

ADOPTION OF BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT AMONG SECURITY FIRMS IN KISUMU CITY

BY

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DECLARATION

hereby declare that the work in this project is my original work, and has not previously in its entirety or part been presented at any other university for a degree; and that all Citations and references in the text have been dully acknowledged.



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This project has been submitted with approval from me as a University Supervisor



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project work to my dear mother Grace Ambunya and my dear aunt Agneta K'Ogudc; you are truly my heroes; since you may not understand the language used here may I briefly use a language you understand best ' *muli abakhaye be emioyo emierereshe khandi abohukosiu bwa nyasaye owomwikulu Omwami abalindenje bulikhase. murio muno bakhana ha Kangu.*

ABSTRACT

Adoption of best practices in human resource management among security firms in Kisumu city is a study area that was conceived from the increasing popularity of security firms as major employers and business units in the city of Kisumu. Indeed for every successful business in the city there is a security firm attached to keep vigil. Best practices in human resource management are many and the correct combination that each business organization can use to optimize the use of their human resource is not clear Ikixall and Purcell. (2003). However in each functional area there are activities which if practiced at their best will spur the performance of the organization. The objective of the study is to establish the extent of adoption of best practices in human resource management among security firms in Kisumu city; therefore the findings of are confirmation that indeed security firms have adopted various practices in human resource management in varying degrees; and where there is deficiency the researcher has recommended that such practices be enhanced to help security firms to control staff turnover and help build cultures that are good and sustainable across all security firms. The study adopted a descriptive study design. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics mainly the mean and percentages. The findings, discussions and conclusions have indeed exposed the need for security firms in Kisumu city to put in place human resource departments and more important. Each firm needs to invest in people management practices and vary them from time to time to suit the changing customer requirements and the ever changing security situation in the city.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background or the study

The approach that a firm uses to manage its human resources is increasingly recognized as centrally important to the execution of its business strategy (Pfeffer, 1994). Boxall and Steenveld (1999) argue that there is a positive relationship between firm performance and labor management and it is evident that the quality of human resource management is critical in the performance of the firm. There are human resource management practices and approaches which will invariably help an organization in achieving competitive advantage in service delivery over others. While there are differences of opinion on the question of details on how each practice creates competitive advantage, all authorities; [Laursen and Mahnke (2000); Becker et al (1997); Huselid (1995); Ichiniowski et al (1997); Mac Duffie (1995)) who have elaborated on human resource best practices strongly suggest that the same basic bundles of human resource practices tend to enhance business in all organisations irrespective of particular product market strategy.

Resources in terms of money and time have been dedicated over recent decades to determine how to get the best performance out of people employed in an organization; how to recruit, reward and keep top performers and how to improve employee performance, theories have been developed, then proven successful or debunked. The results are a wealth of collective human resource management practices and activities that are applicable to any organization that employs people regardless of the sector, size or business strategy. All firms with a reporting staff should have resources to guide and support in people management activities; these resources

support the provision and application of best practices in human resource management (Laursen and Mohnke 2000).

In the same argument, it is logical to suggest that attention needs to be paid to the nature of this resource and its management as this will impact on human resource behavior and performance and consequently the performance of the organization indeed Boxall and Steenveld (1999) argued that there is evidence that the quality of human resource management has a critical influence on the performance of a firm. The applications of best practices human resource management therefore can to a large extent ensure organizational success.

Security Arms are private customer services businesses which interact with the production process. According to Jones (1987) a major element of the services production is the human capital, when customers introduce a high degree of variability of services, organization maybe able to address the variability where their employees are proficient at diagnosing problems, think creatively and developing novel solutions. It's important that staff employed by security firms be of good academic standing and be consistently part of the firms cultures through controlled or steady staff turnover.

1.2 Best practices in human resource management

Best practice is a technique for performing an activity or business process that has proved to work well; to qualify as best practice the technique must have proven record in significantly lowering costs, increasing revenue, improving quality or performance, shortening time requirements, enhancing safety or delivering some highly positive outcome (Strickland et al.

2007). The identity path for operating excellence for a best practice is to be valuable and transferable; it must demonstrate success over time, deliver quantifiable and highly positive results and be repeatable. It is argued that all organizations will benefit and see improvement in organizational performance if they identify, gain commitment to and implement a set of best human resource management practices. According to Beardwell and Claydon (2003), the concept of best practices or high commitment human resource management was identified initially in the early US models of human resource management, many of which mooted the idea that the adoption of certain best human resource practices would result in enhanced organizational performance manifested in improved employee attitudes and behaviors, lower levels of absenteeism and turnover and therefore higher productivity, enhanced quality and efficiency in service provision.

Best practices in human resource management include, continuous planning, selection and recruitment strictly on merit, by giving equal opportunity to all qualified people without discrimination; proper matching of the individual capabilities and interests with the demands and rewards given by the organization against the job; regular training and development activities that are aimed at not only improving employee performance at work, but also boosting self confidence of the individual employee; use of flexible work arrangements to enable employees to mix work and family responsibilities without hurting any side; making performance appraisal to be part of the organization's culture and linking it to organizational objectives and good labor relationships that include diversity management (Ichniowski et al 1997).

Boxall and Purcell (2003) argue that no list of best practices is likely to have universal application because of principles which if applied can bring about more effective but different people management; however there seems to be a growing tendency around the broad human resource management territory that there is plausible list of practices that include selection, training, communication, job design and reward system. There are also practices on the margins such as family friendly and equal opportunity practices as well as some that cannot apply across all sectors such as profit related pay and employee share ownership schemes (Cjucst 2001).

These human resource management practices and their operating activities can variably help an organization in achieving competitive advantage; while there are differences in opinion on the question of details of how each practice impacts on organizational performance, all authorities who have elaborated on the subject of human resource management best practices or how general human resource management practices have agreed that they tend to enhance business performance in all organizations irrespective of the particular product market strategy being pursued.

1.3 Security firms in Kisumu City

Security firms are private business organizations which consist of a group of people who collaborate in structured and relatively permanent way in keeping vigil and providing security; they make an important supplementary contribution to security by inexpensively keeping vigil on businesses and individuals. Their services include guarding cash in transit, rapid response to security alarms including, fire responses, robberies and burglaries. There are 27 registered security firms in Kisumu city and many other small firms that operate without legal registration documents, each with varying capacity in terms of number of personnel, remuneration and allowances given. Mkutu and Sabala, (2007) noted in their study on crime in Kenyan towns that security firms register as businesses under Companies Act, CAP 486, Laws of Kenya, however in starting their operations they must inform the Kenya police and the specific firm owners must produce a certificate of good conduct, this information is further vetted by the National Security Intelligence Services (NSIS).

These security firms have emerged as major employer of various types of professionals including, guards, fire fighters, private investigators, electrical engineers, information technologists and many others with varying degrees of qualification and these keep changing because of the dynamic nature of security needs. In Kisumu town, these firms have employed over 5,000 individuals.

1.4 Statement of the problem

According to Randall (2007), all firms seek to gain competitive advantage through pro|>cr strategies and evidence has shown that effective service delivery is achieved by systematically melding human resource management practices with selected competitive strategy; according to Derrick et al (2007). there are certain human resource management practices and approaches which will invariably help an organization in achieving competitive advantage; the adoption of these human resource management practices to strategy can be done by a firm on its own or through other linked firms. In the same argument. Pfeffer (1994) noted that the way in which a firm manages its human resources is increasingly recognized as centrally important to the execution of its strategy.

Security firms have for along time relied on unstructured recruitment and selection procedures through references, in house advertisement, and relying on physical attributes like height and gait; as a result recruitment and selection in these firms has remained informal, simplistic and reactive to customer and business needs (Mkutu and Sahala, 2007). The ever changing and evolving security issues pose a challenge to security firms on what type of skills that their staff requires to remain relevant and competitive (Carroll.2003). Adoption of best practices in human resource management may therefore create a conducive environment making it easier for security firms to attract a motivated work force and offer quality services to their clients. In a study conducted by Watson Wyclt in 2000-2001 into the links between human resource management practices and market value creation, it was concluded that adoption of key human resource management practices resulted in an overall increase of 47 percent in market value (Scharingner 2002). However, it's unlikely that any one practice will result in identical

outcomes in any two firms, we can be reasonably certain that the practices discussed here could be used to maintain a high quality work force and therefore increase and sustain competitive advantage for each firm.

Studies in best practices in human resource have concentrated on the content of human resource practices; there are those who focus on single or a combination of human resource management practices and examine their effects on various performance measures! Keller and Dansereau, (1995); Bemadine, (2007); Litt et al, (2001)]. There are also related studies examining the effects of the bundles or systems of human resource management practices on performance [Ichiniowski et al, (1997); Mac Duffie, (1995)], these two groups of scholars do not attempt to relate these practices to a particular industry.

In Kenya, relevant studies in best practices in human resource management have concentrated on other sectors; furthermore, such studies on human resource have been addressing the relationship between aspects of human resource management practices; for instance, Njenga, (2007) focused on the relationship between human resource management practices, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance in public secondary schools in Dagoretti division of Nairobi; Omoro (2008) and Nguku (2008) studied strategic human resource management practices and firm performance in the banking and hotel industries respectively. Haraza (2008) dwelt on adoption of best practices in human resource management among hotels in Kenya. Whereas the findings of these studies are valid on their own right, the context in which they were carried out and perspectives are different. There is no known study that has been done in adoption of best human resource management practices among security firms in Kisumu County and therefore the knowledge gap.

1.5 Objective of the study

To establish the extent to which security firms in Kisumu have adopted best practices in human resource management.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is expected to be significant in the following ways:

- j) To expose human resource practices commonly used by private security firms in Kisumu and compare them to the perceived best practices and give practitioners in security firms a chance to adopt what is suitable for them
- ii) The study will go a long way in enhancing awareness of best human resource management practices in private security firms and make them employers of choice and increase individual firm's competitive advantage.
- iii) It will help in controlling staff turnover and help build cultures that are good and sustainable across all private security firms.

CHAPTER TWO: - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Best practices in human resource management

According to Huslid (1095), people are the source of competitive advantage and there is need for use of specific human resource management practices to achieve this. Within such approaches is an implicit assumption that gaining employee commitment to the organizations goals is possible and indeed crucial. The challenge facing human resource management professionals today is to secure employee commitment within an enterprise culture and demands thereof. When deciding what human resource practices to use to link with competitive strategy, organization can choose from six human resource practice 'menus', each of the six menus concerns a different aspect of human resource management; these aspects are planning, staffing, appraising, compensation and training and development.

Ichniowski et al (1997), concluded in their research that although human resource management practices matter for performance in general, little is known, in particular about how and which combinations human resource management practices matter; for example, they are employed in different types of firms, support different knowledge strategies. Evidence suggests that when several human resources practices are used simultaneously and in particular system configuration, productivity increases beyond what individual human resource practice can achieve in isolation. Furthermore, the most successful organization will be those that fully recognise that without the ability to employ motivated, committed workforce it will be extremely difficult to enact changes associated with market place demand for new product introduction, cost reduction strategies, new production technologies and so on. They will also

the coil associated with high turnover and take the necessary steps to control it.

Some of the best practices include selection and recruitment strictly on merit, by giving equal opportunity to all qualified people without discrimination; proper matching of the individual capabilities and interests with the demands and rewards given by the organization against the job; regular training and development activities that are aimed at not only improving employee performance at work, but also boosting self confidence; use of flexible work arrangements to enable employees to mix work and family responsibilities without hurting any side; making performance appraisal to be part of the organizations culture and linking it to organizational objectives and good labor relationships that include diversity management (Lechniowski et al, 1997)

DessJer (2008) observed that other important areas in best human resource practices include the creation of viable and attractive benefit and compensation packages, managing the performance of the employees, making sure that business practices and workers conditions stay well within the law. creating a positive, enjoyable work environment, talent recruitment and mapping out the best human resource strategies for the future. Staying within the law is however a highly prominent aspect of human resources that comes into heavy play when discussing the best practices involved in keeping the work place free of dangerous contentious business practices. It should be law suit proof and free of discrimination of any form.

In a research conducted by Watson Wyatt in 2000-2001 into the links between human resource Practices and market value creation, it was concluded that application of key human resource

management practices was associated with an overall increase of 47% in market value (Senge & Hingner 2002). It's unlikely that any one practice will result in identical outcomes in any two firms we can be reasonably certain that the practices discussed here could be used to maintain a high quality work force and therefore increase and sustain competitive advantage. Milgram and Roberts (1991) argued that human resource best practices are complimentary in that investing in one practice increases the return from investing in another interrelated practice and which may be mutually enhancing in their supporting effects on knowledge creation and utilization in the pursuit of strategic goals.

Several studies have been done in Kenya focusing on human resource management. In a study of diversity management practices applied by commercial banks in Kenya. Oluoch (2006), concluded that there is no single way of treating employees as each one will have their own personal needs, values and beliefs and the notion that best practices while helpful in theoretical setting will not provide all answers in reality. Mutuku (2003) found out that majority of the management have an understanding of the diversity in the work place and are aware about its benefits. Such diversity includes the area of team work, productivity motivation, creativity and staff turnover.

2.1.1 Human resource planning

According to Dessler (2008) human resource planning, is the process of deciding what positions the firm will have to fill and how to fill them and these flows from the firm's strategic plans. It is arguably the most important single human resource practice. Graham and Bennett (1998) noted that all organizations need continuous planning and readjustment because the goals of an

organization - nimble and its environment uncertain. It is also complex because it involves so many independent variables including, invention, population changes, resistance to change, consumer demands, government intervention and competition both from within and without the organization

Sisson and Storey (2000). defined human resource planning as one of the basic building blocks of an organization strategy and performance improvement. Since it helps fill gaps in capabilities of the human resource, detecting surpluses in the capabilities and in developing a talent pool. The demand for manpower is influenced by corporate strategies and objectives, the environment and the way that staff is utilized within the business. The supply on the other hand is projected from current employees through calculations of expected leavers, retirements and promotions and from establishing the required skills in the labour markets. Anticipated demand and supply are then reconciled by considering a range of options and plans to achieve a feasible balance (Torrington et al, 2008). Human resource scorecard may be a useful tool for this aspect of planning and the use of scenarios can be used to provide a picture of alternative organizational features and alternative human resources responses to these (Boxall and Purell. 2003). Planning covers a wide range of human resource functional areas including, employee utilization plans, organizational and structural plans, planning and development plans, performance management and motivation plans, reward plans, employee relations and communication plans (Torrington et al. 2008).

To ensure flexibility of work force skills, commitment and motivation, including steps to ensure that employees have the responsibility and full autonomy to use their knowledge and skills.

There should also be skill variety at the work place which is the extent to which job incumbents can complete a whole and identifiable task using various skills, activities and ability. A good job design is one that can help employees balance their work and non work lives by allowing workers to adopt more flexible work schedules; for example, flextime, permanent part time work, and job sharing and compressed weeks. These programmes enable employees to address their work and family concerns and reduce potential stress and conflict between the various life roles (Bemardinis 2007). But according to Hcardwell and Claydon (2007), despite the advantages of flexible work arrangements, workers may be unwilling to take advantage of work life balance initiatives because they are worried that it will generate hostile responses from colleagues who are unable to do the same or even have damage to career prospects. Resistance is also due to the possible effect to leisure time.

Flexible work systems are contingent based adaptability of human resource activities to the organisations situation. Different patterns, times and people are used in performing activities, Such programmes can be applied in areas such as working time, number of workers, the place of work and even type of workers. Its also important to note that different organizations have different objectives when it comes to deciding which flexible work systems should be used. However, for it to work effectively employees need to accept the drastic changes that come with such arrangements; the changes affect mainly their personal lives, security and status. It also requires employees to be self disciplined since supervision is minimal especially at odd hours or those who work from home.

2 1.2 Selection and Recruitment

Recruitment and selection are essentially concerned with identifying, assessing and engaging new employees or promoting existing ones. The focus is on matching the capabilities and interests of prospective candidates with the demands and rewards given by the organization against the job. In her findings, Kilonzi (2008) noted that in the manufacturing sector, different companies use different recruitment and selection methods; however advertisement of vacancies and promotion from within are the most preferred, while consultancies and employment agencies are least preferred. She further asserted that in selecting employees for vacant positions in the sector, academic qualifications and competence emerged as the most used; individual flexibility is least considered as a method of selecting employees for vacant positions. The most common method is interview¹ and selection tests. But whichever criteria of selection that is used in selection it should be controllable, measurable, reliable and relevant to the organization.

In a study conducted by Hay Group inc and Michigan University it was reported that when business is pursuing a growth strategy it needs top managers who are likely to abandon the status quo and adapt their strategies and goals to the market place. According to the study insiders are slow to recognize the onset of a decline and tend to persevere - strategies that are no longer effective, so top management need to be recruited from outside the organization. Insiders on the other hand will be important when a business is pursuing a mature strategy because they already know the intricacies of the business the results of the Hay Group study suggest that the staffing practices of top management be tied to the nature of the business demand different aspects of the business demand different behavior from individual running the business. **The** implication is that selecting the right top managers is an important staffing decision (Randall et al 1987).

According to Mac Duffie (1995), it is logical to conceive that organizations can use selection to increase their generic human capital while focusing on training to develop a firm's specific human capital. For a firm to sustain its competitive advantage, the resources must also be inimitable and non substitutable to prevent rivals from replicating the value of the resources and competing away their benefits. Kumelt (1994) observed that the duration of a firm's competitive advantage is directly related to the strength of isolating mechanisms. But given the ease with which human resources can move between firms especially from one private security firm to arrival firm it seems on the surface that it will be difficult to prevent and protect the human resource from expropriation by rivals.

Barret (2000), concluded that best practices in recruitment requires that the human side of the business should always be addressed; this means meeting the needs of potential new employees who are choosing to work for the organization, cultures that align with their personal values and support them in their personal professional growth; usually the relationship between the employee and the organization is made by contract in which the employee commits himself to use his knowledge, learning and skills for the benefits of the company. In return the organization provides a reasonable compensation.

The American Institute of Personnel observed that the hiring procedures followed vary between organizations and each has its own ultimate impact on organizational employees' perceptions. The procedures should however at all times take into account the individual organizations' vision, mission and objectives and should match the job description with persons' qualification

otherwise the cost of attracting and retaining a wrong person on the job would be enormous (Mullins 2005).

In the selection and recruitment function of human resource management, there is an important best practice commonly referred to as realistic job preview (RJP). It is a selection device allowing job candidates to learn negative as well as positive information about the job and organization. It may include brochures, films, plant tours, work sampling or merely a short script made up of realistic statements that accurately portray the job. The key element in RJP is that unfavorable as well as favorable information about the job is shared. The concept has even been extended to recruiting of students by college admissions (Armstrong 2008). Most studies demonstrate that giving candidates realistic job preview before offering them the job reduces turnover without lowering acceptance rates. Job preview should be done exhaustively before placement at this time the prospective employee should be made aware of the nature of the job, requirements and working conditions. The primary purpose of selection devices is to identify individuals who will be effective performers. But it is not in management's interest to find good prospects, hire them, and then have them leave the organization.

Selection should be concerned with reducing voluntary turnover among the hired. There are many ways of ensuring this, but the most effective and scientifically tested device is the Realistic Job preview (RJP). While RJP is not normally treated as a selection device, it does take place during the selection process and it has demonstrated effectiveness as a method for increasing job survival among new employees. Every applicant acquires during the selection process a set of hypothetical expectations about the organization and about the specific job the applicant is

hoping to be offered. It is not unusual for these expectations to be excessively inflated as a result of receiving almost uniformly positive information about the organization and job during recruitment and selection activities (Wanous et al. 1979)

Evidence suggests however, that managers may be erring by giving applicants only favorable information. Applicants who have been given realistic job preview hold lower and more realistic expectations about the job they will be doing and are better prepared for coping with the job and its frustrating element. The result is lower turn over rates. It is not unreasonable to suggest that exposing an applicant to RJP may also result in the hiring of a different type of person, or that better information may result in greater commitment on the part of new employees to their decision to come and stay aboard (Wanous et al. 1979). This information though having been covered earlier in the job description and selection interviews, it is crucial that it be repeated again at this stage. This information can assist employee to make decision about accepting or rejecting it such decision lessens costs of recruitment because it is easier to replace an employee at this stage than after full engagement in contractual forms. But the RJP is not panacea for all turnover reduction while RJP is helpful and can create more positive job related attitude, there is no indication that general RJP procedure exists. What is of interest to one person may not be to another. However the benefits of some type of RJP appear to outweigh its cost.

2.1.3 Training and development

Training and development are activities that are used to maintain and promote the competencies and talents of employees in relation to the developments inside and outside the organization. Private security firms have human resources that are not firm specific although

Hatch and Dyer (2004) noted that firms without superior foresight into the productivity of human resources may be able to gain competitive advantage by building the firm specific human capital of its employees through training. In his conclusion, Njenga (2008) noted that employee development directly impacts on the organizational ability to satisfy customers, resolve problems and crises, and adopt changing market conditions. Paying for an employee's continuing professional education, for example, can help organization gain expertise in new technologies and opportunities or markets, which can save resources in the long run. In addition, most employees find learning new skills and taking on new challenges extremely rewarding.

Given the ease with which human resources can move between firms it would seem on the surface that it should be difficult to protect human capital from expropriation by rivals. According to Hilt et al (2001) human capital is most valuable and most inimitable when it is firm specific and original in the environment where it was originally and optimally developed. Becker (1964) concluded that a firm's internal and external training may contribute to corporate prosperity, for example, workers through on the job training, seminars, learning by doing to create firm specific human capital.

2.1.4 Performance management

Organizations have long acknowledged the values of performance appraisal in both administration decisions and in motivating employees. Albrook (1968). the reluctance to implement appraisal systems with lower level and base grade employees may be due to several factors, including employee and union resistance to compulsory system of appraisal. Scherer and Segal (2006) noted that some of the best practices of performance appraisal are ensuring

that an organization makes performance appraisal to be part of the culture, link performance appraisal to organizational objectives, invest in training and education, design the systems for the unique needs of the organization; use performance appraisal to build relationships between supervisors and employees; use flexible, customized appraisal forms and finally separates the compensation from performance. Ouko (2008) recommended that at its best 360 degrees of performance appraisal should be used by organizations because it creates a mutually beneficial relationship between the organization and the employees. It should fit in the strategic mission of the organization and be used as a means and not as an end in itself.

On the other hand the compensation should be schemed in such away that it provides for de-recognition and reward of high performing employees this can be in the form of employee share ownership programmes to increase employee awareness of the implication of their actions for the financial performance of the firm, The terms should be clearly harmonized. Further more, compensation systems have been regarded as influential to elicit employees' contribution, for example, high powered incentives may be used to induce contributions through providing larger shares of quasi rents to employees (Williamson. 1979). Every worker requires some form of feed back on their performance. Performance measurement enables the worker to get feedback from the job itself, which is the extent to which carrying out the work activities results in incumbent receiving clear and direct knowledge about how they are performing.

Human resource audit is examination of the quality and standard of the level of performance of the personnel by looking at their numbers, efficiency and relations at the place of work. Periodical audit enables human resource managers to plan ahead by anticipating future change

in people and work requirements: it helps to avoid wastage in terms of excess numbers of employees for duties that are available in the organization. Audit also results into job evaluation which exposes and compares skills required, the job itself and the cost benefit analysis.

People leave jobs for variety of reasons, many of which are wholly outside the power of the organization to influence. The argument against staff turn over is equally persuasive; first the sheer cost of replacing people who have been hired ranging from the cost of placing a recruitment advertisement through the time spent administering and conducting the selection, to other expenses required in inducting and training employees. There are other explicit losses to the organization arising as a result of poor performance of inexperienced employee which are not measurable (Torrington, 2005).

2.1.5 Compensation

Employee compensation refers to all forms of pay going to employees and arising from their employment. It has two main components, direct financial payment including wages, salaries, incentives, commissions and bonuses and indirect financial payments and benefits like employee, insurance and vacations (Dcsslcr. 2008). Compensation rates can be determined through a job evaluation which establishes the relative worth of the job and its activities. The result is a wage salary structure or hierarchy the basic principal of job evaluation is that jobs that greater qualification, more responsibilities and more complex job duties should be paid more highly than jobs with lesser requirements (Tobin, 2002).

Reward is clearly central to employment creations, for these reason, to a great extent, than is the case in other areas of human resource practice. The management of reward is heavily constrained by financial position of the organization. The aim is to design competitive reward packages which serve to attract, retain and motivate staff, while at the same time keeping a lid on the cost so as to ensure the organization's commercial and financial viability. Employees on the other hand attach greater significance to pay rates (Torrington et al, 2008). Salaries take the biggest proportion of the reward packages for most employers and employees, its important that it is seen to be fair and that it is administered accurately and professionally; failure to do so may make organizations to loose some of the trust of its employees. Rates of payment however are diverse and depend on many compensation factors, however, use of competence and time taken on the job or experience at work arc the most popular factors considered because they support high performance work systems, self motivation, and tend to support strategic plan and provides basis for performance management (Roberts and Witfield, 2001).

The administration of salaries which comprises of processes for determining, controlling, and motoring the salaries paid to the employees is very important aspect of reward management. Most organizations use the stepped pay band which defines several levels of performance with a rate pay for each (Graham and Bcnnet 1998). The aims and objectives for all pay, reward and remuneration system that an organization may choose to use arc many including, enabling the organization to attract and retain competent career personnel; to motivate employees so that to attain optimum performance; provide incentives for employees to grow in confidence; enable organizations to gain maximum return on service from the employees; enable the employees to develop confidence in the organization with respect to equity and objectivity and to help

minimize staff turnover (Okumbe. 2001). The combination plan should be made internally and consistent and externally competitive. The compensation should be directly be related to the importance of a position and the skills required in performing tasks and should reduce individual and union grievances.

2.1.6 Employee relations

Every organization should strive to induce good labor relations and ensure industrial peace by avoiding labor unrest such as strikes, work stoppages, boycotts and lock outs .The best practice is to keep a communication line that everybody in the process is fully informed frequently and comprehensively to enhance teamwork. Private sector though not vulnerable is culpable to labor interruption (Armstrong 2008).

According to Llmo (2008), most managers do not prioritize quality employee relationship as an aspect of quality management practices. Employee relations include the use of rewards system practices in a manner that supports employee involvement. This is even more important given the physical and knowledge intensive nature of security services. Adoption of systems that reward collective performance and thus encourage teams and individuals to be involved in the business units of which they are part and perceived to contribute positively to overall organizational performance and this is a best practice in employee relationship.

Good labor relation* also includes diversity management initiatives which include practices and policies that the organization adopts voluntarily for the purpose of ensuring that all members of diverse work force feel they are treated fairly (Jackson et al. 2007). Diversity has many

dimensions, but in Kenya it tends to revolve around gender, ethnicity, race and education. Each firm has its unique combination of these aspects of diversity. By using diversity initiative the firm creates a culture of inclusion whereby everybody feels equally integrated into the larger system. Members of the majority and the minority subcultures feel respected and everyone has an equal chance to express views and influence decisions and everyone has similar access to both formal and informal networks within the organization. This makes all members own the organization and less likely to resort to legal means for ensuring fair treatment. Respect to all employees is shown when employment decisions are made on the basis of the merit rather than personal or demographic attributes (Derrick et al, 2007).

This is an approach to employee relations and management that allows employees greater freedom, autonomy and self control over their work, and responsibility for decision making (Mullins 2002). Researchers have looked at it in different dimensions; they include, control over own work, autonomy on the job, pay system that links pay with performance. Caudron (1995), suggested that the components of empowerment include, self directed work teams, free flow of information about a company's goals and direction, training and continual development of work, management leadership skills all employees, managers who are more like coaches and who empower gradually, employee control of needed resources, provision for performance measurement, continual feedback and reinforcement on performance

Empowerment is from both the individual employee perspective and the organization perspective. The organization creates the environment that allow the for empowerment of individual, for example, superiors can empower the subordinates by delegating responsibilities to

jjjjn; this makes the subordinates to be satisfied with their leaders and their work, they often perceive their leaders as being fair and in turn perform to superior's expectations(Keller and Dnnseru 1995). When employees are empowered they feel more appreciated and valued at work placc and acquire sense of belonging to the organization. Empowerment makes greater use of skills and abilities of the work force, it encourages team work and there is meaningful participation and can lead to successful implementation of programmes; usually empowered employees do not suffer ambiguity about their roles in the organization (Dessler. 2008).

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The Study adopted a descriptive study design. A descriptive study was the most appropriate design for the study as it enabled the examination of the entire population of the existing phenomena by asking questions without making inference on causal statement, thereby exposing various human resource management practices in the individual firm studied.

3.2 Population

According to Kenya Security Industry Association (KSIA) website (<http://www.ksia.co.ke>) there are 27 security firms in Kisumu City and all of them were studied.

3.3 Data collection

Primary data was collected using a semi structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided in two sections; Section one contained demographic information of the respondent and basic identity information about the firm, while Section two focused on best practices in human resource management in the firm. The heads of human resource sections in the firms were the respondents. The drop and pick later method was used to administer the questionnaire.

3.4 Data Analysis

The raw data was coded, arranged and collated for completeness and accuracy. The analysis was carried out using descriptive statistics, mean and percentages to measure the extent of adoption of best practices in human resource.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response rate

the response rate was 19 out of the 27 firms initially targeted for study purposes, this forms 70.37% response rate.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

From the findings 12 out of the 19 respondents were men that is 63.2%. The female respondents formed 36.8% of the total. From these figures we can conclude that security firms in Kisumu city have employed more men than women. The findings also indicated that 63.22% are in the age bracket 26 years and above, with only 38.8% falling below the age 26 years of age; this means that the security firms mostly employ adults who are well past standard high school age. The analysis of the personal information also established that 89.5% are married with families to take care of and therefore they are responsible people. All the respondents work both in the field and in their offices. 79.9% have served for more than 1 year and therefore have experience of their work. From the findings 63.2% are temporary employees while 5.3% are not aware of their terms of service.

4.3 Extent of adoption of best practices in human resource management

From the finding 10 i.e. (52.6%) of the firms do not have a functional and independent human resource department, the respondents though in charge of human resource are only responsible of supervision, shift control and discipline but the major decision on human resource are handled by the directors. On the other hand 47.3% of the organizations have functional human resource departments which co-ordinate the functions of selection & recruitment, training and development, compensation and employee relations.

4.3.1 Planning, selection and recruitment practices

from the finding 63% of the respondents feel the recruitment style and method used is fair enough. This disproves Mkutu and Sabala (2007) assertion that recruitment and selection in security firms is haphazard and reactionary; further proof of best practice in recruitment and selection is the finding that 68.42% of the respondents agree that vacancies are advertised. In the planning process there is an equal agreement which implies there is some form of planning taking place before recruitment but 21% disagree that everybody is involved in the planning process. Education and professional qualification is considered in recruitment 79% agree, this is in agreement with Nullins, (2005); and Dessler,(2008) observation that recruitment should match the organizations mission, vision and job description and persons qualifications; otherwise the cost of attracting and retaining the wrong person would be enormous.

4.3.2 Staff training and development practices

from the findings all the respondents, that is, 100% believe that training is very important, This shows that over a half of the respondents have trained and therefore these firms emphasize training as part of the staff development. According to Hrenda Sugre (2005) training has a fairly impressive record of influencing organizational effectiveness, scoring high than appraisal and feedback. The 89% who have trained acknowledge that training was mainly meant for physical fitness; while from the finding respondents would like training to take the form of physical drills, knowledge of public relations and handling of fire arms and other weapons. 60% of the respondents would like the training to be regular to improve their service delivery. This study

established that 47.36% are confident that with regular training there are realistic chances of advancement of their careers.

The most regular form of training is on Job training for staff development with 89% agreement; according to Hatch and Dyer (2004) this presupposes that managers themselves have been equipped with the necessary skills to effectively oversee this important organizational duty; and is in line with Foto (2006) findings that it's the most effective form of employee development since it helps pass values, work activities and job design from the incumbent to new employees.

4 J 3 Job design

This study established that 79% of the respondents agree that employees are involved in arrangement of work schedules and activities, in the same vein 53% find work activities in their security firms interesting. This may be an indicator that the Job design adopted by security firms is satisfactory. However on the other extreme 52.63% think that they have been denied leisure time and 21.05% complain about work activities mean there is little discontent. An equal 47.37% of the respondents agree and disagree that they have adequate time for personal activities; this is in agreement with Bernardine (2007) assertion that such programmes enable employees to address their work and family concerns and reduce potential stress and conflict between the various life roles of the employee. 63.16% of the respondents recommend change on the work activities, though the researcher did not specify the desired change. The finding contradicts Beardwell and Claydon (2007) statements that workers will be willing to take full advantage of flexible work arrangements every time they are presented.

4.3.4 Compensation

from the findings 79% agree that they are fairly compensated for their services, but when asked on the matter of equality in the amount of salary and compensation paid, 37% disagree that there is equality. These findings confirm Torrington et al (2008) statement that salaries take the biggest proportion of the reward packages for most employees and it is important that it is seen to be fair and it is administered fairly and professionally. Also a noteworthy finding indicated that 52.63% agreed that they were happy with the way their services were appreciated and the method used to measure their performance and 26.36% were ready to continue working for their current employers. However the study also established that 63.16% of the respondents were of the opinion that change is recommended in the compensation and salary rates; the type of desired change however is not brought out in the research. Okumbe. (2001) observed that the aims and objectives for all pay, reward and remuneration system should be to enable the organization to attract and retain competent employees, have them motivated and develop confidence in the organization and help minimize staff turnover. The study also sought to establish employee turnover rates and all the respondents, 100%, know colleagues who have left in the last one year and 57.89% do not know the exact number who left the firm. 31.58% are aware of less than 10 employees who left for in the last 1 year. From the data collected 40% of the employees who leave opt to work for other security firms, with 60% changing career all together. The most common reasons cited for the departures are discrimination based on tribe, poor pay, indiscipline and summary dismissal due lack of business or posts of deployment, hence respondents recommend that work place conditions and general performance can be improved through improving technology in the field for the guards and improved remuneration paid in time and regularly.

4.3.5 Employee relations

From the findings 36.84% agree that they have good working relations with other employees in their organizations, with 63.16% agreeing to the same fact; none of the respondents disagreed; meaning therefore that there is good interpersonal relationship in the organizations studied. These findings confirm Derrick et al (2007) observation that respect to employees and among employees is important especially if it is on the basis of merit and not on personal and demographic attributes and this tends to improve loyalty to the organization. It is also worth noting that 68.42% of the respondents do not belong to any trade union, although 52.63% believe that trade unions are important and only 5% disagree that trade unions are important. The findings also indicated that 37% agree that they are treated as important and responsible workers by fellow employees; on this matter 21% are undecided. On the chances of improvement of career 57.89% disagree that they have equal opportunities to improve their careers, on the same note 42.11% agree that they have realistic chances of improving their careers. Staff meetings are held regularly at least in all organizations but only 26% agree that they are given equal chances to give their opinion. The findings also indicated that compensation and remuneration practices are consistently adopted in the security firms studied; but on the same aspect 31.58% of the respondents evaluated were not aware whether performance of work activities was the basis of payment in their firms. All the organizations highly emphasize use of referees during recruitment.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

Security firms in Kisumu city are mostly dominated by male employees who comprise of 63.20% of the respondents. The firms have adopted best practices in human resource management at various degrees, there are many inconsistencies in the adoption and application of various human resource management practices; this could be attributed to the fact that only 47.3% have fully functional human resource departments. While the researcher may not have been able to find out precisely who and how the human resource management functions are carried out in the firms, it was evident during the reconnaissance and the research that these duties were carried out by the management. In selection and the most popular method is advertisement. There is a lot of emphasis on education and professional qualifications. Employees in the firms feel the methods used in recruitment are satisfactory. On job training and development is a popular practice, however security firms need to go further 'boot training' for fitness for and include knowledge based training including courses in public relations, intelligence, handling of weaponry and self defense. The training should also be regular and consistent with the ever changing security situations and issues as recommended by Carroll (2003) in his early findings. Employee participation at various levels in security firms in Kisumu city is a practice that is common especially having had 43% agreeing that their opinion is sought in decision making; however employee turnover still remains a weak link in human resource management in the firms.

5.2 Conclusion

This study has exposed the need for security firms in Kisumu city to put in place human resource management departments separate from the top management and more important the firms should consistently adopt basic best practices in human resource in order to control turn over. Each firm needs to invest in people management practices and vary them from time to time to suit the changing customer requirements and the ever changing security situation in the city. There are varied degrees of adoption of various best practices in human resource management among security firms in Kisumu city and the findings will help each security firm to re-evaluate their individual practices and strengthen their human resources because as observed by various scholars; [Pfeffer, (2004); Uxall and Steenveld (1999); Laursen and Mahnk (2000); Becker et al (1997); Huselid (1995); Ichiniowski et al (1997); Mac Duffie (1995)] who have elaborated on human resource best practices strongly suggest that the same basic bundles of human resource practices tend to enhance business in all organizations irrespective of particular product market strategy.

5.3 Recommendations

Security is a dynamic concept in every society and the challenges of offering good security services can be tackled through proper utilization of best practices in human resource management. This should start from planning with focus on the customer needs and selection and recruitment based on intelligence quotient, education and professional qualifications and knowledge of information technology. Training and development should be continuous in response to the market needs. To curb employee turn over remuneration and compensation

should be improved to be consistent with work activities. The importance of security in as a support service to other business cannot be gain said and therefore the need for personnel in this industry to be managed in the possible manner.

5.4 Limitations of the study

The study did not achieve 100% response rate mainly due to the sensitive nature of security matters and in some cases ignorance of the intention of the researcher. The study has also focused on a few human resource practices, this may not reflect the exact level of adoption of human resource management practices among security firms. The method of analysis of data and especially the over reliance on percentages may have created a wrong statistical impression. The target group was mainly human resource managers in the various firms, and it is possible the findings would have been possible if other levels of employees would have been in the research. The research process and findings carries itself with the personal limitations and biases of the researcher.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

Ilie researcher aimed at establishing the extent of adoption of best practices in human resources management among security firms in Kisumu city. Further study therefore can be carried out in factors affecting adoption of best practices in human resource management among security firms in Kisumu city; or further still relate adoption of best practices to the style of management in human recourse.

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Appendix

Ombogo, John Otachi

Tel: 0733256103

00 University of Nairobi

To respondent

security firm

Box

N u n u

Dear Sr.

te; ADOPTION OF BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AMONG SECURITY FIRMS IN NAIROBI

I am a student of Master of Business Administration, Human Resource Management, in the University of Nairobi. As part of the course, I am currently involved in research on *THE ADOPTION OF BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AMONG SECURITY FIRMS IN NAIROBI*. The objective of the study is purely academic and information based and aims at eliciting what each firm in the city is practicing in their human resource department,

Your sincere responses to these sample questions will go along with to help me in collecting necessary information for the research purposes. Please feel free to seek clarity from me.

Copy of the findings of the research will be available to your firm on request.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours faithful

John Otachi

Appendix 2

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following Information by ricking the appropriate box

PART 1: PERSONAL INFORMATION /BIO DATA

Gender:

Male 1 Female 1

Age:

19 - 26 1 26 - 40 1

40 - 60) 60+ 1

Marital Status

Single 1 Married 1

Separated 1 Divorced 1

Widowed 1

Level of education

1 Diploma 1

Certificate) Others Specify). 1

Degree 1

Post of work

1 Office 1

Field 1

Length of Service in current station

Less than 1 year 1 1 - 3 years 1

4 - 6 years (1 7 and above 1

What is your position in the firm?

Owner) Employee 1

Shareholder 1

Do you have professional qualifications for your current job?

Yes 1 No 1

What are your terms of services?

Permanent) Temporary' 1

PART II: BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

I. PLANNING ,SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT

Do you have an independent human resource department in your organization?

Yes | 1

No | |

1. What would you have to say about the selection and recruitment in your organization

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
There is a lot of fairness in the recruitment style in the organization					
Education and professional qualifications are considered during					
The criterion used in selection is good and adequate for my job.					
The plans used in before recruitment are adequate					
Vacancies are advertised					
Method used in recruitment is satisfactory					
Every body is involved in the planning process					

2. Do you feel the recruitment style used is fair enough?

Yes [] No []

3. briefly what would you change in the planning process if need a rises-

B. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

I. Respond to the following statements indicating your level of agreement

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Training is very important to an					

»yec

Have you undergone any training for your current job?

Are there any chances of advancement on your job?

Do you have confidence with the manner in which promotions are carried out?

1. Since you joined this organization, have you undergone any form of training?
Yes () No. ()

2. If yes, how has the training affected/helped you?

3. In your opinion what kinds of training activities do you recommend to enable you offer quality services to your clients?

4. How often do you think the training in (4) above should be offered?
Annually () Semi annually ()

Quarterly () Regularly ()

C. CLEAR JOB DESIGN

Please state to what extent you agree with the following statements as far as the job design in your organization is concerned.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
-----------	-------------------	----------	-----------	-------	----------------

Shifts are arranged in agreement with employees

There is planned time for personal activities

Organization recognizes leisure time					
some work activities that are interesting to me					
Work mates complain about work schedules					
Managers in the company are well equipped for the work activities					
Work; activities are easy and good					
Given a chance I will change how work activities are scheduled					

2. Do you like the way junior workers respond to shifts and turns of duty?

Yes No

3. Briefly comment on your response

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Please state to what extent you agree with the following statements as far as performance measurement, recruitment and retention are concerned.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Indecided	Agree	Strongly agree
I am fairly paid for my services					
There is equality in the salary and other					
Given a chance I will still choose my current firm					
I like the way my performance is appraised					
Change is recommended for the way employees are compensated					

2. In your approximation how many of the employee leave every year?

Appendix 3

List of security firms studied

Adapted with modification from [http/www](http://www).

*ai 4*25*may 2010*

1. Bed rock security
2. Kenya kazi
3. G4s services
4. P. M. security services
5. Boh Morgan security
6. J.R. Security
7. Riley falcon security limited
8. Papa Toni security
9. Kali guards security
10. Robinson security
11. Ex -boinnet
12. Wells Fargo
13. Security group
14. Modem security
15. Patriotic guards
16. Polca guards
17. Simba security
18. Posh security
19. Total security
20. Boriga security
21. Jannal security
22. Inter security
23. Dark security services
24. Viphcmo security
25. Darross security
26. Guard force
27. Metro security consultancy