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OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT STRATEGY ON PERFORMANCE OF NON-ACADEMIC STAFF IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Globalization has energized organizations to develop strategies that would make them relevant in the market. This has been motivated by the dynamic nature of the global market that requires adaptability, continuous learning and improvement. Modern organizations are therefore faced with the dire need of developing, upgrading and expanding knowledge and skills of workers. This is presumably the best option of attaining competitive advantage. The adoption of diverse employees, collaborations, innovations, inclusivity and talent development has necessitated the need to develop opportunities for advancement of the workforce. Advancement often requires employees to acquire new skills and knowledge. These skills directly contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the broader development agendas. In view of this, training workers in sustainable practices and/or innovation is helpful in addressing various SDGs related to the environment and economic growth. Despite all these, little has been done by some universities to utilize and provide opportunities for the non-teaching workforce in the form of professional development. This study assessed the extent to which opportunity for advancement strategy influences performance of non-academic staff at the University of Eldoret in Kenya. The study endeavored to establish the influence of opportunity for advancement on employees' performance at University of Eldoret in Kenya (UoE). The study was based on human capital theory. It was based on a quantitative research approach. The researcher used a descriptive research design to obtain views and opinions of respondents on the research problem. The target population of this study comprised all the 208 permanent non-teaching staff from which 137 were picked as sample size of the study using Yamane formula. Stratified and simple random samplings were used to select respondents for the study proportionally and randomly respectively. The study used structured questionnaires as its main primary data collection tool. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive statistics included use of percentages, frequencies, and measures of central tendency. Inferentially, linear regression analysis was applied to get the changes in dependent variable caused by the influence of independent variable. The findings of the study established that opportunity for advancement was statistically significant in explaining the dependent variable. This study will be beneficial to all stakeholders in higher education in their endeavors to enhance performance in service delivery.

Keywords: *Opportunity, Advancement, Development, Skills, Workforce*

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INTRODUCTION

Human resource component is the engine that drives performance of organizations globally, including universities. Stiff competition in the service sector has compelled institutions of higher learning to invest in their non-teaching staff in order to attain a holistic growth and development. These cadre of workers are essential ingredients used to boost service delivery of universities. They make remarkable contributions to organizational change hence enabling universities to adapt to external challenges efficiently (Baltaru, 2019; Stage, 2020). In the United States, the non-teaching staff have been incorporated in extensive expansion of universities' programs. They have utilized Patent and Trademark Law Amendments Act that enabled higher institutions of learning to possess property rights on inventions and products produced by their researchers using federal funding. Consequently, many universities have since then established permanent offices technology transfer to manage the commercialization of research. In the offices many staff have been employed to market patent and do licensing. These initiatives have improved the performance of universities in America in commercializing research services. In Netherlands, the government officially devolved estate ownership institutions of higher learning nearly thirty years ago. This made universities engage in real estate management units made up of managerial staff with rich private sector knowledge and experience. Through these agencies, the management of universities' properties has become profoundly successful. Consequently, these staff have become essential components of the universities' workforce. These developments notwithstanding, in most university systems the gap between managerial staff and the teaching staff has created discontent and arguments concerning utilization of the universities resources and most academic staff feel their power and influence on university education is gradually declining (OECD, 2020).

In Finland, institutions of higher learning providing training sessions to the teaching staff to equip them with the prerequisite skills to improve their delivery of content in classes. From such training teachers are able to sharpen their thinking abilities and teaching skills. The training offered to the non-academic staff has profound effect on the performance of university duties. It raises their motivation at work, improves job participation and involvement. Their skills are further improved as well as their overall potentiality at work. The continuity in developing the workers is not only necessary for making them competitive but also raises their quality of work (Ntawigaya, 2021). In India, support staff are strong pillars in the performance of universities. Their contribution in regards to skills, and professional know how has enabled faculties to work towards achieving their missions and visions. They are well utilized in administrative as well as leadership positions in the departments. Through this, the non-teaching staff enrich universities with abundance expertise and ensure daily continuity of operations. Consequently, this has translated to better performance of students in the universities through their advisory, supportive and operative services. Research shows that the number of the non-teaching staff has increased tremendously in the last two and half decades. However, there are concerns that this has directly led to increase of universities fees to carter for their compensatory benefits. Some critics claim the rise in number of these staff has not led to better performance of universities (Gupta, 2021).

In Nigeria, inefficiency has been a major issue battling the service delivery of non-academic staff in most public universities and this has greatly affected the academic and research outlook of Nigerian universities. Studies demonstrate that the only way to resolve inefficiency among non-academic (administrative) staff in public tertiary institutions is to integrate effective training into employee career management and adopt employee performance evaluation process as contained in the private organizations (Adejare., Olaore, Udofia and Emola; 2020). The non-academic department in a university system consists of works, bursary, librarian, medical personnel, exams and records, confidential secretaries, cleaners/messengers, administrative staff, account, security personnel among others. Many of these departments are greatly inefficient at their capacity to function effectively and support the university system to achieve its stated objectives and goals especially in state and federal

universities in Nigeria (Iwuoha, 2018). For instance, exams and record department in Nigerian universities have a long history and mismanagement of student's results and preparing academic transcripts for students. This inefficiency has gone so deep to an extent where foreign universities or organizations will send a mail to exams and records department to confirm a student's academic status and will not get any response. Lack of training and development of university administrators would hinder the success and educational services of a university system and this would affect the rating and attraction of the university to the international community (Diefendorff et al., 2018). In Uganda, the advent of private universities came with stringent policies envisioned to guide universities to strictly adhere to best practice in managing human resources including part time staff. Such university human resource policy was part of the education liberalization policy introduced in 1980s, and which led to unconceivable growth of private universities. However, the university reputation on corporate efficacy remains a subject of scrutiny. (Alemiga & Kibukamusoke, 2019; Baine, 2010).

In Kenya, public universities are under siege due to severe challenges that affecting their operations. The rapid number of non-teaching staff coupled with rapid globalization has completely changed the operations of the universities. Stiff competition over student population has been heightened. Kenya universities continue to face challenges in managing their workforce, especially the support staff cadre. Universities are indebted as they receive very small amount of capitation to meet their operations including paying the non-teaching staff (Wambui, 2022). According to the Auditor General Report (2020) there is a sharp reduction in the number of non-academic staff in the UoE by 6.35%. compared to the previous financial year. The management has deliberately initiated this measure to cut overhead costs. Consequently, non-core services are now outsourced. This has negatively a section of the non-teaching staff. This has affected performance in this institution. In the same university, service delivery has been halted in several occasions by industrial disputes involving non-teaching employees, among other staff. This had a negative influence on the smooth learning and service delivery in the institution. The staffs at the UoE have tirelessly complained about poor reward systems, that include both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. In September 2021 University of Eldoret (UoE) lecturers and non-teaching staff held a protest citing delayed implementation of a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Following the disagreement, the students were left in panic after university workers issued a notice of peaceful strike. However, the resultant CBA only addressed issues on extrinsic motivation ignoring the intrinsic factors (University Academic Staff Union Report, 2021). This was the knowledge gap that was to be filled by this study in which attempts were made to establish the extent to which opportunity for advancement influenced performance of non-academic staff at the University of Eldoret, Kenya.

Problem Statement

Globalization has intensified competition between organization. Each organization is strategically training and developing its human resource to make it relevant in the market. Nonacademic staff in universities are not exceptional on this. Providing opportunities for career advancement of this of this cadre of staff is profoundly important in enhancing performance of the universities. Opportunity for advancement is a powerful motivator for non-academic staff in universities, just as it can be for employees in any other organization. It provides them with the necessary resources and support to help progress in their careers. By doing so, universities are in a position to motivate and retain their non-academic staff, ultimately benefiting both the employees and the institution. Advancement often requires employees to acquire new skills and knowledge. These skills directly contribute to the achievement of SDGs and the broader development agendas. For example, training in sustainable practices and/or innovation is helpful in addressing various SDGs related to the environment and economic growth. Employees seeking advancement are more likely to be innovative and proactive in problem-solving. They may identify opportunities to improve processes, products, or services that contribute to the achievement of national,

regional and international goals of development. Incorporating opportunities for career advancement into the framework of these development agendas can serve as a strong motivation for workers to actively engage in activities that support the goals and aspirations of their country and continent. This alignment not only benefits the individual workers but also the overall progress towards sustainable development in Kenya and Africa (UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2015; Kenya Vision 2030; 2007; AU Agenda, 2063). Service delivery at the UoE has been halted in several occasions by industrial disputes involving university administration and non-teaching employees. This has had a negative influence on smooth learning and service delivery in the institution. The support staffs at the university have tirelessly complained about insufficient motivational reward systems. This has been necessitated by unconducive workplace conditions leading to frequent strikes in the recent past. This has resultantly led unpleasant industrial relations between the administrators and the support staff. The CBAs signed between the university administrators and non-teaching don't sufficiently address workers interests (University Academic Staff Union Report, 2021). If this problem is not adequately addressed, employees' performance would continue deteriorating and this would compromise the quality of services offered in the university. This study was therefore geared to assess the extent to which opportunity for advancement for the non-teaching staff at UoE influenced their performance.

Objective of the Study

This study assessed the extent to which opportunity for advancement influences performance of non-academic staff at University of Eldoret in Kenya. The study was guided by the following hypothesis;

- **H₀₁:** There is no statistically significant influence of opportunity for advancement on performance of non-academic staff at UoE in Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Underpinning Theory

This study was based on human capital theory. This theory was proposed by Schultz in 1961 and improved by Becker in 1964. The theory maintains that investments in employees' skills, knowledge, and capabilities (human capital) contribute to their productivity and performance, which ultimately enhances the organization's overall performance. Human capital theory is an economic theory that emphasizes the role of education, training, skills, and other human attributes in contributing to an individual's economic productivity and overall well-being. The theory suggests that investing in employees' education, training, and personal development leads to an increase in their human capital, which in turn results in higher job performance and improved organizational outcomes. According to this theory, providing opportunities for personal development, such as training, education, and skill-building programs, increases employees' human capital, leading to improved job performance and organizational outcomes. Based on this theory, the study sought to establish strategies that were put in place by the management of University of Eldoret to develop opportunities and abilities of non-academic staff and their effects on employee's performance.

Opportunity for Advancement on Employees' Performance

Naw, Phyuazar, Midhunchakkaravarthy and Amiya (2023) conducted a study to determine the impact of career advancement on employee retention. According to the findings, firms that focus on employee career development have a positive impact on employee satisfaction because the impact of employee satisfaction is larger when long-term objectives and goals are met. The study discovered that organizational career development planning is connected to employee retention through organizational goals, training and development, and career ladders, all of which have an effect on employee satisfaction and subsequently support the development of organizational effectiveness. The study also established that individual career planning affects employee

satisfaction, causing employees to experience varying levels of satisfaction. career planning enables employees to give all of their abilities to their company to further their careers and the company gains from their efforts.

Mark and Nzulwa (2018) conducted a study to determine the effect of career development programs on employee performance in National Hospital Insurance Fund headquarters Nairobi. A case study design was used. The study targeted a population of 402 employees of National Hospital Insurance Fund headquarters Nairobi from which a sample of 120 respondents were drawn using 30% of the target population. The sample was selected using stratified sampling technique. The researcher collected primary data using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was pilot tested to ascertain the reliability of research instrument using Cronbach Alpha. The study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics to present and analyze the data. A correlation analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between career development programs and employee performance. From regression analysis, it was observed that career development programs contributed to 34.9% of employee performance. The study findings also revealed that there was statistically significant positive relationship between employee training; career counseling, employee mentoring and career advancement on employee performance. The study therefore concluded that career development programs influence employee performance and thus recommends that NHIF should focus more on career development programs in enhancing their employee performance. The study recommended that similar research be carried out in other state corporations other than National Hospital Insurance Fund. This research also suggested that future researchers should research on other factors that contribute to employee performance that were not covered by this study.

Efenji (2023) investigated effect of career development on employee productivity in University of Cross River State. The specific objective was to evaluate the effect of career training and career advancement on employee productivity. This study adopted the survey research design. The target population composed both academic staff and non-academic staff of University of Cross River State, which totaled to 499. The multiple linear regression technique was used to determine the effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables. Beta coefficient in respect to career training (CT) was estimated at 0.946 and career advancement (CA) was estimated at -0.025. Result shows that that career training significantly increases on employee productivity while career advancement insignificantly decreases the productivity of employees in University of Cross River State. This study recommended that, the management of organizations should consider organizing for trainings and seminars for employees this will help to increase employee skills and competence making them more willing to work harder and deliver quality service delivery for the success of the organization. Usep, Eeng, Disman and Rofi (2023) analyzed the impact of career development and employee engagement on employee performance, either separately or simultaneously. The survey methods used in this study were descriptive and explanatory. The research was carried out on 87 employees PT Indonesia Pos (Persero). The saturated sampling technique was used for sampling. Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analyze the data. According to the study's findings, career development and employee engagement have a combined or partial impact on employee performance. Furthermore, the determinant value was found to be 0.800, indicating that career development and employee engagement can account for 80% of employee performance. Other factors accounted for 20% of the variance.

Muthumbi and Kamau (2021) conducted a study aimed at determining the effect of career development on employee performance in Deloitte Limited, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design by using quantitative research methods. The target population of this study comprised of 500 employees working at Deloitte Limited, Kenya. Out of this, 116 respondents formed the sample size and were selected using stratified random sampling technique. Data collection was carried out using structured questionnaires. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics included percentages, means and standard deviations represented by way of tables

and figures. Inferential statistics included correlation and regression analysis to measure the relationship between the study variables. The study established that career development had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. The results indicated that career development was positively and significantly associated with employee performance. Several aspects of career development were identified as key, that is, training programs, career guidance & mentorship and mobility programs. The study established that career development had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. It recommended that professional services firms should shift more effort on the aspects related to career development. The firms should specifically enhance training programs, career guidance & mentorship and mobility programs.

Mwiti, Moguche and Rintari (2021) sought to establish the relationship between career advancement and job satisfaction relating to secondary school teachers confined in Igembe North sub-county. The independent variable career advancement was used in coming up with the specific objective of the study as well as formulating hypothesis. The relationship of this predictor variable with the dependent variable job satisfaction among teachers was statistically established. Three theories relevant to the study were analysed to determine their relevance, strengths and weaknesses. They included equity, dual factor and hierarchy of needs theories of motivation. A descriptive survey design was applied as it was appropriate in obtaining quantitative data from the sampled respondents which was analysed quantitatively to describe the variables of the study. The study targeted 427 teachers who formed the total population of the study. Secondary schools were classified as boarding schools and day secondary schools in the sub-county through the application of a stratified technique of random sampling. A sample size equivalent to 129 teachers was selected representing thirty per cent of the target population. A five Likert scale closed-ended questionnaire was utilised to gather quantitative data from the selected teachers. To assess how the questionnaire was reliable and valid in accomplishing its intended task, seven teachers from Igembe South sub-county were selected for piloting purposes. This was achieved by applying a test and re-test technique. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.794 was obtained which was above the recommended value of at least 0.7. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were applied in analysing the data. Regression analysis was utilised to establish the extent to which the predictor variable influenced the response variable. For easier interpretation of the data, pie charts and tables of distributions were deemed appropriate. The study findings revealed that career advancement had a mean of 3.52 which moderately showed that the respondents agreed that it impacted positively on job satisfaction. Further, career advancement had $r = 0.8902$ indicating a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction. It had a beta coefficient of 0.4082 and a p-value of 0.0017. These statistical results of the findings manifested clearly that the relationship between career advancement and job satisfaction was positive and significant.

Nahoda (2020) sought to establish the impacts of career development on employees' performance at Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) - Headquarters. The study specifically intended to assess the impacts of training on organization performance; the roles of career planning on enhancing employees' performance; the effects of career mobility on performance improvement; how awareness on career opportunity trigger higher performance; as well as the general contribution of career counselling on career development and employee performance. The study employed a case study research design, adopting both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Simple random sampling was applied to select 43 respondents who were required to complete the questionnaires; while purposive sampling was used to select 3 respondents for interview. The findings of the study show that, training enhances employee's performance. Performance is also enhanced by career planning through development of career path and career goal. As career effects promotion and morale, it improves the performance of TRA staff. Majority of staff in TRA are aware of career development, however career counselling programs are found to be inadequate. The study recommends that, performance should be maintained through

provision of training to staff, enhancing career mobility, improving career awareness to triggers employee career development, and initiating more programs to utilize career opportunity. TRA should also build capacity of Human Resource Officer to enable them provide career consultation to TRA Staff and to support their career development and performance.

Mutsoli, Mbithi and Juma (2022) assessed the influence of career development on engagement of employee in the public health sector in Kenya. The study's theoretical framework drew from Super's career development theory. The study adopted a descriptive research design and was guided by positivism philosophy and the deductive method. The target population were 3,092 respondents with a sample size of 342 respondents, drawn from two different cohorts of 35 doctors and 307 nurses. Stratified and basic random sampling techniques were used to choose the sample. A questionnaire was used as a method for data collection to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data types. A mixed method approach was used, and data analysis was realized using both quantitative and qualitative analysis. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data. Using descriptive and inferential statistical methods, quantitative information was edited, coded, and analysed. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were given by descriptive analysis. Correlation, basic and multiple linear regression analyses were used to base inferential statistics. The findings obtained indicated that career development had a positive moderate and significant influence ($r=0.670$ $p < 0.000$ $R^2=0.449$), on employee engagement in the public health sector in Kenya. The study concludes that when career development is low or not provided to nurses and doctors within the public health sector, their engagement level will decrease. Failure to implement diverse and supported career development programs and learning opportunities could cost the sector a lot in terms of decreased engagement affecting service delivery and performance. The study recommends that the public health sector should adopt career management policies that take into account equal opportunity for learning and upgrading, create awareness of the same and provide management support through scholarships.

Mwova and Langat (2021) investigated the effects of career guidance on employee performance in Kenyan private universities, with a particular interest in the religious based Private Universities in Kenya. This was a descriptive study design targeting the employees of religious based private universities in Kenya which included Daystar, CUEA, St. Pauls and KeMU and totaled 2336. A sample size of 341 was obtained. The main data collection tool was questionnaires, from which the obtained quantitative data was analyzed by both descriptive and inferential analyses. Results indicate that career guidance is a significant predictor of employee performance ($\beta = .204$, $p < 0.05$). It is concluded that career guidance as regards counseling and mentorship is inadequately practiced across a majority of the institutions surveyed. There is need for the study area and similar institutions to introduce policies that will enhance career growth opportunities especially for employees. From the above literature review it is evident that few studies have done to establish the influence of opportunity for advancement on the performance of non-teaching staff in public universities. Furthermore, none of these studies have been conducted in UoE. These were the gaps that this study endeavored to fill.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative research approach. In this approach quantitative data involved the use of close-ended questions based on structured questionnaires. This was based on a case study design since the unit of observation was a single institution. A descriptive research design was used to systematically and accurately describe the opinions of the non-teaching staff of EoU on how opportunity of for advancement in their careers influenced their performance. The responses were described statistically in quantifiable terms. This study was conducted at the UoE purposively because it is one of the public universities in Kenya that has faced challenges emanating from the conflict between the management and workers relating to unsatisfactory motivational levels.

The target population for this study was all the 208 non-teaching permanent employees who had been working for the last five years at the institution. These were purposively selected because they had the knowledge and experience on the research questions. They were drawn from various categories as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Target population	Percentage
Administrators	20	9.6
Operations officers	82	39.4
Communication officers	26	12.5
Customer service officers	30	14.4
ICT officers	23	11.1
Finance officers	27	13.0
Totals	208	100.0

Source: University of Eldoret (2022)

A sample size of 137 respondents was obtained from the target population of 208 using Yamane formula (1967) as represented Table 2.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size required

N = population size (208)

e² = level of precision (0.05)²

n=137

Table 2: Sample Size

Category	Target population	Sample size
Administrators	20	13
Operations officers	82	54
Communication officers	26	17
Customer service officers	30	20
ICT officers	23	15
Finance officers	27	18
Totals	208	137

Source: Research (2023)

Stratified sampling technique was used to select samples proportionally since the target population was heterogeneous. Then the researcher used simple random sampling technique to select the individual respondents randomly from each stratum. This was done by use of computer-generated random numbers. The selected subjects then became units of analysis for the study. According to Gupta (2008) a sample is regarded as large if and when it exceeds 30 and therefore 137 was considered an appropriate size for this study. A self-structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data for the study. The closed ended questions were framed on a likert scale of 1 to 5. These were suitable in collecting quantitative data. The filled-up questionnaires were collected using drop-pick later method. In order to ascertain reliability and validity of the questionnaires, the researcher did pilot study by

distributing 14 questionnaires to staff in Moi University, who were not part of the sample used in the final study. The pilot respondents represented 10% of the sample size (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The results of the piloted research instruments enabled the researcher to determine the consistency of responses made by respondents and adjust the items accordingly by revising the questionnaire items. To test validity, the research questions were tested and pretested to randomized sample for accuracy by use of content validity. This ensured that the questions accurately measured what was needed. The Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of the research instrument. The internal consistency reliability was established to be 0.713. This value was above 0.7 thus the research instruments were reliable to be used to collect data (Castillio, 2009). The researcher used relevant procedure to collect data from the respondents. Collected data were organized and edited to remove any inconsistencies, and errors that would have made analysis difficult. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive statistics included percentages, frequencies, and measures of central tendency. Inferentially, correlations and linear regression analysis were applied to establish the extent to which opportunity for advancement influenced performance of non-teaching staff at UoE. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 significance level. This provided the basis of rejecting or accepting the null hypothesis. The analyzed data was displayed using tables.

The model $y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + u$ was subjected to a test using linear regression to establish whether employee skills were a predictor of performance of manufacturing industry.

Where Y = dependent variable (performance of non-teaching staff)

X₁ = independent variable (opportunity for advancement)

α = constant

β_1 = the coefficient of the independent variable

u = the error term.

To ensure research ethics, the researcher adhered to all requirements, relevant rules and procedures of conducting a study. The respondents participated in this study voluntarily and their identities were not revealed.

FINDINGS

This study had the following findings

Response Rate

Out of 137 questionnaires issued to the respondents, 118 questionnaires were fully filled and returned. This translated to 86 % response rate. This response rate was considered adequate for the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

Descriptive Analysis of Opportunity for Advancement on Employee's Performance

The study sought to assess the influence of opportunity for advancement on employee's performance at university of Eldoret. Participants were asked to provide their opinions on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree," 2 indicating "disagree," 3 indicating "neutral," 4 indicating "agree," and 5 indicating "strongly agree." The analysis of the average scores from the responses was carried out on a continuous scale. Scores below 1.5 were categorized as "strongly disagree," scores between 1.5 and 2.4 were considered as "disagree," scores between 2.5 and 3.4 were seen as "neutral," scores between 3.5 and 4.5 were interpreted as "agree," and scores above 4.5 were regarded as "strongly agree." A total of seven statements were utilized to assess the influence of opportunity for advancement on employee's performance at university of Eldoret, and participants' responses were collected using a 5-point Likert scale as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents' Opinions on the Influence of Opportunity for Advancement on Employee's Performance.

Statement		SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	SD
Employees are provided with opportunities to pursue their careers	F	35	43	7	15	18	3.53	1.42
	%	29.7	36.4	5.9	12.7	15.3		
Employees are able to access training and development programs to enhance their competences	F	36	47	8	14	13	3.67	1.32
	%	30.5	39.8	6.8	11.9	11.0		
Employees are rewarded for their career growth	F	39	42	8	15	14	3.65	1.37
	%	33.1	35.6	6.8	12.7	11.9		
There is mentorship program to benefit employees in the institution	F	36	47	10	16	9	3.72	1.25
	%	30.5	39.8	8.5	13.6	7.6		
The management has well spelled succession plan for each job	F	40	46	7	14	11	3.76	1.29
	%	33.9	39.0	5.9	11.9	9.3		
Employees are responsible for the work activities they do	F	43	48	9	12	6	3.93	1.15
	%	36.4	40.7	7.6	10.2	5.1		
Employees are provided continuous feedback by the management in conducting their work	F	36	47	10	15	10	3.71	1.26
	%	30.5	39.8	8.5	12.7	8.5		

Source: Field Data (2022)

The study results in Table 3 indicate, 78(66.1%) of the participants agreed that employees are provided with opportunities to pursue their careers. However, 33(28.0%) of the participants disagreed that employees are provided with opportunities to pursue their careers. Further, the study findings indicated that the respondents agree with the statement that employees are provided with opportunities to pursue their careers with mean rating of 3.53 and standard deviation of 1.42. Secondly, 83(70.3%) of the participants agreed that employees are able to access training and development programs to enhance their competences. Conversely, 27(22.9%) disagreed that employees are able to access training and development programs to enhance their competences. On contrary, the findings revealed that the respondents agreed to the statement that employees are able to access training and development programs to enhance their competences with mean rating of 3.67 and standard deviation of 1.32. The previous research by Chanana and Sangeeta. (2021) shows that organizations doing these kinds of engagement activities for their employees are learning new skills and developing themselves. Employees are feeling committed to the organization and stay motivated during this tough time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Conversely, the findings revealed that 81(68.7%) of the respondents agreed that employees are rewarded for their career growth. However, 29(24.6%) of the respondents disagreed that employees are rewarded for their career growth. Similarly, the respondents agreed that employees are rewarded for their career growth with mean rating of 3.65 and a standard deviation of 1.37. These findings are consistent with the study done by Li, Bonn and Ye, (2019) AI and robotics awareness was found to be significantly associated with employee turnover intention. In addition, 83(70.3%) of the respondents agreed that there are mentorship program to benefit employees in the institution. However, 25(21.2 %) of the respondents disagreed that there are mentorship program to benefit employees in the institution. However, the study results also showed that the mean rating of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 1.25 indicates that the respondents agreed with the statement that there are mentorship program to benefit employees in the institution. Similarly, 86(72.9%) of the participants agreed and 25(21.2%) disagreed that the management has well spelled succession plan for each job. Further, the study results also indicate that the respondents agreed that the management has well spelled succession plan for each job with mean rating of 3.76

and standard deviation of 1.29. The study further revealed that, vast majority 91(77.1%) of the participants agreed that employees are responsible for the work activities they do. On contrary to that the 18(15.3%) of the respondents disagreed that employees are responsible for the work activities they do. Further, the study results indicate that the respondents agreed with the statement that employees are responsible for the work activities they do with mean rating of 3.92 and standard deviation of 1.15. Finally, 83(70.3%) agreed that employees are provided continuous feedback by the management in conducting their work. However, 25(21.2%) of the respondents disagreed that employees are provided continuous feedback by the management in conducting their work. Further, the study results also indicate that the mean rating of 3.71 and a standard deviation of 1.26 the respondents agreed with the statement that employees are provided continuous feedback by the management in conducting their work.

Linear Regression Analysis of Opportunity for Advancement on Employee’s Performance

The linear regression analysis examined how the performance of employees was influenced by opportunity for advancement. The subsequent sections present the outcomes of this analysis

Table 4: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.845 ^a	.715	.712	.52930

Source: Field Data (2022)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) and correlation coefficient (R) shows the degree of association between the influence of Opportunity for Advancement and employee’s performance at the university of Eldoret. The results of the linear regression indicate that $R^2 = 0.715$ and $R = 0.845$. R value .845 indicates that there is a strong linear relationship between the influence of opportunity for advancement and employee’s performance at the university of Eldoret. The R^2 indicates that explanatory power of the independent variables is 0.715. This means that about 71.5% of Opportunity for Advancement explains the variation on employee’s performance at the university of Eldoret holding other factors constant. This implies that opportunity for advancement had an influence on employee’s performance at the university of Eldoret.

The analysis of variance was employed in the study to determine if the model's predictive capabilities surpassed those of the mean, as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Fitness Results

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	81.369	1	81.369	290.436	.000 ^b
Residual	32.499	116	0.28		
Total	113.867	117			

Source: Field Data (2022)

From table the F-test offers a comprehensive evaluation of the significance of the established regression model. The F-value signifies the importance of all the variables in the equation, confirming the overall significance of the regression. The F-statistics produced ($F = 290.436$) was significant at $p=0.000$ thus confirming the fitness of the model and therefore showing that there is statistically significant relationship between opportunity for advancement and performance of the non-teaching staff at university of Eldoret. The study further sought to establish the regression model coefficients in order to use in the regression equation. The study results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Regression Model Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.552	0.19		2.898	0.004
Opportunity for advancement	0.875	0.051	0.845	17.042	0.000

Source: Field Data (2022)

The study results revealed that there was positive linear effect of influence of opportunity for advancement on employee's performance. Since ($\beta_1=0.552$, $p=0.000<0.05$), the study established that there is a statistically significant relationship between opportunity for advancement on performance of non-academic staff at UoE in Kenya. These results reveal that an increase in influence of opportunity for advancement increases performance of non-academic staffs by 0.875 units. Therefore, the coefficients generated the regression equation as expressed by;

$$Y = 0.552 + 0.875X_1$$

Hypothesis Testing

To determine whether opportunity for advancement influences performance of non-teaching staff, H_0 hypothesis which states that "There is no significant relationship between opportunity for advancement and the performance of non-teaching staff at UoE" was tested.

Decision rule: If the calculated p value is found to be less than the critical value of 0.05, then the null hypothesis is rejected. Regression results indicated in Table 6 confirm the appropriateness of the model fit for this data since the computed p value of 0.000 was much smaller compared to critical value of 0.05. These findings implied the existence of a significant relationship between opportunity for advancement and performance of non-teaching staff. This led to a rejection of the null hypothesis and the adoption of an alternative hypothesis which states that, "There is a significant relationship between opportunity for advancement and performance of non-teaching staff" is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The research findings were discussed based on the data analysis

Opportunity for Advancement Performance of Non-Teaching Staff

The regression analysis indicates that there is statistically a significant relationship between the opportunity for advancement and performance of non-teaching staff at UoE since the p value obtained was 0.000 which is less than the critical value of 0.05 as shown in Table 6. This findings concur with Naw, Phyuazar, Midhunchakkaravarthy and Amiya (2023) who confirmed that firms that focus on employee career development have a positive impact on employee satisfaction because the impact of employee satisfaction is larger when long-term objectives and goals are met. Their study discovered that organizational career development planning is connected to employee retention through organizational goals, training and development, and career ladders, all of which have an effect on employee satisfaction and subsequently support the development of organizational effectiveness. They established that individual career planning affects employee satisfaction, causing employees

to experience varying levels of satisfaction. They further noted that career planning enables employees to give all of their abilities to their company to further their careers and the company gains from their efforts.

The findings further agree with Mark and Nzulwa (2018) who observed that career development programs contributed to more towards employee performance. This study revealed that there was statistically significant positive relationship between employee training; career counseling, employee mentoring and career advancement on employee performance. The study concluded that career development programs influence employee performance. The findings are in line with Usep, Eeng, Disman and Rofi (2023) who observed that career development and employee engagement have a combined impact on employee performance. Furthermore, they established that career development and employee engagement can account for 80% of employee performance. The study's findings further concur with Muthumbi and Kamau (2021) who established that career development had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Their study indicated that career development was positively and significantly associated with employee performance. Several aspects of career development were identified as key, that is, training programs, career guidance & mentorship and mobility programs. Additionally, this study is in agreement with Nahoda (2020) whose findings show that, training enhances employee's performance and that performance is enhanced by career planning through development of career path and career goal. As career effects promotion and morale, it improves the performance of workers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study established that there is a significant relationship between opportunity for advancement and performance of non-teaching staff at UoE. The implication is that building on employees' career growth enhances the productivity of workers hence resulting to improved service delivery.

The study recommended to the government of Kenya, particularly university administration and other stakeholders, to initiate and implement strategies that would promote the career paths and growth of the support staff. The impact will be realized in improved service delivery, innovation and creativity among the staff.

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