INFLUENCE OF REWARD SRATEGIES ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERITIES IN KENYA

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Abstract

The study sough to investigate the influence of reward strategies on employee performance in Technical University of Kenya. The target population was 625 employees of Technical University of Kenya. Simple random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 244 respondents consisting of teaching and non-teaching staff. The study used the questionnaire as the data collection instrument. A pilot study of 25 subjects which is a 10% of the sample size was carried out to validate the questionnaire. Qualitative data was analyzed through Content analysis. The study adopted a descriptive research design and utilized both primary and secondary data. Data analysis was carried out using both qualitative and quantitative techniques with the aid of SPSS version 22 while the main method of data presentation was frequency distribution, pie charts, and graphs.This study shall benefit the students who received quality teaching from motivated staff.The study revealed that in the institution the employees are committed towards delivering high quality services to get bonuses and also that organization salary is determined by the performance of the employee. The study revealed that employees are well trained for the work which they do and also that while on duty the organization give them trainings they need to do their job. The study establish revealed that organization it gives satisfactory rewards for work performance. The study revealed that organization management is responsible for promoting the right person before hiring people from outside and also that there is clearly established career path. Regarding the pay scheme the study revealed that employees work with minimal supervision or no supervision and also those incentives are given by the management to the employees. The study recommends that the management of the institution should conducts capability assessment to benchmark skills required for critical roles and further development for the employees and offer payments that match the job descriptions and roles of the employees. Relating to growth opportunities the study revealed that TUK is good at identifying individual training needs and that the organization take part in career development opportunities on a regular basis. The study recommends that institution management should seek to educate their employees on the know how to effectively use the new technology and equipment. The study recommends that the management of the institutions should always appreciate employees for good performance in their work on a specified period. The management should also set criteria for employees' recognition. The study recommends that the management of the school should consider to give employees who are already in the institution a first priority when a vacant position arises within the organization to outsourcing new employees.

Keyword: Employee Performance, Reward, Reward Strategy, Motivation, Performance, Pay Schemes**,** Growth Opportunities, Recognition and Staff Promotion.

Introduction

Rewarding employees is associated with the motivation of the workforce of organization for better performance. However, the type and mix of rewarding tools to use is a challenge for organizations. Several studies have demonstrated that rewards have positive impact on the employee's health and work place safety. Rewarding employees is one of the factors that sought to increase employee engagement in the work place, which is a key element in work performance, (Furtado, *et al.,* 2013). It is widely acknowledged that one of the most critical human resource problems in any organization is how to influence employee performance. Given the complex nature of reward strategies that influence various forms of employee behavior, it follows that understanding the role of different reward strategies on employee performance for designing and implementing an effective reward strategy will give an organization a competitive edge. That gives the basis of the study on influence of reward strategies on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya.

In Kenya, Ndungu, (2016) studied the effects of rewards and recognition on employee performance in public educational institutions; a case of Kenyatta University, Kenya. The study results showed significantly positive relationship between reward and recognition, with employee performance. In addition a very positive and significant relationship was observed between job performance and the independent variables (extrinsic rewards, intrinsic rewards and financial rewards, recognition rewards, working environment and leadership styles). Results also showed that salaries, fringe benefits as well as job security were weak in Kenyatta University, caused dissatisfaction and affected employee performance.

Njanja, Maina, Kibet & Kageni (2013) did a study on the effect of reward on employee performance, at Kenya Power in Nakuru, Kenya. The findings of the study showed that cash bonus have no effect on employee performance ($p=0.8$) because those who received cash bonuses and those who did not all agree that the cash bonus affects their performance the same. The study recommended that organizations should focus on changing the intrinsic nature and content of jobs to increase employee motivation as employees will get more autonomy more challenging job assignments and responsibilities, (Njanja et al, 2013).

According to Echakara, (2011), reward strategies chosen by management actually influence employee motivation and task performance. Findings also indicated that it takes an effective management to develop a good reward strategy that can optimize the output of employees. Reward strategies are important tools that management effectively uses to channel employee motivation in desired ways. The systems seek to attract people to join the organization, keep them coming to work and motivate them to perform to higher 'levels.

Okoth, (2014) studied the effects of reward management on employee performance in hotels in north coast, Kenya. The study found high correlation between reward management and employee performance. The study however found that as much as there was a reward policy in place, it was fairly weak as the reward strategies that have very high correlation with employee performance such as grade structure, performance appraisal and strategic reward were weakly implemented but concentration was on contingent pay and equal pay which have a relatively weaker correlation with performance.

The Technical University of Kenya is a public technical training university in Kenya having been established in 1961, with a student population of over 420 teaching staff, and 758 non-teaching staff. It offers Masters, Degree, Diploma and Certificate courses. Its core mandate is to train high and middle level personnel for both public and private sectors (Government of Kenya (GoK), 2007). The selected case in this study is Technical University in Kenya (formerly the Kenya Polytechnic). The technical university is a new type of university in Kenya, whose mandate is to offer higher education and research in technology. TUK continues to produce technologists with the objective to bridge the gap between, say, the engineer and the technician such that whereas the engineer is trained to be concerned with the conceptualisation, innovation, and design of new artefacts and systems; the technologist on the other hand is normally concerned with the actual production of artefacts and the implementation of systems (TU-K, 2014). The Technical University in Kenya has a huge establishment of staff comprising of 1534 employees on contract, casual, part-time, full-time, academic staff, non-academic staff, permanent and pensionable.

Statement of the Problem

In the recent past, hardly a week passes without a threat of industrial action by employees. This has been the case even in Kenya whereby the lecturers and employees in universities laid down their tools on March, 2017 demanding the organizations to meet their as agreed in the collective bargaining agreement. The same case was in April, 2010 whereby all universities went on strike demanding increase in allowance and basic salaries. This caused employees not to do their work, and affecting the quality and quantity of production. The employee performance at TUK has not been good as many other interventions like introduction of information transparency, participatory decision making and other reward strategies have not yielded much improvement. The management at TUK has been having challenges of organizing interviews now and then because the institution is losing many qualified lecturers to both public and private university. This has lowered university standards because they are not able to attract lecturers of the same caliber as those leaving the organization.

Consequently, this has led to the institute performing dismally in the performance contract ranking, dropping from position 32 in the financial year 2009/2010 to 41 in the financial year 2010/2011 (GoK, 2012). This is a major concern to the management since it can lead to lack of confidence in the institution by the public in terms of service delivery especially on its core mandate of imparting Technical Vocational Education Training knowledge, skills and nurturing attitudes for self-reliance and national development. This may finally result to the university not playing its role in the realization of vision 2030, which science, technology and innovation are expected to provide a cutting edge of our global competitiveness and promote greater efficiencies in all the key sectors under the three pillars of vision 2030 (GoK, 2010).

The University recently acquired new training modern engineering machines but despite all the initiatives, the employees' performance especially when it comes to meeting the deadlines and actual work delivery have not improved as envisaged. Performance is essential as it is also required to play a pivotal role in the country's achievement of vision 2030. This is the driving force behind many performance management initiatives that have been introduced in the recent past. This includes performance contracting which was introduced in the year 2008 and has a specific target on employees' satisfaction (Technical University of Kenya (TUK), 2012a). The other major initiative is the implementation of the quality management system based on ISO 9001:2008 (TUK 2012b). The reward strategies have not been fully embraced at TUK therefore the study sought to investigate the effects of reward strategies on employee performance.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective was to investigate the effects of reward strategies on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya.

The study was guided by the following specific objectives

1. To determine the influence of pay schemes on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya
2. To examine the influence of growth opportunities on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya
3. To investigate the influence of recognition on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya
4. To establish the influence of staff promotion on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya.

Theoretical Review

Several theories were highlighted to strengthen the research study. They include Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs, Theory X and theory Y of McGregor, Adam's Equity theory and Herzberg's Two- Factor Model.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs

One of the most influential theories of human motivation is Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of human needs. The hierarchy of human needs postulates that employees are motivated by five levels of needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. This ranking is guided by four major assumptions. Firstly, only unmet needs motivate. Secondly, people's needs are arranged in order of importance from basic to complex. Thirdly, people will not be motivated to satisfy a higher-level need unless the lower level needs have been at least minimally satisfied, and lastly human needs can be arranged on a pyramidal hierarchy with the basic needs appearing at the bottom while self-actualization coming at the apex (Maslow, 1943). The theory supports the pay scheme variable in that when the pay scheme is reviewed needs are met and the employees are motivated to work hard hence good performance.

Theory X and theory Y

The concepts of theory X and theory Y were advanced by McGregor in 1960. These are a group of assumptions that underlie management's attitudes and beliefs regarding worker behavior (McGregor, 1960). In theory X management assumes employees are inherently lazy and will avoid work if they can and they also dislike work. As a result of this, management believes that workers need to be closely supervised and comprehensive systems of controls developed. According to this theory, employees will show little ambition without an enticing program and will avoid responsibility whenever they can. If the organization goals are to be met, theory X manager rely heavily on threat and coercion to gain their employees' compliance (McGregor, 1960). The theory supports the variable of personal growth opportunities in that employees need to develop personal need for achievement so that they can be motivated to perform their duties diligently.

Equity Theory

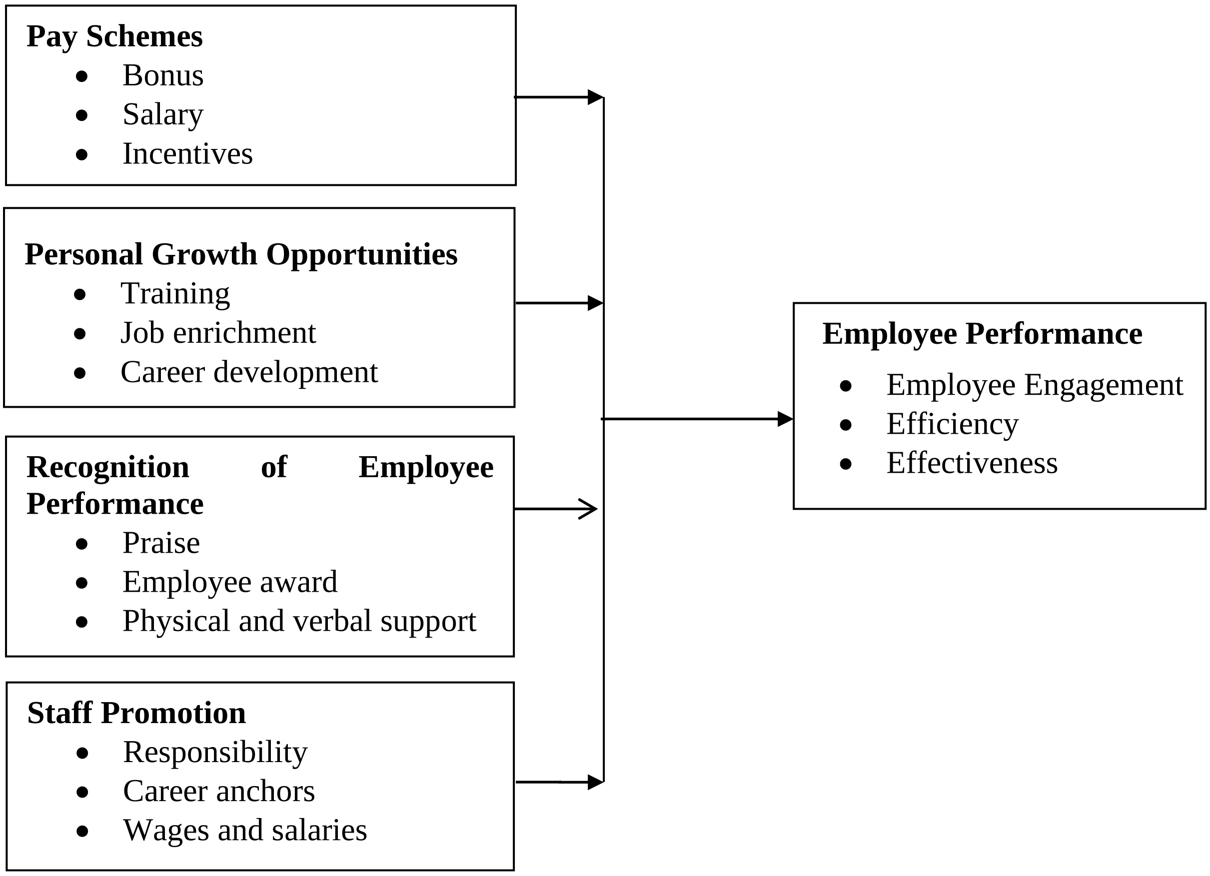
This theory is grounded on the perceptions people have about how they are treated as compared with others. Equity involves feelings and perception and is always a comparative process. The theory states that people will be better motivated if they are treated equitably and de-motivated if treated inequitably. Adams, (2005) suggested that there are two forms of equity. The first one-distributive equity, which is concerned with the fairness with which people feel they are rewarded in accordance with their contribution and in comparison with others. The second forms, which is procedural equity, or procedural justice, is concerned with the perceptions employees have about the fairness with which company procedures in such areas as performance appraisal, promotion, and promotion are being operated. The theory supports the variable of recognition in that when employees are treated equitably the output will be motivation hence good performance.

Herzberg's Two- Factor Model

One of the most prominent theories establishing relationship between employee performance and motivation is the Herzberg's two-factor theory. Herzberg's, (1987) model divide the factors of the work environment into two classes: motivators or satisfiers on one hand; and hygiene factors or maintenance factors on the other. The research found that elements in the job that produce satisfaction are achievement, recognition, promotion prospects, and the work itself. On the other hand, he identified a number of elements whose absence or inadequacy produced dissatisfaction namely; pay, relations with others, type of supervision, company policy, physical work conditions and fringe benefits. Herzberg in his two-factor theory identified motivation and hygiene factors that tend to maximise the performance of employees (Tan & Waheed, 2011). The theory supports the variable of promotion in that when employees' satisfier needs are met they will be motivated and are able to perform better.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework entails operationalization of the variables under the study by depicting the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2010). The independent variables include pay schemes, personal growth opportunities, recognition and promotion. The dependent variable is employee performance.



Independent Variables **Dependent Variable**

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

The research used descriptive survey approach. The target population consisted of 625 employees of TUK, both teaching and non- teaching staff. The study selected a sample of 244 respondents, comprising of 36% teaching staff and 64% non-teaching staff. The desired sample size was determined by use of the Yamane (1973) formula which provided a simplified formula to calculate sample size. $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$. Where: n = sample size, N = the total population size, e = error precision.

$$n = \frac{625}{1+625(0.05)^2} = \quad n = \frac{625}{1+0.5375} = 244\text{, round up the figure.}$$

Therefore, sampling size is 244 samples.The study employed simple random sampling to select a sample of 244 from the target population of 625 employees of TUK as presented in table 1 below:

Table 1: Target Population

Sample Category	Target	Sample Ratio	Sample Size
Teaching Staff – full time	225	39%	88
Non-Teaching Staff	400	39%	156
Total	**625**	**39%**	244

Source: TUK Organisational Structure (2017)

The study collected qualitative and quantitative through self-administered questionnaires. The researcher conducted a pilot study by administering questionnaires to different cadres of employees at TUK using simple random sampling of ten percent (10%) of the sample size as advocated by Mugenda & Mugenda, (2003). All questionnaires from respondents were checked and edited for completeness before analysis. The data from the questionnaires was coded to enable the responses be grouped into various categories. Since data was both quantitative and qualitative hence both descriptive and content analysis techniques were employed. The data was processed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to enable the researcher analyze the data.The following multiple regression model as adopted from Freifeld (2012) was used to undertake regression analysis using the SPSS software. Analyzed quantitative data was presented through the statistical tools such as frequency distribution tables, graphs, pie charts etc, while qualitative data from open-ended questions presented through thematic narration.

Results and Findings

Descriptive and inferential statistics have been used to discuss the findings of the study. The study targeted a sample size of 244 respondents out of which 214 filled in and returned the questionnaires making a response rate of 87.7%. This response rate was satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. The response rate was representative for the study. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. Based on the assertion, the response rate was considered to excellent.

Reliability Analysis

A pilot study was carried out to determine reliability of the questionnaires. The pilot study involved a sample of respondents from the target population, who were not included in the actual study. Reliability analysis was subsequently done using Cronbach's Alpha which measured the internal consistency by establishing if certain item within a scale measures the same construct. Gliem and Gliem (2003) established the Alpha value threshold at 0.7, thus forming the study's benchmark. Cronbach Alpha was established for every objective which formed a scale. The table shows that recognition had the highest reliability (α= 0.867), followed by personal growth opportunities (α=0.834), pay schemes (α=0.820) and promotion (α=0. 811). This illustrates that all the four variables were reliable as their reliability values exceeded the prescribed threshold of 0.7.

Table 2: Reliability Analysis

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Pay schemes	0.820	3
Personal growth Opportunities	0.834	6
Recognition	0.867	4
Promotion	0.811	5

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis is used to analyse the association between independent and dependent variables. The study used the Pearson Moment Correlation analysis to determine the association between pay schemes, growth opportunities, recognition, staff promotion on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya. The results were as shown in Table 3. The results revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between employee recognition and employee performance as shown by r = 0.791, statistically significant p = 0.001<0.01; there was a positive correlation between pay schemes and employee performance as shown by r = 0.746, statistically significant P = 0.001<0.01; there was a positive correlation between grow opportunities and employee performance as shown by r = 0.804, statistically significant P = 0.000; there was a positive correlation between staff promotion and employee performance as shown by r = 0.818, statistically significant P = 0.000. This implies that pay schemes, growth opportunities, recognition and staff promotion are related.

Table 3: Correlations Coefficient

		Employee performance	Pay schemes	Growth opportunities	Recognition	Staff promotion
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	214				
Pay schemes	Pearson Correlation	.746**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001				
	N	214	214			
Growth opportunities	Pearson Correlation	.804**	.341	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.062			
	N	214	214	214		
Recognition	Pearson Correlation	.791**	.502	.522	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.058	.079		
	N	214	214	214	214	
Staff promotion	Pearson Correlation	.818**	.283	.434	.272	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.083	.064	.079	
	N	214	214	214	214	214

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

Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model summary is used to analyse the variation of dependent variable due to the changes of independent variables. The study analyzed the variations of employee performance due to the changes of employee recognition, pay schemes, growth opportunities and staff promotion. Adjusted R squared was 0.678 implying that there was 67.8% variation of employee performnace, due to the changes of employee recogntion, pay schemes, growth opportunities and staff promotion. The remaining 32.2% imply that there are other factors that lead to employee performance which were not discussed in the study. R is the correlation coefficient which shows the relationship between the study variables. From the findings, the study found out that there was a strong positive relationship between the study variables as shown by 0.838.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.838[a]	0.702	0.678	0.0334

Analysis Of Variance

The analysis of variance ANOVA is used to determine whether the data used in the study is significant. From the ANOVA statistics, the processed data (population parameters) had a significance level of 0.001. This shows that the data is ideal for making conclusions on the population's parameter as the value of significance (p-value) is less than 5%. The F calculated was greater than F critical (178.169< 19.764). This shows that employee recognition, pay schemes, growth opportunities and staff promotion significantly influence employee performance at TUK.

Table 5: Analysis Of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.764	4	4.941	178.169	.001[b]
	Residual	5.796	209	0.028		
	Total	25.56	213			

The regression equation was

$Y = 0.989 + 0.476X_1 + 0.712X_2 + 0.534\ X_3 + 0.634X_4$

The equation above reveals that, pay schemes, growth opportunities employee recognition and staff promotion variables will significantly influence employee performance as shown by constant = 0.989 as shown in Table 6.

Pay Schemes and Employee Performance

The pay schemes is statistically significant to employee performance as shown by ($\beta = 0.476$) this shows that pay scheme had significant positive relationship with employee performance. This implies that a unit increase in pay schemes will result to increase in employee job satisfaction. These findings concur with the findings by Lotta, (2012) he indicates that motivated employees are more productive, more efficient and more willing to work towards organizational goals than the employees who are experiencing low levels of motivation.

Growth Opportunities and Employee Performance

Grow schedules are statistically significant to employee performance as shown by ($\beta = 0.712$) this indicates that flexible work schedule had significant positive relationship with employee job satisfaction. This implies that a unit increase in growth opportunity will result to increase in employee performance. These findings concur with the findings of Namusonge (2012) who argued that retention of employees needs to be managed and remuneration developed. Career growth opportunity, work environment, performance management and flex time were identified as areas that impact on staff.

Employee Recognition and Employee Performance

Employee recognition is statistically significant to employee performance as shown by ($\beta = 0.534$). This shows that employee recognition had significant positive relationship with employee performance. This implies that a unit increase in employee recognition will result to increase in employee performance. The findings are related to the findings of Maurer (2001) he indicated that rewards and recognition are essential factors in enhancing employee job satisfaction and work motivation which is directly associated to organizational achievement.

Staff Promotion and Employee Performance

Staff promotion is statistically significant to employee performance as shown by ($\beta = 0.634$) this implies that that staff promotion had significant positive relationship with employee performance. This shows that a unit increase in staff promotion will result to increase in employee performance. These findings are in agreement with the findings of Ellickson and Logsdon (2002), they found that promotional opportunities was found to be positively and significantly related to job satisfaction.

Table 6: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.989	0.198		4.995	0.011
	Pay schemes	0.476	0.102	0.314	4.667	0.016
	Growth opportunities	0.712	0.112	0.543	6.357	0.002
	Recognition	0.534	0.096	0.423	5.563	0.006
	Staff promotion	0.634	0.099	0.486	6.404	0.003

Conclusion

On the pay scheme the study indicated that pay scheme influence employee performance at TUK to great extent. Also the study revealed that in the institution the employees are committed towards delivering high quality services to get bonuses and also that organization salary is determined by the performance of the employee. Thus the study concludes that pay schemes influences employee performance at Technical University of Kenya positively. On the objective on growth opportunities the study indicates that growth opportunity affect employee performance at TUK by a great extent. Additionally the study revealed that employees are well trained for the work which they do and also that while on duty the organization give them trainings they need to do their job. Thus the study concludes that growth opportunities positively influence employee performance at Technical University of Kenya.

On recognition, the study revealed that recognition affect employee performance at TUK to a great extent. Also the study revealed that organization it gives satisfactory rewards for work performance. Additionally the study established that the teaching and non-teaching stuff are rewarded fairly for good performance. Thus the study concludes that recognition positively influences employee performance at Technical University of Kenya. Regarding promotion, the study indicated that promotion affect employee performance at TUK to a great extent. Additionally the study revealed that organization management is responsible for promoting the right person before hiring people from outside and also that there is clearly established career path. Thus the study concludes that staff promotion positively influences employee performance at Technical University of Kenya.

Recommendations

Regarding the pay scheme the study revealed that employees work with minimal supervision or no supervision and also those incentives are given by the management to the employees. The study recommends that the management of the institution should conducts capability assessment to benchmark skills required for critical roles and further development for the employees and offer payments that match the job descriptions and roles of the employees.
Relating to growth opportunities the study revealed that TUK is good at identifying individual training needs and that the organization take part in career development opportunities on a regular basis. Thus the study recommends that the institution management should seek to educate their employees on the know how to effectively use the new technology and equipment. Also the study recommends that the management of the institution should endeavor to provide regular growth opportunities for their employees on a regular basis using favorable selection criteria.

On how how recognition influences employee performance at Technical University of Kenya. The study revealed that workmates appreciate other work mates work performance and also that the organization is responsible to recognize the employees effort in an institution and recognize the specific parties involved. Thus the study recommends that the management of the institutions should always appreciate employees for good performance in their work on a specified period. The management should also set criteria for employees' recognition.
Regarding staff promotion the study established that employees have opportunities for career growth within TUK and also that staff promotion scheme will make employee work long for the institution. Thus the study recommends that the management should set up a clear policy within the institution for the promotion of its stuff. Also the study recommends that the management of the school should consider giving employees who are already in the institution a first priority when a vacant position arises within the organization to outsourcing new employees.

Areas for Further Studies

The study sought to investigate the effects of reward strategies on employee performance at Technical University of Kenya. The study recommends that a study should be done on effects of payments schemes on employee performance at any of the public universities.

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