How Do Employee Attitude Surveys Contribute to Staff Turnover Intentions in a University Setting?

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Abstract

This study aimed to determine the effect of employee attitude surveys on academic staff turnover intentions in chartered universities in Kenya. The specific objectives were; to determine the extent of employee attitude surveys practices among universities in Kenya; assess the level of turnover intentions among academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya, and determine the effect of employee attitude surveys practices on turnover intentions among academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya. The study was anchored on the Universalistic theory and the Unfolding model of voluntary turnover. A positivism research philosophy guided the study, and a descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used. The study obtained primary data from a representative sample of 364 academic staff members drawn from 15 chartered universities in Kenya. The study found that employee attitude surveys have been practiced to a low extent and produced correspondingly low staff turnover intentions. Two dimensions of employee attitude surveys significantly negatively affect staff turnover intentions. The study called on future research to apply more robust statistical techniques anchored on mixed methods design for a more comprehensive explanation of the direction of the causal effects of attitude surveys on staff turnover intentions.

Keywords: employee attitude surveys, ideas, issues, report implementation and recommendations, academic staff, turnover intentions

1. Introduction

The most valuable asset available to an organization is its people. Thus, the retention of employees in their jobs is essential for organizational success. Globally, organizations are keen on evaluating the attraction, hiring, development, motivation, retention, and separation of employees. Various reasons have been advanced on why employees quit their jobs in an organization, including workplace-related factors, a mismatch between work and the employee, lack of coaching and feedback, lack of growth and advancement opportunities, remunerations, lack of recognition, overwork related-stress, and lack of trust from the Management (Kaufman, Barry, Wilkinson, & Gomez, 2020; Marchington, 2015; McCloskey & McDonnell, 2018). Employee attitude Surveys are considered crucial for addressing these causes (Puni, Agyemang, & Asamoah, 2016) since they are an essential component of employee voice mechanisms used by HR professionals. Human resource management (HRM) literature on employee voice has grown enormously in recent decades. Given the broad scope of the concept and its importance in contemporary workplaces, researchers have focused attention on a wide range of aspects in the employee attitude surveys phenomenon. They have paid particular attention to the meaning of employee attitude surveys evolution trends, consequences, relationship with individual and organizational outcomes in shaping organization systems and influencing their effects in different countries (Barry& Wilkinson, 2016).

Many organizations use employee attitude surveys as non-unionized employee voice mechanisms. Employee attitude surveys seek employees' views on matters affecting their work. They are a valuable way of involving the workforce by considering their opinions on matters that affect them. Employee attitude surveys offer information on employees' likings, caution on likely problems, establish the route cause of particular matters, and relate job satisfaction, commitment, and morale in different sections of the establishment. Thus, frequent employee attitude surveys act as smoke detectors and help uncover potential problems and turnover intentions. Employee attitude surveys are carried

out through interviews, questionnaires, a mixture of questionnaires and interviews, and focus groups (Amstrong & Taylor, 2017; Ghadi & Ghadi, 2017).

Employee turnover intentions are the ultimate psychological, behavioral outcomes brought about by reality shocks in the employment contract. Turnover intentions are commonly used to measure the anticipated workplace turnover (Bigliardi et al., 2015). According to Abassi and Hollman (2020), employee turnover intentions are an employees' mental decision regarding whether to continue working or quit the job and leave the organization Lacity et al. (2018) defined employee turnover intentions as the extent to which an employee plans to leave the organization. Employee turnover intentions measure the employee's willingness to quit the organization and the possibility of the organization removing the employee from a given position (Lim, Loo, & Lee, 2017). Employee turnover intentions are commonly used to measure the anticipated workplace turnover (Bigliardi et al., 2015). For this study's purpose, turnover intentions were operationalized as an employee's conscious and deliberate wilfulness to quit the job, leave an organization, and look for job alternatives in other organizations (Tett& Meyer, 1993).

Quitting a job and leaving the organization may not always be an option for an employee. The decision to leave is influenced by many personal and contextual factors such as employability due to personal development, labor market conditions, perceived chances, the ease of finding another job, the role of mobility cognition, and individual differences in search behavior (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). Further, Morrell and Loan-Clarke (2015) and Abdullah and Bilau (2012) contended that factors influencing an employee's decision to resign from the organization include the availability of job alternatives and the employee's desire to move due to job dissatisfaction. Although employee turnover intentions do not necessarily equate with actual employee turnover, it is a strong predictor of the actual turnover (Organ, 2018).

Previous studies have predicted and established the relationship between employee turnover intentions and actual turnover (Bluedorn, 2012; Kysilka, 2013). For example, Lucas and Boulton (2015) found that a turnover intentions model successfully predicted 73% of actual turnover among registered health staff. Employee turnover intentions are also a reflector of the withdrawal behavior and the indicator that an employee is likely to quit the organization soon (Moriano et al., 2015). Khan (2015) suggested that employee turnover intentions are the final cognitive decision of the employee to leave the organization. Sivakumar& Chitra (2018) further argued that employee turnover intentions are an essential factor that requires much attention in understanding, maintaining, retaining, and sustaining employees in organizations.

Employee turnover intentions are a smoke detector for uncovering potential turnover. It is also a tool for predicting the actual turnover rate. Although not all turnover intentions result in actual turnover, observations towards employee turnover intentions are helpful to identify employees who hold an intention to quit their jobs and leave the organization along with the reasons so that the management can formulate a strategy to prevent turnover (Sivakumar & Chitra, 2018). Employee turnover intentions that lead to actual turnover are catastrophic to an organization's existence due to the high costs associated with the actual hiring of new employees, training, and interruptions in production and service delivery. It is more sustainable when its management concentrates on employee turnover intentions, retention, and talent development (Alkahtani, 2015). Therefore, the administration should pay attention to employee turnover intentions to avoid the financial, time, and resources wastage on hiring, training, and interruptions.

Previous studies also suggest that the intention to leave indicates that an employee is withdrawing psychologically from their job. Khan (2015) opined that employee' intention to quit the job and leave organization being a psychological response to specific organizational conditions and practices is characterized by a continuum of organizational withdrawal behavior, including the search for a job elsewhere, intention to quit, absenteeism, tardiness, and actual turnover. HRM researchers have encouraged organizations to adopt suitable HRM practices such as employee attitude surveys since HRM practices have influenced employee turnover intention (Khan, 2015). Previous research consistently found that employee turnover intentions and actual employee turnover are often correlated (Castle, Engberg, Anderson, & Men, 2017). Several studies on employee turnover intentions have demonstrated that turnover intentions are the best predictor of actual employee turnover (Price, 2001). Employee turnover intentions are the most potent precursor of actual employee turnover (Allen, Weeks, & Moffitt, 2017). Since employee turnover intentions are the best and most powerful predictor of actual turnover, researchers often use employee turnover intention as a proxy for actual employee turnover (Castle et al., 2017).

Employee turnover intentions are measured using specific time intervals. It is a choice concerning an individual leaving a current employer.(Wong et al., 2015, Khan'sKhan (2015) studies on job satisfaction and intentions to quit in three private schools of Dubai, used a three-item construct to measure turnover intentions, namely, severe thoughts

of leaving, intention to go, and actively searching for jobs elsewhere Jenkins (1993) and Kransz et al. (1995). Similarly, Tiampati and Moronge (2018) measured employee turnover intentions by the intention to stay using a Likert scale. Yu et al. (2005) used intention to leave, quitting, actively looking for a new job, and thinking of changing jobs to measure employee turnover intentions. The three-item employee turnover intention scale from the Michigan organizational assessment questionnaire (Lawler, Cammann, Nadler, & Jenkins, 1979) was designed to measure the perceptions of corporate members about their psychological state relevant to the quality of work-life issues in the workplace. The dependent variable was adopted from the measurement instrument developed by Meyer, Anderson, Pencavel, & Roberts (1994), which consists of two items: "How often do you feel like quitting your job in this organization" and "How likely is it that you will leave your organization within the next year."

In the current study, employee turnover intentions were adopted as the dependent variable since research findings of various studies suggest that intention to leave eventually leads to actual turnover (Horner&Hollingswoorth, 1978; Mobley, Horner, Hollingswoorth, Ismail, & Din, 1978). The study adopted three-item constructs from Jenkis (1993) and Kransz et al. (1995): serious thoughts of leaving, intention to leave, and active search for jobs elsewhere. These three items were rated on a five-point Likert scale. The study was undertaken in response to strongly emerging calls for Universities to adopt relevant human resource management interventions suitable to stem the high academic staff turnover among universities in Kenya (Njoroge et al. 2016).

The focus of the study was to investigate how components of employee attitude surveys of employee ideas, employee issues, and Implementation of employee attitude surveys reports affect turnover intentions among academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya. The specific objectives sought to: establish the extent of employee attitude surveys practices among universities in Kenya; establish the level of turnover intentions among academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya and establish the effect of employee attitude surveys practices on turnover intentions among academic staff in the chartered universities in Kenya.

The findings of the study are important to both academicians and practitioners. The study focuses on the state of HRM practice in the education sector and to ascertain the state and highlight milestones achieved about HRM practices among institutions of higher learning (Kilika, KObonyo, Ogutu & Munyoki, 2012; Mutiso &Kilika, 2018). By focusing on turnover intentions, the study addresses an area of concern by policymakers on how to stem a serious turnover problem in an important sector of the economy. From a theoretical point of view, the authors conceptualize the study using SHRM theories to offer theoretically sound explanations on the phenomenon connecting SHM best practices and employee behavior outcomes.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

The current study was anchored on universalistic theory and the unfolding model of voluntary turnover. Dewar and Werbel (1979) postulated the universalistic theory, which sought to identify the best practices on Human Resource Management (HRM). Several researchers such as; Delaney, Lewin, and Ichniowski (1989), Huselid (1995), Osterman (1994), and Pfeffer (1994) contributed to the Universalistic theory. These scholars contend that some HRM practices are superior to others, and therefore all organizations should undertake these best practices. Pfeffer (1994) referred to the universalistic model as the "best" practice model founded on the postulation that there is a set of superior or best human resource management practices. Adopting them will lead to outstanding organizational performance and a reduction in turnover. These "best" human resource management practices are seen through enhanced employee attitudes and behaviors, reduced absenteeism and turnover intentions, higher skills levels, enhanced quality and efficiency, and increased profitability (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2008).

Therefore, all organizations will benefit and experience improved organizational output if they can identify, get dedicated to, and implement a set of best human resource management practices. Those who adopt this viewpoint, which recognizes the unavoidability of workplace conflict, tend to regard conflict as necessary for the organization's well-being since it helps convey employees' complaints and grievances to the management. Workers may unite in employee trade unions to safeguard their interests in such a situation. As a result, employee trade unions become the legitimate agents of a worker in the organization. Thus, the Industrial Relations (IR) structure gets chastised on concessions and cooperation between administration and employee trade unions. Workers are not as influential in the negotiation as the management. Hence, workers join employee trade unions to negotiate with management on equal standings to guard their interests. This theory was the foundation of an employee attitude survey, which is an employee voice mechanisms dimension.

Lee & Mitchell (1991) developed this unfolding model of voluntary turnover. It was founded on the principles of Image Theory (Beach, 1990). Lee and Mitchell highlight the psychological processes involved in quitting a job and leaving an organization. An employee's decision to quit an organization can take various forms. People use psychological behavioral tactics to stop and leave an organization. According to Lee, Mitchell, Wise, & Fireman (1996), who tested Lee et al.'s model (1991), employees choose one of four distinct decision paths when deciding to leave their jobs. Reality "shock" is a factor in determining which path to take. They categorized shocks as expected or unexpected, positive or negative, personal or organizational, and personal, job, and organizationally connected. Marriage, motherhood, and becoming debt-free are examples of individual shocks. Position and organizational-related shocks include corporate reorganization, new management, and changes in work assignments.

Maertz and Campion (2004) advanced the theory and provided four quitters based on the circumstances surrounding their decision to leave their job and the organization. The first group quits on the spur of the moment, usually due to a bad experience. Management finds it impossible to predict or even avoid behavior repercussions of this type of quitter due to their unpredictability. The second type of quitter is persuaded away from their current job by tempting alternatives but negatively influences their current employer. The third type of quitter intends to leave after the birth of a child, the retirement of a partner, or even if they want to pursue their formal education. The last sort of quitter is the conditional quitter. When an unexpected occurrence or shock occurs, this person decides to come to a halt. This type of incident or shock can include the possibility of a better job offer, a transfer, being passed over for a promotion, working conditions, and how a supervisor treats them. Almost invariably, they are detrimental to the company (Maertz & Campion, 2004). This model was applied to examine the current study's relationship between HRM practices such as employee attitude surveys and turnover intentions.

2.2 Conceptual and Empirical Review

2.2.1 Turnover Intention

Employee turnover is one of the most important concerns that firms are tackling these days because of its impact on the organization's economic success (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013). This is because the loss of people has significant tangible and intangible consequences for the performance of an organization (Frank, Finnegan, & Taylor, 2004; Tanova & Holtom, 2008). The administrative expenditures of recruiting, selecting, training, and developing new staff are visible consequences, whereas intangible consequences include a loss of employee morale, social capital, and corporate memory (Morrell, Load-Clarke, & Wilkinson, 2004). Companies' intangible loss of skills, expertise, and know-how is more substantial than the tangible costs of replacing individuals since it can result in lower productivity and performance, leading to lower profits. As a result, firms must understand the adverse effects of employee turnover and adopt methods to keep their current personnel (Frank et al., 2004; Tanova et al., 2008). Unstable organizations have high turnover intentions, according to Ongori (2007), and workers are more eager to stay in a predictable work environment and vice versa. Employees are more likely to leave insecure companies favoring more secure ones as they plan their future progress. A high incidence of staff turnover, he says, could suggest a lack of HRM procedures. According to Gaiduk and Gaiduk (2009), three major groups of variables influence employee intentions to leave/remain with an organization: employee demographic characteristics such as gender, age, position, and level; the nature of an employee's current job; and adequate working arrangements, which include aspects such as current supervision quality, opportunities for advancement, available training, and communication quality. Employee attitude surveys are seen as the organization's efforts to encourage and enhance employee participation and voice from the employee's perspective. As a result, Employee attitude surveys reflect the company's concern for the well-being of its employees. According to Guest (1997), employees are happier, and their psychological contract improves as they experience more Employee attitude surveys in their jobs.

2.2.2 Employee Attitude Surveys

Employee attitude surveys are valuable ways of engaging employees by getting feedback on important issues. Attitude surveys can reveal employee preferences, alert managers to potential problems, diagnose the source of specific problems, and compare employee satisfaction, devotion, engagement, and morale across the organization. Employee surveys are an excellent vehicle for gaining insight into the employee in the workplace. Failing to respond to the feedback obtained through employee attitude surveys can devastate employee morale and trigger job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions.

Three components were considered relevant for the investigation to explain the role of employee attitude surveys in turnover intentions: seeking employees' ideas, identifying employee issues, and implementing survey reports. Employee ideas were measured in this study as employee attitude surveys were carried out regularly, seeking views and opinions of employees. Identifying employee issues was measured by seeking information on employees'

preferences, revealing problems facing employees, and addressing all areas of concerns of the employee. Implementing survey reports was measured by establishing whether reports are shared or not, implementing the recommendations of employee attitude surveys, and satisfaction with employee attitude surveys.

Nwinyokpugi (2020) investigated employee turnover, its causes, implications, and solutions among academic staff at two private universities in Nigeria's Ondo State. According to the study's findings, workplace discontent, selection rules, job security, and career progression significantly affected academic staff turnover intentions in private universities in Nigeria's Ondo State. Agoi (2015) explored the impact of employee surveys on employee turnover intentions in the Kenyan public sector. The study was founded on the theories of planned behavior action. According to the study's findings, employee surveys and absorption had a significant negative impact on turnover intentions. Although this study was based in Kenya, it is contextualized in the public sector, focusing on only one construct of employee voice mechanisms. The survey findings also contradicted Nwinyokpugi's (2015) study on the employee survey.

Mumtaz and Hassan (2018) researched the urban society of a region in Karachi, Pakistan, to determine the causes and factors of rising employee turnover rates. Primary and secondary data were collected, and a simple random sampling procedure was applied. The study discovered a strong link between employee-boss relationships and turnover. Secondary factors of employee turnover, such as work satisfaction and commitment, indicate a moderate and pessimistic relationship. On the other hand, lucrative job opportunities have a strong positive and direct correlation with employee turnover. Mallett (2015) examined how institutions' attitudes and motivation surveys influence employee performance. The study used purposive sampling, and non-probability sampling was used. Data analysis was done using frequencies and percentages; hence did not allow for testing hypothesized relationships. The findings indicated that motivation surveys reduce the employees' intentions to quit the job.

Overall, insufficient attention has been given to understanding the employee attitude survey in organizations and its relative contribution to employee turnover. Given the strategic value of employee attitude surveys based on their contribution towards providing insights into understanding employees and enabling management to proactively take measures that improve human relations to minimize behavioral outcomes such as turnover intentions, the authors investigated its effect on turnover intention using a conceptual lens drawn from the SHRM Theories.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Population

This study was guided by the research philosophy of positivism and phenomenology proposed by Creswell (1998). It is a highly structured procedure for generalizing quantitative data and evaluating the outcomes with statistical methods. The study was based on theory and a conceptual framework derived from hypotheses. This philosophy necessitates the use of quantitative data and analytical approaches. This philosophy also includes taking extensive samples to operationalize concepts (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). The positivist paradigm was also appropriate because it permitted hypothesis and theory testing. The quantitative facts and figures connected with the relationships of the study variables were adjusted using positivist philosophy.

The study's target population comprised 17,210 academic staff in the designation of professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, and assistant lecturers in the 49 chartered universities (CUE, 2020). The chartered universities comprised of 31 pubic chartered universities with 13086 academic staff and 18 private chartered universities with 4124 academic staff spread across eight regions in Kenya that includes; Coast Region, North Eastern Region, Eastern Region, Central Region, Rift Valley Region, Nyanza Region, Western Region, and Nairobi Region. The unit of observation and target respondents was academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya. The Regions were used because academic staff in Chartered universities take appointments after considering the university's region. They consider the region's nature regarding the level of development. This study also evaluated Chartered universities because their organizational structures and rules are developed and explicit. They are likely to have complex interactions among the research variables since they do not operate on individual decisions but instead on a clear line of authority and responsibility.

A questionnaire was the most appropriate tool for this study as it enabled data collection. The questionnaire was both open and close-ended to obtain rich information. A five-point Likert scale was used for most questions in the survey except for the section dealing with demographic data. A five-point Likert scale was used where 1 represented strong disagreement while 5 showed strong agreement. The five-point Likert scale questions enabled the respondents to answer easily and quickly.

The questionnaire was subdivided into three parts. Part one gathered personal and contextual information (age, gender, education level, rank, and experience), Part two covered the attitude survey. Part three dealt with turnover intentions (intention to quit, change job, and search for a job in the organizations actively) which facilitated the study to get a comprehensive understanding of the issue investigated. Descriptive Statistics were used to answer objectives one and two, while linear regression was used to answer objective three. Data analysis was done through statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (version 20).

4. Research Findings

4.1 Respondents Characteristics

The data was collected from 364 academic staff of chartered universities in Kenya. The questionnaire was administered directly through research assistants hired in the respective universities due to their close association with academic staff. They contacted the sampled academic staff to provide an informed consent form before administering questionnaires by Drop-off and Pick-Up later (DOPUL) method. A total of 353 questionnaires were successfully filled and found suitable for further analysis resulting in a response rate of 97 %. The response rate was comparable to those of other studies done on academic staff by Nge'the et al. (2015), which had a response rate of 100%. A similar study on HRM practices on tutors' turnover intentions in primary school teacher training colleges by Kyalo, Kilika, and Kimencu (2018) had a response rate of 76.9%. The high response rate resulted from the cadre of academic staff in the university education sub-sector and the follow-up done by the research assistants working in the respective universities. The profiles of the respondents are summarized in Tables 1 to 6.

Table 1. Cross-tabulation of respondents' gender and university type

	Public		Private		Total	
Gender	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	167	64.7	56	58.9	223	63.2
Female	91	35.3	39	41.1	130	36.8
Total	258	100	95	100	353	100

Note. The percentages given are column percentages (within university type).

Table 2. Crosstabulation of respondents' academic qualifications and intended years of working in the university

Academic qualifications	Intended years of working in the university							Total
		≤1	2-10	11 - 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	≥51	
Post-Doctoral	n	0	2	2	7	5	4	1	21
	%	0	9.5	9.5	33.3	23.8	19	4.8	100
Ph.D.	n	5	12	21	41	50	39	1	169
	%	3	7.1	12.4	24.3	29.6	23.1	0.6	100
Masters	n	10	21	18	34	21	38	0	142
	%	7	14.8	12.7	23.9	14.8	26.8	0	100
Bachelors	n	2	5	3	4	1	5	0	20
	%	10	25	15	20	5	25	0	100
Diploma	n	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	%	0	0	0	0	0	100	0	100
Total	n	17	40	44	86	77	87	2	353
	%	4.8	11.3	12.5	24.4	21.8	24.6	0.6	100

Note. The percentages given are row percentages (within academic qualification).

Table 3. Crosstabulation of respondents' academic designation and intended years of working in the university

Academic designation	Statistic	Intended years of working in the university						
		≤1	2-- 3	4 -- 5	6 --10	11---20	21≤ y	
Professor	n	0	0	4	1	1	1	7
	%	0	0	57.1	14.3	14.3	14.3	100
Associate Professor	n	1	0	5	11	5	4	26
	%	3.8	0	19.2	42.3	19.2	15.4	100
Senior lecturer	n	2	5	6	10	18	7	48
	%	4.2	10.4	12.5	20.8	37.5	14.6	100
Lecturer	n	2	12	17	32	32	36	131
	%	1.5	9.2	13	24.4	24.4	27.5	100
Assistant Lecturer	n	6	12	8	16	20	18	80
	%	7.5	15	10	20	25	22.5	100
Graduate Assistant	n	6	11	4	16	1	21	59
	%	10.2	18.6	6.8	27.1	1.7	35.6	100
Total	N	17	40	44	86	77	87	351
	%	4.8	11.4	12.5	24.5	21.9	24.8	100

Note: All percentages are row percentages (within academic designation)

Table 4. Crosstabulation of respondents' age and intended years of working in the university

Age	Statistic	Intended years of working in the university							Total
		≤1	2 - 10	11 - 20	21-30	31-40	41-50	≥51	
21-30	n	4	5	5	8	1	15	0	38
	%	5	13.2	13.2	21.1	2.6	39.5	0	100
31-40	n	4	18	13	23	15	37	0	110
	%	3.6	16.4	11.8	20.9	13.6	33.6	0	100
41-50	n	6	9	9	27	35	24	0	110
	%	5.5	8.2	8.2	24.5	31.8	21.8	0	100
51-60	n	0	4	12	19	24	6	1	66
	%	0	6.1	18.2	28.8	36.4	9.1	1.5	100
61-70	n	3	4	4	9	2	5	1	28
	%	7	14.3	14.3	32.1	7.1	17.9	3.6	100
≥ 71	n	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	%	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100
Total	N	17	40	44	86	77	87	2	353
	%	4.8	11.3	12.5	24.4	21.8	24.6	0.6	100

Note. The percentages given are row percentages (within the age group).

4.2 Findings on Study Objectives

4.2.1 Findings on Objective One

The first objective was to establish the extent of employee attitude survey practice among universities in Kenya. Three components measured the extent of employee attitude surveys practices: seeking employees' ideas, identifying employee issues, and implementing survey reports on a scale of 1- 5 where 1= Not at all; 2=slight extent; 3=moderate extent; 4= High extent; 5=very high extent). The respondent scores on the items measuring each dimension of employee attitude surveys were measured using the 5-point Likert scale. The results were interpreted using the mean score and a corresponding standard deviation to measure dispersion. The analyzed data are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis of employee attitude surveys items

Variable	Descriptive Statistics			correlations		
	No. of items	mean	Standard deviation	A	B	C
Employee Ideas (A)	3	2.72	1.293	1.00		
Employee issues (B)	3	2.83	1.28	0.744**	1.000	
Implementation (C)	4	2.54	1.18	0.749**	0.666**	1.000

Note. ** Indicate significance is less than 5%

The results indicate that the various components of the employee surveys were practiced to a low extent. Overall, the surveys are practiced to a low extent based on the aggregate mean score. The low standard deviation suggests a high level of consensus among the respondents on the extent of the Implementation.

4.2.2 Finding on Objective Two

The second objective was to establish turnover intentions among academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya. Turnover intentions among academic staff in Chartered Universities were conceived in this study in terms of the extent to which academic staff planned to quit their current job, had the intention to leave, had intentions to change job, thought of leaving their current job and were actively searching for a job in other organizations. Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the selected statements about academic staff turnover intentions on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. Selected statements captured aspects that according to the literature reviewed, were indicators of turnover intentions. Therefore, the study used a 3-item measure adopted from Jenkis (1993) and Kransz et al. (1995) to measure academic staff turnover intentions. The three items comprised serious thought of leaving, intention to leave, and active search for jobs elsewhere. The academic staff's means and standard deviations were computed. The findings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of turnover intentions items

Variable	No. of items	mean	Standard deviation
Thoughts of Leaving	4	2.52	1.25
Intentions to leave	4	2.53	1.33
Active search for jobs	5	2.61	1.37
Aggregate	13	2.55	1.32

The results indicate that staff turnover intention among the academic staff was experienced to a low level. The standard deviation scores point at a relatively high degree of consensus among the sampled universities' academic staff about the academic staff's intention to leave their current employers.

4.2.3 Finding on Objective Three

The current study was based on the premise that employee attitude surveys potentially affect academic staff turnover intentions in Universities in Kenya. The linear regression results testing the effect of each of the three dimensions of employee attitude survey on the level of turnover intention are presented in Table 4.

The simple regression results presented in Table 6 show that employee attitude surveys ideas, employee attitude surveys issues, and Implementation of employee attitude survey reports produced $R^2 = 0.013, 0.007 and 0.019,$ respectively, for each dimension of the employee attitude survey. Implying that employee attitude surveys ideas explain a 1.3% variation of employee turnover intentions, 0.7% by employee attitude survey issues, and 1.9% by implementing employee attitude survey reports. The remaining variation is explained by other variables not included in this study, like personal factors, demographical factors, country employment level laborious mobility. The results further showed that the effect of employee attitude surveys ideas is negative and statistically significant (β=-0.107, p<0.05), employee attitude surveys issues is negative but not significant (β=-0.083, p>0.05), while implementing employee attitude survey reports are negative and significant (β=-0.083, p<0.05). The adopted regression models are suitable for predicting the effect of the components of employee attitude surveys on academic staff turnover intentions.

Table 7. Regression results

Parameter	Surveys Ideas	Surveys Issues	Implementation
R	0.114	0.085	0.137
R2	0.013	0.007	0.019
Adjusted R2	0.010	.004	0.016
F	4.600**	2.541*	6.697**
Constant	2.850***	2.792***	2.892***
Sig(p-value)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Regression coefficient	-.107**	-0.083*	-0.083**
SE error	.050	.052	.052
T	-2.145**	-1.594*	-2.588*

Note. The provided regression parameters are based on the fitted simple regression model of university turnover intention (dependent) based on three dimensions of employee attitude: surveys ideas, surveys issues, and Implementation. The analysis was done using the ordinal least square regression method. Stars indicate statistical significance level: ***1: p < 0.01; **: p < 0.05, and * p < 0.1

5. Discussion and Implications

The findings reported in the previous section are discussed in this section to highlight their implications for theory and practice. The study's first objective aimed to establish the extent of employee attitude surveys among chartered universities in Kenya. The results reported that this practice is to a low extent. The dimensions used to measure the variable of employee ideas, employee issues, and Implementation of the attitude survey reports, as drawn from the theory and practice of HRM, indicate that the strategic imperative given prominence in SHRM has not been given the same attention in practice among the sampled universities. This finding concurs with earlier findings on the state of HRM practice from a strategic lens among universities in Kenya that reported that HRM was yet to become strategic (Kilika, 2012). The second objective sought to establish employee turnover intentions among academic staff in the sampled universities. The results indicated a correspondingly low turnover intention among the academic staff. The dimensions used to measure the variable of thoughts to leave, intentions to leave, and active search for new openings was found to be at a low extent which corresponded to the low level of extent of the practice of employee attitude surveys. It would have been expected that the turnover intention would be rated to a higher extent owing to the low level of practice of attitude surveys.

The third objective sought to establish the effect of the extent of the practice of attitude surveys on the level of turnover intention exhibited by the academic staff in universities in Kenya. Of the three dimensions of attitude survey used, employee ideas and Implementation of the survey results were found to have a significant negative effect on turnover intention. In contrast, survey issues have a non-significant effect. From the conceptual and

practical standpoints, the authors note that employee attitude surveys ideas are an effective technique to engage employees by soliciting their ideas since they can provide information about employees' ideas, provide early warnings about anticipated problem areas, pinpoint the cause of specific problems, and compare job satisfaction, commitment, and morale across the organization. The descriptive statistics supported the findings by showing that, on average academic staff were neutral on the extent of utilization of employee attitude surveys with an aggregate mean of 2.72, indicating that employee attitude surveys have not adequately been undertaken in universities even though employee attitude surveys are an effective technique to engage employees by soliciting their ideas. However, the finding sheds some light on the role of employee attitude surveys. In this case, there is some negative influence emanating from employee ideas on academic staff turnover intentions. The study's finding reveals the role of employee ideas in reducing academic staff turnover intentions. Using the logic of postulates of the universalistic theory by Dewar and Werbel (1979), based on the adoption of best human resource management best practices that are superior to others, the study notes that some of the best practices for HRM from which this variable was drawn have not been highly adopted by universities, thus producing a relatively low effect in stemming turnover intentions among universities. According toDewar and Werbel (1979), the universalistic theory, sometimes known as the "best" practice model, is based on the idea that there is a set of superior or best human resource management practices, according to Pfeffer (1994). The construct relied upon was drawn from the emphasis on employee relations, whose focus is two-fold. First, the best human resource assists in preventing and resolving problems or conflicts between management and employees. Second, they help formulate and implement fair and consistent policies for all employees. Adopting employee attitude surveys leads to good employee relations and a reduction of employee turnover intentions. University management can use employee attitude surveys as one of the best human resource management practices for superior performance, which translates into higher levels of satisfaction, lower levels of absenteeism, and reduced academic staff turnover intentions.

The second dimension used was in the Implementation of the attitude survey report. Implementation of employee attitude surveys reports are an effective technique of satisfying employees by implementing their recommendations. The effect of the Implementation of employee attitude surveys reports and academic staff turnover intentions was negative and statistically significant. The effect was relatively low (β= -0.083). The descriptive statistics indicated that the level of practice of Implementation of the reports was low (Mean= 2.54). The finding sheds some light on the Implementation of employee attitude surveys reports by enlightening the nature and direction of effect from employee attitude surveys Implementation on academic staff turnover intentions. The effect is relatively low and negative, showing an inverse relationship with turnover intentions. Theoretically, the implantation of the survey reports can serve as a way of empowerment of employees in that their ideas and suggestions are considered in informing decisions about work and the workforce.

Even though the effect brought about by the two constructs is low, in terms of the direction of the impact, the findings of this study agree with those of Agoi (2015), Mallett (2015), Nwinyokpugi (2015), Mumtaz and Hassan (2018) who found that employee attitude surveys had a significant impact on employee turnover intentions. Improvements in employee attitude surveys are expected to lead to higher satisfaction and reduced turnover intentions. Individuals satisfied in their jobs are more likely to stay with the same organization for a long period, resulting in reduced turnover intentions.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Research

From the findings of the study reported, the research makes three conclusions. The findings on the extent of the practice of employee attitude surveys point to the fact that HRM practices considered to have a strategic contribution to the success of organizations have been adopted to a low extent among universities in Kenya. The respondents perceived that employee attitude surveys had been applied to a very low extent, which was argued to confirm earlier findings that HRM practice is yet to become strategic among universities in Kenya. The resulting staff turnover intention demonstrated by the academic staff arising from attitude surveys is low. The effect of employee attitude surveys on staff turnover is negative and low, consistent with earlier research findings of an inverse relationship between strategic HRM practices and turnover intentions. Thus, the current employee attitude surveys have a significant low and negative effect on the staff turnover experienced among academic staff in universities in Kenya. Therefore, there is a need for the universities management to provide and improve employee attitude surveys as voice mechanisms to avert employee turnover intentions in universities in Kenya.

The Government, universities Council and Management pay more attention to the university sector's employee attitude surveys, which predict academic staff turnover intentions. They need to make an effort to have regular employee attitude surveys, to reduce employee turnover intentions.

The researchers suggest the following areas for further research resulting from the implications, limitations, and recommendations made: The contextual and organizational factors in the other organizations are not the same as

those in the Universities in Kenya and will therefore differently influence the study variables. Thus, similar studies can be conducted on other sectors in Kenya, probably in the non-Universities sectors. Future research could consider exploring historically contextualized analyses and longitudinal research design, as Kinuu (2014) suggested. Longitudinal studies for at least five years can examine the evolutionary effect of employee attitude surveys on academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya. The current study only sought views of employees to determine the extent of voice. Another study can involve both managers and employees to improve the reliability of the information provided regarding employee voice mechanisms. Future research work could also be done in non-university sectors and commercial organizations. Similar studies could include demographic characteristics, soft and hard HRM, psychological traits, personalities, and other mediating and moderating variables to aid in developing the body of knowledge. This will broaden the scope of the findings and the degree to which they can be generalized. Future studies can also be carried out in the Universities involving non-academic staff to contrast any staff characteristics.

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