



# An Evaluation of Human Resource Practices on Employee Retention in State Corporations in Kenya

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## Abstract

Organisations can achieve a competitive advantage by enhancing and expanding human resource knowledge, skills, motivation, and morale. The study aimed to determine the effect of performance management techniques on staff retention at the National Transport and Safety Authority-Kenya. The study focused on 2100 employees working in 15 of Kenya's National Transport and Safety Authority branches. A descriptive research design was used in the study, with a sample size of 336 respondents selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Findings showed that Staff retention is positively correlated with performance management. There was a strong positive correlation (association) ( $r = 0.725$ ) between performance management and employee retention. The ANOVA findings determined the regression model's significance, from which an f-significant value of  $P < 0.001$  was derived, indicating that the model's likelihood (probability) of producing an incorrect prediction is less than 0.001. Management of NTSA-Kenya should appropriately handle aspects of employee relations management, such as HR initiatives, leadership styles, and shared values. They should also provide their employees with rewards in the form of cash bonuses, payments based on performance and pension schemes. Previous research on human resource practices and employee retention has mostly focused on the private sector, leaving a study gap on the effect of these policies on staff retention in Kenyan state corporations such as NTSA. The study, therefore, fills the gap in Knowledge of the performance management practice affecting staff retention.

## Introduction

Human resource practices help businesses attract, develop, and retain personnel to reach higher performance levels. Human resource management actions develop internal capabilities that are valuable, unique, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable (Walker, 2024). These activities significantly impact how people perceive their occupations. Training is a broad educational activity linked to workers' requirements to improve their job performance and acquire the skills, information, and attitudes required to manage their jobs and progress their careers in a changing workplace (Armstrong, 2023). Organisations should retain well-trained employees rather than squander training costs and restart the induction process (Singh, 2019; Wanyonyi & Barasa, 2018).

Human beings are the "soft resources" that must be managed efficiently for a business to grow. Only humans can increase the productivity of both physical and financial assets. Organisations can achieve a competitive advantage by enhancing and expanding human resource knowledge, skills, motivation, and morale. According to Walker (2024), effective firms invest in their personnel and manage the



retention of bright ones. As a result, managing human resource practices (HRPs) such as manpower planning, training, financial incentives, motivation, grievance redressed, and so on are critical concerns in a corporate organisation that must be handled with extreme care and consideration to acquire, maintain, and retain competent employees. The ultimate goal of HRPs is to achieve organisational success through manpower and capabilities, taking advantage of new opportunities by influencing the organisational behaviour of its people (Cherif, 2020; Jawaad et al., 2019).

Numerous studies have been undertaken on the relationship between HR performance and employee retention, with many emphasising the significance of job satisfaction, remuneration and benefits, training and development, and career advancement. Overall, these studies provide a global view of the impact of performance management practices on employee retention across industries and countries. To retain employees and remain competitive in the global labour market, firms must implement efficient HR policies that address job satisfaction, remuneration and benefits, training and development, and career advancement.

Globally, human resource practices such as work satisfaction, remuneration and benefits, training, and development are positively associated with employee retention. These HR performances have been demonstrated to positively influence employee retention in various industries and nations, demonstrating that they are critical to the success of any firm. Wang et al. (2022) assert that in the Chinese manufacturing industry, HR practices such as performance appraisal, job security, and training and development were found to be favourably associated with employee retention.

Staff retention is a key issue for African firms, as high levels of staff turnover have been observed across various industries. Organisations might incur significant expenditures due to employee turnover, including recruitment and training costs, loss of institutional knowledge, and decreased productivity. Furthermore, high turnover can harm employee morale and job satisfaction, resulting in lower engagement and motivation.

Despite the few studies conducted in Africa, these findings emphasise the significance of excellent performance management policies in improving employee retention. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the specific performance management practices that promote employee retention may differ among industries and African nations. As a result, more studies are required to assess the influence of performance management practices on employee retention in other African nations and industries and to determine the most effective performance practices for retaining people in various circumstances.

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Regarding the small number of studies conducted in Africa, these findings emphasise the significance of excellent human resource policies in improving employee retention (Kalia et al., 2023). Furthermore, the findings indicate that the specific human resource practices that promote employee retention may differ among industries and African nations. As a result, more studies are required to assess the influence of human resource practices on employee retention in other African nations and industries and determine the most effective human resource practices for retaining people in various circumstances (Hassan, 2022).

Kenya is one of Africa's fastest-growing economies with a growing labour force. Despite increasing job prospects, the country has difficulty maintaining its trained workers. This issue has been blamed



on various factors, including inadequate salaries, poor working conditions, a lack of professional advancement opportunities, and low employee engagement. Thus, employee retention is a key issue in Kenya's public and commercial sectors. The public sector employs many people and has been experiencing a brain drain as skilled individuals seek better prospects abroad or in the private sector. The private sector, on the other hand, confronts severe competition for talent and must establish effective HR processes to keep its qualified staff.

Several studies in Kenya have been undertaken to assess the impact of human resource practices on employee retention. For example, Mburu et al. (2019) discovered that employee engagement, training and development, and career advancement possibilities were critical determinants of employee retention in the banking sector. Similarly, Njoroge et al. (2020) discovered that pay and benefits, employee recognition, and work-life balance were major predictors of employee retention in telecoms.

Overall, the research undertaken in Kenya shows that efficient performance management practices are critical for employee retention. According to Hassan's (2022) research, firms should focus on remuneration and benefits, employee engagement, career progression possibilities, and work-life balance to retain their competent personnel. Furthermore, given the importance of employee retention in improving organisational performance, constant examination and improvement of HR policies in Kenya are required.

The National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA) is a Kenyan government organisation in charge of road safety and transportation regulation in the country. Employee retention is critical for the NTSA to achieve its goals and objectives, as it is for any organisation. Employee turnover can be expensive, resulting in the loss of institutional knowledge and higher recruitment and training expenditures. As a result, assessing the impact of human resource practices on employee retention in the NTSA is critical.

Human resource management and employee retention research in Kenya has been focused on commercial enterprises, with only a few studies in the governmental sector. However, Mburu et al. (2019) discovered that remuneration and benefits, career development opportunities, and performance management were all positively connected to employee retention in a study that examined the effect of human resource policies on employee retention in public institutions in Kenya. This shows that similar techniques could be beneficial in retaining public sector staff.

Given the NTSA's unique position as a government agency, a study on the impact of human resource policies on employee retention in this company would be valuable. Such a study might assess the effectiveness of the NTSA's present human resource policies in retaining staff and identify areas for improvement. It may also add to the corpus of information on human resource practices and staff retention in Kenya's public sector.

Understanding the influence of performance management policies on employee retention in the NTSA is critical for the organisation's development and achievement of its goals. By implementing excellent human resource practices, the NTSA can attract, retain, and encourage individuals to perform at their best, resulting in enhanced productivity, job satisfaction, and organisational success.

The study drew upon several theories, including Herzberg's Two Factor Theory and Social Learning Theory. Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, also known as the Motivator-Hygiene Theory, was developed by Frederick Herzberg in the 1950s. According to Samuel (2009), unmotivated employees are likelier to leave the organisation. Salary, relationship with supervisor, job conditions, status, and security are the dissatisfies. According to Michael (2008), external elements, such as a positive work environment and job security, and intrinsic factors, such as development and training, have a significant role in firm employee retention. On the other hand, the social learning Theory was developed by Albert



Bandura in the mid-twentieth century. According to this hypothesis, individuals learn by witnessing and imitating the activities of others and the consequences of those behaviours. According to Bandura (1977), learning happens through cognitive, environmental, and behavioural elements. The social learning theory can be applied to employee retention by allowing employees to learn from more experienced colleagues or mentors. Formal training programs, work shadowing, and mentoring connections can help.

### **Performance Management and Retention**

Saks and Gruman (2014) suggest in their study that EPM has become a global phenomenon as the role of talent management in enterprises has grown. Strategic alignment, stakeholder involvement, continuous learning, and performance accountability are identified as the four key drivers of EPM (Ravid, 2022). According to the study, Kuwaiti culture values individualism, which might lead to an emphasis on individual performance rather than team performance. The report suggests that firms in Kuwait should consider team-based performance indicators to improve EPM. Imran (2023) investigated the association between EPM and South Asian retention. According to the study, EPM favours employee retention and perceived organisational support and work satisfaction buffer this link. According to the survey, South Asian firms should enhance employee perceptions of support and work satisfaction to improve EPM and retention.

In Kenya, research has concentrated on elucidating the elements influencing EPM and retention in the Kenyan context. In their study, Nkanata et al. (2023) investigated the influence of EPM on staff retention in the Kenyan public sector. According to the study, EPM has a favourable impact on employee retention, and elements such as training and development, job stability, and possibilities for growth are significant in retaining personnel. Kibet et al. (2020) investigated the association between EPM and retention in Kenya's private sector. The study discovered that EPM benefits staff retention and that aspects including employee involvement, communication, and appreciation are critical in improving EPM and retention.

### **Methods**

This study used a descriptive research methodology and employed quantitative methodologies. It described the effects of performance management practices on employee retention; a descriptive research approach was employed.

The target population for this study included all the 2100 employees in three categories working in the various Offices of the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA).

*Table 1: Target Population*

<b>Target Group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Top-level Managers	210	10.0	10.0
Middle-level Managers	655	31.2	41.2
Lower-level Officers	1235	58.9	100.0
Total	2100	100.0	

The study's sample was chosen using a stratified random sampling technique. This method entailed splitting the population into subgroups or strata and choosing individuals proportionally from each stratum. The strata comprised of Top-level Managers, Middle-level Managers and Lower-level Officers. This is because they had positions that were best for giving more information on strategic management performance. Simple descriptive statistics were used for sample size. The researcher used 336 respondents, equivalent to 30 per cent of the chosen representative, which was sufficient for the research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013; Barasa, 2024).



Table 2: Sample Size

Target Group	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Top-level Managers	34	10.1	10.1
Middle-level Managers	105	31.3	41.2
Lower level Officers	197	58.6	100.0
Total	336	100.0	

The study incorporated a primary source of data using questionnaires. After data collection, a comprehensive assessment of the returned questionnaires was done to determine those appropriate for data analysis. The data was then coded by giving number symbols for data entry. Following that, the coded data was examined to reduce errors while inputting the data into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS V.22). After that, the data was checked and cleaned to verify its accuracy and completeness.

**Results and Discussion**

*Performance Management*

Table 3: Performance Management

Performance Management	Mean	Std. Dev.
All employees have access to a performance plan	2.30	1.2910
Line supervisors and employees talk about performance goals and deliverables	2.20	1.9149
The performance management document clearly defines each employee's responsibilities	2.20	1.9149
Performance evaluations are conducted on a regular basis	2.10	2.0817
During the performance appraisal process, employees are given the opportunity to engage and share their thoughts	1.70	3.2146
In the organisation, performance appraisal is done fairly	2.10	2.0817
The organisation has established a work culture that promotes goal achievement	2.30	2.3805
Line managers encourage staff to attain their objectives	2.20	3.0000
Employees are given timely feedback on their performance	1.90	3.3166
You and your line manager reach an agreement on an area of your performance	2.30	2.3805
As part of performance feedback, line managers deliver the appropriate amount of constructive criticism	2.30	2.3805
My boss encourages me to be creative and take chances related to new developments	2.00	2.6458
Employees must take initiative and accept responsibility in their job duties	2.20	1.9149
Employees have the authority to make important decisions	2.10	2.0817

Table 10 shows that most respondents had access to their performance Plan, as shown by a mean of 2.30; line supervisors and employees talked about performance goals and deliverables, which were rated with a mean of 2.20. It was also noted that the organisation had established a work culture that promoted goal achievement with a mean of 2.30. As part of performance feedback, line managers took the initiative to deliver the appropriate amount of constructive criticism, rated at 2.30. Employees, together with their line managers, also reached an agreement on areas of their performance as shown by mean 2.30. Employees were encouraged to be creative and take chances related to new developments, as shown by a mean of 2.00. However, during the performance appraisal process, employees thought they were not allowed to engage and share their thoughts, as shown by a mean of





1.70. Generally, the study found that the National Transport and Safety Authority had implemented a policy for performance appraisals, which included doing them in the best manner feasible, providing timely feedback, and conducting them regularly.

These findings agree with Kibet et al. (2020), who investigated the association between EPM and retention in Kenya's private sector. The study discovered that EPM had a beneficial impact on staff retention and that aspects including employee involvement, communication, and appreciation are critical in improving EPM and retention.

### *Employees Retention*

*Table 4: Employee retention*

<b>Employees retention</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
Within three years, I aim to switch from my current employer to a different one	2.40	2.4900
I am pleased and valued for the work I do, and I intend to stay longer	2.67	2.4495
If I wanted to undertake another job or function, I would first look at the options available within this organisation	2.53	2.4495
If I had my way, I'd be working for this company for the next five years	2.60	2.3452
I enjoy my work for this organisation and am dedicated to it	2.67	2.4495
Opportunities for advancement in the organisation are crucial for me to stay for the long term	2.80	2.5495
Working in this organisation allows me to attain my career objectives	2.60	2.3452
The organisation has made me very happy and comfortable	2.53	1.8708
Employees are more likely to remain working if they receive training and development	2.73	2.1213
A good working relationship guarantees that people are dedicated to their jobs	2.60	2.9155
Hiring talented people ensures employee loyalty	2.80	2.5495
I will stay with this organisation even if a better opportunity arises elsewhere	2.47	1.9494

Findings from Table 4 show that most respondents indicated that Opportunities for advancement in the organisation are crucial for them to stay for the long term, as shown by a mean of 2.80. It was also evident that Employees are more likely to remain working if they receive training and development, as shown by a mean of 2.73. Good working relations ensure that employees are committed to their work, as shown by a mean of 2.60, and hiring talented people ensures employee loyalty to the organisation, as shown by a mean of 2.80.

The findings agree with Okello and Wafula (2017), who explored the relationship between employee relations and job satisfaction in the Kenyan construction industry in their study. According to the study, good employee interactions were positively associated with job satisfaction, increasing retention rates. The authors proposed that firms improve employee relations to increase job satisfaction and retention rates.

### *Correlation Analysis*

Using SPSS, data on various variables was applied to determine Pearson's product correlation coefficient. At the five per cent significance level, the relationship between the variables of interest was determined using Pearson's product correlation coefficient. The Pearson's product correlation coefficient between the variables is displayed in Table 5.



*Table 5: Correlation Matrix*

	Performance Management	Employee Development	Compensation and benefits	Employee Relations
Performance Management	.725	1		
Employee Development	.567	.534	1	
Compensation and Benefits	.667	.534	.569	1
Employee Relations	.590	.834	.537	.798

Table 5 shows a strong positive correlation (association) ( $r = 0.725$ ) between performance management and employee retention. There was also a positive correlation,  $r = 0.567$ , between employee development and retention. There was a strong positive correlation,  $r = 0.667$ , between Compensation and benefits and employee retention, and the results also showed a positive correlation,  $r = 0.590$ , between employee relations and employee retention.

**Regression Analysis**

The model summary was utilised to ascertain how variations in the independent variables can account for variations in the dependent variable. This study examined how variations in performance management, employee development, compensation and benefits, and employee relations affected employee retention. The results are displayed in Table 6.

*Table 6: Regression Analysis Results*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.736 <sup>a</sup>	.542	.742	.221

Table 6's linear regression model's modified R2 value of 0.742 suggests that modifications to performance management, employee development, compensation and benefits, and employee relations may be responsible for 74.2% of variances in employee retention. The remaining 25.8% indicates that the study did not examine all human resource practices. The correlation coefficient value (R) of 0.736 indicates a significant and positive relationship between the variables under investigation, further supported by the results.

**Analysis of Variance**

An ANOVA was performed to evaluate whether the entire regression model suited the data that was gathered well. The goal of the ANOVA analysis was to determine if the employee retention study's observed variance could be explained by variations in the independent variables. The ANOVA findings determined the regression model's significance, from which an f-significant value of  $P < 0.001$  was derived, indicating that the model's likelihood (probability) of producing an incorrect prediction is less than 0.001. As a result, the regression model had a 95% confidence level. In this instance, the output is shown in Table 7.

*Table 7: Analysis of Variance*

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	67.761	5	16.940	15.058	.000
Residual	199.125	7	1.125		
Total	266.886	12			



Table 8: Coefficient of Study Variables

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised t Coefficients	Sig.
	B	Std. Error		
(Constant)	.664	.114		18.250
Performance Management	.410	.161	.386	2.54
Employee Development	.741	.052	.821	3.12
Compensation and Benefits	.765	.882	.130	.868
Employee Relations	.465	.067	.378	6.940

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Retention

From Table 8, the estimated multiple Regression model to estimate Retention was;

$$Y=0.664 + 0.41X_1 + 0.741X_2 + 0.765X_3 + 0.465X_4$$

(Y-Employee Retention, X<sub>1</sub>-Performance Management, X<sub>2</sub>-Employee Development, X<sub>3</sub>-Compensation and benefits and X<sub>4</sub>-Employee Relations)

The intercept between Human Resource management practices and Employee Retention was 0.664, indicating that for any increase in any of the variables of Human Resource management practices, Employee Retention increases by 0.664.

Performance Management was statistically significant at (β= 0.41, P=.017); this indicates that Performance management had a positive relationship with staff retention at NTSA-Kenya, implying that a unit increase in performance management will positively affect staff retention at NTSA-Kenya. The findings agree with Imran (2023), who investigated the association between employee performance management and retention in the South Asian environment. According to the study, Employee Performance Management favoured employee retention, perceived organisational support and work satisfaction.

**Conclusion**

Performance management positively correlated with staff retention at NTSA-Kenya, implying that a unit increase in performance management will positively affect staff retention at NTSA-Kenya. Employee Development had a strong positive relationship with staff retention at NTSA-Kenya implying that a unit increase in Employee Development will positively affect staff retention at NTSA-Kenya, Compensation and Benefits had a strong positive relationship with staff retention at NTSA-Kenya implying that a unit increase in Compensation and Benefits will positively affect staff retention at NTSA-Kenya. Employee Relations positively correlate with staff retention at NTSA-Kenya, implying that a unit increase in employee relations will positively affect staff retention at NTSA-Kenya.

To prevent employees from viewing performance management as a punitive, discriminatory, or judgmental process where cronyism and biased considerations trumped objectivity and rendered the system ineffective, the study recommends that issues arising from performance management be discussed openly. Provide Training: Train all managers and leaders on effective performance management techniques and tools to ensure strategies for motivating employees and, hence, staff retention. Assess Current Practices: Evaluate existing performance management processes to identify strengths and areas of weakness for organisational improvement. Customise Approaches: Tailor practices to fit the organisational culture and specific employee needs. Monitor and Adjust:





Continuously monitor the effectiveness of implemented practices and make necessary adjustments based on feedback and changing organisational needs.

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