



**INFLUENCE OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN KENYA**

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## INFLUENCE OF KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN KENYA

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### ABSTRACT

*The success of any organization depends on the capacity of its human resource. Any firm can have the best resources but without an adequate team of human personnel to back them up, the firm will not succeed. Employee engagement is thus, encouraged within any formal organization to bring out the best from each employee within the firm. Engaged employees will always be motivated to bring out their best and work towards ensuring the best productivity for the entire firm. This research was carried out to determine the influence of key performance indicators on employee engagement in multinational companies in Kenya. The research adopted a descriptive research design to investigate the aspects of balanced scorecard and employee engagement as they are. The research utilized random sampling to select the sample for the study. The population size for the study was 3,334 individuals drawn from employees both in management and lower level subordinate staff working for AON Kenya, Airtel, Barclays, DHL, EABL, Jubilee Insurance, Maersk, Safaricom, Standard Chartered and Unilever at their head offices in Nairobi County. The sample size for the study was based on a stratified random sampling, giving a total of 180 respondents from the ten firms. A questionnaire was designed to help in the primary collection of data which was sorted, edited and analyzed using SPSS version 23. The coded data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The research findings showed that performance indicators were also adopted in the majority of the firms. The research recommended that technology should be adopted in performance measurement tools now that the world is changing to digitalization. The study recommends that the government should be involved in supervising and regulating MNC to ensure that fair employee treatment and compensation is achieved. The research also recommends that technology should be adopted in performance measurement tools now that the world is changing to digitalization.*

**Key Word:** Key Performance Indicators, Employee Engagement, Performance Measurement

## INTRODUCTION

The key performance indicators of a firm are also referred to as key success indicators within management cycles. These measures help both the management and the personnel to understand and attain the organizational goals. Key performance indicators have been used widely as measures of performance in modern organization to assess both the level of operational efficiency and productivity towards meeting the firm goals as well as the appraisal of the staff thus helping to motivate them leading to better productivity (Krause & Arora, 2010).

In setting up key performance indicators, the first step in the process is setting up of the standards which are used as a benchmark to compare the actual performance of employees. This step requires setting the performance criteria to judge the performance of employees as successful or unsuccessful of the degree (Paile, 2012). To be useful, these key standards should relate to the desired result of each job. The standards set should be clear, easily understandable and in measurable terms (Komati, 2013). In case the performance of the employee cannot be measured, great care should be taken to describe the standards and review them accordingly. Key performance indicators are preset measures that are widely applied in guiding the organization towards the preset goals (Paile, 2012).

They are also referred to as key success indicators within management circles. KPI's are operationalized through the; sale indicators, service delivery channels and the number of customer complaints. A good KPI should be quantifiable, based on organizational goals and deeply rooted on the organizational culture. Several KPIs such as the continual, discrete and hard indicators can be used.

Aubrey (2005) discussed that while most human resource executives see the need to improve employee engagement, countless have yet to build up tangible ways to measure and tackle this

goal. Hay Group (2012) elaborates that engaged employees cannot be expected to take a personal interest in organizational objectives unless an organization treats them as more than factors of production. With organizations increasingly forced to do more with less, tapping into the discretionary effort offered by engaged employees becomes all the more important for business success. Employees committed to their organizations may not always have an in-depth commitment to their job. Satisfaction and commitment are related to performance, but engagement appears overall to be a better predictor of employee performance. West and Dawson (2012) stated that over the years, organizations have employed three different measures in evaluating their employee engagement levels: as a description of conditions under which people work, as a behavioural outcome, and as a psychological orientation

Nwinyokpugi (2015) in a study on the employee engagement and harmony in the Nigerian Civil service pooled 10 Ministries in the River State Civil Service. The researcher highlighted that employee engagement can only be achieved through enhanced collaboration by the management and the employees in designing the most consistent and amicable methods of employee performance measurement. He further highlights that leadership collaboration and employee career enhancement would be a starting point for improving performance measurement and employee engagement respectively. Akinwade (2011) argues that employees engagement is promoted through the management striking a part of the psychological makeup of their staff. Through creation of a better working environment and promotion of better interaction systems the management can enhance employee engagement. Thus, it is the ability of the management to create good structures, culture and adequate performance measurements that will help to enhance the employee engagement.

Mutunga (2009) through her research on Factors that Contribute to the Level of Employee Engagement in the Telecommunication Industry in Kenya found that most workers in Zain are disengaged, and the most contributing factors was dissatisfaction with pay and benefits, work-life balance and lack of freedom of expression, but she failed to link level employee engagement to individual performance. In a study on performance appraisal systems in the Kenya Tea and Development Agency in Meru, the researcher notes that appraisal systems have a large impact on human resource systems and the entire organization strategies.

### **Concept of Performance Measurement and Employee Engagement**

Performance measurement contributes to strategy formulation and implementation by revealing the links between goals, strategy, lag and lead indicators (Goodman, 2007) and subsequently communicates and operationalizes strategic priorities. The role of performance measurement evolves from a simple component of the planning and control cycle to an independent process that assumes a monitoring function.

Employee engagement encompasses the commitment, passion, and positive attitude that are exhibited by employees towards their work. An engaged personnel is able to acquaint with the policies within the organization and their job description as well as relate well with their colleagues in a bid to enhance the productivity within the firm (Robbins, 2008).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Employees are becoming key business drivers for any organization. It is through employees that organizations find their strategic fit that is and ensuring competitiveness in the market. Employee engagement is essential for better performance of work, and the employee's contribution to the firm is efficient and effective at all levels. Performance measurement should be

key to identifying the consistency of the employee engagement and enhancing it where necessary (CIPD, 2007).

Locally, employee engagement has been loosely implemented. This can be attributed to the lack of standard performance measurement tool locally. This has led to disengagement among members of staff within firms Mutunga (2009). Lack of employee engagement affects the entire firm's performance through increasing turnover, lack of innovation and commitment to the work (Alfes, 2010). This affects the implementation of management and human resource decisions due to the lack of commitment among personnel (Wachira, 2013). Performance measurement is an ideal management function of assessing the level of employees work output (Bakker, Demerouti, & Lieke, 2012). Good performance measurement tools promote high work engagement (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011). Lack of effective performance measurement will lead to work disengagement (Gruman & Saks, 2011).

The measurement of employee performance is an essential undertaking in the process of employee management. As such there is a need to establish if any, the effect that application of any selected performance measurement tool has on employee engagement. Lack of adequate literature supporting the selection of particular performance measurement tools makes it hard for MNC to enhance employee engagement by employing different tools. Hence this research played a key role in determining the influence of key performance indicators on employee engagement in Multinational companies operating in Kenya.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of key performance indicators on employee engagement in Multinational Companies operating in Kenya.

## Research Hypotheses

- $H_i$ . There is significant relationship between the effectiveness of key performance indicators on employee engagement in Multinational Companies operating in Kenya.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

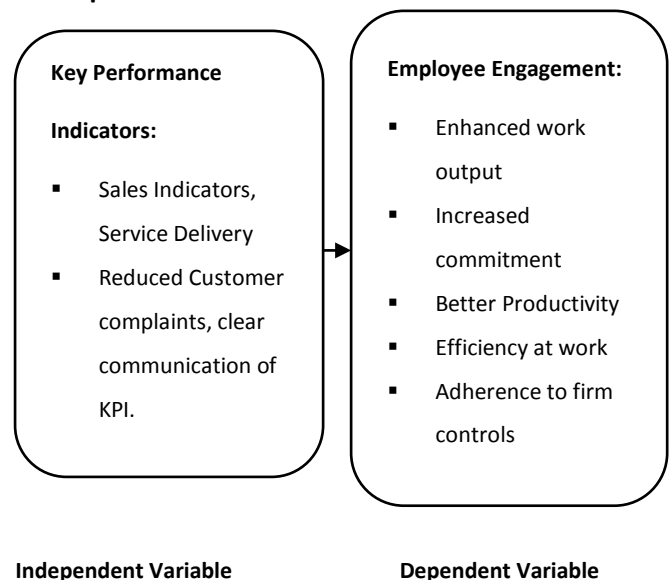
#### Three Component Model of Engagement

This model was advanced by Schaufeli and Bakker in 2004. The researchers noted that work is a state of mind fulfilling aspect which features having vigor, dedication and absorption within work. Employees who have high vigor were found to have extremely higher levels of energy and mental resilience towards their work. The dedication was found to be related to the feelings of importance within a work setting, the levels of inspiration by managers, the pride and enthusiasm one shows in their work. Absorption is concerned with how much one is immersed in their work.

Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) noted that employees who are highly engaged within the work will generally come up with their own positive feedback on work. This implies that an engaged employee will show greater energy and enthusiasm. Through their work, they also concluded there is a positive relationship between job capabilities such as performance feedback, support, supervision and the level of work engagement determined by; Vigor, dedication, and absorption. Through their modelling, they concluded that job capabilities and not demands exclusively predicted the levels of work engagement and engagement acts as an interlink between job resources and levels of turnover. Similarly, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES); (Schaufeli, Salanova & Bekker, 2002) was used to test the relationship between the levels of employee engagement and job performance and the findings of the study supported that there is a positive relationship between employee engagement and the in-role performance,

innovativeness and extra-role performance within work. As outlined above this theory supports the notion that employees with high vigor exhibit better performance. This theory supported the variable for the key performance indicators which are the set achievements by the firm which the personnel are expected to meet in the course of their job. By implementing challenging key performance indicators, the management can inculcate a team of personnel who are highly motivated to meet the set targets.

### Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### Empirical Review

In a another study by Theo and Voordt (2004) they identified that for employees to be productive within a firm the main factors that the management should ensure the employees are not distracted in their work places, the ergonomics of the firm should be enhanced as well as access to technology. As such management needs to set up the firms indicators through guidance by the factors that will ensure employee productivity as a measure of ensuring meeting up the expectations of management. In a study by Hanover Research (2010) on the usage of key performance indicators in the U.S the firm highlights that performance indicators are a

logical measure which is easy to implement straightforward and a necessary tool in measuring the quality and quantity of organizational goals efficiently within an organization. They further identify that a good performance indicator should be able to be measured adequately using the least amount of resources. In this regard they identify the main performance indicators for divisional staff should be the level of customer service and relationships improvement, the level of employee engagement and retention, the safety of the work environment and the improvement in the efficiency of the organization.

In a study on the influence of performance contracting on the performance of central government ministries, the researcher noted that the use of financial indicators was key to enhanced performance within the parastatals, further, the researcher notes that using customer service delivery indicators was widely used by supervisors to gauge the performance of the staff within ministries in day to day operations. Thus, from the findings the researcher concluded that to engage the employees into better performance, organizations can make use of financial and customer service delivery indicators (Waruinge, 2012).

Most organizations have mismatching connection between the measures they are using and the results they are expecting. Due to lack of comprehensive knowledge most organizations end up using the wrong measure in same measure as key performance indicators. Key performance indicators should be a measure that explicitly guides the organization on what needs to be done in order to exponentially raise the performance of the firm. Key performance indicators are implicitly concerned with the most strategic aspects to the organization which are key to the present and the future of the organization (Parmenter, 2015). The key performance indicators of a firm are also referred to as key success indicators within management cycles. These measures help both the management and the personnel to

understand and attain the organizational goals. Key performance indicators have been used widely as measures of performance in modern organization to assess both the level of operational efficiency and productivity towards meeting the firm goals as well as the appraisal of the staff thus helping to motivate them leading to better productivity (Krause & Arora, 2010). In setting up key performance indicators for their staff the management incorporates the operational efficiency of the firm to ensure that as employees work towards attaining the goals set up for them, they will ultimately ensure better organizational performance. Essential to setting up key performance indicators is the ability of the management frameworks to align the needs of the organization with the objectives of the key performance indicators (Parmenter, 2015).

In order to determine the applicable KPIs for measuring achievement of an organization, it is necessary to do an analysis of the vision statement, mission statement, and objectives of the organization. Performance measurement also helps the organization to be consistent in making a decision with the intention to ensure the operational activities are linked with the organization's vision and mission. The measurement of market share, customer demand, and customer satisfaction can be essential elements of an organization to understand its current position and make necessary improvements to achieve its target. However, the process of discovering the right measurement is very complex. Huang, Lai, and Lin (2011) have mentioned that metrics is good if the actions and decisions which improve the metrics, also improve the firm's desired long-term outcomes.

A good key performance measurement needs to be quantifiable in a sense that is agreed between the management and employee to ensure accordance to it and its alignment to the organizational goals. Secondly a good KPI should be based in accordance with the organizational goals to ensure that its attainability is based upon

the resources and capabilities of the firm. Further, a good KPI should be deeply rooted on the organizational culture, to avoid numerous changes which may not be adaptable by the personnel within a considerable time, however, as the organization edges closer to its goals the indicator maybe changed as a way of engaging the employees to the work more as noted in the research by (Reh, 2005).

Bowen (2005) in his work posits that continual indicators are used for factors and quantities of quality, productivity, schedule, effort and cost that can be measured on an infinitely divisible scale. The continual quantities can thereafter be ranked in terms of weight, time and money. Their measurement is carried out repeatedly over specified periods. Discrete indicators are used to measure characteristics having the nature of the description. For example, artificially determined evaluating scales use indicators of excellent, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory. These indicators are repeatedly observed within a specified period. Hard indicators are objectively measurable indicators observing firm's objectives, development or its activities, and they are generally focused directly on the customer.

Hard indicators are mostly used to measure competitiveness because they are easily measurable, are available without additional costs, and they can mostly be expressed in terms of money. Hard indicators determine desired borders or limits with which a real value is being compared and evaluated. Soft indicators serve to the assessment of aspects that logically influence business performance but where the effects are distant in time and place from the cause. For example, staff turnover. They are usually not transferred and expressed in terms of money (Horváthová, 2010).

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design to investigate the relationship between performance measurement and employee engagement in Multinational Corporations in Kenya. This research was grounded on positivism research philosophy. The populations for the study was 3, 334 individuals drawn from employees including management and subordinates working for AON Kenya, Airtel, Barclays, DHL, EABL, Jubilee Insurance, Maersk, Safaricom, Standard Chartered and Unilever at their Head Offices in Nairobi County as outlined below:

**Table 1: Target Population**

Target Firms	Senior Executives	Mid-Level Executives	Low Level Managers	Subordinate Staff	Totals
EABL	15	25	72	532	644
AIRTEL	15	42	128	128	313
DHL	4	36	44	431	515
Barclays Bank (Headquarter)	6	10	32	84	132
AON Kenya	4	9	21	44	78
Jubilee Insurance	3	14	34	326	377

<b>Safaricom Ltd.</b>	8	22	56	416	502
<b>Standard Chartered</b>	4	10	23	213	250
<b>Unilever Kenya</b>	6	8	19	332	365
<b>Maersk Sea Land</b>	3	5	11	139	158
<b>Totals</b>	68	181	440	2645	3334

The researcher employed a list frame. This frame was employed since the research was targeting the list of employees within the five multinationals in Kenya. The study used random sampling in selecting the sample size since all employees within the firm possess the same characteristics in terms of employee engagement. This ensured maximum inclusivity and lack of biases. The study employed the criteria formulated by Yamane (1967) to calculate the sample size. The study used primary sources of data for subsequent analysis. The data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires. The questionnaires had both open and close-ended questions (Kothari, 2011). The questionnaires were administered personally through a drop and pick method by the researcher to ensure reliability, clarification, accuracy and efficiency. To test the validity, reliability and internal consistency of the data collection the researcher undertook a pilot test for the study. The data collected through the pilot survey was used to adjust or modify the questionnaire in order to improve levels of clarity. Data collected was analyzed using a multiple linear regression and correlation analysis through the SPSS data analysis tool.

#### DATA FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the research indicated a positive response of 82% while only 18% of the respondents failed to respond. The Cronbach's Alpha Test of reliability was used to test the

reliability of the constructs describing the variables of the study. Values of Cronbach's alpha ranges from 0 to 1 with values equal to 0.7 and above indicating that the questionnaire is reliable while values below 0.7 indicates that the questionnaire is unreliable. Findings from the study showed that the majority of the respondents 72% were male while only 28% of the respondents were female. Findings also showed that the majority of the respondents 39% had university level education, 28% had attained postgraduate level education, and 28% of the respondents had college level education while only 5% of the respondents had just secondary school education. The respondents 45% were subordinate level employees, 43% of the respondents were middle level management while only 13% of the respondents were top level management employees. On the length of service, majority of the respondents 37% had more than 8 years of services, 28% of the respondents had between 1-2 years of service, 20% of the respondents had between 5-7 years while only 15% of the respondents had between 3-5 years of service.

#### Key Performance Indicators

Findings showed that with regard to sales indicators are used to measure the levels of employee engagement, the majority of the respondents 28% strongly agreed, 27% of the respondents agreed, 16% moderately agreed, 14% of the respondents strongly disagreed while



only 12% of the respondents disagreed. The majority of the respondents 36% strongly agreed that efficient customer service delivery is used to measure the level of employee engagement, 25% of the respondents strongly agreed, 16% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 12% of the respondents moderately agreed while only 12% of the respondents disagreed. With regard to time used to deal with customer complaints is used to measure employee engagement, the majority of the respondents 27% strongly agreed, 26% of the respondents agreed, 20% of the respondents disagreed, 16% of the respondents moderately agreed while only 11% of the respondents strongly disagreed. In regard to the management has laid down key performance indicators that employees need to consistently meet, the majority of the respondents 35% of the respondents agreed, 31% of the respondents strongly agreed, 14% of the respondents disagreed, 10% of the respondents moderately agreed while only 10% of the respondents strongly disagreed.

**Association between Key Performance Indicators and Employee Engagement**

The findings of the study also show that with regard to sales indicators are used to measure the levels of employee engagement the majority of

the respondents were in agreement as indicated by the mean value of 3.7059 which falls under extent of strong agreement 3.0-4.0 and there was moderate dispersion in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.40378. The result findings also indicated that with efficient customer service delivery is used to measure the level of employee engagement the majority of the respondents were in strong agreement as indicated by the mean value of 4.0588 which falls under extent of strong agreement 4.0-5.0 and there was moderate dispersion in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.34993. In regard to time used to deal with customer complaints is used to measure employee engagement the majority of the respondents were in strong agreement as indicated by the mean value of 4.0588 which falls under extent of agreement 4.0-5.0 and there was moderate dispersion in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.24853. Concerning the management has laid down key performance indicators that employees need to consistently meet the majority of the respondents were in strong agreement as indicated by the mean value of 4.1176 which falls under extent of strong agreement 4.0-5.0 and there was moderate dispersion in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation of 1.409.

**Table 2: Key Performance Indicators Descriptive**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sales indicators are used to measure the levels of employee engagement.	148	3.7059	1.40378
Efficient Customer service delivery is used to measure the level of employee engagement.	148	4.0588	1.34493
Time used to deal with customer complaints is used to measure employee engagement.	148	4.0588	1.24853
The management has laid down key performance indicators that employees need to consistently meet.	148	4.1176	1.40900

## **Employee Engagement**

Findings showed that with regard to having engaged employees within the firm increases teamwork and positivity in duties the majority of the respondents 43% agreed to a very high extent, 37% of the respondents agreed to a low extent while only 20% of the respondents agreed to a moderate extent. In regard to non-engaged employees limit the potential of other workers within the firm the majority of the respondents 39% agreed to a very high extent, 38% of the respondents agreed to a moderate extent while only 24% of the respondents agreed to a low extent. The majority of the respondents 44% agreed to a very high extent that engaged employee are enthusiastic on their work which increases their productivity, 42% of the respondents agreed to a low extent while only 14% of the respondents agreed to a moderate extent. The majority of the respondents 43% agreed to a very high extent that engaged employee are more collaborative at the work place thus fostering teamwork, 35% of the respondents agreed to a low extent while only 22% of the respondents agreed to a moderate extent. In regard to offering incentives can be a major determinant of engagement levels the majority of the respondents 43% of the respondents agreed to a low extent, 35% of the respondents agreed to a very high extent while only 22% of the respondents agreed to a moderate extent.

Concerning actively disengaged employees should not be tolerated within the firm since they were redundant and a distraction to other staff members, the majority of the respondents 47% moderately agreed, 25% of the respondents agreed to a very high extent while only 23% of the respondents agreed to a low extent. In regard to engaged employees were more adaptive thus management can introduce changes without any loss of man hours the majority of the respondents 45% agreed to a low extent, 43% agreed to a very high extent while only 7% agreed to a moderate

extent. The majority of the respondents 40% agreed to a very high extent that engaged employees are more open to continuous professional development and growth, 28% of the respondents agreed to a low extent while only 24% of the respondents agreed to a moderate extent.

## **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The majority of the respondents were in agreement that the sales indicators are used to measure the levels of employee engagement. Findings also showed that the majority of the respondents were in agreement that efficient customer service delivery is used to measure the level of employee engagement. Concerning to time used to deal with customer complaints is used to measure employee engagement the majority of the respondents strongly agreed. Respondents were also in agreement that the management has laid down key performance indicators that employees need to consistently meet.

The results of the study showed that the majority of the respondents were in agreement that having engaged employees within the firm increased teamwork and positivity in duties. Further, findings showed that respondents were in agreement that non-engaged employees limit the potential of other workers within the firm.

Findings also showed that the respondents were in agreement that engaged employee are enthusiastic on their work which increases their productivity. Respondents were also in agreement that engaged employee are more collaborative at the work place thus fostering teamwork. Concerning actively disengaged employees should not be tolerated within the firm since they are redundant and a distraction to other staff members; the majority of the respondents were in agreement. Findings also showed strong agreement among respondents that engaged

employees are more open to continuous professional development and growth.

### **Conclusions**

With regard to the key performance indicators the research concluded that firms should seek other alternatives than sales volume to track the level of employee engagement. More so, the firms within the services sector should adopt more service-oriented measures that are relevant in the current globalization era. The study also concluded that firms need to adopt current internal quality management systems that will help in developing performance indicators that are in line with the evolving job requirements and business environment changes.

### **Recommendations**

Employees within the MNC should be involved in the deliberations on performance measurement within the firm. This should not be left to the discretion of corporate heads in other countries. The study also recommends that the government should be more actively engaged in ensuring better working conditions and adherence to fair employment treatment across all multinationals.

The study also recommends that firms should come up with technology-reliant performance measurement tools. This will lead to a reduction in biasness especially in direct supervision. The firms should also adopt more motivating rewards systems such as promotions, scholarships and better wage and employment terms. The study also recommends that firms should seek to enhance team work within the organizations by developing performance measurements tools for teams within the work environment. This can be used to boost cohesion among employees.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

The study recommends that further research should be conducted on;

- The relationship between work-life balance and employee performance within multinational companies.
- An empirical examination of the role of government in promoting better working conditions with multinational companies.

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