
**INFLUENCE OF WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION
IN LEVEL FOUR AND FIVE HOSPITALS IN MACHAKOS COUNTY**

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Abstract

The study was to investigate the influence of working environment on employee retention in public health sector in Kenyan hospitals. Its objectives included: determining the influence of working hours on employee retention in level four and five hospitals in Machakos County; evaluating the influence of information communication systems on employee retention in level four and five hospitals in Machakos County; establishing the influence of job design on employee retention in level four and five hospitals in Machakos County and assessing the influence of teamwork on employee retention in level four and five hospitals in Machakos County. The study adopted a descriptive research design and targeted 742 employees. Purposive sampling and Stratified sampling were used to sample 86 employees. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis indicate that on influence of working hours on job retention showing a significant negative influence imply that the current working hours and scheduling in the hospitals are faced with shortcomings. On Information Communication Systems it also emerged that they have a negative influence on job retention in the county hospitals whereas on that job design ($\beta = 0.750$; $p < 0.05$) and teamwork ($\beta = 0.724$; $p < 0.05$) had a significant positive effect on employee retention. Further, there is need for the County Department of Health Service to look into the issues such as Information Communication systems with an aim of improving the communication in the county hospitals. The study recommended that the Department of Health services to engage more with other stakeholders such as World Health Organizations and other partners. A similar research in-depth is also recommended as an area of further research in the public hospitals in Kenya due to effects of devolved government.

Keywords: Employee Retention; Job Design; Level 4 hospital; Level 5 hospital; Teamwork; Work Hours; Work environment

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to the World Health Organization (2013), global human resources crisis coupled with poor performance of health workers in the health sector in low and middle-income countries is receiving increased global attention. They are regional health care facilities that provide specialized care, including specialist consultations, life support and intensive care (Ministry of Health, 2014). Through an examination of the health care financing system in Kenya, this review

demonstrates that there is need for the country to seriously consider universal health care (Nitayarumphong, 2015). According to a draft budget policy statement (2012), the government sought to provide universal health coverage for all Kenyans amongst other objectives.

Bardad (2017) indicated that poor employee retention is resolved by improving employee benefits, motivation and working conditions. Therefore, it would be contended that if employee's organization commitment level is greatly significant. The level of their contribution to the services will be high. Level 4 hospital is the healthcare facility for clinical care at the sub county level which is the first referral hospital and form an integral part of the sub county health system (Ministry of Health, 2014). Therefore, in order to sustain the competitive advantage, employees should be able to display total commitment to the performance ethics that are required; whereas Level 5 hospital are referral centres for the Level 4 Hospitals.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Some healthcare practitioners leave public health institutions for the private health institutions (Kigathi, 2018). There are increasing cases of experienced and long serving healthcare workers leaving public hospitals in Kenya and moving to work in places such as United States, South Africa, Europe, and even Somalia, South Sudan and Namibia (Okeyo, 2018). This saw the Kenyan health sector witness the ever longest strike in the history of the country which lasted slightly over one hundred days. The health workers typical indicators of poor working environment, job dissatisfaction, lack of growth and progression, being overworked, lack of feedback and recognition, little opportunity for decision-making, poor employee selection, work role ambiguity, poor remuneration terms, poor career progression, work role conflict, work role overload, job stress, and lack of organizational commitment, poor job designs and employee resourcing practices. The above compelled the researcher to come up with this study on Influence of Work Environment on employee retention in level four and level five hospitals in Kenya with a particular reference to Machakos Level five and level 4 hospitals in Machakos County.

1.2 Objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the influence of work environment on employee retention in level four and five hospitals in Machakos County.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Various theories address employee needs and have been advanced by a number of authors as the basis of retention strategies in organizations. The theories used in this study include equity theory (1965), Expectancy theory (1964), Job characteristics theory (1975), The Hawthorne theory (1932), all of which are all relevant to this study.

2.1.1 Equity Theory

This theory was formulated by Adams (1965) and is concerned with the perceptions people have about how they are treated as compared with others. The theory posits that employees seek to maintain equity between the input they bring into a job (education, time, experience, commitment and effort) and the outcome they receive from it (promotion, recognition and increased pay) against the perceived inputs and outcomes of other employees. Failure to find equity leads to various actions one of which may be to leave the organization. This theory will be applied in this study to explain how working hours can influence employee satisfaction and hence influence the decision to stay or leave the organization. Employees usually compare their working hours with the benefits they receive from the organization. Their findings can make them stay or leave the organization (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

The theory thus guided this study in understanding on what may influence an employee to leave or stay. Employees keep comparing their input in terms of working hours against the rewards they are getting from the organization. Moreover, employees may compare their working hours with the working hours of comparable organizations. When they feel that they are working more hours than their peers or when they feel that their working hours are not being well remunerated by their hospital, they will be inclined to leave the organization. However, employees who feel well rewarded based on the perceived equity of their working hours will stay in the hospital.

2.1.2 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory is widely used in turnover management. It was developed by Vroom 1964, and later supported by Porter and Lawler (1968) as well as Lawler (1994). Basic to the idea of expectancy theory is the idea that people join organizations with expectations and if these expectations are met, they will remain in the organization (Daly & Dee 2006). According to turnover and retentions frameworks developed from this theory, decision to stay or leave an organization can be explained by examining relationships between structural, psychological, and environmental variables. The expectancy theory is the back bone of this study because it explains whether an employee will remain in an organization or will choose to leave based on their expectations (Daly & Dee 2006). This theory was used to explain how the information and communication system in place in the organization can influence employee outcomes such as retention.

2.1.3 Job Characteristics Theory

Job characteristics theory was developed by Hackman and Oldham (1975) to explain how and why core job characteristics influence key job outcomes, such as job satisfaction, job performance, and employee retention and turnover intentions. The theory assumes that the design of a job will influence the perception of employees towards the job. This will also influence employee productivity, attitude, and intentions to stay or leave. When job is designed to utilize a variety of employee skills and to enhance task identity and significance. The employee will be more satisfied with the job and will most likely stay on the job. Other factors that can boost employee stay include task autonomy and feedback (Kigathi, 2018). These core job characteristics

influence three critical psychological states, that is, experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for work outcomes, and knowledge of the results (Jayaram & Engmann,2014).These in turn influence the work outcomes which high internal work motivation, high growth job satisfaction, high general job satisfaction, high work effectiveness, low absenteeism rates and low turnover. The job characteristics theory is also relevant to this study in that it recognizes the key role played by relationships among employees and team work in the organization in influencing employee motivation, satisfaction and retention.

2.1.4 The Hawthorne Theory

The Hawthorne theory is a series of experiments conducted by Elton Mayo in the years between 1924 and 1932 at the Western Electric factory in Illinois, also called Hawthorne Works. The study was originally focused on manipulating levels of light working environment; in order to find out if that would have any effect on workers' productivity. Workers were split into two groups. The experimenters incrementally increased the intensity of the lights for the first group, while the working conditions of the second group (the control group) remained the same. A marked increase in the productivity of the first group was observed. Later, the experimenters introduced additional variables, such as reduced working hours and more breaks, and again they led to increased productivity. But then, an odd thing happened. Productivity in the first group would increase even after the lights were dimmed. In fact, productivity remained high for the whole duration of the experiment, after which it started to gradually drop down again. This theory therefore can guide a researcher in establishing influence of team work on employee retention.

2.2 Empirical Review

This section reviews pertinent literature on the conceptualized influence of work environment on employee retention. In this regard, it delves into working hours, information communication systems, Job Design and Recognition.

2.2.1 Working Hours on Employee Retention

Msabaa (2017) conducted a study on the effect of perceived work life balance on employee turnover intent among international humanitarian organization in Kenya. The Population of the study included all the 1860 employees of international Humanitarian Organization in Kenya. The sample of the study was 144 selected through stratified sampling method. The study adopted a descriptive survey research deign. Correlation and regression analysis were used in establishing the effect of perceived work life balance on employee turnover intent among international humanitarian organization in Kenya. The findings revealed that a strong inverse correlation exist between work life balance practices relating to working schedules, employee benefits, employee assistance programs and turnover intent. Perceived work life balance practices were found to have significant effects on turnover intent among the international humanitarian organizations in Kenya.

Lamba and Choudhary (2013) in their study on influence of HR practices on organizational commitment established that one of the consequences of poor implementation work/life balance

programs is loss of talented human capital. Workforce planners, who clarify what type of alternative work arrangement is most appropriate for the differing roles of employees, help managers grasp how it can benefit their employees (Lamba & Choudhary, 2013). Proactively instituting flexible work arrangements such as flextime, a compressed work-week, or telecommuting, trust and enabling employees to “own” rather than be passive receptors of their work. Managers’ acceptance of flexible work arrangements is essential so that their direct reports will ensure that their job security and career paths are not in jeopardy if they choose to take advantage of these programs (Iqbal, Malik & Ghafoor, 2011).

2.2.2 Information Communication Systems on Employee Retention

A study carried out by Syallow, Mberia and Bosire (2017) conducted a study on the role of organizational communication on employee Job satisfaction in telecommunication, industry in Kenya. A linear regression Model was used to analyze the study with the help of SPSS. A sample of 130 employees was selected. The findings of the study indicated that Organizational Communication plays a vital role in ensuring employee job satisfaction.

In a study by Kalla (2005), a model of communication and turnover was theorized that deals with intent to leave as a predictor of employee turnover. To this end, this study highlighted that communication issues are antecedent to employees’ affective responses in relation to communication satisfaction and job satisfaction as well as organizational commitment, which eventually lead to employee turnover intension and actual turnover. In this direction, the study shows that managers’ methods and strategies of communication have a great deal of impact on subordinates’ turnover. Thus, these two variables: manager’s communication method and workers’ intention to leave are correlated. Femi (2014) carried out a study on the impact of communication on workers’ performance in selected organization in Lagos state, Nigeria. The data for the study was collected through questionnaire with sample population of 120 respondents.

The researcher design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. The data was analyzed using static; techniques which included both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of this study reveal that a positive relationship exists between effective communication and workers’ performance, productivity, retention and commitment.

2.2.3 Job Design on Employee Retention

Total, Bashir and Shoukat (2017) conducted research on the Impact of Job design on employee’s Organizational citizenship behavior and counter –productive work behavior in the banking sector of Faisalabad in Pakistan. Data sampled from 170 frontline managers of the Bank on a Linear regression model. It was found there was a positive and significant relationship between job design and employee organizational citizenship behavior and counterproductive work behavior in the banking sector in Faisalabad, Pakistan.

Weilinghoff (2016) conducted a study on the effect of job design on employee retention and performance. The study focused on job description, job specifications, job rotation and job

simplification. This study was conducted in German hospitals and involved a literature review and five semi structured interviews. The study identified the design practices that were largely practiced in the German hospitals. These included job description and job simplification. Job description enabled employees to clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. This made employees more satisfied and engaged which enhanced employee retention and performance. Job simplification enabled jobs to be divided into smaller components thus making them more manageable for employees.

In Sri Lanka, Macf and Mam (2015) investigated the effect of job design on employee satisfaction, engagement, retention and performance. The study applied a correlation design. Data was collected through questionnaires administered to 103 respondents. The study results indicated a positive and significant relationship between job design and employee engagement and retention. Job design involved specification of job roles, clarity in job description, and job enrichment. Job enrichment was practiced by providing employees with additional responsibilities which made them more motivated. Job rotation was also practiced which provided employees with more flexibility and work satisfaction.

2.2.4 Teamwork on Employee Retention

Kigathi (2018) through a study in Kenyatta National Hospital assess the factors influencing retention of health workers in the public health sector in Kenya. The study population was all the operational and administrative employees of the hospital. Questionnaires were used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. Study findings established that team work was a key factor in retaining employees in the hospital. Teamwork provided individual self-esteem, encouraged companionship and provides a sense of belongingness. While organizations often focus on the importance of individual performance, they fail to see how it can destroy morale. Having employees working as a team is something that is crucial in any work place. When employees are supportive of one another, morale is higher, which leads to increased job satisfaction and Employee retention.

In a study in United States, Jinman (2018) investigated how teamwork can be used as a remedy to prevent turnover amongst public child welfare workers. Respondents to the on-line Survey of Organizational Excellence (SOE) from a mid-western state child welfare agency in 2015 provided the data for this paper. The SOE is a population survey and was offered to all employees of the agency (2,423 survey invitations were sent) with a return rate of 70% providing 1,691 responses. Study findings showed that caseworkers who did not experience cooperation from other workers through sharing information, getting another's perspectives, exchanging resources, and communicating effectively with colleagues and/or a supervisor showed a high likelihood of leaving. These findings provided evidence that teamwork affects the caseworkers' intentions to leave thus advocating for policies and practices that improve the cooperation between employees or between a supervisor and employee.

In India, Ansari and Bijalwan (2017) examined the relationship between team effectiveness and employee retention. The study endeavored to highlight the relation among team effectiveness (TE) and the employee's decision to stay with or leave the organization. The research was conducted to collect the response through questionnaire by the employees working in different organizations of service sector (such as educational institute, banking, insurance, and several others) in Uttarakhand state. Different statistical tools, such as Cronbach's alpha, coefficient of correlation, t-test, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were applied to test the hypothesis. The study findings showed that team effectiveness had a significant positive effect on decision to stay in the organization.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to establish the effects of working environment on employee retention in the Kenyan public health sector. The study was done in Machakos Level 5 and 4. In this study, the target populations were the employees of the level four and five hospitals in Machakos County 742 in number. Machakos County has a total of five health facilities which are ranked as either level 5 or level 4 hospitals. They included Machakos level 5 hospitals, Kangundo level 4, Kathiani level 4, Mwala level 4, and Matuu level 4 hospital (Machakos, CIDP 2013).

Table 1: Target Population

Name of the facility	Facility level	Medical superintendents and HODs	Medical officers	Clinical officers	Nurses	Support staff	No. of employees
Machakos level 5 Hospital	Level 5	2	30	72	160	70	334
Kathiani Sub-County Hospital	Level 4	2	12	18	47	41	120
Kangundo Sub-County Hospital	Level 4	2	9	15	27	42	95
Mwala Sub-County Hospital	Level 4	2	10	16	41	35	104
Matuu Sub-County Hospital	Level 4	2	9	15	33	30	89
Total		10	70	136	308	218	742

Source: Machakos, (CIDP, 2013)

Purposive sampling was used to select hospital superintendents and heads of department due to the fact that they are well conversant with administration issue. Stratified sampling was as well used to group other employees into cadres as shown on Table 1 above. Level five and level four hospitals were ideal for this study because of the number of employees that they have and the

critical services that they offer. The number of hospital superintendents and heads of departments sampled were 10 (5 are hospital superintendents and 5 are HODs). Further, 10% of the employees (742) in the five facilities were selected. This made a total sample of 86 as indicated on Table 2. According to Kothari (2004) a sample size of between 10% and 20% is ideal for descriptive survey design.

Table 2: Sample Size

Name of the facility	Sample size	Machakos	Kathiani	Kangundo	Mwala	Matuu	Total
Medical Superintendent	Census	1	1	1	1	1	5
HOD	Census	1	1	1	1	1	5
Medical officers	10%	3	1	1	1	1	7
Clinical officers	10%	7	2	2	2	2	15
Nurses	10%	16	5	3	4	3	31
Support staff	10%	8	4	4	4	3	23
Grand Total							86

Source: Machakos, (CIDP, 2013)

The questionnaire was the research instrument used. It had both closed-ended and open questions. This enabled the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Questionnaires were administered by the researcher to respondents through the drop-and-pick method. A total of 86 questionnaires were administered to the sampled potential respondents where 69 were returned. This method of data collection was considered appropriate because it achieves the highest response rate as compared to other methods of administering questionnaires.

Data was coded and analyzed by use of SPSS version 23.0. Descriptive and inferential methods were used in analyzing the data. Descriptive frequency of the responses was used to analyze the findings. Regression analysis was used to determine the direction and strength of relationship between the variables under study.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study carried out to analyze the influence of work environment on employee retention in Level Four and Five Hospitals in Machakos County are represented hereunder.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis

4.1.1 Working Hours in the Hospitals

The first specific objective of the study sought information on the influence of working hours on employees. To this end, a number of questions were raised as discussed in this section. To get a feel of the influence of working hours on Employee retention a number of statements were provided based on five-point Likert scale items as shown in Table 3 below, where 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neutral; 4 = agree; 5= strongly agree. The interpretation was done by

combining the percentages for responses for strongly agree and agree on one hand and the percentages for strongly disagree and disagree on the other hand. The means and standard deviations were also used to make deductions.

Table 3: Working Hours on Employee Retention

Working Hours	Mean	Std. Dev
I perceive working hours in this hospital to be fair	4.03	1.20
Working hours in this hospital follows best practices and policies	3.03	1.26
This hospital honors employee work preferences when scheduling shifts and work hours	3.09	1.21
The hospital allows employees to have control over their schedule thus creates a culture that demonstrates the value of employees to the organization and recognizes that employees' life off-the-job is important	2.94	1.25
The hospital honors time-off requests in scheduling work hours	4.25	.946
Employees participate in work scheduling and arranging working hours	3.03	1.35

The results show that the item had a mean score of 4.03 and a standard deviation 1.20 of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they perceive working hours in their respective hospitals to be fair.

Regarding whether working hours in the hospital follows best practices and policies, there were mixed reactions as indicated. The item had a mean score of 3.03 and a standard deviation 1.20.

Regarding whether the hospital allows employees to have control over their schedule thus creates a culture that demonstrates the value of employees to the organization and recognizes that employees' life off-the-job is important, there were also diverse responses with the item had a mean score of 2.94 and a standard deviation 0.946.

There was a good indication from the respondents, that the hospital honors time-off requests in scheduling work hours, the item had a mean score of 4.25 and a standard deviation 0.946. These findings contrast with the observations by Williams, et al. (2013), that involvement of employees in designing work schedules is critical for higher job satisfaction.

Hospitals' Information Communication System

The second objective of the study sought to find the level of information communication system influence employee retention at Machakos Level IV and V hospitals. Several issues were to shed light on this relationship. To understand the nature of the link between Information Systems in the hospitals the respondents were asked to rate six statements using the same Likert scale used

in Table 4. A similar approach in interpretation was taken using mean scores and standard deviation.

Table 4: Information Communication Systems and Employee

Information Communication System	Mean	Std. Dev
There are adequate tools and systems for effective information and communication in the hospital	1.97	1.236
There is effective communication between employees and management in this hospital	4.10	0.598
Employees in this hospital are well trained on how to use the information and communication systems	4.25	0.651
Staff requests regarding information and communication system matters are acted upon effectively.	2.42	1.035
The hospital has adopted current ICT systems which has led to improved service delivery	2.61	1.046
There are clearly laid down structures and policies for communication in this hospital	4.45	0.53

The results show that of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed that there are adequate tools and systems for effective information and communication in the hospital. The item had a mean score of 1.97 and a standard deviation 1.236. According to the respondents there is effective communication between employees and management in the surveyed hospitals. The item had a mean score of 4.10 and a standard deviation 0.598. These findings suggest that though the systems and tools of communication are not adequate, there is good communication between employees and management.

Further, as per the responses of the respondents on whether there are clearly laid down structures and policies for communication in the surveyed hospitals.

The item had a mean score of 4.45 and a standard deviation 0.53. These findings imply that the hospital has clearly laid down structures and policies for communication.

In conclusion these findings are in line with Femi (2014) who found an association between adoption of ICT systems and better performance as well as Employee retention.

4.1.3 Job Design in Hospitals

The third objective of the study was seeking the link between job design and employees’ retention in Level IV and Level V Hospitals in Machakos County. The study investigated the influence of job design on employee retention in line with scale and interpretations. The results are in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Job Design on Employee retention

Job Design	Mean	Std. Dev
There is adequate variety of duties in my work to make it more interesting	3.12	1.356
Standards of ergonomics are realistic in this hospital	2.99	0.675
The current status of my office environment is a source of motivation in my job	2.71	1.214
The job I do is meaningful to the welfare of patients	4.74	0.442
I regularly receive feedback regarding my work performance from my supervisor	4.00	0.891
My job description is precise and elaborate	4.10	0.843
I am responsible for the outcomes of my job	3.84	1.400

Regarding whether there is adequate variety of duties in the respondent’s work to make it more interesting, there were mixed reactions as indicated who agreed and strongly agreed who were neutral and it had a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation 1.356. This suggests that variety in duties was not a key factor in job design in the hospital. The results show that all the respondents were in agreement that the job they do is meaningful to the welfare of patients.

In regards to whether there is regular feedback from supervisors in the hospitals surveyed as indicated by the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed while disagreed which had a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation 0.891. On job description of the respondents is precise and elaborate as indicated by the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed with the item as well as a mean score of 4.10 and a standard deviation of 0.843 posted on this item.

Majority of the respondents were also in agreement that they were responsible for their outcomes. The results seem to imply a misunderstanding or lack of awareness of the hospitals’ employees’ job designing thus the mixed reactions. As noted by Al-ahmadi (2009) understanding job designing by employees is necessary is connected to sense of pride and thus one is able to take care of the welfare of their clients especially in the case of hospital where these are patients needing special care.

4.1.4 Teamwork in the Hospitals

The study’s fourth objective was regarding the influence of teamwork on Employee retention in surveyed hospitals. The study sought to establish the nature of teamwork practices in the hospitals using the five-point Likert scale and the results are resented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Team work on Employee retention

Teamwork	Mean	Std. Dev
The employees in this organization trust each other	4.41	0.551
There are team-based rewards in this hospital	2.03	1.014
Teams in this hospital share responsibility for achieving the team goal	4.14	0.845
I have a good relationship with my fellow team members	4.41	0.495
Each team member in my team is empowered to contribute their skills and experience	4.16	0.633
There is effective communication amongst team members	4.43	0.499

It emerged that the employees in this organization trust each other as indicated by the respondents with a Mean of 4.41 and standard deviation of 0.551, who agreed or strongly agreed on this item. This is in line with Kossivi et al. (2016), who found that teams tend to boost employees' trust amongst each other.

There was vivid evidence that each team member is empowered to contribute their skills and experience as indicated by the item had a mean score of 4.16 and a standard deviation 0.633 hence indicating that management in the hospital engaged in employee and team empowerment thus enabling employees to contribute their skills and experience effectively.

There is effective communication amongst team members as indicated by a mean score of 4.43 and a standard deviation 0.499. The findings are supported by Hanaysha (2016) who found that teams empowered employees to perform their roles better.

Data Analysis and presentation

Correlation and Regression Analysis

The correlation and regression analysis results are presented in this section. First, the study sought to establish the association that existed amongst the study variables. The summary of the results in presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Association between Work Environment Factors and Employee Retention

		Working hours	Information Communication System	Job design	Teamwork	Employee retention
Working hours	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	69				
Information Communication System	Pearson Correlation	.407**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001				
	N	69	69			
Job design	Pearson Correlation	-.430**	-.454**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000			
	N	69	69	69		
Teamwork	Pearson Correlation	-.405**	-.506**	.582**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000		
	N	69	69	69	69	
Employee retention	Pearson Correlation	-.491**	-.496**	.748**	.721**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	69	69	69	69	69

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings in Table 10 indicate that working hours ($r = -0.491$; $p=0.00 < 0.05$) and Information Communication System ($r = -0.496$; $p=0.00 < 0.05$) had a significant negative relationship with employee retention. These findings suggest that the management of working hours and the information and communication system was not effective enough and hence negatively associated with employee retention.

The findings in Table 10 also show job design ($r = 0.748$; $p=0.00 < 0.05$) and teamwork ($r = 0.721$; $p=0.00 < 0.05$) had a significant positive relationship with employee retention. These findings suggest that there was effective job design and team management at the hospital which enabled these two factors to have a positive association with employee retention.

To answer the research questions, regression analysis was run to ascertain the nature of the effect of the work environment factors on employee retention.

The overall means for each variable were used to undertake the regression analysis. In the regression analysis, tests were conducted at 5% significance level. The significance of the coefficients (Working hours, Information Communication System Job design and Teamwork)

was assessed. The tests were conducted at 5% significance level. The study results are presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Significance of the Coefficients

Regression variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-.197	.721		-.273	.786
Working hours	-.358	.123	-.047	-2.911	.008
Information Communication System	-.356	.137	-.832	-2.599	.017
Job design	.750	.279	.164	2.689	.011
Teamwork	.724	.351	.324	2.064	.043

a. Dependent Variable: Employee retention

$$Y = -0.358X_1 - 0.356X_2 + 0.750X_3 + 0.724X_4 + \varepsilon$$

The study results in Table 11 indicate that working hours had a negative and significant influence on employee retention ($\beta = -0.358$; $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that working hours are managed in the hospitals that negatively influence employee retention. The findings also show that the Information Communication System in place in hospitals in Machakos County had a significant negative influence on employee retention ($\beta = -0.356$; $p < 0.05$). These results show that the information communication systems in the hospitals were not effective and therefore they contributed negatively to employee retention. Findings also show that job design had a significant and positive effect on employee retention ($\beta = 0.750$; $p < 0.05$). These findings suggest that jobs in the surveyed hospitals were designed effectively, which contributed positively to employee retention. Lastly, the findings show that teamwork had a significant positive effect on employee retention ($\beta = 0.724$; $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate effective teamwork in the hospitals thus contributing to employee staying in the hospitals.

5.0 SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents a summary of key findings, conclusion and recommendations proposed by the study.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

On working hours the study established that working hours had a negative and significant influence on employee retention ($\beta = -0.358$; $p < 0.05$). These findings indicate that management of working hours displeased employees and hence negatively affected their intention to stay. These findings are in agreement with the observations by Williams, et al. (2013) on issues such as involvement of employees in designing work schedules is critical for higher job satisfaction and consequently employee retention.

On Information Communication System in the surveyed hospitals in Machakos County had a negative significant influence on employee retention ($\beta = -0.356$; $p < 0.05$). These results imply that employees were not satisfied with the systems of information and communication in the hospitals. These findings are in line with Femi (2014) who found an association between adoption of ICT systems and better performance as well as employee retention.

The study results show that job design had a significant and positive effect on employee retention ($\beta = 0.750$; $p < 0.05$). The regression results show that job design has a significant positive influence on Employee retention in the hospitals, which led to employee to perform the organizational activities in the most efficient and effective manner. These findings are in agreement with two studies (Weilingh off, 2016; Macf & Mam, 2015) who also found usage of job design methods in German hospitals and Sri Lankan organizations as helpful in retaining employees. The study found that job rotation is the most popular job design method in the surveyed hospitals whereas it indicated that job enlargement and job simplification were rarely used.

Finally the study findings indicated that teamwork had a significant positive effect on employee retention ($\beta = 0.724$; $p < 0.05$). The findings are supported by Hanaysha (2016) who found that teams empowered employees to perform their roles better and thus are more loyal to the institution they are working for. Moreover, the study found that the employees in the surveyed hospitals trust each other in line with Kossivi et al. (2016), who found that teams tend to boost employees' trust among each other.

5.3 Conclusion

The results on influence of working hours on employee retention shows a significant negative influence imply that the current working hours and scheduling in the hospitals are faced with shortcomings. Some of these shortcomings were noted as being lack of incorporating the views of hospital staff when scheduling and inconsistency in following scheduling best practices.

With regard to information communication systems, it also emerged that they have a negative influence on employee retention in the county hospitals. This is despite Kenya being hailed as a pioneer in technological innovations which should be felt across all areas especially in the health facilities. That the health workers in the county hospitals are not feeling the benefits of technological advances is a worrying finding for not only HRM practitioners but also for the county and national leaders.

The results regarding the existing job design issues in the hospitals seems to imply a misunderstanding or lack of awareness of the hospitals' employees job designing thus the mixed reactions. There are some employees who are well informed on the job designing in the hospitals while others are not well informed.

The finding that teamwork boosted trust among the hospital employees given the importance of teamwork from support staff to the administrators and further with the county leadership, if the

hospitals are to serve the patients and their families in a dignified manner and for employees to be satisfied with their jobs.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that there is need for the Department of health Services to look into the issues such as Information Communication systems with an aim of improving the communication in the county hospitals. Better communication among employees and also with patients and their family members will enhance Employee retention and thus the counties will not incur recruitment costs.

The study also recommends increased consultations among the hospital employees to ensure more knowledge sharing and easier problem solving thus higher employee retention by the county. There is also need for the Department of health Services to enhance awareness on job design among the employees. The administrators need to explain the benefits of job design methods such as job rotation to ensure employees do not feel victimized.

Lastly, the study recommends that scholars should provide more empirical evidence on employee retention to help hospitals in better management of their staff.

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