

**INFLUENCE OF STAFF MOTIVATION ON THE  
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND  
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT KENYA ELECTRICITY  
GENERATING COMPANY (KENGEN)**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Statement of the Problem:** This study sought to examine the relationship between employee engagement, employee motivation and employee performance. The overall objective of the study conducted in the year 2020 at KenGen was to assess critical elements necessary to motivate employees and enhance their engagement to enable the company achieve its vision and mandate. The specific objectives of the study were; to determine the influence of employee engagement on performance at KenGen and to determine the intervening effect of staff motivation on the relationship between employee engagement and performance at KenGen. The paper was anchored on William Kahn's Theory of Employee Engagement and supported by the Vroom's Expectancy Theory.

**Methodology:** This paper adopted descriptive research design. The unit of analysis consisted of 2,500 employees of KenGen. The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using questionnaires using survey monkey administered electronically to all employees, focus group discussions and stakeholder engagement. Secondary data was obtained from document review. Drawing on relevant literature, some basic employee engagement and

staff motivation antecedents were selected and analyzed using thematic content analysis process.

**Results:** The results revealed that the company had high Organization Health Assessment (OHA) ratings on critical factors. The findings indicated that employees understood the organization core values and aligned their personal behavior to the same.

**Conclusion and Recommendation:** The study concluded that organizational structure required improvement and treatment of all departments equally. Staff motivation had an enhancing mediating effect on employee engagement since it improved employee connection thereby improving the employer reputation. The study recommended that the Company should ensure that leadership is visible in communicating the vision, mission, values and corporate strategy to the staff. The study further recommended leveraging the existing formal and informal channels for communicating important issues to employees. Finally, the study recommended sponsoring women to take up technical courses. This will ensure a high number of qualified female technical staff are channeled into the workforce.

**Keywords:** *Employee Engagement, Staff Motivation, Leadership, Management Performance and KenGen*

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## INTRODUCTION

Organizations continue to experience difficulties in trying to achieve employee engagement (Iqbal, Khan & Iqbal, 2012). The sustainability of corporate industries is pegged on increasing profits from current capabilities, while acknowledging the dynamic state of the business environment (Kortmann, Gelhard, Zimmermann & Piller, 2014). To achieve organizational success, leaders persistently strive to increase the engagement levels of their employees (Kortmann *et al.*, 2014). Farndale and Murrer (2015) defined employee engagement as when employees harness themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while completing daily tasks. To achieve organizational vitality, survival and profitability, employee engagement must be achieved (Albercht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey & Saks, 2015). Further to this, employee engagement within organizations results in employee productivity, customer satisfaction and increased revenues (Vandenabeele, 2014).

Studies indicate that globally, only 13% of employees are fully engaged, negatively affecting organizations (Bersin, 2014). In the United States, disengaged employees in the workplace cost more than \$300 billion annually (Haar & White, 2013). Momeni, Kalali, Anvari, Raofi and Zarrineh (2011) indicated that organizational costs to keep disengaged employees who are not productive have a significant impact on profits and ability to retain skilled employees. In Africa, Nguwi (2016) established that almost three quarters of the economically active population in Zimbabwe has a low level of engagement. Most companies have been focusing intensely on employee engagement (SHRM, 2013)

Despite the increasing effects of motivation on employee productivity, there is still limited literature on its effect in developing countries (Ofori & Aryeetey 2011). This is because while a lot has been documented about the concept of motivation in advanced nations, most works related to motivation in areas concerning productivity in less industrialized nations are hardly

found. In addition, it was observed that very little information was provided on intrinsic motivational factors such as relationship with co-workers and managers as it relates to productivity while excess information was provided with regards to extrinsic motivational factors. Certo (2016) describes motivation as giving people incentives that cause them to act in desired ways. Motivation has also been described as the process of arousing and sustaining goal-directed behavior (Nelson, 2013).

A study by Lăzăroiu (2015) confirmed a positive relationship between satisfaction of employees needs and their performance in the organization. The past few years have witnessed considerable interest from businesses and consultancy firms in the concept of employee engagement; however, in recent years, employee engagement has also attracted the attention of academic researchers (Welch, 2011). The reason for this attention is partly because research on engagement has suggested that improving employee engagement directly correlates with improved performance, which eventually leads to organisational goal realisation (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009; Truss, 2014; Byrne, 2014). Equally, employee engagement has been argued to contribute extensively to organisational performance, leading to improvements in quality of service, customer satisfaction and long-term financial results (Menguc, Auh, Fisher & Haddad, 2013).

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement refers to psychological presence of individuals who behave out of momentary attachments and detachments during role performance (Kahn, 1990). Employee engagement has emerged as one of the greatest challenges in today's workplace. With complexities and stringent regulations in many organizations, employee engagement will continue to challenge organizations in the future (Mishra, Boynton & Mishra, 2014). This aspect challenges management because engagement is a critical element in maintaining the organization's vitality, survival, and profitability (Albercht, Bakker, Gruman, Macey, & Saks, 2015; Breevaart, Bakker, Hetland, Demerouti, Olsen & Espevik, 2013; Farndale & Murrer, 2015). Organizations that have highly engaged employees have greater profits than those that do not (Society for Human Resource Management [SHRM], 2014). Organizations with highly engaged employees experience increased customer satisfaction, profits, and employee productivity (Ahmetoglu, Harding, Akhtar, & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2015; Carter, 2015; Cooper, Thomas *et al.*, 2014; Vandenabeele, 2014).

Purcell (2014) argued that, after assessing most of the engagement definitions and measurements, engaged employees are 'rare breeds' and probably a mirage. He further pointed out that, because of so many conceptualisations of the term, the reliability and validity of employee engagement surveys might be difficult to establish. Likewise, Fletcher et al (2014) stated that the validity of most engagement research is questionable, because it has been found that employee engagement fluctuates with time; as a result, an employee's level of engagement will change, depending on the situation and condition at work. Employee engagement is conceptualized as the individual's investment of his complete self into a role (Kahn, 1992).

Engagement is a positive attitude where an individual goes above and beyond the call of duty, so as to heighten the level of ownership, and to further the business interest of the organisation

as a whole (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Moreover, it is also a discretionary effort or a form of in-role or extra role effort or behavior that fosters change, and practically affects the employee morale, productivity, commitment, loyalty to internal and external customers, employee absenteeism and turnover in the organization (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Thus, employee engagement has been popularized by practitioners as well as the research/academic community and is regarded as the barometer that determines the association of the individual with the workplace (Sundaray, 2011).

There remains an academic knowledge gap in employee engagement literature, which continuously elicits the need for further empirical research in this area within diverse contexts and different demographic segments. Associated with high profit margins, productivity, customer satisfaction, and safety (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002), employee engagement has also been associated with essential work attitudes and performance behaviors, such as organizational commitment (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008; Saks, 2006), organizational citizenship behaviors (Saks, 2006), low turnover intentions (Saks, 2006; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), and job performance (Bakker & Bal, 2010). Extant literatures have shown the existence of a statistical positive relationship between employee engagement and business productivity, profitability, employee retention, safety and customer satisfaction (Coffman & Gonzalez-Molina, 2002).

The past few years have witnessed considerable interest from businesses and consultancy firms in the concept of employee engagement; however, in recent years, employee engagement has also attracted the attention of academic researchers (Welch, 2011). The reason for this attention is partly because research on engagement has suggested that improving employee engagement directly correlates with improved performance, which eventually leads to organisational goal realisation (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009); Truss *et al.*, 2013; Byrne, 2014). Equally, employee engagement has been argued to contribute extensively to organisational performance, leading to improvements in quality of service, customer satisfaction and long-term financial results (Mercer, 2007; Bulent *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, disengagement of employees is central to a lack of commitment and motivation (Aktouf, 1992).

The main problem of the employee engagement concept so far is that there are over 50 characterisations of employee engagement as of 2009 (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). This influx of definitions has made it more difficult to understand the actual meaning of employee engagement. Similarly, Purcell (2014) argued that, after assessing most of the engagement definitions and measurements, engaged employees are 'rare breeds' and probably a mirage. He further pointed out that, because of so many conceptualisations of the term, the reliability and validity of employee engagement surveys might be difficult to establish. Likewise, Fletcher *et al* (2014) stated that the validity of most engagement research is questionable, because it has been found that employee engagement fluctuates with time; as a result, an employee's level of engagement will change, depending on the situation and condition at work.

Newman (2011) singled out demographic factors as a solid contributor to employee engagement definitions and drivers. Richard *et al.* (2011) argued that employee engagement is related to the relationships workers have within their organisations. He further stated that

engaged employees are enthusiastic about their work and they find meaning in what they do, echoing Kahn's (1990) idea of psychological meaningfulness. According to Richard *et al.* (2011), employees knowing what are expected of them, having the right materials to accomplish their task, and trusting their boss and co-workers are some of the factors that can drive an employee to be engaged. Brunetto, Xerri and Nelson, (2014) described engagement as an emotional involvement of employees, as well as a pervasive state of being, such that employees are energetically undertaking work tasks. Brunetto *et al.* (2014)'s emotional engagement concept is in line with Kahn's psychological facet of engagement. Shaw (2005) conceptualizes employee engagement as a relationship between employees and their supervisors.

### **Staff Motivation**

Staff motivation refers to the processes that accounts for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of efforts toward attaining a goal (Yudhvir & Sunita, 2012). Certo (2016) describes motivation as giving people incentives that cause them to act in desired ways. Motivation has also been described as the process of arousing and sustaining goal-directed behavior (Nelson, 2013). It is commonly agreed that there are two types of motivation, namely extrinsic and intrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is that behavior which an individual produces because of the pleasant experiences associated with the behavior itself (Mosley, Pietri & Mosley Jnr, 2012). They stem from motivation that is characteristic of the job itself. Examples are receiving positive recognition, appreciation, and a sense of achievement and meeting the challenge. According to Beer and Walton (2014), intrinsic rewards accrue from performing the task itself, and may include the satisfaction of accomplishment or a sense of influence. Mosley *et al.* (2012) describe extrinsic motivation as the behavior performed, not for its own sake, but for the consequences associated with it. Examples include salary, benefits and working conditions. Extrinsic rewards come from the organization as money, perquisites or promotions from supervisors and co-workers as recognition (Beer & Walton, 2014).

George and Jones (2012) states that motivation can be categorized into two classes namely intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation arises from an employee's internal cravings to execute a task out of self-interest rather than a need or wish for some external reward while external motivation arises when an employee is compelled to act in a specific way either as a result of that employee's desires for external rewards or to avoid punishment.

### **Employee Performance**

Performance is defined as productivity which states quality, quantity, and contribution of work (Wardani & Eliyana, 2020). When productivity is high, the overall performance in the organization will also be high. According to Naufal and Suryaputra, (2011) performance is basically a form of what employees do or don't do in carrying out their work. So that performance is a real behavior that is displayed by everyone as work achievement produced by employees in accordance with their role in the organization.

Employee performance refers to the level of achievement of the tasks that make up the work of an employee (Al Banin, Eliyana & Latifayah, 2020). Employee performance is the result of

an employee's work during a certain period compared to various possibilities (standards, criteria or targets) that are mutually determined and agreed upon (Muzakki, Eliyana & Muhtadi, 2019). Meanwhile, according to Al Banin et al. (2020) employee performance basically refers to the level of achievement of the tasks that make up the work of an employee. Employee performance is a factor that can significantly affect the profitability of an organization characterized by work results with the best quality work. Employee performance has a very important role in achieving the hospital's goals. Performance can be interpreted as productivity which states quality, quantity, and contribution of work (Wardani & Eliyana, 2020). When productivity is high, the overall performance in the organization will also be high.

## **THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **William Kahn's Theory of Employee Engagement**

This theory was incepted by Kahn's in 1990. Kahn's (1990) original conception postulated that engagement flows and ebbs according to individuals' interactions with the surrounding conditions, and therefore could fluctuate on a daily basis. Kahn defines engagement as the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles. When employees are fully engaged, they express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance (Kahn, 1990). Perrin (2003) defines engagement as an employee's willingness and ability to contribute to company success by putting discretionary effort into their work, in the form of extra time, brainpower and energy.

Kahn's theory aligns meaningfulness, safety, and availability within the working environment, to engagement (Kahn, 1990). Adler (2012) believed employee engagement has become a primary focus for both research and practice around the world. The mechanisms of engagement approaches range from social psychology to developmental psychology to philosophy and ethics (Glavas, 2012). Bhatnager (2012) indicated engagement is a direct measurement of organizational effectiveness as job performance, quality, output, business growth, and profits. Soieb, Othman, and D'Silva (2013) defined engagement as a strong bond between oneself and the job responsibility where people fully express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Employee engagement creates a framework for building commitment based on inspiring, rewarding, and involving employees in collaborative actions with human resource (Mone, Eisinger, Guggenheim, Price & Stine, 2011).

The effective shift model of work engagement is the assumption that both positive and negative effects have important functions for work participation (Bledow, Schmitt, Frese & Kuhnel, 2011). Bakker, Albrecht and Leiter (2012) emphasized organizations' need for employees who are connected to their work and able to invest themselves fully in their roles, and who are proactive and committed to high-quality performance standards. According to Robertson and Cooper (2010) one of the barriers to achieving employee engagement is bureaucracy, as the bureaucratic structure of organizations significantly affects its potential to engage its employees. In addition, the findings of Mosadeghrad and Ansarian (2014) revealed that the workload, accompanied by poor management and ineffective communication, are key challenges to employee engagement.

### **Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory**

Expectancy Theory was developed by Victor Vroom in (1964). Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory of motivation describes how people determine their actions from their perceptions. Expectancy theory pertains to the process in which an individual's motivational force underlying a course of action or goal is determined by a series of judgements regarding the (1) valence, (2) instrumentality, and (3) expectancy associated with the action (Estes & Polnick, 2012).

The expectancy theory, as opposed to the need theory, is a process theory. It relates to the diversity existing in the workplace as regards the opinions, thoughts and concerns of workers including their attitude and behaviors towards the job (Purvis, Zagenczyk & McCray, 2015). This theory specifically focuses on the personal evaluations of a workforce and their work place. It assesses the activities of workers based on their hopes and aspirations (Purvis et al., 2015). The theory identifies two major concerns; the first concern is that irrespective of various possible outcomes, workers are motivated to commit their efforts to an organization only if they are certain that the end result or outcome will realize a specific level of performance (Purvis et al., 2015). This means that, if the members of a workforce lack faith in their ability to perform at a particular level, the inspiration to perform the job effectively will be low or lost. The other concern is that workers would only be encouraged to perform at a particular level, if their performance at this level would bring about preferred outcomes.

Schedlitzki and Edwards (2017) linked the path-goal theory to the assumptions of the expectancy theory stating that workers have a tendency to perform effectively if they believe that they have the capability of fulfilling the assignment, achieving the expected outcome and that this expected outcome is of utmost value to them (Schedlitzki & Edwards, 2017). The theory implies that workers will only be willing to put their energy to work if the outcome of both concerns are positive. This means that the positivity of an outcome is assumed to be associated with a specific action, as such the willingness of a workforce to perform is largely dependent on how positively inclined they view the outcome (Vroom, 1964; Lin, 2007).

## **EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Employee Engagement and Employee Performance**

Employee engagement research has shown that the concept is critical for organizational competitiveness and achievement of set goals (Truss, 2014). This does not imply that the concept is devoid of criticism. Researchers, such as Kahn (1990) and Schaufeli (2013) gave precise definitions and measurements for employee engagement; however, the concept remains inconsistently defined and conceptualized (Ludwig & Frazier, 2012; Van Rooy, Whitman, Hart & Caleo, 2011). Theories of job performance aver that motivation is a key determinant of performance. The role of motivation in the work context has been studied to understand what causes employees to try hard to do well, or more specifically what causes the arousal, direction, and persistence of voluntary actions that are goal directed (Mitchell & Liden, 1982). It is

therefore imperative that managers understand what motivates employees and how to motivate them effectively (Deci, 1975).

There have been numerous researches done on motivation and employee performance. Many scholars have postulated theories to try and understand what motivation is, and how it affects individuals (Fincham & Rhodes, 2015). Organizational productivity is determined by employees' efforts and engagement (Musgrove, Ellinger, & Ellinger, 2014). Interpersonal behaviors affect productivity; consequently, organizational leaders have begun to monitor how different interpersonal behaviors influence productivity (Hausknecht & Holwerda, 2013). Negative effects on productivity could be caused by negative interpersonal behaviors that lower employee engagement. Bersin (2014) found that only 13% of worldwide employees are fully engaged at work.

### **Staff Motivation and Employee Performance**

Motivation is generally defined as the psychological forces that determine the direction of a person's level of effort, as well as a person's persistence in the face of obstacles (Stanley, 2012). Stanley (2012) avers that motivation is key for talent retention and performance in today's marketplace, where companies seek a competitive edge. No matter the economic environment, the goal is to create a workplace that is engaging and motivating, where employees want to stay, grow and contribute their knowledge, experience and expertise. Globalization is being experienced by most of the organizations in Kenya. Kumari (2014) states that the opportunities and challenges of leadership and management are significantly different from that of the past and in particular, the last decade. Industrial psychologists and management practitioners have long been interested in searching for factors which influence motivation and productivity.

The responsibility for motivation is three-fold: it falls on the senior leadership, the direct manager and the employee (Bhuvanaiah & Raya, 2015). Numerous factors are involved, from trust, engagement and values (individual and organizational) to job satisfaction, achievement, acknowledgement and rewards. Motivation is essential for working autonomously, as well as for collaboration and effective teamwork (Stanley, 2012). Motivating employees for better performance encompass these critical factors: employee engagement, organizational vision and values, management acknowledgment and appreciation of work well done, and overall authenticity of leadership (Kumari, 2014). Traditionally, the study of job performance has been based on two somewhat independent assumptions: that performance can be understood in terms of the individual's ability to perform the tasks, and that performance depends solely upon the level of motivation.

Gheitani, Imani, Seyyedamiri and Foroudi (2019) examined the mediating effect of intrinsic motivation on the relationship between Islamic work ethic (IWE), job satisfaction, and organizational commitment in banking sector. Data collected from 220 respondents using questionnaires revealed a positive and a significant relationship between IWE and job satisfaction and organizational commitment with the mediating role of intrinsic motivation.

Evelyne, Muathe and Kilika (2018) examined the mediating effect of employee motivation on the relationship between job characteristics and the performance of employees among private

equity firms. The theories used in the study were the Job Characteristics model, Herzberg's two-factor theory and the Demand control model. The study adopted a descriptive research design and involved a census of all 210 employees in 25 different private equity firms in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Questionnaires were used for primary data collection. The quantitative data in the study was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The researcher got 116 questionnaires out of the 210 distributed. The results indicated partial mediation by the mediator on the independent variable. The study recommends that Job characteristics be considered in planning and evaluation of employees' jobs and performance respectively.

Al-Musadieq, Nurjannah, Raharjo, Solimun and Fernandes (2018) assessed the mediating effect of work motivation on the influence of job design and organizational culture against HR performance. The study used path analysis and Sobel test to test the indirect effect (mediation effect). The study revealed that there is a significant direct influence of work design on the performance of human resources and work motivation; there is a significant direct influence of organizational culture on work motivation and human resource performance; and there is a significant direct influence of work motivation on human resource performance.

### **Employee Engagement, Motivation and Performance**

Bustasar, Sumarsih and Nugroho (2019) studied the relationship between motivation, engagement and performance of employee. The study used survey design to sample 200 employees. The study used three latent variables; motivation, engagement and performance employee. Structural equation modelling was used in the analysis of data. The study findings revealed that there is a positive direct effect of motivation on employee engagement. The findings also revealed that there is a positive direct effect of motivation on Performance of Employees. Finally, the results indicated that there is a positive direct effect of employee engagement on self-efficacy.

Gikonyo (2018) assessed the relationship between employee engagement and performance of research and training state corporations in Kenya. The study was anchored on resource-based view and stakeholder theories and supplemented by social exchange, expectancy and work adjustment theories. A positivistic philosophy was adopted in order to investigate relationships among the variables. Descriptive and explanatory research designs were used to describe the variables and establish the nature of the relationships among them. The influence of employee engagement on performance was found to be moderated by demographic characteristics of age, tenure and level of education while the relationship was found to be partially mediated by organisational commitment.

Tampubolon (2017) examined the relationship between employee engagement, job motivation, and job satisfaction towards the employee performance. The study used simple random sampling to select the respondents. The study results revealed that Employee engagement positively and significantly influenced employee performance. Job motivation was found to positively and significantly influence employee performance. Job satisfaction was also found to positively and significantly influence employee performance.

Change, Linge and Sikalieh (2019) examined the influence of idealized influence on employee engagement in parastatals in the energy sector in Kenya. The study targeted the 10 parastatals within the energy sector in Kenya. The study adopted a positivistic research philosophy to examine how idealized influence influences employee engagement and data were collected using structured questionnaires. A correlational research design was conducted with the purpose of determining the strength of the relationship between parameters of idealized influence and employee engagement in parastatals in the energy sector in Kenya. The study results indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the influence of idealized influence and employee engagement in parastatals in the energy sector in Kenya.

### Conceptual Framework for the Study

This paper reviewed the influence of staff motivation on the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance as presented in a diagrammatical form in Figure 1.

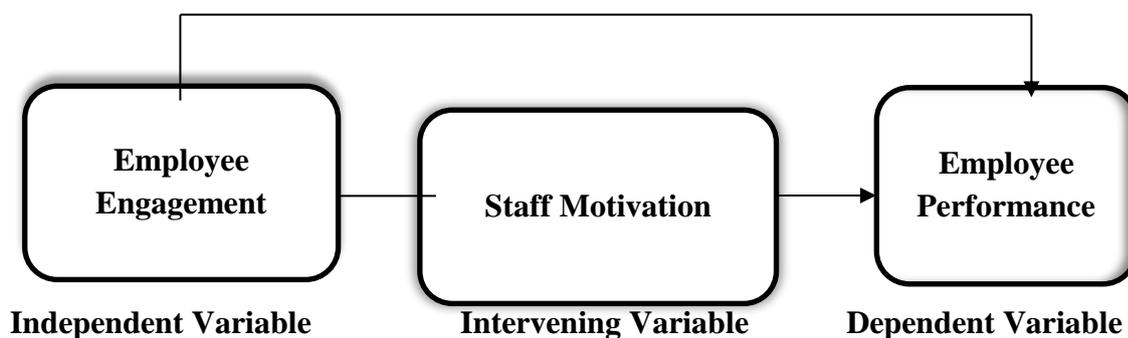


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a positivist research philosophy. Creswell (2012) stated that the positivist philosophy presupposes that the test for a valid knowledge from different researchers is testing the ideas at the same time and this should give same results. A cross-sectional survey design was employed. This is because it gives a snapshot of one point in time, while longitudinal studies are repeated over an extended period to track changes over time (Saunders & Lewis, 2016). The target population of the study comprised of the current 2,500 employees of Kenya Electricity Generation Company Plc (KenGen).

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected using the questionnaires through survey monkey and focus group discussions (FGDs) comprising of champion and Union leaders. The data was also collected using document review and stakeholder engagement through Organizational Health Assessment (OHA) survey questionnaire administered electronically to all employees. The study also used secondary data obtained from the document reviews and stakeholder engagement. The review mainly used content analysis which were mentioned, and discussions specific to the study variables were identified, analyzed, and critiqued.

The study used descriptive statistics in the form of percentages, means and measures of dispersion; which allows presentation of data in a more meaningful way and thus simpler interpretation of data. The analyzed data was then interpreted and presented in frequency tables, bar charts, graphs and pie charts. Responses from open-ended questions were coded, interpreted and their frequencies determined through cross tabulations on differences between respondents and central tendencies of the responses of each factor.

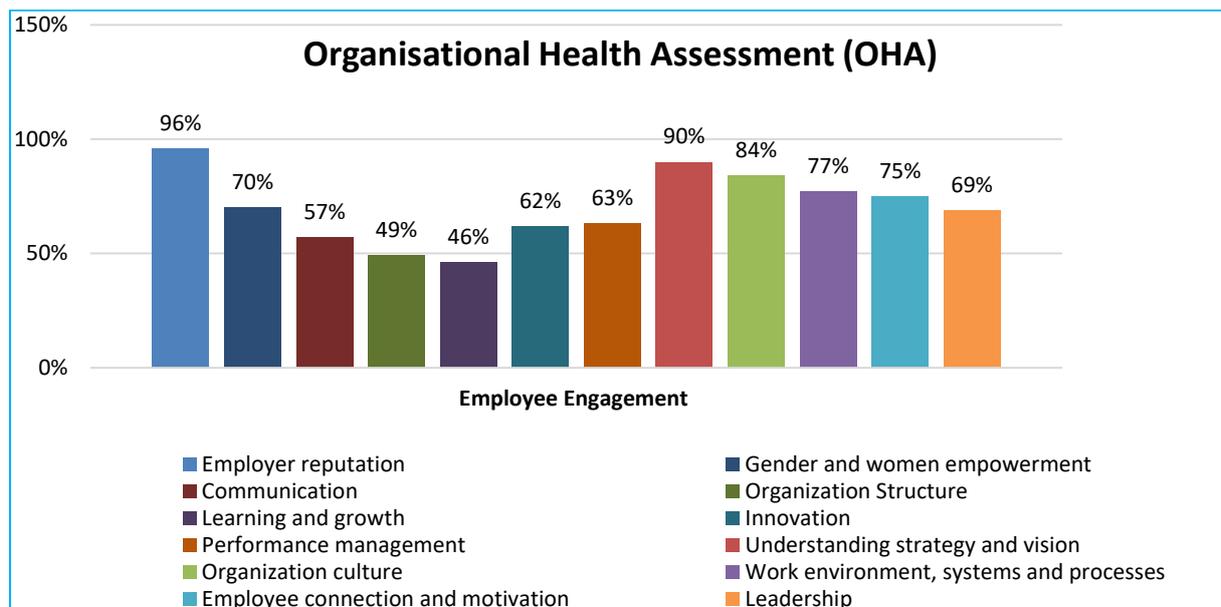
## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Response Rate

The study targeted 2500 employees in the survey, out of which 1360 (54%) responded positively. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting.

### Descriptive Analysis

The paper sought to establish the relationship between employee engagement, staff motivation and employee performance at Kengen. The results from the survey are presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Organisational Health Survey**

From the results on figure 2, it was revealed that employee engagement at Kengen was high as per high OHA ratings on critical factors. Employer reputation was at 96% indicating a strong perception of employees on engagement. On Understanding strategy and vision, the study findings showed that 90% of survey respondents understood how their job contributed to the overall strategic objectives. This indicates that clarity of vision and strategic direction was one of the areas of strength within the organization’s critical factors.

On organizational culture, 84% of survey respondents believe culture and core values are clearly defined. The employee connection and motivation is also at 75%. The study indicated that their organisational culture is clearly defined and 96% of employees believe their

behaviour is consistent with core values. These findings indicate that strategy, culture, employee connection, employee behavior and motivation need to be aligned with core values in order to realize the desired organizational performance results. The findings further indicated that employees understood the organization core values and have aligned their personal behaviour to the same. This means that employees put organization values first and their preference comes second, thus enhancing employee loyalty, commitment and performance. This is further supported by the fact that 96% of the employees hold the organization with high reputation and are proud to work for it. 95% of employees would recommend the organization as a great work place. Additionally, the results also mean that employee turnover is very low as they are very proud to work with the organization.

On leadership, the study revealed that 69% of survey respondents felt that their supervisors support them in delivery of their work objectives. Further, the leadership results are favourable across board. The findings revealed that there is room for improvement on leadership by creating an open and trusting environment for employees and encouraging bottom-up communication.

On the structure, the study results revealed that organizational structure is an area of improvement with 49% of respondents feeling that not all departments are treated equally. The study results showed that 77% of the respondents were satisfied with the Work environment, systems and processes. These factors contributed to the high employee connection, motivation and respect displayed towards the organization. This is likely to be translated into significant improvement in productivity and performance of the organization.

Performance management is an area of improvement with an overall score of 63%. The results indicated that 87% of the respondents have favourable perceptions regarding performance targets, however 42% have unfavorable perception about having a clear linkage between performance results and promotion. This indicates the need to enhance the performance governance to improve objectivity, reliability and equitability of the process.

Women and gender empowerment survey results indicated that 76% of survey respondents feel that the leadership demonstrates their commitment to gender equality. At the same time 74% of the respondents agreed that there was concerted effort to create gender awareness among employees. This implies that the women agenda has been taken seriously with some women promoted to high levels of management. The results further reverberated that women input are sort when making decisions.

The study results deduced that KenGen has embraced innovation with 82% of the respondents indicating that there are initiatives in place to encourage innovation although 53% felt the environment is not conducive for challenging the status quo in order to foster innovation and implementation. This is also in line with the challenges in both work systems and processes and performance management. The result indicated that communication and organization structure significantly improved to 69 percent in the current survey. This improvement is attributed to improvement in women and gender empowerment and innovation. Finally, the study results also revealed that motivation of most employees was high at 85% but there is still room for improvement. This showed that Motivation had an enhancing mediating effect on

employee engagement since when it was introduced, the influence of employee engagement on performance improved.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study found that employee engagement had a positive impact on performance of employees at KenGen. Organizational leaders have a great influence on employee level of engagement. Leadership should evaluate each employee and recognize strength and weaknesses and develop their skills and capacity in areas with gaps. High employee engagement can lead to innovation, increased productivity, higher-quality products or service, less waste, customer satisfaction, and higher profits. The study concluded that leadership results are favorable across board, however, the study notes that there is room for improvement on the leadership components related to creating an open and trusting environment for employees and encouraging bottom-up communication. The study concluded that communication is an area of improvement especially between departments and within the hierarchy. The study concluded that level of understanding of strategy and direction should be improved by cascading the strategy to different levels in the organization so that every person understands what strategy means to their work and how their inputs are necessary in achieving the same. The study concluded that there is need to establish clarity of vision and strategic direction since these affect employees' engagement to the overall strategic objectives.

The study also concluded that the organizational culture was clearly defined and the employees believe their behaviour is consistent with core values of the institution. The study further concluded that organisational structure is an important area of improvement and there is need to ensure that all departments are treated equally. Finally, the study revealed that women and gender empowerment needed improvement including incorporating the women in the board and top-level management.

The study concluded that motivation mediates employee engagement but other factors also affect overall employee engagement including gender inclusiveness, performance management, leadership and communication. Motivation was found to have an enhancing mediating effect on employee engagement. The employees rated employer reputation very high. This could be attributed to a good employer-employee relationship which emanates from employee motivation, good work environment, systems and processes. The motivation of most employees was high but still there was room for improvement.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The study findings concur with William Kahn's Theory of employee engagement and supports Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory of motivation. The study recommended that these theories be applied to guide managers and policy makers to develop laws, regulations, policies, culture and practices that reinforces employee engagement and motivation of workforce.

The study recommends that policy guidelines be formulated to guide organizations on leadership development, performance management, communication strategy and gender inclusiveness. It is recommended that an enabling environment be developed for employee engagement to enhance motivation of employees and improve their performance.

On leadership, the study recommends that leadership development and people management training programs be developed and implemented. The study also recommends empowerment of management through creation of accountability and responsibility frameworks. Further, it is recommended that managers should regularly engage lower-level staff and communicate vision, strategies and performance to them. The study recommends that communications plan be developed and implemented including channels and ownership while ensuring two-way open communication where one can speak and be heard freely.

The study recommends integration of gender mainstreaming, setting parity targets in the company strategy and development of policies to drive diversity on gender representation in leadership and technical roles. The study further recommends forums for male employees, so that they don't feel left out.

On performance management, the study recommends building line managers capability on performance management so as to ensure common understanding of the process and the overarching guiding principles across board. The study also recommends development of a hierarchical moderation mechanism complimented with a grievance management process for receiving and managing dissatisfaction with performance appraisal outcome. The individual performance should be linked to reward, promotion and development. Finally, it is recommended that leaders should be trained on mentorship and coaching skills.

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