

**INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN A
PUBLIC ORGANISATION: A SURVEY OF KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE**

TALLAM CHELIMO FELISTER

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ABSTRACT

Employee retention is critical to the long-term health and success of any organization. It is a known fact that retaining your best employees ensures high performance, job satisfaction and employee motivation. For the past 5 years ,Kenya Wildlife Service as a public organization has experienced employee turnover rate of 17%.It is not clear why Kenya Wildlife Service employees are shifting to competitors such as group Ranchers, Sanctuaries, Farms, Non-Governmental Organizations and other organizations. Employee retention has remained a major challenge to many public organizations due to salary scale, working environment and other factors as indicated by high turnover rate. Due to employee turnover the organization faces direct and indirect costs of recruitment, selection and training of the new staff to replace those who are leaving. The departure of knowledgeable and skilled workers has many costs implications including disruption of the work process, recruitment and training of new employees, and low productivity of new employees during the training period. The study investigated the influence of human resource policies on employee retention in a public organization through a survey conducted at Kenya Wildlife Service. The study sought to investigate the influence of employee training on employee retention, the influence of employee reward on employee retention, the influence of company culture on employee retention and to examine the influence of work environment on employee retention at Kenya Wildlife Service. The study was based on motivation theories including Herzberg' Motivator- Hygiene, Vroom's Expectancy Theory, and Stacey's Equity Theory. The study adopted descriptive survey research design to investigate the influence of human resource policies on employee retention. A sample size of (230) employees was drawn from the target population of 540 permanent employees using stratified random sampling technique. Primary data was collected by using structured questionnaire while secondary data was collected through review of literature. The instrument was tested for reliability using Cronbach alpha (α), and found to be 0.879 hence confirming reliability of the instrument. Data analysis which involved both descriptive and inferential statistics was carried out with aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22.0.The hypotheses were tested using P-value approach at 95% significance level. The study found out that employee training, company culture and work environment had a significance influence on employee retention while employee reward was insignificant in influencing employee retention in the organization. The findings of this study are important to other public organizations since it provides information of human resource policies and its influence on employee retention. The study concluded that human resource policies are the most important and valuable means that influence employee's retention in any organization it therefore recommends that Kenya Wildlife Service should craft strategies of employee retention and monitor turnover rate, in order to help management retain their employees.