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**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND
EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY IN THE MINISTRY OF
WATER AND IRRIGATION IN NAIROBI CITY
COUNTY, KENYA.**

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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER AND IRRIGATION IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to establish the effects of performance management strategies to employee productivity in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Methodology: The study adopted a descriptive research design and Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two factors and expectancy theory for its theoretical framework. The target population was 200 employees drawn from middle level and lower level cadres in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. A sample of 133 employees was issued with the questionnaires. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to identify respondents. Primary data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires administered by the researcher. Descriptive statistic like mean, standard deviation frequencies, tables and charts were used to analyze quantitative data using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), while open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis.

Results: The findings showed that performance management strategies affect employee productivity but at different levels. Remuneration is the leading factor that negatively influences employee productivity within the scope area. It was also noted that the promotion process affects the Ministry of Water and Irrigation negatively because it is not based on merit. However, both training and physical work environment facilitate improved productivity among the employees. This shows that performance management strategies positively and negatively affect the overall employee productivity in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

Recommendations: The study recommends that, through the Public Service Commission and Salaries and Remuneration Commission, the government of Kenya introduce measures in areas of remuneration and training that will motivate workers in this ministry. Draft new guidelines for salary review based on the present living standards. The ministry should ensure that all workers are entitled to transport to and from work, mortgage facilities, and other benefits. All salaries be harmonized across the public sector.

The promotion policies and guidelines that are already in place be followed when promoting employees. Adoption of a proper appraisal system and that all the promotions are based on merit but not influence, corruption or seniority. The Ministry takes note of the annual training plans and implementing them to the latter.

Keywords: *Performance management strategies, employee productivity.*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Economies all over the world strive to maximize on the resources for output. Success or failure of an organization is dependent on the employees' performance (Hameed & Waheed, 2011). The concept of labour productivity has been a challenge to both developed and developing economies. A study to determine labour productivity showed that Africa and South Asian countries (except India) scored very low. It was further noted that in these two continents, the Sub-Saharan region performed poorest in the economies (Chebet 2015, Arham, Nazri & Rahma, 2018).

Research on productivity of employees date back to the 1900 with the likes of Fredrick Taylor (1911) as noted by Locke (1982), Henry Fayol (1916), Max Weber (1920) by Mommsen (1990), and Elton Mayo (1933), who sought to find ways of increasing productivity with the least of inputs. The orientation of the public sector makes it difficult to measure the objectives and the result/outcomes of the sector, (Bohnet & Eaton, 2003, and Buelens & Broeck, 2007). The public sector has gradually transformed and adopted private sector strategies like technology, global trends, performance management strategies, performance contracting, and aligning Human resource function to the organization strategic plan (Nabukeera, Ali & Raja, 2015). These changes have proven to be a challenge for both developed and developing countries. The pressure for improved service delivery and labor productivity in the public sector has been persistent hence the need for research in the area (Hughes, Moore & Kataria, 2011). Daley (2012), notes that the modern Public Service is a professional service that must be built on knowledge and expertise. Professionals must be sought and guaranteed of an environment where their careers will be nurtured and prosper.

Human resource is considered to be one of the key vital assets to any organization as its practices and strategies have a direct impact to employee productivity (Kirusa & Mukuru, 2018). It is therefore important to identify the practices and strategies with the highest level of impact to employee productivity as this is likely to help inform policy formulation and implementation (Mohammed & Nimalathan, 2016). When employees are developed, they feel motivated to work hard, utilize the skills acquired fully and put more effort to achieve organizational goals (Hameed & Waheed, 2011). Training leads to enhanced skills which when utilized result to enhanced production. This therefore makes employees of an organization to be a competitive advantage

Chandrasekar (2011), notes that a work place that is characterized with poorly designed workstations, unsuitable furniture, lack of ventilation, inappropriate lighting, excessive noise, insufficient safety measures in fire emergencies and lack of protective equipment among other hazards, is likely to cause occupational diseases which impact employees negatively in their productivity. Organizations interested with productivity will focus on personal motivation and the infrastructure of the environment where employees work in. In recognition of the importance of workplace environment, the employers are coming up with programs that address lifestyle changes work/life balance, health and fitness which were previously not a concern.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation Nairobi Headquarters is mandated by the Constitution of Kenya (2010) to formulate policies and give guidelines in water sector. These policies and guidelines are in turn adopted by the county governments and any other body dealing with water collection or supply for example the Nairobi Water and Sewerage Company.

The public sector employees both at the County and National level of governments have been discontented for a long time and there has been numerous strikes complaint being poor remuneration and working environment (Chebet, 2015). Nelson & Quick (2012) notes that jobs motivation of employees lead to high performance. Motivation includes attractive compensation equivalent to work done, skills and knowledge on the work being done, employee participation in decision making, a conducive working environment among others. According to Hewitt (2014), work environment, workplace relations, opportunity for growth, total reward, and company practices were seen as factors found engaging employees to productivity. According to Sattar, Ahmad and Hassan (2015), training, incentives/rewards and empowerment contribute to employee productivity and satisfaction.

The variables under study were strategies that human resource managers can use to improve delivery of water services to the citizens of Kenya. The sector deals with a natural resource which needs proper management despite the challenges of a fast growing population and limited resources at their disposal. The study adopted the following three theories and used their relevance to the discussions, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two factor and expectancy theory

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Organizations today have come to the realization of how vital human resource is in the achievement of their goals and objectives. They are therefore keen to develop human resource strategies that ensure productivity is at its best. Ndulue and Echukwu (2016), notes that for productivity to be at its peak, performance management strategies towards productivity must be aligned to the organizational strategic plan. Many performance management strategies have been studied which aid productivity. Armstrong (2016), notes that employees need to be equipped with the prerequisite skills, be in an enabling working environment, their remuneration be considered and promotions be prompt when deserved, for them to perform.

In her study, Anitha (2014), three strategies, work environment, compensation, and training were studied. However, it did not consider promotion as a strategy that would affect productivity. Further the study will specifically look into the physical working environment whereas Anitha looked at the general work environment. The study by Akhtar, Nawaz, Mahmood, and Shahid (2016), was in the banking sector in Pakistan. It focused on High performance work practices which included rewards, training and employee engagement as practices that directly affect employee performance / productivity. This study did not consider the environment in which employees work in or the effects of promotions on productivity. Namanga (2017), focused the study on employee involvement, employee compensation, work environment and training as factors affecting employee performance and engagement. The remuneration strategy under study will focus on the medical scheme, housing and transport of employees and the resultant effect of the same to productivity.

Hay Group (2012), studied the importance of work environment to employee productivity, while International Journal of Science and Research (2013) and Karatepe (2013), looked at the benefit of training to the employees and employers. These studies focused on only one factor. It was however observed that work environment and training have a positive relationship to employee performance. Wanjala (2019), on the other hand studied the effects of job security, training & development, compensation and employee participation to employee performance in the county government. Chebet (2015), focused on leadership/management as factor affecting employee

performance besides training, remuneration /compensation and working conditions. Caroline & Kinyajui (2019), noted that there is a positive effect of reward, work environment, human resource development and work life balance to employee performance.

Ministry of water and irrigation is a part of the public service which struggles to perform. The constraints facing the Public sector are evident in the Ministry. This includes setting of goals and achieving them, being providers of public goods and therefore not profit oriented, difficulty in measuring of achievements made and not forgetting bureaucracy which hinders fast and timely decision making. The ministry is tasked with formulating policies which are in turn cascaded to the whole of the water sector all over the country. Water being an essential and vital asset in human life, there is a serious need to clearly spell out strategies that can be applied to ensure that this vital resource is well managed and utilized. The aforementioned studies have proven that the factors under study have a positive impact to employee productivity in the organizations studied (county government, parastatal, and private sector), however this had not been tested in a public organization at the National government and also at the Ministry of water and Irrigation, therefore the study sought to find out the impact of these factors to employee productivity in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. This study therefore sought to understand the effects of training, remuneration, promotions and physical working conditions as performance strategies to employee productivity in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

2.0 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg two-factor theory was developed in (1959) by Frederick Herzberg, (Caroline & Kinyajui, 2019). He defined two sets of variables that affect employee motivation at workplace that is hygiene and motivator factors. The hygiene factors include: pay, company policies, fringe benefits, physical working conditions, status, interpersonal relations, and job security among others. They prevent dissatisfaction in employees. These factors are external to the job and prompt disappointing encounters to the employees, (Ruthankoon & Ogunlana, 2003). Fulfillment of these factors alone does not motivate employees but their absence brings dissatisfaction. They are equated to Maslow's physiological and safety needs which are very basic and need to be fulfilled. They describe the job environment/ scenario. The hygiene factors do not lead to positive satisfaction for long but their absence leads to dissatisfaction.

The other set of factors defined by Herzberg is motivators. These factors are inherent to the job and yield positive satisfaction (Dartey & Amoako, 2011). They are also known as intrinsic factors. They include recognition, growth and promotional opportunities, training/ learning, responsibility, meaningfulness of the work among others. They motivate employees to higher productivity. They were perceived as needs on the higher side of Maslow's hierarchy of needs which include self-actualization. They are also perceived to be an additional benefit to the employee. Basset and Lloyd (2005) note that unpleasant working conditions prompts staff to desert work and opt for other employers. "Workers are more propelled if they feel content in their work and frequently happens when the employer makes a decent workplace where representatives feel esteemed, by and large through expanded correspondence and being requested their conclusions" (Guy & Mastracci, 2018). The employees will be more inspired if the organization invests through training on the employees (Caroline & Kinyajui, 2019). High pay may not be sufficient to sustain high

productivity; consideration has to be done to cater for training, working conditions among other things. The two variables hygiene and motivators must be fulfilled (Cole, 2004).

Having looked at the tenets of this theory, it is evident that the strategies understudy is clearly addressed by the theory. The researcher sought to understand how remuneration, promotion, physical working condition and training contribute towards employee productivity. The strategies fall clearly under the two categories of variables advanced by Herzberg theory. The remuneration, promotion, and physical work condition fall under hygiene factors whose absence will cause dissatisfaction on the employees and leave the organization. They however do not motivate the employees individually and therefore the need for motivator. Training is classified as a motivator to the employee. The two categories of factors are work hand in hand for employees' productivity.

2.2 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Needs theories are viewed as the best to explain employees drive at work (Robbins & Judge, 2009). Abraham Harold Maslow (1954) perceived human beings as having needs which drive their actions. He classified these needs into five categories forming a hierarchy from the lowest to the highest as indicated in figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1: Maslow's Hierarchy of needs.

Source: <https://jambarteambuilding.com/maslows-hierarchy-needs/>

Maslow observed that these needs are satisfied systematically. It is only when the lower level needs are satisfied does the higher level need get satisfied. At the lowest level are physiological needs which are the basic needs to human survival. These needs drive people to work so as to be able to cater for their basic needs as food, shelter and clothing. Therefore pay becomes vital to an employee and determines their productivity. The next level covers safety needs which comprise of job security, protection against danger, safety of property. The third level needs entails of social needs which include belongingness, love, affection, friendship, conversation. The fourth level comprises of self-respect, recognition and respect for others which is clustered as esteem needs. The fifth level need is self-actualization which comprise of growth, learning, meditation among others.

This theory is not without criticism. The ERG theory by Clayton Alderfer (1969), notes that these needs are not necessarily satisfied systematically. He notes that these needs must not follow a particular order in their fulfillment. One can pursue growth before satisfying the physiological needs. He further notes that more than one need can be functional at a time (Karic, 2014; Dresang, 2008).

Maslow's theory of need continues to inform various studies despite the criticism. It is relevant to this study as the four strategies being studied clearly fit in the classification of Maslow. Remuneration fits in the first classification of physiological needs as it a requirement for one to cater for the basic needs of food, shelter and clothing. Promotions form a part of security and belonging at the work place. Promotions will only be done to employees who are performing and achieving organizational goals. It also boosts an employee's morale and self-esteem. The acquisition of skills, knowledge through training is clustered as self-actualization and development.

2.3 Expectancy Theory

The valence, instrumentality and expectancy theory was advanced by Victor Vroom in (1964). Unlike Maslow and Herzberg who defined needs as the drive to work, Vroom focuses more on the (work environment), outcome and results of work done. Vroom asserts that, "the intensity of work effort depends on the perception that an individual's effort will result in a desired outcome" (Holdford & Lovelace-Elmore, 2001). The expectation that performance /productivity will be followed by a definite outcome drives the willingness of employees to work harder. Therefore employees are driven by how much they need the reward (valence), the assessment that the efforts will lead to the expected results (expectancy) and the belief that the performance will lead to reward (instrumentality). Factors that influence expectancy include possession of requisite skills, training, resources, an enabling working environment, and information among others. This theory stresses the need for clarity for clear connection between performance/ productivity and outcomes/ expected reward. Greenberg & Baron (2003) notes that emphasis on training, advancement, recognition and rewarding systems encourage employee to make efforts to perform at their maximum.

The employees will strive to perform when they relate very closely the efforts to the reward. Employees will endure the struggles of acquiring new skill through training as they relate it to promotion. Promotion is associated with better remuneration. When an employee puts more effort to perform better so as to receive a better package or even promotion automatically it serves the purpose for both the employer and the employee. The condition of the working environment affects

employees positively and negatively. The employer will try to ensure the working environment is favorable to discourage employee turnover and any expenses related to medical bill caused by poor working conditions. Time wasted on absenteeism can be productive at workplace. The gains at workplace contribute to employee productivity.

3.0 Performance Management Strategies

3.1 Remuneration

Remuneration is a component of human resource management strategy which consists of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Extrinsic reward is the monetary/financial aspect which includes basic pay/salary and bonuses/allowances while as the intrinsic reward is the non-financial aspect which include recognition, job security, appreciation, praise, decision-making, flexible working hours, feedback, medical cover, housing by organization, transport to and from work, holiday package among others (Yang, 2008). Reward systems are recognized by organizations worldwide as essential tools to motivating individual employees at workplace (Mwangi, 2017). It is seen as the most transparent way in which organizations communicate to their employees as to what they regard as essential (Mwangi, Njenga, Chepkilot, & Koima 2017). Remuneration should be clearly aligned to the organizational goals as employees behavior is dependent on how the employees are measured/rated/appraised and rewarded (Mwende, 2015). Non-monetary rewards motivate employees differently from the monetary rewards and therefore both rewards are considered important to employee performance, (Danish et al., 2015). Wanjala (2019), notes that it's important to treat human resource as a key competitive advantage. This is so because a poorly remunerated workforce results to low morale and eventually high turnover. In the past, reward system and measure of exceptional performance was not well structured. It was purely left to the whims of the managers.

Performance worth of reward would have meant anything from punctuality to assisting other department or even having a right attitude (Nanzushi, 2015). However, this is gradually changing and organizations are/have devised strategies to measure and improve productivity which includes appraisal systems, better compensation, job security, training and development as a key human resource strategy (Ndulue & Ekechukwu, 2016). Determination of pay is intended to bring a sense of equity, efficiency and macro-economic stability and efficient allocation of labor (Khan, 2011). The ILO Publication, 'An introduction to performance and skill-based pay system (1998) indicates that pay is an important and contentious element in an employment relationship whereby the employer, employee and government have equal interests. The employer is concerned with costs, ability to hire and retain competent employees. The employees are concerned with their standard of living and how they are valued by the organization while the government on the other hand is interested with the macro-economic stability of the economy.

Chebet (2015) identifies a good reward system as one of the best strategies which organizations use to motivate and retain its most valued staff. Having noted that employees are a key asset in the survival of an organization, they are mandated to provide salary and other non-financial benefits to employees so as to get the best out of them. Khan (2011) notes that a reward management system is complex and must be administered with caution as it is expected /supposed to encourage employees to work harder and be more determined. Organizations must be strategic in designing compensation systems with elements that work together for optimum productivity.

Basic pay is the major component of remuneration and its determinants should address issues like equity, efficiency, macroeconomic stability among others (Chebet, 2015). Benefits increase employee satisfaction at workplace which results to improved productivity. Extraordinarily high wages may not necessarily result to high productivity but can be a source of inefficiency in employees. In the world, organizations are seen to use different remuneration strategies which are linked to other essential strategies as technology, marketing, operations and financial decisions.

3.2 Physical Work Environment

Environment is man's immediate surrounding which he manipulates for his existence (Chebet, 2015). Work environment has been an area of study with Elton Mayo (1933), being the first researcher. Research has shown that the work environment has an impact on employee productivity. The physical environment plays a vital role in the satisfaction of employee. Employees spend at least 50 percent of their time in the workplace which affects their mental status, actions, abilities and productivity (Hay Group, 2012; Mmbusa, 2019). Chebet (2015) identified features associated with a suitable work environments proper lighting, ventilation, access to natural light, and acoustic environment. The physical work environment affects employees' behavior, attitude, workplace satisfaction as well as productivity. Gensler (2006) on the other hand observed that the layout of a room/office affects the human sense and interpersonal interactions. Employees who are in an open office plan are likely to be distracted in their work and feel that their privacy is invaded compared to those in partitioned office spaces. Closed office plans reduce disruptions, allows employees to have time to concentrate, focus and enhances creativity with minimal or no interruptions compared to open office plans where there are several disruptions from other colleagues, noise and also lack privacy (Mwbex, 2010). Despite the disruptions and noise in the open office plans, it allows for regular consultations and informal engagements which foster an environment of mutual support and co-operation.

These features (lighting, ventilation, access to natural light, and acoustic environment) have an effect on the employee health and consequently on productivity. Organizations must therefore provide their employees with protective clothing especially those working in hazardous environment, provision of plenty of clean water, restrooms, toilets, first aid facilities and all employees and employer must be conversant with the safety rules and procedures (Chebet, 2015).

In this regard it is important to look keenly into the work environment and its implications to the productivity of employees. Wrong manipulation of the environment makes it unsafe for working and this affects the levels of productivity. A conducive work environment is that which allows for productivity as expected by the management (Mike, 2010). Today's workplace is dynamic compared to the later days. The fast growth of the economy presents the workforce with endless opportunities. The organizations are therefore in need of the employees more than the employees need the organizations. Chebet (2015) notes that employees who are faced with harsh working conditions are likely to produce less compared to organizations with favorable working conditions. Poor working conditions lead to employee turnover which makes an organization lose to its competitors in the market (Fosfuri et al., 2001).

3.3 Promotions

Njanja, Maina, Kibet, and Njagi (2013), describe promotion as "the advancement of an employee from one position to another job position that has a higher salary range, a higher level job title and

often more and higher level job responsibilities". Wambugu and Ombui (2013), note that most often promotion brings in an increase in pay, authority, responsibility and influence on decision making process of an organization. Promotion is a powerful tool used by management to communicate to employees of what the organization values most. The promotion system must therefore be just and based on aspects like education, expertise and knowledge (Sharabi, 2008). Gul, Akbar, and Jan (2012) notes that a just promotion policy must be based on employee career appraisal. The career appraisal must consider the employee's abilities, knowledge, effective accomplishment of tasks and time management. At the point of promotion there is need to consider the length of service as well as competency of the staff (Ahmad & Shahzad, 2011). A just promotion system eliminates politics among employees and pressure to the management. Bowra, Sharif, Saeed, and Niazi (2012), note that among the many human resource problems that developing countries face, promotion process stands out. The promotion process lacks proper policies and guidelines to ensure justice. The developing countries base promotions on seniority than on actual performance. The process lacks to compensate hard work. Promotion opportunities are seen as a source of job satisfaction in an organization. According to Wambugu et al., (2013), there is a positive relationship between promotion practices and perceived performance of employees. It is the responsibility of managers to keep their employees motivated through fair and just promotion processes as it directly affects the productivity. Shahzad, Bashir, and Ramay (2008), notes that filling vacancies from within the organization as well as promoting staff on merit increases employee satisfaction and employee productivity

3.4 Training

Training is the transfer of specific skills or knowledge by an expert to employees with an objective of improving performance in their current task (Wanjala, 2019). Training is a vital aspect which supports productivity in organizations. Training empowers employees to perform better (greater efficiency, effectiveness) by continually building their knowledge, skills ability, competences and behavior (Karatepe, 2013). Employees with high education and training exhibit high levels of satisfaction, motivation and ultimately improved productivity (Chebet, 2015). Training has proven to be beneficial to both the employees and the organization (International Journal of Science and Research, 2013; Appiah, 2010). Capacity building is an indicator that organizations care for its employees (Hameed, 2011). According to Wanjala (2019), beneficial training is that which is tailor-made to suit the specific job requirements and strategic objectives of the organization. Training is expensive for an organization and so organizations will equip their employees with skills when they are assured of higher productivity, achievement of the organizational goals and sustainable succession planning.

The Public Service Commission has through the training policy (2016), advocated /recommended for at least five days training for each officer in the entire public service in every financial year. Kinyili (2012) argues that an efficient, motivated and well trained civil service is expected to be one of the major foundations of a country. Training creates a difference between organizations that train their employees and those do not. ILO report of (2008) indicates that training for new skills gives employees opportunity for growth in the organization, higher income and employability aspect. Training should be associated with something that employees' desire like promotion, pay rise, recognition among others as this triggers faster acquisition of the skill. The new skills further give organizations a competitive advantage and relevance in the market as well as better performance. Employees perform their duties effectively and efficiently when they have good

interpersonal skills and technical skills. These can only be developed through training. Well trained staff requires minimal supervision (Akhtar, Nawaz, Mahmood, & Shahid, 2016).

4.0 Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design and a target population of 200 employees drawn from middle and lower level cadres. The study used the stratified and simple random sampling to arrive at a respondent. A sample of 133 respondents was arrived at using Yamane (1967) formulae as shown below

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where

n0 = Sample size

N = Target Population

e = Precision (5%)

1=Constant

By way of illustration, this is the sample to be used for the study

$$n = 200 / 1 + 200(0.05)^2$$

$$n = 133$$

The research instrument adopted for the study was semi-structured questionnaire which was administered by the researcher to the respondents. The researcher used descriptive statistic like mean, standard deviation frequencies, tables and charts to analyze data. Further the information from the questionnaires was coded and computer software (SPSS) was used to analyze it. Content analysis was employed on open-ended questions. Inferential statistics was used to analyze the data.

5.0 Discussions of Findings

5.1 Remuneration

The findings showed that employees at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation are poorly compensated (M=3.083, SD=2.832). This is because only a few workers were satisfied with their salaries because they cannot use them to pay for their basic needs. Although the salaries were paid on time, it was not commensurate to the work done. Also, all the workers were entitled to different benefits, such as medical schemes and transport allowances, but a mean of 2.46 showed that only a few enjoy mortgage facilities. In terms of salary review, the majority (70%) agreed their payment was reviewed in 2020. However, failure to record a 100% response rate on the salary review in 2020 showed no consistency because some said their payment was reviewed in either 2019, 2021 or even ten years ago. During the salary review, the majority (59%) agreed that the guidelines were followed. Those who said there were no clear guidelines followed said the salary review process failed to consider changes in living standards. Only 40% of the respondents were satisfied with the remuneration package, but the majority (60%) expressed dissatisfaction because the package was not commensurate with their efforts. They recommended different measures that can be adopted to make the remuneration package more satisfying, such as aligning payment with prevailing living standards and harmonizing all the salaries in the Public Sector.

These findings agreed with Mwendu (2015) who argued that remuneration should be clearly aligned to the organizational goals, as employees' behavior is dependent on how their performance is measured/rated/appraised and rewarded. Also, the idea of providing mortgage and transport allowance to workers in the ministry of Water and Irrigation agreed with Yang (2008), who described them as intrinsic motivating factors. Mwangi (2017) argued that reward systems are recognized by organizations worldwide as essential tools to motivating individual employees at the workplace. This showed that failure to reward their efforts through better pay can demotivate them, reducing overall productivity. This is further supported by Wanjala (2019), who noted that it's important to treat human resources as a critical competitive advantage because a poorly remunerated workforce results in low morale and eventually high turnover. Ndulue and Ekechukwu (2016) noted that key strategies can improve their productivity, such as appraisal systems and better compensation. These measures can increase employee satisfaction at the workplace, resulting in improved productivity

5.2 Physical Working Environment

The findings showed that the overall working environment at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation was favorable ($M=3.50$, $SD=3.207$). The environment was characterized with supply of essential resources, such as clean drinking water, protective gear, and comfortable office furniture. Also, the offices are fitted with adequate lighting and sufficient ventilation. Both the employees and the management were aware of the safety and emergency procedures required at the workplace. The study showed that majority (57%) worked from closed or partitioned office design, while 43% operated in an open office design. Those operating in closed office design said that the design positively affected their work performance because it created a favorable environment for concentration, innovation and privacy. However, they cited boredom, loneliness, and wastage of time moving from one office to another for consultation. For these key reasons they preferred an open-plan office layout. The respondents recommended different ways that could make workers more productive. The majority recommended converting closed plan office to open layout because it facilitated easier and fast consultation with colleagues, saved time, and made it easier to supervise workers as well as interpersonal interactions which reduced stress levels and promoted a good health.

These findings agreed with Elton Mayo (1933), who found that the physical environment played a vital role in the satisfaction of the employees. Also, Mmbusa (2019) found that employees spent at least 50 percent of their time in the workplace, affecting their mental status, actions, abilities, and productivity. Also, some of the identified features that make the workplace environment comfortable, like proper lighting, ventilation, and comfortable workstations, agreed with Chebet (2015) who identified things that influenced overall productivity at the workplace, such as proper lighting, ventilation, access to natural light, and acoustic environment.

5.3 Promotion

Although the Ministry of Water and Irrigation has written and operational promotion policies and procedures, the findings showed that the promotion process was not based on merit ($M=3.13$), and was never prompt whenever employees attained prerequisite qualifications ($M=2.66$). A mean score of 3.35 showed that workers do not see an opportunity of getting promoted in the Ministry. However, the findings showed that requirements for promotions are clear and achievable, meaning that they can be used to improve overall productivity if enacted well. The majority of the

respondents (56%) were not satisfied with promotion procedures for different reasons, such as outdated guidelines that do not address issues affecting the current workforce and guidelines that are issued from time to time targeting specific employees.

The findings in some aspects concurred with studies conducted earlier, Bowra, Sharif, Saeed, & Niazi (2012), noted that promotions in developing countries lack to reward hard work and were not based on merit. These findings aligned with Gul, Akbar, and Jan (2012), who argued that a just promotion policy must be based on employee career appraisal, which considers employees' abilities, knowledge, effective tasks, and time management. According to these respondents, the promotion procedure met all these requirements.

5.4 Training

Training facilitated improved productivity among the workers in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. Employees had sufficient knowledge to undertake their duties because they possess skills that match their roles. However, a mean score of 2.98 and a standard deviation of 2.785 indicated that the ministry does not prioritize staff training. However, a majority (75%) of the respondents agreed that there was an annual training plan in place. Despite the presence of an annual training plan in place, only 23% of the respondents agreed that the plans are implemented. This is because most of the respondents have not been acquiring additional skills and knowledge in their current positions. These findings were supported by Chebet (2015) who found that employees with high education and training exhibit high levels of satisfaction, motivation, and ultimately improved productivity, meaning that training is beneficial to both the employees and the organization.

5.5 Inferential Statistics

5.5.1 Linear Regression Model

The researcher used a simple linear regression model to determine the correlation between dependent and independent variables. Table 1 gives a summary of the coefficients table.

Table 1: Coefficients of linear regression

Model	Coefficients ^a				Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.200	.206		3.944	.000
Remuneration	1.113	.193	.000	.000	1.000
Physical work environment	.356	.258	.000	.000	1.000
Promotions	1.000	.277	.476	3.606	.001
Training	.500	.162	.475	3.679	.001

(Dependent Variable: Employee productivity)

Source: Researcher 2021

Table 1 presented a bivariate correlation between the study variables. The SPSS output showed a significant relationship between independent and dependent variables. Remuneration had the highest β value (1.113), meaning that employee productivity depended much on the remuneration package in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. This was followed by promotion ($\beta=1$), training ($\beta=.500$), and physical work environment ($\beta=.356$). Since all the β values were positive, it implied that all the independent variables (Physical work environment, Remuneration, Training, and promotions) determined employee productivity within the scope area. However, the level of influence varied from one independent variable to another. The beta values result in the following multiple linear regression model:

$$Y = 1.200 + 1.113X_1 + 0.356X_2 + X_3 + 0.5X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where

Y= Employee productivity of Ministry of Water and Irrigation

X1 = Remuneration

X2= Physical Work environment

X3= Promotions

X4= Training

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ =Regression Coefficients

ε = Error term

5.5.2 Multiple Correlation Coefficient

Table 2: Multiple correlation coefficient

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.978 ^a	.956	.932	.536

a. Predictors: (Constant): Physical work environment, Remuneration, Training, and promotions.

Source: Researcher 2021

The R-squared statistic in Table 2 indicated the strength of the relationship between dependent and independent variables on a scale of 0-100%. The value of R² is .956, meaning that the regression model reflected the study findings shown by the four independent variables. It showed that the overall employee productivity at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation is influenced by the physical work environment, remuneration, employees' training, and promotions, implying a significantly positive correlation.

6.0 Conclusion

The findings showed that the four independent variables affect employee productivity but at different levels. Remuneration was the leading factor that negatively influenced employee productivity within the scope area. Although employees were paid on time, the salary was not commensurate to their efforts/work done, and some of the employees did not enjoy some extrinsic benefits, such as transport allowance and mortgage facilities. These factors could have led to reduced morale and motivation among the workers, translating to reduced overall productivity.

Also, the promotion process affected the Ministry of Water and Irrigation employees negatively because it was not based on merit. The promotions were also not prompt whenever an employee attained the prerequisite qualifications. This explained why it has taken some workers more than six years in the same job group before being promoted, yet they had met the required threshold, making some staff lose hope in being promoted by their current employer. Failure to follow laid down procedures and guidelines for promotions in the ministry was the leading cause of reduced productivity among the staff. However, both training and physical work environment facilitated improved productivity among the staff. The working environment was characterized by availability of essential resources, such as clean drinking water, necessary protective gear, and comfortable office furniture, makes it motivating. Also, the interior design of the open and closed office layouts comprised adequate lighting and sufficient ventilation, making the working environment more comfortable. On the other hand, the ministry invested a lot in employee training to ensure they are equipped with the relevant skills and experience required to deliver quality services. This showed that the four variables positively and negatively affected the overall employees' productivity in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

7.0 Recommendations

The study recommended that, through the Public Service Commission and Salaries and Remuneration Commission, the government of Kenya introduce measures in areas of remuneration and training that will motivate workers in this ministry. It also recommended that new guidelines be drafted for salary review based on the present living standards as workers complained of an insufficient salary that is not proportional to their services or cannot meet their needs. The study further recommended that the ministry should ensure that all workers are entitled to transport to and from work, mortgage facilities, and other benefits to ensure that some employees especially the lower level employees, do not feel like there is some form of discrimination. The study further recommended that all salaries be harmonized across the public sector. Further the ministry should be consistent and fair in reviewing salaries.

Also the study recommended that the promotion policies and guidelines that are already in place be followed when promoting employees. This can be achieved by ensuring that the ministry has a proper appraisal system in place and that all the promotions are based on merit but not influence, corruption or seniority. The study further recommended that the Ministry takes note of the annual training plans and implementing them to the latter. This improves employees' skills and thus better results in productivity.

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