



Employee Engagement and Employee Retention in Faith-Based Organizations in Kenya: A Case of AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital

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Abstract

Hospitals in Kenya have been experiencing a low level of employee retention. Kijabe Mission Hospital faces low employee retention, a challenge that has weakened its performance. In the recent past, Kijabe has been losing many of its employees and hence the need to seek for solution to the high turnover rates. This research examines how employee engagement influences retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. It focuses on employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication, and rewards as key factors. The work is grounded in Vroom's expectancy theory, with support from organizational support, discourse-based, and reasoned action theories. Using a descriptive design, the study targeted 859 permanent staff, drawing a sample of 272. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, yielding quantitative results. The questionnaire was pretested on 13 staff at PCEA Kikuyu Hospital to assess validity and reliability. The supervisor confirmed content validity, and internal consistency was measured with Cronbach's Alpha at 0.7. Data were gathered through self-administered questionnaires at the workplace, collected after completion, then cleaned, coded, and analyzed using SPSS and Excel. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential methods, with findings shown in tables, charts, and discussions. Ethical standards were observed throughout data collection and respondent handling. Results indicate that employee development, supervisor support, communication, and reward systems all influence retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. Of these, reward and recognition proved most influential, followed by development, supervisor support, and communication. The study will be significant to the management of AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital and other organizations that can gain insight on how to retain its employees. Organizations will gain insight on association between employee engagement and their retention besides increasing literature on the subject matter.

Keywords: *Employee Engagement, Employee Retention, Faith-Based Organizations, Kenya*

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1.0 Background of the Study

Changes in the business operating environment demands that organizations respond by creating and putting into practice strategies that can aid in keeping up with the changes. For organizations in service-based industries, the strategies must focus on the systems, the processes, and employees as they are at the core of production and service delivery. When it comes to employees, the strategies must focus on attracting the best fitted persons to fill available vacancies, empowerment and capacity building for the employees, and retention for longer to enrich the organization (Sithole & Pwaka, 2019). Quality delivery of services is largely dependent on the employees and hence the need to retain them for longer. Lee et al. (2018) argued that retaining employees has become a big challenge in organizations based on huge costs incurred in the recruitment and induction process and effort expended in empowering employees. The high competition means that it is costly to lose employees with expertise knowledge, skills, and experiences, and high employee retention is driven by factors such as opportunities for growth, engagement and involvement, support and collaborative efforts, satisfaction and fulfillment with the job, and high rewards and benefits (Kurdi & Alshurideh, 2020).

Employee retention is associated with employee engagement. Baharin and Hanafi (2018) noted that keeping staff is more difficult than recruiting, making engagement strategies essential. The strategy details the plan on how employees will be retained, and the information can be sourced from conducting employee engagement surveys or through use of lagging indicators such as productivity levels, absenteeism rates, and turnover rates. Park and Johnson (2019) noted that the health sector, facilities, and programs will record downward performance trends and even collapse if they are unable to retain their employees. As a service-based industry, the health sector heavily relies on staff to implement and deliver its mandates and hence efforts made to hire the best talents, equip and retain them. Mayende and Musenze (2018) define retention as an obligation to proceed to conduct business with a certain firm on a continuous basis, shaped by a number of factors that have to be congruently managed such as organizational culture, pay and benefits, organizational strategy, and organizational philosophy.

In the global scene, Ivana (2020) posited that to improve employee retention and solve the issue facing many organizations of employee losses and high turnover, there is need to focus on human resources practices including recruiting, induction, training, empowerment, and managing compensations, which have been shown to improve the retention rates of skilled workforce. Chatzoudes and Chatzoglou (2022) observed that employee retention across European nations was associated with commitment and satisfaction levels of staff, and that organizations seeking to retain their staff were asked to build supportive work environments, culture, relationships, and HR initiatives to support the work teams. Kundu and Lata (2017) reported from India that higher employee retention rates was as a result of supportive work environments and organizational engagement initiatives. Kossyva et al. (2021) observed that Generation Y employees across six European nations were interested in work systems, engagement, and change management practices that encouraged them to work for a company for a longer period of time. Sergio and Rylova (2018) noted that employee engagement and empowerment initiatives conducted by the Volkswagen Group resulted in high employee retention rates, as engagement and empowerment served as factors that enhanced commitment and loyalty, though the study centered on Volkswagen as a case, making its findings less generalizable and highlighting the need for further research. Fletcher,

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Alfes, and Robinson (2018) observed that in the UK, retention was shaped by factors like training, development, engagement, job satisfaction, and change management, while workplace boredom, fatigue, and limited autonomy were tied to employees' intention to quit.

In the African context, Houssein, Singh, and Arumugam (2020) examined Djibouti's financial sector and found retention a growing concern, driven by intense competition and organizational pressure to perform, with employee retention being high when there was career development, employee engagement, and other human resource practices like work-life balance. Ezeudji and Mbane (2017) studied the hospitality sector in Cape Town, South Africa, and noted that there was high turnover amongst staff of the hotel industry, linked to long working hours, unfair salary, strict supervision, and lack of support from managers and the organization, with the hotel management having to consider the work environment and working situation to curb the high turnover rates. Tadesse (2018) shared that through good work relationships, work environment remuneration, commitment, and satisfaction with the job, public ministerial offices helped prevent job switching. Krishna, Rao, and Datta (2019) reported that certain HR practices at the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia supported staff retention, including work-life balance, work environment, employee engagement, reward and recognition, and life development opportunities that resulted in high retention rates.

In Kenya, Yeswa and Ombui (2019) mentioned the big role played by the hotel industry and its contribution to economic development, hence the need for quality, talented staff and employing talent management strategies, with employee retention associated with the reward system, career development, employee engagement, and training. Wairimu and Ndeto (2019) showed that retention in pharmaceutical companies was tied to HRM practices including recruitment, training, engagement, recognition, rewards, and commitment, noting that job training improved competencies of employees while employee reward and recognition promoted commitment, enjoyment, and satisfaction, resulting in less complaints, absenteeism, and stress levels. Nyaema and Wambua (2019) shared that commercial banks in Kenya attracted talented employees but could not retain them, with cited reasons including poor reward structure, job design where some employees were uncomfortable with their roles, and little or no supervisory support, with the banks having neglected employee welfare despite having proper structures to implement performance management and appraisals. Njora and Ndegwa (2020) agreed that employee retention in SACCOs was due to rewards, job design, and career opportunities for growth and development, with other motivation factors including well-structured employee rewards, catering for employees' needs, and supportive employee policies.

Employee engagement is defined as the state of intellectual and emotional engrossment that a worker has in a particular organization. Uddin et al. (2019) view employee engagement as interventions undertaken by human resources to enhance the extent to which employees enjoy, value, and believe in their roles and tasks in the organization, encompassing physical, psychological, and emotional commitment to the role and the organization. Cheche, Muathe, and Maina (2019) note that engaged staff often remain longer, driven by a feeling of ownership and being valued, and also advocate and defend the organization and its products. This study focused on four employee engagement strategies, namely employee development, reward and recognition, supervisory support, and organizational communication. Papa et al. (2018) emphasize the need for employee development and acquisition of knowledge through formal and informal training

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programs, coaching and mentoring, apprenticeship, and benchmarking, with opportunities for career advancement and professional progress motivating staff to remain longer in pursuit of their goals (Maleka et al., 2019). Mwita and Tefurukwa (2018) note that supervisor support can determine whether employees remain or exit, directly shaping retention levels, while Markos and Gossaye (2021) share that sharing of information works to enhance engagement levels in the organization and works to improve commitment to the firm and entices workers to stay for longer. Masri and Abubakr (2019) note that top performers should get a reward either in monetary terms such as cash bonuses or salary increments or non-monetary terms including getting days off, paid vacations, or permanent employment contracts that create a sense of job security.

Kijabe Mission Hospital, originally a small clinic known as Theodora Hospital established in 1915, is a faith-based autonomous organization headquartered at Kiambu County near Limuru town, sponsored by the Africa Inland Church as one of the church's largest health facilities in the country. The hospital has grown from its original outpatient position to include an inpatient facility with a 363-bed capacity, and has expanded over the last ten years to include AIC Kijabe Naivasha Medical Centre, the AIC Marira Clinic, and AIC Kijabe Clinic in Westlands. The hospital is guided by the mission of provision of compassionate health care, but in recent years has seen an increase in staff turnover rates, rising from 18.5% in 2013 to a high of 21% in 2017, both exceeding the internationally accepted standard capped at 15%, hence necessitating an assessment of why staff were leaving the facility (HR at the Kijabe Mission Hospital, 2018). Kimeu (2021) shared that Kenyan hospitals have been experiencing low levels of employee retention, which has negatively affected performance of employees and translated to low organizational performance. This study therefore examined how employee engagement strategies influenced retention among healthcare workers at Kijabe Mission Hospital, with retention assessed through turnover rates, commitment, and job satisfaction, with the aim of informing evidence-based interventions that could reverse the rising turnover trend and sustain quality healthcare delivery.

1.1 Problem Statement

Hospitals in Kenya face a number of challenges, including employee retention. Kijabe Mission Hospital has experienced poor employee retention in the recent past (Mukweyi, 2016). In the year 2015, the hospital lost 117 employees, (16%) of its workforce to competitors, in the year 2016, the number rose to 141 employees, (16%) of the workforce, in 2017 the number rose drastically to 191 employees, (21%) of the workforce, and 127 and 111 in the year 2018 and 2019 which represented 14% and 10% of the workforce respectively (Kijabe Mission Hospital, 2019). The hospital highlights engagement as its strategy to address low retention and achieve its goals. Several studies have been conducted on engagement and retention of employees such as Pareek, Mohanty and Mangaraj (2019) systematically reviewed how engagement impacted retention of employees. Through review of secondary data for the 10year period (2009-2019), the reviewed articles shared that employee engagement improved employee retention rates. The study however created methodological gaps by using secondary data and its background setting is retention rates in India, hence contextual gaps. Kimeu (2021) examined the factors influencing employee engagement and retention at Marie Stopes Hospitals in Kenya. Findings noted that performance management and good working conditions were the main drivers of engagement and retention. Conceptually gaps were created as the study focused on employee engagement drivers, furthermore it was a case study from a methodological standpoint and limits applicability of findings.

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Oluwatunmise, Adenike, Adewale, Olubusayo, Paul and Loveth (2020) assessed the employee engagement strategies as antecedents to intention to migrate for Nigerian medical practitioners. It was revealed that work overload, funding issues, capacity building and training cause intention to migration among healthcare workers in Nigeria. The strategies include job design, investment in employees, compensation, career development and work environment that are trying to reduce intention to migrate. The gap arises from a Nigerian study focused on migration intentions. Namanga (2017) examined engagement strategies and performance at KeMRI in Kilifi County. Results showed that the adopted employee engagement measures, which included pay, work environment, training, and participation, were found to enhance employee performance. The research, however, created conceptual gaps by using different elements of employee engagement strategies and only focused on employee performance and not retention. Methodological gaps are linked to the case study whose findings might be limited in applicability. High turnover and gaps in context, concept, and methods emerged from prior studies. This study addressed them by exploring how engagement affects retention.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. Assess how employee development influences retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital.
- ii. Examine the role of supervisor support in employee retention.
- iii. Analyze how organizational communication impacts retention.
- iv. Determine the effect of reward and recognition on employee retention.

2.0 Literature Review

The literature review is discussed in sections.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on expectancy theory, organizational support theory, discourse theory of change, and the theory of reasoned action. Vroom (1964) introduced expectancy theory built on three ideas: valence, expectancy, and reward. Valence links performance to innovation, rewards, and reduced turnover, while expectancy ties motivation to productivity, satisfaction, and service quality. Nyberg (2010) linked training and development to expectancy theory, noting that the theory explores how organizations can improve retention rates of employees through developing their competencies that will raise their expectations and motivate the employees to work hard. The reward and recognition aspects can enhance the expectation levels of hospital staff and through that align with the expectancy theory, as meeting these expectations motivates staff to remain, while reward and recognition further strengthen retention. Eisenberger and Stinglhamber (2011) introduced the organizational support theory, noting that with time, employees perceive how valued they are to an organization, and are also concerned about their own well-being, a concept called perceived organizational support (POS). Kim, Eisenberger, and Baik (2016) noted that the orientation covers aspects such as recognition, praise, welfare, and rewards, with loyalty in employees conceived whenever there is a belief that the organization has positive orientation and values the contribution of its own staff.

Grant and Marshak (2009) introduced the discourse theory of change, identifying the stages of organizational change as macro, meso, micro, and intrapsychic, with micro discourse focusing on individual language use while meso discourse highlights interactions that shape relationships,

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activities, and behavior within departments or organizations. The theory views organizational communication as a tool for driving change that enhances employee retention, as the communication system can help relay information to employees which increases sense of belongingness and ownership that impacts on retention rates. Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) introduced the theory of reasoned action, asserting that employee turnover is a rational process, highlighting the prediction process in behavioral intention and turnover rates, with attitudes and intentions converted into behavior that inform the decision to leave the organization. Perreira and Berta (2015) noted that by converting an intention into a reality, control beliefs facilitate or impede the execution of a behavior, such that the AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital works to cultivate behavior in its employees that can induce their intentions to stay in the facility for longer.

2.2 Empirical Review

Amegatsey, Odoom, Arpoh-Baah, and Okyere (2018) conducted a study on staff development and challenges in retention of staffs in a tertiary education institution in Ghana's Takoradi Technical University. The findings revealed that staff development faced challenges including limited funds, rigid policies, favoritism, and lack of transparency, hence low staff retention as associated to the work environment, with reports of no involvement in decision making, delays in career growth and promotions, no feedback, recognition, or rewards. The study concluded that low staff development led to low staff retention in the technical university, thus the need for allocation of sufficient resources and policies for staff development, though contextual gaps arose from its Ghanaian education setting and methodological gaps from its case study design.

Aleem and Bowra (2020) examined training and development in Pakistan's banking sector, showing that investing in staff skills strengthens retention, commitment, and overall success. Data from eight Pakistani banks was gathered through interviews and questionnaires, with results showing that training and development strongly influenced staff retention and commitment, as such programs drive career growth, build skills, enhance capacity, and improve compensation, encouraging longer tenure. Diah, Hasiara, and Irwan (2020) studied employee retention through predictors of development and socio-economic exchange in pharmaceutical firms in Indonesia, with data from 316 pharmaceutical front-office staff showing that perceived investment in development significantly boosted retention, leading to the conclusion that employee growth enhances retention rates.

Penning, Knies, and Leisink (2020) explored how frontline supervisors and employees align in their views of support in Dutch secondary schools, finding that past experiences shape horizontal shared perceptions while supportive leadership fosters collective understanding vertically, with prolonged supervisor support experienced by employees at the workplace positively affecting the development of perceptions. Iqbal, Hongyun, Akhtar, Ahmad, and Ankomah (2020) researched on supervisor support and its impact on turnover intentions as mediated by job satisfaction, with findings from 173 questionnaires revealing that supervisor support improved satisfaction that reduced turnover intention practices. Chami-Malaeb (2021) studied supervisor support, self-efficacy, turnover intention, and how nurse burnout mediates these links amongst 552 registered Lebanese nurses from 19 hospitals, concluding that perceived supervisor support led to reduction in intentions to leave the health sector by the nurses.

Prasetyo et al. (2021) conducted a study on the climate in organizational communication and its effect on employee retention as it relates to employee performance, with data collected from 65 respondents revealing that organizational culture improved employee performance whereas organizational communication climate had no effect, though organizational communication was found essential for passage of information and understanding work assignments which resulted in better engagement, retention, and productivity. Karanja, Mugambi, and Muriu (2021) studied the role of communication in retaining employees and how it affects performance of merging firms, with findings from 161 respondents noting that communication played a significant role in retaining employees by enhancing a sense of ownership through close engagement of all employees, concluding that communication helped in improving employee retention rates and this worked to improve performance outcomes in the organizations.

Chepkosgey, Namusonge, and Makokha (2019) examined reward practices and their effects on employee retention among 2,940 employees of beverage companies in Kenya, with 352 filled questionnaires, finding that the role of reward practices in employee retention was strongly correlated, concluding that policies, benefits, and allowances enhance retention. Tirta and Enrika (2020) examined how reward, recognition, and work-life balance influence retention among Indonesian millennials, with job satisfaction acting as the mediator, with findings showing a strong association between the analyzed aspects and recommending that formulating development programs, policies, and empowerment can improve millennial employee retention. Orajaka (2021) investigated reward management practices and their effect on employee retention in public institutions in southeast Nigeria using descriptive research, finding a strong positive link between reward practices, variable payment, and retention, concluding that monetary, non-monetary, and psychological payments and incentives led to improved variable payment and employee retention.

Mburu (2019) researched on the link between career development and rewards and their effect on retention rates in NGOs in Kenya, with data from 45 staff through questionnaires, interviews, and observation revealing that career development strongly boosted retention, while intrinsic rewards showed a moderate positive link and extrinsic rewards had no effect. Al-sharafi, Hassan, and Alam (2018) examined training, career development, and non-monetary practices in Yemen's telecom sector using primary data from 100 non-managerial employees, with findings showing that training enhanced satisfaction and retention rates of employees, while career development did not influence satisfaction or retention, and job satisfaction mediated training's effect on retention. Kaur and Sharma (2019) conducted a study on total reward strategies for attracting and retaining employees in Indian start-ups through secondary data, finding that innovative total reward practices helped reduce employee turnover, concluding that when start-ups employed total reward strategies it led to higher retaining rates.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Employee development, supervisory support, communication, and rewards are illustrated in Figure 1, along with their measurement indicators.

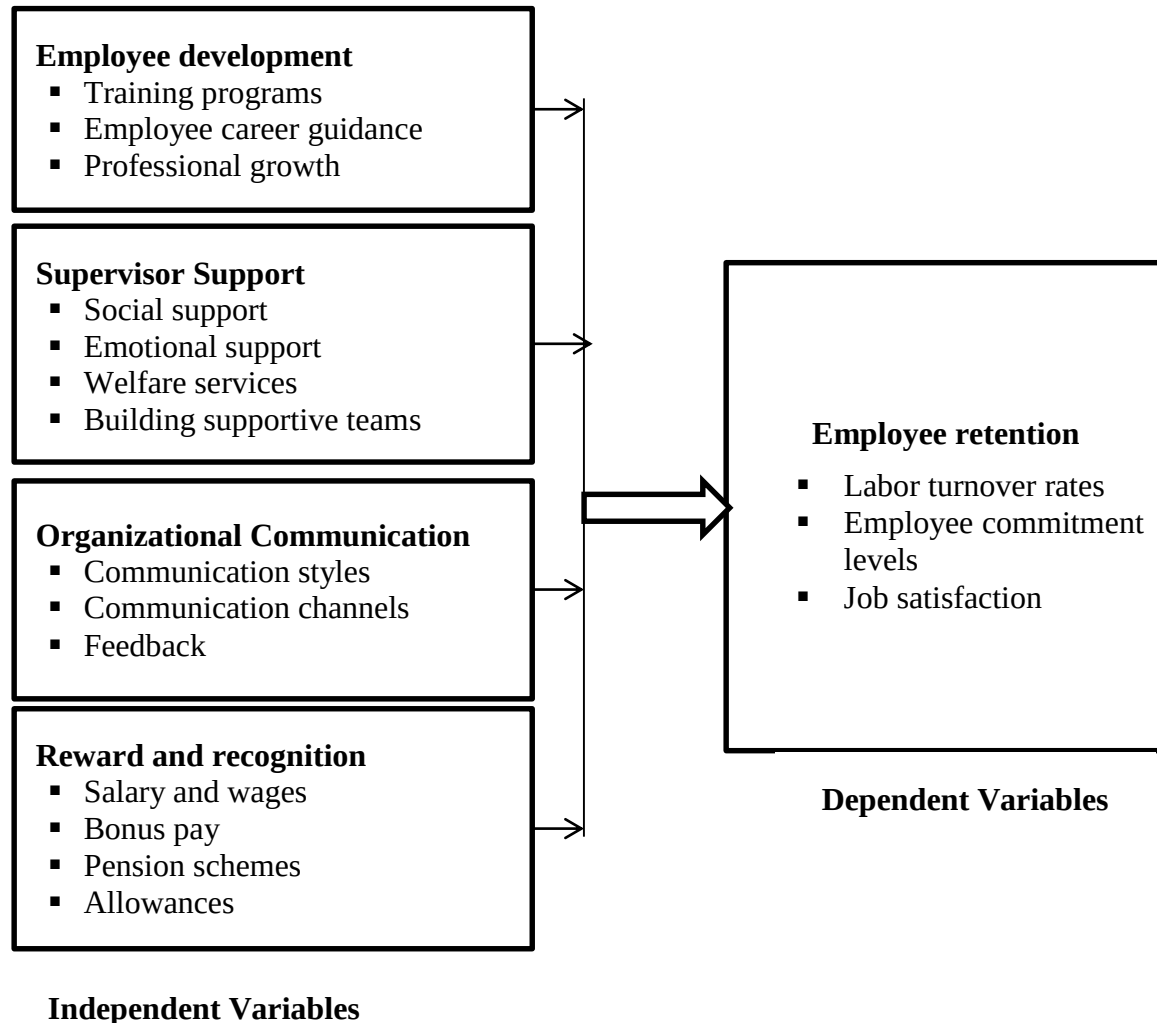


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher (2021)

3.0 Research Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design, which Bloomfield and Fisher (2019) explain answers the what, where, when, and how of a phenomenon, reporting reality without alteration and making it suitable for explaining how employee engagement influences employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. The target population comprised 859 permanently employed staff drawn from senior managers, middle level managers, and junior staff across departments including accounts, front office, surgery, wards, security, nursing, and general medical units, with casual laborers excluded from the study. Using the Yamane (1967) formula at a 95% confidence interval and a margin of error of 0.05, a sample size of 272 respondents was determined, with stratified and simple random sampling used to ensure unbiased selection and representation across all ranks

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and departments. Primary data was collected using an open-ended, 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire, which Nguyen (2019) notes efficiently gathers large amounts of information at low cost, covering demographic information and both independent and dependent variables. A pilot study was conducted on 13 participants, equivalent to 5% of the overall sample, drawn from PCEA Kikuyu Hospital, with content validity confirmed by the supervisor and reliability tested using Cronbach's Alpha at a threshold of 0.7 as recommended by Taherdoost (2017). Data collection commenced after obtaining approval from the university and permission from the hospital management, with data cleaned, coded, and analyzed using Excel and SPSS 25.0, producing descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses, with findings presented in tables, pie charts, figures, and prose, while ethical standards were upheld through informed consent, confidentiality, accurate reporting, and proper citation of all sources.

4.0 Data Analysis and Discussion

The data analysis and discussion are presented in sections.

4.1 Response Rate

The response rate from each employee category is as follows

Table 1: Rate of Response

Group	Surveyed	Replied	Rate (%)
Senior Managers	4	3	75%
Middle-Level Managers	23	20	87%
Junior Staff	245	239	97%
Overall Total	272	262	96%

Source. Research Data (2024)

Out of the 272 distributed, 262 responses were collected which is an average response rate of 96%. This high response rate speaks to active participation by the staff thus enhancing data credibility. Such high participation rates among junior staff, 97%, reveal their active engagement in the survey process, perhaps as an avenue for them to express their concerns or opinions in regard to the working environment. Middle-level managers also had acceptable levels of participation, 87%, as did senior managers, 75%, further testifying to reasonable engagement at all levels.

Other studies, such as Kihara (2019), reported lower response rates of around 85% in healthcare research indicating that the level of participation at AIC Kijabe is relatively higher.

4.2 Employee Development

This study examined how employee development affects employee retention at the AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. In this regard, a Likert scale questionnaire was administered, with statements focusing on different aspects of employee development. This section analyses the collected data in terms of the number of responses, means and standard deviations (SDs) for each statement.

Table 2: Employee Development

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hospital offers regular trainings to employees in different departments	262	4.00	1.14
Informal and formal training programs enhance knowledge in all the employees	262	4.01	1.09
Employees of AIC Kijabe Mission enjoy career guidance services	262	4.07	1.09
Assessments and reviews are conducted for individual employee growth	262	4.21	1.14
All employees at the hospital get an opportunity for career growth	262	4.07	1.12
Career advancement encourages employees to stay for long at the health facility	262	4.25	1.01
Employee development programs have led to employee retention at the facility	262	4.11	1.08
Total mean	262	4.09	1.08

Source. Research Data (2024)

Findings on employee development at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital revealed a generally positive perception among employees, with an overall mean of 4.09 and a standard deviation of 1.08. The hospital's offering of regular training across departments scored a mean of 4.00, with both informal and formal training programs scoring 4.01, indicating that employees valued the blend of training modes provided as effective in enhancing their competencies. Career guidance services scored a mean of 4.07, individual assessments and reviews scored 4.21, and career growth opportunities scored 4.07, all reflecting strong agreement that the hospital supported employee growth and development. Career advancement emerged as the strongest driver of retention with the highest mean of 4.25, indicating that employees regarded clear and attainable advancement paths as a primary reason for staying, while employee development programs as a whole scored a mean of 4.11, confirming that such programs contributed significantly to employees' decisions to remain at the facility. However, Karanja (2018) noted that in some mission hospitals, staff development programs failed to influence retention significantly, as employees often used new skills to seek better paying opportunities elsewhere, suggesting that retention may also depend on how effectively institutions align employee development with internal career growth paths.

4.3 Supervisor Support

Below is the table summarizing the responses to the Likert scale questions regarding supervisor support and employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. The table includes the number of respondents (N), mean, and standard deviation (SD) for each statement.

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Table 3: Supervisor Support

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees have social support to balance work and social matters	262	4.00	1.16
Supervisors support subordinates by giving feedback on work-related matters	262	4.12	1.08
The hospital management operates on open-door policies to support work output	262	4.14	1.02
There is emotional support from co-workers as well as managers	262	4.11	1.08
The hospital has welfare services that motivate all employees	262	4.41	0.95
The managers assist in building work teams that support team members	262	4.12	1.06
The work environment advocates for peer support	262	4.07	1.10
Supervisors' care for employee well-being increases retention rates	262	4.10	1.05
Supervisory support enhances employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital	262	4.18	1.01
Overall mean	262	4.13	1.07

Source. Research Data (2024)

Findings on supervisor support at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital revealed an overall mean of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 1.07, indicating strong agreement among employees that supervisor support positively influenced their decision to remain at the hospital. Social support for work-life balance scored a mean of 4.00, feedback on work-related matters scored 4.12, and the open-door policy scored 4.14, all reflecting that supervisors were accessible, consistent in giving feedback, and promoted a culture of openness that enhanced employee commitment. Emotional support from co-workers and managers scored a mean of 4.11, while welfare services received the highest mean of 4.41, demonstrating the hospital's strong commitment to employee well-being as a key motivator for retention. The role of managers in building supportive work teams scored 4.12, peer support advocacy scored 4.07, supervisors' care for employee well-being scored 4.10, and the overall contribution of supervisory support to retention scored 4.18, collectively confirming that supervisor support was central in determining employee retention outcomes at the hospital. These findings agreed with Omondi (2017), who argued that supportive supervision enhances job satisfaction and reduces turnover.

4.4 Organizational Communication

Table 4 presents the responses to statements on organizational communication and its effect on employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. It includes the number of respondents (N), mean, and standard deviation (SD) for each statement.

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Table 4: Organization Communication

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The employees share work information that increases engagement	262	4.14	1.06
Open communication at the hospital uplifts morale/commitment for high work satisfaction	262	4.16	1.05
Communicating on terms of work improves output of the employees	262	4.23	1.01
The hospital seeks feedback on processes, services, and working conditions	262	4.33	0.98
Information flows in both directions (upwards and downwards) leading to closer engagement	262	4.06	1.13
Offline and online communication channels are used at the hospital	262	4.12	1.07
The communication system operates on giving instructions and getting feedback for better engagement	262	4.10	1.09
Organizational communication enhances engagement for improved employee retention	262	4.22	1.02
Overall mean	262	4.15	1.05

Source. Research Data (2024)

Findings on organizational communication at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital revealed an overall mean of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 1.05, indicating strong agreement among employees that communication practices positively influenced their engagement and retention. Information sharing among employees scored a mean of 4.14, open communication scored 4.16, and clear communication of work terms and expectations scored 4.23, all reflecting that employees valued transparent and consistent communication as a driver of morale, commitment, and productivity. The hospital's practice of seeking feedback on processes, services, and working conditions received the highest mean of 4.33, indicating that employees felt heard and valued, while bidirectional information flow scored 4.06, use of both offline and online channels scored 4.12, and the instruction and feedback communication system scored 4.10, collectively confirming that the hospital maintained an effective and inclusive communication structure. The overall contribution of organizational communication to employee engagement and retention scored a mean of 4.22, further affirming its critical role, though Njoroge (2016) found no significant correlation between communication and retention in some government hospitals, citing that communication policies were present but rarely implemented effectively, emphasizing the importance of not only having structures in place but ensuring their effective implementation.

4.5 Reward and Recognition

Table 5 summarizes the responses to statements regarding reward and recognition and its effect on employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. The table includes the number of respondents (N), mean, and standard deviation (SD) for each statement.

Table 5: Reward and Recognition

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees get their salaries and wages regularly as per their contracts	262	4.43	0.76
Salary payment is done in a timely manner as per the monthly schedule	262	4.50	0.73
All employees enjoy benefits like days-off, paid annual leave, and leave days	262	4.30	0.85
Top performing employees are rewarded in monetary terms like cash bonuses	262	4.35	0.82
Permanent employees are on a pension scheme to cater for their needs in old age	262	4.33	0.81
Managers recognize those employees whose performance is exemplary	262	4.37	0.81
Employees enjoy allowances (transport, airtime, and overtime pay)	262	4.42	0.76
Overall mean	262	4.39	0.79

Source. Research Data (2024)

Findings on reward and recognition at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital revealed an overall mean of 4.39 and a standard deviation of 0.79, indicating that employees strongly appreciated the reward and recognition practices at the hospital and believed they positively influenced their job satisfaction and retention. Regular and timely salary payments scored means of 4.43 and 4.50 respectively, reflecting strong employee trust in the hospital's compensation reliability, while employee benefits such as days-off, paid annual leave, and leave days scored a mean of 4.30, confirming that comprehensive benefits contributed to employees' sense of well-being and work-life balance. Monetary rewards for top performers scored a mean of 4.35, pension schemes scored 4.33, managerial recognition of exemplary performance scored 4.37, and employee allowances covering transport, airtime, and overtime pay scored 4.42, all collectively demonstrating that both monetary and non-monetary reward practices were highly valued across the workforce. These findings were supported by Kimani (2018), who indicated that in healthcare institutions competitive compensation reduces turnover rates, though Mburu (2020) showed that some mission hospitals had inconsistent reward systems that weakened their influence on retention, emphasizing that rewards elicit their intended effect only when fairly and consistently carried out.

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4.6 Employee Retention

Table 6 summarizes the responses to statements regarding employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. It includes the number of respondents (N), mean, and standard deviation (SD) for each statement.

Table 6: Employee Retention

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The hospital has a conducive work environment that improves work satisfaction	262	4.40	0.74
Employees are committed to their functions at the hospital	262	4.29	0.86
There is high employee morale at the hospital	262	4.30	0.86
Involvement of employees at the hospital has increased retention rates	262	4.21	0.86
The labor turnover rates are low in the last financial year	262	4.48	0.70
Overall mean	262	4.34	0.80

Source. Research Data (2024)

Findings on employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital revealed an overall mean of 4.34 and a standard deviation of 0.80, indicating strong agreement among employees that the hospital maintained conditions conducive to retention. A conducive work environment scored a mean of 4.40, employee commitment to functions scored 4.29, and high employee morale scored 4.30, all reflecting that the hospital fostered a positive and motivating workplace that encouraged employees to remain. Employee involvement in decision making scored a mean of 4.21, indicating that employees felt their participation was valued and that it positively impacted their engagement and retention, while the statement on low labor turnover rates in the last financial year received the highest mean of 4.48, affirming the effectiveness of the retention strategies put in place by the hospital. These findings were consistent with Wachira (2017), who stated that employees are likely to stay when organizational practices promote loyalty, though Chege (2018) noted that despite job satisfaction, employees in hospitals with limited resources often left to seek better opportunities elsewhere, highlighting that retention is influenced by both internal organizational practices and external factors.

4.7 Correlation Analysis

A correlation analysis is increasingly recognized as a powerful method for assessing the strength and direction of a relationship between two or more variables. This method helps conclude the relationship between independent variables (i.e., predictors) and dependent variables (i.e., outcome) and investigates the factors contributing to workplace outcomes such as employee retention. According to Field (2013), correlation coefficients vary within ranges between -1 and +1; +1 denotes a perfect positive correlation, -1 represents a perfect negative correlation, while 0 depicts no correlation. Current research will use correlation analysis to ascertain the strength and

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direction of the relationship between employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication, reward and recognition-independent variable, and employee retention-dependent variable at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital.

Table 7: Correlation

		Employee Development	Supervisor Support	Organizational Communication	Reward and Recognition
Employee Retention	Pearson	1.000			
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Employee Development	N	262			
	Pearson	0.76	1.000		
	Correlation				
Supervisor Support	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
	N	262	262		
	Pearson	0.82	0.76	1.000	
Organizational Communication	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		
	N	262	262	262	
Reward and Recognition	Pearson	0.77	0.73	0.74	1.000
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	262	262	262	262
	Pearson	0.85	0.80	0.79	0.76
	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	262	262	262	262
	**.	Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			
	*.	Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).			

Source. Research Data (2024)

The correlation analysis show that employee retention appears to be strongly and significantly related to the four independent variables namely employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication and reward and recognition. There is a positive association among all the four variables. This is indicated by the pearson correlation coefficients which are all positive. Among the four variables examined, reward and recognition shows the highest correlation ($r = 0.85$, $p < 0.01$). Supervisor support followed closely ($r = 0.82$, $p < 0.01$) followed by employee development ($r = 0.76$, $p < 0.01$) and lastly organizational communication ($r = 0.77$, $p < 0.01$). As mentioned above, these findings indicate that high levels of employee development, supervisor support, effective organizational communication and reward and recognition contribute extensively to increased employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. These strong and positive correlations reveal that as these variables become more favorable, employees are more prone to stay longer with the organization indicating the need for creating an enabling and engaging work environment. The low p-values of less than 0.01 substantiate the statistical significance of these associations and emphasize that these variables assist highly in enhancing employee retention. Muli (2018) also observed that employee engagement is related to retention,

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which is consistent with the findings of these studies. However, Kariuki (2021) identified comparatively weaker correlations within public institutions implying that the impact of these relationships may vary across different institution's settings like culture and the respective context.

4.8 Regression Analysis

To assess the impact of employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication, and reward and recognition on employee retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital, regression analysis was performed. The results presented below show how these independent variables contribute to employee retention.

Table 8: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.90	0.81	0.80	0.59

Source. Research Data (2024)

Employee retention is strongly correlated with independent variables, such as employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication, and reward and recognition.. With an R Square value of 0.81, these variables account for some 81% of the variation in employee retention, which represents a substantial proportion of the explained variance. A value of 0.80 for the Adjusted R Square also confirms a well-fitting model. This estimate's Standard Error is 0.59, which indicates the model's accuracy. The independent variables strongly predict employee retention in these results.

Table 9: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	271.45	4	67.86	107.93	0.000
Residual	62.44	257	0.24		
Total	333.89	261			

Source. Research Data (2024)

The ANOVA table is critical for the regression model. By assessing it, we can determine if the regression model is statistically significant. An F-statistic of 107.93 and the associated p-value of 0.000 indicate that the model collectively is effective in predicting employee retention. This shows that the collective impact of the independent variables namely employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication and reward and recognition is meaningful in determining employee retention at the hospital.

Table 10: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
Constant	0.92	0.28	-	3.29	0.001
Employee Development	0.43	0.07	0.42	6.14	0.000
Supervisor Support	0.33	0.06	0.34	5.47	0.000
Organizational Communication	0.27	0.05	0.29	5.40	0.000
Reward and Recognition	0.39	0.06	0.38	6.21	0.000

Source. Research Data (2024)

Empirical Model

The fitted regression model for employee retention (Y) is:

$$Y = 0.92 + 0.43(\text{Employee Development}) + 0.33(\text{Supervisor Support}) + 0.27(\text{Organizational Communication}) + 0.39(\text{Reward and Recognition})$$

The model shows that any interventions made in any of the four key areas will contribute positively towards employees' retention at the hospital. The variable with the most impact is reward and recognition (B=0.39) and employee development (B=0.43). The other variables follow, with supervisor support (B=0.33) and organizational communication (B=0.27). All the above mentioned results are significant statistically ($p < .01$). Together, these factors explain 81% of why employees choose to stay ($R^2 = 0.81$) which is an indication that the model is robust. This suggests that interventions on these four areas would possibly reduce employee turnover which in turn improves retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital.

5.0 Conclusion

At AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital, this study explored the effects of employee development, supervisor support, organizational communication, and reward and recognition on employee retention. The findings confirm that all the four factors significantly affect retention with reward and recognition having the most impact. The results imply that employees are more likely to remain loyal to the organization when they feel valued through recognition of their excellent performance, fair compensation and adequate benefits. They are also likely to stay with the organization when an organization invests in their development through training and development and offering career growth that supports their future and personal goals. Supervisor support also enhances their retention by providing a sense of belonging, constructive feedback and emotional encouragement while effective organizational communication also ensures transparency, engagement and trust between leadership and the employee which ensures they stay with the organization. As a result, the study concludes that employee retention is more a matter of organizational practices than a single factor. Hospitals and similar organizations that offer

supervisor support, effective communication, fair rewards and career growth opportunities will be able retain their employees as well as improve overall organizational performance and service delivery.

6.0 Recommendations

This study emphasizes a number of organizational practices that are important for staff retention at AIC Kijabe Mission Hospital. The study showed that reward and recognition had the most effect and therefore the hospital should ensure that the compensation is fair, timely acknowledgment of employees' contributions and provision of benefits that make staff feel secure and appreciated. Besides, continuous employee development ought to be encouraged through providing structured training, career growth opportunities and mentorship programs. This will improve the employee skills as well as increase their commitment to the organization. Additionally, it is also important that supervisor support be strengthened by ensuring that the supervisors are equipped with skills on guidance, constructive feedback and emotional encouragement. In turn, supportive leadership is likely to enhance loyalty and a more sense of belonging. Similarly, the hospital should strengthen internal communication to promote transparency, trust and better engagement between the employees and the management. Overall, offering a work environment that rewards effort, promotes growth, embraces supportive leadership and practices open communication will enable the hospital to retain skilled staff while improving both organizational performance and the quality of healthcare services.

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