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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
WORK ENVIRONMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE
RETENTION IN INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL
ORGANIZATIONS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**



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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK ENVIRONMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

^{1*} Fred Domiano Musinya

Masters Student, Mount Kenya University

Corresponding Author's email: fmdomiano@yahoo.com

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between workplace environment practices and employee retention in selected International Non-Governmental Organizations in Nairobi County.

Methodology: This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The sampling frame was the listing of staff in 93 International Non-Governmental Organizations that were selected using a simple random sampling method from the 1,252 INGO's with offices in Nairobi County. Purposive sampling was used to select 120 staff from the 93 INGOs who participated in the study. A semi-structured self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data while secondary was collected through a review of published literature such as annual INGO reports, journal articles and published theses. Data analysis involved preparation of the collected data - coding, editing and cleaning of data in readiness for processing using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) package version 24.0. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure consistency and content validity. Quantitative data was analyzed using detailed statistics that include mean, standard deviation as well as the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 24 and Microsoft Excel. Qualitative data was evaluated and analyzed using content analysis. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to evaluate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and information obtained from the study presented using graphs, charts, written text and tables.

Results: Internal promotion plans, mentoring programs, management support, effective career development policy, proper individual performance management, practical on-the-job training, effective organizational training policy, flexible leave plans, job sharing and job scheduling practices strongly influence the intention of the respondents to stay with their employers. More work needs to be done to improve succession planning, career break practices and the overall effectiveness of the work life balance policy.

Key Words: *Employee Retention, Career Development, Training and Work Life Balance*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Employee retention is a product of a combination of dedicated efforts and strategies deployed by an institution whose aim is to retain its competent work force in order to reduce turnover.

According to Wikipedia, employee retention is represented by a percentage for a particular period i.e. a rate of 80% per annum means that the organization kept 80% of its workforce that year. Employee retention has an inverse relationship with employee turnover-that is the higher the retention rates the lower the turnover rate and vice versa. It makes business sense for an employer to put in intentional efforts to keep high performing workforce as this helps in reduction of time, effort and finances invested in replacing, training, developing and integrating new hires into the organization.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are critical in social - economic spheres of a country. Their importance has seen an increase in the number of NGOs that have helped create employment opportunities for the populace and boost the economic standings of the host country. In the United States of America, 1.14 million NGOs were registered between the year 2002 – 2013 that injected a total of US\$.2.26 trillion into the US economy (Nonprofit HR, 2016). Additionally, a report by CCSS (2019), affirms that the non-profit sector contributes at least 5 per cent (%) of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the United States of America, Canada, Czech Republic, Belgium, France, New Zealand, Australia and Japan. In Kenya, INGOs injected Kes.168.7 billion into the economy in 2019 that hugely supported employment and implementation of the government's Big-4 Agenda (NGO Coordination Board Kenya 2019).

While evidence shows growth of the sector and the level of financial contribution to the economy, sustainability is a challenge with staff turnover being a core factor. There is no one agreeable and ideal retention rate but some studies have suggested a retention rate of 85% as ideal and as such, this study will use this percentage as ideal for a healthy organization.

INGOs have traditionally used their mission statement to attract and retain employees. Mission statement enables the institution to articulate its values and envision its future clearly which in turn draws clients, donors, funders, employees and volunteers to the organization. To a larger extent, INGOs still rely on their employees' dedication to this mission to manage staff turnover. However, increased accountability and demand for evidenced program delivery by donors and host governments are putting additional pressure on INGO employees which frustrates and erodes their commitment to the mission. This pressure has forced employees to seek opportunities that offer more pay at low levels of stress. Globally, the average employee turnover stood at 19% in 2019. This is an increase of 1% from 18% in the year 2018. Canada, USA and the UK all reported a turnover rate of 19%, (Nonprofit HR,2019) while according to LWCG (2018), New Zealand reported a turnover rate of 16.9% in the same year.

In the Asian continent, Australia reported a turnover of 18% in 2019 (AHRI,2019) while a study of Turnover Trends in China, Germany, India, Brazil and the USA established that while China and India's employee turnover numbers were reducing from an average of 15% in 2011 to 13% in 2013 and from 12% in 2011 to 9% in 2013 respectively, Germany, Brazil and USA were recording an increase in the same period – that is from 5% to 9%,9% to 10% and from 9% to 13% respectively (Elkjaer and Filmer,2015). This trend has continued in the USA to 19% in 2019 and it is estimated that the number will rise to 35% by the year 2023 (Nonprofit HR,2016). Additionally, in 2018, 73% of the employees in Asia declared their intention to leave their current jobs within 12 months with Singapore recording the highest turnover intention at 46% followed by Malaysia at 38% and Australia at 36%, (Syed,2018).

Although there are no accurate country-by-country turnover rates in Middle East and North Africa Region, these two Regions were regarded as having the highest (up to 54%) number of disengaged employees who would leave as soon as another opportunity arises, (The Gallup,2017). And in South Africa, the turnover rate was estimated to be between 14% -19% in the year 2015, (Rasoava Rijamampianina, 2015).

Within the East Africa Region, Tebeje, Alemseged & Beyene (2016), established that 59.4% of Health Workers in Ethiopia and 46% of the same category of workers in Uganda intended to leave their employment for other opportunities within a period of 12 months. A similar study in Public Universities in Uganda concluded that 39% of the staff are looking for greener pastures and would immediately leave if the opportunity arose (Kyaligonza & Kamagara-2017). In Tanzania, a study of 50 Non-Governmental Organizations established that their annual employee turnover rate stood at an average of 40% (Mubondo, B.T.2013).

In Kenya, the annual average turnover of INGO employees in Nairobi County was 26% in 2015, (Kenya National Council of INGOs,2015). In the same year, Asante Africa Foundation reported an annual turnover of 12%, PATH at 15% while Jhpiego reported an annual turnover rate of 28%. This average corresponds with latest study conducted by Ngure, (2018) who established that 25.5% of Health Workers at Kenyatta National Hospital intended to exit as soon as they get an alternative opportunity.

These global, regional and local turnover numbers establish a common pattern; upward trajectory. This is a trend that poses a major business continuity risk to the organizations whether for or not-for profit and calls for strategic interventions to curtail the upward movement of employee turnover. However, an organization cannot address employee retention challenges before understanding the underlying causes and whether or not the turnover is beneficial to the organization. This requires related studies such as the intended one. Most organizations strive to keep employees that have the requisite skills needed to drive their business and that if lost will be a challenge to replace on time. Cardy and Lengnick-Hall (2011), avers that these employees should be retained to afford the business a sustainable competitive advantage. It is of importance to note that not all turnovers result in negative impacts to the business, sometimes, it is necessary to let go of non-performing employees and replace with competent ones that add value to the business.

While employee turnover is not distinct to INGOs, INGOs depend on the ever-reducing donor funds and as such they do not have equal financial muscle to compete with for-profit organizations or the Government resulting in massive loss of its competent employees to either the Government or for-profit organizations. This movement is true to Yamamoto's, (2011) assertion that indeed, INGO's are struggling to retain manpower due to, especially, competition from other organizations. Despite the concerted efforts by employers, Njoroge & Nzulwa (2019) avers that employees are driven by personal interests and may still leave for other external opportunities or to pursue other interests in life. The cost of employee turnover is high. This is a real problem for INGOs whose funding structures do not provide for such and as a result, turnover costs severely affect funds meant for delivery of life changing interventions while complementing Government's efforts such as in healthcare and education. It is no doubt that without skilled workforce, the INGO's delivery will be negatively impacted further complicating ability to attract funds as donors and the government would question their ability to deliver. As evidenced by a number of research outcomes used in this study,

employee retention is a product of various factors. However, Silva, Warnakulasuriya, & Arachchige (2018), concludes that there still lacks a profound discernment of the importance of working environment and its relationship with employee retention. The researcher, therefore, will attempt to investigate the work environment, with emphasis on the contribution of the three work place practices of training, career development and work life balance on retention of INGO employees.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Human capital is a critical ingredient in any organization and therefore attracting and retaining competent employees is key to an organization's growth and business sustainability. On the other hand, high employee turnover results in business interruptions, increased replacement costs, reduced efficiency, client dissatisfaction, missed targets and eventually; depletion of the organization's intellectual capital.

Earlier studies have pointed out employee retention as being a major challenge for INGOs in Nairobi. According to the National Council of NGOs Report (2015), the NGO leadership documented that NGO work was being hampered by low employee retention and Nairobi County was indicated to have registered a mere 26%. In the same year, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) Kenya experienced a staff turnover of 10%, Lung'aho, H., K. & Mukanzi, C. (2018) and in 2010 International Livestock Research Institute experienced a staff turnover of 25% which significantly affected its efficiency, Wachira, J. W. (2018). Overall, the prevalence of turnover INGO staff in Nairobi County is a concern as it affects service delivery, (Kibet, 2015).

In an effort to establish the causes for the high staff turnover of INGO employees in Nairobi County, Musyula, A (2014), Njoroge, S.N. (2017), Ndinya, M.K. (2017) and Njoroge, S.M., & Nzulwa, D.J. (2019) have all attempted to establish critical factors affecting employee retention in Nairobi County. However, these studies fell short of clearly showing the direct relationship between work environment and an INGO staff's decision to stay or leave his or her employer which left a knowledge gap in this respect. Therefore, the Researcher set out to investigate the relationship between the said work environment practices and employee retention in selected International Non-Governmental Organization in Nairobi County. The outcome of this investigation will be useful in addressing the knowledge gap and provide some basis for further studies.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- i. To establish the relationship between career development practices and retention of employees in the selected INGOs in Nairobi County.
- ii. To investigate the relationship between training and employee retention in the selected INGOs in Nairobi County.
- i. To find out the relationship between work life balance and retention of employees in the selected INGOs in Nairobi County.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Empirical Literature Review

According to Ng'ethe, Namusonge, & Iravo (2012), employee retention is becoming more complicated as organizations are continuously scouting and competing for the best talent. Akila (2012) stresses that retaining competent employees is critical for growth of any business. Chinyio, Suresh, & Salisu (2018), avers that employee retention is not only influenced by the extrinsic benefits but is also dependent on whether the employee deems the benefit as sufficient for his or her needs.

Diriye (2015), concluded that career planning, coaching, counselling and mentoring greatly influenced employee commitment and retention at the Nairobi City Council. On the same breath, Kahiga, Ogolla, and Muema (2019) concluded that employee retention in the Nairobi Supermarkets was positively influenced by career development policies. Similarly, Nagarathanam (2018), concluded that career development was solely responsible for employee decisions to stay with the Aviation industry in Qatar and therefore it's upon the organizational leadership to ensure effective policies that will enable the business continuity and ultimate productivity. Indeed, Gomez (2014), affirms that career development practices, if deployed effectively, will improve employee retention. When an organization invests in staff development, employees feel the employer cares and hence increases their commitment and loyalty that makes them stay longer.

Anis et al., (2010) proposes that any employer who needs to keep up with the competition inevitably has to invest in staff training. Employees express their strong willingness to stay with an organization that has proper policies that support their training (Abbas, 2014) and which has authority over an employee's resolve to stay with an organization (Nyambura & Kamara, 2017). G&A Partners (2020) advises that for an organization to be competitive and consistently outperform its competitors, it needs train the current workforce. According to Bibi et al., (2017), training increases an employee's commitment and loyalty making individuals stay longer in employment.

Mendis and Weerakkody (2014), established that having work life balance does not only improve retention but positively influences employee performance to the ultimate benefit of the organization. According to Waclawska (2018), having work life balance policies in an organization helps reduce absenteeism, recruitment costs due to staff replacement and helps to improve employee loyalty, commitment, engagement and performance. In the same breath, Hashim et al. (2016) found out that effective work life balance practices have direct and positive relationship with employee retention. Additionally, Robert (2019) avers that one of the low-cost benefits that can help in staff retention is to develop creative but effective work life balance arrangements.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Herzberg's Motivation –Hygiene (Two Factor) Theory

Frederick Herzberg developed this theory in 1959. His intention was to fathom the agents in a work environment that drives an individual's job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. He called the satisfiers *motivators* and the dissatisfier's *hygiene factors*. Herzberg identified and prioritized top six factors that he determined as the main causes of employee satisfaction and these

included recognition by the supervisor/employer, contents of the role, level of individual responsibilities, individual achievement, promotion and growth in career.

2.2.2 Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom is credited for developing this theory in 1961. According to the theory, employees will deliver their roles better where they have a desirable outcome or reward that complements their efforts. This theory has three components, valence, instrumentality and expectancy. Valence is the degree to which an employee believes that attaining a certain outcome is desirable, instrumentality is about the employee's belief that achieving at a given level will lead to a reward and expectancy is the degree to which an employee believes s/he can deliver the outcome. In a nut shell, to attain the desired positive effect on retention, the organization needs to put more effort to align the employee goals to its business goals.

2.2.3 Job Embeddedness Theory

This was developed by Brooks, Terence, Thomas (2006) from Georgetown University after over a decade of research. This theory is a mal-faceted means to identify and address challenges that may lead to increased staff turnover. It represents a list of possible influencers that weigh on an individual employee's determination to stay or exit employment. These influencers are made up of on and off-the-job factors that include the fit between an individual's job, skills, connection with co-workers, personal, family and community commitments.

Job embeddedness theory is, therefore, the critical element connecting the determinants of the employee's continued stay in the organization. It is therefore of importance that before an organization develops a retention strategy, there is need to be aware and understand the aspects of the job that satisfies or dissatisfies employees and ensure this is included in the strategy.

2.4 Recap of Literature

Earlier studies have pointed out employee retention as being a major challenge for INGOs in Nairobi. According to the National Council of NGOs Report (2015), the NGO leadership documented that NGO work was being hampered by low employee retention and Nairobi County was indicated to have registered a mere 26%. In the same year, Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) Kenya experienced a staff turnover of 10%, Lung'aho, & Mukanzi (2018) and in 2010 International Livestock Research Institute experienced a staff turnover of 25% which significantly affected its efficiency, Wachira (2018). Overall, the prevalence of turnover INGO staff in Nairobi County is a concern as it affects service delivery, (Kibet, 2015).

In an effort to establish the causes for the high staff turnover of INGO employees in Nairobi County, Musyula (2014), Njoroge (2017), Ndinya (2017) and Njoroge & Nzulwa (2019) have all attempted to establish critical factors affecting employee retention in Nairobi County. However, these studies fell short of clearly showing the direct relationship between work environment and an INGO staff's decision to stay or leave his or her employer which left a knowledge gap in this respect. Therefore, the study intended to investigate the relationship between workplace environment practices and employee retention in selected International Non-Governmental Organizations in Nairobi County.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The sampling frame was the listing of staff in 93 International Non-Governmental Organizations that were selected using a simple random sampling method from the 1,252 INGO's with offices in Nairobi County. Purposive sampling was used to select 120 staff from the 93 INGOs who participated in the study. A semi-structured self-administered questionnaire was used to collect primary data while secondary was collected through a review of published literature such as annual INGO reports, journal articles and published theses. Data analysis involved preparation of the collected data - coding, editing and cleaning of data in readiness for processing using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) package version 24.0. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure consistency and content validity. Quantitative data was analyzed using detailed statistics that include mean, standard deviation as well as the statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) version 24 and Microsoft Excel. Qualitative data was evaluated and analyzed using content analysis. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to evaluate the relationship between the independent and dependent variables and information obtained from the study presented using graphs, charts, written text and tables.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

To ensure the sample size is large enough, this study targeted 120 employees from INGOs in Nairobi. The questionnaires were issued to 120 respondents, but only 107 respondents completed the survey. Therefore, overall, the response rate for this survey was 89%. The rate was deemed sufficient enough that would allow data analysis and interpretation.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

In this research study, multiple 5-point Likert questions (from highly disagree to highly agree) in the questionnaire form a scale for measuring the level of work environment practices. It is imperative to determine if the scale used is reliable. Therefore, executing a reliability test helps measure internal consistency to understand whether all the questions reliably measure the same latent variable. The Cronbach's alpha has been calculated for the study variables and is presented in below table 2.

Table 1: Reliability Test Statistics

Reliability Statistics					
	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items			N of Items
	.721	.722			4

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Work_Life_Balance	11.846	2.427	.554	.347	.632
Career_Development	11.608	2.731	.480	.235	.676
Training	11.604	2.700	.584	.361	.619
Employee_Retention	11.329	2.933	.429	.201	.704

Source: Researcher(2021)

Table 2 obtained Cronbach's alpha of 0.721, and this indicates a high level of internal consistency for the scale used in the study. In addition, the removal of any variable will result in a lower Cronbach's alpha. Therefore, there is no need to exclude any variable within this study because we have an acceptable internal consistency between the variables.

4.3 Demographic Features

The study established the demographic features of the respondents, and these features are summarized as shown below:

4.3.1 Gender of Respondent

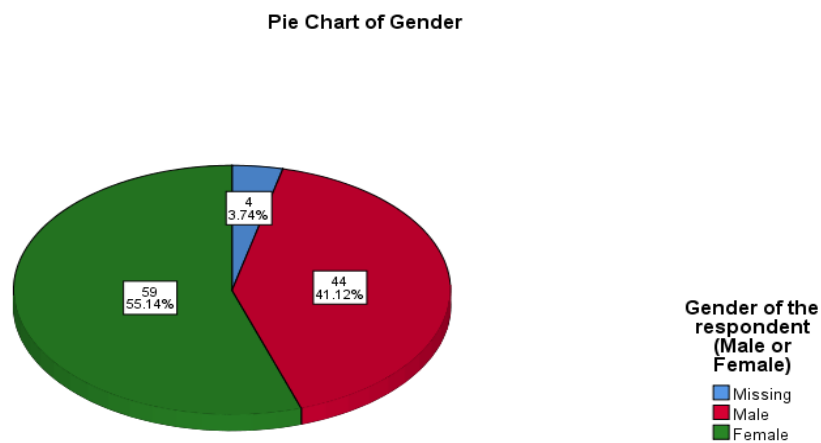
The study targeted both male and female participants to ensure no bias within the research. There is a randomness to ensure everyone stands a chance to participate in the survey.

Table 2: Gender Composition

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	44	41.1	42.7	42.7
	Female	59	55.1	57.3	100.0
	Total	103	96.3	100.0	
Missing		4	3.7		
Total		107	100.0		

Source: Researcher(2021)

Figure 1: Gender Composition of the Respondents



Source: Researcher (2021)

From the survey, the gender composition is represented through a pie chart. The summaries are presented in table 3, where four respondents did not specify their gender (appear as missing within the table). Therefore, of the remaining 103 respondents, 44 were male, and 59 indicated that they were female. Thus, approximately 55.14% of the respondents were female, and 44.12% were male, while 3.74% did not specify their gender. The gender composition results do not vary from each gender, and this, therefore, indicates that there is gender

equality within the INGOs in Nairobi County. The results show no evidence of significant gender disparity within the INGOs.

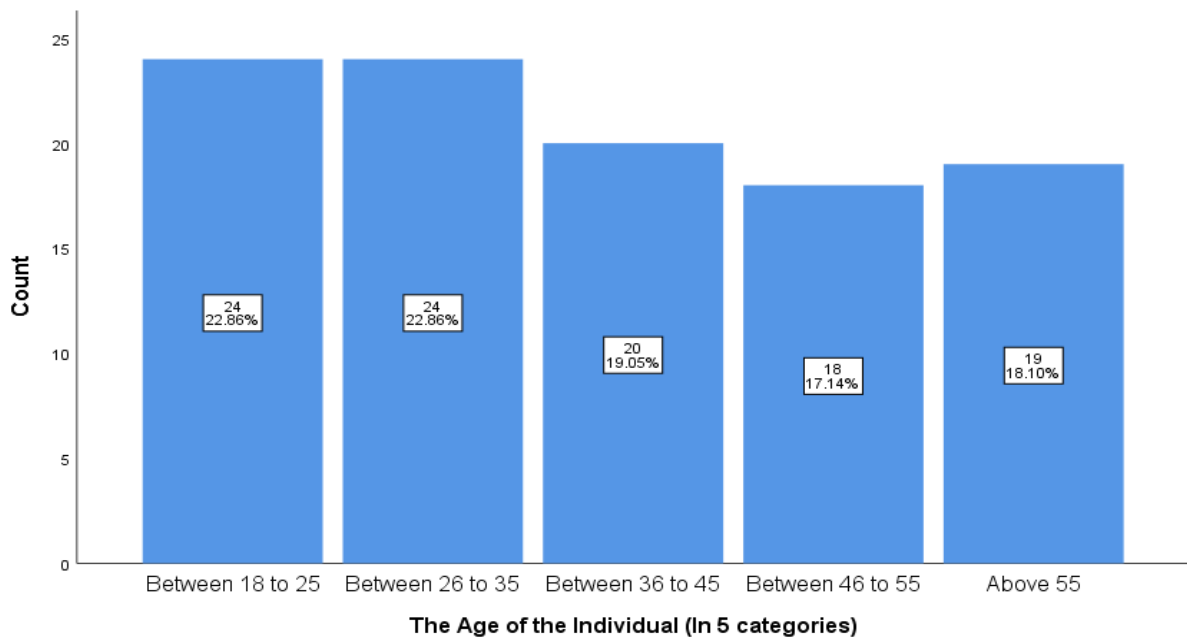
4.3.2 Age of Respondents

Table 3: Age Composition of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Between 18 to 25	24	22.4	22.9	22.9
	Between 26 to 35	24	22.4	22.9	45.7
	Between 36 to 45	20	18.7	19.0	64.8
	Between 46 to 55	18	16.8	17.1	81.9
	Above 55	19	17.8	18.1	100.0
	Total	105	98.1	100.0	
Missing		2	1.9		
Total		107	100.0		

Source: Researcher (2021)

Figure 2: Age Composition of the Respondents



Source: Researcher(2021)

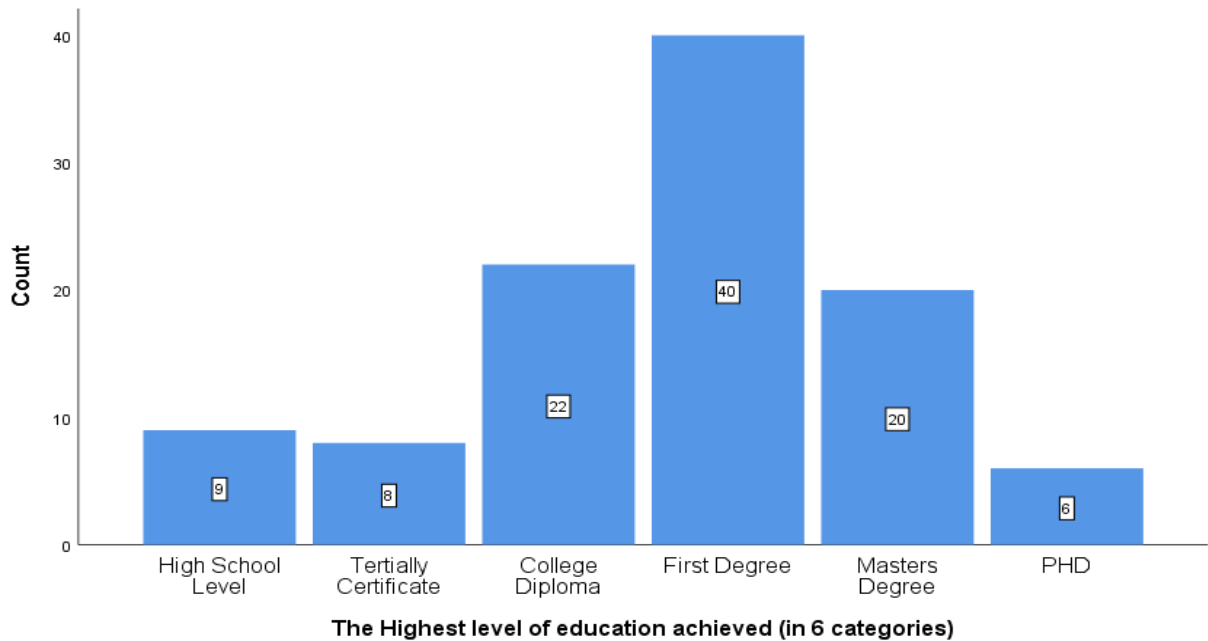
From figure 3 and table 4, most of the participants within this study were aged between 18 to 35 years of age. Only a few participants within the study were aged above 45 years of age.

4.3.3 Highest Level of Education

Table 4: Highest Level of Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High School Level	9	8.4	8.6	8.6
	Tertiary Certificate	8	7.5	7.6	16.2
	College Diploma	22	20.6	21.0	37.1
	First Degree	40	37.4	38.1	75.2
	Masters Degree	20	18.7	19.0	94.3
	PHD	6	5.6	5.7	100.0
	Total	105	98.1	100.0	
Missing		2	1.9		
Total		107	100.0		

Figure 3: The Highest Level of Education



The study also aimed at understanding the highest level of Education achieved by the employees working within the INGOs in Nairobi County. Table 5 above and figure 4 indicate that most of the employees had first degree (40) and were followed by those with a college diploma (22). About 20 of the respondents indicated that they had achieved a master's degree. Those with PhDs were few within this study (6). Therefore, as seen from the results, it can be asserted that INGOs in Nairobi County taps talents from all education levels but basically, they focus most on those who have attained the first degree. In addition, the results also show that the employees within the INGOs are literate enough to understand the workplace practices that retain and motivate employees.

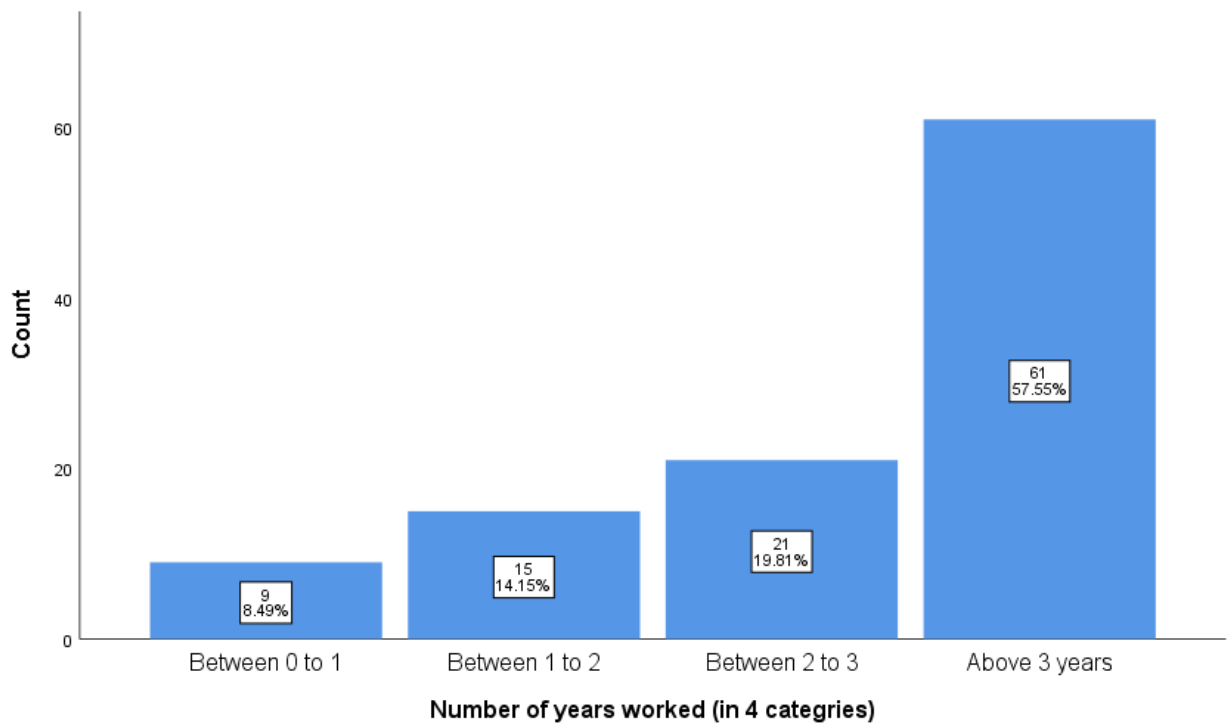
4.3.4 Number of Years Worked**Table 5: Years Worked (in 4 Categories)**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Between 0 to 1	9	8.4	8.5	8.5
	Between 1 to 2	15	14.0	14.2	22.6
	Between 2 to 3	21	19.6	19.8	42.5
	Above 3 years	61	57.0	57.5	100.0
	Total	106	99.1	100.0	
Missing		1	.9		
Total		107	100.0		

Source: Researcher(2021)

This study also aimed at determining the number of years the Respondent had worked within the INGO. From the results in table 6, 57% of the employees had worked for over three years within the INGO. About 19.6% of the respondents indicated that they had worked with the INGO for between two to three years.

Figure 4: Number of Years Worked



Source: Researcher (2021)

Also, table 6 indicates that 15% of the respondents had worked for one to two years, while 9 % of the respondents had worked for less than a year within the INGO. Therefore, as evident from figure 5, most of the employees working in the INGO in Nairobi Country have worked for more than three years.

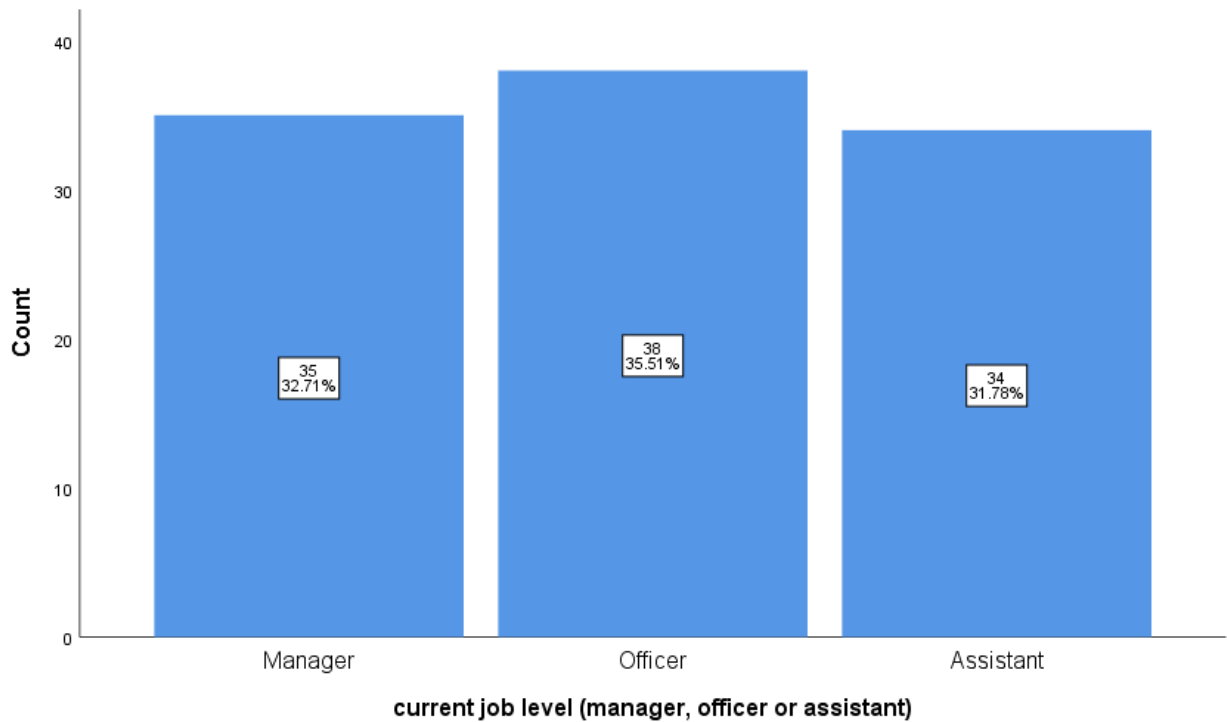
4.3.5 Current Job Level

Table 6: Current Job Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Manager	35	32.7	32.7	32.7
	Officer	38	35.5	35.5	68.2
	Assistant	34	31.8	31.8	100.0
	Total	107	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher(2021)

Figure 5: Current Job Level



The study also aimed at ensuring that it has interviewed managers, officers, and assistants so that credible information can be obtained. As seen in Table 7 and figure 6, this study interviewed 35 managers (32.71%), 38 officers (35.51%), and 34 assistants (31.78%). The information would help gauge whether the established workplace practices were effective and contributed towards employee retention.

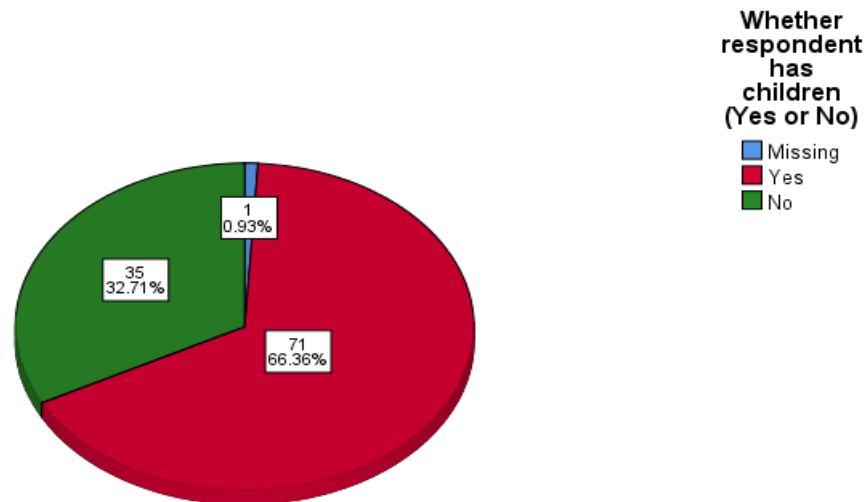
4.3.6 Children

Table 7: Respondents with Children

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	71	66.4	67.0	67.0
	No	35	32.7	33.0	100.0
	Total	106	99.1	100.0	
Missing		1	.9		
Total		107	100.0		

Source: Researcher(2021)

Figure 6: Respondents with Children



Source: Researcher (2021)

The study sought to determine whether the respondents had children (dependents) and as seen in table 8 and figure 7, 71 respondents (66.36%) indicates that they had children, while 35 of the respondents (32.71%) stated that they had no children. Only one Respondent did not show whether he/she had a child. Therefore, most of the respondents in this study had dependents in their life.

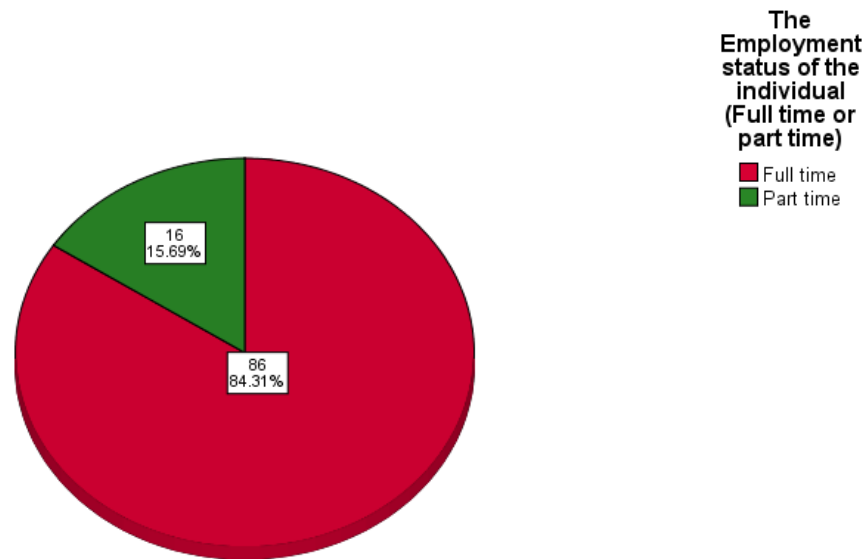
4.3.7 Employment Status

Table 8: Employment Status of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Full time	86	80.4	84.3	84.3
	Part time	16	15.0	15.7	100.0
	Total	102	95.3	100.0	
Missing		5	4.7		
Total		107	100.0		

Source: Researcher(2021)

Figure 7: Employment Status of the Respondents



Source: Researcher (2021)

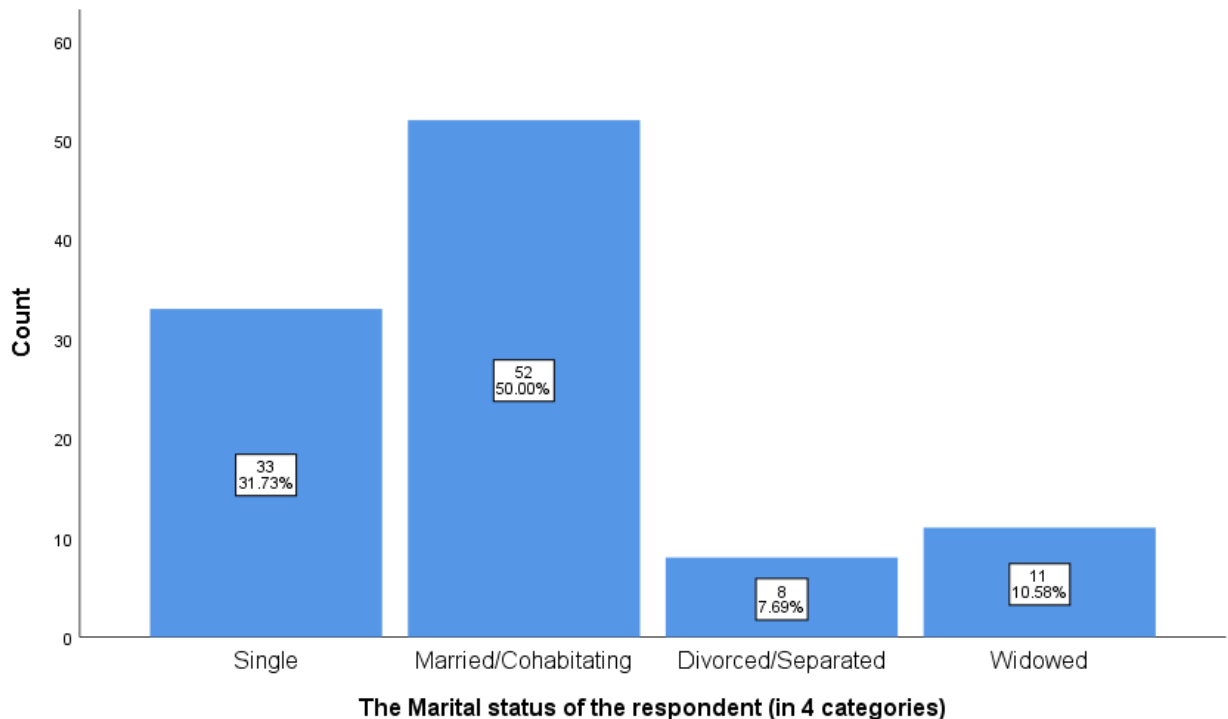
In addition to the above demographic features, the study also aimed to address the employees' employment status. From table 9, 84.31% of the respondents indicated that they were full-time employees. Of the remaining respondents, 15.69% were part-time employees.

4.3.8 Marital Status

Table 9: Marital Status of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	33	30.8	31.7	31.7
	Married/Cohabiting	52	48.6	50.0	81.7
	Divorced/Separated	8	7.5	7.7	89.4
	Widowed	11	10.3	10.6	100.0
	Total	104	97.2	100.0	
Missing		3	2.8		
Total		107	100.0		

Figure 8: Marital Status of the Respondents



Source: Researcher (2021)

The study also sought to determine the employees' marital status, and as seen in table 10, most of the respondents (50%) indicated that they were married/cohabiting. 31.73% of the respondents were single, while 7.69% were divorced, with 10.58% indicating that they were widowed.

4.4 Discussion of Individual Objective Results

4.4.1 Relationship Between Career Development and Employee Retention

The first objective of the study was to establish the relationship between career development practices and retention of employees in the selected INGOs in Nairobi County. The respondents were asked to indicate the level at which they agree with a particular career development practice exercised within the organization. The results of the finding are represented below.

Table 10: Career Development Practices within the Organization

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Succession plans at the workplace	105	3.39	1.213
Promotions plans at the workplace	106	3.90	.925
Management support at the workplace	106	4.09	.669
Mentoring plans at the workplace	106	4.05	.877
Effective Career development policy	105	3.84	1.145
Valid N (listwise)	104		

Source: Researcher(2021)

The results in table 11 indicate that, on average, the respondents were undecided (mean=3.39) whether the succession plans laid down within their organization contributed towards career development. Overall, the respondents agreed (mean=3.90) that the workplace's promotion plans contributed to career development. The respondents also agreed that the management support, mentoring programs, and effective career development policy (each mean>3.5<4.4) have been established within the INGOs contributing to individual career growth. Therefore, it can be asserted that INGOs within the Nairobi Country have implemented effective practices that result in career development and as a result supports the organization's employee retention efforts.

4.4.2 Relationship Between Training and Employee Retention

The second objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between training and employee retention in the selected INGOs in Nairobi County. The respondents were asked to indicate the level at which they agree with a particular training practice exercised within the organization to determine the extend at which training influence employee retention within the select INGOs. Five parameters were used to measure the influence of the training practice and the results are as shown in table 12 below.

Table 11: Training Practices within the Organization

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance management	105	4.02	.747
Supervisors support	105	4.06	.807
Of-the-job_training	103	3.36	1.305
On-the-job_training	106	4.12	.739
Effective organizational training policy	104	3.67	1.218
Valid N (listwise)	103		

Source: Researcher(2021)

Based on the results 105 (mean=4.02) respondents agreed that proper performance management practices as a factor of effective training at their workplace had been established. In addition, the respondents agreed (mean >3.5<4.4) that there is adequate supervisor support, practical on-the-job training, and effective organizational training policy. However, the respondents were undecided (mean=3.36) on the of-the-job training that was being offered. From the above analysis, employees at the INGOs in Nairobi County have acquired the necessary training, which has helped them improve job performance. This also affirms that training as a work environment practice contributes highly towards employee retention.

4.4.3 Relationship Between Work-life Balance and Employee Retention

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics of Work Life Balance Practices within the Organization

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
flexible job schedule	102	3.62	1.034
Flexible leave plans	106	3.69	.989
Effective Work Life Balance Policies	107	3.35	1.260
Career breaks	107	3.51	1.299
Job sharing	107	3.91	.864
Valid N (listwise)	102		

The third objective of the study was to find out the relationship between work life balance and retention of employees in the select INGOs in Nairobi County. The respondents were asked to indicate the level at which they agree with a given work-life balance practice. Table 13 shows the results of work-life balance practices as employed by the INGOs to ensure a high employee retention within the organizations.

From the table, the respondents agreed (mean=3.62) that the INGOs within Nairobi County had established flexible job schedules. These job schedules indicated that the employees achieved a work-life balance within these INGOs. Therefore, this is one of the effective practices contributing to a high rate of employee retention. The employees who participated in this study agreed that job sharing practice (mean=3.91) was well established. Also, the employees who participated in the survey agreed that there are flexible leave plans (mean=3.69). However, the employees were not sure about the effective work-life balance policies (mean=3.35) and career breaks (mean=3.51) exercised within the organizations. Therefore, from this analysis, the INGOs in Nairobi County exercised effective work environment practices to attain a work-life balance for its employees.

4.4.5 Employee Retention

Table 13: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Retention

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Answer to: "I intend to stay with my organization for a foreseeable future"	105	3.95	.974
Answer to: "Am committed to my work and my organization"	106	4.25	.744
Answer to: "Am satisfied with my current job"	105	3.96	1.055
Answer to: "Am loyal and trust my organization"	107	4.31	.719
Answer to: "Am highly motivated to continue working with my organization"	107	4.15	.979
Valid N (listwise)	103		

Source: Researcher(2021)

This study also sought to gauge the participants' responses to the sub variables of the dependent variable; employee retention. These factors include the participants' intention to stay, level of commitment to their current employer, satisfaction with their current jobs, loyalty and trust to their current employer, and their motivation to continue working with their current employer. The study participants were asked to indicate the level at which they agree with a particular question focused on measuring the extent of the sub variable within the INGOs. From table 14 above, the employees who participated in the study agreed (mean=3.95) that they intended to stay with the organizations they were working at for the foreseeable future. This indicates that with continued implementation of the workplace practices, the INGOs will likely retain their high performing staff for years to come.

In addition to this, the study asked the respondents how committed they were to both their work and organization. The participants agreed (mean=4.25) that they were committed to their work and to the organization. Further, the participants agreed that they are satisfied with the current job (mean=3.96), agreed that they are loyal and trust their organizations (mean=4.31), and are highly motivated to continue working with their organizations (mean=4.15). Therefore, overall, it can be asserted that employees within the INGOs in Nairobi County were optimistic about their organizations and with continued implementation of the three work place practices, the INGOs are able to retain their high performing employees.

4.5 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical concept utilized to determine the relationship between two or more quantitative variables. It usually comprises a dependent variable and explanatory/predictor variable (s). The concept is thus utilized within research studies to create an equation (model) that represents the relationship between the established variables in the study. In addition, it can be speculated that the regression analysis helps researchers understand the statistical dependence that a variable has on other variables. The obtained results from the analysis help the researchers identify the proportion of variance between the dependent and independent variables. Therefore, in this analysis, a multiple linear regression model was utilized to determine the relationship between employee retention rate, work-life balance, training, and career development. The study model that was adopted for this analysis is:

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \beta_3x_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where: -

Y = Employee Retention

β_0 = Constant

β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 = Model coefficients

X_1 = Work life Balance

X_2 = Career development

X_3 = training

ε = normally distributed Error term

The results obtained from the regression model are presented in tables 6.0, 6.1 and 6.2. These results explain the relationship between the outcome variable (employee retention) and the predictor variables (work-life balance, training, and career development). In addition, the information obtained will be used to gauge whether the model is favorable in determining the significance of work environment practices on employee retention. The tables will also provide information that determines the relevance of every variable within the model.

Table 14: Summary Results from the Regression Model

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.448 ^a	.201	.177	.6146

a. Predictors: (Constant), Training, Career_Development, Work_Life_Balance

Source: Researcher (2021)

From table 15, the coefficient of determination which is the percentage of variation in the dependent variable explained by the changes in the explanatory variables is R^2 which equals 0.201. This indicates that 20.1% of the variation in employee retention resulted from work-life balance, career development, and training. The remaining 79.9% is due to other factors. The adjusted R-square equals 0.177, and this value indicate that the utilized predictor variables within this model had a 17.7% effect on employee retention. Work-life balance, career development, and training did fit well within the model and established the relationship between the variables. The correlation coefficient measured by R equals to 0.448. The value shows that there is a moderate and positive relationship that exists between the outcome variable and the explanatory variables. The models' standard error of precision of 0.6146 is significantly high on the employee retention.

Table 15: Analysis of Variance

		ANOVA ^a				
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.602	3	3.201	8.474	.000 ^b
	Residual	38.151	101	.378		
	Total	47.753	104			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee_Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), Training, Career_Development, Work_Life_Balance

Source: Researcher (2021)

Above table 16 is the Anova table that provides parameters that can measure the significance of the model. Based on the results from this table, there is a significant effect of work-life balance, training, and career development on employee retention. This can be seen from the significance of $F(3, 101) = 8.474$, which is $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. Therefore, the overall model in this analysis has statistical significance. In addition, the results imply that for the INGOs in Nairobi County to improve employee retention, they need to focus on improving work-life balance, training, and career development practices.

Table 17: Model Coefficients

Model		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.062	.417		4.940	.000
	Work_Life_Balance	.059	.095	.068	.616	.539
	Career_Development	.167	.094	.177	1.766	.080
	Training	.315	.111	.305	2.848	.005

a. Dependent Variable: Employee_Retention

Source: Researcher(2021)

Table 17 provides the coefficients of the model and the significance values of every variable within the model. Based on these regression coefficients, the obtained regression model can be written as follows;

$$\text{Employee Retention} = 2.062 + 0.059(\text{Work-life Balance}) + 0.167(\text{Career Development}) + 0.315(\text{Training})$$

From the formulated equation, the Y-intercept is 2.062. It can be interpreted as the value that would predict employee retention rate when there are no work environment practices that are considered. It is expected that the average employee retention rate to be 2.062 when the INGOs have not established workplace practices. The value can be said to have a meaningful interpretation if it is reasonable for INGOs to fail to have workplace practices put in place. If neither of the assumptions is true, then the value of 1.895 has a meaningless interpretation in this analysis.

The remaining model coefficients have a greater impact on the model. It can be asserted that the coefficient of the work-life balance practice indicates the difference in predicted employee retention rate when all other variables remain constant. In this model, on average, the employee retention rate will change by a margin of 0.059 for every unit change in work-life balance while holding other variables constant. On the other hand, the retention rate will change by 0.167 units for every unit change in career development while holding other variables constant. Finally, the employee retention rate will change by 0.315 units for every unit change in training practices while holding other factors constant.

From the table, when compared with a 5% level of significance, the p-value of work-life balance ($p=0.539$) and that of career development ($p=0.080$) indicates that these two variables fail to have a statistical significance within the model but are assumed to have a practical significance employee retention rate within the INGOs in Nairobi County. However, training

($p=0.005$) indicates that the variable is significant within the model. Within the INGOs in Nairobi County, training practices play a crucial role in employee retention. The retention of employees can be increased by the INGOs focusing more on the employees' training practices. Therefore, it can be speculated that the above regression analysis reveals the extent to which work-life balance, career development, and training significantly predict employee retention rates within the firms. The beta coefficients of this model determine the supremacy in prediction. As it can be seen, these workplace practices have a great effect on employee retention rates within the INGOs.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Retention of high performing employees is a critical factor in the business continuity strategy of any organization. Recruiting employees who are highly skilled is important. However, according to the speculations of Wane (2016), keeping these employees longer with the organization requires strategies that ensure they are continuously satisfied and motivated. The upper management within the INGOs have established work environment practices that are deemed to be catalysts that motivate workers to be productive within the organizations. The study attempted to establish the relationship between work environment practices and the retention of the employees in INGOs in Nairobi County and it can be concluded that indeed there is a positive relationship between workplace practices and employee retention.

The study concludes that there exists a direct and positive correlation between career development and employee retention at the INGOs in Nairobi County. This is in support of Mule et al. (2020) where the researchers established that employees are more likely to work for long in organizations where there are workplace practices that create a work and life balance. Employees have identified opportunities for promotions, management support, mentoring and an effective Career development policy as key career development enablers which positively influence their intention to stay longer with their employer. In retrospect, contributors to their retention. On the same breath, the employees have identified succession planning as an area that needs improvement in order to achieve the intended impact on employee retention.

The study also concludes that there exists a direct and positive correlation between training and employee retention at the INGOs in Nairobi County. Employees perceive that proper performance management practices, adequate supervisor support, practical on-the-job and off-the-job training, and an effective organizational training policy contributes to their willingness to stay long at their current workplace and hence high retention.

The study further concludes that work life balance influences their retention. From the results, majority of the respondents agree that flexible leave plans and job sharing practices positively influence their intention to stay with their employer. However, the results point to need for the INGOs within Nairobi County to review the effectiveness of their overall work life balance policies, job schedules and career break practices as majority of the respondents were unsure of their effectiveness in improving employee retention.

In summary, it can, therefore, be concluded that training, career development and work-life balance are critical work environment practices that, when employed effectively, positively influences the rate of retention of employees in the INGOs in Nairobi County.

5.2 Recommendations for Practice

Based on the findings of this study, it is expected that the stakeholders (who include donors managers/supervisors, INGO leadership and respective government bodies) will gain a better understanding of workplace practices that affect employee retention.

Owing to the critical role played by the INGOs especially in health, poverty eradication and overall economy of the country, employee retention in this sector is crucial and there is thus need to place emphasis on the following areas:

- i. Strengthening the three workplace practices to improve employee retention;
- ii. Developing effective policies that satisfy employees and are in alignment with the organizational needs;
- iii. Owing to the large number of respondents who are married/cohabiting and have children, develop policies and facilities i.e. child care facilities etc to retain this category of employees;
- iv. The relevant government bodies i.e. the NGO Coordination Board, to develop policies that support such workplace practices through tax and other similar incentives that will motivate the INGOs to invest more effort in developing effective work place practices that improve employee retention.
- v. Review and implement corrective measures aimed at improving the general effectiveness of the policies governing career development, training and work life balance.

5.4 The Authorities for Implementation

The authorities need to strategize on the workplace practices that the respondents indicated were unsatisfactory. The INGOs may be investing in some of the work environment practices that do not contribute towards employee retention. As it emerged from the study, succession plans seem not to have been taken seriously within the INGOs. The respondents within the study were undecided about this workplace practice. Therefore, it is recommended that the authorities need to address the issue of succession plans that will motivate the employees. In turn, they will be willing to stay more within the organizations. It is recommended that the organizations should establish employee reward schemes and programs as they are the practices that contribute highly towards employee retention. It is recommended that the authorities should establish exchange programs to promote career development among the employees.

5.5 Service Users/Beneficiaries

This research provides a useful basis that can help the readers understand how effective work environment practices support employee retention in the INGOs within Nairobi County. While employees appreciate better remuneration, pay and benefits, organizations may not be in a position to sustain the ever increasing demand for better pay and benefits. It is therefore, imperative upon the organizations to develop strategies that can have longer-term effect on employee satisfaction and motivation hence retention. The results of this study will, therefore, help consumers to think through, contextualize and adopt effective strategies to deploy in their business in order to sustainably and cost effectively improve their employee retention

through investing in the strengthening of the three work place practices of career development, training and work life balance.

5.6 Other Stakeholders

The study conclusions point to a need for intentional efforts by employers in effectively and deliberately designing work environment practices that enhance employee retention for business sustainability and growth. Employee needs are as important as business needs and it is therefore important to strike a working balance for mutual benefit. Therefore, other non-governmental organizations, firms, and businesses can gain insightful information from this study that will support their thinking and designing of effective work environment practices.

5.4 Recommendation for Further Research

It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and form a basis for future researchers. The following areas of further research are thus suggested:

- (1) Whereas the current study focused on responses from the employees of the INGOs in Nairobi County, future studies should focus on responses from the respondents of the INGOs based outside Nairobi County and indeed, cover the entire country;
- (2) Expand the study to cover other work place practices i.e. performance management, discipline management etc

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