INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION PRACTICES ON NEWCOMER ENGAGEMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR IN KENYA: A CASE OF ORGANIZATIONS IN THE ENERGY SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to establish the influence of organizational socialization practices on newcomer engagement in the public sector with special reference to organizations in the Energy sector. The target respondents comprised of the 271 staffs drawn from various departments at the Ministry of Energy (MoE), Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen), The Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) and Kenya transmission Company (KENTRACO). The study revealed that the organizational socialization practices under study cause 72.4% variation in newcomer engagement. The study also conclude that newcomers go through common learning experiences, designed to produce uniform responses to situations that permit a variety of responses as, newcomers receive clear guidelines regarding the sequence of activities and experiences they will encounter. Further, the study concludes that in the organizations under study superiors care about newcomer well-being, value their contributions, and are generally supportive, additionally strong supervisor support in their organization help newcomers in reducing burnout and intentions to quit. It would however be useful to carry out a similar study across heterogeneous sectors such as construction, banking among others.

Key Words: organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring, career planning, organizational culture

Introduction

Employees are moving organizations frequently, with approximately one-fifth of employees in Europe, and one-third of employees in the USA, moving jobs within any 12-month period (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006; Macaulay, 2003). Both theoretically and practically, it is important to understand what facilitates the newcomer adjustment process for this large tranche
of employees, to the benefit of newcomers, their colleagues, and their employing organizations. Effective organizational socialization is desirable, and results in more rapid role learning, task mastery, and social integration, and is also associated with greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, person-organization fit, and lower intent to quit and turnover (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004).

Employee engagement has received a great deal of attention in the popular press and among consulting firms and has begun to appear in the academic literature (Crawford et al., 2010; Rich et al., 2010; Saks, 2006). Engagement has been described as a key driver of individual attitudes, behavior, and performance as well as organizational performance, productivity, retention, financial performance, and shareholder return (Richman, 2006). According to Macey et al., (2009), engagement is the key to an organization’s success and competitiveness.

Given the importance of employee engagement to organizations combined with the deepening disengagement among workers today (Kowalski, 2003), a key issue is how to increase employee engagement. As noted by May et al. (2004), “Engagement is important for managers to cultivate given that disengagement, or alienation, is central to the problem of workers’ lack of commitment and motivation” (p. 13). However, the focus of previous research has been the engagement of existing employees and the working conditions that impact their engagement (Crawford et al., 2010). Much less is known about the engagement of new hires and the socialization practices that might promote their engagement during the socialization process. There is also an absence of engagement research in the socialization literature. This study therefore seeks to establish how organizational socialization influences employee engagement in the public sector in Kenya.

Organizational socialization focuses on how newcomers adjust to their new surroundings and learn the behaviors, attitudes, and skills necessary to fulfill their new roles and function effectively as a member of their new organization (Fisher, 1986; Van Maanen, 1976). Socialization has become more important in recent years as organizations have come to appreciate the effect of the on-boarding process on new hires’ performance and retention, and as a result of the increased mobility of the workforce (Bauer et al., 2007). As noted by Bauer et al.(2007), individuals today will undergo socialization more frequently in their careers and as a result, organizations will have to socialize newcomers more often.

**Organizational Socialization Concept**

Organizational entry is a critical time for newcomers. A basic premise of organizational socialization practices is that the nature of a newcomer’s initial experiences is imperative to their adjustment to the new environment (Saks and Ashforth, 1997). Experiences during this period help shape a newcomer’s views about the organization, which may have long-lasting functional or dysfunctional consequences for their later attitudes and behaviors. Because newcomers may experience a reality shock or surprise when they first enter the organization, they respond by
searching for information to reduce their uncertainty and anxiety. During this entry period, newcomers reinterpret and revise the meaning of work as it pertains to a particular organization as well as their roles as functioning organizational members (Hulin, 1991).

A successful socialization process is one which transforms newcomers into established organizational insiders. Organizations, by providing or withholding information in a particular way, can affect the newcomer’s behavioral outcome. In order to ease the transition, organizations often employ socialization practices to help new hires learn the desired values and behavioral norms. By confirming and disconfirming the newcomers’ values and behaviors, organizations transform them from outsiders to insiders. Thus, organizational socialization involves the process in which new members undergo learning the ropes, being taught what is important and what is expected in the organization, acquiring appropriate role behaviors, and adjusting to the group’s norms and values (Feldman, 1989).

Statement of the Problem

Given the many challenges facing organizations today, combined with the impact that socialization practices can have on new hires, it is important to study what and how socialization practices can produce engaged newcomers. Although the relevance of socialization for engaging new hires has been recognized in the engagement (Rich et al., 2010) and socialization literatures (Saks and Gruman, 2010), no previous study has investigated socialization and newcomer engagement. In Kenya’s energy sector socialization is an important issue because just as the first year is a critical period of learning for newcomers, it might also be a critical period for getting newcomers engaged (Gachuhi, 2013). Furthermore, engagement is related to traditional socialization outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to quit, and job performance. It is against this background that this study sought to examine the extent to which organizational socialization practices predict newcomer engagement. This represents an extension of the engagement and socialization literatures, neither of which has investigated relationships between socialization practices and newcomer engagement.

Research Objectives

The aim of this study was to establish the influence of organizational socialization practices on newcomer engagement in the public sector with special reference to organizations in the Energy sector. Specifically the study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To establish how organizational socialization tactics influence newcomers engagement.
2. To assess how supervisor support influence newcomers engagement.
3. To ascertain how mentoring influence newcomers engagement.
4. To establish how career planning influence newcomers engagement.
5. To establish the moderating effect of organizational culture on newcomer engagement.
Literature Review

Organizational Socialization Tactics

One of the best known and most studied topics in organizational socialization is Van Maanen and Schein’s (1979) typology of socialization tactics. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) defined socialization tactics as “the ways in which the experiences of individuals in transition from one role to another are structured for them by others in the organization” (p. 230). They identified six tactical dimensions that can influence the role orientation that newcomers adopt. Each tactical dimension is said to exist on a bipolar continuum with considerable range between the two poles.

The tactic of collective (versus individual) socialization refers to whether newcomers go through common learning experiences, designed to produce uniform responses to situations, or idiosyncratic experiences that permit a variety of responses. Formal (versus informal) socialization refers to whether newcomers are isolated from other organizational members while they learn their roles, or whether they become part of work groups immediately upon occupying their new positions and learn on-the-job.

Sequential (versus random) socialization refers to whether newcomers receive clear guidelines regarding the sequence of activities and experiences they will encounter or an ambiguous sequence. Fixed (versus variable) socialization pertains to whether newcomers receive detailed knowledge of the timetables associated with completing each stage in the socialization process, or no such information about completion of a stage of learning. Serial (versus disjunctive) socialization refers to whether veteran organizational members act as role models for newcomers, or whether newcomers are required to make sense of their experiences on their own. Finally, investiture (versus divestiture) involves either confirming and reinforcing newcomers’ self-identities and providing social support, or stripping them away through negative communication and rebuilding them in the form the organization desires.

Supervisor Support

Supervisor support is defined as the degree to which employees form impressions that their superiors care about their well-being, value their contributions, and are generally supportive (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Supervisors who are deemed to be supportive have been found to be effective in managing subordinate emotions. Managing subordinate emotions is a critical component in managing organizational commitment.

Hutchison, (1997) research showed that caring and supportive treatment by supervisors was positively associated with affective commitment. Because supervisors act as agents of the organization, they have direct responsibility for directing, evaluating and supporting their subordinates. Accordingly, subordinates view supervisor support as a personal extension of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Levinson, 1965). Organizational support theory suggests
that the actions of its agents are indicators of the organization’s intent (Levinson, 1965). Agents help personify the organization to the employee. Immediate supervisors are typically the closest organizational link to the employee and have the ability to communicate the organization’s intentions directly to their subordinates.

Strong (and weak) supervisor support has been shown to affect employees in several ways. For example, Kalliiath and Beck (2001) found that strong supervisor support helped reduce burnout and intentions to quit. Munnet al.(1996) found that supervisor support was the best predictor of job satisfaction and intention to quit.

**Mentoring**

Mentoring has for many years been recognized as a successful tool to develop individuals (Egan & Song 2008). It has been described as a professional development exercise that aim to bring together colleagues with different levels of experience within an organization or specialty to work together to improve their job performance and prospects for advancement (Sturges 2008). The definition of mentor has been used interchangeably with some other terms like coach, sponsor and colleagues even though these roles may involve different types of relationships.

According to studies by Welch, (2011) Kram (1985) summarized mentoring functions into two broad categories known as career functions and psychosocial functions. Career functions, Kram (1985) claimed are those aspects of a relationship that enhanced learning and preparing for advancement in an organization whereas psychosocial functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role. Career functions aid advancement up the hierarchy of an organization while psychosocial functions affect each individual on a personal level by building self-worth inside and outside the organization (Kram 1995). Functions of psychosocial include role modeling, counseling, friendship and acceptance, and confirmation.

**Career Planning**

A career is a pattern or sequence of work roles of an individual. Career planning is the matching of individual employee potential, that is their needs, abilities, preferences, personality and motivation with the environment which facilitates exploitation of such individual potential (Manual on training 2010). According to Dessler (2008) career planning is a deliberate process through which someone becomes aware of personal skills, interests, knowledge, motivation and other characteristics. It provides action plans to attain specific goals.

Information on career planning is provided by the organization and it means the organization reveals its specific plans to the employee which can be regarded as the general case for fast trackers (Baba, Granrose & Bird 1995). Some organizations go further and actually sponsor studies for those employees who are willing to prepare themselves to other positions. There should be a sequential plan of how an individual can rise along the ladder, which each step
indicating what the qualifications are, and the criterion employed by the organization to fill in the open vacancies. This enables employees to also plan their progress. However, Torrington et.al, (2008) hold that career planning and managing employee career transitions is a joint responsibility of the employer and the employee. Organizations that help employees assess their career options and plan for career transitions attract increased responsiveness to market changes, lower attrition levels for valued employees and higher levels of employee engagement and productivity (Dessler 2008). According to Greenhaus et.al., (1995) indicators of career planning are whether career decisions made are compatible with individual’s values, talents, interests and lifestyle preferences, and whether one can adapt to change in the environment that threaten the compatibility of career experiences with values, talents, interests and lifestyle preferences.

**Organizational Culture**

Organisational culture can be viewed as the unique pattern of shared assumptions, values, norms, attitudes, symbols, beliefs, rituals, socialization, and expectations of the people in the organisation (Schein, 2007). According to the definition by Hellriegel et al., (2009), the base of culture is formed by shared assumptions, values and norms, and these cannot be observed. The more visible and observable elements, such as its socialization activities, symbols, language, practices and narratives, are the only way in which culture can be inferred (Hellriegel et al., 2009).

One way of describing organisational culture is by comparing it to personality, because, like personality, culture affects how people behave when they are not being told what to do (Hellriegel et al., 2009). Harrison and Stokes (2007) agree with Hellriegel et al., (2009) and they explain that culture is to an organisation, what personality is to an individual. The next section will discuss the shared assumptions, shared values, shared attitudes and norms of organisational culture.

Shared assumptions can be seen as the widely held, inherent, unique, and deeply rooted views that individuals take for granted and believe to be true, and which guide their views, feelings and emotions about things and how those things function. Shared assumptions typically remain unquestioned, and are accepted as truth (Schein, 2007). Schein (2007) mentions that an organisation only has a culture when it has had enough of a history to have developed this set of shared assumptions. Smith (2008) states that assumptions have been developed, invented or discovered by employees out of their experience, and future employees therefore view these assumptions as valid because they appear to have been successful in the past. These assumptions are seen as important enough to teach to new members of the organisation when they enter because they define how employees should perceive, think and feel about problems.
Research Results

The gender of the respondents was cross tabulated against company name and the results, out of the 111 sampled responses, 80 were male and 31 female representing 72% male and 28% female. Education level was another characteristic that was measured by the instrument. According to the findings 48.6% (54) of the respondents indicated that they had bachelors degree as their highest level of education, 29.7% (33) indicated they had masters level degree, 19.8% (22) indicated they had higher national diploma and a few 1.8% (2) indicated they were diplomer holders.

The study sought to establish how long the respondents had been working at their respective organizations to ascertain to what extent their responses could be relied upon to make conclusions for the study based on experience. From the study findings 40% indicated a period over 10 years, 32% indicated 6-10 years, 17% between 2 to 5 years a few (7%) indicated a period less than 2 years.

The study sought to establish the respondents’ extent of agreement based on statement related to organizational socialization tactics at their organization. From the study findings majority (57%) strongly agreed that newcomers go through common learning experiences, designed to produce uniform responses to situations that permit a variety of responses as shown by a mean of 4.3, 48% of the respondents agreed that newcomers receive clear guidelines regarding the sequence of activities and experiences they will encounter as shown by a mean of 4.0; another 48% also agreed that newcomers are required to make sense of their experiences on their own as shown by a mean of 4.7 and lastly, 48% agreed that in their organizations veteran organizational members act as role models for newcomers as shown by a mean of 3.7.

The study sought to establish the respondents’ extent of agreement based on statement related to supervisor support and newcomer engagement in their organization. From the study findings as indicated in Table 3 majority (69%, 77) of the respondents agreed that In my organization superiors care about newcomers well-being, value their contributions, and are generally supportive as shown by a mean of 4.5, 51% (47) agreed that strong supervisor support in their organization help newcomers in reducing burnout and intentions to quit as shown by a mean of 4.0, 53% (59) agreed that supervisor support in their organization is the best predictor of job satisfaction and intentions to quit among newcomers as shown by a mean of 4.0. And lastly 50% (56) agreed that supervisors are supportive hence effective in managing subordinate emotions as shown by a mean of 3.9.

The study sought to establish the respondents’ extent of agreement based on statement related to mentoring. Findings show that majority (64%, 71) strongly agreed that in their organization mentoring is an exercise that aims to bring together newcomers and other employees with different levels of experience within the organization as shown by a mean of 4.3, 50% (56) of the respondents agreed that mentoring in their organization facilitate relationship between newcomers and other employees thus enhancing a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and
effectiveness in a professional role as shown by a mean of 3.8; 47% (52) of the respondents agreed that in their organizations mentors assist newcomers to develop their skills at resolving career-related complications as shown by a mean of 3.7.

The study sought to establish the respondents’ extent of agreement based on statement related to career planning and Newcomer engagement in their organizations. From the study findings the respondents strongly agreed that newcomers are given guideline on the qualifications needed to progress in ones’ career as shown by a mean of 4.8. Also the respondents strongly agreed that formal training programmes are determined and career information provided to newcomers and that there are guideline on the qualifications needed to progress in ones’ career as shown by means of 4.6 respectively. The respondents disagreed that newcomers know the next level of their career as shown by a mean of 2.0.

The study sought to establish the respondents’ extent of agreement based on statement related to organizational culture. From the study findings majority (58%, 64) of the respondents strongly agreed that shared assumptions typically remain unquestioned, and are accepted as truth as shown by a mean of 4.6, 48% (53) strongly agreed that in their organizations values are basic concepts and beliefs about conditions that are very important and meaningful to employees and are stable over time that newcomers learn to feel comfortable in the new environment as shown by a mean of 4.4 and lastly 48% (53) agreed that shared assumptions is the widely held, inherent, unique, and deeply rooted views that individuals in their organizations take for granted and believe to be true, and which guide their views, feelings and emotions about things and how those things function as shown by a mean of 4.0. According to Hellriegel et al., (2009), the base of culture is formed by shared assumptions, values and norms, and these cannot be observed. This findings implies that the more visible and observable elements, such as organizational socialization activities, symbols, language, practices and narratives, are the only way in which culture can be inferred and have influence on how a newcomer is engaged in his/her new environment.

From the study findings the respondents strongly agreed that newcomers are given materials and equipment to do their work right as shown by means of 4.1. Also the respondents agreed that the supervisors discusses with newcomers about their progress and that newcomers receive recognition or praise for doing good work as shown by means of 4.0 respectively. Lastly the respondents agreed that newcomers are told what is expected of them at work as shown by a mean of 3.8.

**Regression Analysis**

In addition, the researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis so as to determine the influence of organizational socialization practices on newcomer engagement in the public sector in Kenya. The researcher applied the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to code, enter and compute the measurements of the multiple regressions for the study.
Table 1: Regression Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.851(a)</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>.676</td>
<td>.77048</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Predictors: (Constant), organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning.

From the findings 67.6% of newcomer engagement in the organizations under study is attributed to combination of the independent factors that relate to organizational socialization practices (organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning) investigated in this study. A further 32.6% of newcomer engagement is attributed to other organizational socialization practices not investigated in this study.

Table 2: ANOVA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>35.775</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.944</td>
<td>15.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>13.654</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>.594</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.429</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The significance value is .044 which is less that 0.05 thus the model is statistically significant in predicting independent variables (organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning) this shows that the overall model was significant.

Coefficient of Determination

The study conducted a multiple regression analysis and from the above regression model, holding (organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning) constant at zero, newcomers engagement in the organizations under study will be 1.147. A one percent (1%) change in organizational socialization tactics practices will lead to zero point four eight percent (0.488%) variation in newcomers’ engagement; also a one percent (1%) change in supervisor support will lead to zero point three eight four percent (0.384%) variation in newcomers’ engagement. Further, a one percent (1%) change in mentoring will lead to zero point one two two one percent (0.221%) variation in newcomers’ engagement and lastly a one percent (1%) change in career planning adopted will lead to zero point two six nine percent (0.269%) variation in newcomers’ engagement. This shows that there is a positive relationship between (organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning) and newcomers’ engagement.
Table 3: Regression Analysis Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.147</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>2.915</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational socialization tactics</td>
<td>.488</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>.663</td>
<td>1.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>.384</td>
<td>.106</td>
<td>.397</td>
<td>3.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Planning</td>
<td>.221</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>.192</td>
<td>1.917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>.269</td>
<td>.135</td>
<td>.387</td>
<td>1.991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Dependent Variable: Newcomers Engagement

The Unstandardized beta coefficients column in Table 4.12 below were used to obtain the overall equation as suggested in the conceptual framework. When these beta coefficients are substituted in the equation, the model becomes:

\[ Y = 1.147 + 0.488X_1 + 0.384 X_2 + 0.221 X_3 + 0.269X_4 + \varepsilon \]

Where

- \( Y \) = Newcomers Engagement, \( X_1 \) = Organizational socialization tactics, \( X_2 \) = Supervisor Support, \( X_3 \) = Career planning, and \( X_4 \) = Mentoring.

The results also show the unique contribution to the explaining of the independent variable. The standardized coefficients assess the contribution of each independent variable towards the prediction of the dependent variable, since they have been converted in the same scale to show comparison. The result indicates that Organizational socialization tactics having the highest beta of 0.663 has the largest influence on Newcomers Engagement. The second most important variable was supervisor Support with a beta of 0.397. The third most important variable was Mentoring with a beta of 0.387. The least important predictor of these five variables is career planning with a beta of 0.192. The t-test statistic shows that all the B coefficients of organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning) are significant (since \( p<0.05 \)).

**Moderating Effect of Organizational Culture on the Relationship between organizational socialization Practices and newcomer engagement**

The objective sought to find out the moderating effect of organizational culture on the relationship between organizational socialization Practices and newcomer engagement. To achieve this study objective, Baron and Kenny’s (1986) approach to test the moderating effect of OC on the OSP - NE relationship was used.
Table 4: Model 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>.8567a</td>
<td>.734</td>
<td>.729</td>
<td>.73953</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning and organizational culture

Table 4 indicates the linear regression F-test results and with F= 16.540, and 110 degrees of freedom, and the critical values for F-test is less than the computed F-value, then we conclude that there is a linear relationship between organizational socialization Practices and newcomer engagement which is moderated by organizational culture.

Inferences can therefore be made that organizational culture moderately influence the relationship between organizational socialization Practices and newcomer engagement.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVAb)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>39.232</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.034</td>
<td>16.540</td>
<td>.041a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>14.234</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>.547</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53.466</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), organizational socialization tactics, supervisor support, mentoring and career planning, Organizational culture

b. Dependent Variable: newcomer engagement

Model 1 in Table 4 showed a significant total effect of Organizational Socialization Practices on NE ($r^2 = 72.4\%$, $F = 15.066$, $p < 0.05$). Model 2 shows a significant increase of 1 per cent in R-square when organizational culture was added (change of $F = 16.540$, $p >0:05$). In model 2, when the interaction term of Organizational Socialization Practices and NE (organizational culture) was added, the explanation power of the model increased significantly to 73.4 per cent ($R^2 = 0.734$, $p<0:05$), indicating that the interaction term contributed to a small but significant increment in explaining the variance in NE (change of $F = 16.540$; $p < 0.05$).
Table 6: Coefficient of Determination between Independent variables and dependent variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.448</td>
<td>.560</td>
<td>2.584</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>.191</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.113</td>
<td>3.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational socialization tactics</td>
<td>.466</td>
<td>.123</td>
<td>.312</td>
<td>3.779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Planning</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>.116</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>2.544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor Support</td>
<td>.233</td>
<td>.077</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>3.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture(OST<em>CP</em>SP*SS)</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>2.445</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The standardized regression function was:

\[ NE = 2.832 + 0.191M + 0.466OST + 0.063CP + 0.233SS + 0.109(OST*CP*SP*SS). \]

Discussion

On the extent to which organizational socialization tactics influence newcomer engagement, the study found that a one percent (1%) change in organizational socialization tactics practices results in a zero point four eight eight percent (0.488%) variation in newcomers’ engagement. According to Saks and Ashforth (1997) one of the goals of organizational socialization is to facilitate newcomers’ adjustment to the requirements of their work tasks and roles and the values and culture of the organization. In their meta-analysis, Saks et al., (2007) found that institutionalized tactics were positively related to fit perceptions, and fit perceptions partially mediated the relationships between socialization tactics and socialization outcomes. This study therefore concludes that individuals who are sure of their fit with a social system are more likely to derive greater meaning from it and to become more engaged. Individuals are also likely to feel insecure and less psychology available when they are unsure of their fit with an organization.

Also the study found that supervisory support influence newcomer engagement to a great extent. A one percent (1%) change in supervisor support will lead to zero point three eight four percent (0.384%) variation in newcomer engagement. The study findings agrees with Hutchison (1997) research that showed that caring and supportive treatment by supervisors was positively associated with affective commitment, supervisors act as agents of the organization, they have direct responsibility for directing, evaluating and supporting their subordinates. Perceived organizational support (POS) has been linked with higher job performance (Erdogan and Enders,
The study found that mentoring influence newcomers engagement. Mentoring has been described as an interpersonal exchange between an experienced employee (mentor) and a less experienced peer (prote´ge´) (Russell and Adams, 1997). A recent meta-analysis found that mentoring is positively associated with compensation, number of promotions, career satisfaction, and expectations for advancement, career commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to stay (Allen et al., 2004). This study concludes that mentoring is vital for newcomer engagement since it helps in acquiring behaviors, knowledge and attitudes necessary to function as an organizational member.

The study found that a one percent (1%) change in career planning will lead to zero point two six nine percent (0.269%) variation in newcomers’ engagement. According to Baba, Granrose & Bird (1995) information on career planning is provided by the organization and it means the organization reveals its specific plans to the employee which can be regarded as the general case for fast trackers. However, Torrington et.al, (2008) hold that career planning and managing employee career transitions is a joint responsibility of the employer and the employee. The study concludes that there should be a sequential plan of how an individual can rise along the ladder, which each step indicating what the qualifications are, and the criterion employed by the organization to fill in the open vacancies. This enables employees to also plan their progress.

This implies that organizations that help employees assess their career options and plan for career transitions attract increased responsiveness to market changes, lower attrition levels for valued employees and higher levels of employee engagement and productivity.

Conclusions

Influence of Organizational Socialization Tactics on Newcomer Engagement

The study concludes that Ministry of Energy (MoE), Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen), The Kenya Power and Lighting Company (KPLC) and Kenya transmission Company (KENTRACO) employ organizational socialization tactics.

On the extent to which organizational socialization tactics influence newcomer engagement, the study concludes that organizational socialization tactics practices influence newcomers’ engagement. The study also conclude that newcomers go through common learning experiences, designed to produce uniform responses to situations that permit a variety of responses as, newcomers receive clear guidelines regarding the sequence of activities and experiences they will encounter.
Influence of Supervisor Support on Newcomer engagement

The study concludes that supervisory support is offered to newcomers at the organizations under study and affects newcomers’ engagement. Further, the study concludes that in the organizations under study superiors care about newcomer well-being, value their contributions, and are generally supportive, additionally strong supervisor support in their organization help newcomers in reducing burnout and intentions to quit.

Influence of Mentoring on Newcomer engagement

The study concludes that mentoring newcomers influence how they engage. The study also concludes that mentoring is an exercise that aims to bring together newcomers and other employees with different levels of experience within the organization, facilitate relationship between newcomers and other employees thus enhancing a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role.

Influence of Career Planning on Newcomer Engagement

The study sought to establish the influence of career planning on newcomer engagement in the organizations under study. The study concludes that newcomers are given guideline on the qualifications needed to progress in ones’ career, formal training programmes are determined and career information provided to newcomers and that there are guideline on the qualifications needed to progress in ones’ career. The study concludes that there should be a sequential plan of how an individual can rise along the ladder, which each step indicating what the qualifications are, and the criterion employed by the organization to fill in the open vacancies. This enables employees to also plan their progress.

Recommendations

The study recommends that organizations should practice institutionalized socialization tactics that provide new hires with the information, guidance, direction, and social support they need to experience meaningfulness (to feel worthwhile, useful, and valuable), safety (structure that will make the socialization process predictable, consistent, and non-threatening), and availability (resources that are necessary for them to perform their new job and role). Furthermore, individualized socialization tactics are associated with job demands (e.g. role ambiguity and role conflict) that are related to lower levels of engagement.

Also the study recommends that organizations should emphasize on supervisor support to newcomers because supervisors act as agents of the organization, they have direct responsibility for directing, evaluating and supporting their subordinates. According to Levinson (1965) subordinates view supervisor support as a personal extension of the organization. Immediate
Supervisors are typically the closest organizational link to the employee and have the ability to communicate the organization’s intentions directly to their subordinates.

Further, the study recommends that organizations should emphasize on mentoring newcomers this is because mentoring functions into two broad categories known as career functions and psychosocial functions. According to Kram (1985) mentoring enhances learning and prepares newcomers for advancement in an organization and also enhances a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role.

Lastly, the study recommends that organizations should help employees in assessing their career options and plan for career transitions attract increased responsiveness to market changes, lower attrition levels for valued employees and higher levels of employee engagement and productivity.

References


