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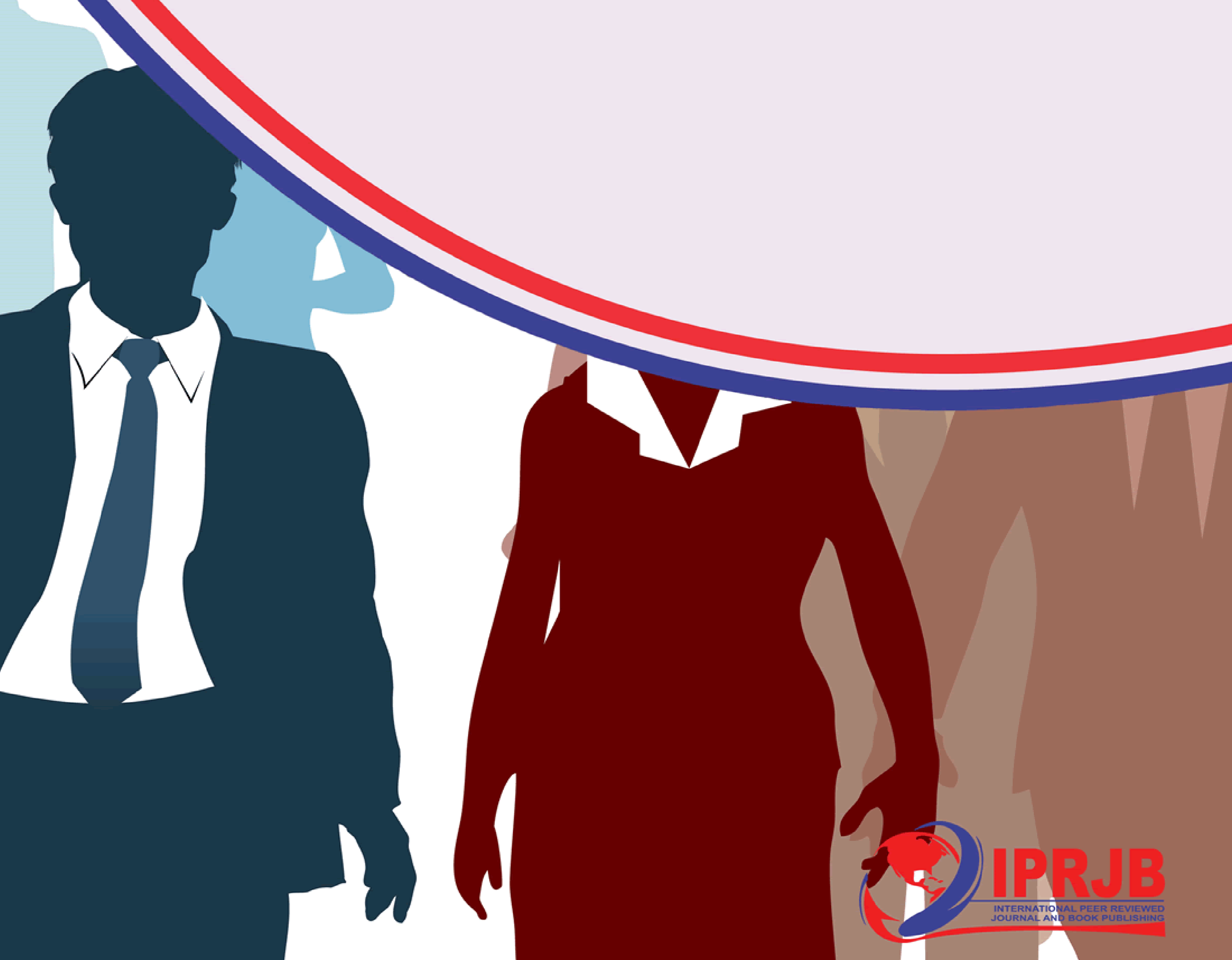

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REWARD MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTES IN KENYA

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between reward management system and the employee performance in Technical Institutes in Kenya. Many organizations including technical institutions have realized the value of human capital, which is the most important asset of any organization, besides; the success or failure of an organization is largely dependent on the caliber of the people working therein.

Methodology: The research adopted both descriptive and correlational research designs. It also used a mixture of methods approach consisting of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, applied to a sample of the technical training institutes in Kenya. A sample size of 3 Technical Institutes in Kenya and comprising of 137 respondents was used. A linear regression analysis was used to explain the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. The data was analyzed through Statistical package for social sciences and presented using the statistical methods amongst them tables, bar graphs and pie charts. The results were used test and determine the relationship of the variables.

Findings: The findings revealed that reward management had a positive effect and thus relationship on performance of the employee.

Contributions: The findings contribute to enhancement of reward systems in any organization for improved performance of both the employee and at large the employer. The results and recommendations will be used for policy formation and decision making

Keywords: *Human Resource Management, Reward Management, Reward System, Employee Performance, Technical Institutes in Kenya.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The technical training institutes have in the recent past, faced transformation, expansion, conversions/upgrading and competition from other service delivery organizations. This translates to mean that performance of the employees therein will also be affected in one way or the other. The specific objective was be to find out the relationship between employee reward system and employee performance in technical training institutes in Kenya.

The research adopted both descriptive and correlational research designs. It also used a mixture of methods approach consisting of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, applied to a sample of the technical training institutes in Kenya. A sample size of 3 Technical Institutes in Kenya and comprising of 137 respondents was used. A linear regression analysis was used to explain the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. The data was analyzed through Statistical package for social sciences and presented using the statistical methods amongst them tables, bar graphs and pie charts.

The results were used test and determine the relationship of the variables. The findings revealed that employee welfare had a great effect on performance. HRM is all about organizations dealing and handling people as their most important assets of and technical training institutes are not exceptional. Kenya had thirty two technical before devolvement of counties. In the recent past they have experienced transformation and upgrading to institutes of higher learning, and cut-throat competition, advancement in information technology, and leadership wrangles and therefore they are determined to have a sustainable competitive advantage by being trying to remain meaningful, relevant, effective, and fruitful (Kamau, 2008).

Vast majority of empirical research is focused on the organizational performance issue, and most studies show that well directed human resource management practices and leadership do increase firm's performance. However studies on reward management system the employee performance in Kenya has been limited with much concentration on organizations (Maina, 2015, Omolo *et al, 2013;* Mutua, 2012; Musyoka, 2008 and Nzuve, 2010, Kipkebut, 2010, Swain, 2010). The concentration is on financial institutes, institutes of higher education, counties and other government institutes in Kenya and in Africa and all found out that there is an impact of HRM practices on the organization's performance (Chen et al., 2009; Malik et al., 2010; Lew, 2009). This leaves a gap on the relationship between reward management system on the performance of the employees working in the technical training institutes Kenya.

Reward management is one of the HRM practices and together with the other practices is designed to attract, develop, motivate and retain employees who ensure the effective functioning of the organization (Tan & Nasurdin, 2010). Employees are very important assets of an organization as they contribute to its growth and success (Danish and Usman, 2010). Malik *et al.* (2010) concluded that in the era characterized by rapid and continuous change, knowledge capital must be retained in order for organizations to be productive and responsive to the needs of their stakeholders. Likewise, institutions including technical training institutes need to attract, retain and develop their employee. Organizations and this includes technical training institutes need employees who are well rewarded and motivated so that they are committed to their work of conducting research and training for the development of the nations (Lew, 2009).

1.1 Objective of the Study

The specific objective of the study was find out the relationship between reward system and employee performance in technical training institutes in Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Hierarchy of Needs: The most famous classification of needs is the one formulated by Maslow (1954). He suggested that there are five major need categories that apply to people in general, starting from the fundamental physiological needs, then safety, social, esteem and self-fulfilment. Needs at a higher level only emerge when a lower need is satisfied. The notion here was that a satisfied need is no longer a motivator.

Physiological Needs: The first level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is need to satisfy biological psychological requirements like food, air, water, and shelter, which means that there is need for them to be met before moving to the next level. If workers do not make enough money to buy food and water, then it will be hard for them to sustain their jobs. As argued by Juang and Morissete (2008), institutions with functional HRM practices have a high chance of achieving their objectives especially if the reward system and employee welfare necessary for staff retention and motivation is in place. A functional HRM practice like reward system will boost the esteem. Satisfaction of these needs produces feelings of self-confidence, prestige, power and control. Self-esteem can be summarized and is represented by two different sets of needs according to Maslow. First, individuals are motivated by the "desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom (Maslow, 1943). He goes on to discuss a second subset of esteem needs, "we have what we may call the desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), recognition, attention, importance or appreciation. Organizations through functional HRM practices will enjoy the services of the employees if they understand the Maslow's hierarchy of needs and work towards fulfilling them through a good reward system, and conducive employee relations.

The Managers need to devise programs or practices aimed at satisfying emerging or unmet needs since most of the lower needs are felt again and again. When the need hierarchy concept is applied to work organizations, managers have the responsibility to create proper practices in which employees can develop to their fullest potential. Failure to provide such practices would theoretically decrease employee satisfaction and could result in poor performance, lower job satisfaction and increased withdrawal from the organization (Steers & Porter, 1983).

Human Capital Theory: Human Capital theory was proposed by Schultz (1961) and developed extensively by Becker (1994). Becker has explained in his publication titled "Human Capital: A theoretical and Empirical Analysis to special reference to education". According to the theory, Human capital theory suggests that education or training raises the productivity of workers by imparting useful knowledge and skills, hence raising workers‟ future income by increasing their lifetime earnings (Becker, 1994). In his view, human capital is similar to “physical means of production”, e.g., factories and machines: one can invest in human capital (via education, training, medical treatment) and one’s outputs depend partly on the rate of return on the human capital one owns.

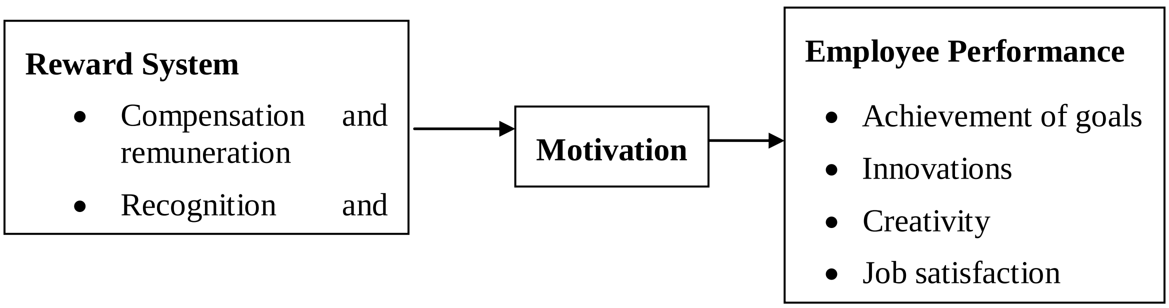
This theory has implications thus for attracting, engaging, rewarding and developing people in organizations. The theory has cross cutting significance in HRM practices. In the context of the current study Human capital theory will be the umbrella theory to underpin this study. It is useful in the context of education sector since HRM practices to be studied in this research must ensure these organizations attract and retain employees. Investments in Human resources need to be done by the use of training practices (Mutua, 2012). According to Schuler (2007), human capital can be categorised into utilizing the human as labour force in the classical economic perspective. This implies that economic added value is generated by input of labour force as other production factors such as financial, land and machinery. Ronner (2005), says that through out the investment of human capital, an individual’s acquired knowledge and skills can easily transfer to certain goods and services. For the same reason then one can say that learning or training is a core factor to increasing of human capital. Therefore effective HRM practices are very key in increasing the knowledge of the human capital.

Becker (1994) propounds that although education and training are not the same in terms of scope and strategy used both help organisations to derive economic value from employees as a result of knowledge, skills and experience. He explains that human capital theory considers employees as capital because of their individual, group, and organisational knowledge they possess and is a strong base for competitive advantage (Itika, 2011).

Equity Theory: Introduced by John Stacey Adams (1965), a workplace and behavioral psychologist, he put forward his Equity Theory on job satisfaction in 1965. He argued and came up with the concept that people derive job satisfaction and motivation by benchmarking their efforts (inputs) and income (outputs) with those of the other people in the same or other firms and equity must be maintained. Equity, and thereby the motivational situation we might seek to assess using the model, is not dependent on the extent to which a person believes reward exceeds effort, nor even necessarily on the belief that reward exceeds effort at all. Rather, Equity, and the sense of fairness which commonly underpins motivation, is dependent on the comparison a person makes between his or her reward/investment ratio with the ratio enjoyed (or suffered) by others considered to be in a similar situation. Therefore Equity theory is based on the principle that since there are no absolute criteria for fairness, employees generally assess fairness by making comparison with others in similar situations. To assess fairness an employee is likely to make a comparison between the level of inputs and outputs they are making compared to the other employee (Beardwell and Claydon, 2007).

2.2 Conceptual Framework

According to Kothari (2008), a concept which can take on different qualities of qualitative values is called a variable. If one variable depends on or is a consequence of another variable, it is dependent variable. The variable that is antecedent to the dependent or that makes it to change is called independent variable. A conceptual framework consists of independent variables which cause changes in the dependent variable. Independent variables are factors that cause, change, affect or influence the outcomes while dependent variables are factors that depend on the independent variables. They are also called outcome, effect variables and criterion. The independent variable in this study is reward System and dependent is the employee performance as illustrated in figure 1 below. The research sought to establish the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable in technical training institutes in Kenya.



Independent Variables **Mediating Variable** **Dependent Variable**

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Reward System and Employee Performance

In an ever-competitive local and global business environment, many organisations are trying to develop effective reward strategies that are directly linked to the enhancement of employees and organizational performance (Milne, 2007). A properly developed and managed reward system can be a vehicle for high performance, work satisfaction and commitment. Supported by other HRM practices, an appropriate reward system plan can provide the stimulus for desired behavioural change and performance enhancement. Armstrong (2009), Harris (2005), McKenna & Beach 2002 and Torrington *et al. (*2005) all agree that before employees join organisations, they ask themselves several questions such as how much they would be rewarded for the work and whether the job will meet their expectations. Furthermore, the organisation has to show, at least in principal that it is not ‘a too demanding sort’ and paying too little attention to rewarding accordingly. As many authors would agree reward policy provides guidelines for decisions and action in a number of areas including consideration for market rate pay, Internal and external equality, Merit pay and incentives. They further argue that the objectives for devising remuneration policies are many but at least they are meant to obtain optimal performance from employees, encourage employees to improve their performance have sufficient flexibility to reward high performers and deal with poor performers, attract sufficient suitable employees and encourage retention of effective employees.

According to Armstrong (2009), reward management is an HR strategy aimed at bringing about a competitive strategy and which leads to quality performance and the achievement of high standards of customer satisfaction which the end result becomes a creator of positive competitive advantage. He and many other scholars agree that there is always a link between reward and performance and therefore the employee's performance should be recognised through the provision of appropriate rewards. Evidence exists in literature about the positive and significant relationship of compensation and rewards on employees behavior and organizational performance. Compensation and rewards significantly affects organizational outcome as stated by Chiu et al., (2002). Jyothi and Venkatesh (2006) found that competency-based pay and rewards improves productivity and reduces labour turnover. A study done by Chiu et al. concluded that an effective compensation and reward system increases sales, reduce staff turnover, and improve firms" performance.

Reward Management should be governed by the need to reward the right performance and to get the right message across about what is important for the organization. The idea that employees who do well at work and inject more effort with the perception that the employer will reciprocate by giving fair remuneration and benefits, is based on the expectancy theory. Employees who are paid low wages and those who are not rewarded or appraised on their performance do not perform any better at work (Handel and Gittleman, 2004). Further, Neumark *et al.* (2004) noted that the absence of a respected benefit scheme has led to low turnover in organisations, arguing that low turnover leads to lower profits and, hence, less taxes to be paid. Neumark *et al.* (2004) also noted that many organisations value their employees' performance and reward them so that they can increase their effectiveness in the organisation. Organisations consider human resources as an important source of competitive advantage. Performance and reward management ensures that there is work assessment, which without, it will be difficult to know whether the organization is achieving its objectives and services or not and to what extent, Gottschalg and Zollo (2007).

It has been found that there is a significant relationship between reward and compensation and employee and organizational performance (Giorgio and Arman, 2008; Shin-Rong and Chin-Wei, 2012; Danish and Usman, 2010; Khan, 2010; Qureshi et al., 2010; Tessema and Soeter, 2006; Katou and Budhwar, 2006; Chang and Chen, 2002). For example, Mayson and Barret (2006) found that a firm's ability to attract, motivate and retain employees by offering competitive salaries and appropriate rewards is linked to firm performance and growth. On the other hand, Ine´s and Pedro (2011) found that the compensation system used for the salespeople has significant effects on individual salesperson performance and sales organization effectiveness. Therefore, in an ever competitive business environment, many companies today are attempting to identify innovative compensation strategies that are directly linked to improving employee and organizational performance (Steven and Loring, 1996; Denis and Michel, 2011).

Reward and compensation should be legal and ethical, adequate, motivating, fair and equitable, cost- effective, and able to provide employment security. While interpersonal abuse includes targeted action from one member of an organization toward another member of the organization, organizational abuse stems from the organization toward the organizational members (Mathis and Jackson, 2004). For example, "encouraging loyalty and not rewarding it, inequity in compensation, performance appraisals that destroy self-esteem, transfers or time pressures that destroy family life, terminating people through no fault of their own, and creating the myth that the organization will benevolently protect or direct an employee's career" are examples of how organizations abuse employees Rewards has also been cited by many scholars as a strong predictor of employee retention and turnover intentions (Armstrong, 2010; Gwavuya, 2011; Hillmer, et al., 2004).

As scholars argue (Hillmer, et al., 2004; Samuel & Chipunza, 2009), money is a motivating factor for employees in organisations and serves as a basis upon which individual employees assess the value their employer places on them. Chiboiwa, et al., (2010) and Samuel & Chipunza, (2009) observed that there is a negative relationship between high rewards and turnover in organisations. They observed that employees whose salaries were high compared to the salaries of persons performing the same jobs in other institutions were less likely to leave their positions. Employees will increase their productivity with the expectation of receiving appropriate rewards from their employers as believed by Armstrong (2009) and Okumbe (2001). Job satisfaction is highest when rewards meet expectations of employees. As observed by McKenna & Beach (2002), while the financial aspect of rewards relates to extrinsic motivation meant for the satisfaction of basic needs of life, the non-financial rewards are more intrinsic, in that, they are meant for the satisfaction of psychological needs These ideas are well developed by various motivation theories including Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two factor and expectancy theories (Bratton & Gold 2007). There are also those scholars who believe that the environment within which a task is performed can be a source of reward.

For decades, now the centre of the debate is the extent to which intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are a source of rewards for different professions and staff. Intrinsic rewards are attached to the direct relationship between the work and the task done including the feeling of achievement, accomplishment, challenges met and competence derived from performing the job. On the other hand, extrinsic rewards are achieved through motivation from factors outside the job itself. In virtually every aspect of organizational functioning, reward and compensation can shape employee behaviour and organizational effectiveness (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Barber and Bretz (2000) mentioned that reward management systems have major impact on organizations capability to catch, retain and motivate high potential employees and as a result getting the high levels of performance. Kim (2000) argue that individual employee performance is the unit of overall organizational performance and firms use the reward system as a tool to monitor the performance of the same employees as well as a method to motivate employees

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted both descriptive and correlational research designs. The descriptive design was used to obtain and describe information on the critical analysis of the issue of reward practices on employee job performance of the technical training institutes in Kenya. This is supported by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) who indicates that the design is suitable and conducted in communities when a researcher wishes to establish the extent of a range of issues such as education, health, nutrition, etc. When one wants to get information on the current status of a person descriptive research design is the most appropriate (Kothari, 2008). Thus the study focused on getting information on the current status of human resource practices in the technical training institutes in Kenya and their effect on the employee job performance. It was also a correlational research because it is concerned with assessing the relationship among the variables of the study: HRM practices and employee job performance. Graeme and Moutinho (2008) justified the use of correlation research in determining whether a relationship exists between or among variables. This is also supported by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008) who argue that the design is concerned with assessing the relationship between variables.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the analysis focuses on the role of reward management practices on employee satisfaction. The below Table 1 illustrates the results.

4.1 Reward Management

The Table depicts the results as obtained from the research and this shows the positive relationship:

Table 1:Reward Management

	Mean	Standard Deviation
There is an attractive and competitive reward and remuneration system in place	2.77	1.045
Employee reward management and staff performance are highly related.	2.85	1.117
Employees whose performance improves are recognized positively through a fair and equal reward	2.72	1.021
The employee pay is according to the employees' qualifications	2.83	1.167
There is performance contracting and appraisal in place	3.64	1.155
The reward system in place has been able to attract, retain, motivate, recognize and treat employees fairly	2.79	1.046
The reward and remuneration system in the Technical Training Institute has helped employees be more creative	2.78	1.089
The Technical Training Institute has been able to compensate and recognize employees who have shown excellent performance	2.85	1.111
The Technical Training Institute reward system attracts highly qualified personnel in the labor market and curbs turnover	2.75	1.02

Based on the results above, there is performance contracting and appraisal in place (mean = 3.64, SD = 1.155). The Technical Training Institute has been able to compensate and recognize employees who have shown excellent performance (mean = 2.85, SD = 1.111). The employee pay is according to the employees' qualifications (mean=2.83, SD= 1.167). There is an attractive and competitive reward and remuneration system in place (mean=2.77, SD= 1.045). For instance, employees whose performance improves are recognized positively through a fair and equal reward (mean=2.72, SD=1.021). Also, the reward system in place has been able to attract, retain, motivate, recognize and treat employees fairly (mean=2.79, SD=1.046). In general, results on reward management practices summed up to a mean of 2.887 and standard deviation. According to the Likert scale, most of the employees (29.15%) strongly disagreed with the reward management practices while only 9.35% strongly agreed.

Table 2:Level of agreement on Reward Management

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
10.5%	30.5%	25.9%	26.4%	6.8%

4.2 DISCUSSION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REWARD SYSTEM AND EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE

It's evident from the above results that reward management had a positive relationship on performance of TTIs (r=0.677; p<0.01). The results in Table 3 above concur with results from other researchers like Armstrong (2009), Harris (2005), McKenna & Beach 2002 and Torrington *et al. (*2005) on performance enhancement through reward systems.

Table 3: Regression Analysis For Reward Management On Performance

Model summary

Reward Management R	R Square	Adj. R	F	P-value
.677a	0.458	0.454	111.261	0.000b

ANOVAa

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	31.354	1	31.354	114.261	0.000b
	Residual	37.045	135	0.274		
	Total	68.398	136			

a. Dependent Variable: y_EMPLOYEE.PERFORMANCE

b. Predictors: (Constant), x3REWARD.SYSTEM

Coefficientsa

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error		
1	(Constant)	1.428	0.168	8.525	0.000
	x3 REWARD SYSTEM	0.598	0.056	10.689	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: y_EMPLOYEE.PERFORMANCE

Y=1.428 + 0.598*X3

Researchers like Jyothi and Venkatesh (2006), Gwavuya (2011), Hillmer, et al.(2004) and Neumark *et al.* (2004) found out that competency-based pay and rewards improves productivity and reduces labour turnover intentions. At the same time it increases employee retention. This is also supported by other authors like Barber and Bretz (2000) who mentioned that reward management systems have major impact on organizations capability to catch, retain and motivate high potential employees and as a result getting the high levels of performance. Also Kim (2000) argue that individual employee performance is the unit of overall organizational performance and firms use the reward system as a tool to monitor the performance of the same employees as well as a method to motivate employees.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The key findings from the respondents' responses revealed that employee reward management and staff performance are highly related which the majority of the respondents agreed with that. The study also revealed that there was performance contracting and appraisal in place. However, even though there are competitive reward and remuneration systems in place, there are shortcomings in place in lack of employee's positive recognition through a fair and equal reward especially for those whose performance had improved. Other shortcomings are lack of attraction, retention, motivation, recognition and treatment of employees fairly when it comes to reward management. It was also discovered that the reward management system has not helped staff be more creative and that there are no compensations and recognition of staff who have shown excellent performance. This is assumed to be the reason as to why majority of the respondents indicated that the reward system has had a negative effect in attracting highly qualified personnel in the labor market and curbing turnover.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings reveal that reward management system has a great effect on performance and this therefore translates to mean that all the reward management system had a positive relationship with Performance. Reward management is very key in any organization in enhancing competitive advantage. The study concludes also that good reward system has boosted the moral of employee.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the management reward and motive staff who perform with fairness and transparency. The management should give incentives like scholarships and training as rewards for the best performers. There is room for future exploration on the relationship between the other Human Resource Management Practices and the institute's performance. Another area that can be researched on in future is the area of HRM practices and employee job satisfaction.

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