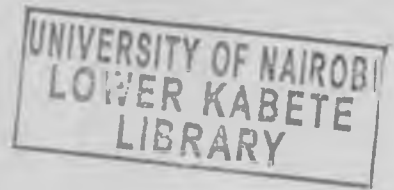


**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FUNCTION  
IN SUPPORTING BUSINESS STRATEGY AT THE KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE  
(KWS)**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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**2011**

## DECLARATION

### Declaration by Candidate:

I declare that this project is my original work and has never been presented in any other institution/University.

Signed: .....*rheme*.....

Date: .....*9 NOV 2011*.....

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### Declaration by Supervisor:

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I take this opportunity to first, thank God for good health and for bringing me this far. I wish to acknowledge every one who assisted me in completing this study. I extend my gratitude to my supervisor for his encouragement and patience in reading, correcting, re-reading and refining this work.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my family who provided me with the motivation and for their care and sacrifice throughout my studies. Their love, care, concern, support, encouragement and enthusiasm inspired me to achieve this goal.

## ABSTRACT

The role of human resource management function in fostering employee engagement and commitment is vital in all corporate organizations. Human resource management functions that provide workers with the opportunity to fully participate in strategic planning process and ensure that workers have the skills and ability to do their jobs are the foundation of a human resources practices (Bailey 1992). The subject about human resource management has been done in a wide range of fields in Kenya. This has been done both in public and private organization.

The Kenya Wildlife Service is a state corporation that was established in 1990 to conserve and manage wildlife in Kenya. It is established under an Act of Parliament Cap 376 (The Wildlife Conservation and Management Act) with the mandate to conserve and manage wildlife in Kenya, and to enforce related laws and regulations. The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of the human resource management function at Kenya Wildlife Service in supporting business strategy. The study was therefore a case study involving KWS as a study site. Data was collected from the head of business strategy and the HR manager.

The result of the study was obtained by qualitative analysis on the data collected from KWS. From the study findings it is clear that KWS's effectiveness of HRM function is realized through the implementation of the corporate strategic themes that involve attractive selection and recruitment of qualified staff; leadership training and development; management of performance; rewards & Recognition of staff; leadership & management development; and also staff engagement in the strategic planning. The study concluded that KWS has demonstrated its effectiveness of the HRM function in various ways thus enhancing its performance in the public service sector. It was recommended that KWS can improve its effectiveness in HRM functions

by putting more emphasis on strategy implementation on HRM that would involve; measuring, evaluating, revising and refocusing for the future; setting the direction that would ensure that the parastatals' mission and vision is adhered to; emphasis on the strategic business issues which are likely to highlight numerous implications for human resource management; analysis of economy and industry in which it competes; intensive assessment of company strengths, weakness, and core competencies. This study focused only on KWS as a corporate organization in service sector but further studies can be done to expound the knowledge in HRM function in other sectors in Kenya.

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Human resource management (HRM) refers to the collective activities undertaken by all those who manage people in the corporate organization (Cole, 2002). People working in a corporate organization individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of objectives in the corporate organization (Armstrong, 2002). It is people who create corporate organizations and make them survive and prosper. Hence, their special management cannot be neglected as other components of the corporate organization are likely to suffer. Without people, corporate organizations could not function. Yet people also need the corporate organizations so that they can maintain their living standards, by working in these corporate organizations.

Harrison (2000) observed that human resource management has major effects upon product quality, customer service, and corporate organizational flexibility and costs. 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. The drive and motives of everybody can be set in motion and maintained through appropriate human resource management strategies. HRM strategies build a sustainable advantage over a corporate organization's rivals. This happens because corporate organizational culture, people and processes form the base of sustained competitive advantage of a firm. Therefore, a corporate organization has to align its human resource management function with its overall strategic goals and objectives.

Scholars suggested that the idea of human capital is people whose assets are of value and can be enhanced through embedding knowledge, competency, attitude and behavior in an individual (Youndt et al, 2004; Rastogi,2000). Hence, human resource management can also be defined as the process of acquiring, developing, deploying and the retention of the collective knowledge, skills and abilities of a corporate organization's employees by implementing processes and systems that match employee talent to the corporate organization's overall business goals. Youndt *et al.*, (2004) noted that human capital is an asset whose value can be enhanced through investment. As with any investment, the goal is to maximize value the value of human capital while managing risks. As the value of people increases, so does the performance capacity of the corporate organization, and therefore its value to clients and other stakeholders. Secondly, a corporate organization's human capital policies must be aligned to support the corporate organization's mission, vision for the future, core values, goals , objectives, and strategies by which the corporate organization has defined its direction and its expectations for itself and its people. All human capital policies and practices should be designed, implemented, and assessed by the standard of how well they help the corporate organization pursue its shared vision (Wan, 2007; Youndt et al, 2004; Rastogi, 2000).

Human resource management plays an important role in fostering employee attachment and commitment. Therefore, a consolidated approach toward identifying those human resource practices which foster and support attachment to the organisation is important. Due to changing business environment, corporate organizations undergo reforms in order to remain competitive. The reform process in corporate organizations has led to stiff competition in key sectors of the economy (Murage 2005). It is, therefore, important for a firm to adopt strategic human resource practices that will enable it to gain competitive advantage.

### **1.1.1 Human Resource Management Function (HRM)**

Human resource management function deals with policies and practices used in human resource planning, job analysis, recruitment, selection, orientation, compensation, performance appraisal, training and development and labour relations (Dessler, 2007). HRM is composed of the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees' behaviour, attitude, and performance. Fajana (2006) stated that human resource management entails notion, theories, policies, plans, programmes, strategies, procedures, rules and regulations that must be employed in the acquisition and utilization of men towards the achievement of organisational goals. Fajana classified HR scope into 3 levels; 1) Before Employment which include career choice, work design, technological change, self preparations and growth-related conflicts; 2) During Employment which include self development, motivation, leadership, trade unionism, counseling, on-the-job training, conflict management, workplace communication; 3) Post-retirement which include exit interview, post-retirement follow-up, pension policies, job redesign and evaluation.

Recent liberalization of economy and opening up of the market to domestic and global competition has forced corporate world to have a serious relook at their management and human resource management functions. There is a growing belief that if they have to survive and thrive in global economy, they require world-class human resource (HR) competencies and the processes for managing them. Developing a critical mass of employees who are knowledgeable or skilled in a particular technology may constitute a potential source of competitive advantage for them (Khandekar and Sharma, 2005). As a result, more and more organisations are designing their HR systems in a way that enable employees to use the knowledge for competitive edge.

The performance of the organisations depends on their ability to cope with heterogeneous culture, coordinating diverse resources, competitive environment and to leverage innovations across and within national boundaries (Hitt *et al.*, 2001). Consequently, many business corporations around the world have started shifting their emphasis to human resources with their knowledge and experience, as the central resource for corporate organizational performance. Among a firm's intangible resources, HR is more likely to produce a competitive advantage because they often are truly rare and can be more difficult for competitors to imitate (Jackson *et al.*, 2004).

### **1.1.2 Business Strategy**

According to Mintzberg and Quinn (1993), the term strategy refers to a plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal in a corporate organization. The objective of strategy is to bring about advantageous conditions within which action will occur. The concept of strategy has developed as an important aspect of managing as the dynamics and complexity of the world and business environment have increased. The term strategy is used to explain both the processes (e.g. corporate organizational restructuring) and the outcomes (market position) of chosen long-term directions. It can be either a conscious, planned activity or a series of events, which lead to a desirable objective. It necessarily involves an evaluation of the likely impacts of both the external and internal corporate organizational environment, the long-term goals of the corporate organization (Nankervis, Compton & Baird 2000).

Volberda (2004) considered strategy as a deliberate planning process initiated by top management based on an elaborate industry analysis. These authors and others (Mintzberg and Lampel, 1999) point out that a firm's strategic planning process involves explicit systematic

procedures used to gain the involvement and commitment of those principal stakeholders affected by the plan. According to Bailey and Johnson (1996), rather than adopting a single style of strategy development, corporate organizations mix six elements of planning, incremental, cultural, political, command (or vision) and enforced choice in different combinations.

The basic strategic planning model suggests that a parastatal's strategies are as a result of a plan hence the planning process itself is rational, highly structured and that the process itself is orchestrated by top management (Hill and Jones, 2008). The corporate organizations engage in strategic planning practices so as to clearly define their goals and objectives. The strategic planning model assesses both the internal and external environments to formulate strategy, implement the strategy, and evaluate the success of strategy. Strategic planning incorporates planning, incremental, cultural, political and visionary views. Moreover, strategic planning should involve objective setting, analysis of environmental trends and resource capabilities, evaluation of different options and careful planning and implementation of strategies (Johnson and Scholes 2002).

### **1.1.3 Human Resource Management Function and Business Strategy**

Management in business firms should implement business strategies that will ensure commitment of all employees to the corporate organization goal. Management should adopt human resource management functions that enhance employee identification with goals and values of the firm, desire to belong to the firm and willingly display effort on behalf of the firm. A committed employee will display qualities that have the potential of attracting clients and stimulating interest in the firm's products. These qualities include good customer care practices,

effective communication skills, application of different problem solving methods and confidentiality (Bonnars G.A. *et al* 1994).

The drive and motives of everybody can be set in motion and maintained through appropriate HRM strategies. HRM strategies are linked to the concept of strategy which as defined by Johnson and Scholes (2002) is the direction and scope of an organisation over the long term, which ideally matches its resources to its changing environment and in particular to its markets, customers and clients to meet stakeholder expectations. According to Bourgeo, (1980) the purpose of a strategy is to build a sustainable advantage over a corporate organization's rivals. Strategies enable a firm to define its business today and tomorrow, and determine the industries or markets to compete. Grant, (2000) suggests that the intensity of competition in an industry determines its profit potential and competitive attractiveness.

Competitive strategy will assist a firm in responding to the competitive forces in these industries or markets (from suppliers, rivals, new entrants, substitute products, customers. Armstrong (2002) asserts that all organisations must ensure that they have resources required achieve their objective and ensure that the resources are used effectively. An organisation has to align human resource management function with the 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 1991). It is important that a firm adopts strategic human resource management practices that make best use of its employees. Strategic management of human resource is an efficient function that copes with environmental changes. Gomez-Mejia *et al.* (1995) indicated that strategic human resource management (SHRM) directly and indirectly benefits companies because it changes passivity into initiative, transmits corporate organizational goals clearly and encourages the involvement of line-managers.

Strategic human resource management (SHRM) is at a critical point, poised between becoming a strategic business partner or receding into oblivion, as there is much debate about its relevance and contribution to the bottom-line and corporate organizational effectiveness (Lawler & Mohrman, 2003; Jamrog & Overholt, 2004). As organisations battle to get the most from their existing people in an environment characterized by skill shortages, the role of human resource management in fostering employee attachment and commitment is paramount.

### **1.1.4 The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS)**

The Kenya Wildlife Service is a state corporation that was established in 1990 to conserve and manage wildlife in Kenya. It is established under an Act of Parliament Cap 376 (The Wildlife Conservation and Management Act) with the mandate to conserve and manage wildlife in Kenya, and to enforce related laws and regulations. It manages the biodiversity of the country, protecting and conserving the flora and fauna.

The Kenya Wildlife Service's functions include saving the endangered and vulnerable species and important habitats and protecting the parks and reserves. Kenya Wildlife services goal is to revive and protect long-established migration corridors which the wildlife has used from time immemorial. KWS plays an important role in supporting and expanding the needs of the dynamic travel industry by diversifying the tourism product to satisfy the market. Kenya Wildlife Community Service works closely with the people who live alongside the wildlife, complementing socio-economic and cultural needs with the preservation of wildlife and habitat. The management at KWS has been outstanding as demonstrated by management awards to various leaders. The CEO and the Head of HRM have been awarded for good management during Fifty Parastatal of the Year Awards (COYA) of the year 2009. The COYA awards

recognized him as the CEO who enabled change and transformed the parastatal into a model of performance management that is unique in the public sector. This implies that human resource function at KWS is properly run which motivates this study to find out the effectiveness of KWS human resource function in supporting its business strategy.

## 1.2 Research Problem

The role of human resource management function in fostering employee engagement and commitment is vital in all corporate organizations. Human resource management functions that provide workers with the opportunity to fully participate strategic planning process and ensure that workers have the skills and ability to do their jobs are the foundation of a human resources practices (Bailey 1992). Strategic human resource management directly and indirectly benefits companies because it changes passivity into initiative, transmits corporate organizational goals clearly and encourages the involvement of line-managers (Gomez-Mejia *et al.* 1995). Management should be commitment to make the employees identify with the goals and values of the firm, desire to belong to the firm and willingly display effort on behalf of the firm. A committed employee will display qualities that have the potential of attracting clients and stimulating interest in the firm's products. HRM strategies are linked to the concept of strategy which, according to Johnson and Scholes (2002), matches its resources to its changing environment and in particular to its markets, customers and clients to meet stakeholder expectations. Competitive strategy will assist a firm in responding to the competitive forces in these industries or markets (from suppliers, rivals, new entrants, substitute products, customers).

Kenya Wildlife Service has a strategic plan covering the period 2008-2012 (Osewe & Tuda 2010). The strategic plan at KWS clearly communicates corporate organizational vision and



missions, aligns day-to-day work to the vision and strategy, measures performance in four dimensions perspectives, provides a framework for prioritizing activities and projects and uses performance measures and targets to measure progress. The strategic plan extends the corporate organizations focus on people, technology and image as the pillars of excellence (Osewe & Tuda 2010). To ensure that business objectives at KWS are successfully achieved, it is important to evaluate the effectiveness of various components of the strategic plan such as human resource management. This study aims at assessing the effectiveness of the human resource function at Kenya Wildlife Service in supporting business strategy.

Previous studies, that the researcher is aware of, on HRM function in Kenya have not focused on the effectiveness of the human resource function in supporting business strategy, for example: (1) Omoro (2008) studied strategic human resource management practices and firm performance through a survey of the banking sector in Nairobi. He found that strategic human resource management practices are positively related to performance; (2) Nguku (2008) investigated strategic human resources management practices among classified hotels in Kenya. He found that there were communication channels for strategic issues and heads of human resource departments participate in strategic decisions; (3) Chumo (2007) investigated human resource challenges arising from use of temporary employee and found that no single perspective, parastatal policy or strategy fits all situations in relation to temporary work and human resource management. He attributed his findings to differences in skills, demographic characteristics, levels of commitments to work, identity with the corporate organization and purpose of employment. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this knowledge gap by assessing the effectiveness of the human resource function in supporting business strategy at Kenya Wildlife Services. The

study will be guided by the following research question: What are the benefits and drawbacks of human resource management functions in supporting business strategies?

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

To determine the effectiveness of the human resource management function in supporting business strategy at the Kenya Wildlife Service.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The study will provide knowledge on relationship between human resource and business strategies which management at the KWS will use as a basis of formulation of policies on areas that needs implementation of alternative strategies to enhance corporate organizational performance.

The result of the study would assist the government of Kenya in formulating policies that guide stakeholders in the in the tourism sector and other parastatals in adoption human resource practices that enhances corporate organizational performance.

The study findings will greatly contribute to the existing body of knowledge on human resource management. Future researchers and academicians will, therefore, use the study findings as a reference point for further studies on strategic human resource and business strategies.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Human Resource Management

For years, human resource (HR) researchers have argued that human resource management practices have a major impact on employee productivity and commitment because the way employees are treated directly impacts corporate organizational performance. For example, (1) Huselid (1995) found that HR practices impact turnover, productivity and corporate financial performance; (2) Delaney and Huselid (1996) found HR practices impact perceptions of corporate organizational performance; (3) Pfeffer (1998) and Pfeffer and Veiga (1999) argue that corporate organizational success is based on how employees are treated and that there are seven HR practices that together lead to corporate organizational success, profitability and survival; (4) Barney and Wright (1998) argue one way to gain a sustained competitive advantage is to find unique ways to attract retain and motivate employees; thus, their argument focuses on specific HR practices to obtain corporate organizational competitive advantage and (5) Yoon and Thye (2002) argue that corporate organizational practices are connected to employee emotions and cognitions that shape an employee's corporate organizational commitment.

Corporate organizational theorists have come to acknowledge the importance of HR competencies, capabilities, and skills as the sources of sustainable competitive advantage (Mabey *et al*). Researchers like Wright *et al.* (1998) has argued that HRM capability is a source of competitive advantage as it is embedded in the collective knowledge of the firm members (inimitable), which is developed over a period of time (rare), and valuable as the firm's routines for managing people can direct employees' talent and behaviours to meet objectives and create value.

Unique talents among employees include superior performance, productivity, flexibility, innovation and the ability to deliver high levels of personal customer services, are ways in which people provide critical ingredient in developing an corporate organization competitive position hence its success. Armstrong (2002) argued that human resource practices that would enhance employee capabilities unique to an corporate organization are: resourcing, human resource development, performance management, rewards and employee relations. However, certain practices are applicable to a given corporate organization depending on the driving force such as quality, performance, processes and policies which are designed to link together and operated in concert to deliver certain defined results. MacDuffie (1995) explored the extent to which combinations of practices can be determined and whether corporate organizational performance is related to adoption of such practices. His conclusion was that a firm with a collection of HR practices should have a higher level of performance, provided it also achieves higher levels of correspondence with competitive strategy. The logic in the favour of bundling is straight forward because the employee performance is a function of both ability and motivation. It makes sense to have practices aimed at enhancing both. These practices include ways in which an employee can acquire needed skills through careful selection and training and multiple incentives to enhance motivation through different form of financial and non-financial rewards.

Traditionally, within the employment relationship, employees exchanged their loyalty and hard work for the promise of job security. In the contemporary environment, changes in corporate organizational structure towards more flexible work practices and the decline in job security have altered the psychological contract between employer and employee (Allan, 2002; Wiens-Tuers, 2001). The new form of psychological contract is visible in placement practices, which see organisations focus on non-core and part-time workers to gain flexibility at lower cost

(Cappelli, 1999; Kalleberg, 2000). Because of these organisation-wide changes, the essence of attachment between employer and employee has changed. The old contract of employee loyalty in exchange for job security and fair work has dissolved and current employers emphasize "employability" rather than long-term loyalty in a specific job (Ko, 2003). These trends seem to be geared towards having a career portfolio (Hays & Kearney, 2001). Replacing the old employment deal, the new psychological contract suggests that the employer and the employee meet each other's needs for the moment but are not making long-term commitments.

## **2.2 Human Resource Management Functions**

Wood and Wall (2002) argue that the practice of HRM function comprises of a range of corporate organizational activities that focus on recruitment, development and management of employees. Wall and Wood (2005) outline HRM practices that emphasize or include the following: sophisticated selection methods, appraisal, training, teamwork, communications, empowerment, performance related pay and employment security. Collectively, these are deemed to contribute to skill and knowledge base within the corporate organization, and to the employees' willingness to deploy their learning to the benefit of the corporate organization. The following are practices in human resource management.

### **2.2.1 Recruitment and Selection**

Recruitment and selection is a process of obtaining number and quality of employees required to satisfy the human resource needs of an organisations at minimum cost. According to Cole, (2002), the principle purpose of recruitment is to attract sufficient and suitable potential employees to apply for vacancies in the organisation while selection is the identification of the most suitable potential employees to apply vacancies in the organisation while selection is the

identification of the most suitable applicants and persuade them to accept the position in the organisation.

Recruitment may also be internal within the corporate organization. An internal labour market (ILM) exists when external hiring is limited to entry level positions, job "ladders" exist to advance internally, and promotion from within is favoured (Althausser, 1989). The primary motivation to establish and maintain ILMs is to secure employee commitment. Since ILMs favour current employees over external rivals, employees should perceive ILMs positively and reciprocate this support with commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Also individuals may see ILMs fulfilling an employer's duty to provide security and opportunity for development and advancement. We expect employees appreciate their favored status in an ILM and, consequently, feel higher commitment. Reputable recruitment agents can be used to source for suitable persons to fill the vacancies and of importance is also "poaching" of known employees whose performance record is known. If organisations are able to find and employ staff that consistently fulfil their roles and are capable, the organisation is immeasurably better placed to deal with the opportunities and threats arising from their operating environment than competitors who are always struggling to build and maintain their workforce.

### **2.2.2 Training and Development**

Training is the process of teaching new and present employees skills they need to perform their jobs (Desler, 1997). It is formal and systematic modification of behaviour through learning, which occurs as a result of education, instruction development and planned experience (Armstrong, 2002). The fundamental aim of training is to help the organisation achieve its purpose by adding value to its key resource; the people it employs. Training means investing in

people to enable them perform better and empower them to make the best of their natural abilities.

A strong training emphasis implies an internal labour market and career opportunities (Althaus, 1989). Such emphasis is indicated by formal training, numbers participating, training effectiveness, and firm attempts to match current training practices. Based on human capital theory, employees should perceive employer training investments as symbols of continued future employment and higher wages. Employees should value training for the job security, advancement, and higher earnings implied, and thus be more committed. Prior research shows corporate organizational climates that emphasize continuous training and updating elicit high commitment (Maurer and Tarulli, 1994).

### **2.2.3 Performance Management**

Performance management is the “tool” that can aid in the achievement of the individual-organisation fit. Performance is simply the records of outcomes (Armstrong, 2002). It can be regarded as behaviour – the way in which organisation’s teams and individuals get work done. Performance management is about getting better results from the organisation’s teams and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competence requirements. Performance requires that employees be capable, have clearly defined job roles, know what is expected of them, have tools to do the job, have the knowledge and skills to perform, receive regular feedback on performance and understand and receive rewards for good performance (Power, 1986).

Performance measures in a service industry is unique because most services are intangible, services output varies and production and consumption of the services are inseparable and services are perishable.

When building the performance measures (Otley 1987) some basic questions need to be answered; what are the dimensions of performance that the organisation (university) is seeking to encourage? How are appropriate standards to be set? What rewards and/or penalties are to be associated with achievement of targets? Setting of appropriate standards once the actual dimensions and performance measures have been established involves consideration of who sets the standards, at what levels the standards are set and whether the standards facilitate comparison across business units (Drury, 2004).

#### **2.2.4 Reward Management**

Reward management is about how people are rewarded in accordance with their value to an organisation. It is concerned with both financial and non-financial rewards. An employee reward system consist of an organisation integrated policies, processes and practices for rewarding it's employees in accordance with their contribution, skill and competence and their market worth. Cole (2002) concurs that employers seeking staff who are rare or want to achieve fairness in pay in relation to effort, responsibility and other factors find that monetary incentives are needed to encourage employees to put extra effort.

Armstrong (2002) asserts that the aim of reward management is to support the attainment of the organisation strategic and short term objectives by helping to ensure it has skilled, competent, committed, and well motivated work force it needs. The financial rewards could be fixed or variable pay and employee benefits which together comprise total remuneration. The system



also incorporates non-financial rewards such as recognition, praise, achievement, responsibility and personal growth and in many cases performance management process. Among the concerns of the employees' quality of work life, security, impact of work on family life pay and benefits top the list (Susan and Schuler 2000).

To be a source of sustainable competitive advantage human resources must also be rare. If competitors can easily access the same pool of talents, then that talent provides no advantage against competitors (Kathryn, 2006). By being an employer of choice, an organisation can access the best available talent. In other words the best get the best. By managing and remunerating well, employers can further enhance their advantage.

### **2.2.5 Employee Relations**

Employee relations consist of all those areas of human resource management that involve relationships with employees directly and or through collective agreements where trade unions are recognised. Employee relations refer to interrelationships, both formal and informal, between managers and whom they manage (Cole, 2002). It embraces; contractual obligations, communication policy and practice; joint decision-making and problem solving; collective bargaining; individual grievance and disciplinary policy and practice; employee development and employee welfare. Employee relations' processes consist of the approached and methods adopted by employers to deal with employees collectively or individually. These are based on corporate organization's articulated or implied employee relation policies and strategies recognising the uniqueness of each organisation, Armstrong (2002) emphasise that "there is of course no such a thing as a model employee relations policy. Every organisation develops its own policies."

In employee relations is the strategy of Employee involvement. Employee involvement is often viewed as an integral part of High Commitment Work Systems. Involvement in decisions provides a sense of ownership of and commitment to both those decisions and the corporate organization (Guest, 1992). Clearly, employee involvement processes should engender the perception that the corporate organization values employee contributions. Additionally, employee involvement might be perceived by workers as a discretionary positive benefit. In the sense that involvement opportunities are voluntarily provided, employee commitment to the employer-employee relationship should increase. Further, Lawler and Mohrman, (2003) found that when parties to an exchange relationship work together toward a super ordinate goal, relational cohesion increases. In that employee involvement serves the dual purposes of enriching jobs and improving corporate organizational processes and outcomes, employee involvement will be positively related to employee commitment to the corporate organization. Previous research has supported a moderately strong link between related measures (e.g., autonomy) and commitment (Kalleberg et al., 1994; Wallace, 1995). Employee involvement is often realized in the form of increased worker responsibility and autonomy (Stone, 2005).

## **2.3 Business Strategy**

A business strategy is the set of management decisions designed by executives, the board, senior management team or whoever are the final decision makers in the organisation that are meant to get the better of adversaries or attain the organisations goals (Tapper, 2005). Business Strategy is concerned with the overall purpose and scope of the business to meet stakeholder expectations. This is a crucial level since it is heavily influenced by investors in the business and acts to guide strategic decision-making throughout the business. Business strategy is often stated explicitly in a mission statement.

Corporate level management involves corporate level issues such as corporate identity (CI), branding, communications, and strategy (Balmer and Greyser, 2003). In a broader sense, factors can be described as strategic if they lead to creation and exploitation of potentials for success or significantly influence the development of the firm (Grant, 2002). Without strategies, firms' short-term decisions will conflict with their long-term goals (Brown and Blackmon, 2005). For this, strategic management theory distinguishes different levels of strategy where strategy-making process occurs and competitive advantage is contributed (Huff et al., 2008). Corporate strategy addresses industry attractiveness and deals with the ways in which a corporation manages a set of businesses together (Grant, 2002). Some key tasks of corporate strategy are to identify the industries within which the business units of the corporate organization will compete and to allocate corporate resources to these divisions (Bowman and Helfat, 2001). Corporate strategy concerns the inter-corporate organizational dimension at which the firm interacts with other companies. According to Baraldi (2008), a business strategy consists of structural (defining relationship contents, forming network structures and evaluating goal matching with the network) as well as dynamic components (combining resources in interacting via inter-corporate organizational routines and joint projects). Business strategy focuses on competitive advantage, i.e. how a parastatal should compete (Grant, 2002). As mentioned by Thompson et al. (2005) and Porter (2004), a firm, or specifically the strategic business units, zeros in on the ability to perform interrelated economic activities at a collectively lower cost than rivals, or to perform some activities in unique ways that create end-customer value. The focus and objective of strategy making (strategizing) varies between the different levels, but on the other hand each level can influence the others (interrelationships). The strategic fit between internal aspects of an

corporate organization (a network, firm, or business unit) and the external environment determines competitive advantage.

## **2.4 Human Resource Management Function and Business Strategy**

The relationship between human resource and business results is built on a rather simple premise that better deployment and use of HR should correlate with higher business performance in a competitive environment (Ulrich, 1997). Constant marketplace discontinuities and the accelerating pace of change have seen traditional businesses and corporate organizations redesigning themselves for superior corporate organizational performance. In this quest, human resource management has aspired to be a business partner. There has been a continuous debate on how human resource strategy can be linked to the business strategy of the corporate organization (Wright, McCormick, Sherman & McMahan, 1999; Ulrich, 1997; Martell and Carroll, 1995). Recently there has been an emphasis among academics and practitioners on people and people management systems as a source of competitive advantage (Becker and Huselid, 1999; Ulrich, 1998, Bartlett and Ghosha 2002). Previous empirical research has given useful insights about the linkage of HRM with firm performance (Becker and Huselid, 1998) and has consistently found that more effective HR management is associated with superior financial performance.

Different researchers have observed that human resource management functions provide a source of competitive advantage. The reason for designing and redesigning HR programs is to achieve corporate organizational agility through contextual clarity, embedding core values, and enriching work practices (Shafer *et al.*, 2001). Kochanski and Randall, (1994) stated that the HR function tackled the task of changing the fundamental form of the corporate organization by reducing

costs and improving performance, employee effectiveness, and satisfaction through the development of a strategic architecture that integrated work flows, structures, and the competency enhancement process. Forbringer and Oeth (1998) reported that HR practices made a significant impact on business results and provided a springboard for the HR department pursuant to the findings of Ulrich (1997). Some of their findings included HR initiatives to help identify, communicate, and support core cultural competencies; expand economic literacy; expand corporate knowledge or the capture of collective wisdom; play the role of a change agent (Ulrich, 1997) and overall strive to be innovative. Hallowell, (1996) suggested that much of the value that a parastatal creates is through employee satisfaction, which was converted to customer and shareholder value via corporate organizational capabilities and was captured by the firm as a result of its cost advantage and superior service.

Empirical evidence thus, supports that both strategic management of human resource and HR practices have positive effects on firm outcomes. Using a large-scale survey of HR managers across China, Law *et al.* (2003) found that the strategic role of HR is important to firm performance in joint ventures. Bjorkman and Fan (2002) focused on joint ventures and wholly owned foreign subsidiaries in China and found support for the positive impact of high-performance HR practices and the extent of HRM-strategy integration on firm performance in a competitive environment. They further noted that HRM strategy integration was a stronger predictor of performance than HR practices.

Regarding the effects of HR practices on corporate organizational outcomes, Yu and Egri (2005) found that several HR practices were related to job satisfaction and commitment of employees working in joint ventures and state-owned enterprises. Bjorkman and Fan (2002) reported that HR practices that focus on individual performance and employment motivation were strong

costs and improving performance, employee effectiveness, and satisfaction through the development of a strategic architecture that integrated work flows, structures, and the competency enhancement process. Forbringer and Oeth (1998) reported that HR practices made a significant impact on business results and provided a springboard for the HR department pursuant to the findings of Ulrich (1997). Some of their findings included HR initiatives to help identify, communicate, and support core cultural competencies; expand economic literacy; expand corporate knowledge or the capture of collective wisdom; play the role of a change agent (Ulrich, 1997) and overall strive to be innovative. Hallowell, (1996) suggested that much of the value that a parastatal creates is through employee satisfaction, which was converted to customer and shareholder value via corporate organizational capabilities and was captured by the firm as a result of its cost advantage and superior service.

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predictors of firm performance in foreign-invested enterprises. Takeuchi, Akabayashi, and Chen (2003) also found support for the positive relationship between a firm's HR practices and financial performance in a sample of Japanese subsidiaries. Furthermore, Wang, Tsui, Zhang, and Ma (2003) argued that corporate organization-specific employment relationships with different levels of inducements and expected contributions are critical for firm performance.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology that was used to carry out this study. The methodology of this research included the research design, population to be studied, sampling strategy, the data collection process, the instruments used for gathering data, and how data was analyzed and presented.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design refers to the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in the procedure (Babbie, 2002). The study adopted a case study research design. A case study design was the most appropriate where a detailed analysis of a single unit of study was desired as it provided focused and detailed insight to phenomenon that may otherwise be unclear (Young, 2000). Case study allows the study to focus on one unit of study which is KWS. Case study facilitated an in-depth analysis of human resource management function at KWS and its effectiveness in supporting business strategy.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The study used an interview guide to collect the required data. It made it possible to obtain data required to meet specific objectives of the study. The interview guide was structured into two parts namely: Part A which facilitated collection of data on the respondents' profile and Part B



which gathered information to determine effectiveness of the human resource management function in supporting business strategy at KWS.

The interviewees were the head of business strategy and head of human resource management at Kenya Wildlife Service. The study sought to utilize the respondents since they are more versed with both human resource management and corporate strategic issues .They have been at strategic in formulating and overseeing the implementation of strategic decisions.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Data collected was purely qualitative and was analyzed by means of content analysis. According to Holsti (1969), content analysis is used to make inferences about the antecedents of a communication, to describe and make inferences about characteristics of a communication and to make inferences about the effects of a communication. It involves observation and detailed description of phenomena that comprise the object of study. This method was preferred because the information collected was qualitative and therefore required analytical understanding. Neuendorf (2002) suggested that when human coders are used in content analysis, reliability translates to the amount of agreement or correspondence among two or more coders. Reliability in content analysis was ensured by analyzing the amount of agreement or correspondence among the key informants.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the interpretation and presentation of the findings. The purpose of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the human resource management function in supporting business strategy at the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS). The data collection was done using the interview guides. The respondents were the Head of business strategy and Head of human resource management. Booking of appointment to the respondents was crucial in order to secure the interviewees. Both respondents were available for the oral interview and their contributions into this study were valuable. This study therefore was meant to collect first hand information (qualitative data) that was used to analyze the study. The results are presented in prose form. This chapter provides the major findings discussion on those findings.

### **4.2 Demographic Information**

The respondents were aged between 31-40 years with Masters degrees in strategic management. The two managers have worked in KWS management for over two years. They have demonstrated and testified skills in leadership, excellent communication skills, competent, strong team work, attention to detail, as well as supervisory skills including hiring, termination, scheduling, training, payroll, and other administrative tasks. The Head of HRM prior to joining KWS, has worked as a Procurement Officer in Catering & Tourism Development Levy Trustees, Assistant HRM in Serviscope (E A) Ltd, Head of customer service in the Jawabu Consultancy Recruitment Agency, Assistant consultant in the Perfect Employment Services Company. After contributing to the growth and success of five different organizations in the past 15 years the

Head of HRM deemed to be the best person to be involved in the study since she had experience in various levels of management and issues that influence human resources.

The Head of strategy and change had worked previously in Maokwa Management Consultants and Sameer Industrial Park Ltd in Corporate Planning divisions prior to joining the Strategy and Change division in KWS. He demonstrated competence in areas such as project management, strategic planning, resource utilization, revenue growth and cost reduction. His ability to analyze needs and create unique solutions designed to yield a profitable outcome proved to be one of his greatest assets. The two respondents were therefore appropriate for this study and the information gathered from them was reliable.

### **4.3 The Effectiveness of the HRM Function in Supporting Business Strategy**

The study sought to gather information on the roles and functions of the HRM and Corporate Strategy in KWS. This enabled the researcher to integrate the information into a detailed analysis on the link between the human resources' performance and the implementation of strategic plans. This relied on the collected information on all aspects of the Human Resources Management function.

#### **4.3.1 Human Resources Strategy**

The Strategic Plan in KWS was carefully developed to ensure that the resources available were used in the most efficient and accountable manner. The KWS team while implementing the 2008 – 2012 strategic plan learnt lessons that assisted them in understanding the organization. This has enabled the Senior Management to focus and put the institution in an appropriate direction. Implementation of the plan is carried out through a combination of quarterly performance monitoring to allow for adjustments, staff performance management and performance

contracting. KWS invested in human capital by having right people in right jobs, motivation and training programs. The strategic themes of the strategy are: Attracting & Recruiting; Learning and Development; Management of Performance; Reward & Recognition; Leadership & Management Development; Staff Engagement.

Resource mobilization, confidence of development partners / donors and transparent system of management has enabled consistent performance of this institution. Major milestones achieved in the implementation of the themes include: development of HRM Policies and procedures policy and Schemes of Service. KWS now takes pride in its motivated and committed employees. Job evaluation was carried out and salary disparities harmonized. Pension scheme was converted from defined benefits to defined contributions scheme. Corporate culture change initiatives have been undertaken to inculcate positive attitudes among staff. Infrastructural improvements on staff housing and office blocks have continuously been carried out. Sound financial management systems have been implemented while paying special attention to the use of ICT in decision making on service delivery and work place management. Systems and processes have been implemented to enhance service delivery to drive the organization for ISO certification. All these efforts are geared towards service delivery, increasing productivity towards the achievement of the strategy.

#### **4.3.2 Role of the Head of HRM**

The major role of the HRM in KWS is to ensure the linkage between individual performance plans and the need to improve both horizontally – across functions, departments, etc. – and vertically among the levels of the corporate organization. The information gathered showed that employees shared a single vision; allowing all contributors to directly relate their efforts to a

single set of corporate organizational outcomes. It was concluded that this has contributed to a great deal to competitive tactics, but it has not had a great deal of practical impact on individual performance management.

The flow of information and feedback from the employees has been ensured in the KWS by carrying out periodic employee satisfaction surveys. For instance HR manager said that when changes are made in KWS, employees' surveys are conducted to gather information, feedback, and recommendations from them. This is with the aim of encouraging employee engagement and participation.

The Head of HRM also informed the researcher that the maintenance of up to date job descriptions is done by continuously monitoring the job conditions, environment concerns and the changes in line departments. This has enabled staff to focus on their areas of specialization thus has improved the employees' performance.

KWS has supported staff development and training in a number of initiatives among them are; apprenticeship, internship, job rotation, mentoring, and new skills programs. Manyani and Kenya Wildlife Training Institute are the main training institutes where staff are encouraged to further their knowledge and skills in service delivery. HRM has supported greatly in implementation of a new pay and grading structure that applies to all staff based on the application of KWS wide job evaluation in support of equal pay for work of equal value. This provides a solid foundation for the development of new reward, recognition and progression policies.

The Head of HRM disclosed that some of the functions executed by her division included: Human Resource Development, this includes Career Development (helping individuals align their career planning), Corporate organizational Development (helping groups initiate and

manage change), and Training and Development (designing / developing, and delivering training to ensure people are equipped to do their jobs). HRM usually took on the role of consultant and assist in strengthening the relationship between employees and senior management.

### **4.3.3 Recruitment and selection**

The respondent informed the study that KWS was dedicated to having recruitment, selection and appointment practices that reflected its strategic and operational objectives. Emphasis is put on merit, transparency, fairness, cost effective and prides itself as an equal opportunity employer.

Based on the provisions of the Schemes of Service, the HRM in consultation with user department draft an advertisement for approval by the Director .This applies to all vacancies irrespective of whether they will be filled internally or externally. External advertisements are placed in the local dailies and the Websites whereas for Internal advertisements are posted on the notice boards and intranets. Preference is given to internal applicants who meet the job specifications and competencies. Internal advertisements are done when it is ascertained that there is adequate capacity in terms of knowledge and skills among the serving staff. Internal staff are required to complete an Internal Job Application Form when submitting applications.

Members of the short listing Committee are comprised of Head of department. Applications are shortlisted having met the minimum academic and experience requirements for the position. If there is no applicant who meets the minimum requirements, the short listing committee minutes that the position be re-advertised. If a suitable candidate is still unavailable, the short listing committee recommends the revision of the job requirements, re-designing, re-advertising, head hunting or other alternative action. The shortlisted candidates undergo aptitude test and oral

interviews for selection. Reference checks are conducted on successful candidate's character from his/her list of references before engagement for all cadres. One of the referees must be the candidate's immediate former employer for those with working experience. The respondent informed that the successful candidate is offered a letter of offer stipulating the terms and conditions of service and is given up to three months to assume duty.

#### **4.3.4 Training and Development**

The KWS has ensured that there is continuity of leadership and management by allowing delegation of duties which encourage the assistants to handle challenging decisions making and responsibilities thus the absence of the any respective leader is rarely noticed. It recognizes the need for training and development for all its employees. It is therefore its policy to offer training opportunities to its employees, in order to equip them with the necessary skills to improve their work performance and enhance their personal development. Staff are also be encouraged to undertake self-development courses by granting of study leave, time-off and reimbursement of fees and examination expenses subject to the set conditions

The respondent mentioned that training and development is guided by an annual training plan derived from the Training Needs Assessment (TNA) and the Training Policy. Training Needs are identified through annual performance appraisals and projected skills gap from each Department. Training is geared towards improving the employee's knowledge, skill, and attitudes to ensure enhanced performance and efficient service delivery towards the achievement of the strategic objectives. The Training Policy is guided by the overall direction of the Public Service Training Policy and is continuously developed and borrows from best practice in both public and private sector organizations. A Training Advisory Committee is constituted by the Director ensures the

Training policy guidelines are enforced. This Committee maintains equity and transparency in award of training opportunities and regularly reviews the rules and regulations governing training and development. The Head of HRM provides secretariat to the Training Advisory Committee (TAC). The main function of the TAC is to ensure equity in approve training programmes in line with the training plan.

KWS has supported staff development and training in a numbers of initiatives among them are; apprenticeship, internship, job rotation, mentoring, and new skills programs. Manyani and Kenya Wildlife Training Institute are the main training institutes where staffs are encouraged to further their knowledge and skills in service delivery. The Head of HRM undertakes a monitoring and evaluation exercise after a period of three years to measure the impact of trainings conducted and the return on investment of the same.

### **3.5 Reward & Recognition**

To achieve the desired goals, reward systems are closely aligned to organizational strategies. At KWS, Performance is rewarded through awards as recommended by the Human Resources Management Advisory Committee. The awards are guided by budgetary provisions and the overall performance of KWS in Performance Contracting. These awards are in the form of letter of commendation, salary increments and merit awards. Moreover necessary sanctions are also recommended for the employees whose performance is below average.

The researcher was informed that when KWS needed to focus on the product differentiation strategy, HRM designed reward practices to foster innovation in order to provide unique services. This gave the managers a lot of flexibility to offer rewards at various cost levels and to find rewards that match what individual employees find valuable. Team rewards are also in place



and they help foster team bonding. These initiatives have enabled high-performance teams and enhanced cross-organizational cooperation. Team motivation and rewards programs are part of the overall employee recognition program. The desired outcome of recognition programs is to improve performance and employee retention.

#### **4.3.6 Employee Performance Management**

According to the respondents, the ultimate purpose of staff performance management is to promote the most effective use of workers so that each employee makes optimum contribution to the strategic objectives within his/her power. It also helps individuals get the highest possible satisfaction from their jobs. Performance of staff is done through a 180 degree appraisal system to measure and evaluate performance in both mid-year and annual assessments. The researcher found out the main features of KWS's performance management system include parameters that are mainly geared at closely monitoring the utilization of both human and non human resources, attitudes, efforts, determination and outputs. In this approach, the employee is assessed against jointly agreed tasks and targets with the supervisor. It is 'results focused' and helps to integrate ones tasks/objectives on the job under consideration with the objectives of the Department/Sections and the organization as a whole.

At least twice every financial year, performance is formally assessed against the agreed targets. These targets are drawn from the strategic plans which are translated into annual work plans. All employees are appraised twice every financial year. Blank Appraisal Report Forms are submitted to employees at least two (2) weeks before the target setting date. An appraisal interview is held with the immediate supervisor to discuss the achieved targets. Any disagreements are recorded and the report is forwarded to the second supervisor. The supervisors submit the duly completed

forms to the second supervisor who summarizes and submit them for analysis. The Head of HRM submits all analyzed appraisal reports to the Management and Board.

Good performance is rewarded through awards approved by the Board. Such awards are guided by budgetary provisions and the overall performance of the KWS .At the end of the performance appraisal exercise, the Management acknowledges those rated with both outstanding and above average performance by issuing them a letter of commendation and other tokens as approved by the Board. On the other hand, necessary sanctions are recommended for employees whose performance is below average.

KWS regards performance appraisal as a continuous process. Whenever an employee displays weaknesses in his/her work, he/she must be assisted by the immediate supervisor to overcome his/her weaknesses immediately. Whenever an employee produces outstanding performance, his immediate supervisor is encouraged to commend him/her on the spot in order to reinforce that behavior/performance. Moreover supervisors are required to mentor and motivate the employee at all times verbally and in writing, and advise them of any faults or shortcomings, the remedying of which may reasonably be supposed to be within their power as soon as these become apparent. All appraisal reports are recorded and filed in the employee's personal file. The respondents disclosed that if an employee's performance is found unsatisfactory during the performance and development review, he is advised of the shortfalls in his/her performance and be placed on a performance and skills improvement programme. The programme specifies the performance, skills and standards that must be achieved and will set a time for an interim review. This will normally be after six (6) months (during the mid-year review).At the end of the stipulated period, a performance and development review is undertaken. If the employee's performance still fails to meet standards, the employment contract may be terminated.

### **4.3.7 Health and Safety in the Workplace**

Maintenance of health and safety measures in KWS is done in a structured mechanism that gives procedure on how to; report accidents and incidents, carry out a risk assessment for the workplace which should identify any hazards present in the workplace, assess the risks arising from such hazards and identify the steps to be taken to deal with any risks, take health and safety leave, handle workplace harassments and victimizations and present complaint and grievances. The head of business strategy accepted that HR practitioner is responsible in setting up a positive culture with the workplace. He mentioned that in the recruiting of employees, identifying competencies and traits that support a positive culture and then hiring those individuals has greatly helped in ensuring the sustainability of the initiative in KWS. This has enabled KWS to involve leaders, who are comfortable with their leadership position, have a vision, listen to the coworkers, and maintain good communication and relationship in the workplace for a positive culture.

### **4.3.8 Equal Opportunities**

In the past, KWS is believed to have deficiencies that caused negative attitudes for instance, favoritism, lack of recognition or different sets of standards for different employees. The current management has had positive influences based on fairness and equal treatment of all employees; achievements are recognized and rewarded; open management style with regular feedback; open and honest communication; clear goals are set out; regular training are conducted; evaluations on staff satisfaction and of course the equal opportunities for all employees has been adopted to promote positive workplace culture in KWS.

## CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Summary

The information gathered from the respondent showed that they were appropriate respondents for the study. They showed a lot of competence and knowledge in their different roles in the management of KWS. Having worked in other organizations, they demonstrated and testified skills in leadership, excellent communication skills, competent, strong team player, attention to detail, as well as supervisory skills including hiring, termination, scheduling, training, payroll, and other administrative tasks.

From the findings of this study, the HRM sets out how KWS will address its strategic themes. Strategic objectives have been identified for each theme and are delivered through a number of supporting strategies some of which have been developed and others which will be developed/formalized in accordance with an agreed plan. The strategic themes are: Attracting & Recruiting; Learning and Development; Management of Performance; Reward & Recognition; Leadership & Management Development; Staff Engagement. Implementation of the plan was carried out through a combination of quarterly monitoring to allow for adjustments, staff performance management, and performance contracting. KWS invested in human capital by having right people in right jobs, motivation and training programs which allowed team work. Resource mobilization is key in enabling the mandate to be realized. Confidence of development partners / donors and transparent system of management enabled consistent performance of the institution. The major role of the HRM in KWS was realized that she was fully involved in ensuring the



Linkage between individual performance plans and the need to improve both horizontally – across functions, departments, etc. – and vertically among the levels of the corporate organization.

In regard to recruitment of new staff into the KWS, the management is able to develop greater understanding of its labour markets and how it can widen the potential pool of applicants. Aligning staff recruitment and selection processes with KWS strategies was found to be key. There is a paradigm change in KWS's resourcing policies to recruit from flexible pools of staff. Recognizing some jobs will always require specialists, identifying and developing groups of jobs to enable potential successors to be identified for a variety of roles e.g. developing talented HR managers, each of whom is adaptable and capable of filling a number of roles. HRM in KWS will be having easier times in developing longer term work force planning models that inform recruitment and deployment plans. The management has been able to develop strategies and policies to promote KWS as a service delivery parastatal. KWS has developed role and career progression policies that support flexible staff deployment. Moreover development of human resource Health & Wellbeing and Flexible Working strategies in support of a positive working environment has been enhanced. Also succession planning policies and talents pools have been developed in various ways.

The KWS encourage staff to self develop by taking them through a process that involved performance management; competency modeling; training needs analysis; job analysis; gap analysis; career development programs; and workforce planning. This made KWS to deliver quality services to the public demonstrating high professional qualification. In the implementation of strategic plans, the staff experienced a number of problems for instance; inability of some staff to cope with change; the nature and effectiveness of the processes used to

arrive at major decisions to bring about change; the efficiency of the mechanisms utilized to complement management decisions; the internal methods employed to determine and track valid objectives; the effectiveness of the way information is communicated within the parastatal; and the quality of the personnel and attention to recruiting and selecting the proper quality and adding to their abilities with further training.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

From the study; it is clear that human resource management has been very much effective in enabling the link between the human resources with strategic goals and objectives of the KWS. This has resulted to improvement in business performance and development in the organizational culture that fosters innovation and flexibility. The HRM in KWS demonstrated acceptance of the HR functions in the formulation of the company's strategies as well as in the implementation of those strategies through HR activities such as recruiting, selecting, training and rewarding personnel. HR management role in environmental scanning i.e. identifying and analyzing external opportunities and threats is in deed very crucial to the KWS success. Similarly HR management enabled the supply of competitive intelligence in the workplace which has been very useful in the strategic planning process. HR also participated in the strategy formulation process by supplying information regarding the company's internal strengths and weaknesses. The strengths and weaknesses KWS human resources had a determining effect on the viability of KWS strategic options.

The study therefore concludes with a view that a Flexible Working Strategy in KWS would provide the opportunity to balance operational and individual requirements, enhance corporate performance through e.g. reduced absenteeism rates and increase staff motivation and job

satisfaction. In the introduction to the effective human resource functions, KWS would deliver Strategic plans through the efforts, skills and capabilities that the general management and staff can contribute to the parastatal. Investment in the delivery of the HR function will drive the changes in culture, behaviours, skills and performance that will deliver the type of services KWS need deliver and the workforce it needs to have. The ability to invest at appropriate levels in the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy is linked to achieving the KWS's income growth targets and creating the capacity for investment. Failure to deliver that investment capacity will inhibit the parastatal's ability to support delivering the changes in culture, skills, competencies and behaviours needed to achieve its strategic growth objectives.

Through effective HRM practices and corporate governance, KWS has demonstrated leadership in its core business of wildlife conservation and management. It is rapidly becoming a shining example for its conservation practices in Africa. The Director has been exceptional in inspiring and applying transformational leadership to implement change. He has portrayed practical competencies in leadership - mentoring, coaching and succession planning. As a result, the organization received the COYA awards recognizing him as the CEO who enabled change and transformed the company into a model of performance management that is unique in the public sector. It is this style of leadership that bagged KWS several COYA awards in the categories of best CEO of the year, leadership practices, and corporate governance, manager of the year and lastly Company of the year 2009.

### 5.3 Recommendations

An underpinning strategic objective that can be adopted in KWS is the development and implementation of a skills/competency framework that will support the Strategy's aims and objectives and ensure an integrated approach to all aspects of human resource management. The KWS has the potential to exploit its capability in developing the policies and processes that support the development of talent for roles not jobs. In support of the development and retention of key staff, the KWS needs to consider the identification of talent pools e.g. the professoriate or research staff and develop tailored development policies to support that particular group.

The research also posits some recommendations on the promoters of effective human resource management functions as; Identifying strategic business issues; Crafting corporate and business level plans of action; Emphasis on strategy implementation on HRM that would involve; measuring, evaluating, revising and refocusing for the future; Setting the Direction that would ensure that the parastatals' mission and vision is adhered to; emphasis on the Strategic Business Issues which are likely to highlight numerous implications for human resource management; analysis of economy and industry in which it competes; intensive assessment of company strengths, weakness, and core competencies.

It's increasingly necessary for corporate organizations to adapt new technologies, structures, processes, cultures, and procedures to meet the demands of stiffer competition. Most of the corporate organizations look to the human resource department for the skills to facilitate organizational change and to maintain organizational flexibility and adaptability. One consequence of this change facilitator role is the need to be more focused on the future. For example, as the external environment and business strategies change, new skills and



competencies are needed. To ensure that the right skills and competencies are available at the appropriate time, HR department in KWS and other related corporate organizations must anticipate change. Thus, the HR department can play a significant role in organizational change. In addition, they must guide the discussion and flow of knowledge, information and learning throughout the organization.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Further Studies**

There is need to explore on the challenges facing the HRM in the adoption of strategic planning in both corporate and private organizations.

More research should be carried out to investigate the factors of HRM that influence employee's retention in corporate organizations.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Interview Guide

#### RE: Participation In Research

I am a postgraduate student pursuing my Master degree in Business Administration at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a research entitled “The Effectiveness of The Human Resource Management Function in Supporting Business Strategy at Kenya Wildlife Service” which is a requirement for the award of the degree.

In this regard, you have been selected to take part in this study as a respondent. Kindly respond to all items to reflect your opinion and experience. Please answer all the questions freely. You will not be identified from the information you provide and no information about individuals will be given to any corporate organization. The data collected will be used for this academic research only.

Your participation is important for the success of this project. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Mary Chemas

**PART A: RESPONDENT'S PROFILE**

1. Please provide the following information.

a.	Age bracket	18-30 yrs [ ] 31-40yrs [ ] 41-50yrs [ ] Above 50 yrs[ ]
b.	Level of education	Ordinary Level [ ] Diploma/College Certificate [ ] Under graduate [ ] Post graduate [ ] Other (Specify).....
c.	Work duration:	

**PART B: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FUNCTION IN SUPPORTING BUSINESS STRATEGY**

1. Briefly explain how the following recruitment practices influence the selection of excellent staff at KWS
  - a. Accurate advertisements, job/role descriptions and person specifications and context information?
  - b. Appropriate selection tools and mechanisms
  - c. Timely hiring
  - d. Well planned induction

2. How does human resource management function at KWS achieve the following aspects of employee performance management?
  - a. Linking individual staff objectives to business plans
  - b. Implementing mechanisms that facilitate reception of regular feedback from employees
  - c. Keeping up-to-date job descriptions/roles
  - d. Ensuring staff development through training
  - e. Continuously evaluation employee performance
  - f. Performance appraisals
  
3. Briefly explain how human resource management function at KWS carry out the following aspects of workforce continuity and succession planning
  - a. Monitoring of absence and resignation data
  - b. Monitoring age profiles
  - c. Appropriate maternity and paternity leave provisions
  - d. Identification of single person/critical dependencies
  - e. Ensuring knowledge sharing systems such as mentoring, job rotation, and job exchanges are in place
  - f. Ensuring effective exit interviews and management of knowledge handover

4. How does management at KWS ensure that human resource management functions conform with legal obligations in respect to the following
  - a. Discrimination
  - b. Diversity
  - c. Privacy
  - d. Health and Safety
  - e. Freedom of Information
  - f. Equal Opportunity
  
5. How does management at KWS encourage positive workplace culture in respect to the following
  - a. Value defined and driven workplace culture
  - b. Change orientated, flexible culture
  - c. Effective communication
  - d. Plans, policies, guidelines available to all staff
  - e. Positive encouragement/support for Innovation and continuous quality improvement
  - f. Recognition and reward systems
  - g. Engagement with work groups and union representatives
  - h. Management of major change procedures
  - i. Monitoring staff satisfaction

6. Which other human resource practices are adopted by KWS?
7. As a human resource manager at KWS, how have you been involved in supporting the business strategy in respect to demonstration of understanding of Vision, Mission and Values and observable behavior?
8. What is your take in drawing up the human resource management (HRM) plan in KWS?
9. What are the strategies that you have supported in manpower planning and designing an efficient performance management system?
10. What are some of the strategies that you have established in KWS to support service quality enhancement?
11. Do you face any challenges in supporting the strategic plan in the KWS? What the strength and weakness elements on the same?
12. How does the corporate organization overcome challenges to successful realization of business strategy through human resource function?
13. Generally, has human resource function been effective in supporting support business strategy?