and County Governments performance in Western Kenya increased to an  $R$  value of 0.832. This infers that the performance of these Counties is associated with the chosen predictors. Also, clearly, the total variance in performance of Western Kenya County Governments, reported by the three predictors is 69.2% ( $R^2 = .692$ ) and 68.7% ( $R^2 = .687$ ) when adjusted to remove the shrinkage value of 0.5 percent. The net amount of variance of Western Kenya County Governments in performance represented for by interaction term is therefore 5.4% ( $R^2 \text{ change} = .054$ ) which is also significant at 0.5 level,  $F(1,169)=29.634$ ,  $p<.05$ . This suggests that labour mobility is a significant moderator of the relationship between human resource succession planning and Western Kenya County Governments Performance. The moderation is positive, implying that, labour mobility amplifies the influence of human resource succession planning on county governments performance.

These findings are almost similar to those of Josh Bersin (2017), Judith et al., (2010), Luna (2012), and Rezaei and Beyerlein, (2018), who explored moderation in Human Resource aspects although they did not deal with labour mobility as a moderating variable. However, all these studies found presence of moderation which well agrees with this study's findings. It can therefore be concluded that, labour mobility positively moderates human resource succession planning and performance correlation.



## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Initially, it was hypothesized that, the relationship between human succession planning and performance of counties in western Kenya is not moderated by labour mobility. However, in western Kenya, counties are practicing both aspects of labour mobility. This has made both efficiency and effectiveness in performance to rely on improved labour mobility such that the more the labour mobility is practiced, the more the human resource succession planning improves performance of the counties. It is therefore clear that labour mobility improves the enhancement of human resource succession planning on performance of the counties.

Finally, the findings revealed that there cannot be good performance in the counties without an enhancement of labour mobility on human resource succession planning. Given the importance of labour mobility prospects on succession planning effect on performance, the study recommended a speedy implementation of labour mobility among counties in order to help the human resource succession planning improve performance. This can be achieved through appointment or sourcing of leaders who understand the human resource matters in the public sector with the aid of public service at both county level and national government level.

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