

Influence Of Talent Planning On The Performance Of National Referral Hospitals In Kenya

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Abstract

Talent management in the health sector is more challenging compared to other sectors because of the following factors: the high demand for talent, scarcity of talent across various healthcare professions, the mobility of healthcare experts, the diverse governance structures of healthcare service providers, and the presence of unfavorable external factors. Addressing these challenges is crucial for effective talent management in the health sector. The study sought to investigate the influence of talent planning on performance of National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. A sample of 225 respondents was selected from 4 national referral hospitals using multi-stage sampling technique comprising of purposive, stratified and simple random sampling. The respondents included directors, heads of departments and section heads in each of these hospitals. Primary data was obtained from the respondents through self-administered questionnaires and interviews. Secondary data was obtained from HR and health records. The questionnaires were distributed using the drop and pick approach. An interview guide was used to conduct interviews. The data was statistically analyzed using descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. The study findings indicated that talent planning had a positive and significant effect on the performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya with an r value of .837. The value of R^2 was .692 which implies that 69.2% of variation in performance of national referral hospitals was brought about by talent planning. The study concluded that talent planning influenced the performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya. The study found that with a proper talent plan the national referral hospital would be guided on how they would acquire, retain and develop talents. Study recommends talent planning should be integrated with overall business strategy, doing so would ensure the organization meets its goals and objectives.

Key words: *Talent Planning, Talent identification, Performance, Hospitals*

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I. Introduction

Talent planning refers to the systematic process of identifying and assessing the necessary talent, both in terms of quantity and specific skill sets, required by an organization in the present and future (Armstrong, 2014). The success of any talent management plan is dependent upon the presence of a well-defined roadmap that aligns with long-term vision (Lathitha, 2012). The long-term vision of the organization will aid in the evaluation of its current personnel. The goal of Human Resource growth (HRD) is to continuously assess individuals' competency needs in order to improve their effectiveness in carrying out their assigned job, while also providing opportunities for skill development. This is done to prepare individuals for future jobs within the organization. Talent planning, according to Chikumbi (2011), is the foundation for an organization's existing capabilities and potential to meet current and future business needs. Furthermore, an organization should determine its specific candidate requirement. This should be in line with the job specification matched by a job description.

Statement of the problem

Human resources are a critical component of the health-care system, particularly in the provision of basic health-care services. The achievement of universal health coverage as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is heavily dependent on the availability of a health workforce that is capable of adapting to the ever-evolving needs of health systems (MOH, 2015). Performance of national referrals in Kenya has been a major concern due to various challenges affecting the quality of healthcare services provided. According to a report on the status of national referral hospitals by the national health committee (2019), one of the key concerns was acute

shortage of competent healthcare providers across the national referral hospitals posing a threat to the delivery of specialized health care. KNH is overcrowded as a result of failed referral system and a shortage of 1456 staff, compromising quality service delivery. National spinal injury hospital's lack of emergency room services contributed to late admissions with patients having complications of spinal diseases. Mathari Teaching and Referral Hospital falls significantly short of international standards in terms of services provided and staff ratio. Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital was found to be the most overstretched, with a clinical burden of 110% bed occupancy as a result of the high patient number (National Assembly, health committee report, 2019). The severe shortage of health specialists coupled with these other challenges is likely to jeopardize the country's efforts to realize the right to health and pose a threat to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG); therefore, there is need to come up with a holistic approach in managing human resources in national referral hospitals in Kenya.

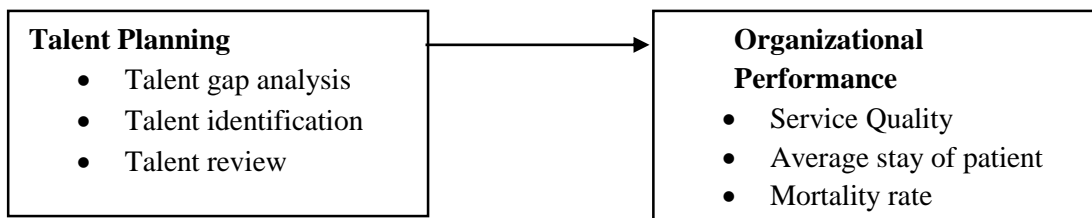
Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of talent planning on the performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya.

II. Literature Review

Talent planning is the process of determining an organization's current workforce, determining future workforce needs, identifying the gap between the workforce available and future needs, and implementing solutions in order for the company to achieve its mission, goals, and strategic plan (CIPD, 2018). According to Armstrong (2006), the business plan serves as the foundation for human resource planning, as it outlines the necessary human capital requirements. Additionally, it guides the development of policies and programs aimed at attracting and retaining employees (finding talent within the organization and developing and promoting it). According to Nafei (2015), talent planning is intended to leverage an organization's existing talents and potential to satisfy current and future business needs. Some of the key area to evaluate are how the company performed the previous year, what the organization's short-term and long-term business goals are, and what future product plans are in place. Other areas that need to be taken into account include the necessary skills needed to achieve predetermined goals, as well as the crucial roles that are essential for the achievement of organizational goals.

According to Momtazian (2016), the talent management planning stage consists of three major areas: understanding the organizational/business strategy, evaluation and measurement/analytics, and workforce development. Alignment with the overarching business strategy is of utmost importance when implementing any talent management strategy. When evaluating the organizational strategy, the environment surrounding the organization is also taken into account. Before formulating the workforce plan, it is imperative to do an evaluation of previous initiatives, an assessment of the workforce profile, and an analysis of talent performance and behaviors exhibited thus far. A workforce plan is thereafter developed by taking into account the existing workforce situation and the envisioned future state.



III. Methodology

Cross-sectional descriptive survey design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches was adopted for this study. The main focus of this study was quantitative. However, some qualitative approaches were used in order to gain a better understanding and possibly enable a better and more insightful interpretation of the results from the quantitative study. The use of these two approaches reinforces each other (Kombo *et al.*, 2006). The target population for this study was the National Referral Hospitals in Kenya. The rationale for choosing the national referral hospitals is based on the fact that these hospitals are relatively big facilities and often operate beyond capacity and have critical patients that overstretch both human and physical resources hence there is high demand for talented workforce.

The sample of the study was drawn using multi-stage sampling technique. The researcher first used Purposive sampling to select only four national referral hospitals; these are KNH, Moi teaching and referral hospitals, Mathari hospital and national spinal injury hospital since these hospitals are believed to have required data regarding the objective of the research. Stratified sampling technique was then used to categorize staff into Directors, Heads of departments and supervisors. Finally, simple random sampling technique was used to sample

respondents for the study. For purposes of accomplishing the objectives of this study, primary data was obtained by use of questionnaires and interview guide. secondary data was obtained from organizations' HR and health records. Descriptive analysis of variables was be done by measures of central tendencies and dispersion. Inferential data analysis was done through Confirmatory Factor Analysis and regression analysis was done to assess model fitness.

Table 1: Sample Size

Staff Category	Kenyatta National Hospital	Moi Teaching & Referral Hospital	Mathari National Teaching & Referral Hospital	National Spinal Injury Referral Hospital	Total Sample
Directors	16	13	2	1	32
Heads of Departments	34	18	6	6	64
Section Heads	80	42	5	2	129
Total	130	73	13	9	225

IV. Results

Response Rate

In total 225 respondents were targeted in this study. From this number, 201 respondents participated and gave their views. The overall response rate was therefore 89% percent. This response rate was deemed satisfactory as suggested by Sekaran & Bougie (2016) who recommends 75 percent as a rule of thumb for minimum responses.

Reliability Test

The Cronbach alpha coefficient test was used to measure the internal consistency of the instruments used. Talent planning and organizational performance registered cronbach alpha value of 0.870 and 0.923 respectively. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2016) these findings are in line with the rule of thumb, where coefficient of 0.60 is regarded to have an average reliability while coefficient of 0.70 and above indicates that the instrument has a high reliability standard.

Table 2: Reliability of study variable(s)

Variable	Alpha coefficient	No of items	Decision
Talent planning	0.870	10	Reliable
Organisational Performance	0.923	10	Reliable

Descriptive Statistics

The respondents gave their responses in a 5-point Likert scale ranging from stongly disagree to strongly agree on a scale of 1 to 5 as shown on table 3 below.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Talent Planning

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organization has a strategic plan which provides direction on how the organization will acquire, retain and develop talents	4	1.5	9	23.1	62.3	4.43	0.975
My hospital has the right people with the rights skills in the right place	2	4.5	9	35.3	49.3	4.38	0.892
Skill gap analysis is carried out in my department	3.5	11.5	17	39	29	4.04	1.065
Jobs and roles are clearly described for staff in my department	2	4	6	31.3	56.7	4.57	0.856
Jobs are assigned according to one's qualification in my department	3	6.1	16.8	29.4	44.7	4.3	1.038
Workforce planning in my hospital is long-term focused and there is an understanding of what talent is currently in place to be successful in future	2	7.1	22.8	33	35	4.14	0.948
Workforce planning is done across divisions in my organization	1.5	6.5	13.4	50.7	27.9	4.18	0.893
There is frequent talent review in my hospital	6	16.4	31.3	30.3	15.9	3.59	1.078
Talent plan is formal, well documented and shared with all employees in my hospital	8.7	15.4	22.6	30.8	21.5	3.86	1.081
Talent inventory analysis is done on frequent basis in my hospital	6	13.5	33.5	27.5	19.5	3.79	1.035
N=201						4.128	0.9861

Findings in table 3 show that in general the respondents were in agreement with the statement that the organization has a strategic plan that provides direction on how the organization acquires, retains and develops talents (85%), the hospital has the right people with the rights skills in the right place (84%). Skill gap analysis is carried out in my department (68%), Jobs and roles are clearly described for staff in my department (87%). Jobs are assigned according to one’s qualification in my department (73%). Workforce planning in my hospital is long-term focused and there is an understanding of what talent is currently in place to be successful in future (68%). Workplace planning is done across divisions in my organization (77%). There is frequent talent review in my hospital (45%), Talent plan is formal, well documented and shared with all employees in my hospital (51%), Talent inventory analysis is done on frequent basis in my hospital (46%).

From the findings of the study, it can also be noted that the mean ranged between 3.5 – 4.4 which indicates that majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statements that were used to measure talent planning. The standard deviation of all the items is within the range of 0.8 – 1.0, meaning that the responses are not much dispersed from each other hence converging towards the expected feedback.

The findings are consistent with the feedback provided by HR managers who were interviewed, indicating that talent planning is implemented within their hospitals. This process is supported by top-level management and it involves identification of key positions/talents and developing their skills and capacity. Similarly, they create talent pipeline where they identify top performers in all the departments and prepare them for future roles. Talent planning is also guided by organization’s strategic plan according to the informants. Further, these findings agreed with Nafei (2015) who observed that talent planning includes identifying the necessary skills needed to achieve the laid down plans and what important posts are necessary to reach these organizational goals. According to Bersin (2010), talent planning must first incorporate the organization’s mission, vision and strategic objectives. By doing so, the employees will be aware of the organization’s intended direction and therefore align their skills and competencies with the company’s goals. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis and the following themes emerged.

“Talent Planning assists the organisation to build the capacity of the staff to enhance in skills which in turn improves performance”, “Talent planning enhances the output of staff since the skills are utilised in the appropriate areas of qualification”, “It ensures a focused way of anticipating future challenges”, “Planning sets the foundation and provides day to day operations thus influencing organizational performance”, “It allows for smooth succession planning and filling in of identified gaps in staff establishment”, “Enhances skills development in various aspects thus enhancing service delivery”, “Ensures the hospital has best quality staff for specific job roles and critical roles”, “It helps identify staffs with highly talented specialized skills in the organization”

Correlation Analysis

In order to specify the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the independent variables and organizational performance, bivariate correlations between the computed study variables and the dependent variables were conducted. The correlation coefficient varies over a range of +1 through 0 to -1. When r is positive, the regression line has a positive slope and when r is negative, the regression line has a negative slope.

Table 4: Correlation Statistics

		PF	TP
PF	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	201	
TP	Pearson Correlation	.837**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	201	201
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Findings in table 4 shows that talent planning had a strong positive and significant association with organizational performance (r =.837, P = .000) at 5% level of significance. This indicates that improvement in talent planning is significantly connected with increase in organizational performance. According to Najm & Manasrah (2017), talent planning helps organizations understand their current status, predict gaps in talent, and take steps to reduce these gaps hence results to a positive outcome.

Regression Analysis

To determine the relationship, the model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TP + \epsilon$ was fitted. The regression results were as shown in table 5.

Table 5: Model Summary of Talent Planning

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.832 ^a	.692	.690	.51382

a. Predictors: (Constant), Talent Planning

The regression results in table 4 show that the influence of talent planning on performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya was significant. With R =0.832 and R² = 0.692 the model implies that 83.2% of performance is explained by talent planning while 69.2% of variation in performance was brought about by talent planning.

Table 6: ANOVA^a of Talent Planning

		Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	65.400	1	65.400	247.714	.000 ^b
	Residual	29.042	110	.264		
	Total	94.442	111			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of National Referral Hospitals

b. Predictors: (Constant), Talent Planning

The findings of the analysis of variance are shown in table 6 (ANOVA). The F test was significant with a p value =0.000 which was less than the standard p value of 0.05 and this meant that the model was significant. From ANOVA, since p value p=0.000 and was lower than p=0.05 (p value 0.000<0.05), then the contribution of talent planning was significant, and it can be inferred that talent planning has a significant influence on the performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya. The equation that was fitted for the model was;

$$P = 1.095 + 0.685TP$$

Table 7: Coefficients^a of Talent Planning

Model	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
		1	(Constant)	1.095		
	Talent planning	.685	.044	.832	15.739	.000

a. Dependent Variable: performance of National Referral Hospitals

The regression model obtained from the output was;

$$Performance = 1.095 + 0.685 \text{ talent planning} + error$$

The coefficient for Talent planning (β) was also significant ($\beta = 0.685$, $t = 15.739$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) indicating that talent planning increases performance by about 0.685 units. Since p-value =0.000< 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between talent planning and performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya.

These findings agree with Chow (2014) who states that talent planning plays a crucial role in positioning a company to enhance the effectiveness of talents and achieve competitive advantages. Silzer and Dowell (2010) support this view by suggesting that organizations need to carefully consider their talent needs in order to gain long-term success. A talent management strategy begins with identifying individual star performers who are a source of competitive advantage and advocating strategies that attract, retain, and develop these high performance and high potential employees (Thompson, 2011).

VII. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the study concluded that talent planning influenced the performance of national referral hospitals in Kenya. The study found that with a proper strategic plan the national referral hospital would be guided on how they would acquire, retain and develop talents. Role clarification is also important as it would ensure that employees are in the right job doing the right thing. Talent planning should be long-term focused and there should be an understanding of what talent is currently in place to be successful in future. The study also identified skill gap analysis as a critical step in talent planning because it helps in understanding the organization's talent needs.

VIII. Recommendations

The study recommends that talent planning be regarded as one of the most critical steps in talent management. This is because without a proper plan, the organization may not be able to identify the talents they need. The study recommends that talent planning be regarded as one of the most essential talent management practices. National referral hospitals need to have a formalized process for talent planning in place, as well as a

comprehensive and diverse approach to talent planning. Talent strategy should be integrated with overall business strategy, doing so would ensure the organization meets its goals and objectives. Organizations also need to identify the types of talent they need and where they need it, both now and in the future. It is also critical to involve top management in talent planning in order to gain their support; employees must also be engaged in this process.

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