

**HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE  
ENGAGEMENT IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

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**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (HUMAN RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT)**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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## DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been previously published or submitted elsewhere for award of a degree. I also declare that this contains no material written or published by other people except where due reference is made and author duly acknowledged.

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Date: \_\_25.08.2025\_\_

I do hereby confirm that I have examined the master's Project  
and have approved it for examination.

  
Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_26.08.2025\_\_

Dissertation Supervisor

# **HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the impact of Human Capital Management (HCM) practices on employee engagement within private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. It focuses on five key HCM dimensions: recruitment processes, performance appraisal, work-life balance, career management, and reward management. Grounded in the Human Capital Theory, Social Exchange Theory, and Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, the research highlights the significance of investing in employee development, reciprocal employer-employee relationships, and balancing job demands with resources to enhance engagement. The study targeted 930 academic and administrative staff across three selected private universities—KCA University, Kenya Methodist University, and Mount Kenya University. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, pilot-tested for reliability and validity, while secondary data were sourced from relevant academic literature. A stratified random sample of 280 respondents was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses were conducted to determine the relationships between HCM practices and employee engagement. Results revealed that recruitment practices ( $\beta = 0.237$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), work-life balance ( $\beta = 0.116$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), reward management ( $\beta = 0.492$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), and performance appraisal ( $\beta = 0.281$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) all significantly enhanced employee engagement. Recruitment strategies aligning candidate values with institutional culture fostered belonging and engagement, while effective performance appraisal systems emphasizing feedback and goal setting improved motivation and morale. Additionally, organizations that promoted career development and work-life balance reported higher employee commitment and engagement levels. The study concludes that private universities should make recruitment decisions based on competency, adopt diverse performance evaluation methods, provide regular feedback, support career development, and implement flexible work arrangements. Such comprehensive HCM strategies can significantly strengthen employee engagement, leading to improved institutional performance and competitive advantage.

**Key words:** Human Capital Management (HCM); Employee Engagement; Recruitment Practices; Performance Appraisal; Reward Management; Career Development; Work-Life Balance; Human Capital Theory; Social Exchange Theory; Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model; Private Universities; Nairobi, Kenya; Organizational Performance; Employee Productivity; Higher Education Management.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated, first and foremost, to the Almighty God, whose grace, wisdom, and strength have sustained me throughout this academic journey.

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

|                   |                                             |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <b>HCM</b>        | Human Capital Management                    |
| <b>HCMPs</b>      | Human Capital Management Practices          |
| <b>SPSS</b>       | Statistical Package for Social Sciences     |
| <b>CUE</b>        | Commission for University Education         |
| <b>KCAU</b>       | KCA University                              |
| <b>KEMU</b>       | Kenya Methodist University                  |
| <b>MKU</b>        | Mount Kenya University                      |
| <b>SET</b>        | Social Exchange Theory                      |
| <b>JD-R Model</b> | Job Demands-Resources Model                 |
| <b>HR</b>         | Human Resources                             |
| <b>EES</b>        | Employee Engagement Scale                   |
| <b>IRB</b>        | Institutional Review Board                  |
| <b>SPSS</b>       | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| <b>VIF</b>        | Variance Inflation Factor                   |
| <b>Q-Q Plot</b>   | Quantile-Quantile Plot                      |

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

### Human Capital

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Management Practices</b>      | It encompass the specific strategies and methods employed by organizations to effectively manage their human resources, including recruitment, training, performance management, and retention (Noe et al., 2019).                                                                                           |
| <b>Emotional Engagement</b>      | It is the emotional attachment that employees have to their jobs and organizations, which is characterized by feelings of passion, enthusiasm, and dedication. (Yalabik et al., 2017, Habiballah, 2021).                                                                                                     |
| <b>Rational Engagement</b>       | It refers to the cognitive recognition by employees of their Hrole's importance and alignment with organizational goals. It involves understanding how their contributions add value, cultivating an attitude of purpose and dedication to organizational success (Bailey et al., 2017; Shuck et al., 2017). |
| <b>Organizational commitment</b> | is the emotional attachment, identification, and involvement that an employee has with their organization, often leading to a desire to remain part of the organization (Allen, 2020).                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Motivation</b>                | Internal processes that originate, guide, and sustain goal-directed behavior, influencing employees' effort and perseverance at work (Ryan & Deci, 2017).                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Turnover Intention</b>        | The likelihood that an employee will leave their current position within a certain timeframe, influenced by factors such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Apriliyandari & Herachwati, 2023).                                                                                               |

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter builds out the foundation for the study by providing background information on the research problem, the problem statement, and the objectives that will guide the investigation. It also discusses the significance, research questions, scope, and limitations of the research. The discussion is designed to provide a clear understanding of the context and rationale for investigating the impact of Human Capital Management (HCM) practices on employee engagement at private colleges in Nairobi, Kenya. This chapter establishes the research background and defines the subject under inquiry, laying the groundwork for the thesis's succeeding sections on methodology, data analysis, and findings interpretation.

### 1.1 Background of the study

Human Capital Management (HCM) is a strategic framework that integrates practices such as structured recruitment, performance appraisal, career development, and reward systems to optimize employee performance (Veselinović et al., 2022). This framework is especially critical in knowledge-intensive sectors such as higher education, where institutional success depends on effectively leveraging employees' skills, expertise, and abilities (Udokwu et al., 2023).

The roots of the human capital concept trace back to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776), where he highlighted the economic value of individuals' skills and knowledge. The concept was further advanced by Theodore Schultz (1961), who conceptualized education and training as key investments; Gary Becker (1964), who systematically analyzed the economic returns of education; and Jacob Mincer (1974),

who empirically linked schooling, work experience, and earnings. Collectively, these scholars laid the foundation of Human Capital Theory, shaping its modern application.

In recent decades, HCM has evolved into a strategic driver for higher education institutions, influencing teaching quality, research productivity, student satisfaction, and institutional reputation (Allen, 2020). However, universities and colleges continue to face challenges such as rapid technological change, increasing demands for quality education, and persistent financial constraints. The effective implementation of HCM strategies is imperative for the long-term success and sustainability of competitiveness, as a result of these realities (Goldin, 2024).

In higher education, context-specific HCM practices are required to meet sectoral needs and adapt to evolving demands (Katou, 2017; Noe et al., 2020). In Africa, universities contend with unique challenges such as limited resources, diverse workforce needs, and dynamic educational landscapes. Studies in Zimbabwe and Ghana demonstrate that structured recruitment, performance management, career development, and performance-based rewards significantly enhance employee engagement in universities (Agyemang & Ofei, 2013). These results emphasize the significance of tailored HCM practices to address the specific challenges faced by African higher education institutions.

In Kenya, particularly in private universities in Nairobi, strategic HCM practices play a pivotal role in improving employee satisfaction, commitment, and institutional performance (Waithaka, 2023). Research indicates that structured recruitment processes, systematic performance appraisals, career growth opportunities, and performance-based rewards are critical drivers of employee motivation and retention in Nairobi's higher education sector (Mwandagha, 2023).

This study examines three private universities in Nairobi KCA University, Kenya Methodist University (KEMU), and Mount Kenya University (MKU) focusing on both academic and non-academic staff. By investigating the impact of structured recruitment, performance appraisal, career development, and reward management on employee engagement, the study aims to offer a comprehensive comprehension of how these HCM practices influence staff motivation and commitment. By capturing diverse employee experiences, this research offers holistic insights into optimizing HCM strategies within private universities in Nairobi.

### **1.1.1 Human Capital Management Practices**

Human Capital Management Practices (HCMPs) are structured strategies designed to manage human resources effectively to optimize performance, foster organizational commitment, and enhance productivity (Leontes et al., 2024). In private universities, HCMPs are critical in attracting, developing, and retaining skilled employees, which directly impacts teaching quality, research output, and institutional success (Alfes et al., 2016).

The effectiveness of HCMPs is shaped by organizational culture, leadership styles, and resource availability. Institutions that adopt structured recruitment processes, performance appraisals, career development initiatives, and performance-based rewards experience higher employee engagement and retention (Giauque et al., 2013). Conversely, universities lacking robust performance management systems or equitable reward structures often face high turnover and low employee morale.

This study emphasizes four key HCMPs structured recruitment, structured performance appraisal, work-life balance in career growth, and performance-based rewards management as fundamental in shaping employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. Structured recruitment ensures alignment between institutional

goals and employees' values, fostering long-term commitment. Performance appraisals provide clarity, regular feedback, and opportunities for growth, which sustain employee motivation and productivity (Taylor, 2014).

Career growth opportunities that promote work-life balance, such as mentorship, coaching, and professional advancement programs, create motivating environments that enhance retention (Giauque et al., 2013). Similarly, transparent and fair performance-based rewards, including competitive compensation, recognition programs, and intrinsic incentives, strengthen motivation and trust, reducing turnover (Alfes et al., 2013).

By examining these practices, the study aims to offer practical insights for optimizing HCMPs in private universities, thereby enhancing employee engagement and improving institutional performance in teaching, research, and sustainability.

### **1.1.2 Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is a critical outcome of Human Capital Management Practices (HCMPs), reflecting the emotional and intellectual commitment of employees to their organization. It is shaped by various factors, including structured recruitment processes, structured performance appraisals, work-life balance in career growth, and performance-based rewards management. In this study, employee engagement is examined as the dependent variable, highlighting the effectiveness of these HCMPs in cultivating an inspired, committed, and productive workforce within private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

Employee engagement is a multidimensional concept encompassing psychological, emotional, and behavioral aspects of the employee-organization relationship. It extends beyond job satisfaction or organizational commitment to embody a deep sense of purpose, enthusiasm, and active involvement in one's work. Benefits to the

organization like higher morale, lower turnover, and increased production are facilitated by high levels of involvement. (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Recruitment strategies play a foundational role in establishing engagement by aligning employees' values with institutional goals. Structured recruitment processes that prioritize cultural fit and goal alignment create a strong foundation for long-term commitment and job satisfaction (Supardi et al., 2024). Additionally, work-life balance in career growth significantly enhances engagement by ensuring that employees can develop professionally while maintaining a healthy work-life dynamic, thereby fostering increased drive and contentment at work (Karatepe & Olugbade, 2017).

Performance management also plays a crucial role in sustaining engagement. Structured performance appraisal systems that provide clear expectations, continuous feedback, and recognition help align individual performance with institutional objectives, reinforcing a sense of purpose and accountability among employees (Gupta & Sharma, 2021). Furthermore, performance-based rewards management is essential in maintaining employee morale and reducing turnover. Reward systems that integrate financial and non-financial incentives, including competitive compensation and recognition programs, strengthen employee motivation and commitment to their roles (Islam, 2025). Employees are considerably more inclined to remain engaged and dedicated to their organizations when they perceive that their contributions are acknowledged and compensated.

Organizational culture and leadership styles also have a profound effect on engagement. Transformational leadership inspires and motivates workers, creating an atmosphere that is favorable to involvement. while a positive and inclusive culture that fosters trust, collaboration, and open communication enhances employees' sense of belonging. (Vijai, 2025). Within private universities in Nairobi, where challenges such

as resource constraints and competition for skilled staff persist, enhancing employee engagement through effective HCMPs is essential for institutional success (Ngunjiri & Maringe, 2021). Employee engagement is an ongoing process influenced by interactions within the work environment, requiring private universities to continuously adapt their HCMPs to maintain it (Albrecht, Breidahl, & Marty, 2018).

This investigation implemented an exhaustive methodology for quantifying employee engagement, which involved the evaluation of critical variables, including motivation, attrition intention, organizational dedication and work satisfaction, and willingness to contribute. Job satisfaction reflects employees' contentment with their roles, working conditions, and career growth opportunities, directly influencing their motivation and engagement levels (Memon et al., 2020). Organizational commitment, which measures the emotional attachment employees have toward their institution, is a critical indicator of engagement, as highly engaged employees demonstrate greater loyalty and a strong desire to contribute to the success of their organization (Gillet et al., 2020). Intrinsic motivation, which reflects employees' internal drive to perform their roles with enthusiasm and dedication, is another essential component, as motivated employees often exceed their formal job requirements, driving productivity and innovation (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2023).

Turnover intention serves as an important engagement indicator, reflecting employees' likelihood of leaving the institution. A low turnover intention signals strong engagement and effective HCMPs in retaining skilled talent, which is crucial for sustaining institutional performance (Qazi et al., 2022). Additionally, willingness to contribute captures employees' readiness to go beyond their defined responsibilities to support institutional goals, further demonstrating their level of engagement and commitment. Commitment was measured by assessing employees' emotional

attachment to their institution, while job satisfaction was examined through questions on work environment, peer relationships, and managerial support (Anitha & Aruna, 2016).

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of employee engagement within private universities in Nairobi. The findings offered useful suggestions for enhancing human capital management practices, ultimately enhancing teaching quality, research output, and overall institutional performance (Bedarkar & Pandita, 2020).

### **1.1.3 Private Universities in Kenya**

Kenya's higher education landscape comprises a mix of public and private universities, offering a diverse range of programs and degrees. As of recent counts, there are approximately 74 universities in Kenya, including both public and private institutions. Public universities are generally supported by the government and serve a considerable section of the student population, offering accessible education across numerous disciplines. (Commission for University Education [CUE], 2022). In contrast, private universities are independently funded and often offer more specialized programs, flexible study options, and are sometimes seen as providing higher quality education due to smaller class sizes and more personalized attention (Mutisya & Kikuvu, 2019).

Private universities in Kenya have grown significantly in number and reputation, particularly in reply to the growing need for higher education that public universities alone cannot meet. They offer an alternative for students seeking specific academic programs or a different educational environment (Kim et al., 2017). As of present, Kenya has around 30 chartered private universities that have been accredited by the Commission for University Education (CUE), the regulatory agency in charge of assuring the quality and standards of the country's higher education institutions. There

are approximately 13 private universities located in Nairobi (CUE, 2023). This concentration reflects the city's role as a central point for higher education and its attractiveness for both local and international students. These universities offer diverse programs that cater to different academic and professional needs, contributing to the overall educational and socio-economic development of the country (Nganga & Mugo, 2019). These universities are known for offering a wide range of programs, including business, technology, health sciences, and the arts. They attract students who are looking for flexible schedules, innovative teaching methods, and environments that often foster close-knit academic communities (Mutisya & Kikuvi, 2019).

The selected universities for this study, represent a microcosm of Nairobi's vibrant private university sector. They are chosen not just for their varied academic offerings but also for their established presence and reputation in providing quality education. These institutions play an important role in meeting the educational needs of Nairobi's rising population and in developing qualified professionals in the region.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Universities play a vital role in societal development through education, research, and innovation, contributing significantly to human capital development (Salmi, 2017). Employee engagement is essential in this context, as it directly affects productivity, institutional effectiveness, and academic performance. Engaged employees exhibit higher commitment, motivation, and alignment with institutional goals, fostering a positive learning environment. However, despite its importance, many private universities in Nairobi face persistent challenges, including disengagement, high turnover rates, and difficulties in sustaining staff motivation (Ndung'u et al., 2019).

Research shows that effective HCMPs like recruitment, development, performance management, and rewards enhance employee engagement by fostering a supportive work environment (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Social exchange theory suggests that employees who perceive organizational support are more likely to reciprocate with increased dedication and effort (Saks, 2006). However, private universities in Kenya continue to struggle with challenges such as unstructured hiring, inadequate career development opportunities, and ineffective performance evaluation systems, leading to job dissatisfaction and reduced commitment (Rubera et al., 2022).

Studies have explored various aspects of HCMPs in university settings. For instance, Njuguna et al. (2015) found that structured training programs and equitable reward systems significantly enhance job satisfaction at the Technical University of Kenya. Similarly, Morara (2017) highlighted the role of strategic HCMPs in achieving institutional goals at Daystar University, emphasizing the need for HCMPs strategies aligned with organizational objectives. Kariuki (2015) also demonstrated that job design factors, such as skill variety and task identity, positively influence employee engagement at the Presbyterian University of East Africa.

Despite these insights, limited research has specifically examined how HCMPs influence employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. Existing studies focus on individual HCMPs components rather than a holistic framework encompassing recruitment, performance management, career development, and reward systems (Mutua & Wanjiku, 2024). This study aims to address the existing gap, as no prior research has comprehensively examined Human Capital Management Practices (HCMPs) as a framework for understanding employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. In this way, it provides empirical evidence and practical

recommendations for policymakers and university administrators to enhance staff motivation, commitment, and institutional effectiveness.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The overall goal of this study was to investigate the impact of HCM practices on employee engagement at private colleges in Nairobi, Kenya. The precise aims were as follows.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To establish the effect of recruitment processes on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.
- ii. To determine the effect of performance appraisal practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.
- iii. To establish the effect of work-life balance career management practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.
- iv. To find out the effect of reward management practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

### **1.4 Hypotheses**

#### **1.4.1 General Hypothesis:**

H<sub>0</sub>: HCM practices have no significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Hypotheses:**

H<sub>01</sub>: Recruitment processes have no significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

H<sub>02</sub>: Performance appraisal practices have no significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

H<sub>03</sub>: Work-life balance career management practices have no significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

H<sub>04</sub>: Reward management practices have no significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The information in this report is important to various major stakeholders in the higher education industry. University administrators may benefit from insights that might assist them improve staff engagement methods, hence boosting overall institutional performance. Human resource experts can use the data to create specialized human capital management approaches that address the specific difficulties that private colleges confront. Faculty and staff might experience direct benefits from improved engagement initiatives, leading to enhanced job satisfaction, morale, and productivity.

Additionally, policy makers in government and educational sectors can gain valuable data to inform policies that promote better working conditions and employee engagement within the education sector. The study might also contribute to the academic literature on employee engagement and human capital management, establishing a basis for future research. Ultimately, students might benefit from improved employee engagement, which can lead to better teaching quality and enhanced learning experiences, thereby improving educational outcomes. This research aimed to bridge the gap in empirical studies on employee engagement in private universities, contributing to both theory and practice in human capital management.

### **1.5.1 Private Universities in Nairobi**

Private universities in Nairobi face unique challenges, including limited financial resources and high competition for qualified staff (Otieno, 2018). Effective HCM practices, such as structured recruitment, career development, and performance management, are crucial for attracting, developing, and retaining top talent. This study offers university administrators evidence-based strategies to enhance employee engagement, thereby improving institutional effectiveness and student outcomes.

### **1.5.2 Policy Makers**

Government and education sector policymakers can leverage the study's findings to inform policies that promote better working conditions and employee engagement within private universities. By understanding the challenges and best practices in HCM, policymakers can design interventions that support workforce stability and enhance the quality of higher education in Kenya.

### **1.5.3 Researchers**

This study may add to the expanding corpus of scholarly work on human capital management and employee engagement, especially in the context of developing nations. It might bridge the existing empirical and theoretical gaps by offering fresh insights about how HCM practices influence employee engagement in private universities. Future researchers can build upon this work to explore additional dimensions of employee motivation and institutional effectiveness.

## **1.6 Justification of the study**

This study is justified by the critical role of employee engagement in enhancing the overall performance and sustainability of higher education institutions. Employee

engagement is directly linked to improved institutional reputation, student success, and innovation (Shuck & Reio, 2014). Despite the recognized importance of effective Human Capital Management (HCM) practices in fostering employee engagement, there is a significant gap in research focusing specifically on private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. These institutions face unique challenges, including resource constraints and intense competition for qualified personnel, which are not adequately addressed in existing literature (Kiiru & Muathe, 2020). Additionally, studies indicate that inadequate HCM practices lead to high turnover rates and low morale among staff, further undermining educational quality (Nganga & Mugo, 2019). By concentrating on the specific HCM practices of recruitment, performance management, career management, and reward management, this study aims to provide empirical insights that can inform tailored strategies to improve employee engagement and institutional performance (Kiiru & Muathe, 2020). Thus, this research is essential for developing practical solutions to enhance workforce commitment and operational effectiveness in Nairobi's private universities, ultimately contributing to the broader academic discourse on HCM in higher education (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

This study examined the effect of HCM practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. It focuses on 13 private universities in Nairobi, out of which 3 universities were used as a representative sample, 165 Staff (Faculty and Administrative staff) were sampled and questionnaires administered to them. The thematic scope includes recruitment, training and development, performance management, and Reward management, all critical for influencing employee engagement.

The study collected data over six months using questionnaires, allowing for statistical analysis and in-depth insights from faculty and administrative staff (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). This approach ensures that findings are specific to the local context and generalizable to similar settings in other regions.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews existing scholarly work relevant to the study and provides the theoretical and empirical foundation upon which the research is built. It synthesizes literature on Human Capital Management (HCM) practices and employee engagement, examining both global and local perspectives. The chapter is organized around key themes derived from the study objectives, including recruitment, performance management, career development, and reward management, and their influence on employee engagement. It further discusses conceptual models that guide the study and identifies gaps in previous research that justify the need for this investigation. By critically analyzing existing studies, this chapter establishes the context within which the study is situated and highlights how it contributes to advancing knowledge in the field

#### **2.2 Literature Review**

Human capital management (HCM) is increasingly recognized as a critical driver of organizational success, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors such as higher education. Effective HCM practices can significantly enhance employee engagement, which in turn boosts productivity, innovation, and overall organizational performance. This study of the literature investigates the connection between HCM practices and employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. It examines various dimensions of HCM, including recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, and reward strategies, supported by relevant theoretical frameworks and empirical studies.

## **2.3 Theoretical Review**

This section explores three foundational theories that underpin the relationship between Human Capital Management (HCM) practices and employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. The theories Human Capital Theory (HCT), Social Exchange Theory (SET), and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model jointly explain how investments in people, perceptions of fairness, and workplace resources interact to shape engagement outcomes. They provide a comprehensive framework linking HCM practices such as recruitment, performance appraisal, reward management, and work-life balance to the multidimensional aspects of employee engagement cognitive, emotional, and behavioral.

### **2.3.1 Human Capital Theory**

Human Capital Theory was initially introduced by Schultz (1961) and later expanded by Becker (1993). The theory posits that employees' skills, knowledge, and competencies are valuable resources that can be developed through education, training, and experience. According to the theory, investment in human capital leads to higher productivity, improved performance, and sustainable competitive advantage.

In the context of private universities in Nairobi, the theory suggests that institutions that invest in staff development through structured training programs, mentoring, and continuous professional education foster higher levels of engagement, satisfaction, and commitment (Schultz, 1961). Professional development and career management initiatives serve not only to enhance employee competencies but also to demonstrate institutional commitment to individual growth, which in turn fosters emotional attachment and loyalty among staff (McDonald & Hite, 2023).

When employees perceive that their organizations value their development, they become more committed to institutional goals and display stronger engagement at cognitive and behavioral levels (Kwon & Rupp, 2013). Similarly, employees who experience continuous professional support exhibit greater job satisfaction and motivation, reinforcing their willingness to contribute effectively to organizational success (Noe et al., 2020).

However, Human Capital Theory assumes a direct and linear relationship between investment in training and improved engagement, which may not always hold true in practice. In many Kenyan private universities, inadequate funding, inconsistent training policies, and limited leadership support may weaken the link between human capital investment and engagement outcomes. The theory also focuses primarily on the cognitive aspect of engagement, paying limited attention to emotional or behavioral engagement.

Despite these limitations, Human Capital Theory remains relevant in highlighting the significance of career management and continuous learning in fostering a skilled and motivated workforce. When universities strategically invest in faculty and administrative staff development, they enhance retention and job satisfaction while promoting institutional effectiveness (Schultz, 2019). This demonstrates that human capital investment, when combined with supportive leadership and an engaging organizational culture, can serve as a strong driver of employee engagement.

### **2.3.2 Social Exchange Theory**

Social Exchange Theory (SET), developed by Blau (1964), provides a behavioral framework for understanding how mutual exchanges between employers and employees influence engagement levels. The theory posits that individuals engage in

relationships based on reciprocity, where favorable treatment by an organization encourages employees to respond with commitment, loyalty, and effort (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

In the context of private universities in Nairobi, SET explains how recruitment and reward management practices affect engagement. Transparent and fair recruitment processes foster trust and psychological attachment, as employees perceive that their institution values fairness and equality (Chapman & Mayers, 2015). Similarly, equitable reward systems enhance employees' sense of worth and recognition, encouraging them to demonstrate higher levels of cognitive focus, emotional enthusiasm, and behavioral dedication in their work (Caesens, Stinglhamber, & Ohana, 2016).

Fair treatment in selection and promotion processes also motivates employees to reciprocate with higher levels of commitment and lower turnover intentions (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005). This reciprocal relationship builds a positive organizational climate, strengthening both individual and institutional performance.

Nevertheless, the theory has limitations when applied to the Kenyan private university setting. It assumes that both parties have equal capacity to reciprocate, overlooking contextual challenges such as low pay, limited advancement opportunities, and rigid hierarchies that may inhibit equitable exchange. Furthermore, SET does not account for mediating variables such as job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation, which can influence how employees perceive and respond to organizational support.

Incorporating moderators such as leadership style and organizational culture is also essential. Supportive leadership enhances the reciprocity dynamic, while toxic or authoritarian leadership can erode trust, weakening engagement. Despite these limitations, SET remains a valuable framework for understanding how fairness,

transparency, and recognition foster emotional and behavioral engagement in private universities.

### **2.3.3 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model**

The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model was proposed by Demerouti et al. (2001). The model classifies job characteristics into two dimensions: job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to aspects of work that require sustained effort and may lead to strain, while job resources are physical, social, or organizational factors that help achieve work goals, reduce job demands, and promote personal growth (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

In the private university context, the JD-R Model explains how performance appraisal, reward management, and work-life balance practices influence engagement. Structured appraisal systems, constructive feedback, and recognition programs serve as job resources that enhance motivation and psychological well-being, while excessive workload, poor management, and lack of support function as job demands that lead to stress and disengagement (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014).

Effective performance appraisal practices, such as Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scales (BARS), Management by Objectives (MBO), and 360-degree feedback, create clarity and direction, improving cognitive engagement and motivation among academic staff (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Recognition programs and supportive supervision further contribute to emotional and behavioral engagement by making employees feel valued and appreciated.

However, in the absence of adequate job resources such as clear feedback, fair evaluation, and supportive leadership employees may experience exhaustion and disengagement (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). In many private universities, where staff

face high workloads and limited resources, leadership style and organizational culture act as crucial moderators determining how employees perceive job demands and available resources.

The JD-R Model is comprehensive but often generalized, offering limited insight into how contextual factors like institutional policies, leadership practices, or cultural values affect engagement. Nonetheless, it effectively emphasizes the need for balancing demands and resources to sustain employee well-being and engagement across all three dimensions cognitive, emotional, and behavioral.

### **2.3.4 Integration of Theories into a Hybrid Conceptual Model**

Employee engagement in Nairobi's private universities can be better understood by combining the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, Social Exchange Theory, and Human Capital Theory. Social Exchange Theory captures the emotional dimension by highlighting justice, trust, and reciprocal relationships, while Human Capital Theory explains the cognitive dimension by demonstrating how investing in employees' skills and knowledge increases their commitment. The JD-R Model tackles the behavioral dimension by emphasizing how fair performance management and sufficient job resources maintain diligence and perseverance. Together, these viewpoints imply that HRM practices have an impact on engagement both directly and indirectly through elements like job satisfaction and motivation, with organizational culture and leadership style influencing how strong these effects are. This hybrid model therefore provides a comprehensive, multidimensional framework for analyzing how organizational practices and contextual factors interact to foster employee engagement.

## **2.4 Empirical Review**

This section examines empirical research on the study's main factors, including career management, performance-based reward management, performance appraisals, and hiring procedures. The review emphasized the relationship between these factors and staff engagement in private universities.

### **2.4.1 Recruitment Processes and Employee Engagement**

Recruitment is widely recognized as the foundation of effective Human Capital Management, shaping how employees identify with and engage in organizational goals. Empirical studies consistently show that transparent, competency-based recruitment enhances engagement by promoting perceptions of fairness and trust. Breugh (2020) and Phillips and Gully (2021) found that applicants who experience equitable hiring processes demonstrate higher organizational commitment. Similarly, Allen et al. (2022) reported that standardized hiring correlates with lower turnover and stronger engagement.

However, this positive view is not universal. Studies such as Bratton and Gold (2020) caution that overly rigid recruitment systems may overlook contextual suitability or creativity, leading to mismatched hires. Moreover, reliance on digital recruitment tools can introduce algorithmic bias, disadvantaging certain candidate groups (Chapman & Mayers, 2022). Thus, while structured processes improve consistency, they require careful design to balance efficiency with inclusivity.

The integration of employer branding and value alignment has emerged as another key determinant of engagement. Cable and Judge (2020) observed that employees who perceive alignment between personal and institutional values are more motivated and loyal. In contrast, Waithaka (2023) found that many private universities in Nairobi

struggle with unstructured and opaque hiring practices, resulting in low morale and high turnover. These local findings mirror broader global trends but highlight a stronger institutional fragility in Kenya's private higher education sector.

Recent research also emphasizes diversity and inclusion in recruitment. Cascio and Aguinis (2023) found that inclusive recruitment strategies enhance belonging and engagement. Yet in Nairobi's private universities, diversity policies are often underdeveloped due to cost pressures and limited HR capacity (Kamau et al., 2024).

The literature converges that fair and transparent recruitment strengthens engagement, but contradictory evidence suggests that over-standardization or technological bias can reduce fit and inclusion. For private universities in Nairobi where unstructured hiring and limited HR automation persist (Waithaka, 2023) this study investigates whether structured recruitment processes significantly predict employee engagement.

#### **2.4.2 Performance Appraisals and Employee Engagement**

Performance appraisal systems are essential for aligning employee performance with institutional objectives. Empirical evidence generally supports a positive relationship between transparent appraisal systems and engagement. DeNisi and Murphy (2021) and Manolache and Epuran (2023) found that regular feedback and goal clarity foster employees' psychological attachment and motivation. Likewise, Park et al. (2023) demonstrated that continuous feedback mechanisms strengthen professional growth and organizational identification.

However, several studies question the consistency of these outcomes. Shields et al. (2021) highlight that poorly implemented appraisals marked by bias, inconsistency, or lack of follow-up can demotivate employees and foster disengagement. Patel et al.

(2023) further note that perceptions of unfairness in appraisal criteria erode trust, especially where evaluator training is inadequate. Thus, while performance appraisal has engagement potential, its success depends on procedural justice and appraiser competence.

Technological integration has modernized performance evaluations. Studies such as Johnson and Ng (2022) and Gorman et al. (2023) report that digital appraisal tools enable real-time feedback and reduce evaluator subjectivity, increasing transparency. Yet others warn that excessive reliance on automated performance dashboards may depersonalize feedback, weakening the relational element that drives engagement (Aguinis, 2023).

Empirical research also shows mixed effects regarding the linkage between appraisals and rewards. While Otieno and Kamau (2023) found that faculty rewarded based on fair evaluations exhibit higher engagement, Cheng and Li (2022) observed that when performance pay is perceived as inequitable, it reduces intrinsic motivation. These findings illustrate that appraisal outcomes must balance extrinsic recognition with developmental value.

In the Kenyan private university context, challenges such as inconsistent evaluation criteria, limited digital infrastructure, and subjective appraisals remain prevalent (Mungai et al., 2021). Therefore, this study examines whether structured and transparent performance appraisals predict engagement among academic and administrative staff in Nairobi's private universities.

### **2.4.3 Work-Life Balance Career Management Practices and Employee Engagement**

Career management encompasses the structured processes that promote employees' professional growth while maintaining equilibrium between work demands and personal well-being. In higher education, balancing teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities is essential to sustain engagement and minimize burnout. Empirical evidence shows that integrating work-life balance into career management enhances employees' commitment, motivation, and long-term engagement (Noe et al., 2023).

Globally, several studies emphasize the positive impact of institutional support for work-life balance on engagement. Azevedo et al. (2023) found that employees who perceive their organizations as supportive of flexibility and wellness display higher engagement and loyalty. Similarly, Gubbins and Garavan (2023) observed that structured mentorship and coaching programs not only support career progression but also help employees manage competing personal and professional demands. Allen and Eby (2021) further noted that mentorship contributes to psychological well-being by providing guidance in workload prioritization and stress management. These studies collectively indicate that well-designed career management systems contribute to sustained engagement through personal and professional support.

However, scholars caution that not all career management initiatives yield positive outcomes. Nyambura and Kamara (2022) observed that, in some institutions, career programs increase workload without corresponding support, resulting in stress and disengagement. Similarly, Cheng and Li (2022) argued that when universities introduce development programs without addressing workload inequities, employees experience burnout rather than motivation. These contradictions suggest that career management

must be accompanied by structural adjustments, such as realistic workload distribution and flexible scheduling, to achieve intended engagement benefits.

From a global perspective, studies like Jackson and Wilton (2023) advocate for personalized career development plans that align organizational objectives with individual aspirations. Patel et al. (2023) highlights that continuous learning opportunities such as sabbatical leave, research grants, and flexible online training reinforce engagement by showing institutional investment in employees' growth. Conversely, in contexts with limited financial or technological resources, sustaining such programs remains a major challenge.

In Kenya, empirical evidence reveals similar trends but sharper constraints. Kariuki and Mutua (2022) found that while faculty in private universities value professional development, heavy workloads and limited institutional support impede the realization of work–life balance. Mungai et al. (2021) reported that the absence of formal wellness programs and mentoring structures contributes to fatigue and declining motivation among academic staff. Omolo and Njoroge (2022) noted that mentorship initiatives, when present, significantly improve job satisfaction and retention, but are often underfunded or inconsistently applied. These findings reveal both the potential and fragility of career management practices in Kenyan private higher education.

The literature further suggests that institutional culture and leadership determine the success of work–life initiatives. Hidayat et al. (2025) found that supportive cultures offering childcare, paid leave, and flexible workloads reduce turnover and strengthen engagement. Yet, as Smith and Brown (2023) observe, without managerial commitment and equitable policy enforcement, such programs remain symbolic rather than transformative. This highlights the importance of translating policy frameworks into practical, inclusive support systems.

While most studies agree that integrating work–life balance into career management enhances engagement, contradictions persist regarding implementation feasibility and sustainability, particularly in resource-limited settings. The Kenyan experience reflects both alignment with global best practice and unique challenges of funding, workload equity, and institutional policy. Therefore, this study investigates how career management practices that incorporate work–life balance influence employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, where competing academic and administrative pressures often compromise both productivity and well-being.

#### **2.4.4 Rewards Management Practices and Employee Engagement**

Reward management encompasses the strategies used by organizations to attract, retain, and motivate employees by linking compensation and recognition to performance outcomes. It has long been associated with employee engagement, as fair and transparent reward systems signal institutional appreciation and strengthen psychological commitment. Empirical studies consistently show that employees who perceive rewards as equitable and performance-based exhibit higher engagement and motivation (Gupta & Shaw, 2014; Chiang & Birtch, 2017). Shields et al. (2015) further emphasize that aligning rewards with measurable outcomes reinforces employees' sense of achievement, which in turn enhances engagement and productivity.

However, findings across the literature reveal that this relationship is not always straightforward. Deci et al. (2017) argue that an excessive focus on extrinsic rewards such as bonuses and allowances can undermine intrinsic motivation, especially in knowledge-based institutions like universities where autonomy, academic freedom, and intellectual fulfillment are core engagement drivers. In contrast, Gupta and Shaw (2014) found that when reward systems are perceived as fair and aligned with performance expectations, they strengthen rather than diminish intrinsic motivation. These divergent

findings suggest that the effectiveness of rewards depends on how they are structured, communicated, and integrated into broader institutional values.

A growing body of research advocates for a balanced reward approach that integrates both financial and non-financial incentives. Otieno and Kamau (2023) demonstrate that non-monetary recognition such as opportunities for research funding, leadership roles, and professional development can sustain engagement even in financially constrained institutions. Similarly, Cheng and Li (2022) highlight that transparent reward communication reduces perceptions of favoritism and builds trust, a critical determinant of engagement. This perspective aligns with Social Exchange Theory, which posits that employees reciprocate perceived organizational fairness and support with loyalty and effort.

Despite the global emphasis on fairness and transparency, implementing effective reward systems remains challenging in many developing contexts. Studies in Kenya reveal that private universities often operate under financial constraints that limit their ability to provide competitive monetary rewards (Mungai et al., 2021). This creates inconsistencies between performance appraisal outcomes and actual rewards, leading to perceptions of inequity and disengagement. Moreover, informal reward practices such as selective promotions or recognition based on personal relationships undermine trust and morale (Hassan & Ahmed, 2023). These challenges illustrate the contextual limitations of applying Western-style reward models in resource-limited settings.

At the same time, some Kenyan universities have attempted to address these gaps through innovative, low-cost recognition programs. Kariuki and Mutua (2022) report that non-financial incentives such as certificates of excellence, staff appreciation days, and flexible work arrangements significantly improve engagement and retention. Yet, these efforts often lack consistency and institutional support, reducing their long-term

impact. The contrast between global and Kenyan findings underscores that reward management is highly context-dependent; its effectiveness hinges on cultural expectations, resource availability, and the perceived fairness of implementation.

In summary, while the literature widely supports the link between fair reward systems and employee engagement, contradictions persist regarding the type and magnitude of rewards that drive sustainable motivation. In the context of private universities in Nairobi, limited financial capacity, inconsistent performance evaluations, and weak transparency mechanisms hinder the full realization of reward engagement linkages. Therefore, this study seeks to determine whether performance-based and transparent reward management practices significantly predict employee engagement within these institutions, where balancing extrinsic and intrinsic motivators is particularly critical.

## **2.5. Summary of Literature Review**

The reviewed literature demonstrates that Human Capital Management Practices (HCMPs) including structured recruitment, performance appraisal, career management, and rewards management play a critical role in shaping employee engagement across organizations. Theoretical perspectives such as Human Capital Theory (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1993), Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), and the Job Demands-Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) provide useful lenses for Recognizing the connection between HCMPs and engagement, highlighting the importance of continuous skills investment, reciprocal relationships, and balancing job demands with adequate resources.

Empirical studies consistently show that structured recruitment enhances fairness and organizational alignment, which improves trust and long-term commitment

(Phillips & Gully, 2021; Wachira, 2023). Performance appraisals, when transparent and developmental, strengthen motivation and job satisfaction (DeNisi & Murphy, 2021; Manolache & Epuran, 2023), whereas poorly designed systems lead to disengagement (Kamau et al., 2024). Career management practices, particularly those integrating work-life balance and mentorship, foster retention and sustainable engagement (Azevedo et al., 2023; Gubbins & Garavan, 2023; Allen & Eby, 2021). Reward management especially when performance-based and fairly administered—encourages productivity, loyalty, and alignment with institutional goals (Gupta & Shaw, 2014; Chiang & Birtch, 2017; Otieno & Kamau, 2023).

Globally, research confirms that effective HCMPs reduce turnover, enhance organizational performance, and build institutional competitiveness (Albrecht et al., 2015; Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Within the Kenyan context, however, studies highlight persistent weaknesses, including unstructured recruitment processes (Waithaka, 2023), inadequate career development opportunities (Mwaura & Muturi, 2020), ineffective performance appraisal practices (Kamau et al., 2024), and inequitable reward structures (Mwandagha, 2023). Importantly, most existing studies examine these practices in isolation rather than holistically, and very limited research specifically focuses on private universities in Nairobi. This underscores the need for further inquiry into how a combination of HCMPs collectively influence employee engagement in this context.

## **2.6 Study Gaps**

The following table summarizes the key research gaps identified from the reviewed literature:

**Table 2.1**

**Summary of literature review study gaps**

| <b>Author(s)</b>                                 | <b>Topic/Focus</b>                            | <b>Key Findings</b>                                                                       | <b>Identified Research Gap</b>                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Waithaka (2023)                                  | Recruitment practices in Kenyan universities  | Highlighted unstructured and inconsistent recruitment leading to disengagement            | Did not examine recruitment within private universities specifically, nor its interaction with other HCMPs |
| Mwaura & Muturi (2020)                           | Career development in higher education        | Reported inadequate career development programs as a cause of disengagement               | Focused broadly on Kenyan universities; did not address private universities or link to work-life balance  |
| Kamau et al. (2024)                              | Performance appraisal systems in universities | Found appraisals to be poorly structured, biased, and ineffective in enhancing engagement | Did not explore integration of digital performance systems or their impact on employee engagement          |
| Mwandagha (2023)                                 | Reward structures in Kenyan universities      | Found inequitable and inconsistent reward systems contributing to dissatisfaction         | Narrowly focused on reward management; ignored non-financial rewards and holistic HCMP strategies          |
| Allen et al. (2022)                              | Recruitment and employee engagement           | Found structured, transparent hiring enhances satisfaction and reduces turnover           | Study conducted in Western contexts; limited evidence from private universities in Nairobi                 |
| Kariuki & Mutua (2022)                           | Career management and engagement              | Showed that mentoring and work-life balance initiatives enhance faculty engagement        | Lacked empirical focus on private universities in Nairobi                                                  |
| Otieno & Kamau (2023)                            | Performance-based rewards in higher education | Found fair, performance-linked rewards increase motivation and engagement                 | Study did not address resource-constrained private universities, where financial rewards may be limited    |
| Albrecht et al. (2015); Bakker & Albrecht (2018) | Global studies on HCMPs and engagement        | Confirmed structured HR practices enhance performance and engagement worldwide            | Limited contextualization for Kenya and no focus on private universities                                   |

## **2.7 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study illustrated the anticipated relationships between Human Capital Management Practices (HCMPs) and Employee Engagement within private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. The framework posits that HCMPs, encompassing Recruitment Processes, Performance Appraisals, Work-Life Balance in Career Growth, and Reward Management Practices, significantly influence Employee Engagement. Employee Engagement, the dependent variable, is conceptualized through indicators like organizational commitment, job satisfaction, Motivation, Recognition, turnover intention, as well as Willingness to Contribute. This framework provided a structured approach to examining how well-defined and strategically implemented HCMPs can enhance engagement, retention, and overall institutional performance in private universities.

## Independent variables

## Dependent variable

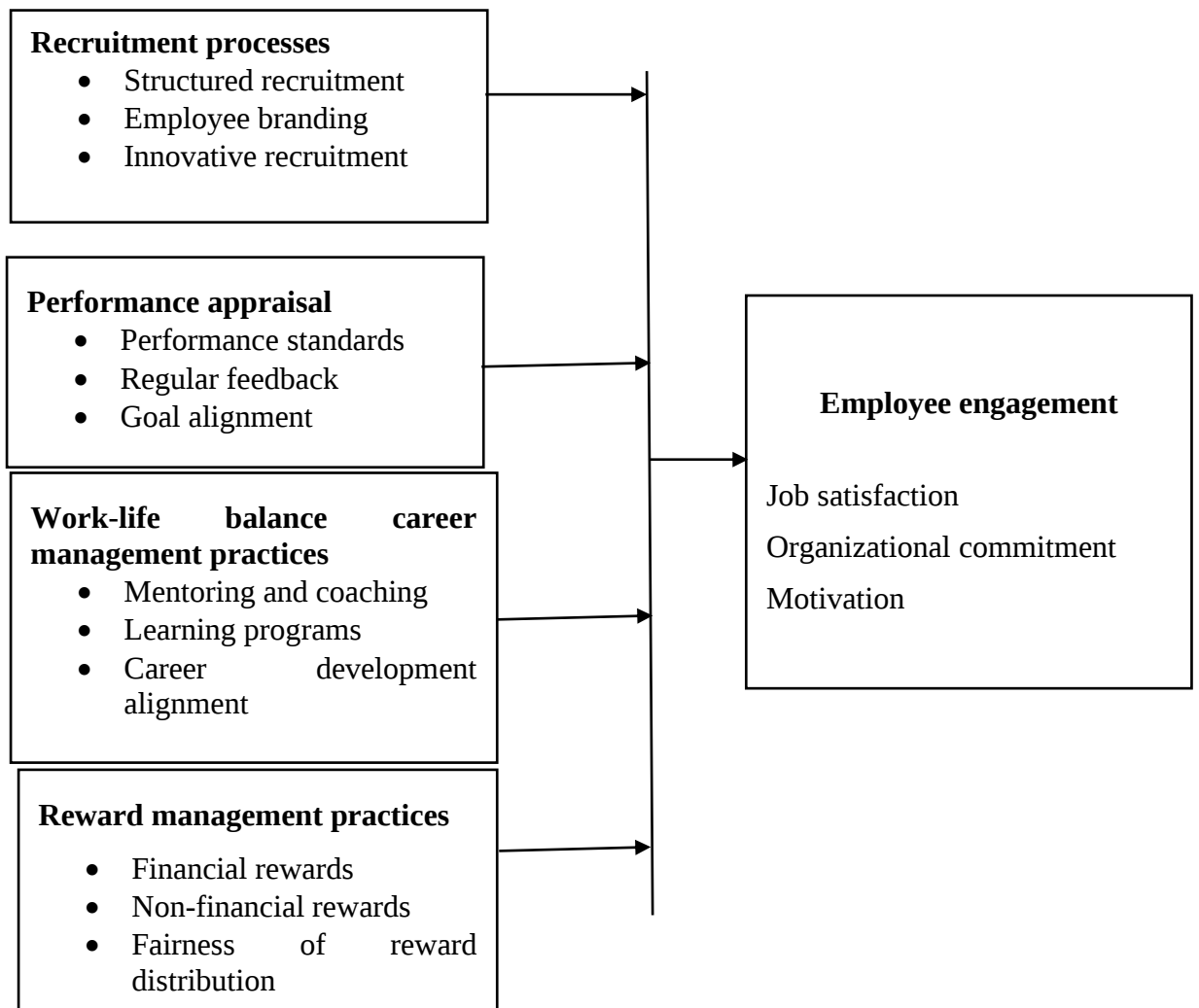


Figure 1.5

## The Conceptual Framework

**Table 2.2:****Summary of Operationalization of Variables**

| <b>Variables</b>                                 | <b>Indicators of the Variable</b> | <b>Measurement Tool</b> | <b>Type of Data</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Recruitment Processes</b>                     | -Structured Recruitment           | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Employee Branding               | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | -Innovative Recruitment           | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
| <b>Performance Management Practices</b>          | -Performance Appraisal            | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Regular Feedback                | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Goal Alignment                  | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
| <b>Work-Life Balance &amp; Career Management</b> | - Mentoring and Coaching          | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Learning Programs               | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Career Development Alignment    | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
| <b>Reward Management Practices</b>               | - Financial Rewards               | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | -Non-Financial Rewards            | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Fairness of Reward Distribution | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
| <b>Employee Engagement (Dependent Variable)</b>  | - Job Satisfaction                | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | -Organizational Commitment        | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |
|                                                  | - Motivation                      | Likert Scale            | Ordinal             |

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlined the methodology to be employed in this study to examine the effect of HCM practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. It details the research design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and the processes of ensuring the validity and reliability of the research instruments. Additionally, the chapter explains the data collection procedures and the methods used for data processing and analysis. The Employee Engagement Scale (EES) is integrated in the study to assess the different dimensions of employee engagement—emotional, rational, and behavioral—offering a comprehensive analysis of how HCM practices influence these aspects.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

In order to investigate the connections between HCMPs and employee engagement, this study's research strategy is a mixed-method approach. This design makes it easier for the gathering and evaluating numerical data to uncover patterns, relationships, and trends (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). By employing statistical tools, the quantitative approach enables precise quantification of the effects of various HCM practices on employee engagement, leading to objective and generalizable conclusions (Field, 2018).

In addition to the quantitative analysis, the study integrates qualitative data to provide a richer understanding of the findings. Secondary data, such as existing literature, organizational reports, and historical records, are utilized within this

qualitative framework. These sources offer valuable context and enhance the interpretation of quantitative results by adding depth and broader perspective (Fink, 2017; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This mixed-method approach combines the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative analyses, making certain that a thorough examination of how HCM practices influence employee engagement.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The study population comprised academic and non-academic staff drawn from three selected private universities in Nairobi: KCA University, Kenya Methodist University (KEMU), and Mount Kenya University (MKU). These universities were selected because they are among the largest and most established private institutions in the region, with diverse academic programs, significant student enrollments, and substantial workforce sizes. The employees targeted included teaching staff, administrative personnel, and support staff, as they collectively represent the human capital that drives institutional performance and directly experience Human Capital Management Practices (HCMPs) such as recruitment, performance appraisal, career development, and rewards management.

The determination of the study population (930) was guided by Yamane's (1967) formula for determining the sample size, proportionately distributed across the three universities to ensure representativeness and reduce sampling bias. By focusing on this population, the study made sure that the viewpoints of workers at various functional levels were adequately captured, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between HCMPs and employee engagement in private universities.

This study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique because of its suitability in higher education research, where populations are large, heterogeneous, and spread across multiple institutions. In the first stage, the universities were purposively selected based on their size, prominence, and representativeness of private universities in Nairobi. In the second stage, proportionate stratified sampling was used to allocate the study population across the universities according to staff numbers, ensuring fairness and accuracy. Finally, simple random sampling was applied within each stratum to select individual respondents, giving every staff member an equal chance of participation. This approach minimized sampling error, enhanced representativeness, and made certain that the results could be applied to the wider context of private universities in Nairobi.

**Table 3.1**

**Target Population**

| <b>Private University</b> | <b>University Population</b> | <b>Study Population</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>KCA University</b>     | 1,250                        | 378                     |
| <b>KEMU University</b>    | 780                          | 261                     |
| <b>MKU University</b>     | 420                          | 291                     |
| <b>Total</b>              | 2,450                        | 930                     |

**Source: Office of Human Resource of respective universities under study (2024)**

### 3.4 Sampling and Sampling Procedure

The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique, which involves selecting universities first, stratifying employees into faculty and administrative staff, and then applying random sampling to ensure representativeness. Stratified random sampling ensured that different sub-groups within the population are adequately represented (Etikan & Bala, 2017).

#### 3.4.1 Sample Size Determination

A sample size of 280 staff members were determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size calculation:

**Formula:**  $ns = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$

Where:

ns - Sample Size

N - Population Size

e - Precision level (at 0.95 confidence interval, e = 0.05)

therefore, with N of 930, e is 0.05,

$$ns = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} = \frac{930}{1 + 930(0.05^2)} = \frac{930}{1 + 930(0.0025)} = \frac{930}{1 + 2.325}$$

$$ns = \frac{930}{3.325} \approx \mathbf{280 \text{ Staff}}$$

$$ns = \mathbf{\underline{\underline{280 \text{ Staff}}}}$$

**Table 3.2****Sampling Procedure Description**

| <b>Private University</b> | <b>Sample size</b> | <b>Administrative</b> | <b>Faculty</b> |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| <b>KCA University</b>     | 114                | 23                    | 18             |
| <b>KEMU University</b>    | 78                 | 16                    | 12             |
| <b>MKU University</b>     | 88                 | 18                    | 13             |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>280</b>         | <b>57</b>             | <b>43</b>      |

**3.5 Research Instrument and Data Collection**

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire, which is a widely used tool in quantitative research to gather standardized information efficiently from a large sample (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The questionnaire was designed to assess the effect of Human Capital Management (HCM) practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. It comprised closed-ended questions using a Employee Engagement scale (EES Scale) to measure variables such as recruitment, performance management, and reward management (DeVellis, 2017). The questionnaire was divided into sections corresponding to each specific objective of the study. Each section included items adapted from previously verified instruments studies to ensure reliability and validity (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). For instance, recruitment practices were assessed using items adapted from Breaugh (2017), while performance management used items from Aguinis (2019).

The data collection process involves several steps to ensure systematic and ethical handling of the study. First, Approval from the institutional review was requested. boards (IRBs) of the selected universities to conduct the study. Following approval, a formal request was made to the universities' administrations to distribute the questionnaires to their staff.

The questionnaires were administered in both hard copy and electronic formats to accommodate the preferences and availability of the respondents. In order to increase the response rate, reminders were sent to the participants, and the importance of their contribution to the study was emphasized.

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were collected from secondary sources such as organizational reports, policy documents, and existing literature to provide context and support deeper interpretation of the findings. The qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved reviewing and coding the data to identify recurring themes and patterns related to Human Capital Management Practices and employee engagement (Khan et al., 2021). The process entailed familiarization with the data, generation of initial codes, development of themes, and interpretation in relation to the study's objectives and theoretical framework. To strengthen credibility, triangulation was employed by comparing insights from qualitative data with quantitative results, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of how HCM practices influence employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi.

### **3.6 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was conducted with a total of six participants drawn from the University of Nairobi, a leading public university in Kenya. The selection of a public university was intentional to ensure that individuals in the pilot study did not overlap with the target population of private universities. The purpose of this pilot is to find any

ambiguities or inconsistencies in the items and to evaluate the overall feasibility of the data collection process. Feedback from the pilot study was used to refine the questionnaire, improving its validity and reliability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

Making sure the research tool's validity and dependability are critical for the accuracy and credibility of the research findings. Validity assesses whether the instrument measures what it is intended to measure, while reliability refers to the consistency of measurements over time (DeVellis, 2017).

#### **3.7.1 Validity**

To ensure content validity, the development of the questionnaire was guided by a thorough review of contemporary literature on Human Capital Management (HCM) practices and employee engagement. This literature review informed the creation of items that capture the essential constructs of the study (Fink, 2017). Additionally, expert feedback was sought from HCMs scholars and practitioners. Their input helped verify that the questionnaire items are representative of the constructs being measured and align with current theoretical frameworks (Schmidt & Hunter, 2019). This process ensures that the items reflect the relevant dimensions of HCM practices and employee engagement, thereby enhancing content validity (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

#### **3.7.2 Reliability**

Reliability was assessed through a pilot study conducted with a small sample from the target population. This preliminary study identified potential issues with the questionnaire items and provide an opportunity for adjustments. Internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha, with a value of 0.7 or higher considered

acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Cronbach's alpha is widely used to evaluate the reliability of survey instruments by assessing the consistency of responses across related items (Field, 2018).

### **3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The data processing and analysis for this study involved a systematic approach to transforming raw data into meaningful insights that informed the research findings. The process began with the collection of data through structured questionnaires, which was administered to faculty and administrative staff in selected private universities in Nairobi. Once the data is gathered, the first step in data processing is cleaning the data to ensure its accuracy and completeness. This entails identifying and resolving any anomalies, missing numbers, or inconsistent responses, which could potentially skew the results.

Following data cleaning, the data was entered into statistical software, specifically the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is chosen for its robustness in handling large datasets and its comprehensive suite of tools for data analysis. Once the data is entered, it was coded appropriately to facilitate easy identification and manipulation of variables during analysis.

The initial stage of analysis involved conducting descriptive statistics. The respondents' demographics and opinions about HCMPs and employee involvement were summed up using descriptive statistics including mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and frequency distributions. These statistics provided a concise synopsis of the data that emphasizes important trends and patterns.

Inferential statistical methods were used to test the hypotheses and examine the relationships between HCM practices and employee engagement. Specifically, Using

multiple regression analysis, the impact of different HCM practices (independent variables) on employee engagement (dependent variable). Potential confounding variables can be controlled using this technique, which also offers information about the relative significance of each HCM practice in influencing employee engagement (Field, 2018).

The following model was used for the regression analysis:

$$EE = \beta_0 + \beta_1(RT) + \beta_2(PM) + \beta_3(WB) + \beta_4(RM) + \epsilon$$

$$= \beta_0 + \beta_1(RT) + \beta_2(PM) + \beta_3(WB) + \beta_4(RM) + \epsilon$$

$$= \beta_0 + \beta_1(RT) + \beta_2(PM) + \beta_3(WB) + \beta_4(RM) + \epsilon$$

Where:

- EE represents employee engagement,
- RT represents Recruitment,
- PM represents performance management,
- RM represents reward Management,
- $\beta_0$  is the intercept,
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$  are the coefficients for the independent variables,
- $\epsilon$  is the error term.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables (HCM practices) and the dependent variable (employee engagement). This analysis helped determine whether and how strongly recruitment, performance management, reward management, and other HCM

practices are associated with employee engagement. Significance was determined using p-values, with a significance level set at  $\alpha=0.05$  \alpha = 0.05  $\alpha=0.05$ .

To delve deeper into the relationships, multiple regression analysis was conducted. This statistical method assessed the effect of the independent variables on employee engagement, controlling for potential confounding factors. The regression model provided enlightenment into how each HCM practice contributes to variations in employee engagement, helping to identify the most influential practices.

The analysis also included hierarchical regression to explore the incremental effects of adding different HCM practices into the model. This approach helped determine whether the inclusion of additional variables improves the model's explanatory power, offering a more nuanced understanding of the factors that drive employee engagement.

### **3.9 Diagnostic Tests**

To make sure the regression analysis is valid, several Diagnostic tests were carried out. Multicollinearity among the independent variables were detected by calculating the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), as high VIF values indicate potential issues with multicollinearity that could distort the results (García, García, & Albarrán, 2020). The normality of residuals were assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test and by visually inspecting Q-Q plots, which are effective methods for confirming whether the residuals meet the normality assumption necessary for accurate regression analysis (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). Additionally, homoscedasticity, or the homogeneity of variance, was evaluated by examining scatterplots of standardized residuals against predicted values, a critical step to ensure that the variance of the residuals is consistent across all levels of the independent variables (Williams, Grajales, & Kurkiewicz, 2013).

### **3.9.1 Normality Test**

Normality testing was conducted to determine whether the residuals of the regression model were normally distributed, as this is a crucial presumption underlying linear regression analysis. A normal distribution of residuals ensures the accuracy of statistical inferences, particularly with regard to significance testing and the validity of confidence intervals. In this study, the Shapiro-Wilk test was employed to assess the normality of residuals. The Shapiro-Wilk test is widely regarded as a robust method for testing normality in small to medium sample sizes, as it evaluates the null hypothesis that the data are normally distributed. A p-value greater than 0.05 in this test indicates that the residuals do not significantly deviate from normality, thereby meeting the regression assumption. In addition to the statistical test, visual methods such as Q-Q plots and histograms of residuals were also examined to complement the results of the Shapiro-Wilk test and provide further assurance regarding the normality assumption (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012).

### **3.9.2. Homoscedasticity Test**

To make sure the regression analysis was valid, homoscedasticity—the idea that the variance of residuals maintains constant at all levels of the independent variables—was examined. When this assumption is broken, it's called heteroscedasticity, and it can result in skewed standard error estimates and, as a result, inaccurate statistical conclusions. In this study, Levene's test for homogeneity of variances was employed to assess the presence of homoscedasticity. Levene's test evaluates whether the variances of residuals are equal across groups formed by the independent variables. The test generates a p-value, with a value higher than 0.05 suggests that the presumption that homoscedasticity holds, while a value less than 0.05 suggests heteroscedasticity.

The use of Levene's test provided a robust and statistically sound approach for detecting unequal variances, ensuring that the regression model met the homoscedasticity assumption required for accurate interpretation of results.

### 3.9.3 Multicollinearity

In regression analysis, multicollinearity is the state in which two or more independent variables have a high degree of correlation with one another, potentially distorting the research's findings. In this study, where the effect of various Human Capital Management (HCM) practices on employee engagement is being examined, it is crucial to test for multicollinearity among the independent variables to ensure the reliability of the regression analysis. To detect multicollinearity, the following methods were employed:

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is a key measure used to detect multicollinearity. It is calculated for each independent variable  $X_i$  using the formula:

$$VIF = \frac{1}{1 - R_i^2}$$

Where:

- $R_i^2$  is the coefficient of determination of the regression of  $X_i$  on all the other independent variables.

VIF values provide insight into the degree of multicollinearity present in the model. A VIF value of 1 indicates no correlation between the independent variable and others, while values between 1 and 5 suggest moderate correlation, which is generally not problematic. However, a VIF value greater than 5 or 10 signals high multicollinearity, which may need to be addressed.

Tolerance, which is the reciprocal of VIF, is another measure used to detect multicollinearity. It is calculated as:

$$\text{Tolerance} = \frac{1}{VIF}$$

Low tolerance values (below 0.1 or 0.2) indicate the presence of multicollinearity, signaling that an independent variable is highly correlated with others in the model.

A correlation matrix was also examined for the independent variables. High correlations (above 0.7 or 0.8) between pairs of independent variables in the matrix suggest the presence of multicollinearity, which can complicate the interpretation of the regression coefficients.

If multicollinearity is detected in the study, several strategies can be employed to address it. One approach is to remove highly correlated variables from the model, as eliminating one of the correlated variables can reduce multicollinearity. Another strategy involves combining variables that represent similar concepts into a single composite variable, thereby minimizing the correlation between them. Additionally, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) can be used to transform data in order to lower its dimensionality the correlated variables into a set of uncorrelated components, which was then utilized in the regression analysis, effectively addressing the issue of multicollinearity.

Testing for and addressing multicollinearity is essential to ensure that the regression coefficients for the independent variables—such as recruitment, performance management, and reward management—provide meaningful and interpretable estimates of their effect on employee engagement. High multicollinearity can inflate the standard errors of the coefficients, leading to unreliable statistical tests and potentially misleading conclusions. By carefully managing multicollinearity, the study

produced more robust and reliable findings that accurately reflect the relationships between HCM practices and employee engagement.

#### **3.9.4 Hypothesis Testing**

Lastly, hypothesis testing was performed using p-values obtained from the regression and correlation analyses. A significance level of 0.05 was used to determine the statistical significance of the results. This helped in deciding whether to reject or accept the null hypotheses, thereby identifying which HCM practices had a significant effect on employee engagement.

This comprehensive approach to data processing and analysis ensured that the study's findings are accurate, reliable, and provide valuable insights into the effect of HCM practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi.

#### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Strict ethical principles were followed in this investigation to guarantee the rights, dignity, and confidentiality of participants were protected at every stage of the study. Prior to data collection, permission to carry out the research was requested from the university research ethics committee and authorization letters were obtained from the participating institutions. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were provided with clear information regarding the Objective, procedures, and expected outcomes of the research. Every participant gave their informed consent, and they were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without facing any negative consequences.

Confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that no names or personal identifiers appeared in the data collection instruments, analysis, or final report. Data collected was

securely stored and used strictly for academic purposes. To further protect participants, results are presented in aggregated form, preventing the identification of individual respondents or institutions. The study also complied with the ethical principles of integrity, transparency, and respect for persons, as outlined in research ethics guidelines.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter includes data analysis, results, and interpretation. The results are presented using tables, charts, graphs, and descriptive text. The studied data is organized according to themes that align with the study's objectives.

#### 4.2 Response Rate from the Questionnaire

The quantity of questionnaires distributed to the staffs of the 3 private universities were 280.

**Table 4.1**

**Response Rate**

| <b>Response</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Returned        | 229              | 81.79%            |
| Unreturned      | 51               | 18.21%            |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>280</b>       | <b>100.00%</b>    |

**Source : Research Data (2025)**

A total of 229 questionnaires were completed and returned, yielding an overall response rate of 81.79%, as shown in Table 4.1. This indicates a high and successful response rate. According to Babbie (2004), a response rate above 60.00% is considered adequate for research, further validating the reliability of the data collected.

#### 4.3 Pilot Test Results

This section contains the validity and the reliability of the study.

#### 4.3.1 Validity Test

Both content and face validity tests were employed in the study. Questionnaires were subdivided into subsections under construct validity to guarantee that every objective section was evaluated. Project supervisors were asked to assess statements in the questionnaire in order to ensure that the study achieved high validity. They discovered that the test has a strong correlation with other comparable tests, indicating that it is valid for measuring the intended construct.

#### 4.3.2 Reliability Test

Table 4.2 displays the findings of pilot tests that were carried out with six responders chosen from a list of participants (Two from each university), who did not take part in the study itself. After being entered into Excel, the questionnaires were exported to SPSS for analysis. The reliability coefficients for each Likert scaled item were computed and are displayed in Table 3.3.

**Table 4.2**  
**Reliability Assessment**

| <b>Variable</b>       | <b>Cronbach's Alpha</b> | <b>Number of items</b> | <b>Comment</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| Recruitment process   | 0.776                   | 6                      | Reliable       |
| Performance appraisal | 0.778                   | 6                      | Reliable       |
| Work-life balance     | 0.772                   | 6                      | Reliable       |
| Reward management     | 0.808                   | 6                      | Reliable       |
| Employee engagement   | 0.828                   | 6                      | Reliable       |

Table 4.2 shows that every scaled item was higher than the value of 0.7. As a result, every variable met the reliability criteria of 0.7 or above and was deemed suitable for this investigation. This level of construct measure reliability is well above threshold set

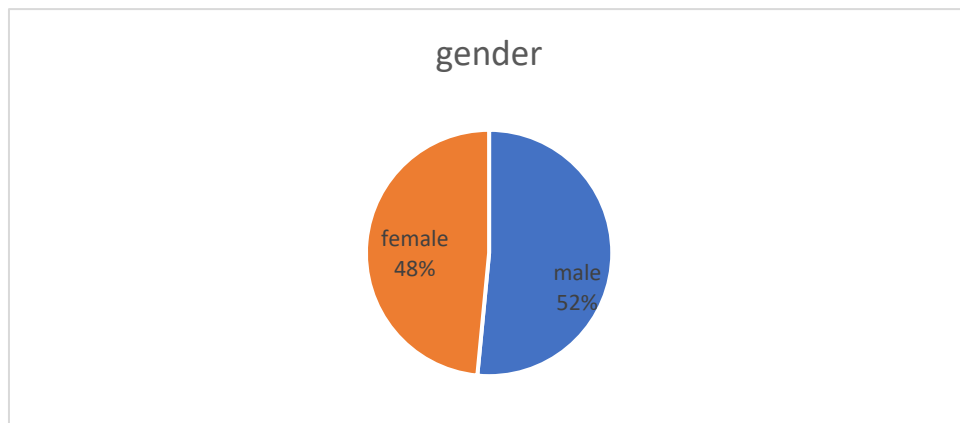
by Bryman (2012) and Cooper & Schindler (2011); Zikmund et al. (2010) and Koshy (2010).

#### **4.4 Demographic Information**

The respondents' biographical information was included in this section. The respondents' age, education, years of experience, present position, gender, and university were all included.

##### **4.4.1 Gender of the Respondents**

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. Figure 4.1 shows the results.



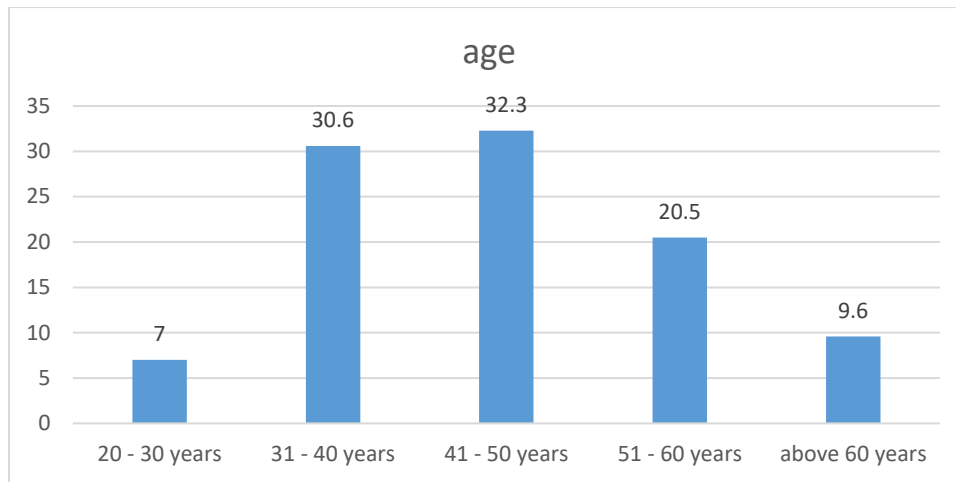
**Figure 4.1**

##### **Gender of the Respondents**

According to the findings, 52.00% of the respondents identified as male, while 48.00% identified as female. Thus, it was concluded that most staffs of the 3 private universities were men.

##### **4.4.2 Age of the Respondents**

The age of the respondents was requested. The results are shown in Figure 4.2.



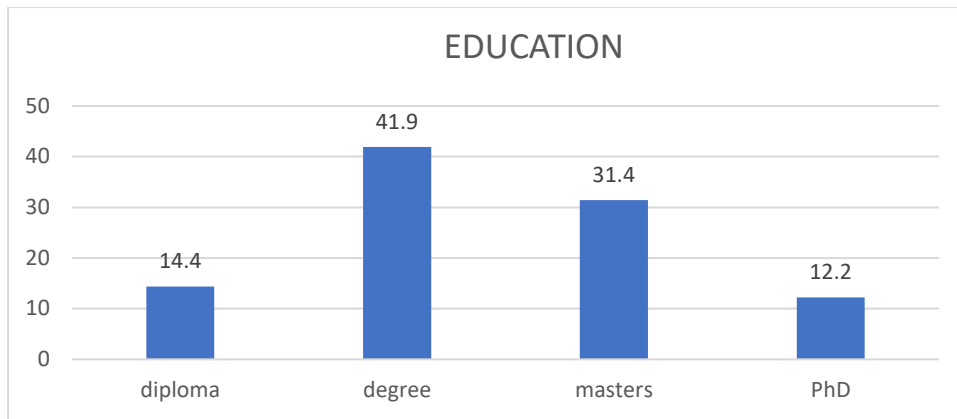
**Figure 4.2**

### **Age of the Respondents**

The findings indicated that majority of the participants who were 32.30% had 31 – 40 years, 30.60% had 41 – 50 years, 20.50% had 51 – 60 years, 9.60% had 60 years and above while 7.00% had 20 – 30 years. This infers that most staffs of the three private universities were middle aged. This suggests that middle-aged employees may bring valuable institutional knowledge and work experience, which could positively influence employee engagement.

#### **4.4.3 Highest Educational Qualification**

The respondents were asked to indicate their highest educational qualification. Figure 4.3 shows the results.



**Figure 4.3**

### **Education Level**

As to the findings, the majority of respondents (41.90%) reported having a degree, followed by master's degree holders (31.40%), PhD holders (12.20%), and Diploma holders (14.40%). The majority of the staff at the 3 private universities were hence middle educated. Employee engagement is higher among educated workers, especially when they are given opportunities for growth and challenging work that make use of their knowledge and abilities.

#### **4.4.4 Years of Experience**

The respondents were asked to indicate their years of experience. Table 4.3 showed the results.

**Table 4.3**

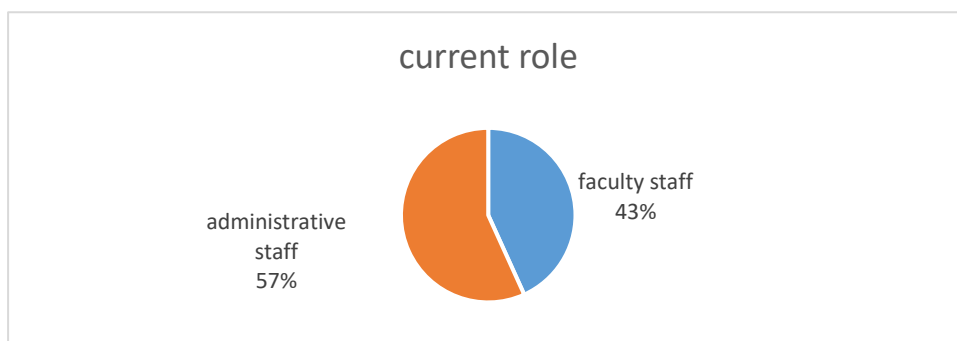
### **Years of Experience**

|                    | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 0-5 years          | 8                | 3.50           |
| 5 - 10 years       | 104              | 45.40          |
| 11- 15 years       | 59               | 25.80          |
| 16 - 20 years      | 43               | 18.80          |
| 20 years and above | 15               | 6.60           |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>229</b>       | <b>100.00</b>  |

According to the findings, 45.40% of the respondents said they had worked at the university for 5–10 years, 25.80% said they had worked there for 11–15 years, 18.80% said they had worked there for 16–20 years, 6.60% said they had worked there for 20 years or more, and 3.50% said they had worked there for less than five years. This suggests that the majority of the employees at the 3 universities had worked there for more than five years. Through information exchange, mentoring, and the development of a healthy workplace culture, seasoned workers significantly improve employee engagement, which in turn encourages more involvement from other staff members.

#### **4.4.5 Current Role**

A question about their present role was posed to the responders. The results were displayed in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4**

#### **Current Role**

Results findings revealed that 57.00% of the respondents were administrative staff while 43.00% indicated that they were faculty staffs. This suggests that most of the respondents that were interviewed were administrative staffs. Administrative staff play a crucial role in shaping employee engagement by creating a supportive and enabling work environment through effective communication, recognition, and fair treatment of employees.

#### **4.5 Descriptive statistics Analysis**

For each of the independent and dependent variables, descriptive analysis was performed, as indicated below. (5), (4), and (3) (strongly agree, slightly agree, and agree) were put together as agree, while (2) and (1) (disagree and strongly disagree) were grouped together as disagree to objectively interpret the study results. **4.5.1**

##### **Descriptive Analysis for Recruitment Processes**

Six questions asking respondents to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements were used to gauge the recruitment process. The findings were shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4**

**Recruitment Processes**

| <b>statement</b>                                                                                                                              | <b>strongly disagree</b> | <b>Slightly disagree</b> | <b>agree</b> | <b>slightly agree</b> | <b>strongly agree</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>std. dev</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| The university follows a structured recruitment to hire qualified and competent employees                                                     | 7.90%                    | 10.90%                   | 13.10%       | 44.50%                | 23.60%                | 3.65        | 1.18            |
| The recruitment in your university is clear and well-structured                                                                               | 19.70%                   | 8.70%                    | 14.00%       | 36.70%                | 21.00%                | 3.31        | 1.41            |
| The job roles and expectations are clearly communicated during the structured recruitment.                                                    | 21.40%                   | 6.60%                    | 10.90%       | 38.40%                | 22.70%                | 3.34        | 1.45            |
| The university's employer branding effectively and deliberately ensures fairness in hiring.                                                   | 4.80%                    | 10.50%                   | 14.40%       | 33.20%                | 37.10%                | 3.87        | 1.16            |
| The university adopts innovative recruitment practices such as online job boards, social media, and job fairs to attract potential employees. | 7.40%                    | 7.90%                    | 13.10%       | 42.40%                | 29.30%                | 3.78        | 1.17            |
| The innovative recruitment practices employed by the university lead to more diverse and high-quality candidates.                             | 19.70%                   | 6.60%                    | 10.50%       | 46.30%                | 17.00%                | 3.34        | 1.37            |

The analysis revealed that 81.20% of respondents agreed that the university follows a structured recruitment process to hire qualified and competent employees. The mean score of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 1.18 indicate a strong positive perception of systematic hiring, implying that structured recruitment enhances efficiency and ensures

qualified staff selection. This supports Bauer (2020), who found that formal recruitment procedures strengthen employee engagement.

Similarly, 71.70% of participants affirmed that the recruitment process is clear and well-organized ( $M = 3.31$ ,  $SD = 1.41$ ). This suggests that transparency and consistency characterize the university's hiring practices, promoting trust among applicants and staff. Regarding communication of job roles, 72.00% agreed that expectations are clearly conveyed during recruitment ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 1.45$ ). The results imply that clarity during hiring fosters alignment between employee capabilities and institutional needs, reducing early turnover.

A larger proportion (84.70%) agreed that the university's employer branding ensures fairness in hiring ( $M = 3.87$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ). This finding highlights the role of employer image in attracting diverse, competent candidates and promoting equitable recruitment. Furthermore, 84.80% agreed that innovative practices such as social media, job fairs, and online job boards are used to attract potential employees ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = 1.17$ ). This implies an institutional shift toward digital talent acquisition strategies to widen the candidate pool.

Lastly, 73.80% supported the view that these innovative methods lead to more diverse and high-quality candidates ( $M = 3.34$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ). This demonstrates the effectiveness of technology-driven recruitment in promoting inclusivity and improving the quality of hires, consistent with Cable and Judge (2020), who emphasized value alignment as a driver of satisfaction and commitment.

Qualitative data obtained from the open-ended section of the semi-structured questionnaire were analyzed to gain further insight into recruitment practices and their perceived effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. The

responses were subjected to thematic analysis, guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. Through systematic coding and categorization, three predominant themes emerged: procedural transparency and equity, technological modernization of recruitment, and institutional preference for internal mobility.

Most of the respondents described their universities' recruitment processes as structured, transparent, and merit based. They associated open advertisements, panel interviews, and clear communication of selection criteria with trust and fairness. Respondents suggested that transparent procedures minimize perceptions of favoritism and strengthen confidence in management.

One respondent stated:

*"Our university always advertises all positions publicly and conducts interviews through a panel, which ensures fairness and credibility."*

Another respondent wrote:

*"Clear job descriptions and selection procedures make the process open and equitable for everyone."*

This suggests that the university employees interpret procedural transparency as a sign of institutional integrity, which enhances their sense of belonging and engagement. When recruitment is perceived as objective, staff feel valued and motivated to contribute meaningfully to the organization (Phillips and Gully (2021).

Several respondents also mentioned the growing use of technology in recruitment. They noted that online job advertisements, electronic submission systems, and virtual interviews have improved accessibility, efficiency, and fairness. Respondents described these practices as evidence of modernization and professionalism within their institutions.

One comment read:

*“Recruitment is now conducted through the university’s online platform, which makes the process faster and transparent.”*

Another respondent explained:

*“Digital applications have made it easier to apply and reduced human bias in selection.”*

The integration of technology appears to have redefined recruitment as more standardized and accountable. Respondents viewed technological processes as enhancing fairness and efficiency, thereby fostering trust and engagement among employees.

A number of respondents also highlighted the tendency of universities to prioritize internal candidates when filling vacancies. They perceived this practice as a demonstration of recognition, motivation, and career progression. Internal promotions were interpreted as indicators that the institution values employee contribution and seeks to retain experienced personnel.

One respondent commented:

*“Before advertising externally, the university considers qualified internal staff. This encourages us to stay and work harder.”*

This indicates that internal recruitment reinforces commitment by validating employees’ efforts and creating a sense of stability and upward mobility within the organization.

Respondents were also asked to indicate in their opinion, how the recruitment process has affected employee engagement in their university. Many respondents

indicated that transparent and structured recruitment processes enhance employee trust and organizational confidence. They noted that when universities follow clear, merit-based hiring procedures, employees view the institution as fair and professional. This perception strengthens morale and fosters engagement since staff feel valued in an environment that upholds integrity.

One respondent explained:

*“Fair recruitment builds confidence in management because we know people are hired on merit, not on connections.”*

Another wrote:

*“When recruitment is open and fair, employees develop a sense of trust and pride in being part of the university.”*

These responses suggest that transparent recruitment reinforces psychological contract fulfillment whereby employees reciprocate perceived fairness with loyalty, enthusiasm, and engagement

Additionally, several respondents associated structured, merit-driven recruitment with motivation and a sense of belonging. They observed that when employees know their colleagues were hired based on competence, it strengthens team respect and commitment to collective performance. Merit-based selection also sets a positive tone for work culture, where ability and effort are valued.

A participant mentioned:

*“When new staff are recruited because of their qualifications and skills, it motivates others to work harder and be part of a competent team.”*

The analysis indicates that transparent and merit-based recruitment enhances trust, motivation, and organizational commitment, while perceptions of bias or favoritism undermine engagement. These findings imply that consistent, equitable recruitment practices serve as an essential foundation for sustained employee enthusiasm and institutional cohesion.

#### **4.5.2 Descriptive Analysis for Performance Appraisal**

To measure performance appraisal, the respondents were asked six questions to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the assertions. The outcomes were displayed in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5**

**Performance Appraisal**

| <b>Statement</b>                                                                                                                                 | <b>strongly disagree</b> | <b>slightly disagree</b> | <b>agree</b> | <b>slightly agree</b> | <b>strongly agree</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>std. dev</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| The university's performance standards system provides an accurate reflection of employee performance.                                           | 11.40%                   | 1.70%                    | 24.00%       | 35.40%                | 27.50%                | 3.66        | 1.22            |
| The performance standards system at the university contributes to employee career growth and development.                                        | 9.60%                    | 7.90%                    | 24.50%       | 27.10%                | 31.00%                | 3.62        | 1.26            |
| The university provides regular feedback to employees regarding their performance.                                                               | 3.90%                    | 19.70%                   | 6.60%        | 45.40%                | 24.50%                | 3.67        | 1.16            |
| The regular feedback received is constructive and helps employees improve their performance.                                                     | 6.10%                    | 3.10%                    | 17.90%       | 52.40%                | 20.50%                | 3.78        | 1.01            |
| The university's performance management system ensures goal alignment between individual performance and the institution's strategic objectives. | 3.10%                    | 14.80%                   | 20.10%       | 48.00%                | 14.00%                | 3.55        | 1.01            |
| The university helps employees set and achieve goals that are well-aligned with overall organizational goals.                                    | 2.20%                    | 17.50%                   | 11.40%       | 44.50%                | 24.50%                | 3.72        | 1.09            |

The analysis showed that 86.90% of respondents agreed that the university's performance standards accurately reflect employee performance ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ). This suggests that the evaluation system is viewed as credible and objective, promoting accountability and confidence in assessments. Similarly, 82.60% agreed that the system contributes to career growth and development ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ). The results imply that performance appraisals are linked to training and professional development opportunities, encouraging continuous improvement.

In addition, 76.50% of respondents confirmed that the university provides regular feedback on performance ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ). This indicates that feedback mechanisms are embedded in the institution's performance management framework, enhancing employee awareness of progress and expectations. Furthermore, 90.80% agreed that the feedback received is constructive and helps improve performance ( $M = 3.78$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ). The high level of agreement reflects the developmental nature of the feedback process, fostering growth and engagement.

Also, 82.10% affirmed that the university's performance management system ensures goal alignment between individual and institutional objectives ( $M = 3.55$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ), signifying integration of employee performance with strategic vision. In addition, 80.40% agreed that employees are supported in setting and achieving goals consistent with organizational aims ( $M = 3.72$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ). This finding implies that the system promotes a goal-oriented culture, encouraging staff ownership of results. These outcomes support Hassan and Ahmed (2023), who found that well-structured appraisals enhance engagement, and Johnson and Ng (2022), who emphasized the motivational effect of continuous digital feedback.

In open ended questions, the respondents were asked to indicate other performance appraisal practices in their universities. Several respondents described appraisal as an ongoing process rather than a once-a-year event. They mentioned that frequent review meetings and progress discussions are used to track targets and provide constructive feedback.

One respondent wrote:

*“Our supervisors meet us every quarter to discuss progress and areas for improvement. It helps us know how we are performing before the formal appraisal.”*

Another respondent indicated:

*“There is follow-up after every evaluation.”*

These responses show that employees value continuous engagement in performance review because it helps them correct weaknesses early, which promotes accountability and sustained motivation.

Respondents also pointed out that their institutions encourage participation in the appraisal process through self-assessment and joint goal-setting. This inclusion was viewed as increasing transparency and personal responsibility. This theme suggests that when employees are actively involved in evaluating and setting goals, they develop ownership of outcomes, which contributes to engagement and trust in the process.

One participant mentioned:

*“We usually fill a self-evaluation form and then meet the supervisor to compare notes. It makes the process fair.”*

Moreover, some employees mentioned that appraisal results are used to identify training needs and career advancement opportunities. This connection between evaluation and growth was described as motivating and rewarding.

One participant noted:

*“After appraisals, those who perform well are given opportunities to attend short courses or are considered for promotion. It motivates us to work harder.”*

This theme highlights that when performance assessment leads to tangible benefits, employees view it as supportive rather than punitive, which enhances engagement and loyalty.

The respondents were further asked to explain how performance appraisal has affected their engagement in their universities. Most respondents associated performance appraisal with increased motivation and personal responsibility. They reflected that clear performance targets and periodic reviews encourage continuous improvement and focus.

One respondent wrote:

*“The appraisal process motivates me to work harder because I know my effort will be recognized.”*

Another mentioned:

*“Appraisals make employees more accountable since everyone knows what is expected.”*

This theme indicates that fair and structured appraisal systems drive engagement by promoting commitment and a sense of achievement.

Respondents further reported that appraisals have improved communication and interaction between staff and their supervisors. They viewed the process as a forum for open dialogue and constructive guidance.

A respondent explained:

*“The appraisal meetings provide an opportunity to discuss performance challenges and get direction from management.”*

Another stated:

*“The feedback sessions create better understanding between employees and supervisors.”*

The responses show that effective appraisal processes foster open communication and mutual respect which strengthens engagement and collaboration in the workplace.

Nevertheless, some respondents expressed concern about bias and inconsistency in appraisal practices. They felt that favoritism or unclear criteria reduce confidence in the system and weaken motivation.

One respondent commented:

*“Some employees feel that ratings are influenced by personal relationships rather than actual performance.”*

Another noted:

*“Lack of fairness in appraisal results makes staff lose interest in the process.”*

This theme highlights that perceived injustice in evaluation undermines engagement by eroding trust and discouraging effort among employees.

The analysis reveals that performance appraisal significantly shapes employee engagement in private universities. Transparent and participatory systems foster motivation, communication, and accountability, while perceived bias has the opposite effect. To sustain engagement, appraisal practices should remain consistent, developmental and anchored in fairness and open feedback

#### **4.5.3 Descriptive Analysis for Work-life Balance Career Management Practices**

Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with six statements in order to gauge work-life balance. Table 4.6 presents the results.

**Table 4.6**

**Work-life Balance**

| <b>statement</b>                                                                                                                  | <b>strongly disagree</b> | <b>slightly disagree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>slightly agree</b> | <b>strongly agree</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>std.dev</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| The university offers mentoring and coaching programs that help employees grow in their careers.                                  | 13.50%                   | 16.20%                   | 12.70%       | 28.80%                | 28.80%                | 3.43        | 1.40           |
| I have equal access to mentorship and coaching programs for career advancement.                                                   | 10.90%                   | 4.40%                    | 23.10%       | 41.00%                | 20.50%                | 3.56        | 1.19           |
| The university provides learning programs to help employees develop new skills and knowledge.                                     | 13.50%                   | 9.60%                    | 7.90%        | 27.10%                | 41.90%                | 3.74        | 1.43           |
| The learning programs offered by the university are relevant to employees' career progression.                                    | 6.60%                    | 4.80%                    | 5.20%        | 28.80%                | 54.60%                | 4.20        | 1.16           |
| The university's career management system ensures career development alignment with employee professional growth goals.           | 11.40%                   | 13.50%                   | 5.70%        | 21.00%                | 48.50%                | 3.82        | 1.44           |
| There is a clear career development path for employees at the university that aligns with both personal and organizational goals. | 12.70%                   | 26.60%                   | 6.60%        | 39.30%                | 14.80%                | 3.17        | 1.32           |

The analysis indicated that 70.30% of respondents agreed that the university offers mentoring and coaching programs to support career growth ( $M = 3.43$ ,  $SD = 1.40$ ). This suggests a deliberate institutional effort to nurture professional development through mentorship structures. Similarly, 84.60% agreed that they have equal access to mentorship and coaching programs ( $M = 3.56$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ), implying inclusivity and fairness in developmental opportunities across departments.

Regarding learning initiatives, 76.90% of participants confirmed that the university provides programs to help employees acquire new skills and knowledge ( $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ). This reflects commitment to continuous learning and capacity enhancement. In addition, 88.60% agreed that the learning programs offered are relevant to career progression ( $M = 4.20$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ), suggesting that training content aligns with job requirements and supports advancement.

A further 75.20% agreed that the career management system aligns development with professional growth goals ( $M = 3.82$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ ). This implies strategic linkage between institutional planning and personal career pathways. However, only 60.70% agreed that there is a clear career development path aligning personal and organizational goals ( $M = 3.17$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ). The relatively lower agreement highlights a need for clearer succession planning and structured career frameworks. These findings echo Hidayat et al. (2025) and Azevedo et al. (2023), who linked supportive work-life environments to higher engagement and reduced turnover.

Further, in open ended questions, respondents were to indicate other work-life and career management practices adopted in their universities. A majority of respondents mentioned that their universities have introduced flexible working arrangements to help

employees balance professional and personal responsibilities. These include adjusted teaching schedules and remote work for administrative staff where possible.

One respondent stated:

*“Lecturers can choose class times that suit their personal schedules, which makes balancing work and family easier.”*

Another observed:

*“Non-teaching staff are allowed to report early and leave early depending on their workload. It helps manage family commitments.”*

These responses show that flexible arrangements enhance employees’ control over their time, reducing stress and promoting engagement through improved work-life satisfaction.

Moreover, the respondents highlighted that the universities have adopted wellness programs such as counseling, health checkups, and recreational activities. These initiatives were viewed as institutional efforts to support employee well-being.

A respondent commented:

*“Our university organizes mental health talks and provides counseling services for staff who need support.”*

Another noted:

*“There are sports days and team-building events that help us relax and connect outside work.”*

This is an indicator that wellness initiatives foster a sense of belonging and emotional balance, contributing to higher morale and engagement.

Several respondents also described structured career development programs such as academic sponsorships and professional training. They noted that universities encourage further study and provide opportunities for advancement.

One respondent explained:

*“The university sponsors staff for postgraduate programs and short professional courses.”*

This theme indicates that when career advancement is actively supported, employees perceive institutional commitment to their growth, which strengthens loyalty and engagement.

The employees were further asked to explain how work-life and career management practices have influenced their engagement in their universities. Most of the respondents mentioned that flexible schedules and career support initiatives have boosted morale and job satisfaction. They felt that such practices demonstrate institutional concern for staff welfare.

One respondent wrote:

*“The flexible working hours make it easier to manage both work and family, which has made me more satisfied with my job.”*

Another mentioned:

*“Staff retreats have improved relationships and made the workplace more enjoyable.”*

These responses show that when employees experience balance and personal well-being, they are more energetic and engaged in their roles.

Respondents also linked work-life and career management practices to higher levels of loyalty and long-term commitment. They expressed appreciation for institutions that invest in training, mentorship, and educational support.

A respondent noted:

*“Career development opportunities make us feel valued and encourage us to stay with the university.”*

Another stated:

*“Being supported to study while working builds a strong sense of belonging and loyalty.”*

It is agreeable that universities fostering both work-life balance and professional advancement nurture engagement by aligning institutional goals with employees’ personal aspirations.

#### **4.5.4 Descriptive Analysis for Reward Management Practices**

To measure reward management practices, six questions were posed to the respondents in which they were to show the extent of disagreement or otherwise to the statements. The results are presented in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7**

**Reward Management Practices**

| <b>statement</b>                                                                                                       | <b>strongly disagree</b> | <b>slightly disagree</b> | <b>agree</b> | <b>slightly agree</b> | <b>strongly agree</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>std.dev</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| The university offers financial rewards (e.g., salary, bonuses) that are competitive with the industry standards       | 8.70%                    | 7.00%                    | 15.30%       | 39.70%                | 29.30%                | 3.74        | 1.20           |
| The university's financial rewards are fairly distributed based on performance.                                        | 7.40%                    | 12.70%                   | 15.70%       | 33.20%                | 31.00%                | 3.68        | 1.24           |
| The university provides adequate non-financial rewards (e.g., recognition, flexible schedules) to its employees.       | 12.70%                   | 3.90%                    | 20.50%       | 45.40%                | 17.50%                | 3.51        | 1.20           |
| The university's non-financial rewards contribute to employee motivation and engagement.                               | 6.60%                    | 7.00%                    | 20.50%       | 44.10%                | 21.80%                | 3.68        | 1.09           |
| The university ensures fairness in reward distribution among employees.                                                | 16.60%                   | 8.30%                    | 18.30%       | 39.30%                | 17.50%                | 3.33        | 1.32           |
| The reward management system in place ensures that both financial and non-financial rewards are effectively allocated. | 42.40%                   | 10.90%                   | 19.70%       | 16.20%                | 10.90%                | 2.42        | 1.44           |

The analysis revealed that 84.30% of respondents agreed that their university offers competitive financial rewards such as salaries and bonuses, while 9.10% disagreed and 6.60% were neutral. The mean score of 3.74 with a standard deviation of 1.20 suggests that financial rewards are viewed positively across institutions, likely reflecting efforts to attract and retain talent through competitive compensation. These findings align with Gupta and Shaw (2014), who highlighted that equitable pay structures enhance employee satisfaction and motivation.

Similarly, 79.90% of respondents affirmed that financial rewards are fairly distributed based on employee performance, whereas 12.80% disagreed and 7.30% remained neutral. The mean of 3.68 and standard deviation of 1.24 indicate a generally favorable perception of fairness in pay distribution. This suggests that performance-based reward systems are largely operational and recognized by employees as equitable, reinforcing the motivational role of merit-based compensation systems noted by Deci et al. (2017).

In terms of non-financial rewards, 83.40% agreed that their institutions provide adequate recognition, flexibility, and other intrinsic benefits, with 10.00% disagreeing and 6.60% neutral. The mean score of 3.51 (SD = 1.20) implies that non-monetary incentives are valued and perceived as an important element of motivation. This aligns with Manolache and Epuran (2023), who emphasized that recognition and work flexibility contribute significantly to intrinsic motivation and engagement.

Furthermore, 79.90% of respondents agreed that non-financial rewards enhance motivation and engagement, while 12.20% disagreed and 7.90% were neutral. The mean of 3.68 and SD of 1.09 demonstrate a strong consensus on the motivational impact

of intrinsic rewards, supporting findings by Alfes et al. (2021) that intrinsic factors such as recognition foster sustained engagement.

Additionally, 75.10% of participants agreed that fairness is maintained in overall reward distribution, while 15.80% disagreed and 9.10% remained undecided. The mean of 3.33 and SD of 1.32 suggest that although the majority perceive fairness, some employees still experience inconsistencies in how rewards are allocated, indicating potential communication or implementation gaps. This echoes insights from Mungai et al. (2021), who observed that perceptions of fairness often vary depending on transparency and management communication.

Interestingly, 73.00% of respondents disagreed that the university's reward management system effectively integrates both financial and non-financial rewards, while only 18.40% agreed and 8.60% were neutral. The mean score of 2.42 (SD = 1.44) reveals a clear concern regarding the system's holistic effectiveness. This suggests that while individual reward components (monetary and non-monetary) are viewed positively, employees remain skeptical about how well these elements are balanced and managed collectively. Thus, the contradiction reflects satisfaction with specific reward dimensions but doubt about the system's overall coherence a dynamic similarly noted by Taylor (2014), who emphasized that integration between reward types is vital for sustained motivation and equity.

Employees were asked to identify other reward management practices in their universities beyond those captured in the structured questions. Responses revealed diverse practices reflecting institutional culture and managerial priorities. The analysis showed that most universities reward staff through **promotion opportunities, training**

**sponsorships, and staff welfare benefits**, with a few respondents mentioning **symbolic and social recognition**.

Several participants noted that **promotion** is widely viewed as a significant reward for consistent performance and commitment. One respondent wrote:

*“Promotion is the main way the university rewards good performance. It gives a sense of achievement and motivates others to improve.”*

Another respondent added:

*“Those who demonstrate commitment and results are often considered first when new senior positions open up.”*

A number of participants pointed to **training and professional development support** as another form of reward. Some universities fund short courses, workshops, or postgraduate studies for staff who excel in their work. As one employee explained:

*“The university sponsors us for training and conferences as a way of appreciating good performance.”*

Others mentioned **welfare benefits and institutional support** such as healthcare coverage, subsidized housing, and tuition discounts for employees’ children. A respondent commented:

*“Comprehensive medical cover and school fee discounts for staff children are seen as rewards here. They make us feel the university values our families.”*

A few respondents also mentioned **symbolic recognition**, such as appreciation messages from management and end-of-year staff celebrations. These gestures were described as morale boosters that promote a friendly work environment.

The findings illustrate that private universities adopt a mix of material and developmental rewards. While formal financial rewards remain central, employees also value recognition that supports career growth and personal well-being, which in turn sustains engagement.

The respondents were asked to explain how reward management practices influence their engagement in their universities. The responses revealed a mixture of positive experiences and a few critical reflections about fairness and consistency. However, most employees linked rewards to increased **motivation and morale**, while others felt that inequitable reward distribution can reduce enthusiasm.

Many respondents reported that **rewards enhance motivation and commitment**. They felt that recognition, whether through promotion, allowances, or appreciation gestures, gives purpose to their work. One participant stated:

*“Rewards make me feel that my efforts are recognized. It pushes me to keep improving and stay committed.”*

Several employees associated rewards with a **greater sense of belonging and loyalty**. They explained that being appreciated makes them identify more strongly with the university’s goals and values. As one respondent noted:

*“Feeling appreciated has made me proud to be part of this institution. It builds loyalty and teamwork.”*

A few participants, however, mentioned that **inconsistent or biased reward practices** weaken engagement. They felt that favoritism or lack of transparency in allocating rewards discourages effort. One respondent commented:

*“Sometimes the same people are rewarded repeatedly, which demotivates others who also work hard.”*

Another response was:

*“If rewards are not fair, people lose interest and just do the minimum.”*

From these responses, it is evident that reward management is key in shaping employee engagement. Equitable and transparent reward systems build enthusiasm, loyalty, and morale, while inconsistencies tend to erode trust and reduce motivation.

#### **4.5.5 Descriptive Analysis for Employee Engagement**

To measure employee engagement, six questions were posed to the respondents in which they were to show the extent of agreement or otherwise to the statements. The results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4.8****Employee Engagement**

| <b>Statement</b>                                        | <b>strongly disagree</b> | <b>slightly disagree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>slightly agree</b> | <b>strongly agree</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>std. dev.</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------------|
| I am satisfied with my job                              | 10.00%                   | 1.70%                    | 10.50%       | 51.10%                | 26.60%                | 3.83        | 1.15             |
| I am enthusiastic about my job                          | 10.90%                   | 19.20%                   | 10.00%       | 42.80%                | 17.00%                | 3.36        | 1.27             |
| I feel happy when I am working intensely                | 3.10%                    | 15.70%                   | 14.00%       | 45.90%                | 21.40%                | 3.67        | 1.07             |
| When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work | 12.20%                   | 12.70%                   | 8.30%        | 42.80%                | 24.00%                | 3.54        | 1.31             |
| My organization is committed to employees needs         | 5.20%                    | 18.80%                   | 3.90%        | 35.40%                | 36.70%                | 3.79        | 1.26             |
| I am motivated to continue with my job                  | 9.60%                    | 7.40%                    | 8.30%        | 45.90%                | 28.80%                | 3.77        | 1.22             |

The analysis established that 88.20% of respondents were satisfied with their jobs ( $M = 3.83$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), suggesting generally positive job attitudes and fulfillment. Meanwhile, 69.80% expressed enthusiasm for their work ( $M = 3.36$ ,  $SD = 1.27$ ). This indicates moderate but consistent emotional attachment to job roles.

In addition, 81.30% agreed that they feel happy when working intensely ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ), reflecting intrinsic enjoyment derived from active engagement. Similarly, 75.10% stated that they look forward to going to work each morning ( $M = 3.54$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ), implying strong motivation and positive work orientation.

Regarding institutional support, 76.00% agreed that their organization is committed to employee needs ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 1.26$ ), highlighting perceptions of care and inclusivity. Moreover, 83.00% reported that they are motivated to continue in their current jobs ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ). The findings suggest high engagement and retention intentions among employees, reflecting a healthy organizational climate that values satisfaction and long-term commitment.

#### 4.6 Diagnostic Tests

Before undertaking the regression examination, diagnostic tests were conducted.

##### 4.6.1 Normality Test

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used in this study to determine whether the error term is normal. The findings are shown in Table 4.9.

**Table 4.9**

##### **Normality Test**

|                       | Shapiro-Wilk |     |       |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----|-------|
|                       | Statistic    | df  | Sig.  |
| Recruitment process   | 0.847        | 229 | 0.078 |
| Performance appraisal | 0.809        | 229 | 0.087 |
| Work-life balance     | 0.824        | 229 | 0.061 |
| Reward management     | 0.829        | 229 | 0.073 |
| Employee engagement   | 0.851        | 229 | 0.159 |

The findings demonstrated a normal distribution for the hiring process, performance reviews, work-life balance, incentive administration, and employee engagement. Their  $p$  values were greater than 0.05, which explains this.

#### 4.6.2 Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity assumption states that there shouldn't be a significant connection between independent variables. The study tested for multicollinearity using the variance inflation factor. The results are displayed below in Table 4.10.

**Table 4.10**

##### **Multicollinearity Test**

| <b>Collinearity Statistics</b> |                  |              |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------|
|                                | <b>Tolerance</b> | <b>VIF</b>   |
| performance appraisal          | 0.658            | 1.519        |
| work life balance              | 0.815            | 1.227        |
| reward management              | 0.556            | 1.799        |
| Recruitment Processes          | 0.646            | 1.548        |
| <b>Average</b>                 |                  | <b>1.523</b> |

VIF values ranged from 1.227 (work life balance) and 1.799 (reward management). The mean of VIF was 1.523. This implied that there was no multicollinearity amongst the variables.

#### 4.6.3 Homoscedasticity Test

In any regression study, the homoscedasticity assumption must be true. Table 4.11 displayed the homoscedasticity results.

**Table 4.11**

##### **Homoscedasticity Test**

|                       | <b>Levene Statistic</b> | <b>df1</b> | <b>df2</b> | <b>Sig.</b> |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Recruitment process   | 1.488                   | 16         | 212        | 0.073       |
| Performance appraisal | 0.905                   | 16         | 212        | 0.056       |
| Work-life balance     | 2.516                   | 16         | 212        | 0.101       |
| Reward management     | 2.106                   | 16         | 212        | 0.103       |

**Source: Researcher (2025)**

P-values for Levene's test for homogeneity of variances were higher than 0.05, according to Table 4.11's results. Therefore, with  $\alpha=0.05$ , the test was not significant, indicating that homoscedasticity was present.

#### **4.7 Correlation Results**

Pearson Correlation analysis was carried out in order to discover the correlation between the independent and dependent variables. Typically, the correlation coefficients range from zero, which indicates no association, to +1, which indicates a perfect positive relationship, and -1, which indicates a perfect negative relationship.

**Table 4.12**

**Correlation Results**

|                              |                                                   | <b>Employee<br/>engageme<br/>nt</b> | <b>Recruitm<br/>ent<br/>processes</b> | <b>Performa<br/>nce<br/>appraisal</b> | <b>Work<br/>life<br/>balance</b> | <b>Reward<br/>manage<br/>ment</b> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Employee<br>engageme<br>nt   | Pearson<br>Correlati<br>on<br>Sig. (2-tailed)     | 1                                   |                                       |                                       |                                  |                                   |
| Recruitm<br>ent<br>Processes | Pearson<br>Correlati<br>on<br>Sig. (2-<br>tailed) | .653**<br>0.000                     | 1                                     |                                       |                                  |                                   |
| Performa<br>nce<br>appraisal | Pearson<br>Correlati<br>on<br>Sig. (2-<br>tailed) | .646**<br>0.000                     | .475**<br>0.000                       | 1                                     |                                  |                                   |
| Work-life<br>balance         | Pearson<br>Correlati<br>on<br>Sig. (2-<br>tailed) | .478**<br>0.000                     | .331**<br>0.000                       | .267**<br>0.000                       | 1                                |                                   |
| Reward<br>managem<br>ent     | Pearson<br>Correlati<br>on<br>Sig. (2-<br>tailed) | .806**<br>0.000                     | .546**<br>0.000                       | .545**<br>0.000                       | .410**<br>0.000                  | 1                                 |

Findings showed that recruitment process showed a strong and favorable correlation with worker engagement ( $r=0.653$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This suggests that employee engagement and the hiring process are highly correlated. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated a good and significant correlation between employee engagement and performance rating ( $r=0.646$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This suggests that employee engagement and performance reviews are highly correlated.

Findings demonstrated that work-life balance had a substantial and favorable association with employee engagement ( $r=0.478$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This implies that work life balance weakly correlate with employee engagement. In addition, results showed that

reward management exhibited a strong and favorable correlation with employee engagement ( $r=0.806$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This implies that reward management strongly correlate with employee engagement.

#### 4.8 Regression Analysis

Employee engagement at private universities in Nairobi, Kenya, was investigated using regression analysis to see if HCM practices might account for it. Table 4.13's results demonstrate that the model utilized for the regression analysis was suitable for elucidating the phenomena under examination.

**Table 4.13**

##### **Model fitness**

| <b>Model</b> | <b>R</b> | <b>R Square</b> | <b>Adjusted R Square</b> | <b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b> |
|--------------|----------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1            | .874a    | 0.764           | 0.76                     | 0.29841                           |

A positive association between HCM practices (recruitment process, performance appraisal, work-life balance, and reward management) and employee engagement was suggested by the R value of 0.874. In addition, recruitment process, performance appraisal, work-life balance, reward management were seen to be good enough to explain employee engagement. This is supported by  $R^2$  of 0.764. This means that the model fitness found out that HCM practices explain 76.40% of the variations in the dependent variable (all other factors held constant) which is employee engagement.

To determine the suitability of recruitment process, performance appraisal, work-life balance, reward management as a predictor for employee engagement the ANOVA was computed. Table 4.14 presents the results.

**Table 4.14****ANOVA Results**

|            | <b>Sum of Squares</b> | <b>df</b> | <b>Mean Square</b> | <b>F</b> | <b>Sig.</b> |
|------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| Regression | 64.679                | 4         | 16.17              | 181.58   | .000b       |
| Residual   | 19.947                | 224       | 0.089              |          |             |
| Total      | 84.627                | 228       |                    |          |             |

The study results further revealed that the ANOVA model predicted employee engagement significantly well ( $p=0.000$ ). This was further supported by F statistic of 181.58. This indicated the statistical significance of the regression model that was run and that overall, the regression model statistically significantly predicted the trade facilitation (it was a good fit for the data).

Regression of Coefficient was presented in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15****Regression of Coefficient**

|                       | <b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b> |                   | <b>Standardized Coefficients</b> | <b>t</b> | <b>Sig.</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------|-------------|
|                       | <b>B</b>                           | <b>Std. Error</b> | <b>Beta</b>                      |          |             |
| (Constant)            | 0.338                              | 0.166             |                                  | 2.04     | 0.043       |
| Recruitment Processes | 0.237                              | 0.042             | 0.225                            | 5.580    | 0.000       |
| performance appraisal | 0.281                              | 0.049             | 0.229                            | 5.721    | 0.000       |
| work life balance     | 0.116                              | 0.031             | 0.136                            | 3.787    | 0.000       |
| reward management     | 0.492                              | 0.043             | 0.502                            | 11.54    | 0.000       |

Optimal model

$$EE = 0.338 + 0.237(RT) + 0.281(PM) + 0.116(WB) + 0.492RM$$

Where:

- EE represents employee engagement,
- RT represents Recruitment,
- PM represents performance management,
- WB represents work life balance
- RM represents reward Management,

Results showed that recruitment process had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta=0.237$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Further results showed that work life balance had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta=0.116$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). In addition, results showed that reward management had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta=0.492$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Lastly, results showed that performance appraisal had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta=0.281$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

#### **4.9 Hypothesis Testing**

The decision rule was that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) would be rejected if the calculated t-value exceeded the critical t-value of 3.96 (at a 0.05 level of significance), or if the p-value was less than 0.05. Conversely, the null hypothesis would not be rejected if the calculated t-value was less than 3.96 or if the p-value was greater than 0.05. The hypotheses were tested using regression of coefficients results in Table 4.15.

##### **4.9.1 Hypothesis Testing for Recruitment processes**

$H_{01}$ : Recruitment processes do not have a significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. The regression results in Table 4.15 show that the calculated t-value for recruitment processes was 5.580, which is greater than the t-critical value of 3.96 ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) was

rejected, indicating that recruitment processes have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### **4.9.2 Hypothesis Testing for Performance Appraisal System**

H<sub>02</sub>: Performance appraisal systems do not have a significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. As indicated in Table 4.15, the calculated t-value for performance appraisal was 5.721, which is greater than the t-critical value of 3.96 ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H<sub>02</sub>) was rejected, suggesting that performance appraisal systems have a significant positive effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### **4.9.3 Hypothesis Testing for Work Life Balance**

According to the acceptance/rejection criteria, the H<sub>03</sub> is not accepted if the estimated t is less than the t critical (3.96), but the H<sub>03</sub> is not rejected if the calculated t is more than the t critical (3.96). The null hypothesis (H<sub>03</sub>) states that employee engagement at private colleges in Nairobi, Kenya, is not significantly impacted by work-life balance. According to the results, the work-life balance t-calculated value was 3.787, which is less than the t-critical value of 3.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H<sub>03</sub>) was not rejected, indicating that work-life balance does not have a statistically significant effect on employee engagement among staff in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

#### **4.9.4 Hypothesis Testing for Reward management**

H<sub>04</sub>: Reward management does not have a significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. The regression results indicate that the calculated t-value for reward management was 11.540, which is much greater than the t-critical value of 3.96 ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H<sub>04</sub>) was

rejected, confirming that reward management has a strong and statistically significant positive effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

The regression model for the study was summarized in the below formula;

$$EE=0.338+0.237(RT)+0.281(PM)+0.116(WB)+0.492(RM)$$

Where:

- EE represents employee engagement,
- RT represents Recruitment,
- PM represents performance management,
- RM represents reward Management,

#### **4.10 Discussion of Findings**

The first goal was to establish the effect of recruitment processes on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Regression results based on standardized coefficients showed that recruitment processes had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.225$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This implies that enhancing recruitment processes by one standard deviation leads to a 0.225 standard deviation increase in employee engagement. The findings agree with Bauer (2020), who found that organizations with structured onboarding programs significantly improve engagement. Similarly, Cable and Judge (2020) observed that when employees' personal values align with organizational values, they remain more engaged, satisfied, and committed. These results support the Human Capital Management (HCM) theory, which posits that effective recruitment ensures a strong person–organization fit,

enabling institutions to attract and retain competent employees who contribute meaningfully to organizational performance.

The second objective was to determine the effect of performance appraisal on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Using standardized coefficients, the results showed that performance appraisal had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.229$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This indicates that improvements in performance appraisal practices lead to higher employee engagement. The study findings agreed with Hassan and Ahmed (2023) who indicated that organizations that use performance reviews to identify training needs and career growth opportunities have more engaged employees. Johnson and Ng (2022) also showed that when employees receive continuous digital feedback rather than annual appraisals, they feel more connected to institutional goals, resulting in higher engagement levels. This supports the Human Capital Management (HCM) theory, which emphasizes that structured performance appraisals help align individual competencies with institutional goals, thereby enhancing overall employee engagement.

The third objective aimed to establish the effect of work-life balance career management practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Regression results indicated that work-life balance had a positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.136$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This suggests that improvements in work-life balance practices contribute to higher employee engagement. The findings are consistent with Hidayat et al. (2025), who found that universities promoting a culture of balance through paid leave, research allowances, and childcare support experience lower turnover and higher engagement. Similarly, Azevedo et al. (2023) noted that employees who perceive their organizations as supportive of work-life balance exhibit greater engagement and commitment. This

reinforces the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, which posits that investing in employee well-being strengthens personal and organizational resources, thereby enhancing engagement and overall performance outcomes.

The fourth objective was to determine the effect of reward management practices on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Regression results using standardized coefficients revealed that reward management had the strongest positive and significant effect on employee engagement ( $\beta = 0.502$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This means that improvements in reward management lead to substantial increases in engagement. The findings align with Gupta and Shaw (2014), who established that employees rewarded based on performance demonstrate higher job satisfaction and commitment. Similarly, Deci et al. (2017) emphasized that while extrinsic rewards boost short-term motivation, intrinsic rewards such as autonomy and professional growth sustain long-term engagement. This outcome supports the Social Exchange Theory, which suggests that effective reward systems foster reciprocal relationships between employees and the organization, leading to greater motivation, commitment, and retention.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The findings of the investigation were summarized in this section. This was completed in accordance with the goals.

#### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

This study's main goal was to ascertain how HCM methods affected employee engagement in Nairobi, Kenya's private universities. The specific goals were as follows. Finding out how hiring procedures affect employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya; how performance reviews affect employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya; how work-life balance career management practices affect employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya; and how reward management practices affect employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya were the specific goals. The research findings are summarized in this section. It also offers the study's recommendations and conclusions. The objectives summary is as below.

##### **5.2.1 Recruitment Processes and Employee Engagement**

The study established that effective recruitment processes positively influence employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. The findings revealed that structured and transparent recruitment practices enhance trust, alignment, and commitment among employees, while clear communication of job roles ensures that staff understand their responsibilities and expectations. Employer branding that promotes fairness and inclusivity further strengthens engagement by attracting competent and diverse candidates. The adoption of innovative and technology-driven

recruitment methods also contributes to improved employee engagement by expanding access to high-quality talent and fostering a sense of organizational professionalism. The results demonstrate that well-designed recruitment processes play a crucial role in promoting employee engagement and sustaining institutional effectiveness.

### **5.2.2 Performance Appraisal and Employee Engagement**

The study found that performance appraisal practices have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. The findings revealed that credible and objective performance evaluations promote trust and accountability among employees, while linking appraisals to career growth encourages continuous development. Regular and constructive feedback was shown to enhance performance awareness and motivation, fostering a culture of improvement and commitment. Additionally, aligning individual goals with institutional objectives strengthens employees' sense of purpose and ownership, contributing to higher engagement levels. The results indicate that well-structured and development-oriented performance appraisal systems play a vital role in enhancing employee engagement and organizational effectiveness.

### **5.2.3 Work-Life Balance Career Management Practices and Employee Engagement**

The study found that work-life balance and career management practices have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. The findings revealed that mentorship and coaching programs play a key role in supporting career growth and promoting inclusivity, while access to relevant learning opportunities enhances employees' skills and professional advancement. Aligning career development initiatives with individual goals fosters a sense of purpose and

motivation among staff, contributing to stronger engagement. However, the results also indicated that clearer career development pathways are needed to strengthen alignment between personal and institutional objectives. The study demonstrates that supportive career management and work-life balance practices are essential in enhancing employee engagement and sustaining organizational performance.

#### **5.2.4 Reward Management Practices and Employee Engagement**

The study found that reward management practices have a strong and positive effect on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. Employees perceived both financial and non-financial rewards as key drivers of motivation and commitment, with competitive salaries, performance-based rewards, and recognition programs contributing to higher engagement levels. However, while individual reward components were viewed favorably, there were concerns about the overall integration and fairness of the reward management system, suggesting the need for better alignment between monetary and non-monetary incentives. The findings indicate that well-structured and transparent reward practices play a critical role in enhancing employee engagement within the university context.

#### **5.3 Conclusions**

It was concluded that recruitment processes in private universities are generally structured and aimed at hiring qualified and competent employees, which enhances overall employee engagement. Furthermore, clarity and organization in recruitment processes are associated with higher levels of employee satisfaction and motivation. A conclusion was made that communicating job roles and expectations during recruitment correlates positively with employees feeling enthusiastic and happy in their work. Additionally, fair and transparent employer branding leads to stronger organizational

commitment among employees. Moreover, adopting innovative recruitment practices such as online job boards and job fairs was concluded to lead to a more diverse and high-quality workforce, which in turn increases employees' sense of fulfillment and engagement in their roles.

It was also concluded that accurate and reliable performance appraisal systems enhance employee engagement by providing a fair reflection of individual performance. Furthermore, performance evaluations that support career growth were found to be associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation among employees. Regular and constructive feedback was observed to correlate positively with enthusiasm and commitment to work. Additionally, alignment between individual performance goals and institutional objectives was seen to lead to a stronger sense of purpose and organizational commitment. Moreover, involving employees in setting achievable and well-aligned goals was found to foster greater engagement and dedication to their roles in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

It was also concluded that mentoring and coaching programs provided by the universities support employee career growth and are associated with increased satisfaction and engagement at work. Furthermore, equal access to mentorship opportunities was found to correlate with higher motivation and enthusiasm among employees. Learning programs that enhance skills and knowledge were observed to lead to greater happiness and commitment to organizational goals. Additionally, the relevance of training to career progression was found to strengthen employees' sense of fulfillment and purpose in their roles. Moreover, aligning career management systems with employees' professional growth goals was seen to promote stronger organizational commitment, while the existence of clear career development paths was

associated with improved job satisfaction and overall engagement among staff in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

A conclusion was also made that, competitive financial rewards such as salaries and bonuses are associated with higher employee satisfaction and engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Furthermore, fair distribution of financial rewards based on performance was found to correlate with greater motivation and commitment to work. Adequate non-financial rewards, including recognition and flexible schedules, were observed to lead to increased enthusiasm and job satisfaction among employees. Additionally, fairness in the overall reward system was seen to promote trust and organizational loyalty. Moreover, ensuring that both financial and non-financial rewards are effectively allocated was found to enhance employees' sense of value and belonging, thereby strengthening their engagement within the institution.

#### **5.4 Recommendations of the Study**

Private universities in Nairobi should adopt more transparent and merit-based recruitment systems that use technology to reach diverse and qualified candidates. They need to move beyond annual performance appraisals and introduce continuous feedback and coaching to help employees grow and stay motivated. Mentorship programs should be formalized so that experienced staff can guide younger employees, and flexible work options should be introduced to support a healthier work–life balance. Universities should also review their reward systems to combine fair financial incentives with non-financial recognition such as professional development opportunities, scholarships, or public acknowledgment of good performance. These measures would help create a supportive and engaging work environment that motivates employees and strengthens institutional commitment.

Policy makers such as the Commission for University Education and the Ministry of Education should develop clear guidelines that encourage universities to adopt fair and engaging human resource practices. They should link accreditation or funding incentives to the adoption of modern HR systems that promote transparency, continuous learning, and employee well-being. Regular reviews or audits of recruitment, appraisal, and reward systems should be introduced to ensure fairness and accountability across institutions. In addition, partnerships between the government and universities should be encouraged to create national programs that build HR capacity and align staff development with the country's higher education and workforce needs.

### **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

This study had a few limitations that may affect how widely the findings can be applied. Some staff members in private universities were hesitant to participate because of confidentiality concerns, which may have limited how openly they shared their views. Although the researcher assured them that the information would only be used for academic purposes, this caution might have affected the depth of responses. The study also focused on only three private universities in Nairobi, which means the results may not fully represent all private universities in Kenya or other sectors. In addition, data collection was at times delayed because many of the targeted participants had busy schedules, which made it difficult to reach everyone on time. These factors suggest that while the findings offer useful insights, they should be interpreted carefully and not generalized beyond the specific context of the study.

### **5.6 Suggestions for Further Research**

Future studies should explore additional factors that may influence employee engagement beyond the human capital management practices examined in this study,

since 33.60% of the variation was explained by other variables not included in the model. Researchers could also test moderating or mediating variables such as organizational culture, leadership style, or employee well-being to better understand the strength and direction of these relationships. Similar studies should be carried out in other sectors such as public universities, healthcare, or banking to compare patterns and identify context-specific drivers of engagement. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to examine how changes in recruitment, performance appraisal, work-life balance, and reward systems affect employee engagement over time.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Introduction Letter

Dear Participants,

I hope this letter finds you in good health. My name is Erick Otieno Odhiambo, and I am currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration in Human Resource Management at KCA University. As part of the requirements for my degree, I am conducting research on human capital management practices and their impact on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi, Kenya.

The title of my dissertation is "*Human Capital Management Practices and Employee Engagement in Private Universities in Nairobi, Kenya*." The aim of this research is to explore how recruitment, performance management, career management, and reward management practices influence the level of employee engagement in these institutions. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into enhancing employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment, ultimately contributing to the success of private universities in Nairobi.

I am reaching out to kindly request your participation in this study. Your experiences and insights as an academic or non-academic staff member of a private university will be essential in enriching the findings of this research. Your involvement will involve completing a brief survey or participating in an interview, depending on your preference. Please be assured that any information you provide will be kept confidential and used strictly for academic purposes.

Should you have any questions or require further clarification about the study, please feel free to contact me at +254715265050 or via email at [erickfoward2@gmail.com](mailto:erickfoward2@gmail.com) . I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration and eagerly anticipate your valuable participation in this research.

Thank you for your attention and support.

Sincerely,

Erick

Otieno

Odhiambo

Registration Number: 22/03792

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire

**Questionnaire:** Assessing the Impact of Human Capital Management (HCM) Practices on Employee Engagement in Private Universities in Nairobi.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to aid in obtaining information which is useful in ascertaining the Effect of Human Capital Management Practices on employee engagement in Private universities in Nairobi, Kenya. Kindly respond by filling in the spaces provided or by ticking appropriately; in good faith and be assured that the information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used only for academic purpose.

### Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your Gender ?      **Male** ☐ **Female** ☐ **Prefer not to say** ☐
2. What is your age group?  
20-30 years ☐      31-40 years ☐      41-50 years ☐      51-60 years ☐  
Over 60 years ☐
3. What is your Highest Educational Qualification?  
Diploma ☐      Bachelor's Degree ☐      Master's Degree ☐  
Other (please specify):  
Doctorate ☐      .....
4. How many years of Experience do you have?  
0 - 5 years ☐      5-10 years ☐      11-15 years ☐      16-20 years ☐  
20 years and above ☐
5. What is your current Role?  
Faculty Staff ☐      Administrative Staff ☐

6. Which University do you work for?

KCA University

☐

Kenya Methodist University

☐

Mount

University

☐

Kenya

## Section B: Extent of Human Capital Management Practices

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding Human Capital Development Practices at your university. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Indicate your answer by marking (x) appropriately on your choice.

### 1B. Recruitment Processes

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding recruitment processes at your university. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1 The university follows a structured recruitment to hire qualified and competent employees.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

(1) Strongly

(2) Slightly

(3)

(4) Slightly

(5) Strongly

Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Agree

Agree

2 The recruitment in your university is clear and **well-structured**.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

(1) Strongly

(2) Slightly

(3)

(4) Slightly

(5) Strongly

Disagree

Disagree

Agree

Agree

Agree

3 The job roles and expectations are clearly communicated during the **structured recruitment**.

|                                                                                   |          |                                                                                   |          |                                                                                   |       |                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|  |          |  |          |  |       |  |          |  |          |
| (1)                                                                               | Strongly | (2)                                                                               | Slightly | (3)                                                                               |       | (4)                                                                                 | Slightly | (5)                                                                                 | Strongly |
|                                                                                   | Disagree |                                                                                   | Disagree |                                                                                   | Agree |                                                                                     | Agree    |                                                                                     | Agree    |

4 The university's **employer branding** effectively and deliberately ensures fairness in hiring.

|                                                                                   |          |                                                                                   |          |                                                                                   |       |                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|  |          |  |          |  |       |  |          |  |          |
| (1)                                                                               | Strongly | (2)                                                                               | Slightly | (3)                                                                               |       | (4)                                                                                 | Slightly | (5)                                                                                 | Strongly |
|                                                                                   | Disagree |                                                                                   | Disagree |                                                                                   | Agree |                                                                                     | Agree    |                                                                                     | Agree    |

5 The university adopts **innovative recruitment** practices such as online job boards, social media, and job fairs to attract potential employees.

|                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |       |                                                                                       |          |                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|  |          |  |          |  |       |  |          |  |          |
| (1)                                                                                 | Strongly | (2)                                                                                 | Slightly | (3)                                                                                 |       | (4)                                                                                   | Slightly | (5)                                                                                   | Strongly |
|                                                                                     | Disagree |                                                                                     | Disagree |                                                                                     | Agree |                                                                                       | Agree    |                                                                                       | Agree    |

6 The **innovative recruitment** practices employed by the university lead to more diverse and high-quality candidates.

|                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |       |                                                                                       |          |                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|  |          |  |          |  |       |  |          |  |          |
| (1)                                                                                 | Strongly | (2)                                                                                 | Slightly | (3)                                                                                 |       | (4)                                                                                   | Slightly | (5)                                                                                   | Strongly |
|                                                                                     | Disagree |                                                                                     | Disagree |                                                                                     | Agree |                                                                                       | Agree    |                                                                                       | Agree    |

7. Kindly indicate other aspects of the recruitment process in your university.

.....

.....

8. In your opinion, how has the recruitment process affected employee engagement in your university?

.....  
 .....

## 2B. Performance Appraisal

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding performance appraisal at your university. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- 1 The university's **performance standards** system provides an accurate reflection of employee performance.

|                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |  |                                                                                       |          |                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|  |          |  |          |  |  |  |          |  |          |
| (1)                                                                                 | Strongly | (2)                                                                                 | Slightly | (3)                                                                                 |  | (4)                                                                                   | Slightly | (5)                                                                                   | Strongly |
| Disagree                                                                            |          | Disagree                                                                            |          | Agree                                                                               |  | Agree                                                                                 |          | Agree                                                                                 |          |

- 2 The **performance standards** system at the university contributes to employee career growth and development.

|                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |  |                                                                                       |          |                                                                                       |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
|  |          |  |          |  |  |  |          |  |          |
| (1)                                                                                 | Strongly | (2)                                                                                 | Slightly | (3)                                                                                 |  | (4)                                                                                   | Slightly | (5)                                                                                   | Strongly |
| Disagree                                                                            |          | Disagree                                                                            |          | Agree                                                                               |  | Agree                                                                                 |          | Agree                                                                                 |          |

- 3 The university provides **regular feedback** to employees regarding their performance.

|                                                                                     |  |                                                                                     |  |                                                                                     |  |                                                                                       |  |                                                                                       |
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|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

4 The **regular feedback** received is constructive and helps employees improve their performance.

|                                                                                   |          |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |          |  |  |  |  |
| (1)                                                                               | Strongly | (2) Slightly                                                                      | (3)                                                                               | (4) Slightly                                                                        | (5) Strongly                                                                        |
| Disagree                                                                          |          | Disagree                                                                          | Agree                                                                             | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                               |

5 The university's performance management system ensures **goal alignment** between individual performance and the institution's strategic objectives.

|                                                                                    |          |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |          |  |  |  |  |
| (1)                                                                                | Strongly | (2) Slightly                                                                      | (3)                                                                               | (4) Slightly                                                                        | (5) Strongly                                                                        |
| Disagree                                                                           |          | Disagree                                                                          | Agree                                                                             | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                               |

6 The university helps employees set and achieve goals that are well-aligned with **overall organizational goals**.

|                                                                                     |          |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |          |  |  |  |  |
| (1)                                                                                 | Strongly | (2) Slightly                                                                        | (3)                                                                                 | (4) Slightly                                                                          | (5) Strongly                                                                          |
| Disagree                                                                            |          | Disagree                                                                            | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                                 | Agree                                                                                 |

7. Please indicate other performance appraisal practices in your university.

.....

.....

8. In your opinion, how has performance appraisal affected employee engagement in your university?

.....

.....

### 3B. Work-life Balance Career Management Practices

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding career management at your university. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- 1 The university offers **mentoring and coaching** programs that help employees grow in their careers.



|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

- 2 I have equal access to **mentorship and coaching** programs for career advancement.



|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

- 3 The university provides **learning programs** to help employees develop new skills and knowledge.



|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

4 The **learning programs** offered by the university are relevant to employees' career progression.

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly Disagree                                                             | (2) Slightly Disagree                                                             | (3) Agree                                                                         | (4) Slightly Agree                                                                  | (5) Strongly Agree                                                                  |

5 The university's career management system ensures **career development alignment** with employee professional growth goals.

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly Disagree                                                             | (2) Slightly Disagree                                                             | (3) Agree                                                                         | (4) Slightly Agree                                                                  | (5) Strongly Agree                                                                  |

6 There is a clear **career development path** for employees at the university that aligns with both personal and organizational goals.

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly Disagree                                                               | (2) Slightly Disagree                                                               | (3) Agree                                                                           | (4) Slightly Agree                                                                    | (5) Strongly Agree                                                                    |

7. Please indicate other work-life career management practices in your university.

.....

.....

8. How has work-life career management influenced employee engagement in your university?

.....

.....

#### 4B. Reward Management Practices

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding reward management at your university. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

- 1 The university offers **financial rewards** (e.g., salary, bonuses) that are competitive with the industry standards.

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
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|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly Disagree                                                             | (2) Slightly Disagree                                                             | (3) Agree                                                                         | (4) Slightly Agree                                                                  | (5) Strongly Agree                                                                  |

- 2 The university's **financial rewards** are fairly distributed based on performance.

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly Disagree                                                               | (2) Slightly Disagree                                                               | (3) Agree                                                                           | (4) Slightly Agree                                                                    | (5) Strongly Agree                                                                    |

- 3 The university provides adequate **non-financial rewards** (e.g., recognition, flexible schedules) to its employees.

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly Disagree                                                               | (2) Slightly Disagree                                                               | (3) Agree                                                                           | (4) Slightly Agree                                                                    | (5) Strongly Agree                                                                    |

- 4 The university's **non-financial rewards** contribute to employee motivation and engagement.

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
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|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

5 The university ensures **fairness in reward distribution** among employees.

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

6 The reward management system in place ensures that both **financial and non-financial rewards** are effectively allocated.

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
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|  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|          |          |              |       |              |              |
|----------|----------|--------------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| (1)      | Strongly | (2) Slightly | (3)   | (4) Slightly | (5) Strongly |
| Disagree |          | Disagree     | Agree | Agree        | Agree        |

7. Please indicate other reward management practices in your university.

.....

.....

8. How has reward management practices influenced employee engagement in your university?

.....

.....

## 5B. Employee Engagement

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding reward management at your university. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

1 I am satisfied with my job

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly                                                                      | (2) Slightly                                                                      | (3)                                                                               | (4) Slightly                                                                        | (5) Strongly                                                                        |
| Disagree                                                                          | Disagree                                                                          | Agree                                                                             | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                               |

2 I am enthusiastic about my job.

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly                                                                      | (2) Slightly                                                                      | (3)                                                                               | (4) Slightly                                                                        | (5) Strongly                                                                        |
| Disagree                                                                          | Disagree                                                                          | Agree                                                                             | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                               |

3 I feel happy when I am working intensely

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly                                                                        | (2) Slightly                                                                        | (3)                                                                                 | (4) Slightly                                                                          | (5) Strongly                                                                          |
| Disagree                                                                            | Disagree                                                                            | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                                 | Agree                                                                                 |

4 When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly                                                                        | (2) Slightly                                                                        | (3)                                                                                 | (4) Slightly                                                                          | (5) Strongly                                                                          |
| Disagree                                                                            | Disagree                                                                            | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                                 | Agree                                                                                 |

5 My organization is committed to employees needs.

|                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |                                                                                       |                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly                                                                        | (2) Slightly                                                                        | (3)                                                                                 | (4) Slightly                                                                          | (5) Strongly                                                                          |
| Disagree                                                                            | Disagree                                                                            | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                                 | Agree                                                                                 |

6 I am motivated to continue with my job

|                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                                                     |                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |
| (1) Strongly                                                                      | (2) Slightly                                                                      | (3)                                                                               | (4) Slightly                                                                        | (5) Strongly                                                                        |
| Disagree                                                                          | Disagree                                                                          | Agree                                                                             | Agree                                                                               | Agree                                                                               |

***Thank you and much appreciated!***

### **Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form**

#### **Title of the Study:**

*The Effect of Human Capital Management Practices on Employee Engagement in Private Universities in Nairobi, Kenya*

**Researcher:** [Your Name]

**Institution:** [Your University]

**Supervisor:** [Your Supervisor's Name]

---

#### **Introduction**

You are invited to participate in this research study, which seeks to examine the effect of Human Capital Management (HCM) practices—such as recruitment, performance appraisals, career development, and reward systems—on employee engagement in private universities in Nairobi. The study is being conducted as part of the requirements for a postgraduate degree at KCA University.

---

#### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate or withdraw at any stage of the study without facing any penalties or negative consequences.

---

#### **Procedures**

If you agree to participate, you will be requested to complete a questionnaire that will take approximately 15–20 minutes. The questionnaire will ask about your perceptions and experiences regarding human capital management practices within your university.

---

### **Risks and Benefits**

There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. While you may not directly benefit from participation, your responses will contribute to understanding how universities can improve employee engagement, which may inform future institutional policies and practices.

---

### **Confidentiality**

All information provided will be treated with strict confidentiality. You will not be required to provide your name, and responses will only be reported in aggregated form. Data will be securely stored and used solely for academic purposes.

---

### **Consent Statement**

I have read and understood the information provided above. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

**Participant's**                      **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's**                      **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Appendix 4: Private Universities in Kenya

| No. | University Name                                     | Year of Establishment | Type    | Number of Campuses |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|--------------------|
| 1   | Catholic University of Eastern Africa               | 1984                  | Private | 5                  |
| 2   | United States International University – Africa     | 1969                  | Private | 2                  |
| 3   | Strathmore University                               | 2002                  | Private | 1                  |
| 4   | Mount Kenya University                              | 2008                  | Private | 16                 |
| 5   | Kabarak University                                  | 2002                  | Private | 2                  |
| 6   | Daystar University                                  | 1989                  | Private | 2                  |
| 7   | Africa Nazarene University                          | 1994                  | Private | 2                  |
| 8   | St. Paul's University                               | 2007                  | Private | 3                  |
| 9   | Pan Africa Christian University                     | 2008                  | Private | 1                  |
| 10  | Presbyterian University of East Africa              | 2007                  | Private | 1                  |
| 11  | Zetech University                                   | 2014                  | Private | 1                  |
| 12  | KCA University                                      | 2007                  | Private | 2                  |
| 13  | Kiriri Women's University of Science and Technology | 2009                  | Private | 1                  |
| 14  | Management University of Africa                     | 2011                  | Private | 1                  |
| 15  | Riara University                                    | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 16  | Pioneer International University                    | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 17  | International Leadership University                 | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 18  | Amref International University                      | 2017                  | Private | 1                  |
| 19  | Umma University                                     | 2013                  | Private | 2                  |
| 20  | East African University                             | 2012                  | Private | 2                  |
| 21  | Great Lakes University of Kisumu                    | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 22  | Gretsa University                                   | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 23  | Kenya Methodist University                          | 2006                  | Private | 4                  |
| 24  | Scott Christian University                          | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 25  | Adventist University of Africa                      | 2012                  | Private | 1                  |
| 26  | Aga Khan University                                 | 2002                  | Private | 1                  |
| 27  | Genco University                                    | 2022                  | Private | 1                  |

|    |                                 |      |         |   |
|----|---------------------------------|------|---------|---|
| 28 | Lukenya University              | 2015 | Private | 1 |
| 29 | Marist International University | 2013 | Private | 1 |