

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU EAST DISTRICT**

BY

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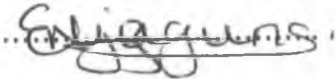
DECLARATION

This research proposal is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in any other university.

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This proposal has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University supervisors.

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To you all, God bless.

ABSTRACT

The practices of managing people have undergone tremendous changes. Previously, the duties of human resources management normally centred on staffing activities such as hiring and firing, keeping personnel records and organizing other personnel activities. However, today public and private organizations can no longer afford to look at people as a commodity to be exploited to exhaustion and then discarded.

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which human resource management practices are utilized in public secondary schools with a case study of Kiambu East District. This study provides a preliminary view of the extent to which human resource practices have been adopted within public secondary schools.

The study used a descriptive research design to investigate the extent of utilization of HRM practices in public secondary schools. The target population consisted of the senior management heads of schools, middle level heads and other teaching staff of all the 19 public secondary schools in Kiambu East District. 40 respondents were selected for the sample of the study using stratified random sampling method. Data was collected using semi –structured questionnaires and was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Presentation of results was in the form of tables, figures and graphs.

The results of the study will be important to the various stakeholders in the secondary education sector, policy makers and future researchers who wish to do more research in this field or other related research phenomenon.

The findings suggested that public schools in Kiambu East have to a reasonable extent utilized HRM practices such as training, vigorous selection process, compensation, and supervisory support. It also revealed that performance appraisal and employee participation in decision making have been practiced to a very little extent.

The concluding section recommends that managers carefully re-evaluate the extent to which innovative HR practices could be implemented within their departments. This is so because some of these practices may be inappropriate to public secondary schools sector organizations due to organizational structure.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

MOEST	-	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
KESI	-	Kenya Education Staff Institute
HRM	-	Human Resource Management
EABL	-	East African Breweries Limited
SHRM	-	Strategic Human Resource Management
MOE & HRD	-	Ministry of Education and Human Resource Developing
T.S.C	-	Teachers' Service Commission
BOG	-	Board of Governors
KNUT	-	Kenya National Union of Teachers

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Today's organisations operating environment is characterised by constant change. The accelerated pace of advances in technology, increase in competition, widespread and growing unemployment create serious adjustment problems. Diminishing resource supplies have also affected the way business is conducted; education institutions have not been spared either and schools have to adapt more prudent management system (Wapubic secondary schools, G. 2009). This complex and unstable environment is a way of life, which will continue way into the future. Organizations are open systems, studies carried out before liberalization indicates that the reform process has led to stiff competition in key sectors of the economy (Owiye 1999, and Murage 2001).

Armstrong (2002) asserts that all organisations exist to achieve a purpose and they must ensure that they have resources required to do so and they use them effectively. An organisation has to align its human resource function with its overall strategic goals and objectives. Organisation culture, people and processes rather than capital or technology can form the base of sustained competitive advantage of a firm (Miner 1995). It is important that a firm adopts strategic human resource practices that make best use of its employees. As a result of this, one key element of organisational capacity, human resources management in humanitarian operations, has been rising up the agenda of both agencies and donors.

People have been reported to hold the key to more productive and efficient organizations. The way in which they are managed at work has major effects upon product quality, customer service, and organizational flexibility and costs (Harrison, 2000). Cole (1997) referred to the collective activities undertaken by all those who manage people in the organization as human resource management (HRM). He highlighted the consequences of not caring for the employees as unsatisfied customers and stressed unhappy work force and emphasized the need to balance the respective needs of customers and those of employees. Harrison (2000) asserted that when employees are well managed through HRM, they would take care of customer needs.

1.1.1 Human Resource Management Practices

In an attempt to define HRM, Armstrong (2001) emphasized that it is people working in an organization who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives. The human resource (HR) is a living and active input that operates the other factors of production. It is people who create organizations and make them survive and prosper. Hence, their special management cannot be neglected as other components of the organization are likely to suffer. Without people, organizations could not function. Yet people also need the organizations so that they can maintain their living standards, by working in these organizations. Jackson (2009) explained that, employees work in exchange for compensation. Hence there is a symbiotic relationship between organizations and employees who work in them.

Human resources management practices describe the way in which managers set about achieving results through people. It is how managers behave as team leaders and how they exercise authority. Managers can be autocratic or democratic, tough or soft, demanding or easy going, directive or laissez-faire, distant or accessible, destructive or supporting, task oriented or people oriented, rigid or flexible, considerate or unfeeling, friendly or cold, keyed-up or relaxed. How people behave will depend partly on their natural inclination, partly on the example given to them by their manager, and partly on the norms, values and climate of the organization.

Human resources management is a strategic and coherent approach to the management of organisations' most valued asset; the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its goals. As defined by Storey (1995): Human resource management is a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to obtain competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and skilled workforce, using an array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques. It is clear that human resources management is an important part of today's business management. Barasa J.M (2004) asserts that all organizations, schools being no exception cannot do without human and material resources. These resources complement each other in organization development and must be managed.

Pfeffer (1998) suggested a number of human resource management practices, termed as best practices, which he believed could improve organizational performance. These are namely; selective hiring, extensive training, employment security, diffusion of information, team working, reduction of status differences, performance related and incentive pay. Guest (2002) argues that a relationship exists between the use of appropriate human resources management practices and positive employee attitudes among them job satisfaction and commitment. He further claims that these practices equip employees and enable them to function autonomously and responsibly.

1.1.2 Public Secondary schools in Kiambu East

There are nineteen public secondary schools in Kiambu East district. Each one of them is headed by the school principal who is responsible for the overall running and control of the school and for the maintenance of the tone and all round standards. He will have such a keen interest in the welfare of both his teachers and students. Though he delegates many responsibilities, he is responsible for all planning, organizing, controlling, staffing, innovation, coordination, motivation and actualization of education goals and objectives of the institution and of the country. It is therefore important that the school head be able to establish cordial relations with the staff, students, the community and other organizations.

Public secondary schools are administered by boards of governors appointed by the Minister for Education. The Teachers Service Commission Act allows the TSC to delegate its powers relating to hiring, control and discipline of teachers to the boards of governors. The public education system in Kenya is structured along the lines of Weber's concept of hierarchy (Baraza J.M 2004). There is for instance a District Education Officer who is answerable to the Provincial Director of Education who in turn is accountable to the Director of Education. At the helm of the Ministry of Education are the Permanent Secretary and the Minister for Education.

In public secondary schools, there is the school principal and immediately under him is the deputy principal. Answerable to the deputy principal are various departmental heads

who are in turn in charge of subject teachers. Also evident in the Kenyan educational system is the adoption of the element of departmentalization.

In a school setting, there are various departments such as the Science, Mathematics, Languages, Humanities and Technical subjects departments. In these departments teachers are assigned tasks to perform according to their specialization; this is to maximize productivity and efficiency.

The ministry of education has the overall responsibility to manage all aspects of education and training with the assistance of semi autonomous government agencies at the provincial and the district level. At the school level, the board of governors is responsible for the management of human and other resources so as to facilitate smooth operations, structure development and provision of teaching and learning materials. Management of people in the school context involves the skillful control and guidance of students, teachers and other stakeholders in order to achieve the schools desired outcomes. The principal plays an important role in this respect. The School Management Guide, 2008 asserts that the nature and quality of leadership and management that the principal provides will determine the effectiveness of the school. Secondary schools do not have clearly defined customers like in the business world. Their customers include students, communities, religious organizations and other government institutions, development partners and the private sector. In today's secondary schools, the school principal is the most immediate human resource manager and is accountable to the Board of governors who are the TSC's agent.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Strategic human resource management improves firm's performance (Beer et al, 1985). This approach emphasizes the importance of congruence between human resource activities and organizational objectives. Recent research has focused on the links between human resource management and performance (Guest 2003; 2004; Purcell 2002; 2004), and much of the growing body of international literature in the field is built upon the premise that human resource management is linked closely to the emergent strategies, especially of large organisations, both public and private organisations.

To provide efficient education and training services, the capacities and skills of staff in the various offices and organizations involved should be commensurate with the tasks they perform (MOEST 2005). Currently, in majority of cases there are gaps between competencies and the responsibilities of those mandated to undertake provision and management of education in Kenya. The Kenya Education staff institute (KESI) is charged with the responsibility of training and servicing education managers to enable them manage education services and institutions effectively (Wapublic secondary schools, G.M, 2006). On the other hand, the school managers who have been trained in Human Resource Management may or may not be adopting the HRM practices in their schools. Either way, secondary schools need to embrace human resource management practices that will help cope with challenges facing their work force and ensure continued education excellence in Kenya.

Murage (2005) surveyed the relationship between the Human Resource Management Practices and performance of firms quoted in Nairobi Stock Exchange and found that only 16% of the highly performing organizations such as Kenya Airways, EABL etc had operational Strategic Human Resource Management. Kimemia (2006) studied the strategic planning practices in public secondary schools in Nairobi where she found that most of the public secondary schools use strategic planning in their operations. Other studies in this area include Kibune (2007) who studied the extent of adoption of SHRM practices in private secondary schools in Nairobi and Njenga (2007) who studied the relationship between HRM practices, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance in public secondary schools in Dagoretti Division.

Much of the research in HRM practices in Kenya has been skewed to other sectors including manufacturing (Rimberia, 2001), hotel industry (Barasa, 2008) and banking (Omoro, 2008). The current study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the HR practices in public secondary schools, using Kiambu East as a case study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

To determine the extent to which HRM practices have been adopted by public school managers in Kiambu East.

1.4 Importance of the Study

The study is expected to be of value to various stakeholders in the secondary education. It will benefit the management and staff of secondary schools as it will be a source of information and reference material on human resource management practices. It will be useful to policy makers and will provide pertinent information to the Teachers Service Commission and school managers. Future researchers will also benefit from this study, either in advancing in the same research problem or in other related research phenomenon.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Human Resource Management Practices

Human resources management is the management of various activities designed to enhance the effectiveness of an organization's workforce in achieving organizational goals. To get work done, organizations need to attract people to apply for jobs and retain those who do their jobs well. After applicants have applied for a job offer, the process of selection occurs. Employers world over want to select employees who will be able and willing to learn new tasks and continually adapt to changing conditions. As job requirements change, existing employees must be able to develop new competencies, become proficient in new jobs and even change their occupations. Training and development practices enable employees to develop themselves and remain employable (Jackson, S.E 2009).

Performance must also be measured and employees must receive usable feedback so that they can correct performance deficiencies. In addition, employees work in exchange for compensation, monetary or otherwise. Employers on the other hand offer incentives and other forms of rewards to motivate employees to perform to their best. They must further provide a healthy and safe workplace and also give an ear to their employees' grievances. Human resources management encompasses a wide area and it can be said that good human resources management practices add value to a job and increase the job satisfaction. The review also covers literature on the dependent variables of this research conceptual framework. Notwithstanding the technological advances and new systems now available in the workplace the most important factor in the production of goods and services is the human factor. The other factors of production are only useful when they are operated by competent well motivated employees.

Human resource management must change as the business environment in which it operates changes. Human resources management as defined by Armstrong (1999) is a strategic and coherent approach of the management of an organisation's most valued assets, the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its goals. As defined by Storey (1995), human resource management

is a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to obtain competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and skilled workforce, using an array of cultural, structural and personal techniques.

Human resources management practices and systems have been linked to organizational competitiveness, increased productivity, higher quality of work life and greater profitability (Cascio, 1992, Schuler and Jackson 1996). In a global economy, competitiveness means the ability to take the most advantageous position in a constantly changing market environment (Pfeffer, 1994). In order for this link to be accomplished between human resources management and organizational success, the role of human resources management must become strategic instead of operational, aligning the human resources function with the strategic needs of the organization (Pickles et al; 1999).

Brewster (1995) reports that the integration of human resources management with business strategy is rare even among the large organizations. Also, Down et al (1997) claim that many management teams have had difficulty transforming human resource management into a strategic function, leaving the human resources department in most companies focused on administrative and clerical tasks.

Many organizations tend to focus on the administrative aspects of the HRM function, due to difficulties they face on the integration of HRM to organizational goals (Down et al; 1997). As a result, they ignore the long term perspective of HR planning and set their sights too low, ending up with HRM strategies that are too functional, too operational, too narrow and too generic (Walker, 1999). In the end, such strategies fail to energize their managers in making necessary changes to achieve competitiveness through people and often fade away or are replaced before they achieve any real impact.

HRM strategies need to be integral to organizational strategies; they need to pay attention to multiple levels for strategy implementation, including organization, development, recruiting and staffing, rewards, performance and employee relations; they should provide for innovative ways to differentiate organizations in competitive markets

and they must establish an achievable implementation of plan (Walker, 1999). The new strategic role for the HRM function entails two major aspects. First, the function should provide enough input into the organisation's strategy about whether it has the necessary capabilities to implement it. Second, it has the responsibility to ensure that the HRM programs and practices are in place to effectively execute the strategy. The key functions of HRM differ from one organization to the other and from one country to another, but includes mainly the employment process, management of movement of employees in the organizations, employees motivations, reward management, performance management, personnel administration, training and development, exit management and employee welfare.

Over the last 20 years there has been a growing interest in people management practices. In part this reflects the accumulating evidence that workers hold the key to enhanced organisational performance. Thus many of today's organisations are re-evaluating their human resource management (HR) practices in an attempt to tap workers' discretionary efforts and improve organisational performance (Park et al 2003).

In many instances, the growing interest has been accompanied by a change in the nature and title of the personnel function, with former personnel managers now referred to as human resource managers, and workers considered as 'valued employees' deserving respect and dignity from senior managers. Where such changes have occurred it is not uncommon to find human resource managers occupying strategic roles within organisations, alerting directors and other senior persons of the implications of change from a human capital perspective

2.2 The Innovative HR practices

Many contemporary organisations use a range of HR practices that have become known as 'high performance', 'innovative' or 'high commitment' practices. In many instances the practices themselves are not new but the rationale for using them has changed. For instance, managers are now endeavouring to develop a committed and qualified workforce in a climate of trust and comradeship. This approach contrasts from the

orthodox view in which employees were used dispassionately and rationally as any other capital resource. Furthermore, evidence suggests that when HR practices are used in conjunction with each other, the impact on performance will be greater than when used in isolation. In other words, organisations attempting to introduce individual HR practices will observe minimal if any change in performance, whereas those organisations successfully introducing a range of practices (generally referred to as 'bundles') will experience a more dramatic change in performance.

Exactly what are the innovative practices? There are mixed views regarding the number and nature of such practices, but it is generally accepted that eight practices form the core. These are thought to represent those used by private sector managers who have successfully achieved competitive advantage through the workforce. However, it is unlikely that any one organisation will utilise all these practices or even perform them equally well. Therefore, the list should be regarded, in the first instance at least, as a standard by which managers may monitor the level and extent of HR activity within their organisations (Murage, 2005).

A preliminary study on Non Governmental Organisations in 2002 by William Gould identified the following inter-related human resource management practices as: employment security, rigorous selection process, incentive pay, effective communication systems or participation schemes, team working, personal training and skill development programmes, symbolic egalitarianism and internal promotion.

As highlighted earlier, it will be difficult to successfully implement one practice in isolation. For instance, a rigorous selection process should ensure suitable candidates enter the organisation. Thereafter, the organisation's personal training and development programme may then enhance the skills of these workers. As these capable individuals develop they are likely to qualify for more senior posts within the organisation, thus reinforcing policies of internal promotion. While the exact content and nature of these practices will vary between organisations, the underlying rationale for their adoption

will be similar. Therefore, the following section will outline why and in what way these practices should be used.

2.2.1. Employment security

Today, it is unlikely that organisations can guarantee life-long employment to workers. Even in countries such as Japan where, until recently, such employment was the accepted norm, organisations have had to re-evaluate their position due to dramatic down turns in the world economy. However, while organisations may not be able to guarantee total employment security, the ways in which re-structuring or downsizing programmes are managed will signal to staff the extent to which managers value them. If workers are given the impression that they are dispensable, not valued or their jobs are insecure, it is highly probable that they will become de-motivated. This in turn may result in them feeling reluctant to exert themselves on behalf of the organisation. If it is simply not possible for managers to guarantee extended periods of employment, they may need to consider ways to counteract feelings of insecurity felt by workers'. In the education sector, employment security has been quite guaranteed. Kenya teachers have continued to enjoy job security except for the case where a teacher is transferred unwillingly to a less attractive station. Such a teacher would feel not highly valued and even insecure. It is however the duty of the school head to create a conducive atmosphere in the school to make everybody feel that their contributions are valued (MOE & HRD, 2008)

2.2.2 Rigorous selection process

When an organisation adopts a strategy of achieving superior performance through the workforce, it will need the right people in the first place. In doing so organisations have used imaginative selection techniques. For example, Kenya airways airline company is reknown for providing high quality service includes customers on the selection panel when recruiting new candidates. The organisation reasons that as customers have extensive dealings with front-line workers, they should be well qualified to identify suitable employees.

Furthermore, it is also argued that rigorous selection processes not only provide the 'right sort of people', but have positive psychological effects, as newly recruited employees having gone through a rigorous selection process, are more likely to feel part of an 'elite' organisation. It is the duty of the T.S.C to ensure that all public schools are staffed with qualified teachers. This role however has been decentralized to the school level where the B.O.Gs are currently doing the teacher recruitment on behalf of T.S.C

2.2.3. Incentive pay

There is a growing number of managers within the private sector who now reason that if employee performance results in enhanced organisational performance, then employees should share in the benefits received. In other words, they feel that workers should be appropriately and equitably rewarded for their effort. It has been observed that when employees perceive that the only ones benefiting from their diligent efforts are the management team, shareholders, or other parties, they become discouraged. To avoid this, some managers have introduced reward packages in which employees receive enhanced pay based on individual and/or group performance.

The most common reward scheme is one in which performance is related to pay. Such incentive pay schemes can be offered in many ways, but the most effective reward packages tend to be based on multiple performance criteria at the individual and/or organisational levels. In such instances workers receive a percentage bonus in salary based on organisational profitability or efficiency gains. Alternatively individual reward packages are awarded when inter alia, individuals increase their productivity, improve the quality of output (whether a product or service), enhance their contribution to the department or section by making suggestions, and/or co-operate with other members of the workforce. While performance related pay schemes have the potential to enhance worker performance, the evidence to date suggests that implementing and managing these schemes is complex and difficult. A key factor influencing the success of these schemes is worker consultation, which should be undertaken to ensure that the rewards are desirable and commensurate with the expected level of effort. Teacher remuneration

is also a function of the TSC. To date, this function has remained centralized at the TSC headquarters in Nairobi. In the Kenyan scenario, it is one of the functions of KNUT to negotiate for incentive pay for teachers.

2.2.4. Communication and Participation

Communication is regarded as a further essential factor in achieving enhanced performance through the workforce. One commentator reasoned: “..if greater employee identification with the employing enterprise is to be elicited, then disclosure of information is essential so that employees are made aware of the relationships between cost and profit, performance and prospects. This should provide them with an informed basis by which they can appreciate how their interests and those of the company are related.” In contra to this view, information sharing is generally not regarded as the norm in many organisations.

This is principally due to managers fearing they will lose authority over their workforce. In such instances, managers reason that ‘information is power’. Such a view creates a reluctance to pass on information to those lower down the organizational hierarchy.

In an attempt to overcome this situation, Intercontinental Hotel introduced an annual assessment programme in which managers were appraised, in part, on the basis of their effectiveness as communicators as judged by those they manage. Interviews with front-line workers revealed that this approach provided them with up to-date information. Further evidence has revealed that improved communication systems frequently have positive effects on staff morale and motivation. Where managers fail to communicate, workers rely on local news media or informal casual contacts with others inside and outside the organisation. This makes workers feel that managers do not trust them, therefore they ask why they in turn should trust management. The school system in Kenya allows for all the three major communication networks, namely; downward, upward and lateral communication (Wesley & Yukl, 1977). It also allows for formal and informal communication.

2.2.5. Team working

Some commentators argue that organisations function better when employees are encouraged to work together as teams rather than on their own:

Group forces are important not only in influencing the behaviour of individual work groups with regards to productivity, waste, absence and the like; they also affect the behaviour of entire organizations. It is argued that team working has a positive impact on performance due to social interaction, peer pressure and work norms. In other words, assuming the group norms are favourable, group members will endeavour to maintain high working standards.

Team working is also thought to provide workers with a forum through which they can learn 'through the grapevine'. These factors may lead to greater comradeship, peer support and team performance. Team effort, enhances school management and contributes towards employees' personal growth and development (Barasa J.M, 2004). In a team, each member is expected to work on his/ her weaknesses and take criticism from colleagues positively. In a school setting, team effort thrives best where members relate to each other freely and openly.

2.2.6. Training and skill development programmes

Personal training and career development programmes have been used by many successful private sector companies as a way of ensuring they have a ready pool of labour within the organisation. If undertaken in a coherent and integrated manner, the training programmes can help secure the commitment of workers who are able to visualise their current and future roles in the organisation. It is also proposed that when organisations undergo programmes of change, they should up-date the skills and expertise of new and existing workers. Following such training programmes, managers will then need to review current working practices, systems and processes to ensure that newly trained employees are able to utilise their skills effectively. Failing to undertake such a review may result in the anticipated benefits of the training programmes being lost.

Following programmes of change many 'high performing' organisations strive to re-train or re-deploy staff, in order not to lose them. For instance, a manufacturing company underwent a significant up-grade of its working systems and introduced new IT systems. Rather than recruiting candidates from the external labour market, the company focused on developing the skills of the existing workforce. This signalled to the workforce that the company was serious about looking after them, and this in turn led to the company receiving positive benefits in terms of increased staff morale, numbers of employee suggestions, better qualified workers and lower absenteeism and labour turnover rates. Therefore, training and skill development programmes appear to have a range of positive effects on organisational performance, especially when integrated with the overall business objectives. School heads should ensure that the staff have an opportunity to develop personal and professional skills (MOE & HRD, 2008). This may be by giving teachers a chance to attend appropriate Inservice Education and Training.

2.2.7. Symbolic egalitarianism

Symbols separating and dividing the workforce are thought to create barriers to achieving high performance. Organisations that have successfully overcome these barriers have done so by positively adopting various forms of symbolic egalitarianism. For instance such organisations have re-evaluated and modified policies regarding company dress, office space and furnishings, reserved car parking facilities, staff canteens, and the way in which junior members address senior managers. In many instances senior managers give up many of their 'privileges' such as executive office suites and reserved car parking. Junior members of staff are encouraged to refer to senior managers using their first name, simply to minimize the differences in rank and status. Doing so is thought to reduce the 'them' and 'us' attitude, which is thought to inhibit rather than promote superior performance. In the school set up, symbolic egalitarianism has not penetrated in most schools. However, there are a few practices that have been employed and seem to be reducing status differences. Such practices include sharing common meal points, washrooms and unlabelled parking zones.

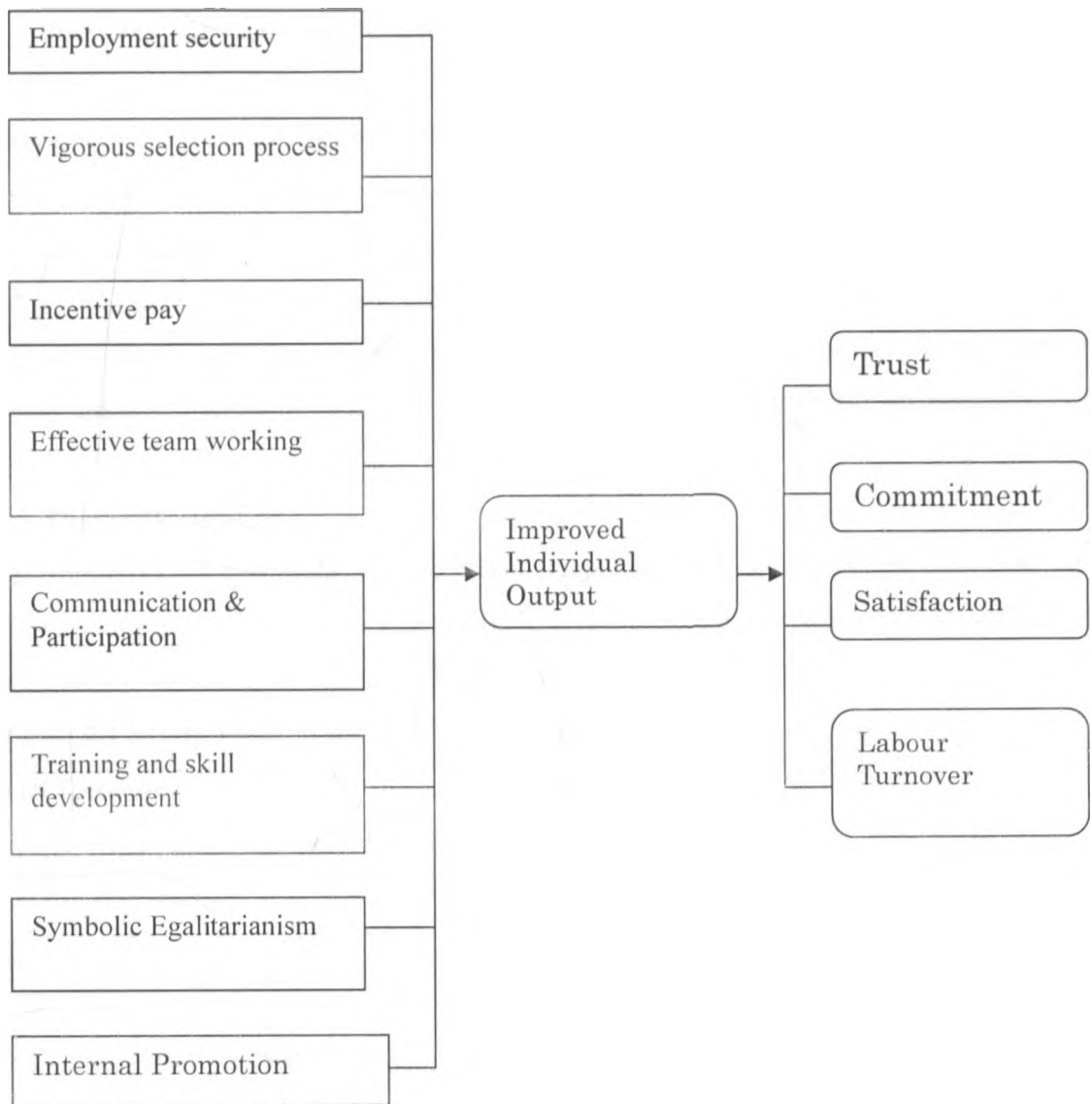
2.2.8. Internal promotion

Internal promotion is generally seen as a critical way to retain key members of the workforce. Having recruited, developed and trained the 'right sort of people', it is unlikely that managers want to see these workers leave the organisation. However, if managers are seeking short-term results and high profits, internal promotion may be a less appealing option. In instances where individuals are promoted from within they are more likely to have a thorough understanding of operational and other relevant aspects of the organisational environment. Also, promoting from within the organisation is likely to perpetuate a 'favourable' organisational culture. The school head through the BOG has the mandate to recommend the member of staff in his school for promotion by the TSC (TSC, 2005). He can therefore facilitate his staff to rise through the ranks of a subject head, departmental head, deputy principal and eventually to the rank of a principal.

As the above review highlights, the eight 'innovative' HR practices may not be appropriate in all settings, but core practices may be essential in gaining improved performance in the public institutions sector. Therefore, the administrators of these public sectors need to consider each of the practices carefully to ascertain their relevance in relation to the context in which they are working.

The study findings will outline the proposed impact these practices have on individual performance outcomes, namely trust, commitment, satisfaction and labor turnover.

2.3 Conceptual Framework



Source: Gould (2002)

The figure above is a conceptual framework derived from the set of eight innovative HRM practices put forward by Gould in 2002. The relationship between the various variables is shown and the possible outcome. The eight innovative HRM practices suggested by Gould when implemented in an organisation will improve the individual output of the employees which in turn will improve the overall performance of the organisation.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study will use a descriptive research to investigate the extent of utilization of HRM practices in public schools in Kiambu East district. According to Gay (1976) descriptive research involves collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject under study. Saunders. M (2007) defines descriptive research as one for which the purpose is to produce an accurate representation of persons, events or situations. It is against this background that the perception of stakeholders with regard to the issues, challenges and responses that impact on the HRM practices in public schools at Kiambu East District will be brought out better by the respondents.

3.2 Target Population

The population of this study will be senior management heads, middle level heads, and other teaching staff of public schools in Kiambu East District who total up 398. This population is as shown in the table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 Study Population

Staff Category	Population
School principals and deputy principals	38
Head of departments	57
Teaching Staff	303
Total	398

Source: (Stafflist for Public Secondary schools in Kiambu East District, 2010)

3.3 Sample Design

The sampling design impacts both the external and internal validity of the research findings. The internal validity will ensure relevance, consistency and coherence of results in relation to the researcher's objectives. The external validity will enable extrapolation of results from sample to other elements. The researcher will adopt the probability sampling method. This will enable the researcher to utilize random selection which will ensure that different units in the population have equal probabilities of being chosen.

The researcher will also adopt the stratified sampling technique. Each sampling unit or population member will belong to exactly one stratum. There will be no sampling units that belong to none of the strata and no sampling units belong to more than one stratum. The stratified sampling technique is deemed to produce estimates of overall population parameters with greater precision than estimates obtained from other sampling techniques. The researcher will group the population into three strata with each stratum representing a particular hierarchical level, i.e. school principal and deputy principals, heads of departments and other teaching staff.

From each stratum the researcher will use simple random sampling to select respondents. The assumption will be that the selected members of staff represent staff from other schools in Kiambu East.

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Stratum	Total Population	Sample size
Senior Heads	38	4
Middle Level heads	57	6
Other teaching staff	303	30
Total	398	40

Source: Researcher

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Procedure

The researcher will gather both primary and secondary data. Primary data will be collected by use of structured questionnaires to sample members in the organization, whilst secondary information will be gathered through review of the existing literature on human resource practices in schools. The use of the questionnaire will be deemed appropriate as it permits anonymity and results in more honest responses. Questionnaires will be forwarded to the respondents with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the study. Drop and pick later method will be initiated in other areas to give the respondents ample time to fill them correctly.

The study will also make use of available information from the organization under study. By analyzing this information, the researcher will identify challenges and issues relating to HRM in the study subject. Use of this information will provide additional evidence to support the needs identified by other methods. It will also be a good source of background information and understanding that otherwise would have generally not been available. The key findings obtained will thus give a more comprehensive understanding of the topic under study.

3.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis will be both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative analysis techniques will be used to help the researcher present, describe and examine relationships and trends in the data. For the qualitative data, the researcher will develop theory by use of deductive approaches.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Data Analysis

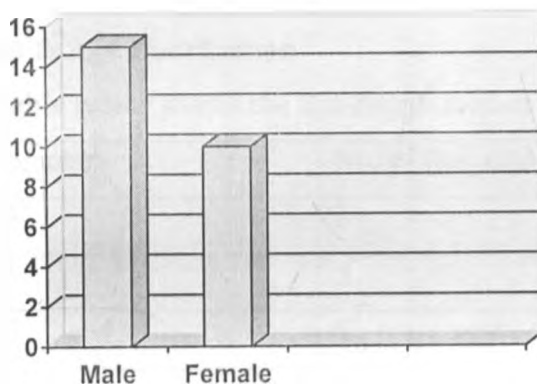
This chapter presents the data analysis and the key findings. It outlines the responses obtained from the research sample. There was a high level of success in the response rate of 62% as twenty five out of forty questionnaires were fully filled. The data analysis and the key findings are drawn from these responses.

4.1.1 Profile of the Respondents

Gender of the Respondents

There were fifteen male employees and ten female respondents.

Figure 1: Respondents Gender

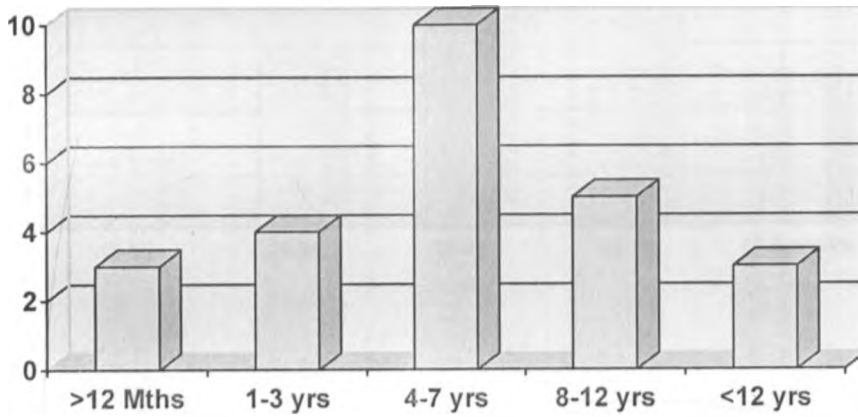


Source: Researcher

Duration of Service In Public Secondary Schools In Kiambu East

Three employees said that they had served in the organisation for less than twelve months while four employees said they have been in the organisation for one to three years duration. Ten employees indicated that they have been in the organisation for between four to seven years. Five said they have been in the organisation for between eight and twelve years while the rest three said they have served the organisation for more than twelve years.

Figure 2: Duration of Service



Source: Researcher

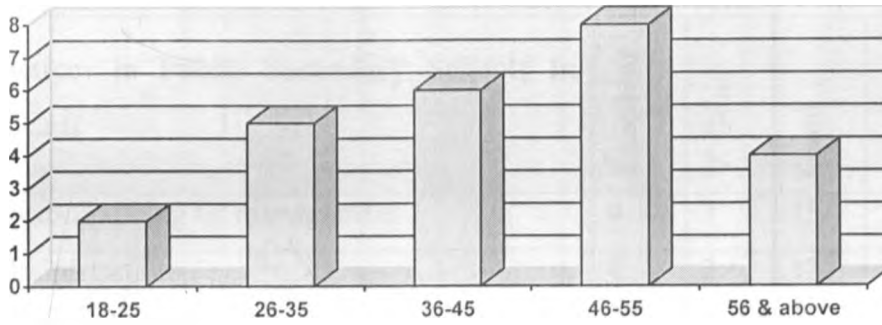
Table 1: Age Distribution

The table below shows the age distribution of the respondents.

Age bracket	No. of Respondents	Percentage
18-25	2	8%
26-35	5	20%
36-45	6	24%
46-55	8	32%
56 and above	4	16%

Source: Researcher

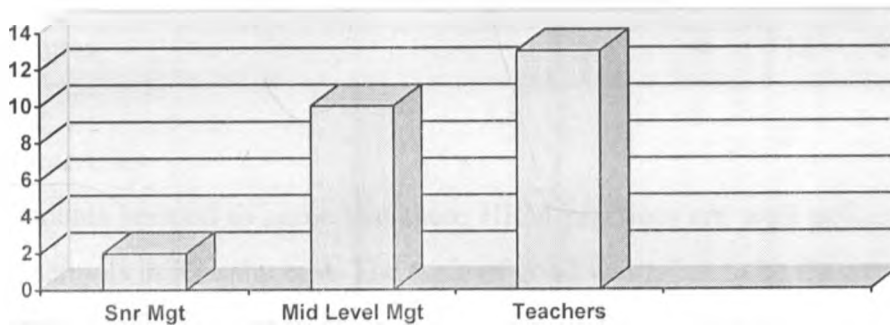
Figure 3: Age of Respondents



Source: Researcher

Two of the respondents were senior management, ten were drawn from middle level management while the rest thirteen were categorised as other employees.

Figure 4: Job Category



Source: Researcher

4.1.2 HRM Practices in Public Secondary Schools in Kiambu East

The respondents were requested to rate eleven HRM practices, this rating was evaluated to show the level of utilisation of this HR practices in public secondary schools in Kiambu east. The table below shows how the respondents rated the HRM practices in public secondary schools in Kiambu east.

Table 2: HRM Practices

HR Practices in Public Secondary Schools In Kiambu East	Excellent	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Staff records updating by management	4	3	15	2	1
Leave administration	4	2	12	4	5
Manpower acquisitions	6	5	8	4	1
Manpower development	5	5	10	4	1
Recruitment system openness	1	4	15	3	2
Remuneration development	2	5	13	3	2
Supervisory management	2	3	17	3	0
Supervisory relationship	5	2	18	0	0
Employee welfare	2	5	15	3	0
Grievance handling procedure	3	4	14	3	1
Exit procedures	5	4	13	2	1

Source: Researcher

The respondents seemed to agree that these HRM practices are well utilized in public secondary schools in Kiambu east. The scale of good was taken to be the average which meant that the practices were in place at public secondary schools in Kiambu east. The respondents indicated they felt the management at public secondary schools in Kiambu east has implemented these practices to satisfactory levels. More than seventy five percent of the respondents rated the eleven HRM practices as excellent, very good and good. The rest rated the practices as either fair or poor. Only four percent of the respondents rated the eleven HRM practices as having been poorly utilised. The results indicate that the level of supervisory support and praise is high, with a significant number of respondents perceiving that supervisors are very supportive indeed. Supervisory support which shows the extent to which front-line workers perceived their immediate supervisors supported or praised them for work done. Such recognition is often a critical component in the working relationship between supervisors and

employees. These factors have been found to contribute to positive working environments and reinforce desirable employee behaviors.

The results also indicate that the organisation has put in training mechanisms for its employees. The respondents indicated that they were continually being trained and the cost was covered by the organisation. The results also show that the organisation does not review the salaries of the employees regularly and from the study findings it was not clear which was the basis of the salary reviews.

4.2 Key Findings

The research established several key findings. First the study established that employees are provided with sufficient opportunities for training or development. There is a clear status difference between management and staff in the various sections within public secondary schools in Kiambu east.

Team working is strongly encouraged in the sections within public secondary schools in Kiambu east. A rigorous selection process is used to select new recruits. Employees feel their jobs are secure within the organization. When new management positions come up the organisations normally fills them with people from outside the organisation. The respondents indicated that promotions within the organisation were not frequent and the top management normally did external recruitment.

The organization does not relate pay with performance in any way. Most of the employees in public secondary schools in Kiambu east are on permanent terms while the rest are on contract terms. Management does not fully involve employees when making decisions that affect them. The middle level management and the top management are the ones that are involved in decision making within the organization. However the future direction of the organisation is clearly communicated to everyone in the organisation. This includes the long-term goals and plans of the organisation being communicated to everyone.

The study findings suggest that public secondary schools in Kiambu east have utilised innovative HRM practices such as training, recruitment/selection, compensation, though it has not utilised others like employee participation in decision making and performance appraisals.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

HRM occurs at all levels of the organization. In Kenya, with a tight labour market, there is a greater need to manage HR not only for operational efficiency but also for strategic effectiveness. HRM rarely emerges as a fully formed set of practices but the trend is changing. Based on the evidence obtained from the study, we can conclude that the context in which HRM practices are implemented imposes certain challenges. The concept and knowledge of HRM practices, such as training, rigorous recruitment/selection, compensation and rewards, are in place in public secondary schools in Kiambu east and show some local influence. Performance appraisal and employee participation show evidence of certain difficulties mainly due to organisation structure.

This study report has provided a preliminary insight into the extent to which HR practices have been adopted in public secondary schools in Kiambu east. The research has revealed that in general, the up-take of HR practices is satisfactory with the exception of performance appraisal and employee participation in decision making. The impact of these practices on worker performance is felt as managers introduce these practices along with a broader range of complementary HR practices. It appears that public secondary schools in Kiambu east to a reasonable level have successfully done so, and this may reflect the positive perceptions of performance within the various sections in public secondary schools in Kiambu east. Clearly more research is needed to identify and elaborate on 'good practice' within these and other public secondary schools in Kiambu east sections. The extent to which the results reported here are consistent with the experience across the public secondary schools sector in Kenya should also be ascertained.

5.2 Key Recommendations

If the take-up of HR practices as outlined in this report is representative of other public secondary schools then it would appear that managers have a long way to go to catch up with private sector practice. Certainly, with increasing pressure from central government to achieve improvements in performance across a range of dimensions, tapping worker discretionary effort by adopting key HR practices is likely to go a long way towards achieving that end. Furthermore, such attempts are unlikely to place a burden on already limited departmental budgets. Therefore, while some of the 'innovative' HR practices may be inappropriate to public secondary schools sector organisations, others may be found to substantially affect worker performance. If senior managers wish to identify such practices, it is recommended that they do so in consultation with their workers.

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APPENDIX 1: COVER LETTER

Dear Respondent,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER

I am a postgraduate student at the School of Business, University of Nairobi. I am currently undertaking a study on the Human Resource Management Practices in Public Schools in Kiambu East District.

You've been selected as one of the respondents. I therefore request you to fill in the attached questionnaire; the information you will provide will be for research purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

A copy of the report can be made available to you on request. If you require further information, contact me on 0728 590734.

Thanking you in advance for your co-operation.

.....

Njuguna Elizabeth

MBA Student

.....

Mr. Duncan Ochoro

Supervisor, School of Business

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions

Tick in the appropriate box.

Where necessary give a brief description in the space provided.

SECTION ONE: PERSON AND ORGANIZATION PROFILE

1. What is your Gender? Male Female

2. In what age bracket do you fall?

a. 18 – 25

b. 26 – 35

c. 36 – 45

d. 46 – 55

e. 56 and above

3. How long have you worked for the school?

a) 1 – 12 months

b) 1 – 3 years

c) 4 – 7 years

d) 8 – 12 years

e) 13 years and above

4. What is your job category?

a) School Principal

b) Deputy Principal

c) Head of Department

d) Teaching Staff

5. How would you rate the below relationships in your school?

The columns are numbered 1 to 5. The key for the number is indicated below: (Tick where appropriate)

1. Excellent
2. Very good
3. Good
4. Fair
5. Poor

Relationship	1	2	3	4	5
i B.O.G and teachers					
ii Principal and teachers					
iii Teachers and students					
iv Teachers and parents					
v P.T.A and B.O.G					

SECTION B: GENERAL VIEW OF HRM PRACTICES IN YOUR SCHOOL

1. How do you rate management's handling of employees' records in terms of updating them?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

2. How do you rate manpower acquisition in your school?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

3. How do you rate manpower development in your school?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

4. How do you rate the openness of the system in terms of job advertisement and recruitment of new staff?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

5. How many times have you attended training programmes this year?

- a. 4 times and above
- b. Thrice
- c. Twice
- d. Once
- e. None

6. From number 5 above, who paid for your training?

- a. The school
- b. Self
- c. Any other

7. What was considered during the selection for the training?

- a. upgrading in information technology
- b. general skills upgrading
- c. performance improvement
- d. needs assessment
- e. any other Please specify _____

8. How do you rate the manpower (teacher) promotion in your school?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

9. How many times have you been promoted since you joined the school?

- a. 4 times and above
- b. Thrice
- c. Twice
- d. Once
- e. None

10. What was the basis of promotion?

- a. Experience
- b. Qualifications
- c. performance
- d. all the above
- e. Any other (please specify).....

11. How do you rate the supervisory management in your school?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

12. How do you rate your interpersonal relationship with your Supervisor?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

13. How do you rate the extent to which staff welfare in your school is addressed?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

14. How do you rate your schools grievance handling procedure?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

15. How do you rate your schools communication systems (both top to bottom and vice versa)?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

16. How do you rate your involvement in decision – making by the school management?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

17. How would you rate the extent to which your school generally embraces teamwork?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

18. How do you rate the harmony that exists between the teaching and non- teaching staff in your school?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

19. What do you think has contributed to the situation in (18) above?

20. How often do you discuss your performance with your supervisors?

- a. Once every year
- b. Twice every year
- c. Every end of Term
- d. Whenever there are poor results
- e. Never

21. Apart from academic excellence, what else does your school reward? _____

22. List the challenges you've faced in relation to human resource management practices in your school

23. How can these challenges be overcome?

24. How do you rate the send off by the school for a member of staff who changes jobs or retires?

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX III: LIST OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KIAMBU EAST

DISTRICT

1. Gachie
2. Kihara
3. Gacharage
4. Wangunyu
5. Muthurwa
6. St. Joseph Gathanga
7. Karuri
8. Snr. Chief Koinange
9. Muongoiya
10. Cianda
11. Kanunga
12. Loreto Kiambu
13. Riara
14. Ndumberi
15. Kiambu Township
16. Kiambu High
17. Riabai
18. St. Annes Lioki
19. Ting'ang'a