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THE INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE AT THE KENYA AIRPORTS AUTHORITY

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Abstract

The main objective of the study is to determine the influence of human resource management practices on employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority (KAA)). This study is anchored on Resource Based Theory and Contingency theory. The study employs a case study research design. A structured interview guide was used to gather information from the respondents. The data was collected from head of the 13 departments of Kenya port authority HR, Finance, ICT, Procurement, Corporate Strategy, Corporate Communications, Security, Marketing and Business Development, Operations, Engineering, Audit and Risk, Customer Service and Legal departments, as they are solely responsible for crafting and executing and monitoring human resource management practices employee performance. The data was analysed through content analysis as the research was of a qualitative nature. The study found that strategic human resource management practices influence employee performance at Kenya Airports Authority. The research findings revealed that Kenya airport authority engaged in strategic employee resourcing, strategic training and development, strategic employee relation and strategic performance management Practices. The study will help to contribute to theory, knowledge, policy and practice to the existing body on knowledge on strategic human resource management practice, and employee performance, thus the research will be of significant value



to scholars and other researchers in the human resource management field. By investigating the impact of human resource strategies on employee performance, the research will highlight areas that warrant further investigation on the connections between HR strategies and employee performance management.

Keywords: Strategy, Strategic human resource management practices, employee performance, resource base theory, contingency theory

INTRODUCTION

Human resource strategies emerged in the 1980s and the 1990s as a reaction to the changing business environment, where the need to align HR plans with the overall organisation strategy and objectives became very crucial, more so when business competition became stiff, and thus the demand for competitive advantage through human capital (Baker & Sinkula, 2015). This approach focuses on shift on change in the contribution or role of HR in the organisation, from managing people, to creating strategic business contributions, which begins from finding the right talent, enhancing their capabilities through training, constantly reviewing their performance, and ensuring they are well motivated to remain in the business to support its strategic objectives through their employee welfare strategies, employee relations strategies and their reward strategies (Cascio, 2018). As, thus, HR strategies provide solutions to business challenges, through people centric solutions (Eneh & Awara, 2016), with the correlation between the human resource strategies and worker performance anchored on the contingency theory and the resource-based theory.

As a result of increase in competition in the aviation sector since the early 2000s, more so when the cost variable is the same amongst several airlines, the need to enhance competitive advantage through people gave rise to the need for strategic human resources to enhance employee performance in these sectors (Odongo, Mugambi & Abayo, 2019). The aviation sector has thus implemented resourcing strategy, employee relations strategy, training and development strategies (Faktaufon, 2013).

This study will be accentuated by two key theories: the Resource Based theory and the Contingency theory. According to Barney (2021), the former theory stipulates that it is imperative for a firm to effectively utilize its resources so as to remain competitive. The Contingency theory by Fred Fiedler (1964) opines that there is no unanimously recognized management style, and the most apposite style depends on the specific context of the situation.

There has been issues in implementing strategic human resource management practices in the aviation sector, which has affected the outcome of these Strategic human

resource practices on employee performance, where for example, poorly implemented employee relations strategy has brought about strikes and go slows in the Western countries, leading airlines such as Delta Airlines, Austrian Airlines, Air France and British Airlines, experience go slows and strikes, in South Africa, the leading airline (Odongo, *et al.*, 2019). South African Airlines, has severally been forced to cancel its flights due to failure to show up to work, by the crucial workers in this sector crucial workers in this sector, and similarly in Kenya, employee performance in this industry has been affected by go slows and strikes, leading to poor service delivery, translating to increase in customer complaints (Ombego, & Makori, 2015).

Similarly, the influence of the strategic training and development in the aviation sector is still wanting evidenced by lack of disaster or emergency preparedness by the aviation staff, which has translated to loss of lives, a good example being the crash of a Malaysia Airlines Flight 17, in 2014, where 298 people lost their lives, and the 157 people who lost their lives during the 2019 Boeing 737 Ethiopian Airlines crash (Turk & Karvaraz, 2021). In Kenya, lack of training on disaster preparedness has caused delays and flight cancellations (Odongo *et al.*, 2019).

This has thus necessitated this study to establish whether the strategic human resource management practices implemented in the aviation sector, attain the desired impact on employee performance, and what remedial measures can be done to enhance the influence of these HR strategies on worker performance in this sector.

Concept of Strategy

Strategy connotes the road map taken by an organisation, and highlights the vision, mission and objective of the business, from which various plans are developed (Cutu, 2021). Generally, in strategy development, the overall business strategy is first crafted by the leadership of the organisation, which then directs the departmental strategy, that is developed and implemented by the various HODS, who then cascade it to the employees, and are responsible for aligning individual employee goals, with the departmental goal and overall business strategy, which helps the business attain an edge over their competition (Kiilu & Awour, 2022).

Strategy is what makes a business unique, and is determined by internal and external factors (Takoy, 2018). Internal factors are pegged on the resource-based theory which places emphasis on the human capital as a resource which cannot be copied by competitors, and thus recommend managers in organisations to place great emphasis in developing this crucial asset by identifying and sourcing the right talent, as well as training and retaining them (Andrews, 2016). External factors, are mainly hinged on the environment in which the business operates,

and subscribes to the contingency theory, that alludes that the success of an organisation is established by how it responds to varying situations, which many a times, are brought about by the environment in which the business operates in (Cascio, 2018).

Strategic Human Resource management practices

Strategic Human resource management means creating a coherent framework for employees to be managed, hired, and developed to enhance an organisation's long-term objectives. It helps ensure that the various aspects of people management work together to drive the behaviour and climate to meet performance targets

Strategic Human resource Management Practices are target based plans, inclined to drive business competitiveness, through employee performance by ensuring the business has employed the right people, or gets to employ the right staff who meet the business requirements, and developing the team through training, ensuring they are engaged by driving positive employee relations and constantly monitoring and reviewing their performance (Boon, Den Hartog, & Lepak, 2019).

Strategic resourcing focuses on human resource planning, which involves looking at the critical roles required by the organisation, when and where to obtain this talent, how to attract these talents by developing an employee value proposition and positive employer brand, and lastly how to ensure the right talent is retained in the business| (Zira, Ogbu, & Remilekun, 2017). Strategic training and development are a planned approach to enhance the employee skills through learning so as to equip them with the competencies required to meet the organisation's goals and begins by aligning individual employee learning and development activities with business objectives, identifying gaps through training needs analysis, driving learning and measuring the outcome of training to ensure the objectives are met (Cascio, 2018).

Strategic employee relations, directs on how to create and maintaining a positive working relationship between an organization and its people, created by developing a shared value system between employees and the organisation, which begins when the employee joins the organisation, having a proper communication and dispute management mechanism, and driving positive employee experience through reward and recognition (Campbell, 2017). Strategic performance management is a systemic method aimed at assisting an organization in attaining its goals and objectives by monitoring and enhancing the performance of individuals, teams, as well as, the entire organization, attained by goal setting, aligning individual and departmental goals with the overall business goal, measuring employee output, and taking corrective/ remedial action for deviation(s) from desired performance (Andrews, 2016).

Employees Performance

The phrase employee performance denotes an employee's capacity or competence to attain their desired output efficiently, effectively and socially using their organizations available resources (Cascio, 2018). It is considered a combination of ability and motivation, implying for the need to incorporate human resource strategies to enhance their skill set or competencies, as well as motivate the employees to enhance their output (Lesororo & Muli, 2019).

Employee performance is evaluated against three main matrices namely: routine task output that workers actually deliver based on their role or required deliverables, adaptive task performance evaluates how employees react to unusual circumstances/ occurrences, whereas creative task performance encompasses the individual ability of an employee to generate ideas or be innovative (Fadavi & Baqi 2014). In the aviation industry, where it is a service-based industry, employee performance is majorly evaluated on the quality of service delivery, degree of disaster/uncertainty preparedness and level of employee innovation (Ciira & Morenge, 2018).

Kenya Airport Authority

Kenya Airport Authority (KAA) is the entity responsible for owning and operating nine civilian airports and airstrips in Kenya. It was founded by an act of Parliament in 1992. In detail, KAA holds the responsibility of running five international airports, five domestic airports and nine airstrips, and has implemented four strategic human resource management practices to enhance employee performance. These strategies include resourcing, training and development, employee relations, and performance management. Over the years, KAA has been performing dismally, as evidenced by deficits in its financial reporting, where for instance, the financial year 2016/2017 was Ksh.20,398,000, 2017/2018 was Ksh.17, 788,000, 2018/2019 was Ksh. 18,784,000 and 2019/2020 was Ksh. 21,045,000 (Kiilu & Awour,2022). In addition, there has been numerous citizens complains on poor service delivery (Ciira & Moronge, 2018).

Research Problem

There are contradictions in the literature on the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee performance. Several scholars argue that there is positive relationship between strategic human resource management practices and employee performance (Olume 2013). Other scholar established a negative relation between strategic human resource management practices and employee performance (Khalumba, 2012).

Within the last 10 years, the Kenyan Airports Authority has been in the limelight for various employee performance related issues, notable amongst them being the recent black out in the nine airports in August 2023, which caused delays and missed flights for thousands of international and local travellers, a stalled Ksh.67B stalled Greenfield project, which was part of the country's vision 2030 project, that saw the state agency thrown over KES.4.7B down the drain, and a fire in the immigration area in 2013 which extensively damaged the international arrivals terminal, that excessively took so much time to extinguish just because KAA employees were not disaster prepared/ ready, which is critical matrix for the aviation industry. This has over the years spiralled into low ratings on their service delivery.

Adhiambo (2011), studied on strategic human resource management practices and performance of sugar manufacturing firms in Western Kenya. He revealed that there was a positive correlation between the strategic human resource management practices and firm performance. Olume (2013), studied on the effect of human resource strategies on employee performance among insurance companies in Kenya. He established that strategic HRM practices have a positive significant effect on employee performance. Wanjiku (2010), did a study on strategic human resource management practices adopted by mobile phone service providers in Kenya and the findings indicated that strategic human resource management practices contributed to profitability and achievement of the corporate objectives. Obiero (2012), studied on the extent of adoption of strategic human resource management practices at cement manufacturing companies in Machakos. He found the cement industry implements that strategic human resource management practices.

Henga (2015), studied performance management strategy, with a specific focus on performance appraisal and employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority just touched on one aspect of the performance management strategy, which is one of four human resource strategies being implemented at Kenya Airport Authority, thus providing an inadequate basis for generalisations on the influences between human resource management practices and employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority.

This study will attempt to cover these research gaps by focusing on the four strategic human resource management practices strategies implemented in Kenya airport Authority, namely: the strategic resourcing, the strategic training and development, the strategic employee relations. and strategic performance management and their resultant effect on employee performance at all KAA locations, so as to enable better generalisations to be made on the influence of the human resource management practice on employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority. It will address the research gaps by answering the questions; What is the

influence of strategic human resource management practices on the employee performance at the Kenya airports authority?

Research Objectives

General Objective

The study's Main objective is to determine the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employees' performance at Kenya Airports Authority.

Specific Objectives

- 1) To establish influence of strategic employee resourcing on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority.
- 2) To investigate the influence of strategic training and development on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority.
- 3) To determine the influence of strategic employee relations on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority.
- 4) To evaluate the influence of strategic performance management on employees' performance at the Kenya Airports Authority.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

This research is underpinned by two major theories, namely resource-based theory and contingency theory, both of which are widely employed in comprehending human resource strategies, and their impact on employee performance.

Resource Based Theory

Resource Based theory was promoted by Penrose in 2009 (Cited by Gebczynska, & Brajer-Marczak, 2020), and stipulates that a firm should make use of its resources so as to remain competitive, more so exploit the non-imitable resource, in this case, its human capital so as to have competitive advantage (Cascio, 2018). This theory further asserts that organisations can do this by building and developing their human capital through human resource strategies such as resourcing, which begins by HR planning, to establish what number, where and when to obtain the right talent, how to attract and retain this talent, as well as equipping them with the right competencies to enable them meet the business objectives, which is linked to their employee output expectations, or performance (Gebczynska, & Brajer-Marczak, 2020). In addition, this theory highlights the importance of performance management strategy, more so

goal setting, and linking individual employee goals, with the overall business goals, thereby indicating its applicability in providing a theoretical foundation for explaining the casual connectivity between human resource strategies and employee performance (Ciira & Moronge, 2018).

Contingency Theory

The Contingency theory, which was established by Fred Fiedler in 1964, posits that there lacks an unanimously recognized, one-size-fits-all management approach. Instead, the best management style depends on the exact context of the situation. The theory opines that employing one inflexible management style over the long-term is inefficient (Harney, 2016). In line with this theory, the effectiveness of the human resource strategies largely hinges on their application context. Therefore, achieving alignment, both externally and internally, between the implemented human resource strategies and the organization, in order to attain optimal levels of employee performance.

External fit is attained when strategic human resource management practices implemented in the organisation, are aligned with the organization's overall strategy or adapt to the environmental conditions that the organization encounters. Conversely, internal fit aims to ensure that the employed human resource practices are in harmony with the organization's size, available resources, and employee capabilities (Cascio, 2018). This theory places emphasis on how various HR strategies such as employee resourcing, training and developing employees, and performance management should be aligned with the overall business goals, so as to attain internal and external fit, for the business to have optimal outcome on employee performance, having affected these strategies, thus its applicability for this study

Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Performance

Rapando (2018), investigated the influence of strategic resourcing on staff performance, with a specific focus on service delivery within the Directorate of Personnel Management, revealed that getting the right talent, helps enhance employee performance in an organisation, as they come equipped with skills that they also transfer to other employees. Likewise, Ngui, Elegwa & Gachungwa (2014), discovered that attracting, hiring and retaining the right talent has a moderate positive significant effect on staff performance, which translates to a similar effect on the overall organisation performance, on their study on resourcing strategy on employee performance in the commercial banking sector in Kenya.

Mupani & Chipunza (2018), conducted research on environmental influences, strategic employee resourcing approaches and the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises;

specifically focusing on small restaurants in South Africa. They revealed that getting the right employees is not enough to enhance employee performance, and that organisations should invest in retaining this talent, as part of their resourcing strategy, so as to ensure continuity of their performance, as well as propagate their skills to other employees, more so for the new hires. Moreover, this study highlights the importance of HR planning, which helps in identifying the number, where, how and when employee talent acquisition should be conducted, so as to enable the business get the right talent, which is also corroborated by Ateufack (2021), on an inquiry on influence of HR planning on employee performance in selected banks in Cameroon.

Mohamed (2018), led a study on the influence of strategic training and development on the performance of staff in Al-Baqa Applied University concluded that training was positively connected with employee performance, as when it is well executed regularly, it equips the employees with the essential knowledge, capabilities, and skills needed to adapt to the constantly evolving demands of the workplace. Nassazi (2013), & Githinji (2014) investigations on the effect of training on staff performance in Pakistan, and United Nations Office in Somalia, respectively, also revealed implementing training regularly has a positive effect on staff performance, as it promotes creativity and employee innovation, which is a measure of employee performance.

Gebrehiwot & Elantheraiyan (2023), on an inquiry on the impact of training on employee performance in the context of Mekelle City, Tigray, Ethiopia, established that training needs analysis helps identify skill gaps, which when acted upon help enhance employee performance. Similarly, Odhiambo (2018), on a study examining the impact of training and development at Safaricom Ltd, also revealed that training needs analysis helps promote employee performance, by highlighting the competency gaps of the employees, which acted as a constraint to employee performance.

Ilyas, Hin & Adnan (2016), research on training aligned with business strategies, focusing on several manufacturing companies in Nigeria, established that aligning individual employees training with the business goal or objectives, helps foster a strategic fit between them and the organisation, and helps motivate employees, leading to higher performance as they are able to perceive their relative contribution to business growth. Similarly, Amadi (2014), investigated the influence of training on staff performance at Safaricom Call Centre, established that aligning individual employee training with the business objectives, greatly enhanced employee performance, and recommended that all training should be aligned with the business goals, to enhance strategic fit.

Abura (2018), on a study on employee relations strategy on staff performance at the public universities in Kenya, revealed that rewarding through promotion increased worker

performance, as it motivates them to work harder, this was further corroborated by Omuya (2018), on her study on employee relations on staff performance at public universities in Kenya, which revealed that rewards and recognition motivate the employee to perform better.

Naliaka,(2019) highlighted in her inquiry on employee relations strategy on employee performance in water and sewerage provider in Nairobi County, revealed that having a proper dispute /grievance handling mechanism helps increase employee job satisfaction, which motivates their performance, and avoids disrupting employee output when the employees are out picketing or striking, which augers with Pratibha (2022), investigation on the influence of HRM strategies and practices in small firms in India, whose research findings indicated that having a proper dispute or employee grievance mechanism helped ensure continuity of work by averting strikes and picketing, which negatively affects their performance.

Musyoka (2016), and Fernández-Gámez, Gutiérrez-Rui, Becerra-Vicario & (2019), on the influence of shared values on employee performance in Sankara Hotel Kenya and selected hotels in Italy respectively revealed that having shared value systems enhances employee performance by directing employee behaviour and resultant outcomes towards the overall goals, of the business, and also compels them to be aligned with the strategy or objectives of the business.

Maseke, Unengu& Haufuku, (2022), on an inquiry on the influence of performance management strategy, and systems in Nigeria, asserted that when the goals of the business are not aligned with the employee goals, the employees will have poor performance, as they do not know what is expected of them, or when they fall short of the business expectations. Maseke et al., (2020), finding is collaborated by Gede & Huluka (2023), study on the influence of strategic alignment on performance of Ethiopian Public Universities, that aligning employee goals with the business goals, helps provide role clarity and direction to the employee on the organisation's expectation of them, which in turn directs their performance, and curbs under performance by the workers. Moreover, Wanyama (2016), on his study on the influence of participative goal setting on staff performance at Kenya Seed Company, highlighted that employees perform better, when they are involved in setting their own goals, as well as setting the overall business goals, which help create a fit between the worker and organisation's goals.

Buuri (2015), on his inquiry on performance management practices and staff performance in the insurance sector in Kenya indicated that constantly monitoring and reviewing employee performance, through frequent performance appraisals, and giving constructive feedback, and helping employee make corrective action towards deviated performance enhanced worker performance in this companies. His findings are augmented by Owino (2019), on her study on performance management systems and staff performance in county referral hospitals within

Kiambu County that indicated that regular monitoring of employee performance helps the workers take remedial action when they deviate from the expected performance expectations.

Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

From the empirical research outlined above, strategic human resource management practices greatly influence employee performance, as they provide direction to what is expected of them, and also motivate the employees to perform better, more so when they are involved in developing their goals, and also when they are rewarded for their performance.

However, these studies have limitations as they have not highlighted on the negative outcomes of these HR Strategies, where for instance, as evidenced by Yamoah (2014), study on effect of monitoring worker performance in Unibank Ghana, who felt violated and uncomfortable when their performance was always monitored, thereby negatively affecting their performance. Similarly, these studies have not indicated that even in the presence of these strategies, if they are not well implemented, the intended impact on employee performance will not be realized. Likewise, as established by Agoi (2017), on his study on influence of HR practices on employee satisfaction in the public sugar manufacturing companies within Kenya, highlighted that driving positive employee experience through reward and recognition, as a major component of employee relations strategy, may have negative effects on performance, especially when they feel the incentives are not fair, which creates an unpleasant employee experience, and resultant poor performance.

In addition, most of the studies were fixated on various industries in the private sector, with few studies focusing on the public sector transport industry, indicating a need to focus on the same.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used a case study research design as it allows an exhaustive inquiry or investigation of variables under study by focusing on one unit of analysis, thereby providing a rich and contextualized understanding of phenomena under study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This research design was ideal as it helped establish the linkages between the predictor variables and the contingent variable at Kenya Airport Authority.

Data Collection Instrument

A structured interview guide was used to gather information from the respondents. A structured interview guide was best suited to collect qualitative information from the respondents

during research, as it helped the researcher understand, and explore research subjects' opinions, using a set protocol or set of questions, to avoid deviation whilst interrogating the respondents (Rahi, 2017). The data was collected from head of departments which of the 13 namely: HR, Finance, ICT, Procurement, Corporate Strategy, Corporate Communications, Security, Marketing and Business Development, Operations, Engineering, Audit and Risk, Customer Service and Legal departments, as they are solely responsible for crafting and executing human resource strategies and monitoring employee performance.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The data gathered in this study was scrutinised through content analysis techniques as the research was of a qualitative nature. Relational Content analysis was used to determine the influence of strategic human resource management practice and employee performance.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section presents the research findings and the subsequent analysis of the same using content analysis. The data that was analysed was collected using an interview guide from the head of departments of the HR, Finance, ICT, Procurement, Corporate Strategy, Corporate Communications, Security, Marketing and Business Development, Operations, Engineering, Audit and Risk, Customer Service and Legal units. The main objective was to determine the influence of strategic human resource management practices on employee performance. The specific objectives were to establish influence of strategic employee resourcing on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority; to investigate the influence of strategic training and development on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority, to determine the influence of strategic employee relations on employee performance at the Kenya Airports Authority and finally to evaluate the influence of strategic performance management on employees' performance at the Kenya Airports Authority. The findings are as follows;

Strategic Employee Resourcing and Employee Performance at Kenya Airport Authority

This section sought to obtain the respondents view on the Kenya Airport Authority's strategic HR planning, its reput as an employer, how it engages in brand building, its employee resourcing and retention strategy, and how the resourcing strategy can be improved, and how the employee resourcing strategy influences employee performance at the organisation. The interviewees stated that each department came up with its annual manpower needs, which were guided by the year's strategic objectives, and had a set out procedure for recruiting its staff, which ensured sufficient skilled manpower, and thus had a robust HR planning system.

However, at times, the anticipated or intended outcomes of strategic HR planning at KAA were not obtained due to political interference and budgetary constraints, which made it difficult to actualise the strategic HR planning.

On employer branding, the respondents stated that Kenya Airport Authority was perceived to be a good employer, and was actually considered one of the best parastatals to work with by its staff, and the public, with the Human Resource Head of Department stating that they are always in receipt of blind applications and were always swamped with numerous resumes whenever they floated vacant roles internally or externally, thus indicative of a good brand image. The interviewees stated that Kenya Airport Authority did not purposefully engage in any external employer brand building activities, but just strived to create a good work culture so as to attract and retain its employees. This study also established that Kenya Airport Authority had low staff attrition rates, with the respondents stating that its long serving employees were over 30 years old in the organisation, which was attributed to the all-inclusive work culture, which made the employees stay. However, they stated that this posed a challenge to employee performance in the organisation, as this constricted external recruitment, which was crucial for driving innovation at Kenya Airport Authority, where new employees had the potential of enhancing how things were done in the organisation, by coming up with fresh ideas from their various places of work, or having competencies/ skill set that the current pool at Kenya Airport Authority did not possess, leading to enhanced employee performance in the organisation.

The sentiments from the HODs of the 13 departments at Kenya Airport Authority highlighted the need for the organisation to set aside more financial resources to facilitate the fruition of the strategic HR planning, and engage in external employer brand building, where Kenya Airport Authority will be involved in career fairs in order to enhance the organisation's ability to attract good talent externally thereby enhancing their strategic resourcing strategy. The respondents also collectively stated that strategic employee resourcing positively influenced employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority, as it supported the acquisition and retention of qualified personnel, who matched the competency requirements for the various roles, thereby enabling the enrichment of employee output.

Strategic Training and Development and Employee Performance

The main intent of this section was to establish the respondent's views on the fit/alignment between employee training and business goals at Kenya Airport Authority, the frequency and extent of strategic training needs analysis, strategic training activities that were implemented at Kenya Airport Authority, and what had been the outcome of this. Moreover, this

section sought to identify the respondent's views on the influence of the training and development strategy on employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority, and how it can be enhanced.

The respondents stated that employee training was not aligned with the business goals, but rather employee competency gaps, indicating there was no fit between employee training and business goals at Kenya Airport Authority.

In addition, they stated that since the training budget allocated in the organisation was limited, training was just done when needed at Kenya Airport Authority, and this was majorly for the technical and customer service departments, as thus the outcome of the training was only experienced in these two departments. The interviewees asserted that the bias in training and development activities in Kenya Airport Authority, made it difficult for the training and development to enhance employee performance in the organisation, thus minimal effect of the training and development activities on employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority. The respondents stated that training and development should be given prominence to all the departments, in order for it to be effective, and should also align individual training requirement with business goals in order to enhance employee performance.

Strategic Employee Relations and Employee Performance at Kenya Airport Authority

This study focused on establishing strategic employee relations activities at Kenya Airport Authority in this segment, from its value system, the communication and dispute management mechanism, reward and recognition activities at Kenya Airport Authority and strategic employee relations activities are linked to employee performance, at Kenya Airport Authority

The respondents asserted that there is a shared value system at Kenya Airport Authority, with a unity of purpose amongst the employees in the organisation, that is driven by an all-inclusive work culture, and open communication channels, where every employee has a voice at Kenya Airport Authority.

They also stated that there is an inhouse dispute management structure in the organisation, though majority of the times, the junior employees overlooked it and resorted to picket and demonstrate to express their disgruntlement which affected their performance. Unanimously, the respondents asserted that the trade union activities negatively affected the employee performance at KAA, as these often-encouraged confrontational ways of resolving employee complaints, and unending dialogues which often led to disruption of work. The respondents also stated that there was a viable reward and recognition program, which each

department had their unique non-financial incentive of appreciating its top performers which the employees were happy about, that encouraged enhanced employee performance.

Though the respondents stated that strategic employee relations had a positive impact on employee performance at KAA, much more can be done by enhancing the dispute management system so as to reduce the influence of the trade union activities, which really disrupt employee performance in the organisation.

Strategic Performance Management and Employee Performance at KAA

In this segment, the study sought to establish the respondent's views on strategic performance management activities at KAA and their relation to employee performance. The respondents stated that KAA sets its overall business goals annually, which are then linked to the departmental goals and then broken down to individual employee goals by the respective head of department in the thirteen administrative units in the organisation, implying that employee goals are linked to employee performance. The respondents also stated that since all employees were on performance contracts, performance monitoring was done annually without fail. However, they stated that KAA only evaluated and monitored employee performance as it was a government directive as it was a state agency, just as a formality sake, and not majorly to enhance employee performance, as thus remedial action on deviation from desired performance was not conducted thereby making the performance appraisal activities have minimal or no effect on employee performance at KAA.

The interviewees recommended a culture or mindset transformation among the employees at KAA on why and how performance management should be conducted, so as to enable it to be geared to driving corrective action to rectify and direct employee output, and not just a mere government directive, in order for the strategic performance management efforts to yield a positive influence on employee performance at KAA.

Employee Performance at Kenya Airport Authority

The study in this section aimed to establish the respondents view on employee performance at. The Kenya Airport Authority employee performance metrics were the quality-of-service delivery provided by employees, degree of disaster/emergency preparedness by employees, and level of innovation of the employee at Kenya Airport Authority, as they were the measures used to gauge worker output in the aviation industry.

The respondents stated that the employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority was unsatisfactory, as they experienced frequent cases of disaster unpreparedness, customer

complaints on poor quality of service delivery, with few instances of the HODS taking pride in the innovations made by the employees.

DISCUSSION

The result of the findings on the influence of strategic resourcing practices at , that in Kenya Airport Authority indicate that positive employer branding and strategic HR planning positively influence employee performance collaborate with the findings of Mupani & Chipunza (2018), and Rapuda (2018), that revealed that positive employer branding helps attract the right talent, who possess the right skill set to perform the required roles within the organisation, which is vital component in driving employee performance. Similarly, these study findings on the influence of HR planning validate Ateufack (2021), research outcomes which highlighted the importance of HR planning in enhancing employee performance, as it highlights the manpower requirements needed and how and when these requirements are to be fulfilled in order to have the right skill set required by the organisation in order to have optimal employee output.

These study established the need to link training and development on business goals at Kenya Airport Authority, and allocating the required financial resources for training and development as this is quite crucial in equipping employees with the right skill set, failure to which the training will be inconsequential which augers with the study outcomes of Gebrewot *et al.*, (2023), and Boon *et al.*,(2019), that revealed the importance of linking individual employee training needs to the overall business needs so as to enhance employee performance, and setting aside sufficient resources for this, failure to which the training will be inconsequential in driving employee performance.

The outcome of these research findings which revealed the negative outcomes of not taking corrective action on employee performance after performance evaluation, justifying the research outcomes of Owino (2019), and Buuri (2015), which highlighted the value of providing feedback after performance evaluation, and taking corrective action on deviation from desired employee performance, failure to which the performance management activities will have no effect or minimal effect on employee performance as observed in Kenya Airport Authority.

The outcomes of these study findings indicate the value of having a robust employee relation strategy which has a shared valued system, established channels of communication and dispute management structure, which plays an important role in driving employee performance. This study also highlights the negative effects of trade unions on employee performance, which collaborates with the findings of Dinyuny & Segar (2015), as well as Antwi& Bakoror (2020), which revealed that trade union activities are disruptive to employee

performance, as they encourage picketing and go slow, and lengthy dispute resolution systems which are disruptive to the employees' workflow, which consequently derails their output.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Summary of Findings

The study established that of the four strategic human resource practices implemented at Kenya Airport Authority, that is strategic employee resourcing, strategic training and development, strategic employee relation and strategic performance management, strategic training and development had minimal influence on employee performance, with the other practices having a positive influence on employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority, even though the employee performance was still unsatisfactory, and amendments could be done on how to enhance how these strategic human resource practices were implemented in order to have optimal impact on employee performance.

Recommendations of the Study

The study recommends that Kenya Airport Authority should devote more financial resources in implementing their strategic human resource practices, as they are capital intensive in order to obtain the required results on employee performance. The study also recommends a shift in how the employees perceive or peg value on these human resource management practices, more so strategic performance management practices, so as not to be seen as a mere formality, but to be viewed as purposeful activities geared to drive positive employee performance.

To achieve high employees' performance the organization should ensure a good fit between business strategy and human resource management practices. The configuration fit will ensure high employees performance. The organization should adopt the best human resources practices and align it with business strategy and also align it with both internal and external environments.

Conclusion

Generally, the desired effect of strategic human resource practices on employee performance at Kenya Airport Authority have not been felt due to budgetary constraints and lack of emphasis on the value of how and why these human resource practices have been implemented in order to drive employee performance at the organisation.

Limitations of the Study

This study faced several limitations. Firstly, based on the nature of the study, the study findings were objective in nature, as they were based on the subjective opinion of the respondents, thus the researcher had to rely on the information provided by the 13 respondents which had the risk of being biased.

Secondly, the researcher faced a lot of bureaucracy in assessing the HODS which ate into the anticipated time required to conduct this research.

Thirdly, the researcher encountered difficulties in obtaining comprehensive information from the respondents, as at times they were hesitant to divulge on the area of study, but the researcher strived as much as possible to get all the required information by being diplomatic and patient with the respondents, as well as rewording the questions severally.

Scope for Further Studies

The design of this quantitative study was case study. The study focused only on one firms Kenya airport authority. Future studies need to be done in aviation and other sectors of the industry using Cross-sectional study. Cross-sectional study is the best approach to deal with the issues that arose within the constraints of time and money. Because of this methodological approach, respondents were only able to give well indepth responses. This emphasizes the need for future research to employ a mixed-methodological approach, which strengthens support for strategic human resources management practices on employees' performance and may lead to triangulation.

The situation is exacerbated by the fact that our investigation only looked at Kenyan airport authority. To determine how Strategic human resources management affects employees' performances in various sectors, more research is required. The findings of this study indicate that future research should concentrate on additional variables in addition to the previously mentioned ones, such as technology and differentiation strategy.

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