

Effect of Employee Acquisition Plan on the Performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization

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Abstract- This study established the effect of employee acquisition plan on the performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization. This study adopted a descriptive research design. The unit of analysis which is the study population consisted of the employees of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization. The unit of observation which is the target population consisted of the 145 employees of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization from CRI, TRI, SRI and VRI and the sample size was 145 respondents. The study adopted the census method to select respondents from the human resources/administrative department, research scientists and technical staff in the selected agricultural research institutes. Structured questionnaire containing close-ended questions were used to collect primary data for this study. The questionnaires were distributed using drop-and-pick later method to the respondents. Secondary data was obtained through published materials such as journals and annual reports. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis methods using SPSS Version 24 and the analyzed data was presented in form of tables, graphs and charts. The correlations of the study variables were determined which established that there was a positive and significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. All the independent variables were positively related to the performance of the organization as attested by the respective correlation coefficients: Employee acquisition plan($r=0.769$), HR utilization ($r= 0.592$), HR demand forecasting ($r=0.678$) and employee retention ($r= 0.702$). All the relationships are rendered significant since their p-values are less than 0.05. A multiple linear regression analysis was used to analyze the effects of employee acquisition plan on the performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization. The findings of this research hold that there is a strong positive and significant correlation between the employee acquisition plan and performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization.

Index Terms- Employee Acquisition Plan, Performance, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization

I. INTRODUCTION

Performance measurement is the process whereby an organization establishes the parameters within which programs, investments, and acquisitions are reaching the desired results (Graham & Bennet, 1998). The linkage between human resource planning and organizational performance has dominated much of the debate within the human resource management literature since the mid-1990s.

Human resource planning is the process of identifying current and future needs and it is a crucial process in every organization. It is essential to conduct human resource planning since hiring the wrong employees or failure to anticipate fluctuations in hiring needs could be costly in the long run. The process of human resource planning ensures that, an organization's employees have the requisite skills and competencies an enterprise needs for it to succeed (Ghazala & Habib, 2012). Gupta (2008) adds that, human resource planning prepares appropriately employees for potential rationalization. It further enables a firm to make adequate preparations for recruitment and strategic hiring.

According to Mursi (2003), there is significant and positive relationship between human resource planning and organizational performance. Organizations that undertake human resource planning stand to benefit in more ways than one; through optimum utilization of their human resources; they are able to match and align personnel activities to organizational strategic objectives; making fairly accurate predictions on the labour and how these would affect the organization and coordinate different personnel management programs such as affirmative action, talent development and management and retention (Werther & Davis, 2003). Chand & Katou (2007), in their study in the Indian hotel industry, found out that manpower planning have strong relationship to productivity, and productivity impact on organizational performance.

No doubt therefore, human resource planning is important for organizational success. "it is the system of matching the supply of people, internally (existing employees) and externally (those to be hired and searched for) with over a given time frame". Human resource planning has two objectives; the optimum utilization of currently employed human resources and providing future human resource needs in the areas of skills and

numbers (Public Service Commission, Kenya, 2017). Human resource planning will enhance the process of decision making, encourage open discussion, bringing the right people together around the right questions, resolving conflicts among strong technical professionals, and managing emotional ups and downs of employees of the organization.

Matching human resources with the present and the future is one of the main problems faced by organizations (Dubois, 2004). Human resources have a certain degree of inflexibility, both in terms of their movement, development and their utilization. There is the lead time to recruit and to train the average employee. In the case of upper management personnel in the organizations, the process may take up to years to nurture the candidate and making sure of the succession plans are put in place. Making decisions on recruitment and development are strategic and will produce long-lasting results given the right people are being chosen. Therefore, the management must forecast the demand and supply of human resource as part of the organization's business and functional planning processes. Demand refers to the number and characteristics (e.g. skills, abilities, pay levels, or experience) of people needed for particular jobs at a given point in time and at a particular place. Supply refers to both the number and characteristics of people available for those jobs.

Human resource planning has become an increasingly significant concern for every organization and research institutes have not been left behind. According to an International Labour Organization (ILO) report, a gap exists between manpower planning and strategic decision making, indicating that use of human resource planning is given very low emphasis by managers in most public organizations. Since the government of Kenya froze employment in 2012, most government organizations realize that there is a gap which has been created due to the aforementioned (Omollo, 2013).

Kenyan government ministries continue to experience high staff turnover rates which in turn lead to staff shortages hence making it difficult to undertake strategic human resource planning. According to Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization strategic plan for 2017-2021, which was launched recently, human resource planning was stated as one of the major challenges and weaknesses facing the organization being a major problem due to inadequate capacity to catalyze agricultural technology dissemination, delayed implementation of human resources management policies, plans/terms of services leading to high turnover of skilled staff. This study therefore, aimed to establish the effect of employee acquisition plan on the performance of the organization. This study aimed at establishing the effect of employee acquisition plan on the performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational performance can be measured through financial stability and productivity, but when we have to relate human resource planning with the organizational performance, than we consider some of other variables like efficiency and effectiveness, employee motivation, job satisfaction, trust on employees (Cho *et al.*, 2006).

Human resource planning is surrounded by three basic level practices which can increase the organizational performance being, to increase the knowledge, skills and abilities among employees, enhance their empowerment like giving them employment security and organize some participation programs for employees and finally give them motivation through both incentive means like giving them compensation and benefits, and also through internal promotion them with their job status (Yongmei *et al.*, 2007).

According to Schermerhorn (2002), the most basic kind of motivation for employees to perform is reinforcement. Reinforcement comes in two different ways, positive and negative. If a manager likes what he or she is seeing in an employee, it is important to let this be known to the employee. There should be 'administration of positive consequences that tend to increase the likelihood of repeating the desirable behaviour in similar settings'. However, there is needed to be a distinction between reinforcement and rewards. This method does not always encourage better performance, so rewards should only be used in the right situation. Otherwise, a reward may lose its desired effect as a motivator used so often. Negative reinforcement is given if a manager does not approve of what he/she is seeing. This is if the employee is not performing to the expected standards. While these methods are not the most effective ways, they are easy and can be used on a daily basis to help increase the performance of workers.

In a study done by Aswathapa (2008), he stated that Evaluation and control of human resource planning is necessary as it helps in gauging the effectiveness of the interventions that have been put in place as considerable costs are incurred by organizations in HRP processes like recruitment and selection.

A study conducted by Mensah (2012) on An analysis of human resource planning and its effect on organizational effectiveness at information services department Accra, he states that, for an organization to get the right number of people to do a particular task, human resource must be forecast. Forecasting require that an organization determines the number of future workers, with the specialized skills and ability needed over a period of time. Availability forecasting is to determine the number of needed employees the organization able to hire.

Human resource planning is crucial in organizations in the sense that, it makes the organization aware of what course of action to take, and also to be proactive in recruiting and retaining employees. Through human resource planning organizations can determine, if there will be right supply of talent in order to increase their recruiting efforts and act quickly to secure skilled and talented employees. To better compete in the global market, organization will need to create and implement corporate strategies to promote itself as a "preferred employer" – investing in progressive HR policies and programs with the goal of building a high-performing organization of engaged people, and fostering and creating a work environment where people want to work, not where they have to work (Michael, 2006).

Human resource planning contribute to organization success in the sense that, it ensures that an organization always have a concept of the job market and how it related to its failure (Michael, 2006). A company that refuses to engage in human resource in order to be proactive may find itself with a number of unfilled positions. He concluded that, human resource planning

needs a continual process to help organizations to achieve its goals, though some jobs are still in demand during downturn, securing people with highly desirable skills will always be a challenge.

According to Homer (2001), as is true for any type of program evaluation, this phase involves assessing how well objectives were achieved. Because short-term planning objectives are generally stated in terms that are relatively easy to quantify (e.g., numbers of applicants, numbers of hires, and performance levels of employees), systematic evaluation of human resource planning programs to meet short term organizational needs is quite feasible, and some types of program evaluations are actually common in large organizations. For example, in part because numerous federal and state laws prohibit some forms of discrimination, selection programs in particular have been closely scrutinized to ensure that employers base their selection decisions on characteristics of applicants that are job related.

Legal regulations have prompted many organizations, especially large ones, to assess empirically that relationship between an applicant's characteristics (e.g., abilities) and job performance. Such evaluation studies (validity studies) benefit employers because they serve to monitor the objective of getting right people in the right job. Validity studies also serve a scientific function by providing valuable data to researchers interested in improving our understanding of the factors that influence human performance (Horton, 2000).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design in order to determine the relationship between human resource planning and performance of agricultural research institutes in Kenya without any biasness. It aimed at investigating the research objectives and answering the research questions formulated from the literature review. According to (Creswell, 2008), descriptive research designs are used in preliminary studies to allow the researcher to gather information, summarize, present and interpret it for the sake of clarification.

For this study, the researcher used descriptive survey. Descriptive survey design enables the researcher to summarize and organize data in an effective way (Kireru, 2013). It provides tools for describing collections of statistical observations and reducing information to an understandable manner.

The unit of analysis which is the study population consisted of 4 research institutes within KALRO. The unit of observation which is the target population consisted of 145 respondents at different management levels of the organization. The study adopted the census method to select respondents from the human resources/administrative department, research scientists and technical staff in the selected agricultural research institutes. The study targeted a total of 145 staff working in the selected 4 institutes in three levels of management within the organization and this constituted the target respondents.

In this study, a semi structured self-designed questionnaire and interviews were used as the survey tool for this study based on the anticipated small sample population. Items in the questionnaire were developed to investigate the research objectives and answer the research questions of the study.

Secondary data was gathered using past published scholarly articles explaining the theoretical and empirical information on human resource planning in organizational performance.

The researcher collected a letter of introduction from the university requesting respondents to feel free in answering the questions as it will be used only for academic purposes. The researcher then introduced herself and gave the questionnaires to the respondents which were used to collect the primary data. Secondary was collected using journals, magazines and books.

A pilot study was undertaken to present the data instrument for validity and reliability. 15 questionnaires were pretested to a selected sample of respondents from KALRO to estimate the time it will take to complete the study and to check whether the questions were relevant to the study intended. Further, the comments and suggestions given by the pre-test sample were used to improve on the instrument in order to enhance its level of clarity.

The study generated both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and will be summarized into descriptive statistics of percentages and frequencies so as to organize them into meaningful information. The data analysis tools of Statistical Package for Social Scientists software (SPSS, V24) and regression analysis were used to analyze the quantitative data to give a deeper insight into the responses from the respondents into the subject of the research. Content analysis approach was used for qualitative data so as to determine the respondents' opinions on human resource planning in the organization. Data was presented in the form of frequency distribution tables and pie chart that facilitated the description and explanation of the study findings.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 145 questionnaires were administered for the study. However, 113 questionnaires were completely filled and returned. This translates to 77.93% as shown in Table 1. This response rate was considered adequate as recommended by (Babbie, 2010).

Table 1: Response rate

Rate Category	Frequency	Percent
Response	113	77.93%
Non response	32	22.07%
Total	145	100.0

Majority of the respondents 64% were male while the rest 36% were female as shown in Figure 2, an indication that Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization has slightly more male staff than females. However, this is a good distribution which depicts a fair balance of gender. Since majority of the responses for this study relies on the perceptual measures of the respondents, this gender distribution is expected to accommodate the opinions and views from both sides of the gender divide. Nevertheless the balance in gender in the

organization may also be an evidence of successful efforts of various gender mainstreaming campaigns.

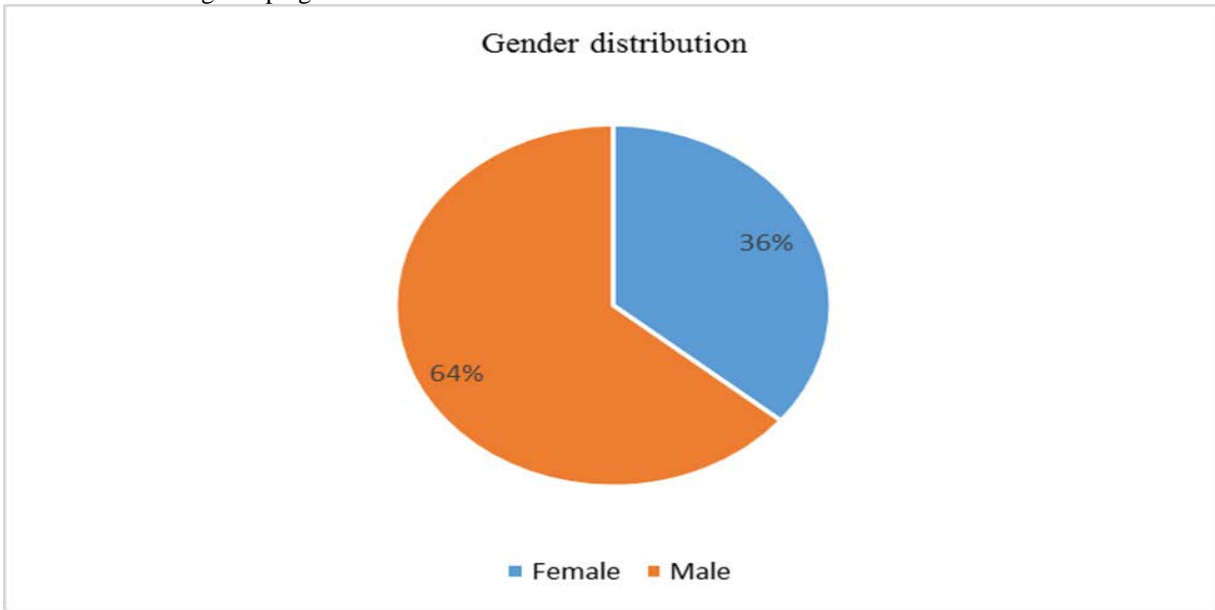


Figure 2: Gender of respondents.

The respondents were asked to indicate their age categories. The age of the respondents to some extent may explain the level of experience an employee has acquired. According to the results in Figure 3, 16.2% of the respondents belonged to the bracket of 21-30 years. This category of respondents has the least level of experience. Some are new to the organization and are still undergoing inductions or on the job training in the form of internship. 23.4% were of age between 31- 40 years most of which belonged to the middle level of the

management, they are responsible for the day to day operations of the organization. Majority of the respondents belonged to the bracket of 41- 50 years which was 36%, most of this group belongs to the top management and most of the strategic decisions of the organization are made by them. 24.3% of the employees belonged to the 51 years and above. These groups as well, belong to the higher levels of the management and have vast knowledge and experience on the management of the organization.

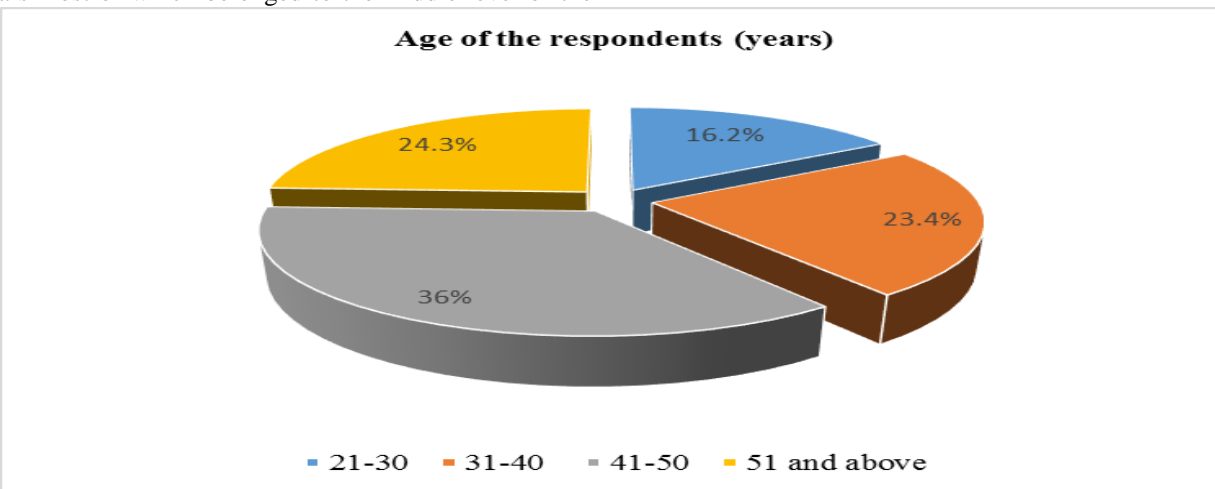


Figure 3: Age of the respondents

Majority of the management staff are holders of bachelor's degree and diploma both represented by 30.9%. 21.8% of the respondents were holders of master degree as 14.5% owning certificates, 1.8% of the respondents were PhD holders (Figure

4). This is interpreted to mean that recruitment at Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization is based on academic merits and therefore those employees are perhaps great contributors to human resource planning.

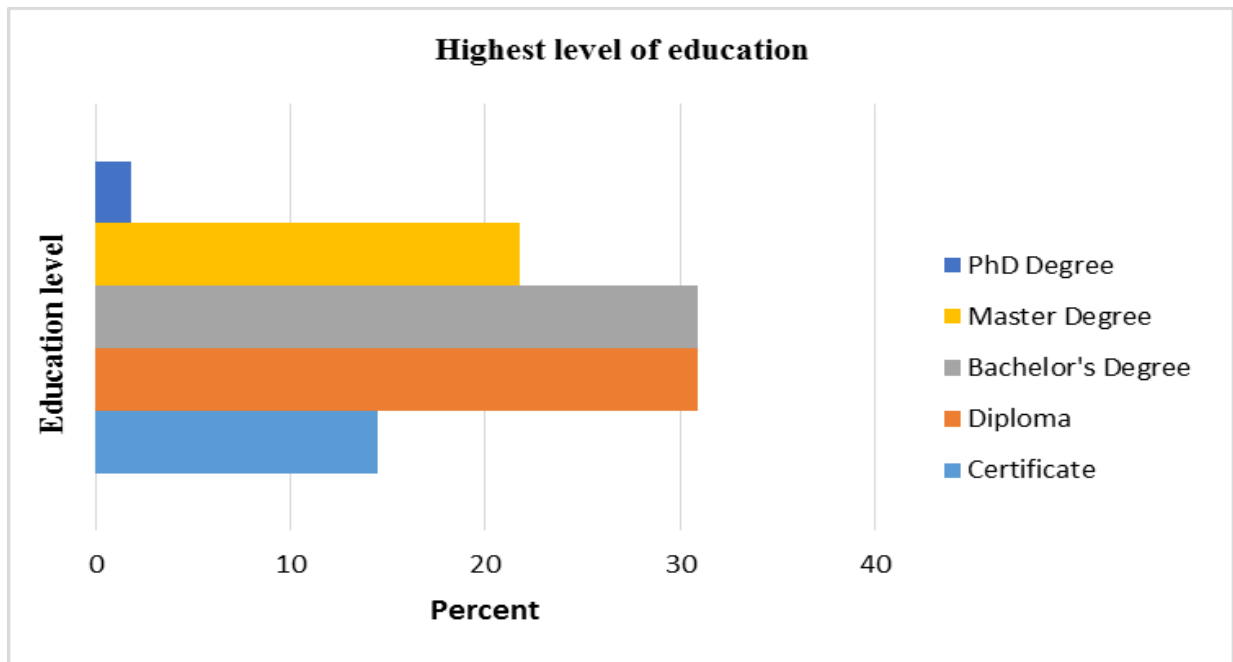


Figure 4: Highest level of education

The perception of employee acquisition plan on the performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization was sought from the respondents. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: percentages distribution of respondents' perception on employee acquisition plan

Employee acquisition plan	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Our institute advertises vacancies openly.	24.1%	42.6%	19.4%	13.9%
Candidates who meet the minimum qualifications are the only ones who are shortlisted and interviewed.	16.8%	51.4%	17.8%	14.0%
Selection adheres to the requirements of the constitution on gender, ethnic and disability	20.6%	43.9%	24.3%	11.2%
My job interview was relevant to my field of specialization and experience	39.8%	51.5%	3.9%	3.9%

From the results, employee acquisition plan largely contributes to an organization's performance. The results showed that majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that vacancy advertisement has an effect on an organization's performance. This is evident from the table where 13.9% strongly disagreed while 19.4% disagreed to the fact while 42.6% agreed and 24.1% strongly agreed that competitive vacancy advertisement has an effect on an organization's performance. The findings are in agreement with (Berente, et al., 2009) who argues that human resource management regards employee recruitment is a function concerned with organizational activity aimed at bettering the job performance of individuals and groups in organizational settings.

When asked whether employee qualifications/skills level has an effect on an organization's performance, 14% disagreed, 17.8% agreed while the majority 51.4% agreed while 16.8% strongly agreed that employee skills level has an effect on an organization's performance. When asked whether recruitment selection procedure has an effect on an organization's performance, 11.2% strongly disagreed, 24.3% disagreed, 43.9% agreed while 20.6% strongly agreed with the statement. When the employees were asked whether relevance of job interviews had an effect on the performance of an organization, 3.9% strongly disagreed while another 3.9% disagreeing. 51.5% agreed while 39.8% strongly agreed. The findings concur with the

observation by Armstrong, 2012 that relevant skills and competencies are needed in planning future staffing activities.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study revealed that Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization advertises for vacancies openly whenever it needs to recruit new employees, only candidates who meet the minimum qualifications are the ones who are shortlisted and interviewed, selection procedures adhere to the requirements of the constitution on gender, ethnic and disability and that job interviews are always relevant to the field of specialization and experience. The study further established that all the new successful employees are properly inducted on the organization's culture, structure and expectations. This implies that Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization has well-developed human resource systems with all the necessary standard operating procedures which have a set of fixed instructions and steps for carrying out routine operations and to provide detailed guidance for initiating and completing any human resource action. Among the SOPs is the employee acquisition plan which has enabled the organization to perform its mandate through engaging the right people into the organization.

Employee acquisition plan is crucial for organizational development and success. It is fruitful to both employers and employees of an organization. Employees become more efficient and productive if they are not overwhelmed and if they are engaged on what they understand. According to the study, Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization was found to be using a management system which supports the integration of human resources planning allowing the organization to assess the current human resource capacity based on their competencies against the capacity needed to achieve the vision, mission and goals of the organization. The results showed that employee acquisition plan positively and significantly affected the performance of Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization.

This study strongly recommends adoption of employee acquisition plan by organizations. Many organizations have begun to view their employees as important resources to their operations. Human resource acquisition plan is a guideline or a roadmap that outline how the following series of activities will be done to ensure that the right people are in the organization viz.: forecasting future manpower requirement either in term of mathematical projection of trends in the economic environment and development in industry or in terms of judgmental estimates based upon the specific future plans of an organization. For organizations to align themselves competitively, they should ensure that the right number of employees, right skills and a considerable reward scale are well taken care of. As a result of implementing the employee acquisition plan, the organizations will be able to run their operations at the most optimum cost, attain profitability while performing as per their set standards and having all their employees happy thus a win- win situation.

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