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Kilel, Joyce Chepkemoi; Sang, Hellen; Rop, Williter

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HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING STRATEGY AND ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC GOALS: A CASE OF KERICHO COUNTY GOVERNMENT- KENYA

¹Joyce Chepkemoi Kilel, ²Dr. Hellen Sang, ³Dr. Williter Rop

University of Kabianga

Abstract: Effective succession management encompasses strategic human resource planning which can result in significant mobility for high achievers for which the normal employment regulations will not apply. The public service in Kenya especially at the County level are faced with succession and stagnation career management challenges one of which is the ageing staff where a large number of employees are nearing retirement yet there is no one to take over from them once they retire. The study specifically sought to establish the relationship between strategic human resource planning and achievement of strategic goals. The study adopted a correlation research design since the researcher was trying to ascertain the type of relationship between two or more variables from a sampled population based on data which was collected using a self-administered structured survey questionnaire. The target population was 3108 out of which 354 respondents were sampled. The findings reveal that there exists a significant correlation between achievement of strategic goal and strategic human resource planning ($r = 0.321$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that county governments need to have a human resource plan which puts into consideration all key positions and one which is reviewed annually guided by strategic plan. The study recommends that the county government develop and implement human resource planning policy and competitively recruit competent staff by following the due process.

Keywords: Strategy, Human Resource Planning, Strategic Goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world now is a global village and very competitive in every front. For any individual, business firm, organization, country or even continent to survive in the competitive environment it has to utilize her resources effectively and efficiently for her future benefit and survival and retain competitive advantage. One of the fundamental resources is the human capital. Charan (2005), noted that human resource plays a critical role in the achievement of strategic goals. What determines growth and future survival in an organization is how it treats and develops her human capital. How a business firm develops a succession plan for her workforce is the magic that determines whether it remains afloat of the highly competitive market or it drowns completely. The era now is termed as "the era of the battle of skilled s". How a business firm develops a successful and appropriate succession plan and implements it has bearing in determining whether the firm will wither the unpredictable world economic challenges, have an efficient and effective workforce, retain the best skilled and have continuity in its strategic leadership (Charan, 2005).

Effective HRM encompasses career planning, career development and succession planning. Employers play a significant role on employees' careers (Dessler, 2008). High attrition rates are likely outcomes in organizations which lack career planning and development programmes. This can result in poor implementation of strategic plans and other related

programmes. Some big organizations have faced challenges in filling positions particularly at senior levels with the right people as a result of inadequate succession planning. Headhunting for performers is a global phenomenon and this has resulted in a lot of mobility.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The issue of succession management and achievement of strategic goals has been a challenge in the public service. This has been attributed to a number of factors such as stagnation, natural attrition and employment embargo as explained by Kiptoo, Kiplangat and Kidombo (2016). To address these challenges the MoPSYGA (Ministry of Public Service, Youth, and Gender Affairs) in collaboration with the CoG, developed a Human Resource Planning and succession management strategy Manual (MoPSYGA, 2017). The Manual seeks to address strategic issues facing Succession Management such as Human Resource planning, aging workforce, mismatch of skills and jobs, shortage of critical skills and competences, staff turnover, staffing gaps particularly at senior levels in some cadres as well as insufficient career management systems in the counties. However, despite the existence of the succession manual the counties have not been able to implement it. Lack of an effective succession management strategy will mean that the counties will be unable to implement the strategic objectives which will hinder the country from achieving its vision 2030. Previous studies have not focused on succession management in the counties which is a gap that this study seeks to address. This was the basis upon which the study was undertaken to establish the relationship between succession management strategy and achievement of strategic goals. Specifically it focused on components of succession management strategy that affect achievement of strategic goals such as strategic human resource planning, recruitment and selection, strategic retention and management development. The study purposed to establish the relationship between succession management strategy and achievement of strategic goals in County Governments, with specific focus on the county of Kericho.

This study was conducted through correlation and case study research design. Correlation research design is where a researcher was trying to ascertain the type of relationship between two or more variables from a sampled population. The researcher adopted a correlation research design since it was easy and convenient to apply especially when trying to ascertain the relationship between the two variables through use of research instruments like questionnaires, interviews, observation and analysis of documents (Mancosa, 2010). The sample consisted of 354 randomly selected from the targeted population of 3108 using Krejcie model of determining a sample from a given target population.

2. STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Strategic Human Resource planning is a critical function in all organizations because it ensures that an organization has the right people in the right jobs all the time. Organizations need to define the targets to be achieved in a given time period as well as the HR skills and competencies required to achieve them. It encompasses HR planning as a scenario of ensuring that an organization has got the right people to deliver on the organizational goals (Guidelines on HRP). HR management certainly requires better planning so that the requisite staffing needs of an organization are addressed all the time through informed forecasting. HR planning is now considered an essential tool for use by HR specialists to enhance performance in the workplace.

Employees are no longer considered as an expense. Instead they can contribute towards improved profitability, success and growth. (Steven J. 2008). It is also essential that proper selection procedures are put in place. By adopting best practices in selection of personnel with the best skills when properly inducted will add significant value to skills profile of the organization Huselid (2015). Training after selection is essential so that organizational culture and employee behavior can be aligned for proper synergy.

Wright *et al* (2003) have argued that an employee will exert discretionary effort if proper performance management system is in place and is supported by compensation system linked with the performance management system. Job definition is combination of job description and job specification. It outlines duties, responsibilities, working conditions and skills required of an individual to perform the job (Qureshi M Tahir, 2006). Ichniowski (2015) while observing productivity of steel workers found that complementary HR practice System affects workers performance. Collins (2005) in a study found that effective HR practices affect employee outcomes positively as measured by the organization's financial stability and productivity. The outcomes consist of more variables like efficiency and effectiveness, employee motivation, job satisfaction, trust on employees (Cho, Woods, & Mayer, 2005).

Human resource planning is surrounded by three basic practices which can increase the organizational performance; increase the knowledge, skills and abilities among employees, to enhance their empowerment like giving them employment security and organize some participation programmes for employees give them motivation through both incentive means like giving them compensation and benefits, and also through internal promotion like promoting them with their job status. (Yongmei, James, david, & R, 2007).

According to the MoPSYDA(2017) report on Human Resource Planning and Succession Management Strategy for Public Service, there is need to institutionalize human resource planning in the public service so as to align it to national or organizational goals. This entails development of a human resource master plan linked to the national medium (MTP and MTEF) which should be reviewed every five years. This will be achieved by developing and updating the skill inventory; identifying requisite skills and competence to meet MTP; identifying the gaps and requisite action required to address the gaps; determining and mobilizing resources required and establishing monitoring and evaluation framework. The report states that the development of annual human resource plans by counties need to be aligned to strategic plans with clear move requirements. This can be actualized by carrying out workload analysis to come up with optimal staff levels, conducting periodic reconciliation of staff establishment records, updating the skills inventory, identifying requisite skills and competences to address the strategic plan demands, identifying the gaps and action required to address fill the same and identifying and mobilizing resources required.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Strategic Human Resource Planning

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
In my department, human resource plan puts into consideration all key positions and frequently reviews them guided by strategic plan	309	1.00	5.00	2.5534	1.48845
The existing human resource plan set based on the departmental strategic objectives in my organization motivates employees to consider working until retirement age	309	1.00	5.00	2.5922	1.36113
In my organization, employees are always given a chance to express their suggestions which makes them feel valued thus achievement of strategic objectives	309	1.00	5.00	3.5890	1.15770
In my department, management support employees who wish to advance in their career through the Education policy and sponsorship for training so as to achieve strategic objectives	309	1.00	5.00	3.9741	1.22976
Valid N (listwise)	309				

Source: Research Data (2019)

Descriptive statistics in table 1 reveals that human resource plan did not puts into consideration all key positions and was not frequently reviewed as guided by strategic plan hence had a mean of 2.55 and a standard deviation of 1.48 meaning respondents disagreed. The existing human resource plan was not set based on the departmental strategic objectives and that employee were not motivated to consider working until retirement age for it had a mean of 2.59 and a standard deviation of 1.36 meaning that the respondents disagreed. Employees were always given a chance to express their suggestions which made them feel valued thus achievement of strategic objectives for it had a mean of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 1.15 meaning that the respondents agreed to it. Management supported employees who wished to advance in their career through the education policy and sponsorship for training so as to achieve strategic objectives had a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 1.22 meaning that the respondent agreed.

This reveals that the county government did not have human resource plan which puts into consideration all key positions and which was frequently reviewed guided by strategic plan. The existing human resource plan was not set based on the departmental strategic objectives hence employees were not motivated to consider working until retirement age. Employees in the county governments were always given a chance to express their suggestions, this made them feel valued thus motivated to achieving strategic objectives. Management supported employees who wish to advance in their career through the education policy and they received sponsorship for training thus achievement of strategic objectives

The findings agree with those of Huselid (2015) who noted that proper selection procedures need to be put in place and that all positions which are key in the operation of the counties are reviewed frequently. By adopting best practices in selection of personnel with the best skills and properly inducting them will add significant value to skills profile of the organization so that organizational culture and employee behavior are aligned for proper synergy. There is need for HR to have a manual which outlines duties, responsibilities, working conditions and skills required of an individual to perform the job this concurs with Ichniowski (2015) who while observing productivity of steel workers found that complementary HR practice System affects workers performance.

The findings also concur with Collins (2005) who found that effective HR practices affect employee outcomes positively as measured by the organization's financial stability and productivity. The outcomes consist of more variables like efficiency and effectiveness, employee motivation, job satisfaction, trust on employees (Cho, Woods, & Mayer, 2005). Human resource planning practices which can increase the organizational performance and which county government should embrace are that it; increase the knowledge, skills and abilities among employees, to enhance their empowerment like giving them employment security and organize some participation programmes for employees give them motivation through both incentive means like giving them compensation and benefits, and also through internal promotion like promoting them with their job status. (Yongmei, James, David, 2007).

Table 2: KMO Test Results

KMO and Bartlett's Test Results for Strategic Human Resource Planning		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.824
Approx. Chi-Square		858.149
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	6
	Sig.	0.000

Table 2 shows the result of KMO and Spherical Bartlett tests, whose value ranges from 0 to 1 and is an indicator for comparing correlation coefficient of observation and partial correlation coefficient. When its value gets closer to 1, the explanatory effect of factor analysis is stronger and when its value gets closer to 0, the model may not work so well. Spherical Bartlett test can be used to judge whether correlation matrix is a unit matrix.

Strategic Human Resource Planning result of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkinis 0.824 which is an indicator for comparing correlation coefficient of observation and partial correlation coefficient. The value is closer to 1 hence the explanatory effect of factor analysis is stronger. When the KMO value is below 0.5 it is not suitable to use factor analysis (William et al., 2010). Spherical Bartlett test can be used to judge whether correlation matrix is a unit matrix, the results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity had a significance of 0.00. From the result of Spherical Bartlett test should fail to reject the null hypothesis which means the variables have a strong association.

3. STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC GOALS

The findings indicated that county government did not have human resource plan which puts into consideration all key positions and the one which was there was not frequently reviewed guided by strategic plan. The existing human resource plan was not set based on the departmental strategic objectives hence employees were not motivated to consider working until retirement age. Employees in the county governments were always given a chance to express their suggestions, this made them feel valued thus motivated to achieving strategic objectives. Management supported employees who wish to advance in their career through the education policy and they received sponsorship for training thus achievement of strategic objectives.

4. STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIC GOALS

The county governments need to have human resource plan which puts into consideration all key positions and one which is reviewed annually guided by strategic plan. Employees need to be motivated to consider working until retirement age, they need to be given chance to express their suggestions, this will make them feel valued and motivated to achieving strategic objectives. Management need to support employees to advance their career by developing education policy and providing sponsorship for training thus achievement of strategic objectives.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends that County government need to develop and implement strategic management policy. The policy should put into consideration human resource planning strategies which the county will adopt in attracting and retaining competent staff. The study looked at the relationship between succession management strategy and achievement of strategic goals in County Governments. Further study can be done on other government entities or private sector so that the results can be compared and generalized.

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