

FACTORS INFLUENCING CALL CENTER AGENT ATTRITION: A CASE OF KENYA POWER CALL CENTER

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ABSTRACT

Call centres are high-pressure and stressful work environments, characterized by highly routine work, lack of control, intensity of electronic performance monitoring, meeting of performance targets, high turnover, and absenteeism. Unfortunately call centres are experiencing painfully high turnover rates often exceeding 50% annually. The call centre industry in Kenya is relatively new yet it has already been associated with a modern-day sweatshop. Although this industry is large and it continues to grow, it experiences high rates of turnover. High staff turnover can, negatively impact on call centre quality because every time a trained agent leaves; fewer are on hand to ensure an optimum level of service. In spite of the investments made to reduce employee turnover, KPC continue to struggle with higher than average call center work turnover. The purpose of the study was therefore to establish the factors influencing call center agent attrition with focus on Kenya Power call center. The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population for this study was 200 agents, 8 team leaders, 4 supervisors, 8 quality control officers in KPC contact center. Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 141 respondents using Kothari (2004) formula. Primary data was obtained from the agents using self-administered questionnaires. Descriptive statistics analysis was employed. Multiple regression analysis was used to establish the relations between the independent and dependent variables. Tables were used to present the study findings for ease of understanding. The study found that training and development, rewards

management, job characteristics, supervisor support and career growth influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power greatly. The study further concluded that training and development, rewards management, job characteristics, supervisor support and career growth greatly and positively influence call centre agent attrition at Kenya Power. The study also recommends that Kenya Power Call Center human resource pool establishment of additional and necessary infrastructures must be implemented by supporting a right policy which guarantees a friendly business environment and the availability of appropriately skilled labour force including language capability, that government should implement policies that encourage the call center sectors, which are of great value from a socio-economic point of view and provide them with the necessary infrastructure in terms of physical and human capital, that Call centers require supervisors or managers who are both relations focused and task focused as there needs to be a balance between the two. This will prevent high staff burn out and reduce the levels of stress in the call centers. In addition this will make the call center work to be more enjoyable to the agents, and that Call center management should strive more for intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation e.g. through recognition and rewards. Intrinsic motivation has long term effects as compared to extrinsic motivation which has short term effect but is the easiest to achieve where the call center management would gain more by turning over burnt-out staff and investing in programs that targeting morale, commitment and enthusiasm.

Key Words: *call center agent attrition, Kenya Power call center*

INTRODUCTION

The increasing demand for customer-services in a highly competitive business environment has resulted in the increase of call centres globally (Knight, 2012). Call centers are an integral part of most industries today. They play an essential role in today's business world and are often the primary source of contact for customers (Jagasia, Baul & Mallik, 2015). The call centre industry has experienced incredible growth on both sides of the Atlantic, which is set to continue. According to Rakestraw (2014), the Western European call centre market as a whole is expected to grow by 12% annually. In European countries such as the UK more employees work in call centres than in many traditional fields and recent figures estimated that in 2001 2.2 percent of the UK population were working in call centres.

The call centre industry is one of the most rapidly growing in the developed world today (Harvey, Cohendet, Simon & Borzillo, 2015). Call centres are employed in diverse industries, including financial services, insurance, retail, information technology, and telecommunications. Internationally, it is estimated that approximately 3% of the US workforce is employed in call centres, while in the UK, the call centre industry is growing at a reported 50% annually (Call Center News, 2002). In the Asia Pacific, it is predicted that over the next few years, the region will represent an estimated 33% of the total global GDP, making it the fastest growing, emerging market in the world (callcentres.net, 2003). At present, the combined call centre market in the Asia Pacific region is valued at US\$15.6 billion, and is predicted to grow some 15% in the next few years (Poon, 2012).

In Singapore, the matured call centre market is predicted to gross US\$166 million in revenues by 2006 from US\$68 million in 2001, growing at a 21% annual rate during this period (Tang, 2002). It is estimated that 250 organizations operate call centres in Singapore, with the market having approximately 325 call centres operating 10,000 seats (Venieris, 2014). The rapid growth of these call centres, both locally and in the region, can be attributed to the liberalization of the industries, increased call centre outsourcing or offshoring opportunities coming from countries such as Britain and the USA, the development and increased adoption rates of mobile phones and wireless data technology, and the lowering cost of long distance calls due to emerging technologies. As call centres become increasingly important for customer relationship management, call agents will become increasingly critical, as they serve as the link between companies and customers.

Call centres that execute customer care by phone, represent a new form of work organization, which often is designed "from scratch". This might offer a unique opportunity to design jobs according to established principles of job design, creating work that is motivating, and enhances productivity (Caillier, 2013). Typically, however, when new jobs are designed, such principles tend not to play a major role. Rather, work is designed around technical solutions or existing organizational principles, and this may imply unfavourable working conditions for employees (Gardner, 2012). This seems to apply to call centres as well. Of course, one cannot lump together all call centre jobs in an undifferentiated way. Nevertheless, there are

indications that, at present, many call centre agents predominantly carry out tasks that are rather specialized and often simplified (Berkbigler & Dickson, 2013).

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employee turnover rates can surpass more than 75% annually in some industries (Tucker, 2012). Many of these industries facing high turnover rates employ call center workers to support their daily operations and client inquiries. Specifically, the call center profession has been widely recognized for being hampered by low employee job satisfaction, exemplified by high turnover (Whitt, 2006).

Call centre customer service positions have been found to be highly repetitive and "dead-end" jobs (Burnett, 2012). This position is often characterized by low status, poor pay and few career development opportunities (Mou & Wang, 2015). The work of call center agents is very demanding with respect to several aspects. There are lower levels of job control or autonomy, limited task variety, and higher levels of job demand and uncertainty. The employees in call centers are de-motivated to work in such working environments. This also has a negative impact on customer service which is detrimental to the organization's success. Consequently, call centers have great difficulty in retaining staff. They often face high agent turnover rates which are very costly to the organisation. Their corporate reputation is also at stake. Usually, call centers employ thousands of people and high agent turnover rates may also mean high unemployment rate for an economy. This, then, worsens the country's economic and social conditions.

Employee turnover in call centers is a significant issue for these organizations with an annual turnover reportedly ranging from 50% to 300% across industries (LeBreton, Binning, Adorno, & Melcher, 2012), a rate that is considerably higher than the total workforce monthly average of less than 2% (HR Focus, 2008). In other words, it has not been uncommon for two to four different workers to fill a single call center position in a given year. Medium to large-sized organizations, including non-profits, can incur millions of dollars in losses each year due to the threat of high turnover rates. Brophy (2011) report call centre agents turnover rates of 8 – 50%. They found that experienced monotony is one of the most frequent reasons that call agents cite for quitting their job. In line with this, low complexity and variety predicted intention to quit and were negatively related to actual job tenure

Although there are not many studies concerning call centres, supporting evidence is growing. A German study involving 250 call agents from 14 call centres (mostly inbound) found that call agents had poorer working conditions in terms of task variability and complexity and lower job control as well as higher psychosomatic complaints than people in comparable, but more traditional work places (administrative clerks, bank clerks; Isic et al., 1999) controlling for age, sex, and education level. A Swiss study among 242 call agents from 14 call centres (primarily inbound) showed that task variety predicted psychosocial well-being, qualification requirements predicted job satisfaction, and lack of complexity was related to low organizational commitment. Moreover, a recent study by Holman and Wall (2012) found that low job control predicted depression among inbound call agents of a national UK bank in cross-sectional as well as in longitudinal data. Furthermore, in a study among US teleservice

centre representatives, lack of job control was associated with musculoskeletal disorders (Karakostas & Demetriadis, 2014).

On a regional perspective, call centers represent a significant realignment of the customer interface across the entire economy (Hannif & Vo, 2011). Increased growth in service sector in the developing countries elicited call center industry which accentuate emotions of employees in the workplace. The increasing demand for client-services in a highly competitive business environment has resulted in a substantial increase in the number of call centres in many African countries (Carrim, Basson & Coetzee, 2006). Within the call centre industry, turnover intentions have been identified as one of the most pressing problems in terms of cost and productivity. Literature suggests that call centre representatives in South Africa are expressing intentions to leave the industry due to the level of stress and monotony they face on a daily basis. This situation is further aggravated by a lack of opportunities for promotion (Doellgast, 2010). A study conducted by Kgomo and Swarts (2010) showed that 31-51% of call centre representative from a sample consisting of 800 from 16 call centres nationwide in South Africa voiced an intention to leave the industry.

In general call centres in many developing countries are not viewed as pleasant workplaces, they have even been referred to as “electronic sweatshops” (Benner, 2006). It is a well-known assumption that call centre representatives work in a stressful and monotonous environment, where job demands are high. For this reason, concern has been expressed about the possible negative effects that call centre work will have on the well-being of representatives. Holman (2003) identified that having high control over work methods, having a sufficient amount of variety within working methods, having a performance measurement system aiming to develop employees and having a supportive structure, can have positive effects on employee well-being. However, if these aspects are not attended to, it can result in increased turnover rates which then results in recruitment and selection costs, training and development costs as well as a loss in intellectual capital (Dzuba, 2015).

A study conducted by Bhatnagar (2008) found that 60% of people joining the call centre industry in Uganda are expected to leave within the first 6 months. The reasons for leaving were little room for career planning, no or little organizational support, a lack in role clarity and inadequate training. Bhatnagar (2008) suggested that an increase in engagement would help address the poor state of retention.

According to Kimani (2015), turnover is a too much headache for all the managers in the call centers in Kenya because it decreases the costs and marketability of the call centers and increases the cost of training and recruitment and selection of the employees. There are some other costs that face call centers in cause of turnover such as the cost of advertising and maintaining of human resource team, the cost of interviewing and assessments and the cost of training which includes the cost of trainer’s wages and the place or conference which is hired for training.

Kenya Power Company

Kenya Power is a limited liability company in Kenya which transmits, distributes and retails electricity to customers throughout Kenya. It is a national electric utility company, managing electric metering, licensing, billing, and emergency electricity service and customer relations. Historically, the company used to print bills and deliver them to customers home. However, as the number of customers increased an idea of posting the bill to the customer's postal accounts was invented. However, other challenges such as planned power outages change in tariffs and making the payments continued to face the company. The banking halls were congested for customers seeking help from our offices. There was a need to develop a platform where the customer could seek help without visiting the offices in person and also to cut the cost of advertisements on the newspapers.

The main objective was to solve customer complaints such as billing, power outage, new connections queries, and pre-paid services without customers visiting the offices. The second objective was to decongest banking halls and the third objective was for telemarketing. Therefore, all this can be done through phone calls, email and social media that are twitter and Facebook. The contact center is one of the Kenya power sub departments. The contact center is composed of 200 agents, 8 team leaders, 4 supervisors, 8 quality control and a chief officer in charge. In Kenya power strategic plan 2011/2012 to 2015/2016, the first objective is improving delivery of customer service. Kenya power call center was established in 2011 to act a link between the company and its customers and it was launched as a National contact center in June, 2013.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Numerous studies have shown that call centres are high-pressure and stressful work environments, characterized by highly routine work, lack of control, intensity of electronic performance monitoring, meeting of performance targets, high turnover, and absenteeism (Holman, 2003; Ocasio, Lowenstein & Nigam, 2015). Under these working conditions, training call agents is a challenging endeavour. This is compounded by the fact that when call service levels fall below specified targets, allocated time for training and coaching is usually compromised. According to Burgess and Connell (2012), call centre representatives are essentially the only face that clients have an opportunity to interact with, as they are the front line of customer service. It is therefore their role to ensure that current business is maintained as well as to promote new business. But unfortunately call centres are experiencing painfully high turnover rates often exceeding 50% annually (Paulet, 2012). According to 2015 global call Center benchmarking report, all call centers record an average of 37% staff attrition in the first 6 months of service. The call centre industry in Kenya is relatively new yet it has already been associated with a modern day sweatshop (Wagaki, 2015). Although this industry is large and it continues to grow, it experiences high rates of turnover. High staff turnover can, negatively impact on call centre quality because every time a trained agent leaves, fewer are on hand to ensure an optimum level of service. In addition to this, there are heavy costs associated with recruiting, hiring, training and developing new staff – not to mention the

costs associated with the dip in productivity that is inevitable as new recruits battle to get up to speed.

In spite of the investments made to reduce employee turnover, KPC continue to struggle with higher than average call center work turnover. Since the contact center was established at KPC, 14 agents have resigned, 24 agents have sought transfer to other departments and each day we record average three to four absenteeism. Secondly our customer service performance level has remained 72% as compared to that of 85% which is set by the company. With the looming challenge of employee turnover in the KPC call centers, previous studies done locally focused on other sectors: Wanjao (2009) did an investigation of the factors that influence job satisfaction of call center agents in Nairobi province, Kamau (2013) focused on perceived relationship between motivation and job Satisfaction among call centre agents at Safaricom Limited while Nyaga (2014) conducted a study on strategic responses to absenteeism by mobile telephony Call centres within Nairobi. All these studies are of different context and there is none that has attempted to study the factors influencing call center agent attrition at Kenya Power call center.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the study was to establish the factors influence call centre agent attrition at Kenya Power call center.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To determine how training and development influence call centre agent attrition at Kenya Power.
2. To evaluate the extent to which rewards management influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power.
3. To analyze the extent to which job characteristics influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power.
4. To establish the extent to which supervisor support influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power.
5. To determine how career growth influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power.

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

In the economics literature, human capital refers to the productive capabilities of people (Cascio, 2006). Skills, experience, and knowledge have economic value to organizations because they enable it to be productive and adaptable; thus, people constitute the organization's human capital. Like other assets, human capital has value in the market place, but unlike other assets, the potential value of human capital can be fully realized only with the cooperation of the person. Therefore, all costs related to eliciting productive behaviors

from employees-including those related to motivating, monitoring, and retaining them-constitute human capital investments made in anticipation of future returns (Walker 2001).

Organizations can use HRM in a variety of ways to increase their human capital (Cascio 2005). For example, they can "buy" human capital in the market (e.g. by offering desirable compensation packages) or "make" it internally (e.g. by offering extensive training and development opportunities). Investments of either type have associated costs, which are justifiable only to the extent the organization is able to productively utilize the accumulated capital. In human capital theory, contextual factors such as market conditions, unions, business strategies, and technology are important because they can affect the costs associated with alternative approaches to using HRM to increase the value of the organization's human capital and the value of the anticipated returns, such as productivity gains.

RESEARCH GAP

The retention of employees, especially the high performers, is an important issue for organizations (Yamamoto, 2011). For most organizations, the high cost of recruitment and selection, possible hold-ups and productivity loss during the assimilation period, potential loss of business opportunity (Walker, 2001), poor customer relationship (Clarke, 2001), and hidden cost of lost productivity (Dee, 2005) associated with turnover have subsequently heightened the importance of retaining committed employees.

Retaining well motivated staff is vital to the success of an organization. As noted by Granrose and Portwood (2009), the focus of scholarly researchers from the mid-1990s has not only been to determine why employees leave their organizations but also to determine factors which positively influence them to stay as well as benefits associated with retaining valued employees. Therefore the challenge for most organizations today is to formulate effective employee retention strategies that will enable organizations to retain employees they consider critical to the attainment of organizational goals (Kochachathu, 2010). While retaining employees has several benefits, research has shown that turnover or losing critical employees is costly to organizations. Different researchers have identified various costs associated with employee departures in terms of time, money and other resources. Similarly, in a study by Hale (1998), employers cited recruitment costs as 50 to 60 percent of an employee's first year's salary and up to 100 percent for certain specialized positions. Cascio (2006) affirms that the costs associated with recruiting, selecting and training new employees often exceed 100% of the annual salary for the position being filled. Other areas of cost include increases in short-term costs such as the money spent on hiring, personnel reshuffling, training of other employees and decreased production (Yamamoto, 2011).

Call centres are continually introducing improved infrastructures and more advanced technologies as a reaction to the need for bigger, better, faster and even more cost-effective communication. This has manifested into work environments where call length is measured in seconds. It is a disciplined environment where perfectionism can easily demand a perfect call from every call centre representative for every customer they interact with (Hauptfleisch & Uys, 2006). However research has shown that this strategy comes with reports of high

levels of stress and intention to leave the industry (Holdsworth & Cartwright, 2002). Personnel turnover is a crisis for many call centres and it represents a significant disadvantage for organisations that use call centres (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2003).

Research in call centres has shown that a lack in job control, performance monitoring, emotional labour and a lack in team leader support all lead to job stress including depression and even burnout (Bakker, Demerouti & Schaufeli, 2003). Also, social support, coaching and adequate performance feedback can lead to involved and committed employees (Bakker et al., 2003). Overall, there has been a lack of studies completed using call center workers as the focus of factors influencing attrition to answer the research questions posed in this study. Specifically, a lack of research exists regarding factors influencing call center agent attrition with focus on Kenya Power call center.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. A descriptive design is concerned with determining the frequency with which a phenomenon occurs or the relationship between variables (Bryman & Bell, 2011). According to Polit and Beck (2013), in a descriptive study, researchers observe, count, delineate, and classify. They further describe descriptive research studies as studies that have, as their main objective, the accurate portrayal of the characteristics of persons, situations, or groups, and/or the frequency with which certain phenomena occur.

Target Population

Based on the recommendations of Churchill and Iacobucci (2010) in defining the unit of analysis for the study, the target population for this study was 223 agents, 8 team leaders, 4 supervisors, 8 quality control officers in KPC contact center as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Target Population

Department	Total Number	Percentage
Agents	203	91.0
Team leaders	8	3.6
Supervisors	4	1.8
Quality control officers	8	3.6
Total	223	100.0

Source: KPC (2017)

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample population of 141 was arrived at by calculating the target population of 223 with a 95% confidence level and an error of 0.05 using the below formula taken from Kothari (2004).

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot N \cdot \hat{p}^2}{(N - 1)e^2 + z^2 \hat{p}^2}$$

$$n = \frac{z^2 \cdot N \cdot \hat{p}^2}{(N - 1)e^2 + z^2 \hat{p}^2}$$

Where; n = Size of the sample,

N = Size of the population and given as 223,

e = Acceptable error and given as 0.05,

\hat{p} = The standard deviation of the population and given as 0.5 where not known,

Z = Standard variant at a confidence level given as 1.96 at 95% confidence level.

Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Stratified random sampling is unbiased sampling method of grouping heterogeneous population into homogenous subsets then making a selection within the individual subset to ensure representativeness.

Table 2: Sampling Frame

Department	Total Number	Proportion ratio	Sample
Agents	203	0.63	128
Team leaders	8	0.63	5
Supervisors	4	0.63	3
Quality control officers	8	0.63	5
Total	223		141

Data Collection Instruments

Primary data was obtained from the agents using self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire is made up of both open ended and closed ended questions covering issues associated to insurance company performance. The open ended questions was used so as to encourage the respondent to give an in-depth and felt response without feeling held back in illuminating of any information and the closed ended questions allow respondent to respond from limited options that had been stated. In addition, an interview guide was administered to the team leaders, supervisors and quality control officers.

Validity of the Research Instruments

The study used both face and content validity to ascertain the validity of the questionnaires. Content validity draws an inference from test scores to a large domain of items similar to those on the test. Content validity is concerned with sample-population representativeness. Gillham (2008) stated that the knowledge and skills covered by the test items should be representative to the larger domain of knowledge and skills.

Reliability of the Research Instruments

Reliability analysis was subsequently done using Cronbach's Alpha which measures the internal consistency by establishing if certain items within a scale measure the same construct. Trochim (2006) established the Alpha value threshold at 0.7, thus forming the study's benchmark.

Table 3: Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items	Decision
Training and Development	.827	4	Reliable
Rewards Management	.838	5	Reliable
Job Characteristics	.746	7	Reliable
Supervisor Support	.718	8	Reliable
Career Growth	.706	4	Reliable

Cronbach Alpha was established for every objective which formed a scale. The rewards management was the most reliable with an Alpha value of 0.838, followed by training and development with an Alpha value of 0.827 then job characteristics with an Alpha value of 0.746, supervisor support with an Alpha value of 0.718 while career growth was the least reliable with an Alpha value of 0.706. This illustrates that all the five variables were reliable as their reliability values exceeded the prescribed threshold of 0.7 Trochim (2006). This, therefore, depicts that the research instrument was reliable and therefore required no amendments.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introduction letter from the university which was presented to each manager so as to be allowed to collect the necessary data from the respondents. The drop and pick method was preferred for questionnaire administration so as to give respondents enough time to give well thought out responses. Research assistants were trained on interviewing skills including developing rapport, convincing respondents to provide relevant data and seeking clarifications whenever necessary. Research assistants booked appointment with respondent organizations at least two days before visiting to administer questionnaires. The research assistants personally administered the research instruments to the respondents.

Data Analysis

The data collected was assessed and comparison made so as to select the most accurate and quality information from the feedback given by various respondents. This involved assessing and evaluating the questionnaires and other sources of both primary and secondary data. Descriptive statistics analysis was employed to establish the factors influencing call center agent attrition with focus on Kenya Power call center. The quantitative data was coded to enable the responses to be grouped into various categories. The analyzed data was interpreted in terms of averages and standard deviation using assistance of computer packages especially SPSS (version 22). Tables were used to present the study findings for ease of understanding.

Multiple regression analysis was used to establish the relations between the independent and dependent variables. Multiple regression attempts to determine whether a group of variables together predict a given dependent variable (Babbie, 2012). Since there were five independent variables in this study the multiple regression models generally assumed the following equation;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y= Call Center Agent Turn Over/Attrition

β_0 =constant

X₁= Training and Development; X₂= Rewards Management; X₃= Job Characteristics

X₄= Supervisor Support; X₅= Career Growth; ϵ =Error Term

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Regression Analysis

Using multiple regression analysis was used to test the relationship between the variables where it shows how the dependent variable is influenced by the independent variables.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.826	0.682	0.666	0.329

The model tests whether the model is fit for data. From the table 4, the independent variables were statistically significant predicting the dependent variable since adjusted R square was 0.666 implying that training and development, rewards management, job characteristics, supervisor support and career growth explains 66.6% variation in call center agent turnover/attrition.

Table 5: ANOVA Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.64	5	4.728	42.050	0.000
	Residual	11.019	98	0.112		
	Total	34.659	103			

The probability value of 0.000 indicates that the regression relationship was significant in determining how training and development, rewards management, job characteristics, supervisor support and career growth influence call center agent turnover/attrition. The F calculated at 5 percent level of significance was 42.05. Since F calculated is greater than the F critical (value = 2.26), this shows that the overall model was significant. The established model for the study was:

$$Y = 3.345 + 0.684X_1 + 0.586X_2 + 0.735X_3 + 0.774X_4 + 0.864X_5 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y= Call Center Agent Turn Over/Attrition

β_0 =constant

- X₁= Training and Development
- X₂= Rewards Management
- X₃= Job Characteristics
- X₄= Supervisor Support
- X₅= Career Growth

Table 6: Coefficients of Determination

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.345	0.182		18.379	0.000
Training and Development	0.684	0.196	0.584	3.490	0.000
Rewards Management	0.586	0.289	0.539	2.028	0.040
Job Characteristics	0.735	0.248	0.562	2.964	0.003
Supervisor Support	0.774	0.312	0.572	2.481	0.015
Career Growth	0.864	0.234	0.686	3.692	0.000

The regression equation above has established that taking (training and development, rewards management, job characteristics, supervisor support and career growth), call center agent turnover/ attrition will be 3. 345. The findings presented also show that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in the training and development would lead to a 0.684 increase in the score of call center agent turnover/ attrition. Further it was found that a unit increase in the scores of rewards managements would lead to a 0.586 increase in the scores of call center agent turnover/ attrition.

Further, the findings show that a unit increases in the scores of job characteristics would lead to a 0.735 increase in the scores of call center agent turnover/ attrition and a unit increases in the scores of supervisor support would lead to a 0.774 increase in the scores of call center agent turnover/ attrition. The study also found that a unit increase in the scores of career growth would lead to a 0.864 increase in the scores of call center agent turnover/ attrition. Overall, All the variables were thus significant with their p- values less than 0.05.

DISCUSSION

Training and Development

The study sought to determine how training and development influence call centre agent attrition at Kenya Power. The study found that training and development influence call center agent turnover/ attrition greatly. The study also revealed that seminars greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition and that on job training greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. These are in agreement with Yazinski (1987) who argue that many changing business environment necessitates that organizations should spend on training of employees to enhance organizational ability to positively respond to the dynamic environment.

The study further indicated that workshops moderately influence call center agent turnover/ attrition and that exchange programs moderately influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. This conforms to Clark (2011) who said that organizations are intensification development for talented employees, through proficiency analysis, input on employee interests, need development and multisource appraisal of capabilities and formulate plans for action.

Rewards Management

The study further sought to evaluate the extent to which rewards management influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power and showed that greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. The study also found that that basic pay as illustrated by an average of 4.1827 and bonuses greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. This is in agreement with Yazinski (1987) who claim that many organizations rewards are differentiated on the basis of status (rather than contribution) and, often, the only way an individual can increase his or her pay is to get promoted.

The study also found that allowances and insurance cover greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. Further the study found that retirement benefits lightly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. These findings are similar to Bowen and Ostroff (2008) who asserts that the aim of reward management is to support the attainment of the organisation strategic and short term objectives by helping to ensure it has skilled, competent, committed, and well-motivated work force it needs.

Job Characteristics

The study also sought to analyse the extent to which job characteristics influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power and found that it influences call center agent turnover/ attrition greatly. The study also revealed that decision making autonomy and quality of work life greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. This is in line with Sonnentag and Frese (2003) who claim that positive relationships of job complexity and variety with well-being and job-related attitudes have been reported both in the literature on stress at work in general.

The study also showed that uncertainty in terms of role ambiguity, monotonous work/job variety and time pressure greatly influence calls center agent turnover/ attrition. This concur with Isic et al (1999) who found that controlling for age, sex, and educational level, rather high levels of time pressure, concentration demands, and uncertainty among call agents, and two of those were significantly higher among call agents than among administrative clerks; the task-related stressors of bank clerks were, however, comparable to those of the call agents.

Further the study revealed that work scheduling and burnout stress syndrome lightly influence calls center agent turnover/ attrition. This is in line with Jain and Singh (2010) who argue that job burnout incidence rates among call centre representatives are extensively high.

Supervisor Support

The study further intended to establish the extent to which supervisor support influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power and found that it influences call center agent turnover/ attrition greatly. The study also found that negative group climate influence call center agent turnover/ attrition very greatly. These findings are in line with Huselid (2011) who notes that supervisors who are indecisive or who use criticism as a management technique can prompt employee resignations.

The study also revealed that feedback from others, job orientation and social support greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. Once employed, new recruits should have a good induction and socialization experience. These findings are in agreement with Robbins and Coulter (2014) who argue that once employed, new recruits should have a good induction and socialization experience which involves meeting with other employees, understanding the structure of the company, what the different employees are responsible for, how they are expected to interact with employees in other departments, who to go to for help, how to use the office IT and telephone systems

The study also established that conflicts with supervisors and socialization greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. This concur with Kilonzi (2013) who claim that suggested that it's also a good idea to place new employees in work groups with positive attitudes.

The study also found that that feedback from job moderately influence call center agent turnover/ attrition while unfair treatment lightly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. These are in line with Thang and Buyens (2014) who said that one of the major reasons that would course an employee to leave am employment is the feeling of being contract agreement.

Career Growth

The study sought to determine how career growth influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power and found that it greatly influences call center agent turnover/ attrition. This correspond to Schaufeli, Taris and Van Rhenen (2008) who argue that employers who look for creative ways to encourage and motivate valued employees, such as appointing them as team leaders or asking them to manage a new project, might be more likely to retain employees. The study also found that that mentoring systems and job promotion greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. This is in agreement with Greller (2013) who said that when employees want to advance in their careers, a motivational factor, it does not matter how old one is, a lot of stay in the organization as a way to advance.

The findings also show that skills development and education advancement greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. This corresponds to Bowen and Ostroff (2012) who argue that plan of action prepares employees for the future and preserves an organization's ability to meet both existing and future needs.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that training and development greatly and positively influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power. The study deduced that seminars greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition and that on job training greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. The study further deduced that workshops moderately influence call center agent turnover/ attrition and that exchange programs moderately influence call center agent turnover/ attrition.

The study also concluded that rewards management influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power greatly and significantly. The study deduced that that basic pay and bonuses greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. The study also deduced that allowances and insurance cover greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition.

The study concluded that job characteristics influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power greatly and significantly. The study deduced that decision making autonomy and quality of work life greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. The study also deduced that uncertainty in terms of role ambiguity, monotonous work/job variety and time pressure greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition.

The study further concluded that supervisor support influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power positively and greatly. The study deduced that negative group climate influence call center agent turnover/ attrition very greatly. The study also deduced that feedback from others, job orientation and social support greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. The study also deduced that that feedback from job moderately influence call center agent turnover/ attrition while unfair treatment lightly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition.

The study concluded that career growth positively, significantly and greatly influence call center agent attrition at Kenya Power. The study deduced that that mentoring systems and job promotion greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition. The also deduced that skills development and education advancement greatly influence call center agent turnover/ attrition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommend Kenya Power Call Center human resource pool establishment of additional and necessary infrastructures must be implemented by supporting a right policy which guarantees a friendly business environment and the availability of appropriately skilled labour force including language capability.

The study also recommends that the government should implement policies that encourage the call center sectors, which are of great value from a socio-economic point of view and provide them with the necessary infrastructure in terms of physical and human capital.

The study also recommends that call centers need to have job rotation to break the monotony of the current highly routine job structures at the call centers. The management should

redesign the work to make it more interesting and challenging e.g. by involving agents in the recruitment of fellow call center agents, or by involving them in projects in the call centers on a rotational basis. This will enable the agents to acquire more knowledge and skills that will help them to build their careers. In addition call center work should stop appearing as an entry level job into the job market.

The studies recommend that work colleagues in different departments should appreciate and value the work of the agents. The call center management can promote this by recognising and rewarding the efforts of call center work and promoting a spirit of customer service in the organisation. It would also be good to change the title of the agents to sound as more meaningful e.g. "Support Executives".

The study suggests that the Call centers should have a clear care path and growth with clear promotion policies. The management can look for ways of rewarding loyal agents by creating different groups of call center agent's e.g senior call centre agent etc. The call centers should also invest more on career development training and coaching and create other senior positions in the call centers.

The study further suggest that Call center management should strive more for intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic motivation e.g. through recognition and rewards. Intrinsic motivation has long term effects as compared to extrinsic motivation which has short term effect but is the easiest to achieve. The call center management would gain more by turning over burnt-out staff and investing in programs that targeting morale, commitment and enthusiasm.

The study finally suggest that Call centers require supervisors or managers who are both relations focused and task focused as there needs to be a balance between the two. This will prevent high staff bum out and reduce the levels of stress in the call centers. In addition this will make the call center work to be more enjoyable to the agents.

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