

**STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, HUMAN  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT, EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES, AND  
PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

**RUGA STEPHEN NJUGUNA MWAURA  
ABBX/05001P/2020**

DIP. TECH. Ed. (Buss. Ed.) (KTTC), HDIP (HRM) (KNEC), B.Ed. (Buss. Studies)  
(CUEA), M.D.Ed. (UON), MBA (HRM) (KU)

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own original idea and that it has not been presented in any other university for the award of any degree.

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

Ruga Stephen Njuguna Mwaura  
Registration Number ABBX/05001P/2020

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the university supervisors:

Dr. Esther Kanyua Kiruja  
Senior Lecturer  
Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship  
School of Business and Management Studies  
The Technical University of Kenya

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

Prof. Evans Vidiya Sagwa PhD, PGDE, MPM, Ba (Hons), HDHRM, MIHRM, Lic.HRP  
Associate Professor  
Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship  
School of Business and Management Studies  
The Technical University of Kenya

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

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For more information, contact Ruga Stephen Njuguna Mwaura on the following address:

P.O. Box, 52428 00200, NAIROBI, Kenya.

Email: [stephen.mwaura@tukenya.ac.ke](mailto:stephen.mwaura@tukenya.ac.ke)

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my truest inspirers; my wife, Sarah Njuguna, and my children; Grace-Maria, Michael Ruga, Victoria Muthoni, Yobel Ngatho and Mishelle Washera, without forgetting all the other members of the extended family who prayed, encouraged, and cheered me on. In return, I thank God for you, and pray that this work may inspire all of you.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARs	Assistant Registrars
CUE	Commission for University Education
DPs	Deputy Principles
DVC	Deputy Vice Chancellor
EOs	Employee Outcomes
HPWS	High Performance Work Systems
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Management
HRMU	Human Resource Management Unit
HRMUs	Human Resource Management Units
IERC	Institutional Ethics Review Committee
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Oilkin
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KUDHEIHA	Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers
KUSU	Kenya University Staff Union
MOEST	Ministry of Education Science and Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NSE	Nairobi Stocks Exchange
PLS	Partial Least Square
SARs	Senior Assistant Registrars
SEM	Strategic Equation Model
SGAS	School of Graduate and Advanced Studies
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
SHRMPs	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices
SRC	Salaries and Remuneration Commission
UASU	Universities Academic Staff Union
VCs	Vice Chancellors

## **CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **Employee Outcomes**

Employee Outcomes refer to the physiological and psychological impacts on employees, which are expected to flow from the implementation of certain strategical human management interventions or practices by a given organization (Ambula, Awino & K'Obonyo, 2016). In this study, employee outcomes are conceptualized as motivation, commitment, empowerment and teamwork.

### **Human Resource Management**

The concept Human Resource Management was defined by Armstrong (2006), as consisting of the use of a strategically coherent approach applied to the utilization of an organization's most valued assets, that is, the people who in and for that organization. Needless to emphasize, these individuals collectively enable the organization to achieve its strategic goals and objectives. It is in this context that this study was premised and undertaken.

### **Human Resource Management Unit**

Human Resource Management Unit Refers to the department or section responsible for operationalizing the management of human resources functionally, and, therefore, implementing all the planned human resource management practices. It is this unit which ensures that any human resource interventions are strategically in line with a given organization's overall strategic plan (Punia, Jaglan & Teena, 2012). In this study, the human resource management unit is conceptualized as the enabler of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices.

This is catered for through implementation of HR functions (practices), particularly with regard to ensuring the existence of enabling physical facilitation, the needed human resource planning, instituting appropriate balancing of full time HR-employee establishment, and also robustly leading in human resource policy formulation.

### **Performance of Public Universities**

The performance of public universities is often measured using research results, teaching outcomes and the number graduated students (Kallio, Kallio & Grossi, 2017). Based in this context, performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized as likely to be indicated by innovative learning programmes, research and publications, student enrollment rates, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates, among others

### **Performance Management**

Performance management refers to a special arrangement, which creates a framework of various performance appraisal tools, which ensure the necessary linkages regarding employee expectations on one hand, and employer expectations on the other. Specifically, performance management ensures that employees are able to get feedback on the performance targets, and there is tangible and constructive impact of this feedback in terms of training, career growth and development. (Awan, Habib, Shoaib & Naveed, 2020). In this study, performance management was synthesized as timely communication, objectivity and reliability of performance appraisal and essential linkage of the performance management and appraisal to planned training and development programmes.

### **Strategic Human Resource Management Practices**

Strategic Human Resource Management Practices refer to the application of certain HR practices, which are normally selected and implemented by an organization.



These practices are often instituted in such a way that they are matched to the overall strategies of that organization, towards attaining desired performance, and, therefore, competitiveness (Ojokuku & Akanbi, 2015). This study extracted four typical strategic human resource management practices commonly implemented by organizations, including public universities. The four strategic human resource management practices were thus conceptualized as; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management, often implemented as a bundle by organizations (Arthur, 1994; MacDuffie, 1996).

### **Reward Management**

Reward Management refers to the provision of incentive packages and all other methods geared towards promoting a sustainable environment, which would encourage the highest possible levels of employee involvement and engagement. This requires strategic identification and implementation through appropriate policy, systems and procedures, which promote fairness and equity (Noorazem, Sabri & Matt, 2021). In this study, reward management was conceptualized as most likely provision of fair equitable rewards, team-based rewarding and other extra incentive schemes.

### **Rigorous Recruitment**

Refers to a recruitment approach by organizations, which is informed by a thorough assessment of the needs of an organization in terms of its internal and external environments' strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. Any recruitment would, therefore, be guided by a recruitment plan, which is further informed appropriately by a stated policy, documented methods and standards, including the use of thorough job descriptions, merit-based recruitment and so on.

Consequently, this ensures that the right personnel for the right jobs are engaged strategically (Kanyemba, Iwu, & Allen-Ile, 2015). In this study, rigorous recruitment was conceptualized as adherence to policy, existence of elaborate job description, and exercise of recruitment based on merit.

### **Staff Training**

Staff Training implies a deliberate, well planned and executed skill-oriented interventions, which align employees' adroitness to organizational strategies. This requires appropriate policy formulation, programmes implementation, and the use of strategic methods to ensure effective implementation, and consequently, enhanced employee and organizational performance (Al-Mzari, Al-rifai & Al-Momany, 2015). In this study, staff training was conceptualized as adherence to training policy, provision of induction and career development programmes.

## ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to determine whether there was a relationship between SHRMPs and performance of public universities in Kenya, and whether any such relationship was influenced by the human resource management units in the universities on one hand, and by employee outcomes, on the other. The study sought to address the gap that despite empirical evidence that public universities in Kenya implemented SHRMPs. in their operations, which ought to positively impact their performance, the universities appeared to continually perform poorly, not only in terms of their financial prospects, but also in terms of their core mandates, including research, learning and teaching, graduation of learners, and staff welfare among others. Moreover, the reviewed literature did not seem to address human resource management units, and employee outcomes. Seven objectives were set; to examine whether SHRMPs combined influence performance of public universities in Kenya, to establish the extent to which rigorous recruitment influences performance of the universities, to determine if staff training influences performance of the universities, to examine whether reward management affects performance of the universities, to determine how performance management influences university performance, to establish the extent to which implementation of SHRMPs by the human resource management unit moderates the relationship between SHRMPs and performance of the universities, and to determine whether employee outcomes intervene on the relationship between SHRMPs and performance of the universities. Hinged on the positivist ontology, and, leaning towards the Resource Based Theory, the study adopted a descriptive mainly quantitative research design, in a census approach, using a sample of 155 respondents drawn from a target population of approximately 75,000 academic and non-academic employees of 31 public universities in Kenya. After an initial pilot of the instruments was undertaken using a random sample of 30 respondents from six universities, which did not take part in the main study, a self-administered five-point Likert type questionnaire data was collected, and analyzed, based on a 110 (74%) response rate. The data was descriptively and inferentially analyzed using tables, graphs, means and standard deviations, and a combination of linear and multiple linear regression. The results showed that the four SHRMPs investigated (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management), collectively and individually had a positive and statistically significant influence on the universities' performance, that the implementation role of SHRMPs by the resource management units had a positive and statistically significant moderating influence on the SHRMPs-performance relationship, and that employee outcomes had a positive and statistically significant intervening influence on the relationship between SHRMPs and universities' performance. It was concluded that strategic human resource management has a significant role to play in the performance of the public universities in Kenya, and, therefore, the universities should consider this as a possible mechanism among others, for influencing their performance prospects in the future. The study recommended that the universities consider revamping their human resource management by innovatively providing the essential physical facilitation, robust policy formulation, and appropriate full-time employee-HR employee balancing. This would not only promote impactful implementation of SHRMPs, but also the realization of value adding employee outcomes with respect to adequate staff motivation, high levels of work role commitment, adequate empowerment and enhanced teamwork. Although delimited to public universities in Kenya, the findings of this study are considered potentially useful to all universities and beyond. Hence, for HR practitioners, policy makers and researchers this study potentially constitutes a source of insightful theory and empirical-oriented knowledge within the wider HRM empirical literature, and, possibly a potential move towards a SHRMPs implementation framework, entailing SHRMPs-OUs-Performance nexus. Further confirmatory and or comparative studies may affirm or otherwise, the results of this study, by comparing private and public universities in Kenya.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Long gone are the historical days of the 1970s, when controversy surrounded the role of personnel management, personnel managers, and their impact in organizations. Today, empirical literature is rich with many studies, which have affirmed the role of human resource management (HRM), as a unique approach towards employee management. This role enables the pursuit towards achieving competitive advantage, by applying a deliberate use of well-motivated and competent workers (Storey, 2016). As emphasized by Storey (2016), HRM enables the use of a combination of cultural and structural people-oriented methodologies to enhance an organization's market prospects. Perhaps one of the most vivid definitions of human resource management was given by Dessler, Lloyd-Walker, & Griffiths (2004), who defined HRM as constituting a process by which organizations acquire, train, reward and ensure that the employees' wellness is sustainably catered for. It is in this context that strategic human resource management, which is the subject matter of the current study, arises.

Strategic human resource management (SHRM), is the current phase in the evolution of HRM, and its usage has become a key trend in organizations today (Lengnick-Hall, Mark & Lengnick-Hall, Cynthia & Andrade, Leticia & Drake, 2009). HRM constitutes deliberate activities by an enterprise, which often help distinguish one entity from its competitors (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). As aptly suggested by Hendry and Pettigrew (1986), strategic human resource management has quadruple beneficial implications.

These include; provision of essential HR planning, entailing the use of streamlined approaches to the designing and managing people in an enterprise, the application definite employment policy as derived from a given philosophy, and the use of a deliberate matching of certain human resource management (HRM)-oriented interventions and policies to a strategic business strategy.

More relevant to the study at hand, strategic human resource management entails a deliberate consideration and perception, on the part of the leadership and management of an enterprise, that the people who work in that enterprise are a strategic asset towards achieving competitive edge (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). It is in this context that this study is premised. As varied business environment dynamics continue to impact organizations, including the Covid 19 pandemic, and its ramifications in the work place, the assimilation of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), by organizations worldwide, continues to gain momentum.

In modern organizations, the need to use a strategic cadre of people as a driver towards achieving high and sustainable performance levels requires using human resource management practices in pursuit of an enterprise's goals. Hence, typical human resource management practices are often strategically mainstreamed into certain key strategic pillars of such an enterprise, thereby influencing those enterprises 'processes, actions and decisions towards desired performance (Dellaney, 1996; Mohammed, 2019). This approach was affirmed recently by Anastasiu, Gavris & Dorin (2020), who recommended the adoption of Porter's Five Forces Model, to strategic human resources management (Porter, 1980).

This model reiterated that the world's business environment is now, more than ever, faced with real-life challenges, in terms of talents shortage, increasing world population ageing rate, the ever-decreasing manual repetitive jobs and so on.

It is in these circumstances that this study is particularly concerned with the implementation of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), and enterprise performance, within the public sector, and specifically within public universities in Kenya. Whereas there is substantial empirical literature regarding SHRMPs and enterprise performance, the majority of the literature seems to incline towards the private sector, rather than the public sector enterprises (Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams & Vandenabeele (2018).

However, although comparably less research literature seems to focus on the public sector as compared to the private sector, there is, nevertheless, empirical evidence regarding strategic human resource management practices and performance in the public sector, and especially in the public universities sub-sector. . For instance, Amin, Wan Ismail, Wan Khairuzzaman, Abdul & Selemani (2014), studied human resource practices in Malaysian public universities, and linked strategic human resource management to the performance of the public universities in Malaysia.

Likewise, Nwakpa, (2019). Established that strategic human resource practices in public universities needed to be harmonized towards achieving desired results. Similarly, Mugizi & Bakkabulindi (2019), empirically related human resource management practices and academic staff in public universities in Uganda, while Mutahi & Busienei (2016), analyzed human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

They established that there was a positive relationship between strategic human resource management practices in terms of HR planning and staffing, and the performance of selected public universities in Kenya.

Of particular interest for this current study, however, is that the literature reviewed does not, to the best knowledge of the researcher, seem to have dealt with the strategic human resource management practices in the context of the variables as conceptualized in this current study, that is, the human resource management unit, and employee outcomes. The pertinent role of a human resource management unit or department in the implementation of SHRMPs is evidenced by empirical literature. For instance, Agarwal, Opong, Derek, Adjirackor, Theophilus, Kugbega, Gagakuma, Wisdom, Sivaramakrishnan & Agarwal (2016), stated that the implementation of strategic human resource management practices through a strategic unit or department was crucial to the level of impact that the implemented practices would have on the performance a given organization. Similarly, Punia, Jaglan & Saharan (2015) pointed out that the HRM department often coordinates the respective human resource activities and sections within each academic faculty office, and directly facilitates the other administrative units, thereby centrally servicing all faculties and all the other administrative units in the whole organization.

However, none of these studies conceptualized the human resource management unit as it was conceptualized in this current study, especially as a variable, which may influence the relationship between implemented SHRMPs and performance, by way of moderating that relationship. Furthermore, although the current empirical literature addresses employee outcomes, including Ismail & Ali (2020), who considered job satisfaction and university performance.

Also, Gbenga & Akinbo (2021), who related employee motivation and Job satisfaction to university performance in Nigeria. Nevertheless, empirical literature so far reviewed does not, seem to employee outcomes in the context of strategic human resource management practices, human resource management unit and performance of public universities in Kenya as conceptualized in this current study.

### **1.1.1 Performance of Organizations**

A comprehensive discussion on performance of public universities should, perhaps, more appropriately, begin with a brief discussion on the performance of enterprises generally. An enterprise, public or private, may be considered a strategic mechanism, which provides a means through which the stake-holding members of that enterprise achieve certain ends. The achievement or otherwise, of the said ends, constitutes that enterprise's performance. However, it has been pointed out that measuring organizational performance constitutes many dimensions (Nzuve & Bundi, 2012). This implies that such measurement covers the many ways and means by which enterprises are able to operate and interact with their environments, out of which such enterprises are able to propel their performance on one hand, and to determine appropriate ways and means of measuring the same against certain parameters, towards determining their levels of success (Nzuve & Bundi, 2012).

It has also been pointed out that enterprise performance measurement is an all-important element in management, especially given the excessively high organizational competitiveness, operational dynamism and complexity, as well as the shifting global environments, which call for managers to have the strongest of grasps on diversified issues (Fleisher, 2003).



This was especially critical towards ensuring that such enterprise were able to identify, institutionalize, and embrace needed structural strategies successfully. More relevantly, however, it has been empirically established, that it is the people who work in, and for an enterprise, rather than the enterprises' forthcoming products, income flows, structures, and so on, which avail the critical differentiating forces towards achieving the desired outcomes of such an enterprise (Mohammed, 2019). This implies that all the other resources besides the people resource are likely to be less useful, because they have to be manipulated by the human resources initially, in creating the desired utility for all the stakeholders within and without the enterprise.

Arguably, therefore, an organization's working force may be considered the "switch" that creates the essential propulsion towards a sustainable flourishing, and, ultimately, a profitable entity in terms of competitiveness and desired performance (Mohammed, 2019). Hence, organizational performance has been deemed a multidisciplinary phenomenon, mainly composed of an enterprise's capacity for creating and delivering value to its stakeholders. It is for this value proposition that an enterprise exists, and on which its performance is evaluated.

The complexity of what constitutes this performance, however, has been a challenge in terms of evaluating and measuring the performance, because of the myriad possible indicators of such performance in organizations. As opined by Juevesa, Roel & Castino (2020), there has been a tendency to use finance-oriented indicators for evaluating organizational performance.

Financial performance indicators, however, are said to underscore and highlight performance after, rather than current and projected performance, and hence failing to reflect the current or the future operational state of an enterprise. Almost all organizations, especially those in the private sector, work in environments, which are highly competitive. For them to remain afloat and or succeed in the market, they have to surmount many challenges, which, if not overcome, may compromise their performance, and therefore, eventually, their very existence (Shafique-ur, Rapih & Hazeline, 2019).

In this regard, organizational performance, which is often measured qualitatively as well as quantitatively, is said to be achieved when all the efforts of individual employees, and sections of an enterprise, are aggregated (Zehir, Gurol, Karaboga & Kole, 2016). Even more relevantly, Zehir et al. (2016) emphasized that, an organization's performance is most likely to be incrementally sustained where employees are valued as assets. Relevantly for this current study, this implies the importance of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) in leveraging on the people who work in an organization. In this respect, there is a need for strategic valuing of the workers of an organization, on the part of the leadership in that organization, as the key assets. This in turn enables such an organization to sustainably realize desired outcomes in terms of client satisfaction, enhanced market presence, higher customer attraction, faster adaptation to change, higher rates of technological innovation, higher levels of employee morale, and faster product innovation (Eneh & Awara, 2016).

### **1.1.1.1 Performance of Public Universities**

This study contextualizes performance within public entities, and, especially performance of universities as business entities. To start with, universities all over the world are said exist with a mandate in researching, generating knowledge, enabling scholarship and engaging in creative innovation. All of these are essential in driving social, technological and economic welfare (Kallio & Kallio & Grossi, 2017). In this respect, universities normally measured their performance using research outcomes, teaching outcomes and the number graduated students, among other parameters.

In this light, university ranking platforms at the international, regional, and local levels arguably provide dimensions by which the performance of universities. For instance, Times Higher Education University Rankings (2023), UniRank (2023), EduRank (2023), all recognize and use web matrix-oriented ranking systems to rank universities across the world using similar indicators, including research publications, teaching and learning technologies, and enrolment of students, and graduation rates, among other measures of performance.

It is in this context that this current study contextualized, and conceptualized performance of public universities in Kenya, and in this respect, selected, innovative learning programmes, research and publications, student enrolment rates, student graduation rates, and staff promotion rates as the indicators of performance, and hence, the dependent variables in this study. In addition, it is important to note, that these indicators are arguably homogenous.

This is because, as conceptualized in this study, these measures of performance, and in this case, indicators of performance, largely apply similarly in all the public universities as sampled, regardless of a university's size, age, geographical location, and so on. Furthermore, all the public universities are government owned, and therefore, largely operationally administered by the government, in all matters regarding policy, governance, rules and regulations, as per the Universities' Act (2012), and the other relevant statutes as provided for by Commission for University Education in Kenya.

More relevantly, the performance of public universities in Kenya is contextualized in the fact that like all other business entities, universities world over continuously find themselves having to fiercely compete in the modern market, and to be innovative in order for them to stay afloat. However, on matters strategic human resource management, and the need to harness staff as key assets, towards creative competitiveness, the public universities in Kenya do not seem to be fairing very well. As pointed out by Hamadamin & Atan (2019), university staff are generally perceived as having relatively higher levels of overall literacy, and are more knowledgeable compared to employees in other similar organizations. Consequently, according to Hamadamin & Atan (2019), there is a tendency for more attention and concern being drawn towards the pursuit of academic activities, as compared to the need to harness all cadres of employees towards fostering a culture, which supports human capital development across the cadres.

This current study opines that this perception may actually be a key factor which may be hampering the extent to which public universities in Kenya and even abroad, strategically utilize their staff, and hence this study.

Indeed, the relevant industry and empirical literature seems to suggest that the public universities are facing in systemic financial operational challenges, accelerated by cross-border competition and other emerging labour market dynamics (Mahdi, Nassar & Almsafir, 2018). More relevant to Kenya's public universities, it has been established that the extent to which public universities in Kenya have been able to deliver on their mandate has been hampered, because the universities have been experiencing varied challenges, including, lack of infrastructural and financial support to engage in meaningful research, leading to low levels of research output. This is worsened by lack of the needed focus and attention to research as a core activity, on the part of faculty. (CUE, 2018).

The state of performance of the public universities in Kenya has been termed as a crisis, which has seemed to get from bad to worse. Indeed, there seems to be empirical, as well as industry-based evidence to this end. For instance, as highlighted earlier, Commission for University Education (CUE), (2018), in a report on the status of public universities in Kenya, highlighted various challenges hampering the performance of public universities in Kenya. These included declining financial support to the universities by the Government. Consequently, there has been increasing lack of infrastructural facilities and equipment, which has hampered research and teaching, increasing deterioration human and other capital resources.

The report also pointed out that there were increasingly too many projects, amounting to disruption and lack of essential focus on geographical and thematic core areas, as well as the rapid expansion of privately sponsored teaching and learning programs which have tended to draw academic staff away from the core research and teaching agenda.

In addition, according to CUE (2018), there were poor university-industry linkages, which had undermined the relevance of teaching programs as well as low levels of university research funding by industry. Consequently, there has been poor policy implementation across the various programmes, including intellectual property rights, research ethics, plagiarism and open accessibility to information and innovations, not to mention poor alignment of university research to the national development goals and aspirations. Seeming to echo on the same, the National Government Auditor General (Kenya) Reports of 2020/2021, and 2021/2022, all reported that public universities were operating under immense financial and operational constraints, had largely turned to financing their operations using expensive short-term overdrafts which had worsened their liquidity statuses.

The foregoing seems to be affirmed empirically. For instance, Idua (2017), found that there was a marked increase in student enrolment, scarce resources, excessive staff turnover, poor capital and human resource planning, and sporadic industrial disputes, which seemed to compound the universities' poor performance prospects, leading to declining staff and organizational performance. Furthermore, according to Munene (2016), the universities continued to experience hardships, including lack of basic facilities, like libraries, internet connectivity, and inadequate academic staff. This situation of the public universities seemed to worsen, even as the institutions expanded through campuses, which seemed to serve as conduits of raising money for their main campuses on one hand, and aiding in satiating the apparently insatiable appetite for higher education and training by the populace (Munene, 2016).

Inevitably, as was widely reported, even in the mainstream media, the Commission for University Education acted, closing down several university campuses in 2019. Furthermore, according to Odhiambo (2018), even as the public universities in Kenya continued to physically expand, through campuses and colleges, the universities did not seem to be living to their core mandate of researching, generating knowledge, enabling scholarship, and creative innovation, which is essential in driving social, technological and economic welfare. Indeed, it has been pointed out that the ability of public universities to produce employable graduates for the country, and the extent to which the universities are able to general social-economic development has been largely waning over time (British Council, 2014; Wanzala, 2015).

Hence, while on the one hand, public universities continue to increase in numbers due to demand for education among other factors, on the other, there are ever increasing challenges, which have been exacerbated by increasing costs of operation while at the same time, declining funding by government, even as enrolments increased (Michubu, Nyerere & Kyalo, 2017). These eventualities have been destructive in terms of the public universities' capacity to deliver high standard education, training, and research (Aduda, 2016).

Most profoundly for this study, Odhiambo (2018), pointed out that despite the challenges which have seen universities performance suffer operationally, the universities did not seem be able to do much towards changing or resolving the challenges they find themselves in. The universities appeared helpless and unable to endeavour to create basic efficiencies towards reinventing themselves (Wanzala, 2018).

These crises have drastically affected the universities' growth, leading to deteriorating services, high academic cadre turnover, student disturbances, as well as dearth of creativity and innovativeness. As it is now, it is not usual to find some public universities engaging in unethical, and detestable activities just to raise scarce income, including for instance, overlooking entry requirements for certain courses, and or disregarding set standards altogether in a bid to graduate many students (Aduda, 2016). In some instances, some universities have turned to 'marketing' certain courses at the cost of other 'unmarketable' courses, and hence, limiting students' freedom of choice.

It is the considered opinion of this study that among other potential solutions towards turning around the universities' fortunes, one of them may lay in rethinking, the implementation of human resource management practices. This is because, as suggested by Susilo, Astutu & Wiyata (2017), these entities seemed to experience challenges related to human resource management, including formulating and actualizing plans, organizing and evaluating performance of HR functions, yet, the universities had human resource units in various structural forms. As evidenced, the performance the performance of the public universities has been on the decline.

Empirical evidence, as discussed in 1.1.2, shows that strategic human resource management practices positively impacts performance of an entity. In this light, could the human resource units in these universities be a possible hindrance, in terms lacking the essential capacity to implement human resource management practices strategically, and hence poor performance? Is it possible that in strategic human resource management, may lay a possible solution, among others, towards turning around the universities' performance prospects? This hypothetical position was tested and determined in this study.



### **1.1.2 Strategic Human Resource Management Practices**

Strategic human resource management practices is a concept derived from the deliberate integration of certain human resource practices of an enterprise, including recruitment, training, and reward management, to enable an enterprise align them to the strategic goals and objectives of that enterprise (Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015). This integration is meant to result to the creation of a foundational human resource capacity, as well as a corporate culture, which would be supportive of critical components of performance, including increased employee innovativeness, enhanced organizational adaptability and competitiveness.

This current study opines that one key implication of the usage of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), is that that the unit responsible for overall direction of employees in an organization, that is, the human resource management department, becomes a strategic pillar, as such an organization formulates and implements its overall business and operational strategies, through HR interventions. In this regard, an enterprise's achievements on its goals and objectives, or otherwise, is likely to be as a result of the extent to which that organization has leveraged on the usage of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) in its activities and operations (Boon, Deanne, Hartog & Lepak, 2019).

Indeed, an organization's performance with respect to SHRMPs can only be realized where employees are valued as assets. Consequently, realization of desired outcomes in terms of client satisfaction and better market presence would arise (Storey, Ulrich; & Wright (2019).

More importantly in this study, is the proposition that the impact of HRM on enterprise performance depends on the strategic adoption of a selected combination of HRM practices, usually referred to as HRM bundles (MacDuffie, 1995). Furthermore, it has been suggested that the relationship between HRM and performance involved a mix of interactions between bundles of HRM practices or activities one hand, and outcomes on the other (Arthur, 1994; MacDuffie, 1996).

Hence, and as suggested by Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014), an enterprise ought to use a combination of SHRMPs in line with its business function-specific requirements in a bid to drive towards desired performance. In implementing strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), therefore, respective interventions are made, each of which would target a particular aspect needed for both workers and enterprise outcomes. As Eneh & Awara (2016) asserted, there was a necessity for each organization to implement a strategic bundle of SHRMPs which would culminate in higher levels of production and ultimately increased organizational achievement (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2021).

Similarly, according to Pfeffer (1998), an enterprise that desires to influence its performance sustainably using a strategic human resource management approach ought to consider the typical people management-oriented interventions. These include; effective employee recruitment, need-specific strategic employee training, strategic compensation and performance management across the organization.

It is in this context that this study conceptualized, and investigated the typical bundle of four strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) commonly used by organizations (Arthur, 1994; MacDuffie, 1996), as illustrated in the foregoing.

For the purpose of this study, the criticality of strategic human resource management practices for organizations, and by extension, for public universities in Kenya, was perhaps most emphatically captured by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) (2022), who have pointed out that, among the current trends in utilizing strategic human resource management practice, modern pace-setter organizations are very keen to listen to employee needs, are hiring employees with talent-oriented soft skills, and are very intentional on retaining their top-talent employees, as a means of leveraging on the said practices to become competitive. In this context, the elementary practices in the conceptualized SHRMPs bundle of rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management are discussed forthwith.

#### **1.1.2.1 Rigorous Recruitment**

Acquiring and engaging the right people is arguably the most critically step, and in this case, practice, for every organization, public universities not exempted. However, empirical research on the recruitment-performance nexus has not been conclusive, especially where and when recruitment is considered and analyzed singly as a practice. Yet there is massive evidence that rigorous recruitment positively affects organizational performance (Govand, & Nabaz, 2021), (Kanyemba, Marta & Iwu, Chux & Allen-ILE, 2015). Furthermore, as established by Kanyemba et al. (2015), there is evidence that recruitment and selection approaches by higher educational institutions and colleges, including public universities helped to reduce costs and increase expertise of staff.

This study intended to assess the extent to which rigorous recruitment as a unitary strategic human resource management practice influenced performance, as far as public universities in Kenya are concerned.

### **1.1.2.2 Staff Training**

Needless to overemphasize, training is one of the basic interventions necessitated by various dynamics in an organization's business environment, including technology and customer expectations. There is empirical evidence that there is impactful influence of training on administrative leaders and administrative employees in organizations (Al-Mzari, Al-rifai & Al-Momany, 2015). Likewise, it was found that training influenced employees' and university performance (Ogohi & Cross, 2018). However, the extent to which this was affirmable as far as the public universities in Kenya were concerned, was investigated in this study.

### **1.1.2.3 Reward Management**

Reward management has been defined as constituting all the processes, systems and policies often instituted in organizations to ensure that the contributions which employees make towards the realization of organizational goals, are valued and rewarded accordingly (Armstrong 2010). Indeed, as Armstrong alluded, the people in an organization represent the most important asset. It then follows logically that any efforts towards eliciting the best possible contribution from this critical asset must entail rewarding them effort for effort.

The existing empirical literature underscores this variously. However, the nature of rewards as proffered by organizations is that they affect employees directly first, resulting to a change in their performance, and consequently, therefore, affecting organizational performance. It is no wonder that the majority of studies available in current literature seem to dwell on influence of rewarding on workers; output rather than on organizational performance.

However, of relevance to this study, was mainly that reward management, as strategic human resource management practice does indeed positively affect the performance of an enterprise (Noorazem, Sabri & Matt, 2021; Samuel, 2021; Leseiyo & Ngui, 2019). This study sought to empirically determine whether that impact of reward management also applies, as far as public universities in Kenya were concerned.

#### **1.1.2.4 Performance Management**

All organizations, large or small, in whichever industry or sector, target to improve their performance, using various approaches and techniques. Measuring the levels of performance is, therefore, arguably a most important exercise towards determining the current and future capacity of employees to support an organization towards desired performance (Samwel, 2018). In this respect, many empirical studies have linked performance management to organizational performance.

For instance, Samwel (2018), established that performance management did impact employee performance, and ultimately, organizational performance. Awan, Habib, Shoaib & Naveed (2020) pointed out that performance management systems did propel organizational performance as a result of high levels of employee engagement.

However, these studies do not seem to address performance management as an elementary practice within the bundle of SHRMPs as conceptualized in this study.

#### **1.1.3 Implementation of SHRMPs by Human Resource Management Unit**

The human resource management (HRM) function in an organization is typically operationalized through a HRM unit, commonly referred to as a department. In line with this, universities across the world are structured such that there is HRM unit with an important responsibility for ensuring growth of the university (Punia, Jaglan & Saharan, 2015).

Such a department, according to Punia et.al, often coordinates with respective human resource sections within each academic faculty office and directly facilitates the other administrative units, thereby centrally servicing all faculties and all the other administrative units in the whole organization (Punia, Jaglan & Saharan, 2015). They added that the human resource management unit had a definite role, including formulation of HR policy as well as HR planning, ensuring strategic reflection of HR-related physical changes and ensuring appropriate HR staffing and loading.

More relevantly, Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015) pointed out that the seemingly unabated lowering of standards in public universities in Kenya, had given rise to a lot of concern, which needed a strategic approach towards harnessing the universities' human resources. This was especially the case when one considered the semi-autonomous nature of the institutions, which determines their uniqueness in terms of their governance structural orientations. Furthermore, in the current dynamic business environment, it is increasingly important for organizations, including public universities' human resource management strategies to be in tune with the institutions' goals.

According to Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015), if and when this is provided for, it may foster an inclination towards the needful essential structuring, equipping, and re-organization of the unit's responsibility in organizing and coordinating the implementation of HR practices which promote successful utilization of employees. This was affirmed by Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams & Vandenabeele (2018), who asserted that universities which had equipped their HR departments with new structures, approaches and features, plans and policies had tended to make better linkage to the respective organization's overall strategic plan towards realizing performance targets.

According to their study, Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams & Vandenabeele (2018) pointed out that largely; related research in this field has mainly focused and provided evidence from the private sector.

It is in this context that this current study opines that, as underscored by Utger, Bart & Rick (2022), public sector enterprises, and especially the public universities, tended to present with unique governance structures, which were mainly driven by the institutions' nature as semi-autonomous entities. In these circumstances, decision-making tends to be constrained, with respect to operational activities (Utger et al., 2022). As far as this current study is concerned, this state of affairs is likely to affect the implementation of strategic human resource management practices, and the provision of commensurate resources to support the same in public universities. Consequently, unlike the private sector enterprises, which are able to make HR-oriented implementation decisions promptly and autonomously, public sector enterprises, including public universities, are not as able to do this as the private sector enterprises, because they are essentially controlled by the government.

The enterprises tend to have diminished autonomy, and are more than likely to be subjected to comparatively high levels of manipulation by multiple stakeholders, including politicians and trade unions. The extent to which this state of affairs affects the role of the human resource management units in the public universities in implementing strategic human resource management practices is a key matter of investigation in this study, therefore.

#### **1.1.4 Employee Outcomes**

There is research-based evidence that organization settings characterized by high performance work systems (HPWS) are likely to experience an impact disconnect between the existing HPWS at the organization level (organization outcomes) on the one hand, and the HPWS at the employee level (employee outcomes) on the other (Zhang, Makhtar, Bal & Talat (2018). It has also been found that employee outcomes have been construed as being personalized behaviors derived from work-related attitudes or believe systems (Ambula, Awino & K'Obonyo, 2016).

According to Ambula et al. (2016), employee outcomes, therefore, refer to such states of mind on the part of employees, including level of gratification or motivation, self-drive level or commitment, and empowerment, all of which affect how teamwork exists among workers (Ambula ,Awino & K'Obonyo, 2016). In support of the foregoing, it has been empirically evidenced that employee outcomes usually arise from the implemented strategic human resource practices (SHRMPs), and are linked to organizational performance by extension (Veth, Korzilius, van der Heijden, Emans & De Lange, 2019). Veth et al. (2019), emphasized that where employees perceived the provision of SHRM practices, there was a marked increase in employee outcomes, which, however, may not necessarily be proportional, given the individualized nature of employee outcomes, the levels of which may vary from one employee to another.

As conceptualized in this study, varying employee outcomes may result from implemented strategic human resource practices at the public universities.



However, depending on other mainly subjective or personalized factors, the employees are likely to perceive and act supportively or otherwise, with respect to the organization's (universities') intentions, goals and objectives.

In this respect, employee outcomes are conceptualized to be indicated by the four elements as conceptualized in this study; level of employee motivation, commitment, empowerment and teamwork. It is hypothesized in this study, that employee outcomes arising out of implemented SHRMPs, (conceptualized in this study as; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management), may mediate the relationship between the implemented SHRMPs and university performance, thereby diminishing or enhancing the said performance.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

It is empirically evident that that strategic human resource management practices, including the four practices investigated I this study, positively impact all forms of organizations, including public universities. Many studies attest to this, including Khaled, Akram, Chung, & Jee (2020), Eneh & Awara (2016), and Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams, & Vandenabeele (2018), the details of which are discussed later in Chapter Two.

There is also substantial evidence that organizations which had successfully leveraged on strategic human resource management practices tended to implement the same in strategic bundles, which were carefully selected in line with such organizations' overall strategic plans (Arthur, 1994; MacDuffie, 1996).

Relevant empirical literature indicates a variety of bundles, mainly consisting of common HR practices, including performance related pay, training, performance management, and talent-based recruitment (Gooderham, Parry & Ringdal, 2008).

It is in this context that this current study conceptualized the bundle of four strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs); (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management), and undertook to investigate how this bundle may influence the performance of public universities in Kenya. In this regard, these four SHRMPs, among others, continue to be implemented in operating environments where the human resource management units in the universities have unique operating environments which may, as hypothesized in this study, affect the extent to which the implemented SHRMPs give rise to certain levels of employee outcomes, which ultimately influence performance.

Indeed, there is corroborating empirical evidence, as presented in detail in Chapter Two, positively linking each of the practices as conceptualized in this study, and how the practices affect organizational performance. For instance, and respectively; Sanket & Vijendra (2022) linked rigorous recruitment and organizational performance, Ogohi & Cross (2018), illustrated a positive relationship between staff training and organizational performance. Likewise, Tripathy & Rohidas (2022), found that reward management positively impacted enterprise performance, while Gomes & Mendes (2022), linked performance management and organizational performance.

However, and more specific to strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities, and the gap which was addressed by this current study, there is substantial evidence that, the universities, like all other organizations, apply certain bundles of SHRMPs in various combinations. For instance, Hamadamin, Hussein, & Tarik (2019), established a linkage between strategic human resource management practices and university performance.

Also, Eneh & Awara (2016), found that strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) had significantly impacted the performance of public universities in Nigeria, Naitore & Wanyoike (2019), established that there was a positive and significant relationship linking strategic human resource management practices, in terms of HR planning and staffing and the performance of selected public universities in Kenya, and Mutahi & Busienei (2015), who similarly affirmed that SHRMPs positively affected performance of Kenya's public universities.

Most interestingly, however, it is the considered position of this current study that the empirical evidence that SHRMPs positively impact on the performance of entities, including public universities in Kenya, is contrary to the prevailing happenings, with respect to the current performance of public universities in real practice. The performance of these universities, which, evidently practice human resource management practices, seems to be contrary to expectation, especially with regard to their core mandate.

This is evidenced variously. For instance, from the industry, Commission for University Education (CUE), (2018), in a report on the status of public universities in Kenya, highlighted various shortcomings continually being experienced by the universities. These include deteriorating research-oriented infrastructural facilities like laboratories and lack of quality human resources, existence of too many disruptive or non-focused projects, and diversionary expansion of privately sponsored teaching and learning programs, which have tended to draw academic staff away from the core research-oriented teaching agenda. Similarly, there is evidence from the industry that public universities, among other state corporations, have consistently continued to operate under immense financial and operational constrains.

The universities had largely turned to financing their operations using expensive short-term overdrafts, which have worsened their liquidity statuses (National Government Auditor General (Kenya) Report, 2021).

Empirical literature reviewed also seems to attest to this. For instance, Idua (2017), pointed out that a marked increase in government-sponsored student enrolment, scarce resources, excessive staff turnover, poor capital and human resource planning, and sporadic industrial disputes, had all compounded the universities' prospects, leading to declining staff and organizational performance. Likewise, it has been established that public universities had continued to struggle in worsening financial and operational turmoil, mainly lacking the most basic facilities, including libraries, internet connection, and adequate academic staff (Munene, 2016).

Hence, it is evident that public universities had, and continue to implement certain strategic human resource management practices. These practices ought to positively impact their performance, and, therefore, the universities ought not to be performing adversely as evidenced from the industry, as well as empirically. It is in this light that this study considered a possible empirical explanation for this discrepancy.

In this regard, there is substantial empirical evidence, pointing to the central and vital role of the human resource management department or unit of an enterprise in providing the structural and operational facilitation through which HR functions are operationalized (Storey, Ulrich & Wright, 2019). Indeed, the contribution of the strategic human resource management unit to the implementation of strategic human resource management practices has been variously illustrated.

For instance, Ali (2022), who linked talent management in enterprises to the human resources departments, which provided supportive operationalization HR policies and practices. Also, Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015), who pointed out that the extent of awareness of the mission and vision of a university by HR department staff determined a lot in terms of HR practice, and university performance. Yet, and fundamentally as far as this current study is concerned, the reviewed literature has not revealed any studies linking strategic human resource management practices and the implementing role of the human resource management unit, and most importantly, how the said implementation role may affect, probably by way of moderation, the impact of implemented strategic human resource management practices on the performance of an enterprise.

It is in this context that this study hypothesized the possibility that, where a human resource management unit of a public university lacks the essential capacity with regard to physical facilitation, robust human resource policy formulation, dynamic human resource planning, and appropriate full-time employee-HR employee establishment balancing as conceptualized, two consequences arise. The first one is that employee outcomes, with respect to level of motivation, level of commitment, extent of empowerment and the degree of teamwork, as conceptualized in this study, are adversely affected (Huselid, 1995). Secondly, as emphasized by Huselid (1995), the state of low employee outcomes may affect, by way of intervening on the relationship between implemented strategic human resource management practices and performance of a university, either promoting the performance, or curtailing the same.

Yet, the relevant empirical literature reviewed did not seem to address the implementation aspect of strategic human resource management practices, especially with regard to the role of human resource management units, as a possible moderator on the impact of implemented strategic human resource management practices on performance on one hand. On the other hand, the possibility that the same relationship between implemented strategic human resource management practices and enterprise performance may be intervened upon, by employee outcomes (Vui-Yee, 2015).

Consequently, this study undertook to empirically investigate the possibility that the adverse performance of Kenya's public universities, in spite of implemented SHRMPs, may be explained by the interplay of SHRMPs, human resource management unit, and employee outcomes. To the best knowledge of the researcher, and based on a thorough review of relevant literature, no previous study seemed to have conceptualized and addressed the variables as conceptualized in this study, especially in the context of public universities in Kenya, and, therefore, this study's potential empirical and theoretical relevance towards a potential empirical explanation, which may inform future attempts at turning around the adverse prospects of the public universities in Kenya..

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

This study was guided by a general objective and seven specific objectives based on the variables of the study.

### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The main objective of this study was to determine whether there was a relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya, and whether that relationship is moderated by implementation of the strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit on one hand, and whether the said relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of the universities is intervened by employee outcomes on the other hand.

### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The study sought to attain the following specific objectives.

- i. To examine whether strategic human resource management practices influence performance of public universities in Kenya.
- ii. To establish the extent to which rigorous recruitment influences performance of public universities in Kenya.
- iii. To determine if staff training influences performance of public universities in Kenya
- iv. To examine whether reward management affects performance of public universities in Kenya.
- v. To determine how performance management influences performance of public universities in Kenya.
- vi. To establish the extent to which implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit moderates the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya

- vii. To determine whether employee outcomes intervene on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

#### **1.4 NULL HYPOTHESES**

The study tested the following hypotheses:

- H01. Strategic human resource management practices do not influence performance of public universities in Kenya.
- H02. Rigorous recruitment has no influence on performance of public universities in Kenya.
- H03. There is no influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya.
- H04. Performance of Public universities in Kenya is not affected by reward management
- H05. Performance management does not influence performance of public universities in Kenya.
- H06. There is no moderating influence of the implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.
- H07. Employee outcomes do not intervene on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.



## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Strategic Human Resource Management Practices (SHRMPs) have been identified as key in enabling enterprises attain desired performance. As suggested by Gupta (2020), who emphasized the four organizational pillars aligned to the use of Strategic Human Resource Practices (SHRMPs), that is, strategy; performing; HR systematizing; and human capitalization, this study's findings with regard to Strategic Human Resource Management Practices (SHRMPs), Human Resource Management Unit (HRMU) and Employee Outcomes (Eos) and performance of public universities in Kenya were found to be empirically and theoretically consistent.

In line with the theoretical framework applied in this study, and particularly with regard to the Resource Based Theory, the Human Capital Theory, and the Institutional Theory, this study demonstrated the relevance of the findings to the theory, and variously seemed to provide more insights to the scope of the three theories.

The outcomes of this study also seemed to affirm, and add to the existing empirical literature, by, for instance, underscoring the importance and relevance of SHRMPs as conceptualized, not only for the public universities in Kenya, but most likely, also for all other universities and organizations locally and abroad. This is with particular emphasis on the human resource management units responsible for implementing these practices, and the critical role of employee outcomes. In this respect, therefore, the significance of the findings of this study is considerable at three levels; first is the need for organizations to be creative, robust, and focused in operationalizing selected bundles of strategic human resource management practices, including rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management, among any relevant others.

Second is the need for the said organizations to use a strategic approach to the designing and facilitation of strategic human resource management (SHRM), to give rise to foundational human resource management units that would be responsible for the effective implementation and operationalization of the selected bundle of strategic human resource management practices, collectively and respectively.

Thirdly, the critical need for organizations to realize that where one and two above are well and sufficiently catered for, the resultant employee outcomes, in terms of staff levels of commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment, and so on, would be such that the entire staff would be adequately capable of driving the institutions towards desired performance. In this regard, this study has particularly emphasized the role of the human resource management unit in a university in enabling successful and impactful mainstreaming of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs).

Therefore, as public universities seek to improve their performance, the findings of this study are considered as potential sources of insightful and empirical and theory-oriented information within the wider bank of knowledge, for the public universities and all other organizations at large. Furthermore, HR practitioners as well as managers, organizational leaders, and policy makers in both private and public organizations should find the outcomes of this study interesting. This is because the results represent a potentially viable implementation framework with regard to the SHRMPs-Performance nexus.

## **1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

This study has dealt with four variables on which the objectives were based; strategic human resource management practices, implementation of SHRMPs by human resource management unit, employee outcomes and performance of public universities.

The study was philosophically inclined towards realist ontology, in investigating and empirically finding the truth regarding the variables in question as they existed (Moon and Blackman, 2017) in the public universities in Kenya. The study covered the 31 accredited public universities in Kenya (CUE, 2018), excluding their constituent colleges/campuses. A descriptive census design was used in an attempt to promote the extents of validity and reliability of the data collected and the findings thereof. Purposive sampling was used, such that The HR Manager/Director; the Academic Registrar; the employee union representatives of UASU, KUDHEIHA and KUSU in each university respectively formed the five respondents for each of the 31 universities. The 31 universities, therefore, created the sample, constituting 155 respondents (5 x 31). Data was collected between April and June 2022.

## **1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This study was organized into five chapters: Chapter One presented the introduction, statement of the problem, research objectives, research hypotheses, significance and the scope of the study. Chapter Two will dwell on literature review, including theoretical foundations, empirical review, research gaps and conceptual framework. Chapter Three, research methodology, discussed the underlying philosophical inclinations, research design and methodology.

Included in this chapter is target population and sampling techniques, data collection method and tools, data analysis and presentation, ethical considerations and operationalization of variables. Chapter Four presented and analyzed collected data while Chapter Five presented the findings conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This section presents a literature review of the relevant theories as well as the relevant empirical studies related to the topic which was studied. First, three theories on which this study was hinged are presented and discussed. Secondly, the relationship between and among the variables which were investigated are presented and discussed.

Hence, relevant literature is reviewed regarding; the relationships between strategic human resource management practices as a bundle, and performance of public universities; individual strategic human resource management practices consisting of rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management and performance of public universities; the moderating influence the implementation role of SHRMPs by the human resource management unit on the relationship between the implemented SHRMPs and performance of public universities; and the intervening role of employee outcomes on the relationship between SHRMPs and performance of public universities.

Finally, the empirical gaps which were identified are discussed, and a conceptual framework depicting the relationships among the variables is provided. As indicated in this chapter, this study illustrated a sufficient and relevant grounding on the existing theory, as well as appropriate linkages to the existing empirical literature.

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION OF THE STUDY**

This section presents and discusses the theories related to the respective variables of the study, highlighting the relevance of the theories and how the current study may be situated within the wider theoretical foundations in human resource management as a discipline.

### **2.2.1 Resource Based Theory**

One of the theories on which this study is founded is the Resource Based Theory, which suggests a strategic management approach by organizations, in which the organizations are called upon to consider employees, among the other available resources, as a key resource in strategizing towards achieving competitive edge. The Resource Based Theory became prominent in the 1980s & 1990s, from key contributions of Wernerfelt (1984), Prahalad & Hamel (1991), and Barney (2001) among others.

These proponents of this theory assert the need for entities to focus internally and hence, determine the elements of enabling competitiveness, instead on focusing on searching for the same elsewhere. The recognition of the relevance of strategizing the management of people in an enterprise in seeking to create organizational competitiveness marks the theory's relevance in this study, as it directly resonates with the constructs and the objectives of the study.

More specifically, the relevance of the Resource Based Theory to this study is underscored by its main characterization, as posited by Barney (2002), who pointed out that the Resource Based Theory focuses on the link between the internalized nature of an organization, vis-a-vis its performance. In this respect, this implies that the major concern for any organization ought to be the extent to which such an organization's resources promote a competitive edge.

According to Barney (2002), the theory proposes that an organization may be likened to a collection of resources, including, managerial skills, organization wide procedures and systems, as well as the knowledge-based information at the organization's disposal. It is these resources which are then utilized, to enable such an organization select and undertake certain strategies, and, eventually realize superior and competitive performance. The nature of these resources is that they are simultaneously valuable, rare to find, of imperfect imitability, and of imperfect substitutability (Barney, 1991).

Thus, the subject matter of this study being human resource management, it may be argued that the propositions of the Resource Based Theory, are likely to be championed by the results of this study. This is because as Barney (2002), pointed out, one of the resources in the collection of resources in an organization is to do with people skills, which this study opines, is the central theme in human resource management.

Furthermore, and based on the foregoing, the objectives of these study seem to resonate with the Resource Based Theory. This is because, each of the objectives relates to a particular aspect of harnessing the human resource towards desired organizational performance; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management. However, the Resource Based Theory has been criticized for being open to a high degree of subjectivity in its application.

In addition, as far as this study is concerned, the characterization of the resources which give rise to competitive advantage, as valuable, rare, of imperfect imitability, and of imperfect substitutability, can be said to pose certain limitations, when contextualized in human resource management terms.

This is because employees, as resources, may not be as manipulatable as the other physical resources, and, therefore, as much as they are valuable, the extent to which they are imperfectly imitable, substitutable and rare depends on many other factors, some of which are subjective in nature, for instance, with reference to their attitudes and perceptions. However, it may be argued that certain human resource management practices, if and when strategically implemented, become key in making employees as human resources, largely inimitable, unsubstitutable, and so on, and hence the relevance of this study in the context of the Resource Based Theory.

Finally, it is the considered opinion of this current study that the Resource Based Theory, as it currently stands, does not seem to directly refer to the implementation role of the strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit, which this study considers as essential. Likewise, the Resource Based Theory does not seem to directly allude to employee outcomes as conceptualized in this study. Hence, it may be argued that the successful completion of this study did potentially add to the theoretical scope as advanced in the Resource Based Theory. This is because the findings of this study can arguably be construed to as providing new insights which may possibly be incorporated into the Resource Based Theory, suggesting a potential wider view of the Resource Based Theory in future.

### **2.2.2 Institutional Theory**

According to Najeeb (2014), the relevance of the institutional theory in human resource management was underscored by Paauwe & Boselie (2003), and also Meyer & Rowan (1977), who pointed out that all practices in an organization were either directly reflective or responsive to the prevailing rules and structural layouts.

These were inbuilt into that organization's overall environment. They added that it was this inbuilt institutionalized environment which legitimized the operational basis of the organization, in terms of motivational schemes as well as the ensuing constraints which arose. The relevance of this theory to this study is particularly illustratable by considering the study's conceptualization that the human resource management unit in an enterprise, is central to the implementation of strategic human resource management practices, and, therefore, to an extent, legitimizes the human resource function.

In this respect, it can be argued that the human resource management unit becomes an institutionalizing agent to the organization, as far as the strategic application of desired human resource management practices are concerned. With this in mind, it is pertinent in this study, that DiMaggio & Powell (1983) referred to institutional isomorphism in institutional theory, pointing out that based on this, there are three formations of institutional isomorphism, each of which implicates human resource management (HRM), and by extension, the HRM unit's role in the implementation of strategic human resource management practices in an enterprise.

The one which is closely associable with this study is coercive isomorphism, which arises out of formal and informal forces from other organizations, which are themselves dependent on, and driven by cultural dynamics in the environments of their operations. Hence, the influence of partnering agencies like trade unions, workplace councils, employment law, and organizational policy.



In this regard, this study posited that the institutional theory implies, among other implications, the structuring and institutionalization of the human resource management unit, thereby creating the essential organizational capacity to operationalize nationwide human resource management functions, and by extension, strategic human resource management practices.

However, one shortcoming of the institutional theory, as viewed from this study, is that the theory seems to give emphasis to the structuring and institutionalization of an enterprises, in terms of rules and regulations, procedures and systems, without seeming to bring out the human element in the said structuring. It may be argued, therefore, that the objectives of this study, and the results hereto, which were designed to give emphasis to the contribution of the human resources, may help to shed more light, and introduce new insights which may be incorporated into the propositions of the institutional theory, which mostly seems to focus on internal structures and systems, rather than human resources.

### **2.2.3 Human Capital Theory**

The Human Capital Theory proposes that people in an organization constitute the key asset which adds value by ensuring desired performance (Schultz, 1961). According to Dinzhanova (2021), human capital as a concept entails a mix of both the humans and the non-human-capital, such that economically speaking, the capital element denotes factors used in production. These factors are the ones which give rise to products not directly used up in the processing (Boldizzoni, 2008). The human element refers to the subjective element which takes control in the ensuing activities of production, consumption, and the associated transactions.

Hence, the concept of human capital presents the production process aspects responsible for generating value addition via being the inputs in the process. More relevantly, this theory refers to the generation of human capital, whereby, the input of labour force is viewed alongside the input of other physical capital resources, including finance capital, equipment and so on. However, the theory proposes that for an organization, investing in physical capital may return similar efficiencies and effects to investing in educating and the training of the human capital (Little, 2003). Fundamentally, according to this theory, human capital connotes the human element, referring to the human as the creating element, which is knowledgeable, skillful, competent, experienced, and able to transverse from the internal to the external environments.

The relevance of the Human Capital Theory to this study is demonstrated in two ways. First, the theory is centered on the impact of employees – the human capital in an organization. Secondly, the theory links human capital to the possibilities of development through skilling, a major investment aspect to the equipping and enabling employees to exhibit employee outcomes like motivation, commitment, empowerment and teamwork as conceptualized in this study.

Nevertheless, the Human Capital Theory seems to emphasize skilling and education, as an element of enhancing the contribution of the human capital to an organization's prospects. Considering this study's objectives, which not only address the contribution of training, but also strategic recruitment, rewarding, and managing performance.

It may be argued that the outcome of this study may potentially contribute to the propositions of the human capital theory, by adding new perspectives in terms of staffing, compensation, and performance management as elements critical in developing human capital, other than training for skilling.

In Conclusion, the relevance of the Resource Based theory, the Institutional theory, and the Human Capital theory in this study is underscored. However, a keen study of these theories does not seem to directly reveal much with respect to the variables investigated in this study, especially the human resource management unit, and how this unit may interact, and possibly affect the extent to which implemented strategic human resource management practices may influence the performance of an organization, notwithstanding the employee outcomes prevailing therein. This study, therefore, arguably helped to add to, and most likely expanded the propositions of the three theories respectively, by adding new and or fresh insights, as indicated from the foregoing discussions on each theory.

## **2.3 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE**

This subsection presents the relevant empirical studies in the current literature, with respect to the variables to be investigated in this study. Consequently, the respective empirical gaps are highlighted and summarized.

### **2.3.1 Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance**

All enterprises exist to achieve certain ends. Organizational performance, which is more often measured quantitatively, usually in economic terms, is also now more increasingly being measured qualitatively.

This performance is said to be achieved when all the individual and collective efforts of employees of an enterprise are aggregated (Zehir, Gurol, Karaboga, & Kole (2016). Empirically, the relevance of strategic human resource management practices in the pursuit of desired performance by enterprises has been documented variously. For instance, Otoo (2019), using a cross-sectional study, found that employees contributed competencies which positively impacted on the linkage between strategic HRM practices and enterprise performance. Similarly, Moustaghfir, Fatihi & Benouarrek (2020), affirmed this by emphasizing the centrality of strategic human resource management practices in business enterprises, finding that strategic human resource management practices greatly impacted performance in an enterprise. It is important to note, however, that the majority of these empirical studies which link human resource management practices with performance of enterprises, including the latter cited, seem to focus on human resource management practices affecting performance, as distinguishable from strategic human resource management practices affecting performance.

The former is more to do with operationalizing human resource management at the functional (department) level, while the latter refers to operationalizing human resource management at the strategic level. It is at the strategic level of human resource management that this study is premised. Strategic human resource management practices refer to the deliberate application of a structured bundle of HR-oriented interventions by an organization towards achieving strategic organizational goals, and therefore, enhancing an organization's ability to influence its performance (Ojokuku & Akanbi, 2015).

This study conceptualized the bundle of strategic human resource practices as; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management. In this regard, various former studies have linked strategic human resource management practices to the performance of enterprises. For instance, Al-Khaled & Al-Khaled, Sultan & Chung (2020), who pointed out that entities that adopted strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) created a sustaining capacity in attaining their goals and to flourish in their respective industries.

Likewise, Eneh & Awara (2016), in a descriptive study on strategic human resource management practices and organizational growth in Nigeria, found that strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) had significantly impacted the growth of organizations, and that such entities ought were able to utilize their human resources much better as a result. They added that strategic human resource management practices such as training of employees, human resource planning, prompt rewarding, and selective recruitment served as drivers of sustainable competitive advantage.

However, it is notable that the majority of empirical studies linking strategic human resource management practices to the performance of enterprises are contextualized in the private sector rather than in the public sector (Knies, Boselie, Gould-Williams & Vandenabeele, 2018). More recently, using a quantitative questionnaire survey method, it was found that four SHRM practices, including the acquiring of staff, technic-based training, compensating and incentives of employees were impactful in promoting organizational entrepreneurship, towards desired performance level (Mathushan & Kengatharan (2022).

Hence, more relevant to strategic human resource management practices and performance of public entities, and in this case, public universities, a descriptive study covering eight Nigerian universities determined that using SHRM practices had beneficially impacted the public universities variously through attraction of more researching sponsorships, increasing scholarly writings and research-based innovations.

As a recommendation, the study pointed to the need for the universities in Nigeria to be strategic at operationalizing the HR function to enable improving performance in mitigation of the declining performance (Ojokuku & Akanbi, 2015). In Kenya, using a census study targeting public universities, Mutahi & Busienei (2015) revealed that strategic HRM practices positively affected performance of public universities in Kenya. The study found that, strategic rewarding and training of employees were key strategic human resource management practices. They recommended development of appropriate employment policy to encourage job security and that the government ought to base the recruitment and selection in universities on the equalizing employment opportunity principle.

The principle would provide for periodic analysis of employee competencies, and enable the universities to refocus on identification of employee training needs for employee growth among other interventions. Likewise, Naitore & Wanyoike (2019), using a descriptive survey of 13 public universities in Kenya, established that there was a positive and significant relationship linking strategic human resource management practices, in terms of HR planning and staffing and the performance of selected public universities in Kenya.

From the foregoing literature, there seems to be evidence that public universities have implemented certain strategic human resource management practices which do indeed positively influence the universities' performance. However, at the same time, there is evidence of declining performance by the same public universities, including National Government Auditor General (Kenya) Report (2021), which reported that public universities, among other state corporations, had consistently experienced performance challenges which have tended to adversely affect their performance on their core mandates. These included having to operate under immense financial and operational constraints, thereby turning to financing their operations using expensive short-term overdrafts which had worsened their liquidity statuses.

On the same notes, Idua (2017), had pointed out that there were various challenges which were being experienced in public universities, including a marked increase in student enrolment, scarce resources, excessive staff turnover, poor capital and human resource planning, sporadic industrial disputes. These challenges, according to Idua (2017), had affected public universities adversely, including declining staff and organizational performance. The foregoing seems to contradict the empirical evidence that the implementation of strategic human resource management practices in public universities did positively impact their performance. There was need, therefore, to attempt to empirically address this contradiction, and hence this study.

### **2.3.2 Rigorous Recruitment and Performance**

Acquiring and engaging the right people is arguably the most critically step, and in this case, practice, for every organization, public universities not exempted. However, empirical research on the recruitment-performance nexus has not been conclusive, especially where and when recruitment is considered and analyzed singly as a practice. For instance, Govand, & Nabaz, (2021), used a quantitative approach in a descriptive survey design to study the impact of human resource management on the performance of government institutions in Iraq. They found that that selective hiring did not positively impact organizational performance as earlier established by Vlachos (2008), who had found that selective hiring presents a key practice which enhanced organizational profits. Likewise, Kanyemba, Iwu, Chux & Allen-Ile (2015), who studied the impact of recruitment and selection on organizational productivity of university staff in South Africa. They underscored that recruiting and selecting effectively impacted entity productivity and hence ought to be adapted crucially by all. More relevant to public universities in Kenya, recent newspaper reports indicate that many public universities engaged in skewed hiring of academic and non-academic staff, often leaning towards ethnic considerations (Mburu, 2023). This seems to be supported by empirical literature.

For instance, Matolo & Iravo (2018), using a descriptive study on relationship between recruitment and employee performance found that employees of public universities which recruited strategically recorded improved levels of employee performance, and hence, such universities tended to enjoy increased staff expertise by hiring staff from outside the universities as well.



Likewise, Nondoh, Tsuma, Alala & Onyango (2020), used a cross-sectional researching design focusing on non-teaching staff of public universities in Kenya. They found that recruitment is a key HR activity which determines the success of an organization like a public university. This was aptly brought out by Augustine, Tanui & Kalai (2020), in a cross-sectional study of public universities in Kenya. They found that although most lecturers in public universities did have the desirable academic knowledge, with which they were able to practice quality instruction, the universities needed to give keen consideration to the lecturers' professional attributes, including pedagogical skills, which were key in teaching, as well as the need to institutionalize professional development interventions to abridge faculty staff.

However, of key interest to this study is that none of these studies addressed the recruitment-performance at the strategic implementation context through the strategic human resource management bundle as conceptualized in this study. Indeed, the empirical literature reviewed did not seem to address recruitment in the context of the human resource management unit and employee outcomes as moderating and intervening variables respectively.

### **2.3.3 Staff Training and Performance**

Needless to overemphasize, training is one of the basic interventions necessitated by various dynamics in an organization's business environment, including technology and customer expectations. Empirical studies have stamped this categorically. For instance, in a descriptive survey examining the attitudes and impact of training in Al-Mzari, Al-Rifai & Al-Momany (2015) found that training had a significant impact in meeting the training needs of staff.

They also found that training influenced employees' and university performance, because the staff performed better in creative teaching as well as enhancing their interactions with students and other staff. Likewise, Ogohi & Cross. (2018), who investigated training and enterprise achievement, established that employees' skills, their knowledge and the capabilities acquired through training significantly affected organizational performance, by way of improved individual employee performance. More specifically, Leseiyu & Ruben (2019), using a descriptive survey to study the influence of training on performance of universities, established that a university's performance was correlated to the training of staff as they were able to serve better and increase customer delivery.

Going by empirical evidence across the world, it appears that staff training impacts organizational performance, through the improved performance of the employees, However, the current study sought to address the impact of staff training within the wider strategic human resource management package, as possibly influenced by two other variables, that is, human resource management unit and employee outcomes. None of the studies reviewed seem to have conceptualized or contextualized training in this manner, and hence this study.

#### **2.3.4 Reward Management and Performance**

As foundational human resource management philosophy, an organizations most important asset is the human resource. It then follows logically that any efforts towards eliciting the best possible contribution from this critical asset must entail rewarding them effort for effort. The existing empirical literature underscores this variously. However, the nature of rewards as proffered by organizations is that they affect employees directly first, resulting to a change in their performance.

Consequently, this affects organizational performance. It is no wonder that virtually all studies available in current literature dwell on the effects of reward management on employee performance rather than on organizational performance. For instance, Noorazem, Sabri & Matt (2021), used a quantitative approach in a descriptive survey design to study the effects of reward system on employees' performance in Malaysia, and found that emoluments positively correlated to employee performance, and ultimately organizational performance.

Likewise, Samuel (2021) empirically evaluated relevant literature on reward management vis-a-vis organizational performance in Nigeria. He established that rewarding employees effectively positively impacted organizational performance, such that performance level rose as long as the rewards proffered by an organization motivated employees to higher performance. More relevantly, Leseiyo & Ngui (2019), used a descriptive case study of 70 members of staff of Moi University, Nairobi Campus to investigate the influence of employee motivation on performance of public universities in Kenya.

They determined that remuneration did that the employees' performance in turn influenced the universities' performance through enhanced delivery of learning programmes and research publications. Although all the studies reviewed above demonstrate the impact of reward on organizational performance, including performance of universities as was proposed in this study, they did not directly link reward management and performance to the variables conceptualized in this study, that is, strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs)-human resource management unit (HRMU)-employee outcomes (EOs)- performance context as conceptualized in this study.

### **2.3.5 Performance Management and Performance**

All organizations, large or small, in whichever industry or sector, target to improve their performance, using various approaches and techniques. Measuring the levels of performance is, therefore, arguably the most important exercise towards management the performance, and hence the criticality of performance management as concept and in this case, as a practice (Kapur & Radhika, 2020).

The Significance of Performance Management in Organizations. Many empirical studies have linked performance management to organizational performance. For instance, Kumar (2015), using a survey design, collected data at an international HR Conference made up of Directors and Proprietors of international organizations in India. He found that performance-based reward and training systems had great influence on organizational productivity. Jyoti & Mohsin, (2020), used a literature review technique to evaluate prevailing performance management practices, trends and problems in higher educational sector in India.

They found that implementation of performance management enhanced general performance in universities and pushed individual and university goal achievement. Elsewhere in Africa, Ezenwaka & Okoro (2020) examined the effect of performance management on organizational productivity on universities in Nigeria, using a survey design. They found that well-managed performance appraisal impacted employee productivity and ultimately, university performance.

Notably, the empirical literature available does not reveal the performance management-organization performance interaction, except for the performance appraisal-organization performance interaction.

None of the studies reviewed seemed to link performance management to performance of public universities. However, Ondari & Ondiba (2019) came close to addressing this in a case study of a sample of 100 employees of Narok University addressing the effects of appraisal systems on employee performance in public universities in Kenya.

The study determined that the employees were aware of the performance appraisal system in use at public universities and two main issues did affect effectiveness in performance appraisal systems in public universities; providing training to the employees appraises and appraisers and the use of a multiple -rating approach to get input and feedback from appraisers. The study concluded that the performance appraisal system presents the only reliable matrix for determining levels of performance of a diversity of employees involved, and therefore, enabling sustained organizational performance.

More specifically, and except for Ondari & Ondiba (2019), none of the above studies have addressed performance management in the context conceptualized in this proposed study in terms of strategic human resource management practices, within which is performance management rather than performance appraisal, human resource management unit, employee outcomes and performance of public universities in Kenya, and hence the potential empirical significance of this study when successfully concluded.

### **2.3.6 Human Resource Management Unit, Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, and Performance**

Any organization seeking to create a good foundation in the management of its people must consider two key pillars or domains. One is a HR department or unit to provide for strategy, structuring and designing of the HR function to create the essential value system and streamlining HR practices to enable the alignment, integration and innovation in line with the organizational strategies (Storey, Ulrich & Wright, 2019). This demonstrates the critical role of a human resource management unit in an enterprise. Furthermore, there seems to be a sort of a consensus in human resource management theory and practice that more attention should be directed towards HR systematization instead of on the individualistic HR practices.

This is especially the case where, for instance, given that the impact of a given implemented bundle of HR practices often rely on the other embedded practices within the larger HR system (Boon, Deanne, Hartog & Lepark, 2019). The HR unit's pertinence in universities' performance was most illustratively captured by Punia, Jaglan & Teena (2015), in a study of universities in India. They found that the human resource unit coordinates the other respective human and non-human resource sections within each academic faculty office and directly serves all the other administrative units, thereby centrally servicing all faculties and all the other administrative units, and ultimately the entire university towards realizing targeted outcomes.

They added that the human resource management unit has a definite role which may be split into formulation of HR policy, human resource planning, physical facilitation and equipping and determination of staffing and loading levels among others.

In a descriptive study of the state of strategic human resource management practices and the role of the human resource management unit in higher education institutions in Poland, Szelagowska-Rudzka (2017), made interesting findings. These included that finding that the implementation of strategic human resources management in Polish higher education institutions called for the improvement of the university HR management system to align the strategic human resource management practices to the overall mission, vision and strategy.

This ought to be done through a centralized HRM unit which would ensure formulation and provision of requisite HR planning, structuring and policy as the essential tools which would drive desired performance. Hence, both regionally and locally, empirical studies reviewed do not seem to directly associate the human resource management unit to the implementation of strategic human resource management practices, and the eventual impact of this to the performance of enterprises, particularly universities.

However, there are empirical studies which may be considered to have done so, but indirectly. For instance, Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015) examined the factors that influenced the adaptation of SHRM practices in public universities in Nigeria and the impact of such practices on performance. They used descriptive and inferential statistics on respondents from eight (8) public universities. As Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015) found, the extent of awareness of the mission and vision of the university by the human resource management department staff accounted for a lot.

This is because, coupled with their level of information and knowledge of the importance of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) this knowledge affected the implementation of the same by the department.

It was also found that that the universities applying SHRM practices had greatly gained through their ability to attract research funding, increasing scholarly publications, international partnerships and recognition for excellence in research-oriented milestones. As a recommendation, Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015, pointed to the need for a strategic approach to HR management in Nigerian universities as a way of fostering improved performance towards turning around the declining standards. Notably, there does not seem to be any study locally, linking the human resource management unit to implemented strategic human resource management practices to performance of an enterprise, or in this specific case, a public university, and hence the need for this study.

For the purpose of investigating the role of the human resource management unit in the strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs)-university performance relationship, as far as objective six of the study is concerned, four indicators were conceptualized; adequacy of physical facilities, evidence of supporting HR policy, sufficiency of full time HR employee establishment (HR staff ratio).

### **2.3.7 Employee Outcomes, Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance**

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, it seems accurate to state that an organization's performance with respect to the implementation and operationalization of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), is likely to be realized where employees are fundamentally valued by that organization and considered as the key assets of such an organization. Empirically, the strategic human resource practices-employee outcomes-performance nexus is well documented.



For instance, Hamadamin & Atan (2019) used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques and Smart Partial Least Square (PLS) on employees of selected universities in Iraq. They found that there was a significant influence of the strategic HRM practices on competitiveness through employee commitment (in this current study conceptualized as an indicator of employee outcomes) and hence employee commitment had partial mediating impact on the strategic HRM practices and university performance relationship.

Likewise, using explanatory design with 380 employees and managers of manufacturing concerns in Ethiopia, it was found that though hierarchical regression and structural equation modeling showed no direct SHRM practices-performance relationship, the HRM practices did initially affect employee outcomes. This in turn affected enterprise performance and indeed, the employee outcomes had a higher impact on this performance as compared the SHRMPs, implying a mediating influence (Wubishet, Chekole & Wedajo, 2018). The potential mediating role of employee outcomes upon strategic human resource management vis-a-vis the university performance does not appear to have been addressed in the current empirical literature.

Indeed, even the few related studies available focused on human resource practices at a functional level, rather than strategic human resource management practices at the strategic level as envisaged in this study. This can be justified empirically. For instance, using a cross sectional descriptive survey and a population of 60 NSE listed firms in Kenya, Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014) established that human resource management practices had a significant effect on employee outcomes.

However, in contrast, the study found that employee outcomes did not affect firm performance nor mediate the human resource management practices-firm performance relationship. From the foregoing, there is a need to empirically address the seemingly apparent contradiction where, for instance. Internationally and regionally, Hamadamin & Atan (2019), and Wubishet, Chekole & Wedajo (2018), respectively determined that there was a mediating effect of employee outcomes on the relationship between human resource management practices and performance of an entity. Likewise, locally, Alusa & Kariuki (2015, found that employee outcomes mediated the relationship between human resource management practices, and performance. But, on the other hand, and locally, Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014) established that the mediating effect of employee outcomes on the relationship between human resource management practices and performance was not significant.

This study specifically tested the possibility of an intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

#### **2.4 SUMMARY OF THE STUDIES AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS**

The relevant empirical studies reviewed have positively linked strategic human resource management practices, and performance of enterprises, including performance of public universities in Kenya. However, this association did not appear to be directly addressed with respect to human resource management units and employee outcomes.

The literature did not reveal any study on the possibility of a relationship among strategic human resource management practices, human resource management unit, employee outcomes and performance, in the context of public universities in Kenya. Table 2.1 presents the summary of empirical studies.

**Table 2.1: Summary of the Studies and Research Gaps**

VARIABLE	AUTHOR/S	TITLE OF STUDY	MAIN FINDINGS	RESEARCH GAP	FOCUS OF CURRENT STUDY
Strategic Human Resource Management Practices	Mathushan & Kengatharan (2022).	Human Resource Management Practices and Corporate Entrepreneurship: An Empirical Study in Sri Lankan SMEs	Four HRM practices, including the acquiring of staff, technic-based training, compensating and incentives of employees were impactful in promoting organizational entrepreneurship, towards desired performance level	This study conceptualized the variable components as human resource management practices, rather than strategic human resource management practices	The current study conceptualized the same as strategic human resource management practices
	Al-Khaled & Al-Khaled, Sultan & Chung (2020)	The impact of strategic human resource management practices on organizational performance	Entities which adopted SHRMPs created sustaining capacity in attaining performance goals.	The study was not contextualized in public sector nor public universities, and mainly reviewed and analyzed empirical journals	The current study was contextualized in public universities in Kenya, and used descriptive, census-oriented design.
	Eneh & Awara (2016)	Strategic human resource management practices and organizational growth: a theoretical perspective	Strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) had significantly impacted the growth of organizations. Such entities ought to utilize their human resources with effectiveness	Study was not contextualized in public universities nor in Kenya	This study investigated the influence of SHRM Practices the context of public universities in Kenya.

	Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015)	Strategic human resource management practices and performance in Nigerian public universities	Using SHRM practices had beneficially impacted the public universities in terms of attraction of more researching sponsorships, increasing scholarly writings and research-based innovations	Study was contextualized in Nigeria	The current study was contextualized in Kenya
	Naitore & Wanyoike, (2019),	Strategic human resource management practices on performance in selected public universities in Kenya	There was a positive relationship between strategic human resource management practices in term of HR planning and staffing, and performance of selected public universities in Kenya.	This study was confined to selected universities in Kenya.	The current study was undertaken in all public universities in Kenya.
	Mutahi & Busienei, (2015).	Effect of human resource management practices on performance of public universities in Kenya.	Strategic human resource management practices positively affected performance o Kenya public universities	The study addressed human resource management practices rather than strategic human resource management practices, in a correlational design.	The current study addressed strategic human resource management practices, using a descriptive quantitative design

Rigorous Recruitment	Sanket & Vijendra (2022).	Stages in recruitment and its importance: A Study	Recruitment enables candidate with technical skills, and with appropriate responsibility taking ability and communication skills to be identified and mapped	The study did not directly relate recruitment to organizational performance, and used literature review and interview technique	The current study directly related and measures the relationship between rigorous recruitment and performance of public universities, using a descriptive design, in a quantitative census approach.
	Govand, & Nabaz, (2021)	The impact of Strategic Human resource management practice on Organizational performance	Selective recruitment is linkable to organizational performance through internalized bonding among employees and respective management which enhance positive culture toward higher levels of performance	Study was not contextualized in public universities nor in Kenya	This study investigated the influence of rigorous recruitment on performance of public universities in Kenya.
	Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015)	Strategic human resource management practices and performance in Nigerian public universities	Public universities which apply SHRMPs tend to recruit using standard procedures to get skilled and Knowledgeable employees.	Study was contextualized in Nigeria	The current study was contextualized in Kenya

Staff Training	Augutine, Tanui & Kalai (2020)	Lecturer Quality in Public Universities in Kenya	Most lecturers did have desired professional qualities with which they practiced quality instruction. However, universities needed to consider lecturers' professional attributes as key during recruitment, as well as professional development interventions faculty staff.	This study focused on quality as an aspect of recruitment, rather than rigorous recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice, using a cross-sectional design	The current study focused on recruitment a strategic human resource management practice, using a descriptive quantitative design.
	Nondoh, Tsuma, Alala & Onyango (2020)  Olivia, Aldizard. Nurhidayati & Ardian (2022)	Effect of Human Resource Planning Practices on Organizational Performance in public Universities in Western Kenya  Cognitive engagement: a result of talent-based training to improve individual performance	The level of quality recruitment determines the performance of a public university  Talent-based training and perceived organizational support relate positively to cognitive engagement and enhances individual performance.	The scope of the study was limited to Western Kenya, and recruitment as an element of factors which determined performance  This study emphasized individual performance rather than organizational performance.	This study covered all public universities in Kenya and contextualize recruitment as an independent variable on performance of public universities.  The current study emphasized organizational performance, particularly universities performance

Al-Mzari, Al-Rifai & Al-Momany (2015)	Training and Its Impact on the Performance of Employees at Jordanian Universities	Training had a relationship with the training needs of staff, and that that it influenced employees' and university performance.	Study addressed staff training only, using a descriptive survey	The current study addressed staff training within the bundle of SHRMPs, using a descriptive design, in a quantitative census approach.
Ogohi & Cross, (2018).	Training and Enterprise Achievement	Employee skills, their knowledge and capabilities acquired through training significantly affected the enterprise performance.	The study contextualized training in the wider private sector	This study contextualized staff training in the public sector, and in public universities particularly
Leseiyo & Reuben (2019)	The influence of staff training on performance of public Universities.	A university's performance was correlated to the training of staff as they were able to serve better and increase customer delivery	This study did not address staff training at the strategic level within the SHRMPs bundle, and used a descriptive case study design	The current study investigated staff training within the SHRMPs bundle, using a descriptive quantitative design, in a census approach
Kiiru (2015).	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Parastatals in Kenya. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Kenyatta University.	There is a significant positive relationship between training and parastatals' performance in Kenya,	This study was contextualized in the larger parastatal subsector.	The current study was contextualized specifically in the public universities



Reward Management	Tripathy & Rohidas (2022)	Impact of Employee Reward System on Employee Performance	There was a positive impact productivity of the employees on rewarding them which creates motivation	The study did not directly link rewarding to organizational performance	The current study directly linked and measured reward management on organizational performance
	Noorazem, Sabri & Matt (2020)	Effects of Reward System on University Employees' Performance in Malaysia,	Emoluments positively correlated to employee performance, and ultimately organizational performance.	The context of this study is Malaysia	This study was contextualized in Kenya.
	Samuel (2021)	Reward Management and Organizational Performance in Nigeria	Rewarding employees positively impacted organizational performance, which rose as long as the rewards motivated the employees	The study was contextualized in Nigeria, and in the public sector rather than public universities	The current study is contextualized in Kenya, addressing reward management in public universities
	Leseiyo r& Ngui (2019)	Influence of Employee Motivation on Performance of public universities.	Remuneration did influence employee' attitudes, which in turn influenced their performance and ultimately performance of the University	The study addressed employee motivation as an aspect of reward, at the functional level	This study addressed reward management as a whole and within the SHRMPs bundle
	Kiiru (2015).	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Parastatals in Kenya. Unpublished	Compensation has a significant positive relationship with Parastatal's performance in Kenya.	This study was contextualized in the larger parastatal subsector	The current study was contextualized specifically in the public universities

		Doctoral Thesis. Kenyatta University.			
Performance Management	Gomes & Mendes (2022),	Organizational Context, Use of Performance Management Practices and their Effects on Organizational Performance: An Empirical Look at these Interrelationships	There were positive effects of PM practices use organizational performance, and performance would improve if PM practices were aligned with the organizational culture	This study was contextualized in Portugal.	The current study was contextualized in Kenya.
	Jyoti & Mohsin, (2020)	Evaluation of prevailing performance management practices, trends and problems in higher educational sector in India	Implementation of performance management enhanced general performance in universities and pushed individual and university goal achieve	Study contextualized in India.	Current study was contextualized in Kenya
	Ezenwaka & Okoro (2020)	Effect of Performance Management on organizational performance in Nigeria Universities	Well-managed performance management impacted employee productivity, and ultimately, university performance.	This study was contextualized in Nigeria	The current study was contextualized in Kenya.
	Ondari & Ondiba (2019)	The effects of appraisal systems on employee performance in	Employees were aware of the performance appraisal system in use at public universities and training and	The study addressed performance appraisal system	This study addressed performance management and

		public universities in Kenya.	feedback from appraisers affected quality towards performance		within the SHRMPs bundle.
	Kiiru (2015).	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Parastatals in Kenya. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Kenyatta University.	performance management has a significant positive relationship with performance of parastatals	This study was contextualized in the larger parastatal subsector	The current study was contextualized specifically in the public universities
Human Resource Management Implementation Unit	Ali (2022).	Strategic Human Resources Management and Human Resources Development	Talent management is enabled through the human resources department which provides assistance through standard HR policies and practices	This study did not link directly the human resource management unit and strategic human resource management practices, nor the potential moderating role of the unit, on the SHRMPs-performance relationship.	The current study directly investigated the human resource unit, and its moderating influence on the SHRMPs-performance relationship.
	Punia, Jaglan & Teena (2015)	Human resource management unit in the university system.	The human resource management unit has a definite role which may be split into formulation of HR policy, human resource	Was contextualized and carried out in India	The current study was contextualized and carried out in Kenya.

			planning, physical facilitation and equipping and determination of staffing and loading levels		
	Szelagowska-Rudzka (2017),	Human Resources Management in Higher Education Institutions in Poland	Implementation of strategic human resource management practices requires the improvement of the university management system, on the basis of development of personnel strategy, HRM processes, procedures, and tools and the including of teaching staff, in the management process, thereby improving the processes and the overall HR function.	Did not test the influence of HRM units and Employee Outcomes on Performance	This study Focused on influence of HRM Practices, HRM units and Employee outcomes on Performance of public Universities
	Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015)	Factors that Influenced the Adaptation of SHRMPs in National Universities in Nigeria.	Extent of awareness of the mission and vision of the university by HR department staff determined a lot in terms of university performance	This study was contextualized in Nigeria, and did not address the role of human resource management unit	The current study was contextualized in Kenya, and also addressed the human resource management unit as a variable

Employee Outcomes	Li, Zhang, & Yan. (2022).	How Does Strategic Human Resource Management Impact on Employee Voice Behavior and Innovation Behavior with Mediating Effect of Psychological Mechanism	Strategic human resource management practices had significant and positive impact on self-efficacy, psychological contract, voice behavior and innovation behavior.	This study was contextualized in China, and not in public universities	The current study was contextualized in Kenya, and specifically in public universities.
	Hamadamin & Atan (2019)	The impact of strategic human resource management practices on competitive advantage sustainability: the mediation of human capital development and employee commitment sustainability	There was a significant influence of the strategic HRM practices on competitiveness through employee commitment  Employee commitment had partial mediating impact on the strategic HRM practices and university performance relationship	Was confined to commitment as an aspect of employee outcomes and also contextualized in Turkey	This study considered the broader employee outcomes other than commitment; empowerment, motivation and teamwork and contextualize the investigation to Kenya.
	Wubishet, Chekole & Wedajo (2018)	Effects of strategic human resource management practices on organizational performance: mediating role of work outcomes	No direct SHRM practices-performance relationship, the HRM practices did initially affect employee outcomes. employee outcomes which in turn affected enterprise performance,	Was carried out in Ethiopia and did not contextualize public universities	The current study was carried out in public universities in Kenya

			employee outcomes had a higher impact on this performance as compared the SHRMPs, implying a mediating influence		
	Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014)	Human Resource Management practices and performance of firms listed on the Nairobi Security Exchange	Human resource management practices had a significant effect on employee outcomes, but that employee outcomes did not affect firm performance nor mediate the human resource management practices-firm performance relationship.	Dwelt on the functional human resource management practices rather than the strategic human resource management practices and was contextualized in the private firm	This study dwelt on strategic human resource management practices and contextualize public universities in Kenya
	Wanyeki, Maina, Sanyanda & Kiiru (2019).	Impact of Teamwork on Employee Performance: Study of Faculty Members in Kenyatta University	teamwork has proven to be closely related to the performance of the individual employee	This study focused only on teamwork as an element of employee outcomes.	The current study addresses a broad spectrum of elements of employee outcomes, including commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment

Source: Research Empirical Review (2021)

## **2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Borrowing from Armstrong's (2006) definition of strategic human resource management, that SHRM entails a process which involves the use of umbrella approaches towards the development of short and long-term HR strategies, often integrated vertically and horizontally with the prevailing organizational strategy, and which give clarity to the intentions, plans and considerations into the future. It is this integration strategies which, according to Armstrong (2006), gives rise to the specific actions needed to be undertaken, including human resourcing, learning and development, reward management and employee relations.

It in this context, as supported by empirical and theoretical literature as exemplified in this Chapter, that this study conceptualized the four strategic human resource management practices typically undertaken as a bundle of strategic interventions; consisting of rigorous recruitment, staff training, and reward management, and performance management. These have been empirically demonstrated to influence the performance of enterprises, including public universities.

Further, it is conceptualized in this study that although empirical literature has proved the strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) - performance relationship, this relationship is likely to be moderated by the operational impact of the human resource management unit in terms of how effectively that unit enables the essential operationalization of the HR functions, with particular emphasis on HR planning, HR policy, commensurate facilities and appropriate full time employee establishment workload balancing.

Hence, hypothetically, the implemented SHRMPs bundle of rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management is likely to be enhanced where the human resource management unit is up to this task capacity, otherwise, there is likely to be little, if any impact of the said SHRMPs on performance in the first place. This study also conceptualized employee outcomes, consisting of motivation, commitment, empowerment and teamwork as forces which may, and often do arise from the functional and operational impact of the human resource management unit, to potentially intervene the relationship between the strategic human resource management practices bundle and performance.

The implication of this, as conceptualized in this study, is that it is not enough to implement SHRMPs only, without factoring in and strategizing for the potential and critical role of the human resource management unit, and the employee outcomes which result from the implemented independent or autonomous forces, in pursuing desired performance. In other words, subject to the uniqueness of human beings with respect to perception, learning ability and attitudes, implemented strategic human resource management practices on their own, may not guarantee expected organizational outcomes, which, as a mediating agent as conceptualized in this study, often enable desired performance.

Lastly, performance of public universities was conceptualized purposively to focus on what this study opines to be the typical core value system as derivable from the objectives of university education as provided by the University's Act, No. 42, (2012).

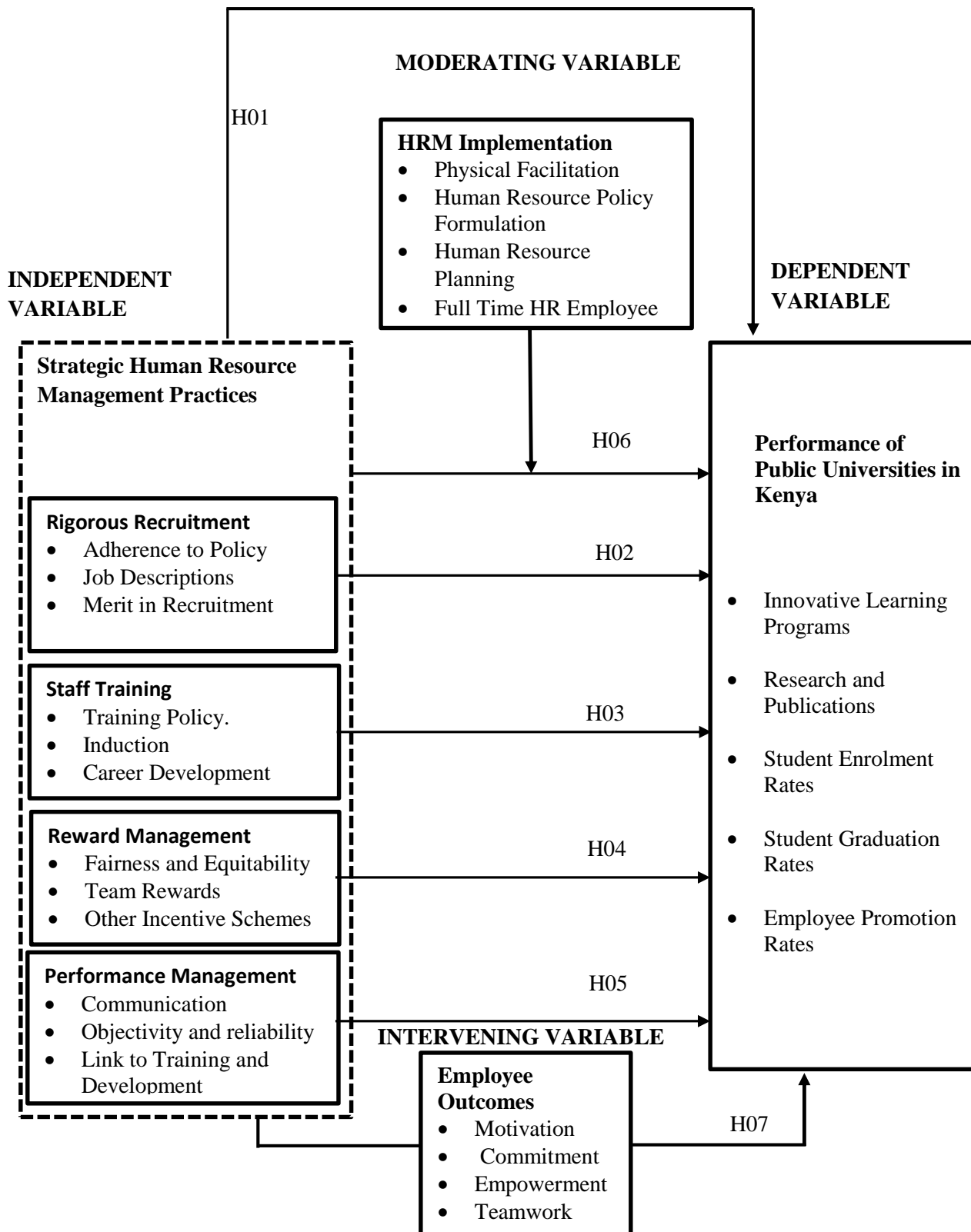


The Act states, among other objectives, that a university exists to advance knowledge through teaching, scholarly research and scientific investigation, to promote learning for students and society at large, and promote the advancement of professional staff and management personnel. The indicators of university performance, which were conceptualized as student enrolment rates, learning programmes innovation, research and publications, students' graduation rates, and staff promotion rates, are all conceived in this study as fairly representative of a public university's mandate, and, therefore, supportive of the same.

Of importance to note is that the use of student enrolment rates was considered feasible because, in the future dispensation as foreseen by this study, universities will have to attract and compete for students, based on their level of competitiveness, as generated by value-adding strategic human resource management practices as conceptualized in this study. Otherwise, for enrolment of students, universities are to a large extent dependent on the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS), and hence, to a certain extent, this indicator is limited to the relatively few other students, especially the self-sponsored ones, who are not necessarily enrolled through KUCCPS.

The indicator of learning programmes innovation was conceptualized and designed to enable the researcher to determine the extent to which the public universities had been able to enrich the programmes on offer, over time, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Student graduation rates was meant to enable the determination of the extent to which learning had been successful or otherwise, leading to the key achievement parameter for learners as an outcome of the learning process.

Finally, staff promotion rates was conceptualized to create an opportunity to enable data collection which would link the reward management practice as investigated in this study, not only to overall performance, but also, to a HR-specific element of university performance, in accordance with the thematic background of this study. 2.1 presents a graphical visualization of the variables as conceptualized in this study.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework**  
 Source: Researcher (2022)

## **2.6 CONCEPTUAL HYPOTHESES**

In the conceptual framework figure 2.1, there are seven relationships which were conceptualized, in line with the objectives of the study, from which, in turn, null hypotheses were derived as follows:

Hypothesis one, which was derived from objective 1 of the study was denoted as;

**H01** Strategic human resource management practices do not influence performance of public universities in Kenya. This hypothesis denoted a direct relationship between strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), as the independent variable, and as a bundle and performance of public universities in Kenya, as the dependent variable. Within the bundle of SHRMPs, therefore, are four individual practices; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management.

This conceptualization was empirically informed and guided by various former studies on the same subject. For instance, Eneh & Awara (2016), who found that as business entities which strategically implemented strategic bundles of SHRMPs gained sustainable competitive advantage. Similarly, Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015), established that that strategic human resource management practices, some of which typically included recruitment and selection, training and performance appraisal impacted the performance of public universities in Nigeria. Likewise, Otoo (2019), using a cross-sectional study, found that employees contributed competencies which impacted on the linkage between selected strategic HRM practices and enterprise performance.

Hypothesis two was derived from objective two of the study, as a null hypothesis as:

**H02** Rigorous recruitment has no influence on performance of public universities in Kenya.

This hypothesis denotes a direct relationship between rigorous recruitment as an independent variable, and performance of public universities as a dependent variable.

The indicators of rigorous recruitment are conceptualized as adherence to training policy, job descriptions and merit in recruitment. This conceptualization is supported by empirical literature, including; Govand & Nabaz, (2021), who established that selected recruitment is linkable to internalized employee harmony through establishing common mutual interests. In the same way, Tsuma, Alala & Onyango (2020), also affirmed that public universities which applied strategic human resource management practices tended to use strategic recruitment to improve the skills and abilities of their employees, and that strategic recruitment affected the performance of public universities.

Hypothesis three was derived from objective three of the study, as a null hypothesis, thus;

**H03** There is no influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya. This hypothesis denotes a direct relationship between staff training as an independent variable, and performance of public universities as a dependent variable. The indicators of staff training are conceptualized as adherence to training policy, job descriptions and merit in recruitment. This conceptualization is supported by empirical literature, including; Leseiyo & Ruben (2019), who linked staff training to university performance on finding that a university's performance was correlated to the training of staff as they were able to serve better and increase customer delivery. Similarly, Al-Rifai & Al-Momany (2015), averred that a university's performance was correlated to the training of staff as they were able to serve better and increase customer delivery, and also, that training had a relationship with the training needs of staff, and that that it influenced employees' and university performance.

Hypothesis four was derived from objective four of the study, as a null hypothesis, thus;

**H04** Performance of public universities in Kenya is not affected by reward management.

This hypothesis denotes a direct relationship between reward management as an independent variable, and performance of public universities as a dependent variable. The indicators of reward management are conceptualized as fairness and equitability, team rewards and other incentive schemes. This conceptualization is supported by empirical literature, including; Noorazem, Sabri & Matt (2020), who found that emoluments positively correlated to employee performance, and ultimately organizational performance. Likewise, Leseiyo & Ngui (2019), who found that remuneration did influence employee' attitudes, which in turn influenced their performance and ultimately performance of the University.

Hypothesis five was derived from objective five of the study, as a null hypothesis, thus;

**H05** Performance management does not influence performance of public universities in

Kenya. This hypothesis denotes a direct relationship between performance management as an independent variable, and performance of public universities as a dependent variable. The indicators of performance management are conceptualized as; communication, objectivity and reliability and linkage of performance management to training and development.

This conceptualization is supported by empirical literature, including; Ondari & Ondiba (2019), who found that implementation of performance management enhanced general performance in universities and pushed individual and university goal achieve.

Similarly, Jyoti & Mohsin, (2020), averred that those employees were aware of the performance appraisal system in use at public universities and training and feedback from appraisers affected quality towards performance.

Hypothesis six was derived from objective six of the study, as a null hypothesis, thus;

**H06** There is no moderating influence of the implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. This hypothesis denotes a moderating influence of the SHRMPs-implementing unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities. The indicators of human resource management unit as the agent of implementation of the SHRMPs as conceptualized in this study are; physical facilitation, human resource policy formulation, human resource planning and full-time employee establishment.

This conceptualization is supported by empirical literature, including; Punia, Jaglan & Teena (2015), who found that the human resource management unit has a definite role which may be split into formulation of HR policy, human resource planning, physical facilitation and equipping and determination of staffing and loading levels. On the same vein, Szelagowska-Rudzka (2017), found that implementation of strategic human resource management practices required the improvement of the university management system, on the basis of development of personnel strategy, HRM processes, procedures, and tools and the including of teaching staff, in the management process, thereby improving the processes and the overall HR function.

Hypothesis seven was derived from objective seven of the study, as a null hypothesis, thus;

**H07.** There is no intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. This hypothesis denotes an indirect intervening relationship between strategic human resource management practices as a composite independent variable, employee outcomes, as an intervening variable, and performance of public universities as a dependent variable. The indicators of employee outcomes as conceptualized in this study are; commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment.

This conceptualization is supported by empirical literature, including; Hamadamin & Atan (2019) who found that the human resource management unit had a definite role which may be split into formulation of HR policy, human resource planning, physical facilitation and equipping and determination of staffing and loading levels. Similarly, Wubishet, Chekole & Wedajo (2018), found that though hierarchical regression and structural equation modeling showed no direct SHRM practices-performance relationship, the HRM practices did initially affect employee outcomes, which in turn affected enterprise performance, implying a mediating influence.

The constructs used in this study, therefore, and the relationships among the constructs as variables of the study, were determined to be empirically sound, and most likely, the results of the study may be taken to represent an acceptable level of reliability and validity, as well as empirically and theoretically relevant, with respect to human resource management as a discipline.



## **2.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter reviewed the empirical literature with regard to the relationships between the independent variable of the study; strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) and performance. Literature review was also undertaken with respect to moderating variable; human resource management unit, as well as the intervening variable; employee outcomes, the now these variables influence performance of organizations, and more specifically public universities abroad and in Kenya.

The literature review was based on a conceptualization of relationships among the variables of the study, such that chosen strategic human resource management practices require a well-organized and facilitated human resource management unit for successful implementation, and hence the envisaged moderating role of the human resource management unit. The successful implementation would result in positive employee, which would, in turn positively impact on performance, and hence the envisaged intervening role of employee outcomes.

As deducible from the literature reviewed, there was sufficient evidence to support the relationships among the variables of this study, showing that organizations, both in the private and the public sector, have utilized strategic human resource management practices, within a strategic environment where human resource management units, and employee outcomes have been factors, towards achieving desired performance. The chapter presented and described the research gaps, as well as the conceptual framework and model, which was followed in the course of the study. The models enabled the formulation of the seen hypotheses, based on seven objectives, which guided collection of data as well as eventual analysis and presentation.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the philosophical inclination, research design, target population of the study, sampling technique and sample size, research instruments and data collection procedures, operationalization of key variables of the study, validity and reliability as well as the techniques which were used to ensure ethical standards.

### **3.2 PHILOSOPHICAL INCLINATION**

Research projects are founded on certain philosophical orientations flowing from a particular conceptualization, given the researching area in question. The philosophical orientation aligns a researcher's persuasion or understanding of reality regarding the issue at hand to the generally accepted assumptions or perceptions in a particular academic discipline (Al-Saadi, 2014). This current study considers positivist ontology to be an appropriate philosophical basis. This is because this study intended to determine the reality of the phenomenon under investigation objectively, independent of the researcher's subjective opinion (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988).

In this regard, this study was structured, controlled and designed appropriately to test seven identified hypotheses, and, therefore was likely to provide science-oriented evidence of the phenomenon under investigation.

The use of positivist ontology, as a basis of testing the identified hypotheses inclined this study towards a scientific process, which became the bases of making the findings, and generate knowledge to enable arriving at dependable solutions to problems out of the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data as emphasized by Osuola (1993)

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study used a descriptive research design in a census approach. This was because, apart from determining and describing what existed according to the variables in question, the study intended, as exemplified in the objectives and hypotheses, to make inferences beyond the data collected, and hence, the events were described and arranged in logical themes, not only to describe the existing phenomenon (Borg & Gall, 1989), but also to ontologically establish what truth may exist, that needed to be known, about the strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs)-human resource management unit (HRMU)-employee outcomes (EOs)-performance interaction. The Census approach was determined to be suitable in enhancing the levels of accuracy and representativeness of the data collected, and also to minimize as much as possible, the sampling error associated with extracting samples from populations (House, 2001).

### **3.4 TARGET POPULATION**

This study targeted approximately 15, 538 academic and 60,928 nonacademic staff of the 31 public universities in Kenya (Commission for University Education (CUE), 2018). Table 3.1 presents the sampling frame of the study.

**Table 3.1: Target Population of the Study**

No.	NAME OF UNIVERSITY
1.	University of Nairobi
2.	Moi University
3.	Kenyatta University
4.	Egerton University
5.	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
6.	Maseno University
7.	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST)
8.	Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
9.	Chuka University
10.	Technical University of Kenya
11.	Technical University of Mombasa
12.	Pwani University
13.	Kisii University
14.	University of Eldoret
15.	Maasai Mara University
16.	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
17.	Laikipia University
18.	Southeastern Kenya University
19.	Meru University of Science and Technology
20.	Multimedia University of Kenya
21.	University of Kabianga
22.	Karatina University
23.	Kibabii University
24.	Rongo University
25.	The Co-operative University of Kenya
26.	Taita Taveta University
27.	Murang'a University of Technology
28.	University of Embu
29.	Machakos University
30.	Kirinyaga University
31.	Garissa University

**Source: Commission for University Education (2021)**

### **3.5 SAMPLING TECHNIQUES AND SAMPLE SIZE**

Sampling constitutes the use of a certain technique in the selection of a smaller set of the total population, usually to enable a researcher to make inferences about that population or to generalize the results (Taherdoost, 2016). This study had targeted to use all the 31 public universities in Kenya, and hence to collect data from all five of the 31 universities, forming a possible 155 respondents. It was expected, therefore, that this would, to a great extent, cater for a good measure of generalizability, dependability and inference of the results to the population. Because of the large population involved, on the one hand, but the need to control the selection of the sample for validity and reliability on the other hand, Quota sampling as an extension of purposive sampling was used as a balance between probability and nonprobability approaches. This enabled a deliberate choice of a sample on the grounds of ensuring that this sample had the desired array of traits that was largely similar to the target population (Davis, 2005; Taherdoost, 2016).

Hence, this enabled quotas of respondents, to create representative units of observation in each of the 31 universities; first, relevant officers to represent the HR-specialization cadre of employees (HR Director/Manager/Registrar) in each university was selected. This was because it was these employees who were essentially engaged in the implementation and operationalization of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) within the human resource management units. Secondly, the dependent variable of this study – performance of public universities – was conceptualized to essentially focus on what this study opined as possible indicators of public universities' performance, based on their core mandate, hence innovative learning programs, research and publications, attracting students to enrolment, graduating students.

Staff promotion was also conceptualized as an appropriate indicator of HR-oriented performance. The Academic Registrar or his or her deputy, as well as the HR Director or Registrar in each university were used to provide data on enrolment and graduation rates, as well as staff promotion rates respectively. Finally, the union officials representing their respective academic as well as the non-academic staff are deemed as being knowledgeable and experienced in providing the data needed regarding the impact of the strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) as conceptualized.

In this case, therefore, and in each university, senior officials (Chairman/Person or Secretary General) of the Universities Academic Staff Union (UASU), Kenya Universities Staff Union (KUSU) and Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) were selected. This made a total of five respondents in each university and the grand total of 155 for all the 31 public universities in Kenya ( $5 \times 31 = 155$ ). As conceptualized in this study, the five respondents from each university, and hence the 155 respondents in total, were purposively selected, rather than randomly selected. As presented in the results in chapter four, the targeted sample of 31 public universities was sufficiently realized, with 30 out of the 31 universities responding. Similarly, of the total 155 respondents targeted, 110 responded, with at a mode of 3 respondents from each of the responding 30 universities.

Although random sampling is a desirable characteristic, which could have been incorporated at this stage, this study was of the considered opinion that purposive would be preferable because of the need to deliberately select respondents who would promoted the highest level of accuracy in terms of relevant data.

Indeed, for each of the five respondents from each of the trade unions, this study envisaged that, being representatives of the unionized employees respectively, the five respondents were in a very good role-specific position, being employees, as well as leaders of the other employees. Hence, in spite of the probability sampling limitation as compared to the non-probability purposive technique as used in this study, it is the considered opinion of this study that that the data collected as well as the eventual results met the acceptable validity and reliability thresholds. Table 3.2 illustrates the process and the eventual sample size of the study.

**Table 3.2: Target Population and Sample Size**

No	NAME OF UNIVERSITY	Sample Size Per University Staff Category					
		HRMO	AC.R	UASU	KUSU	KUDHEIHA	TOTAL
1	University of Nairobi	1	1	1	1	1	5
2	Moi University	1	1	1	1	1	5
3	Kenyatta University	1	1	1	1	1	5
4	Egerton University	1	1	1	1	1	5
5	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	1	1	1	1	1	5
6	Maseno University	1	1	1	1	1	5
7	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology	1	1	1	1	1	5
8	Dedan Kimathi University of Technology	1	1	1	1	1	5
9	Chuka University	1	1	1	1	1	5
10	Technical University of Kenya	1	1	1	1	1	5
11	Technical University of Mombasa	1	1	1	1	1	5
12	Pwani University	1	1	1	1	1	5
13	Kisii University	1	1	1	1	1	5
14	University of Eldoret	1	1	1	1	1	5
15	Maasai Mara University	1	1	1	1	1	5
16	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology	1	1	1	1	1	5
17	Laikipia University	1	1	1	1	1	5
18	South Eastern Kenya University	1	1	1	1	1	5
19	Meru University of Science and Technology	1	1	1	1	1	5
20	Multimedia University of Kenya	1	1	1	1	1	5
21	University of Kabianga	1	1	1	1	1	5
22	Karatina University	1	1	1	1	1	5
23	Kibabii University	1	1	1	1	1	5
24	Rongo University	1	1	1	1	1	5
25	The Co-Operative University of Kenya	1	1	1	1	1	5
26	Taita Taveta University	1	1	1	1	1	5
27	Murang'a University of Technology	1	1	1	1	1	5
28	University of Embu	1	1	1	1	1	5
29	Machakos University	1	1	1	1	1	5
30	Kirinyaga University	1	1	1	1	1	5
31	Garissa University	1	1	1	1	1	5
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>155</b>

Source: Researcher (2021).



### **3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS**

A self-administered 5-point Likert type scale questionnaire was used to collect primary quantitative data from the respondents. The instrument was deemed suitable for this study because the objectives related to determination of attitude-oriented information concerning strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), human resource management units (HRMUs), employee outcomes (EOs), and performance of public universities was successfully collected for analysis.

### **3.7 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

On procedural permission from the Technical University of Kenya, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, The County Commissioner, Nairobi, as well as the Regional Director of Education. After a careful instruction and training of the research assistants, the questionnaires were serial numbered and distributed. Some were administered face to face, while others were administered online depending of the respondent's convenience. All questionnaires duly filled were organized into the respective quotas, numbered and readied for analysis. This took place within three months.

### **3.8 DATA PRESENTATION**

Descriptive data collected was prepared for analysis by cleaning and coding, to separate any incomplete responses and hence ensure clarity and appropriateness for statistical analysis. SPSS Version 16 application was used to avail descriptive data organized into themes based on the questionnaire and variables of the study, and presented using tables and figures as presented in chapter four.

### 3.9 OPERATIONALIZATION OF KEY VARIABLES

The key variables of this study have been broken down into the respective indicators according to the data to be collected and analyzed for each objective and the variable involved. Table 3.3 summarizes.

**Table 3.3: Operationalization of Key Variables**

VARIABLE	INDICATORS	MEASURING SCALE	QUESTIONNAIRE PART
Strategic Human Resource Management Practices (SHRMPs) <b>(Independent Variable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigorous Recruitment</li> <li>• Staff Training</li> <li>• Reward Management</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> </ul>	5 – Point Likert Type Scale	Part B: Questions 7.1-10.3
Implementation of SHRMPs by Human Resource Management Unit (HRMU) <b>(Moderating Variable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Resource Planning</li> <li>• Human Resource Policy Formulation</li> <li>• Physical Facilitation</li> <li>• Full Time HR-Employee Establishment</li> </ul>	5 – Point Likert Type Scale	PART C: Questions 11.1-14.3
Employee Outcomes (EOs) <b>(Intervening Variable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivation</li> <li>• Commitment</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> </ul>	5 – Point Likert Type Scale	Part D: Questions 15.1-18.3
Performance of public Universities in Kenya <b>(Dependent Variable)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Innovative Learning Programs</li> <li>• Research and Publications</li> <li>• Student Enrolment Rates</li> <li>• Student Graduation Rates</li> <li>• Employee Promotion Rates</li> </ul>	5 – Point Likert Type Scale	Part E: Questions 19.1-23.1

**Source: Researcher (2022)**

### **3.10 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Various precautions and actions were taken, prior to data collection, which would promote the extent of validity and reliability of the research instruments as well as the outcomes of this study. These precautions are discussed in this section.

#### **3.10.1 Validity of Research Instruments**

To promote the highest possible level of validity, the instrument was thoroughly pretested. It was checked and verified for accuracy to ensure face and content validity as recommended by Doodley (2003) and Field (2009). In addition, language and subject experts were engaged to ensure accuracy and relevance of the test items, as well as their construction and formatting, and the informed judgment of the selected senior HRM specialists and practitioners at the Technical University of Kenya, as well as the supervisors and other senior lecturers in HRM-oriented research were asked to thoroughly scrutinize and critique the questionnaire to detect any potential biases in terms of depth, sampling and so on. Consequently, their feedback was collated and used to design and construct the questionnaire appropriately. As recommended by Rosenthal & Rosnow (2006), construct validity, as well as internal and external validity was sought through a keen operationalization of variables as illustrated on table 3.3, ensuring that all the variables as operationalized were represented in the questionnaire.

#### **3.10.2 Reliability of Research Instruments**

To check for extent of reliability of the instrument, particular with respect to internal consistence, Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used to determine how items of the research instruments were related to each other.

An acceptable measure of reliability is where the alpha coefficients ranges from 0.6- 0.7 and above, according to Ehlers & Clark (2000). The results of the test are presented in chapter four.

### **3.10.3 Piloting the Instrument**

Eventually, the questionnaire was pilot-tested using 20% (6 universities = 30 respondents) from the target population. The respondents for the pilot were picked systematically at random, and did not take part in the actual study. After training and rehearsals, the questionnaires were administered, collected, and analyzed as a precursor to the main study. The results of the analysis and verification of the responses on the pilot questionnaires were used as feedback, and enabled the reconstruction of, and adjustments to the questions and respective items to avoid ambiguity and bias, among other weaknesses. The feedback information from the pilot of the questionnaire also formed a basis of cross-checking for any outlier variations in the actual study as presented in chapter four.

## **3.11 DIAGNOSTIC TESTS**

The study conducted several diagnostic tests to check for the extent to which the variables as measured through the questionnaire provide for adequacy of inferential analysis as well as sampling adequacy. These tests are discussed in this section.

### **3.11.1 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test for Sampling Adequacy**

To determine the extent to which the sample was adequate, and therefore, fit for inferential statistics analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was undertaken.

As recommended by Field (2009) an acceptable KMO DF statistic should be greater than 0.05 and between 0.6 and 1, for the data set to be considered adequately suitable for statistical analysis. The results of this test are presented in chapter four.

### **3.11.2 Linearity Test**

A linearity test was conducted to test one of the assumptions of regression modeling, and therefore to determine the extent to which the linearity of the variables in this study is adequate. As suggested by Cohen, West and Aiken (2003) and Field (2009), a Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis was used to compare the p-values of all the variables at 0.001, where if  $p\text{-value} < 0.00$ , linear relationship between independent and dependent variables was determined to exist. The results of the test are presented in chapter four.

### **3.11.3 Multicollinearity Test**

Multicollinearity test was undertaken to test for any possible problem in relation to undesirable relationships among the independent variables under strategic human resource management practices as a single variable (Kothari, 2009; Myers, 1990). The results of this test are presented in chapter four.

### **3.11.4 Normality Test**

Using the Shapiro–Wilk, the assumption of normality was test to determine the extent of departure from normality as a prerequisite for dependable data analysis. In this test, the distribution of independent variables within a given distribution was determine to ensure that the data was normal to guard against inflated statistics and or underestimated standard errors (Brooks, 2014; Conover, 1999; Malhotra & Dash, 2011).

A significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ , where p-value  $> 0.05$  would indicate that the independent variables are normally distributed and p-value  $< 0.05$  would signify abnormality in the distribution of independent variables. The results of this test are presented in chapter four.

### **3.11.5 Homoscedasticity**

To test for the condition of that the dependent variable reflects similar amounts of variance across the given range of values of a given independent variable, the Levene test was undertaken to check any level of homoscedasticity. One-way Anova was used to calculate the variance equality, and hence, determine homoscedasticity status (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998; Levene, 1960). The variance would be determined as being equal if the Levene test probability statistics show a value higher than the significance level of 0.05 (Warner, 2008). The results of the test are presented in chapter four.

## **3.12 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION.**

The analyzing of data is about examining collected and coded data to enable inferences (Mugenda & Mugenda (2003). Once data is analyzed and inferences have been made appropriately, it is arranged and organized for presentation in a way that makes the data easy to understand. Based on the objective of this study, analysis of the raw data was undertaken after careful cleaning, sorting and coding, using SPSS version 16 software. Descriptive and inferential statistics, using quantitative approach to aid in describing the features of the data as per the objective (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

For this purpose, the inferential data was computed at 0.05 level of significance, such that the arising p-values and coefficients were used to determine the relationships between the variables. Ultimately, the study presented the findings on tables, using percentages, means and standard deviations.

### **3.12.1: Empirical Models for Data Analysis**

The main aim of this study was to investigate how strategic human resource management practices as a bundle, as well as the respective practices within the bundle, that is rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management may influence performance of public universities in Kenya. In addition, the study ought to measure whether or not, human resource management unit moderated the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya and also the extent to which employee outcomes may intervene the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

According to Cooper & Schindler (2011), simple linear and multiple linear regression models are suitable for predicting values of a dependent variable where one single independent variable and various independent variables are involved respectively. A mix of simple linear, as well as multiple linear regression analysis were, therefore, considered suitable in this study. This is because, objectives two to five, involved the analysis of single independent variables; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management relating individually with the dependent variable; performance of public universities.

Likewise, objectives one, six, and seven analyzed the respective relationships between the independent variable; strategic human resource management practices as a composite made up of the four independent variables; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management on one hand, and the dependent variable; performance of public universities.

In Objective one, the direct relationship between the composite independent variable SHRMPs and performance was analyzed, while objectives six and seven analyzed the moderating and intervening relationships between the composite variable SHRMPs and the independent variable, performance of public universities.

The general regression model used for data analysis was therefore;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 3.1$$

Where: Y= Performance of public universities,  $\beta_0$ = Constant

$\beta_1$  to  $\beta_5$  = Coefficients of independent variables that is  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ ,  $X_3$ ,  $X_4$ , and  $X_5$  respectively.

Hence,  $X_1$ ,  $X_2$ ,  $X_3$ ,  $X_4$ , and  $X_5$  = strategic human resource management practices, rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance, and  $\varepsilon$  = Error term.

Y, the dependent variable, performance of public universities in Kenya, was measured quantitatively, using a five-point Likert type scale. Five indicators were used for this purpose; new innovative programmes, research and publications, student enrolment rates, student graduation rates, and staff promotion rates.



For each indicator, a perception-oriented statement was posed to the respondents, who were supposed to respond, indicating the extent to which they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, by selecting numbers 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 on the Likert scale respectively.  $X_1$  to  $X_5$ , entailing SHRMPs (composite) as well as the respective individual variables (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management) were measured quantitatively, using a five-point Likert type scale. For each of the four practices, three perception-oriented statements were posed to the respondents. They were asked to respond, indicating the extent to which they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, by selecting numbers 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 on the Likert scale respectively.

Hence, Model 3.1 was applied to formulate coefficients for each independent variable and their corresponding P-values, and hence determine whether each independent variable had a significant effect on the dependent variable, performance of public universities. In each case, the corresponding P-value and beta coefficient of each independent variable was compared with significance level at 0.05, whereupon, if P-value of the coefficient was less than 0.05, the study concluded that the independent variable was positively and statistically significant, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

For the purposes of intervening and moderating regression analysis, under objectives six and seven, the composite index for strategic human resource management practices, was calculated according to the Gupte, Bhama & Gupte (2012), technique, to enable application of a joint effect of strategic human resource management practices as a composite variable in the multiple regression models as indicated under models 3.3 (for moderation), and 3.3-3.7 (for intervention), respectively.

For each of the objectives and hypotheses, three perception-oriented statements were posed to the respondents, who were supposed to respond, indicating the extent to which they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, by selecting numbers 5, 4, 3, 2,1 on the Likert scale respectively. Subsequently, the summations of the Likert items were used to generate a value which was applied in proxy for the respective variables within the composition of the strategic human resource management practices composite index (Kiiru, 2015).

Each index for strategic human resource management practices was thus calculated using the formula:

$$I = \sum_{i=1}^N q_i \dots\dots\dots 3.2$$

Where, I is the index (proxy) for the various components of strategic human resource management practices, that is rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management

$q_i$  is a Likert item in each section of the structured questionnaire.

N is the number of Likert items in each of the sections in the structured questionnaire.

**3.12.2: Empirical Model for the Moderating Relationship**

The moderating influence of human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices integrated as a bundle and performance of public universities was tested using the regression equation recommended by Aiken & West (1991). The model is shown below:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 K + \beta_3 X_i \cdot K + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 3.3$$

Where: Y = Performance of public universities  $\beta_0$  = Constant  $\varepsilon$  = error term

$X_1$  = Composite index of strategic human resource practices,  $K$  = Human Resource Management Unit,  $\beta_1$  = Coefficient for Composite Index of Strategic human resource management practices.

$\beta_2$  = Coefficient for Moderator that is, Human Resource Management Unit.

$\beta_3$  = Coefficient for interaction of composite index of strategic human resource Management practices and moderator, human resource management unit.

The coefficient  $\beta_3$  was used to indicate the influence of the moderating variable, human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. Consequently, the p-value of  $\beta_3$  with significance value of 0.05 was used to reject or fail to reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, if the p-value of  $\beta_3$  was higher than significance value of 0.05 the study would have had to reject null hypothesis and vice versa. All the seven research hypotheses were tested at 95% level of confidence. The results of this analysis is presented in chapter four. Table 3.4 summarizes the moderator (SHRMU) influence on SHRMPs-Performance relationship decision criteria.

**Table 3.4: Moderator Relationship Decision Criteria**

<b>MODEL 3.3</b>	<b>DECISION</b>
IF ( $p > 0.05$ ), $\beta_3$ not significant	No moderating influence, HRMU is most likely an explanatory variable
IF ( $p < 0.05$ ), $\beta_3$ is significant	Significant Moderating influence.

**Source: Whisman and McClelland (2005)**

### **3.12.3 Empirical Model for the Intervening Relationship**

Employee outcomes, the intervening variable was determined to be so because as conceptualized in this study, any change in the level of performance (independent variable), would be attributable to a change in strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) (independent variable), which would give rise to a change in employee outcomes (intervening variable).

Hence, it was hypothesized in this study that employee outcomes (Eos), which arise out of successful implementation of SHRMPs, may substantially explain any such variation in performance such that, where EOs are absent or minimal, there is likely to be little or no effect on performance, even where strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) had been implemented (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Notably, it has been pointed out that the appropriateness of an intervention assertion is dependent not on statistics and theory basis only, but also on a researcher's experiential and or assumed viewpoints (Aglar & De Boek, 2017).

In this respect, the test for intervention or otherwise will be observed based on three conditions; first, where the independent variable (SHRMPs) is determined to significantly influence the dependent variable in the first regression step, secondly, the independent variable shows a significantly influence the mediator (Eos) at the second regression step, and three, the mediating variable shows a significant influence on the dependent (performance), at step three and four of regression, at which point the independent variable and mediating variables will be added to the regression mode as predictors. In this case, an intervention shall be determined to exist;

Consequently, a four-step approach to hierarchical multi linear regression was used to analyze the relationship between employee outcomes – the intervening variable, and the relationship between the independent variable – strategic human resource management practices - and performance of public universities in Kenya - the dependent variable. The models in each of the steps is shown below.

**Step one:** Regression analysis with Xi predicting Y

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4 X_1 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 3.4$$

**Step two:** Regression analysis with Xi predicting T

$$T = \beta_0 + \beta_5 X_5 + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 3.5$$

**Step three:** Regression analysis with T predicting Y

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_6 T + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 3.6$$

**Step four:** Regression analysis with Xi and T predicting Y

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_7 X_1 + \beta_8 T + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots 3.7$$

Where for all the models 3.4 to 3.7

Y = Performance of Public universities

X<sub>1</sub> = Composite Index of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices

T = Employee Outcomes

B<sub>4</sub> β<sub>5</sub> β<sub>6</sub> = Coefficients for Composite Index of Strategic Human Resource

Management Practices (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management)

β<sub>7</sub> and β<sub>8</sub> = Coefficients for Employee Outcomes, β<sub>0</sub> = Constant ε = Error term

Hence, step one to three were used to determine whether or not, a relationship existed among the respective variables, such that, where one or more of these relationships was non-significant the conclusion was that intervention was not present (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Progressing to step four was dependent on finding significant relationships at steps one to three. At step four the intervention was supported if the effect of strategic human resource management practices remained significant after controlling for employee outcomes. In case employee outcomes was insignificant, when strategic human resource management practices was controlled, there would be determined to be full intervention.

However, should strategic human resource management practices and employee outcomes significantly predict performance of public universities, partial mediation or intervention would be determined to exist. This decision criteria are summarized on Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5: *Intervention Relationship Decision Criteria***

	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<b>1.</b>	If $\beta_4$ in model 3.4 is significant If $\beta_5$ in model 3.5 is significant If $\beta_6$ in model 3.6 is significant If $\beta_7$ is not significant and $\beta_8$ in model 3.7 is significant	Full intervention
<b>2.</b>	If $\beta_4$ in model 3.4 is significant If $\beta_5$ in model 3.5 is significant If $\beta_6$ in model 3.6 is significant If $\beta_7$ and $\beta_8$ in model 3.7 are significant	Partial intervention
<b>3.</b>	If $\beta_4$ in model 3.4 is not significant If $\beta_5$ in model 3.5 is not significant If $\beta_6$ in model 3.7 is not significant If $\beta_7$ and $\beta_8$ in model 3.7 are not significant	No intervention

**Source: Baron & Kenny (1986)**

### 3.13 HYPOTHESES TESTING

The null hypotheses p-values approach was used where once the p-values were determined for each hypothesis; this enabled decision making each hypothesis. The most significance level approach as used in business and social science research 0.05, as suggested by Javanmard & Montanari (2013), was used accordingly. Table 3.6 summarizes.

**Table 3.6: Hypotheses Testing Models**

Objective	Hypothesis	Statistical test	Interpretation
To examine whether strategic human resource management practices influence performance of public universities in Kenya	Strategic human resource management practices do not influence performance of public universities in Kenya.	$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$	F-value Level of significant 0.05 $P < 0.05$ reject null hypothesis
To establish the extent to which rigorous recruitment influences performance of public universities in Kenya	There is no influence of rigorous recruitment on performance of public universities in Kenya	$Y = \beta_0 + B_2 X_2 + e$	F-value Level of significant 0.05 $P < 0.05$ reject null hypothesis
To determine if staff training influences performance of public universities in Kenya	There is no influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya	$Y = \beta_0 + B_3 X_3 + e$	F-value Level of significant 0.05 $P \leq 0.05$ reject null hypothesis
To examine whether reward management affects performance of public universities in Kenya	There is no effect of reward management on performance of public universities in Kenya	$Y = \beta_0 + B_4 X_4 + e$	F-value Level of significant 0.05 $P < 0.05$ reject null hypothesis
To determine how performance management influences performance of public universities in Kenya	There is no influence of performance management on performance of public universities in Kenya	$Y = \beta_0 + B_5 X_5 + e$	F-value Level of significant 0.05 $P < 0.05$ reject null hypothesis

<p>To establish the extent to which implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit moderates the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya</p>	<p>There is no moderating influence of human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p>:  <math>Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 K + \beta_3 X_1 \cdot K + \varepsilon</math></p>	<p>F-value  Level of significant  0.05  <math>P &lt; 0.05</math> reject null hypothesis</p>
<p>To determine whether employee outcomes intervenes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya</p>	<p>There is no intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p>Step 1: <math>Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4 X_1 + \varepsilon</math>  Step 2: <math>T = \beta_0 + \beta_5 X_1 + \varepsilon</math>  Step 3: <math>Y = \beta_0 + \beta_6 T + \varepsilon</math>  Step 4:  <math>Y = \beta_0 + \beta_7 X_1 + \beta_8 T + \varepsilon</math></p>	<p>Note the values of <math>r^2</math>, <math>\beta_4</math> and F change for regression in step 1</p> <p>Note the values of <math>r^2</math>, <math>\beta_5</math> and F change for regression in step 2</p> <p>Note the values of <math>r^2</math>, <math>\beta_6</math> and F change for regression in step 3</p> <p>Note the values of <math>r^2</math>, <math>\beta_4</math>, <math>\beta_5</math>, <math>\beta_6</math>, <math>\beta_7</math>, <math>\beta_8</math> and F change for regression in step 4, after controlling for EOs</p> <p>Note the change in the beta coefficient for EOs  <math>(\beta_4 - \beta_8 &lt; 0)</math>  If <math>\beta_4</math> and either <math>\beta_5</math>, <math>\beta_6</math> or <math>\beta_7</math> is also significant, then some intervention will be supported  If <math>\beta_8</math> is no longer significant after controlling for EOs, then full intervention will be determined</p>

Source: Researcher (2022)



### **3.14 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

To ensure ethical standards, all protocols with respect to permission and were strictly followed. All the necessary documents, including authorization and approval from the university, were duly sought and obtained. Prior to distribution of the research instruments, audience with the respective university departments was sought to clarify the purpose of the study and the necessary approval was granted accordingly.

The researcher obtained authority from the Technical University of Kenya to facilitate the application of the necessary research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation Institute (NACOSTI), which was duly granted. The respondents were duly informed through the instrument of data collection that filling in the questionnaire was subject to their free will and consent, the that the data collected would be used for research purpose only. This was strictly adhered to during the study. The respondents were also informed that they may opt out of the exercise at any time and that utmost confidentiality and privacy would be ensured. In this respect, none of the respondents opted out, and all the necessary precautions were appropriately taken in the course of collection, coding and processing of the questionnaires for data analysis.

### **3.15 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Using a positivist ontological philosophical approach, this study has been designed for a descriptive survey, targeting 31 public universities in Kenya. After piloting the instrument using a sample of 35 respondents to allow for adjustments, data was eventually collected using five respondents from each of the 31 public universities, making a total of 155 respondents ( $5 \times 31 = 155$ ).

A five-point Likert type scale questionnaire was used to collect qualitative data, which was analyzed using linear and multiple linear stepwise regression, to test the hypotheses. All ethical standards were observed throughout the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The research findings are presented and discussed in this chapter, using tables, percentages, means, frequencies and standard deviations. The information is organized into five main sections, namely: Response Rates; Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Test, Diagnostic Tests, and Inferential Statistics. The descriptive statistics section, presents the descriptive statistics with respect to the background information of the respondents, namely university of domicile, staff category, age bracket, education profile and years of service. The descriptive statistics section presents the responses regarding the respective strategic human resource management practices: Rigorous Recruitment, Staff Training, Reward Management, and Performance Management, as well as the moderating variable; human resource management unit and the intervening variable; employee outcomes.

Eventually in this section, descriptive statistics on the dependent variable, performance of public universities are presented on each indicator, namely research publications, student enrolment rates, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates. The reliability test section presents the results of the Cronbach Alpha Test. The diagnostic tests section presents the results of the diagnostic tests undertaken, while the inferential statistics presents the regression analysis results on each of the variables of the study.

## **4.2 RESPONSE RATE**

This study targeted to collect data from 155 representatives of academic and non-academic staff of the 31 public universities in Kenya, who were purposively selected in line with the objectives of the study.

One respondent was selected from each of the following categories of staff as follows: UASU, KUSU, KUTHEIHA, Academic Registrars and HR Registrars. Hence, five respondents in each university, to make  $5 \times 31 = 155$ . After omitting six universities ( $6 \times 5 = 30$  respondents), which were used for the piloting, 149 questionnaires were distributed. Only 117 questionnaires were received back, out of which seven were not usable due to incompleteness. 110 questionnaires were, therefore used for analysis, representing approximately 74% response rate. According to Kothari and Gang (2014), a research response rate of 50 percent is acceptable for analysis purposes. Also, 60% is said to be good while 70% and above is excellent for the same purpose. Similarly, Leseiyo & Ngui (2019), and Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014) used 93% and 60% respectively for data analysis. In this respect, the 74% response rate in this study was within the acceptable empirical standards and met the threshold of acceptability of the findings of this study.

## **4.3 SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS IN THE SAMPLE**

The background information with respect to the demographic profile of the respondents as required in Part A of the questionnaire is discussed in this section.

### **4.3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents by University of Domicile**

As provided in Appendix II, Part A of the questionnaire, question one required the respondents to indicate the university they belonged to. As presented in Table 4.1, 30 of the 31 universities responded. In addition, there were at least two respondents out of the targeted five from each respondent university. This implied that the extent to which the data collected represented the 31 universities targeted was arguably and relatively high.

**Table 4.1: Profile of Respondents by University of Domicile**

UNIVERSITY	Frequency	Percent of Total
Chuka University	5	4.5
Dedan Kimathi University	2	1.8
Egerton University	3	2.7
Garissa University	4	3.6
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University	3	2.7
Jomo Kenyatta University	4	3.6
Karatina University	3	2.7
Kenyatta University	4	3.6
Kibabii University	4	3.6
Kirinyaga University	4	3.6
Kisii University	2	1.8
Laikipia University1.1.7	5	4.5
Maasai Mara University	2	1.8
Machakos University	5	4.5
Maseno University	3	2.7
Masinde Mliro University	3	2.7
Meru University of Science & Technology	3	2.7
Moi University	4	3.6
Multimedia University of Kenya	3	2.7
Muranga University of Technology	3	2.7
Pwani University	5	4.5
Rongo University	5	4.5
South Eastern Kenya University	4	3.6
Taita Taveta University	5	4.5
Technical University of Kenya	2	1.8
Technical University of Mombasa	3	2.7
The Cooperative University of Kenya	4	3.6
University of Embu	3	4.5
University of Kabianga	3	2.7
University of Nairobi	4	3.6
<b>Total</b>	110	100.0

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

### 4.3.2 Distribution of Respondents by Staff Category

Responding on the question of the staff category they belonged to, most indicated between KUSU and UASU (27% and 29% respectively), while 20% indicated KUDHEIHA, 18% Academic Registrar and 16% HR Registrar. This appears to indicate a higher level of enthusiasm to participate on the part of the UASU teaching, probably because they are affected more by changes pertaining to strategic human resource management practices. In the same way, the KUSU non-teaching staff were naturally more likely to identify more with the day to day HR-oriented activities of their universities, given management and administrative professional background, and hence, more inclined towards a high level of enthusiasm, in comparison to Academic Registrars and HR Registrars, who are basically the implementers of HR-related policies, and hence not too keen to open up on any implied shortcomings as possibly perceived through the questionnaire. Table 4.2 illustrates.

**Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Staff Category**

		University department			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Director; Deputy Registrar; Senior Assistant Registrar or equivalent (HR)	16	14.5	14.5	14.5
	KUDHEIHA	20	18.2	18.2	32.7
	KUSU	27	24.5	24.5	57.3
	Senior/Deputy Academic Registrar or equivalent	18	16.4	16.4	73.6
	UASU	29	26.4	26.4	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

### 4.3.3 Profile of Respondents by Gender

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. This statistic, as far as this study was concerned, would help indicate the extent of representativeness with regard to men and women working in the public universities. It was considered of interest, for instance, to determine how the men to women employee ratio in Kenya's public universities compared to the same statistic worldwide. It was found that, the majority, 70%, indicated male, while 40% indicated female. This appeared to be consistent with the International Labour Organization (ILO) statistic on the men to women ratio in the labour force, where, for every ten men in the labour force, there were six women (ILO, 2018).

This statistic appears to be in line with the men to women ratio in public universities in Kenya, according to Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) Economic Survey (2022). Table 4.3 illustrates.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of respondents by Gender.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Female	40	36.4	36.4	36.4
Male	70	63.6	63.6	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

#### 4.3.4 Distribution of Respondents by Age

On the four age brackets required to be indicated by the respondents, the majority indicated 36-45 year (51%), followed by 46-55 years who represented 36%. The 25-35 bracket had 13%, the 56+ bracket had 7% while the 25% and less bracket had 3%. As indicated on table 4.4. Hence, the minority age bracket appears to be 25 years and less (3%), followed by 56 years and above (7%).

The age bracket distribution seems to confirm what is easily determinable on casual observation of the age profile in a typical enterprise, especially in the public sector, now more specifically in a public university. The majority of employees seem to be within the middle age bracket, and relatively few towards the retirement age, which is 70 years. Table 4.4 illustrates the distribution of the respondents by age.

**Table 4.4: *Distribution of Respondents by Age Bracket***

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 25 and less	3	2.7	2.7	2.7
25-35	13	11.8	11.8	14.5
36-45	51	46.4	46.4	60.9
46-55	36	32.7	32.7	93.6
56+	7	6.4	6.4	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**



#### 4.3.5 Education Profile of Respondents

All the educational levels, that is PhD, Masters, Undergraduate degree, Higher Diploma and Diploma were represented in the responses, with Master’s Degree level indicating the majority (45%), followed by PhD and Undergraduate Degree (32% and 13% respectively). This appears to confirm general observations at public universities, as well as Commission for University Education (2018), and Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) Economic Survey (2022), where majority of university staff are master’s degree holders.

Table 4.5 illustrates.

**Table 4.5: Distribution of Responses by Level of Education**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Diploma	10	9.1	9.1	9.1
First Degree	13	11.8	11.8	20.9
Higher Diploma	10	9.1	9.1	30.0
Masters Degree	45	40.9	40.9	70.9
Ph.D.	32	29.1	29.1	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

#### 4.3.6 Demographic Profile of Respondents by Years of Service

Five service brackets were provided for the respondents to indicate their length of service at the respective universities. A majority of respondents (51%) indicated 16-20 years, followed by 21-25 (33%) and 11-15 (13%). A remarkably few indicated 6-10 (6%) and the least, 26 and above (5%). These statistics seem to support the distribution by age bracket in section 4.3.4, Table 4.4, where the 56+ years age bracket were relatively few at 7%, and the 25 years and less age bracket which had the least at 3%.

In this case, it was considered logical that those who had served longest (26 years and above, 5%) are likely to also be in the age bracket 56+ in Table 4.4 who are relatively few (7%). This may be attributed to general attrition and retirement rate, and so on. Likewise, the very youthful few (25 years and less (Table 4.4), would have served for comparatively less years (6-10 years), in Table 4.6 as illustrated below. The finding that the majority had worked in the universities for 16-20 years also implied that the data collected came from well experienced sources, and therefore, more likely to have a relatively high degree of accuracy.

**Table 4.6: Demographic Profile of Respondents by Years of Service**

Years Range	Frequency	Percent
1-5	2	1.8
11-15	13	11.8
16-20	51	46.4
Valid 21-25	33	30.0
26 and above	5	4.5
6-10	6	5.5
Total	110	100.0

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

#### **4.4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS**

This section presents and discusses the statistical data with respect to the variables used in this study, based on the questionnaire, Appendix II Part B, sections 7.1- 23.1. The respective data for each variable are presented in tables, showing the frequency, the standard deviation and the mean in each case.

#### **4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics on Strategic Human Resource Management Practices**

Under objective one of the study; to establish the influence of strategic human resource management practices on performance of public universities in Kenya. As discussed in the literature review, Chapter two, this study specifically and purposely derived four typical strategic human resource management practices from the empirical and theoretical literature.

These included Zehir, Gurol, Karaboga & Kole (2016), Moustaghfir, El Fatihi & Benouarrek (2020), as well as Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015). All these studies were contextualized in strategic human resource management, and specifically addressed strategic human resource management practices as conceptualized in the current study.

In this respect, the four typical strategic human resource management practices were purposively selected based on their significance in influencing the performance of organizations as evidenced by empirical literature as pointed out above.

These were; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management. A five-point Likert type scale, numbered 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, representing strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree respectively was used for data collection. The data was collected using Part B, sections 7.3-10.3 of the questionnaire (Appendix II).

Statements pertaining to the four strategic human resource management practices were put to the respondents, who were asked to respond accordingly. Using a five-point Likert type scale, and for the purpose of analysis of the data, it was considered that a response of 3 and above indicated a supportive perception in terms of existence of the said practice, based on the item or statement posed to the respondent.

Likewise, an indication below 3 was taken to mean less to least support for the existence of a given strategic human resource management practice. The findings under each of the four indicators, namely, rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management are presented on Table 4.7, are discussed forthwith, section by section, item by item:

Section 7.0, collected data on rigorous recruitment as an indicator of strategic human resource management practices. Three indicator statements were posed to the respondents who were requested to indicate their perceptions on each, with respect to rigorous recruitment as practiced in the respective universities. The findings on each statement are presented as follows;

Statement 7.1, requested respondents to indicate the extent to which they perceived that their university strictly adhered to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff. It was found that 65% strongly agreed, 39% agreed, 18% neither agreed nor disagreed. As conceptualized in this study, those who neither agreed nor disagreed were considered to have no strong opinion either way, or not to know or be sure regarding the matter in question. Miriam (2019). Hence, such respondents could be considered neutral, for the purpose of results analysis, or included, depending on the subject matter and nature of the data being analyzed.

In this study, the impact of neither agreeing nor disagreeing did not seem to affect the overall position of the results, in terms of categorizing them among those who agreed or disagreed. This was such that, even if they were categorized as neutral, and hence ignored for scoring purposes, the impact did not seem to be significant. Therefore, for the purpose of determine the agreed versus the disagreed scores, those who neither agreed nor disagreed were considered to have agreed, at least because they did not disagree.

In total, 62 % of the respondents agreed that their university strictly adhered to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff. On the other hand, 25% respondents disagreed, while 13% strongly disagreed with the statement that their university strictly adhered to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff, implying that a total of 38% disagreed.

Hence, on whether universities strictly adhered to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff, as an indicator rigorous recruitment, it was found that a majority, 62%, positively perceived that the universities strictly adhered to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff. Considering that 38% disagreed, it may be concluded that rigorous recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice, and in terms of the indicator, strict adherence to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff was fairly impactful. This is notwithstanding those who perceived otherwise in disagreeing, 38%. On statement 7.2, the respondents were asked to indicate whether hiring was based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions by the universities.

It was found that 4% strongly agreed, 10% agreed, and 34% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that hiring was based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions by the universities. Hence, in total, (48%) were agreeable, including those who were neutral. On the other hand, 38% disagreed, while 14% strongly disagreed with the statement that hiring was based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions by the universities.

Hence, in total the majority, 52% did not perceive that hiring was based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions by the universities.

On this indicator of rigorous recruitment, therefore, the findings showed that, the majority, though slight 52%, did not perceive that hiring was based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions by the universities. The implication was that, because a majority of the respondents negatively perceived hiring in terms of the use of job description in hiring, that rigorous recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice was not as impactful in this respect.

On statement 7.3, the respondents were asked to indicate how they perceived the proposition that merit, rather than nepotism counted in the recruitment processes at the universities. It was found that 7% strongly agreed, 7% agreed, while 19% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, (33%) agreed.

In contradiction, 42% disagreed, while 25% strongly disagreed. Hence, in total, 67% disagreed with the statement that merit, rather than nepotism counted in the recruitment processes at the universities. Therefore, on whether merit rather than nepotism counted in the recruitment process, as an indicator of rigorous recruitment, it was established that the majority 67% did not perceive as such.

These findings, on the three indicators of rigorous recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice, showed that except for adherence to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff, where the majority of respondents 62% agreed, the respondents mainly disagreed with the other two indicators. This is evidenced by the finding that 52% disagreed that hiring was based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions by the universities, and 77% disagreed with the statement that merit rather than nepotism counted in the recruitment process at the universities.

As a summary, therefore, rigorous recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice, does not appear to have been well or strongly impactful, based on the indicators used in this study. However, given the minority 48% (statement 7.2), who agreed that there were elaborate job descriptions in hiring, and, also the other minority 33% (statement 7.3), who agreed that merit rather than nepotism was applied in recruiting staff, it would appear that rigorous recruitment as a strategic practice in the universities exists, though not as successfully implemented, and therefore, not as impactful as could have been desired.

This finding on rigorous recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice seems to be in consonance with the existing empirical literature.

For instance, Sanket & Vijendra (2022), who established that Recruitment enables candidate with technical skills, and with appropriate responsibility taking ability and communication skills to be identified and mapped. Similarly, Nondoh, Tsuma, Alala & Onyango (2020), who found that the level of quality recruitment has a positive effect on performance of a university. However, whereas these studies seem affirm the results of the current study, it would appear, going by the relatively low perception of impactfulness by the respondents indicated, that the influence of rigorous recruitment is minimal, which may partly explain the declining performance of the universities as pointed out earlier on.

Section 8.0 was used to collect data on staff training, as a strategic human resource management practice, and as provided for in the questionnaire (Appendix II), three indicator statements were used to aid the respondents indicate their perception on the extent to which staff training was impactful. The results are presented as follows:

On statement 8.1, proposing that the universities adhered to an elaborate training and development policy, it was found that the respondents 4% strongly agreed, 18% agreed, while 18% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 40% agreed with the indicator statement that the universities adhered to an elaborate training and development policy. On the other hand, 44% disagreed, while 16% strongly disagreed with the same statement. Hence, in total, 60% disagreed. Overall, therefore, the majority disagreed with the indicator that the universities adhered to an elaborate training and development policy, while a comparative 40% agreed.

Statement 8.2 posed an indicator, proposing that induction training was strategically provided for new and also promoted workers. The respondents were asked to indicate how they perceived this statement, using a five-point Likert scale type questionnaire. It was found that 4% strongly agreed, 7% agreed, while 17% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. In total, 28% were supportive of the statement that induction training was strategically provided for new and also promoted workers. In contrast, 55% disagreed, while 17% strongly disagreed. Hence, a total of 72% disagreed with the proposition that induction training was strategically provided for new and also promoted workers. Hence, on this indicator of staff training as a strategic human resource management practice, the majority of respondents 72%, seemed to disagree, implying that the implemented staff training strategy was substantially impactful, as measured through induction training as an indicator.



Statement 8.3, measured the perception of the respondents with regard to whether or not continuous professional career development for all categories of employees was adequately provided by the universities. Using the five-point Likert scale questionnaire, it was found that 2%, strongly agreed, 4% agreed and 18% neither agreed nor disagreed. In total, hence, 24% of the respondents agreed with the indicator statement that induction training was strategically provided for new and also promoted workers. However, it was found that 51% disagreed, while 24% of the respondents strongly disagreed. Hence, in total 76%, were not in supportive of this statement. It appeared, therefore, that the majority of respondents, 76%, disagreed with the statement that induction training was strategically provided for new and also promoted workers.

In summary, therefore, and from these findings on the three indicators concerning staff training as a strategic human resource management practice, it was found that the majority of respondents in each of the indicators; statement (8.1) - 60%, (8.2), 72%, and (8.3), 76% respectively, did not perceive that there was very impactful strategic training in terms of adherence to an elaborate training and development policy, provision of induction training strategically for new and also promoted workers, and adequate provision of continuous professional career development for all categories of employees.

However, it appears, at the same time, that a sizeable number in each case of the three indicators, seemed to be supportive, implying a possible, however, moderately low, impactful existence, on the part of employees of the universities, from strategic staff training as a strategic human resource management practice. This finding appears to resonate with the empirical studies reviewed in the current study.

For instance, Ogohi & Cross (2018), found that strategic training impacted on the knowledge and capabilities of employees, which in turn influenced an enterprise's performance. Likewise, Kiiru (2015), averred by finding that staff training was positively significant in influencing performance of a parastatal.

Hence, staff training is indeed significant in influencing the performance of a public university, although the negative perception by the majority of respondents seems to indicate a case of less than satisfactory implementation, with regard to adherence to an elaborate training and development policy, provision of induction training strategically for new and also promoted workers, and adequate provision of continuous professional career development for all categories of employees.

Section 9.0 collected data on reward management as a strategic human resource management practice, and as provided for in the questionnaire (Appendix II). Three indicator statements were used to aid the respondents indicate their perception on the extent to which staff training was impactful. A five-point Likert scale was used. On statement 9.1, proposing that job promotion as well as upward mobility were part of the rewarding mechanisms in the universities, it was found that (6%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 12% agreed, while 7% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Hence, in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 25% supported the statement that job promotion as well as upward mobility were part of the rewarding mechanisms in the universities. However, 50% disagreed, while 25% strongly disagreed with this statement. Hence, in total 75% disagreed on job promotion and upward mobility as an indicator of reward management as a strategic human resource management practice, implying that the respondents did not perceive that this was provided for.

On statement 9.2, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on the statement that the terms of service and benefits were motivating to employees in the universities. It was found that 6% strongly agreed, 10% agreed, while 9% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, 25% were agreeable of this statement.

However, responding to the same statement, it was established that 50% disagreed, while 25% strongly disagreed. Hence, in total, it was established that 75% of the respondents did not perceive that the terms of service and benefits proffered were motivating to employees in the universities. This implied, therefore, that on terms of service and benefits provided, as an indicator of strategic reward management practice, the majority did not agree.

On statement 9.3, the respondents were asked to indicate their perception on the statement that there were other university-driven incentive schemes other than those stipulated by the statutory government scheme. It was established that 2% of the respondents strongly agreed, 8% agreed, while 14% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 24% agreed with the statement. However, on the same statement, 53% disagreed, while 23% strongly disagreed.

This meant that in total, 76% were not supportive of the statement that there were other university-driven incentive schemes other than those stipulated by the statutory government scheme. On the existence of university-initiated incentives other than those stipulated in the statutory terms of service, and as an indicator of strategic reward management, the majority disagreed that these existed.

From these findings, concerning reward management as a strategic human resource management practice, it was found that the majority of respondents in each of the indicators seemed not to perceive the strategic reward management, in terms of its impact and adequately, as measured through the three statement indicators; whether job promotion as well as upward mobility were part of the rewarding mechanisms in the universities 75%, whether the terms of service and benefits were motivating to employees in the universities 75%, and whether there were other university-driven incentive schemes other than those stipulated by the statutory government scheme 76%. However, it appears, at the same time, that a sizeable number in each case of the three indicators, seemed to be supportive, implying a possible, however, moderately low, impact on the part of employees of the universities, from reward management as a strategic human resource management practice. This finding resonates with the empirical literature reviewed in the current study. As examples, Tripathy & Rohidas (2022), established that rewarding employees correlated with individual performance, which, in turn, impacted organizational performance. Similarly, Leseiyo & Ngui (2019), who affirmed the same on finding that rewarding positively impacted on employee attitudes, and as a consequence, their individual performance, and ultimately, the performance of a university.

Section 10.0 collected data on performance management as a strategic human resource management practice. This was measured through three statements which were posed to the respondents, as illustrated on the questionnaire, Appendix B. The statements were designed to aid the respondents indicate their perceptions regarding the extent to which they felt that performance management was adequately catered for and impactful.

Using a five-point Likert type scale, the findings under statement 10.1 which suggested whether or not, communication was well done with appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates, showed that 3% strongly agreed, 15% agreed, and 15% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, 33% were agreeable to the statement that communication was well done with appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates. However, on the same statement, 41% disagreed, while 26% strongly disagreed.

In total, therefore, 67% did not perceive that this was the case. Hence, on whether communication was well done, with appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates, it was established that the majority 67% did not perceive that this was the case.

Under statement 10.2, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on whether or not the performance appraisal systems in the universities were well defined, and, therefore, accurate, fair, objective and reliable. It was established that 4% strongly agreed, 9% agreed, while 15% neither agreed, nor disagreed. Hence in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 28%, agreed with the suggestion that performance appraisal systems in the universities were well defined, and, therefore, fair, objective and reliable. On the same statement, however, 43% disagreed, with 29% strongly disagreeing, which meant that in total, 72%, did not perceive that performance appraisal systems were well define, and, therefore, accurate, air, objective and reliable, based on this indicator.

On 10.3, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions regarding the statement that the performance evaluation system in the universities provided a linkage to the training and development programs as well as a mentoring system for the junior employees. It was established that 4% strongly agreed, 8% agreed and 14% neither agreed nor disagreed.

This implied that in total, 26% were in support of this statement. However, on the same statement, it was found that 47% disagreed, while 27% respondents strongly disagreed, implying that in total, the majority, 74% did not perceive, as measured through this indicator, that performance management as a strategic human resource management practice, was impactful.

This finding, that the majority of respondents 74%, did not feel that performance management as a strategic human resource management practice has two implications.

One is that, although the respondents negatively perceived the impact of performance management, as measured through the three indicators, that is, whether or not, communication was well done with appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates, whether or not the performance appraisal systems were well defined, and, therefore, accurate, fair, objective and reliable, and whether the performance evaluation systems in the universities provided a linkage to the training and development programs as well as a mentoring system for the junior employees. There was still a sizeable minority (26%), who perceived a considerable measure of impact by agreeing to the indicators. Hence, it may be concluded that performance management is a factor which is more than likely to influence the performance of public universities.

Secondly, the finding is in line with the empirical literature as reviewed in the current study. As examples, Gomes and Mendes (2022), established that performance of an organization improves where performance management practices were aligned to the organizational culture. Likewise, Ondari & Ondiba (2019), firmed this up on finding that employees were aware of the performance appraisal system in use at public universities and training and feedback from appraisers affected quality towards performance. Table 4.7 provides a breakdown of the respective responses with respect to SHRMPs as a bundle, and hence a composite variable.

**Table 4.7: Descriptive Responses on Strategic Human Resource Management Practices**

NO.	STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Rigorous Recruitment</b>								
7.1	My university strictly adheres to the prescribed recruitment policy in hiring	110	5%	39%	18%	25%	13%	2.95	1.12
7.2	Hiring is based on elaborate job descriptions of the positions.	110	(4%)	10%	34%	38%	14%	2.41	.941
7.3	Merit, rather than nepotism counts in the recruitment process.	110	7%	7%	19%	42%	25%	2.37	1.04
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Staff Training</b>								
8.1	The university adheres to an elaborate training policy.	110	4%	18%	18%	44%	16%	2.42	1.01
8.2	Induction training is strategically provided for new workers	110	4%	7%	17%	55%	17%	2.14	.800
8.3	Continuous professional/career development for all employees is adequately given	110	2%	4%	18%	51%	24%	1.96	.740
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Reward Management</b>								
9.1	Promotion and upward mobility are part of the rewarding systems in the university.	110	6%	12%	7%	50%	25%	2.16	1.07
9.2	The terms of service and benefits are motivating to all employees	110	6%	10%	9%	50%	25%	2.10	.100
9.3	There are other university-driven incentive schemes besides statutory schemes	110	2%	8%	14%	53%	23%	2.04	.810
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Performance Management</b>								
10.1	Communication is well done with appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates in the university.	110	3%	15%	15%	41%	(6%	2.19	1.04
10.2	The performance appraisal system in the university is well defined, accurate, fair, objective and reliable	110	4%	9%	15%	43%	29%	2.05	.930
10.3	The performance evaluation system in the university provides a link to the training and development programs as well as a mentoring system for the junior employees.	110	(4%	8%	14%	47%	27%	1.92	.850

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

As illustrated on Table 4.7, the respondents seemed to perceive, based on the respective indicator statements used, that each of the strategic human resource management practices as conceptualized in this study, that is rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management was considerably less impactful.

However, due to the fact that a high percentage, though a minority, of respondents were supportive of the respective practices, it may be argued that this was an indication that each of the practices did exist in the universities, and had a certain amount of impact on the employees of the public universities. As illustrated in Table 4.7, the mean and the standard deviation for each item under each strategic human resource management practice seemed to support the findings, with the means of under 3 in each case, seeming to affirm the majority disagreeing responses respectively.

The mean and standard deviation captured respectively also seem to illustrate a normal distribution, with minimal variation among the scores in each case. This is because, the empirical rule of thumb asserts that in a normal distribution, approximately 68% of scores would be within 1 standard deviation from mean. Also, that almost 95% of the indicated scorings would deviate within 2 points from the mean, and that approximately 99.7% of the grades would tend to fall around 3 deviations from the mean (Jim, 2019).

In this respect, standard deviation of the data collected with respect to the strategic human resource management practices under investigation in this study ranged from 0.80 to 1.12. For the purpose of analysis, this range seems to be well within the acceptable limits, and was, hence considered appropriate for further analysis.



As hypothesized in this study, the influence of strategic human resource management practices may be hampered, or otherwise promoted by the state capacity of the human resource management unit to implement SHRMPs. On the other hand, the employee outcomes which result from the implementation of the said strategic human resource management practices may also negatively or otherwise, positively impact on the relationship between implemented SHRMPs and performance. In addition, the existence of the strategic human resource management practices in the public universities confirms Ojokuku & Akanbi's (2015) findings, that indeed, universities did implement certain strategic human resource management practices, and that, however, the impact of the same on the performance of the said universities was varied. The findings of this current study, that the implemented strategic human resource management practices did not seem to add as much value as would be expected, seem to be in sync with Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015). The implication, as underscored by Hamadamin & Atan (2019), is most likely that the relatively low impact of the implemented strategic human resource management practices by the public universities, leads to low employee outcomes, in terms of employee commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment, as conceptualized in this current study. The lowly indication on the levels of employee outcomes, in turn, most likely leads to low levels of performance, and hence, the seemingly adverse performance of the public universities in Kenya as attested to by, among others, Commission for University Education (CUE) (2018).

#### **4.4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Human Resource Management Unit**

This study sought to establish, as objective number six, and as provided for under Part C of the questionnaire the questionnaire (Appendix II), sections 11.1-14.3, whether or not, the human resource management unit as conceptualized in this study, may moderate the relationship between strategic human resource management practices as implemented and the performance of public universities in Kenya. A five-point Likert type scale was used to measure the perceptions of the respondents, who were asked to indicate on a range from strongly agree to strongly disagree, labeled 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

In this regard, statements designed to indicate the existence of a well thought out, organized and facilitated human resource management unit, which in turn, would strategically be operationalized through a well-designed human resource management unit or department. The statements were then posed to the respondents, with respect to the four indicators as conceptualized. The indicators were; physical facilities, human resource policy, and full time HR employee establishment and human resource planning. Table 4.8 presents the findings, which indicated as follows:

On physical facilities, numbered 11.1 to 11.3 on the questionnaire, three statements were posed to the respondents to aid them in indicating their perceptions with regard to the extent to which the physical facilities provided in their respective universities are adequate. Under 11.1, the respondents were asked to indicate on the Likert scale, the extent to which they perceived that the space and layout of the HR department are adequate and proper for a conducive work environment.

The results indicated that 5% strongly agreed, 12% agreed while 8% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, 25%, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, were supportive of the statement. However, on the same statement, 64%, disagreed while 11% strongly disagreed, implying that in total, 75% did not perceive that the space and layout of the HR department are adequate and proper for a conducive work environment. Responding to statement 11.2, regarding whether or not there were sufficient HR personnel whose role in supporting the operations of the university was easily noticeable and determinable, it was established that 3% strongly agreed, 13% agreed, while 12% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 28% were determined to have agreed.

However, on whether or not there were sufficient HR personnel whose role in supporting the operations of the university was easily noticeable and determinable, 59% disagreed, while 14% strongly disagreed. Hence in total 72% disagreed with this statement. The implication of these findings was that the majority 72% did not perceive that there were sufficient HR personnel whose role in supporting the operations of the universities was easily noticeable and determinable. In statement 11.3, suggesting that there was adequate supply of HR-related amenities like documents, forms and relevant information/communication for everyone, it was found that 3%, strongly agreed, 11% agreed, while 18% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Hence in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 32% agreed that there was adequate supply of HR-related amenities like documents, forms and relevant information/communication for everyone.

However, on the same statement, it was found that 57% disagreed, while 11% strongly disagreed, implying that in total, 36% did not perceive that there was adequate supply of HR-related amenities like documents, forms and relevant information/communication for everyone at the public universities.

These findings on the physical facilities at the universities, based on the indicators as conceptualized in this study, seem to suggest that, although the responses allude to evidence that there were certain facilities, the facilities seemed to come short of expectation, given that the majority of respondents disagreed, implying discontent or dissatisfaction with regard to the extent to which the facilities at the respective HRM units in the public universities were adequate and sufficient for the operations of the units.

Section 12.0 in the questionnaire, (Appendix II, Part C), consisted of statements designed to aid the respondents indicate their perceptions on HR policy, as an indicator of a well-organized and strategic human resource management unit as conceptualized in this study. On statement 12.1, the respondent were asked to indicate the extent to which they experienced that there was evidence of adherence to HR policy for each key area of work. From their responses, as per the five-point Likert type scale. It was found that 76%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 33% agreed, and 15% neither agreed nor disagreed.

In total, therefore, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 55% positively perceived that there was evidence of adherence to HR policy for each key area of work at the universities. However, on the same statement, 39% disagreed, and 7% strongly disagreed, implying that in total, 45% did not perceive that there was evidence of adherence to HR policy for each key area of work.

On statement 12.2 of the questionnaire, suggesting that the policy documents were well communicated, understood and available or accessible as needed, the respondents indicated their perceptions as per the Likert scale. On indicator statement 12.3, on the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on whether or not they felt that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes, as far as human resource policy, as an indicator of human resource management unit's level of organization and capacitation is concerned. Based on the five-point Likert type scale which was used for this purpose, it was found that 4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 6% agreed, while 24% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Hence, in total, including those who either agreed or disagreed, 34% positively perceived that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes at the universities. However, on the same statement, 51% disagreed, while 15% strongly disagreed, implying that in total, 66% did not perceive there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes at the universities.

In summary, on these findings on HR policy, as an indicator of a well-organized and strategic human resource management unit as conceptualized in this study, there were several pointers. It was found that, except for the statement indicator on the suggestion that there was evidence of adherence to HR policy for each key area of work, where a marginal majority 55% of the respondents agreed, there was negative perception on each of the other two, that is, that the policy documents were well communicated, understood and available or accessible as needed 59% disagreed.

On the suggestion that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes at the universities 66% disagreed. It is arguable, therefore, with respect to these findings, that on the whole, the state of adequacy of the human resource policy, as an indicator of the sufficiency of the human resource management unit, is perceived as being inadequate.

Section 13.0 in the questionnaire, Appendix II, Part C, collected data with regard to full time HR employee establishment, an indicator of a well facilitated and organized human resource management unit in a public university. In this regard, three statements were used to aid the respondents indicate the sufficiency of full time HR employee establishment of the HR units or departments. The aim was to determine how this compared with the total employees in the respective universities (HR staff-Total Staff Ratio). On statement 13.1, and using the five-point Likert type scale, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived that the number of HR personnel as compared to the total number of employees in the universities was adequate.

The findings showed that 65% strongly disagreed, 68% agreed, while 8% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. Hence, in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 81% did perceive positively, that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes in the universities. However, it was also found that 14% disagreed, while 5% strongly disagreed. This implied that in total, 19% disagreed with this statement.

On the statement 13.2, which was intended to indicate the sufficiency of full time HR employee ratio, the respondents were asked to indicate their perception on the proposition that the total number of academic and non-academic staff is too large compared to the total HR staff. In line with the five-point Likert scale which was used in this study, it was found that 13%, strongly agreed, 59% agreed, while 11% neither agreed nor disagreed that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes at the universities. Hence, in total, including the respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 83% perceived that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes at the universities.

However, on the same statement, it was established that 11% disagreed, while 6% strongly disagreed, implying that, in total 17% did not perceive that there was adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes at the universities.

Statement 13.3 on the questionnaire, asked the respondents to indicate their perceptions on the proposition that neither the number of HR staff nor the number of employees in the universities was easily determinable. Based on the five-point Likert type scale used in this study, it was found that 17% strongly agreed, 50% agreed, while 14% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, including the respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, (81%) positively perceived that neither the number of HR staff nor the number of employees in the universities was easily determinable. On the other hand, and responding to the same statement, 13% disagreed, while 5% strongly disagreed, implying that a total of 19% did not agree.

Based on the responses from the three indicator statements, it was found that there appeared to be a contradiction. Whereas on statement 13.1, it was found that, 89% agreed that the total number of HR staff as compared to the total number of staff in the university was adequate, it was also found that under statement 13.2, that 91% agreed with the statement that the total number of academic and non-academic staff was too large as compared to the total HR staff. Likewise, on statement 13.3, it was found that 88% agreed with the statement that neither the number of HR staff nor the number of employees in the university was easily determinable respectively.

Under normal circumstances, if the total number of HR staff versus total number of employees in an organization is sufficient, the question of there being too many academic and non-academic staff as compared to the number of HR staff (HR establishment) ought not to arise, as the findings indicated. Likewise, it ought not to be difficult to determine the number of HR staff nor the total number of employees, because, even in a large organization, like a university, where the size of staff is relatively large, there would be formal statements or records easily accessible for verification.

Section 14.0 in the questionnaire, Appendix II, Part C, collected data with regard to human resource planning as, an indicator of a well facilitated and organized human resource management unit in a public university. In this regard, three statements were used to aid the respondents indicate the sufficiency of human resource planning in the operationalization of the HR units or departments and how the planning enabled the human resource management units to be effective at implementing strategic human resource management practices.



On statement 14.1, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on the extent to which they felt that there was an overall human resource plan by which all key activities like training, recruitment and so on were undertaken. Using the five-point Likert type scale, it was found that 1% strongly agreed, 11% agreed, while 15% neither agreed nor disagreed. Hence, in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 27% of the respondents positively perceived that there was an overall human resource plan by which all key activities like training, recruitment and so on were undertaken. However, on the other hand, and on the same statement, 66% disagreed, while 7%, strongly disagreed.

This implied that in total, (73%) did not perceive that there was an overall human resource plan by which all key activities like training, recruitment and so on were undertaken. As an indicator of human resource management unit, therefore, it appeared that the majority of respondents 73% did not perceive that there was an overall human resource plan by which all key activities like training, recruitment and so on were undertaken. This implied that as far as human resource management units was concerned, human resource planning, in terms of providing for training and recruitment was not adequately provided for.

Statement 14.2 on the questionnaire, was posed to the respondents to aid them in indicating their perceptions on the extent to which human resource planning was appropriately scheduled and undertaken periodically. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was found that 3% of the respondents strongly agreed, 4% agreed, while 15%) neither agreed nor disagreed. In total, therefore, including those who agreed nor disagreed, 22% were in support of the statement that human resource planning was appropriately scheduled and undertaken periodically.

However, responding to the same statement, it was found that 64% disagreed, while 14% strongly disagreed. In total, hence, 78% did not perceive that human resource planning was appropriately scheduled and undertaken periodically. As an indicator of human resource planning, therefore, this statement shows that the majority of the respondents 78% did not perceive that human resource planning, in terms of appropriate scheduling and operationalization, was adequate.

Statement 14.3, on the questionnaire, asked the respondents to indicate their perceptions on the extent to which they felt or knew that there was a designated section in the department, with personnel responsible for human resource planning. Using the five-point Likert type scale, it was found that 4% strongly agreed, 6% agreed, while 14% neither agreed nor disagreed. In total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 24% positively perceived that there was a designated section in the department, with personnel responsible for human resource planning. However, responding to the same statement, it was found that 62% disagreed, while 14% strongly disagreed.

This implied that in total 76% of the respondents did not perceive that there was a designated section in the department, with personnel responsible for human resource planning. Hence, on the indicator statement; that there was a designated section in the department, with personnel responsible for human resource planning, the findings showed that the majority of the respondents did not perceive that there was a designated section in the department, with personnel responsible for human resource planning. Hence, the implication was that, on this indicator, human resource planning was not adequately provided for. Table 4.8 summarizes the findings.

**Table 4.8: Descriptive Responses on Human Resource Management Unit**

NO.	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Physical Facilitation</b>								
11.1	The space and layout of the HR department are adequate and proper for a conducive work environment.	110	5%	12%	8%	64%	11%	2.30	.920
11.2	There are sufficient HR personnel whose role in supporting the operations of the university is easily noticeable and determinable	110	3%	13%	12%	59%	14%	2.26	.910
11.3	There is adequate supply of HR-related amenities like documents, forms and relevant information/communication for everyone in the university.	110	3%	11%	18%	57%	11%	2.34	.861
<b>12.0</b>	<b>HR Policy Formulation</b>								
12.1	There is evidence of adherence to HR policy for each key area of work	110	6%	33%	15%	39%	7%	2.93	1.10
12.2	The policy documents are well communicated, understood and available/accessible as needed.	110	1%	13%	27%	49%	10%	2.45	.851
12.3	There is adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes	110	4%	6%	24%	51%	15%	2.28	.882
<b>13.0</b>	<b>Full Time HR- Employee Establishment</b>								
13.1	The number of HR personnel compared to the total number of employees in my university is adequate.	110	5%	68%	8%	14%	5%	3.59	.881
13.2	The total number of academic and non-academic staff is too large compared to total HR staff	110	13%	59%	11%	11%	6%	3.70	.941
13.3	Neither the number of HR staff nor the number of employees in the university is easily determinable.	110	17%	50%	14%	13%	6%	3.60	1.06
<b>14.0</b>	<b>Human Resource Planning</b>								
14.1	There is an overall human resource plan by which all key activities like training, recruitment etc. are undertaken.	110	1%	11%	15%	66%	7%	2.32	.770

14.2	Human resource planning is scheduled and undertaken periodically.	110	3%	4%	15%	64%	14%	2.14	.742
14.3	There is a designate section in the department with personnel responsible for human resource planning	110	4%	6%	14%	62%	14%	2.13	.801

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Table 4.8 suggests that on the whole, the state of the human resource management units in public universities in Kenya, in terms of adequacy of organization and facilitation, as measured through the four indicators; physical facilities, human resource policy, full time HR employee establishment and human resource planning, and as perceived by the respondents, was inadequate and lacked sufficient organizational facilitative capacity. This appeared to be in line with the conceptualization of the variables investigated in this study, suggesting there was a chance that the implementation of strategic human resource management practices in the public universities may have been, and probably continue, to be hampered by the state of the human resource management units.

This is with respect to lack of physical facilitation and appropriate policy formulation, and hence possible compromise in the entire human resource management function. Deducing from these findings, therefore, it appears that human resource management units in public universities are not in a state that would enable them to provide for their key roles, especially with regard to the implementation of strategic human resource management practices as conceptualized in this study.

As supported by empirical literature, (Storey, Ulrich & Wright, 2019), (Boon, Deanne, Hartog & Lepark, 2019) and (Punia, Jaglan & Teena, 2015), the human resource management units are essential in creating the organizational and structural framework within which the strategic human resource management practices are implemented.

Subject to regression analysis to test for the significance of these findings, it would appear that the critical role of the human resource management units in public universities is such that the capacity to successfully implement value-adding strategic human resource management practices appears to be compromised, in terms of physical facilities, HR policy, full time HR employee establishment and HR planning, and, therefore, a possible explanation to the declining performance of the universities as evidenced by National Government Auditor General (Kenya) Report (2021).

#### **4.4.3 Descriptive Responses on Employee Outcomes**

The study investigated the possibility that employee outcomes, which have been found, as evidenced by empirical studies presented in chapter two, including Hamadamin & Atan (2019) and Wubishet, Chekole & Wedajo (2018), may intervene in the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities. In line with the questionnaire, Appendix II, Part D, sections 15.1- 18.3, statements were posed to the respondents, based on three key indicators. The indicators were; commitment level, level of motivation, degree of teamwork and empowerment, as conceptualized in this study. In each case, the respondents were asked to respond as per the five-point Likert type scale. Under 15.0, three indicator statements were posed to the respondents, to aid them indicate their perceptions on their level of commitment as employees of their respective universities.

On statement 15.1, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed in the vision, mission, and goals of their employer. It was found that 29% strongly agreed, 52% agreed, while 11% neither agreed nor disagreed.

This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 92% positively perceived that they believed in the vision, mission, and goals of their employer universities. However, reacting to the same statement, it was established that 7% disagreed, while 1% strongly disagreed. This meant that in total, 8%, did not believe in the visions, missions and goals of their employer universities. These findings on statement 15.1, therefore, indicated that the majority of respondents 92%, positively perceived the visions, missions and goal of their respective universities. In contrast, however, 8%, did not perceive the same statement positively.

On statement 15.2, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they enjoyed doing extra work without necessarily being given extra incentive. It was found that 37% strongly agreed, 37% agreed, while 3% neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 77% positively perceived that they enjoyed doing extra work.

This is without necessarily being given extra incentive. However, reacting to the same statement, it was established that 19% disagreed, while 4% strongly disagreed. This meant that in total, 23% did not agree that they enjoyed doing extra work without necessarily being given extra incentive. These findings on statement 15.2, therefore, indicated that the majority of respondents 77% indicated they enjoyed doing extra work without necessarily being given extra incentive.

On the statement 15.3, proposing that the respondents would prefer working at their respective universities to any other. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on the statement indicator. It was found that 18% strongly agreed, 18% agreed, while, 45% neither agreed nor disagreed.

In total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 82% agreed that they enjoyed doing extra work without necessarily being given extra incentive. However, on the same statement, 12% disagreed, while 6% strongly disagreed with the statement that they preferred working at their current universities in comparison to any other. In total, hence, 18% did not agree with this statement.

It was therefore found, on this statement, as an indicator of level of commitment, that a majority 81% agreed with the statement, while 19%, did not agreed, implying the majority perceived the statement positively, by indicating that they preferred to stay at their current universities rather than elsewhere. Going by that finding, it is arguable that with respect to the choice of staying with the current employer or not, there was a good level of commitment. In summary, it appeared that the majority of respondents were supportive of being committed to their respective universities, as illustrated by a majority percentage of respondents of agreed with the respective indicators in each statement, with respect to commitment as an employee outcome as conceptualized in this study. However, it is notable that in spite of the majority agreement across the indicators of commitment, there was a sizeable percentage of neither agreed nor disagreed, especially with the statement on preferring to either stay at their present university or another. This may be construed to imply that they were not agreeable to being outright committed to their respective universities.

Section 16.0 consisted of, three indicator statements which were posed to the respondents, to aid them indicate their perceptions on their level of motivation as employees of their respective universities. On statement 16.1, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they were highly motivated as employees of their respective universities.

Based on the five-point Likert type scale. It was found that 3% strongly agreed, 16% agreed, while 16% neither agreed nor disagreed. This implied that in total, 35% were in agreement that they were highly motivated as employees of their respective universities. However, responding to the same statement, it was established that 60% of the respondents disagreed, while 5% strongly disagreed. This meant that the total who disagreed was 65%. On this statement indicating level of motivation, therefore, it was established that a majority 65% perceived that they were not highly motivated as employees of their respective universities.

Indicator statement 16.2 of the questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate the extent to which they were willing to take new responsibility at short notice. It was found that 9% strongly agreed, 47% agreed, while 14% neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, were 70% in agreement that they were willing to take new responsibility at short notice. However, responding to the same statement, it was found that 25% disagreed, while 5% strongly disagreed, implying that in total 30% disagreed that they were willing to take new responsibility at short notice. Hence, these findings on the extent to which the respondents perceived that they were willing to take new responsibility at short notice indicated that a majority 70% agreed that they were.

Indicator statement 16.3 of the questionnaire asked the respondents to indicate the extent absenteeism from work was an unusual occurrence for them. The five-point Likert type scale revealed that 10% of the respondents strongly agreed, 45% agreed, while 20% neither agreed nor disagreed.



This meant that, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 75% perceived this statement positively, indicating that absenteeism from work was an unusual occurrence for them. However, on the same statement, it was found that 21% disagreed, while 4% strongly disagreed. The meant that the total of those respondents who disagreed with this statement was 25%.

Hence, these findings on the extent to which the respondents perceived that they were willing to take new responsibility at short notice indicated that a majority 75% agreed that absenteeism from work was an unusual occurrence for them, implying that a majority of the respondents indicated being motivated, based on this indicator. In this regard, on motivation as an indicator of employee outcomes as conceptualized in this study, and based on the foregoing responses, the respondents were mainly not highly motivated as illustrated by the 65%, who disagreed with the statement that they were highly motivated.

However, in spite of the majority disagreement with being highly motivated, it was notable that a majority 70% agreed the statement that they were willing to take up new responsibilities at short notice, implying that there was still a good measure of motivation, though not as high as it could be. Likewise, a majority 75% agreed with the statement that absenteeism from work was unusual for them. This may be construed to imply that they still had sufficient motivation for regular attendance to duty, in spite of them not being highly motivated.

Section 17.0 consisted of, three indicator statements which were posed to the respondents, to aid them indicate their perceptions on their level of teamwork as employees of their respective universities. On statement 17.1, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt that they were working in a teamwork-enthusing environment.

Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was found that 9% strongly agreed, 15% agreed, while 6% neither agreed nor disagreed. This implied that in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, were 30% in agreement that they were working in an environment which promoted teamwork and collaboration. However, responding to the same statement, it was established that 61% of the respondents disagreed, while 9% strongly disagreed. This meant that the total who disagreed was 70%. On this statement indicating level of motivation, therefore, it was established that a majority 70% perceived that they worked in an environment which promoted teamwork and collaboration.

On statement 17.2, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt that given a choice, they preferred working independently. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was found that 18% strongly agreed, 45% agreed, while 7% neither agreed nor disagreed. This implied that in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, 70% were in agreement that given a choice, they preferred working independently. However, when they responded to the same statement it was found that 20% disagreed, while (10%) strongly disagreed. This meant that in total, 30% did not perceive that given a choice, they preferred working independently. Hence, on this indicator statement of teamwork as an indicator of the main variable, employee outcomes, the majority of respondents 70% were agreeable that given a choice, they preferred working independently.

On statement 17.3, which was conceptualized in this study to indicate level of teamwork, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt that there was a high tendency for employees to blame each other when things went o wrong.

Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was found that 18% strongly agreed, 47% agreed, while 8% neither agreed nor disagreed. This implied that in total, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, were 73% in agreement that there was a high tendency for employees to blame each other when things went wrong. On the other hand, however, and responding to the same statement, it was established that 16% disagreed, while 11% strongly disagreed. This meant that 27% in total did not agree with this statement.

Hence, on this indicator statement of teamwork as an indicator of the main variable, employee outcomes, the majority of respondents 73% were agreeable that there was a high tendency for employees to blame each other when things went wrong;

In summary, on teamwork as an indicator of employee outcomes as conceptualized in this study, it appears that the majority did not perceive that there was sufficient levels of teamwork, as illustrated by the majority 70%, of the respondents who disagreed with the statement proposing working in a teamwork-enthusing environment. Seeming to affirm this, a similar majority 70%, agreed with preferring working independently, and also, there being a high tendency to blame each other when things did not go right 74%, possibly implying that there was less teamwork across the employees of public universities.

Section 18.0 consisted of, three indicator statements which were posed to the respondents, to aid them indicate their perceptions on their level of empowerment as employees of their respective universities.

On statement 18.1, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they perceived that they felt involved in decision making and trusted to be creative at their work. Based on the five-point Likert type scale. It was found that 4% strongly agreed, 11% agreed, while 7% neither agreed nor disagreed.

In total, therefore, including those who neither agreed nor disagreed, it was established that 22%, perceived that they felt involved in decision making and trusted to be creative at their work. However, on the same statement, the respondents seemed to disagree. It was established that 69% disagreed, while 9% strongly disagreed. This meant that in total, 78% did not perceive that they felt involved in decision making and trusted to be creative at their work. Hence, on whether the respondents felt involved in decision making and trusted to be creative at their work, as an indicator of employee outcomes, it was established that the majority, 75% did not feel empowered, based on these findings.

On the indicator statement 18.2 as provided in the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on the extent to which their responsibility at work provided sufficient authority for them to act and make decisions promptly, the five-point Likert type scale indicated that 6% strongly agreed, 8% agreed, while 12% neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, it was determined that 26% agreed that their responsibility at work provided sufficient authority for them to act and make decisions promptly.

However, on the contrary, and on the same statement, it was established that 61% disagreed, while 11% strongly disagreed, meaning that in total 72% disagreed with the statement. The implication was that on whether the respondents felt that their responsibility at work provided sufficient authority for them to act and make decisions promptly, as an indicator of employee outcomes, the majority 72%, did not perceive that their responsibility at work provided sufficient authority for them to act and make decisions promptly.

On the indicator statement in section 18.3 as provided in the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on the extent to which their work was meaningful and gave them a feeling of satisfaction and contentment in achieving their purpose in life. The five-point Likert type scale indicated that 8% strongly agreed, 16% agreed, while 7% neither agreed nor disagreed.

This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, it was determined that 31% agreed that their work was meaningful and gave them a feeling of satisfaction and contentment in achieving their purpose in life. However, on the contrary, and on the same statement, it was established that 57% disagreed, while 12% strongly disagreed, meaning that in total 69% disagreed with the statement. The implication was that on whether the respondents felt that their work was meaningful and gave them a feeling of satisfaction and contentment in achieving their purpose in life, as an indicator of employee outcomes, the majority 57%, did not perceive that their work was meaningful and gave them a feeling of satisfaction and contentment in achieving their purpose in life.

In summary on empowerment as an indicator of employee outcomes, there appears to be a consensus, as illustrated by a majority who disagreed with each of the indicator statements that the level of empowerment was considerably low.

The mean and standard deviations for each item, as captured in Table 4.9, illustrated that except for the vision and missions of the universities, on which 83% of the respondents agreed with, the majority of the respondents were not supportive of their state of commitment, level of motivation, level of teamwork and also the extent of their empowerment. Table 4.9 illustrates the findings.

**Table 4.9: Descriptive analysis of the Responses on Employee Outcomes**

NO.	EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>15.0</b>	<b>Commitment</b>								
15.1	I believe in the vision, mission, and goals of my employer	110	29%	52%	11%	7%	1%	4.07	.810
15.2	I enjoy doing extra work without necessarily getting extra incentive	110	37%	37%	3%	19%	4%	3.46	.961
15.3	I would prefer working at this university to any other	110	18%	18%	45%	12%	7%	3.21	.911
<b>16.0</b>	<b>Motivation</b>								
16.1	I am highly motivated as an employee of the university	110	3%	16%	16%	60%	5%	2.46	.860
16.2	I am willing to take new responsibility at short notice	110	9%	47%	14%	25%	5%	3.32	1.07
16.3.	Absenteeism from work is unusual for me	110	10%	45%	20%	21%	4%	3.40	1.01
<b>17.0</b>	<b>Teamwork</b>								
17.1	I work in an environment where there is teamwork and collaboration	110	9%	15%	6%	61%	9%	2.45	1.02
17.2	Given a choice, I prefer working independently	110	18%	45%	7%	20%	10%	3.45	1.25
17.3	There is a high tendency for blaming each other when things go wrong	110	18%	47%	8%	16%	11%	3.50	1.22
<b>18.0</b>	<b>Empowerment</b>								
18.1	I feel involved in decision making and trusted to be creative at my work	110	4%	11%	7%	69%	9%	2.28	.853
18.2	My responsibility at work provides sufficient authority for me to act and make decisions promptly	110	6%	8%	12%	61%	13%	2.34	.941
18.3	My work is meaningful and gives me a feeling of satisfaction and contentment in achieving my purpose in life.	110	8%	16%	7%	57%	12%	2.45	1.09

Source: Research Data (2022)

From table 4.9, the findings appeared to strongly support the initial conceptualization of the variable and constructs as initially envisaged in this study; that employee outcomes may be adversely affected by poorly implemented strategic human resource management practices, arising out of the poor infrastructural and organizational state of the human resource management unit. As conceptualized in this study, implemented strategic human resource management practices ought to impact on employees, in terms of commitment to duty, level of motivation, degree of teamwork as well as the extent to which employees get empowered for their roles in the organization.

In this regard the findings on employee outcomes are in line with the current empirical literature. For instance, Hamadamin & Atan (2019), who found that employee outcomes may mediate, and thereby influence performance of an entity, where other interventions in form of strategic human resource management practices had been implemented. In such a case, the employee outcomes may positively or adversely affect such an entity's performance.

According to these findings, therefore, it is possible that, given the indicators used in this study, that the public university employees seem to perceive level of commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment negatively, it follows that they were not appropriately impacted, nor responsive to implemented strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), with regard to rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management, as conceptualized in this study. The implication is most likely low productivity levels at the individual as well as at the organizational level.

This may, therefore, explain the declining levels of performance in public universities as attested by Ojokuku & Akanbi, (2015), Naitore & Wanyoike, (2019), and Mutahi & Busienei, (2015).

#### **4.4.4 Descriptive Statistics on Performance of Public Universities**

This study sought to determine the extent to which strategic human resource management practices, human resource management unit and employee outcomes may influence the performance of public universities, as the independent variable. Five indicators of university performance, as conceptualized in this study, and as supported by empirical literature, including Kallio & Kallio & Grossi (2017) and Hamadamin & Atan (2019), were used.

The indicators were; new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rates, student graduation rates and staff promotion rates. For this purpose, indicator statements, each of which were intended to aid the respondents indicate their perception in relation to the respective indicators were posed to the respondents using the questionnaire, Appendix II, Part E, sections 19.1 – 23.1. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on each indicator statement with respect to the performance of their respective universities.

Under section 19.0, of the questionnaire, data was collected on innovative programmes as an indicator of public universities' performance. Statement 19.1, was used, where the respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions on the extent to which they agreed that the number of new innovative programmes in their respective universities had been increasing over the previous five years. It was found that 10% strongly agreed, 34% agreed. While 26% neither agreed nor disagreed.



This meant that, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, a total of 70% perceived positively that the number of programmes in the universities had been increasing over the previous five years. However, reacting to the same statement, it was established that 26% disagreed, while 4% strongly disagreed, implying that in total, 30% did not perceive that the number of programmes in the universities had been increasing over the previous five years.

Hence, on whether the number of programmes in the universities had been increasing over the previous five years, the majority of the respondents 70% agreed. Under section 20.0, of the questionnaire, data was collected on Research Publications as an indicator of performance of public universities in Kenya. Statement 20.1, was used, where the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that the number of research publications by faculty had been increasing over the previous few years. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was established that 7% strongly agreed, 9% agreed, while 36% neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 52% perceived that student the number of research publications by faculty had been increasing for the previous five years in their universities.

However, responding to the same statement, it was found that 38% disagreed, while 10% strongly disagreed. This meant that in total, 48% did not perceive that research publications by faculty had been increasing over the previous five years. Hence, on research publications as an indicator of performance of public universities, the majority of respondents 52%, indicated that the number of research publication by faculty had been increasing over the previous five years.

Under section 21.0, of the questionnaire, data was collected Student Enrolment Rates, as an indicator of performance of public universities in Kenya. Statement 21.1, was used, where the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that student enrollment rates had been increasing for the previous five years in their universities. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was established that 7% strongly agreed, 36% agreed, while 22% neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those agreed, 65% perceived that student enrollment rates had been increasing for the previous five years in their universities.

However, responding to the same statement, it was found that 29% disagreed, while 6%, strongly disagreed. This meant that in total, 35% did not perceive that student enrollment rates had been increasing for the previous five years in their universities. Hence, on whether the student enrollment rates had been increasing for the previous five years in their universities, and as an indicator of university performance, the majority 69% positively perceived that student enrollment rates had been increasing for the previous five years in the universities.

Under section 22.0 of the questionnaire, data was collected on Student Graduation Rates, as an indicator of performance of public universities. Statement 22.1 was used was used, where the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that their universities had been graduating increasing number of students for the previous five years. Based on the five-point Likert type scale, it was established that 8% strongly agreed, 17% agreed while 29% neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, 54% positively perceived that their universities had been graduating increasing number of students for the previous five years.

However, responding to the same statement, it was found that (34%) disagreed, while (12%) strongly disagreed, implying that in total, (46%) did not perceive that their universities had been graduating increasing number of students for the previous five years. Hence, on whether the universities had been graduating increasing number of students for the previous five years, and as an indicator of public universities performance, it was established that the majority of the respondents (54%) did perceive that their universities had been graduating increasing number of students for the previous five years.

Under section 23.0 of the questionnaire, data was collected on Staff Promotion Rates as an indicator of performance of public universities. Statement 23.1, was used, where the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which, in the universities, the number of staff promoted had been increasing over time. Based on the five point Likert type scale, it was established that (4%), strongly agreed, (7%) agreed, and 19 (17%), neither agreed nor disagreed. This meant that in total, including those respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed, (28%) perceived positively that the number of staff promoted had been increasing over time.

However, responding to the same statement, it was found that (38%) disagreed, while 34% strongly disagreed, implying that in total, 72% did not perceive that the number of staff promoted had been increasing over time. Hence, on whether the universities had been promoting staff increasingly, and as an indicator of performance of public universities, the majority of respondents 72%, did not agree. Table 4.10 presents the summary of these findings.

**Table 4.10: Descriptive Responses on Performance of Universities**

NO.	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	N	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>19.0</b>	<b>New Programs</b>								
19.1	The number of programs/courses in my university have been increasing for the last five years.	110	10%	34%	26%	26%	4%	3.21	1.02
<b>20.0</b>	<b>Research Publications</b>								
20.1	The number of research publications by faculty have been increasing over the last five years.	110	7%	9%	36%	38%	10%	2.65	.931
<b>21.0</b>	<b>Student Enrolment Rates</b>								
21.1	Student enrollment rates have been increasing for the last five years in my university.	110	7%	36%	22%	29%	6%	3.13	1.05
<b>22.0</b>	<b>Student Graduation Rates</b>								
22.1	My university has been graduating increasing number of graduates for the last five years.	110	8%	17%	29%	34%	12%	2.75	1.10
<b>23.0</b>	<b>Employee Promotion Rates</b>								
23.1	In my university the number of staff promoted has been increasing over time.	110	4%	7%	17%	38%	34%	2.04	1.01

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

From Table 4.10, the findings, with respect to each of the indicators of performance are summarized, indicating the perceptions of the respondents on each.

In summary, therefore, it was found that a majority 70% agreed that, the number of programs/courses in the universities had been increasing for the previous five years, while 30% disagreed.

Similarly, a slight majority 52% agreed, while 48% disagreed with the statement that the number of research publications by faculty had been increasing over the previous five years. Meanwhile 65% agreed that student enrolment rates had been increasing for the previous five years, while 35% disagreed with this statement. On whether the universities had been graduating increasing numbers of graduates for the previous five years, 54% agreed while 46% disagreed. However, only 28% agreed with the statement that in their university the number of staff promoted had been increasing over time, while 72% disagreed.

Notably, only on student enrolment rates and the number of programmes as indicators of university performance, do we have a fairly clear majority perceiving increased performance as illustrated by the mean of above 3. For the graduation rates, research publications and. promotion rates, the mean of below 3 illustrates disagreement overall, with promotion rates scoring very low at 28%, of the 110 respondents, and a mean of two, who agreed.

These findings on the performance of public universities, and as measured through the indicators; new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rates and staff promotion rates seem to resonate well with the conceptualization of this study. This is because the findings seem to give credence to the conceptualized relationships among the constructs of the independent variable, performance of public universities in Kenya.

This is especially with regard to implemented strategic human resource management practices, the independent variable, and how this variable may influence the performance of public universities. That implemented strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs) may fail to have the desired impact, if and where the state of the human resource management unit is not facilitative of the same. These findings seem to be supported by the various government reports relating to the performance of state entities in Kenya, and in this case, the public universities. For instance; National Government Auditor General (Kenya) Report (2021), and Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) Economic Survey (2022), all of which have reported that public universities in Kenya had been declining in terms of performance.

Even more emphatically in support of the findings of this study, was the report that there were pertinent challenges facing public universities. These included lack of research infrastructure and lack of qualified human resources, among others (Commission for University Education (CUE) (2018). It would appear, therefore, that this study is resonating with the practical and actual performance environment dynamics currently existing in the public universities in Kenya, as indicated by performance indicators measured herein, and the findings made on the same.

#### **4.5 RELIABILITY TEST RESULTS**

To test for reliability, and in addition to piloting the questionnaire, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients was used to determine how items of the research instruments were related to each other. An acceptable measure of reliability is where the alpha coefficients ranges from 0.6- 0.7 and above, according to Ehlers & Clerk (2000). The results of the test are presented in Table 4.11

**Table 4.11: Results of Cronbach Alpha Test.**

<b>VARIABLE</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Strategic Human Resource Management Practices	12	.85	Acceptable
Human Resource Management Unit	12	.60	Acceptable
Employee Outcomes	12	.75	Acceptable
Performance of Public universities	5	.83	Acceptable
Overall Instrument Reliability	41	.87	Acceptable

**Source: Research Data Analysis (2022)**

As illustrated on Table 4.11, all the variables had coefficients above 0.6, implying that the instrument was reliable for data analysis purposes.

#### **4.6 DIAGNOSTIC TESTS RESULTS**

Three diagnostic tests were undertaken to test for the assumptions of inferential statistics and regression towards ensuring that the collected data was fit for analysis and the subsequent findings.

##### **4.6.1 Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test for Sampling Adequacy**

To determine the extent to which the sample was adequate, and therefore, fit for inferential statistics analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was undertaken. As recommended by Field (2009) an acceptable KMO DF statistic should be greater than 0.05 and between 0.6 and 1, for the data set to be considered adequately suitable for statistical analysis. The results of this test are presented in Table 4.12

**Table 4.12: Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Test for Sampling Adequacy Results**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sample Adequacy	KMO Statistic	Sig
	0.824	0.0001

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

As Table 4.12 indicates the KMO statistic for the sample as used in this study was 0.824, and was higher than the 0.6 threshold as recommended by Field (2009), and which was significant at  $p < 0.005$ . Hence, the data collected was considered adequate for inferential statistical analysis, in line with the objectives of this study.

#### **4.6.2 Linearity Test**

A linearity test was conducted to test one of the assumptions of regression modeling, and therefore to determine the extent to which the relationships among the variables were linear or otherwise. As suggested by Cohen, West & Aiken (2003) and Field (2009), a Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis was used to compare the p-values of all the variables at 0.001. Where or if  $p\text{-value} < 0.00$ , linear relationship between independent and dependent variables was determined to exist. The results of the test are presented on Table 4.13.



**Table 4.13: Linearity Test Results**

		<b>Correlations</b>			
<b>VARIABLE</b>		HRM_Unit	Employee Outcomes	SHRMPs	University Performance
HRM Unit	Pearson Correlation	1	.600**	.681**	.581**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	108	107	107	108
Employee Outcomes	Pearson Correlation	.600**	1	.662**	.733**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	107	109	108	109
SHRMPs	Pearson Correlation	.681**	.662**	1	.640**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	107	108	109	109
University Performance	Pearson Correlation	.581**	.733**	.640**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	108	109	109	110
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)					

**Source: Research Analysis Data (2022)**

As Table 4.13 shows, all the relationships between the constructs within the variables are linear, with a p-value of less than  $P < 0.01$  in each case. The implication of these results, as far as this study is concerned, was that the variables and the constructs within were suitable for linear regression analysis as intended in this study, and that the instrument of measurement closely corresponds to the reality of the constructs being measured.

### **4.6.3 Multicollinearity Test**

Multicollinearity test was undertaken to test for any possible problem in relation to undesirable inter-relationships among the independent variables.

This was with respect to strategic human resource management practices as a single variable (Kothari, 2009; Myers, 1990). Table 4.14 shows the results of multicollinearity diagnostics for the study variables.

**Table 4.14: Multicollinearity Test Results**

VARIABLE	Multicollinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance Value	VIF
Strategic Human Management Practices	0.521	2.822
Recruitment	0.481	2.726
Staff training	0.532	2.531
Reward Management	0.550	2.421
Performance Management	0.506	2.646
HRMUs	0.751	1.537
EOUs	0.530	2.342
Dependent variable: Performance of public Universities		

**Source: Research Analysis Data (2022)**

From Table 4.14, the tolerance values for the bundle of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management), as well as the moderating variable (HRMU) and the intervening variable (Employee Outcomes), were all higher than the acceptable minimum limit of 0.1 as proposed by Senaviratna & Cooray (2019). These results, therefore, were deemed indicative of suitability for the analysis of the variables in line with the objectives of this study.

#### **4.6.4 Normality Test**

Using the Shapiro–Wilk, the assumption of normality was tested to determine the extent of departure from normality as a prerequisite for dependable data analysis. In this test, the distribution of independent variables within a given distribution was determined to ensure that the data was normal to guard against inflated statistics and underestimated standard errors (Brooks, 2014).

A significance level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ , where p-value  $> 0.05$  would indicate that the independent variables are normally distributed and p-value  $< 0.05$  would signify abnormality in the distribution of independent variables. The results of this test are presented in Table 4.15.

**Table 4.15: Normality Test Results**

VARIABLE	Statistic	Df	Significance
Rigorous Recruitment	0.833	131	0.594
Staff Training	0.860	131	0.712
Reward Management	0.886	131	0.374
Performance Management	0.867	131	0.272
HRM Unit	0.847	131	0.738
Employee Outcomes	0.879	131	0.464
Performance of Public Universities	0.853	131	0.413

**Source: Research Analysis Data (2022)**

From Table 4.15, rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, performance management, human resource management unit, employee outcomes and performance of public universities all showed significance values which were higher than the 0.05 threshold as proposed by Cohen & Aiken (2003). Hence, the strategic human resource management practices independent variables (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management), are derived from normal distributions.

Likewise, the moderating variable (human resource management unit) as well as the intervening variable (employee outcomes), and also the dependent variable (performance of public universities) were derived from normal population distributions. This is because all their P-values were higher than 0.05. This implied that the data collected was reliable and suitable for further inferential analysis according to the objectives of this study.

#### 4.6.5 Homoscedasticity Test Results

A test to verify the condition that the dependent variable reflects similar amounts of variance across the given range of values of a given independent variable was deemed necessary. Hence, the Levene test was undertaken to check any level of homoscedasticity. One-way Anova was used to calculate the variance equality, and hence, determine homoscedasticity status (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1998; Levene, 1960). The variance would be determined as being equal if the Levene test probability statistics show a value higher than the significance level of 0.05 (Warner, 2008). The results of this test are presented in Table 4.16

**Table 4.16: Homoscedasticity Test Results**

TEST OF HOMOGENEITY OF VARIANCE					
University Performance indicators	Levene statistic	df <sub>1</sub>	df <sub>2</sub>	Sig	Conclusion
New Programmes	1.110	2	129	0.841	P > 0.05 Equal variance
Research Publications	1.163	2	129	0.383	P>0.05 Equal variance
Student Enrolment Rates	1.182	2	129	0.361	P > 0.05 Equal variance
Student Graduation Rates	2.503	2	129	0.163	P > 0.05 Equal variance
Staff Promotion Rates	3.651	2	129	0.263	P > 0.05 Equal variance

**Source: Research Analysis Data (2022)**

From Table 4.16 the Levene test df statistics for all the five indicators of performance of public universities four indicators all had p-values above the 0.05 significance level (Warner, 2008). Hence, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was present, implying that the variance for the variable indicators of performance of public universities was constant.

These results, therefore, were determined as indicative of relevance and suitability of the same, implying that the data collected was suitable for regression analysis in line with the objectives of this study.

#### **4.7 HYPOTHESES TESTING**

This study used the multiple linear regression model to test the influence of the independent variables conceptualized under strategic human resource management practices. These variables consisted of; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management, on the dependent variable, performance of public universities in Kenya. This regression technique was considered appropriate in this study because the involved various independent variables acting on one dependent variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

Seven hypotheses were tested in this study. Hypothesis one tested the direct influence of strategic human resource management practices as a composite variable on the performance of public universities in Kenya. Hypotheses two to five, tested the direct influence of each of the strategic human resource management practices (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management), on the performance of public universities in Kenya. Hypotheses six tested the moderating influence of human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

Hypothesis seven tested the intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

Hence, the extent to which each variable, through the respective predictor variables caused variations in the dependent variable, performance of public universities was investigated using regression analysis models. In this respect, Anova tests were used to determine the suitability of the models for statistical analysis (Mokaya, 2013). Consequently, F statistics and P-values were computed and compared at a significance level of  $P < 0.05$ , such that, where the P-value was less than 0.05, the model was considered significant and suitable for further analysis. In addition, the coefficients of the predictor variables were respectively determined and used to determine the significance or otherwise of the predictor variables on the dependent variable.

#### **4.8 INFERENCE STATISTICS BASED ON REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

Based on the objectives of this study, data was collected using a five point Likert type scale, to measure the perceptions of the respondents, who were asked to indicate on a range from strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly disagree. The perception were labeled 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

Respective indicator statements considered indicative of the variables being investigated were posed to the respondents, upon which they were supposed to select their perception as per the Likert scale. The Questionnaire appended as Appendix II illustrates. For each objective, tests of null hypotheses were undertaken, based on the data collected.

This was done to determine the extent to which the independent variable, in each case, influenced university performance. The results for each objective and hypothesis tests are presented in the following section.

#### **4.8.1 Regression Results of Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices on Performance of Public Universities**

The first objective of the study was to measure the influence of strategic human resource management practices as one composite variable (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management) on performance of public universities in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents from the public universities in Kenya were asked to respond to several questions formulated as statements, on strategic human resource management practices and performance of their respective universities.

In this study, the bundle of strategic human resource management practices was conceptualized in terms of rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management. Performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized in terms of new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rate, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates. A five point Likert type scale, corresponding to a range of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagreed) was used.

These statements posed to the respondents are illustrated on Appendix II, Part B, sections 7.1 to 10.3. Based on this objective hypothesis one was derived as;

**H01.** Strategic human resource management practices do not influence performance of public universities in Kenya. The model which was used for linear regression was  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$ , where  $Y$  = performance of public universities in Kenya,  $\beta_0$  = Constant,  $\beta_1$  = coefficient of the independent variable (SHRMPs),  $X_1$  = SHRMPs as a composite of rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management, and  $e$  = error term. The results of the regression analysis, based on objective one, and hypothesis one, are presented on Table 4.17.

**Table 4.17: Regression Results of Influence of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices on Performance of Public universities**

Model Summary					
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of the estimate	
1	0.665	0.421	.402	0.2402496	
Predictors: (Constant), SHRMPs; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, performance management. Dependent Variable – Performance of Public Universities					
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	6.235	2	1.559	26.002	0.0001
Residual	7.850	128	0.058		
Total	14.085	141			
Predictors: (Constant), - SHRMPs; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, performance management. Dependent variable – Performance of Public Universities					
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients Beta	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	1.680	0.130	0.432	12.889	.0001
SHRMPs	0.425	0.049	0.552	7.795	.0001
Predictors: (Constant), – SHRMPs; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, performance management. Dependent Variable – Performance of Public Universities					

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

From Table 4.17, the adjusted R is .402, implying that the four strategic human resource management practices as a bundle (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management), accounted for approximately 40% of the change in the performance of public universities. The F (2, 128) statistics was 26.002 with a P-value .0001 (P value < 0.05). Likewise, the Beta coefficient for the bundle of strategic human resource management practices was .425 with P-value at .0001 (P-value < 0.05).



Hence, this implied that 60% of the change in the dependent variable, that is performance of public universities, was caused by other factors other than strategic human resource management practices. This also implied that the null hypothesis was rejected, and therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The other implication was that, strategic human resource management practices had a positive statistically significant influence on the performance of public universities. In addition, this implied that any unit change in the bundle of strategic human resource management practices was likely to lead to .402 (40%) change in the performance of public universities.

This finding is consistent with empirical literature reviewed. For instance, Al-Khaled & Chung (2020), studied strategic human resource management practices and organizational performance, and found that entities which adopted strategic human resource management practices were able to sustainably improve their performance. However, this study was not contextualized in the public sector, nor in public universities. The finding also resonates with Mathushan & Kengatharan (2022), who found that the bundle of strategic human resource management practices, consisting of training, rewarding and performance management practices positively impacted performance.

However, their study was conceptualized and carried out in a private sector setting. Eneh & Awara (2016), using a cross-sectional descriptive study, to investigate strategic human resource management practices and organizational growth, found that the use of strategic human resource management practices did influence organization performance. However, this study was contextualized in national universities in Ghana.

Similarly, Ojokuu & Akanbi (2015), studied strategic human resource management practices and performance of Nigerian public universities, and found that using SHRM practices had beneficially impacted the public universities in terms of attraction of more researching sponsorships, increasing scholarly writings and research-based innovations. However, this study was contextualized in Nigeria rather than Kenya. Similarly, in Kenya, Naitore & Wanyoike (2019), used a descriptive survey design to study the impact of strategic human resource management practices on performance of public universities in Kenya. They found that there was a positive and significant relationship linking strategic human resource management practices and performance, in terms of HR planning and staffing.

However, this study was confined to HR planning and staffing practices, as opposed to recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management. Mutahi & Busienei (2015), used a descriptive design to investigate the influence of strategic human resource management practice on performance of public universities in Kenya, finding that the practices affected performance of the public universities, in terms of strategic rewarding and strategic training. Hence, this study confined itself to reward and training practices, as opposed to the bundle of four; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management as undertaken in the current study.

#### **4.8.2 Regression Results of Influence of Rigorous Recruitment on Performance of Public Universities in Kenya**

The second objective of this study was to establish the influence of rigorous recruitment as an individual strategic human resource management practice, on performance of public universities in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents from the public universities in Kenya were asked to respond to several questions formulated as statements, on rigorous recruitment as it related to the performance of their respective universities. In this study, rigorous recruitment was conceptualized in terms of adherence to relevant recruitment policy, use of job descriptions and application of merit-based recruitment. Performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized in terms of new programmes, research and publications, student enrolment rate, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates.

A five point Likert type scale, corresponding to a range of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagreed) was used. Three statements were posed to the respondents are illustrated on Appendix II, Part B, sections 7.1 to 7.3. Based on objective two, hypothesis two was derived as;

**H02.** Rigorous recruitment has no influence on performance of public universities in Kenya.

The model which was used for linear regression was  $Y = \beta_0 + B_2X_2 + e$ . In this model, Y = performance of public universities in Kenya,  $\beta_0$  = Constant,  $\beta_2$  = coefficient of the independent variable (rigorous recruitment).  $X_2$  = rigorous recruitment, and e = error term. The results of the regression analysis, based on objective one, and hypothesis one, are presented on Table 4.18.

**Table 4.18: Regression Results of Influence of Rigorous Recruitment on Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>								
Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson			
1	.597 <sup>a</sup>	.356	.150	.63549	1.149			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment								
b. Dependent Variable: University Performance								
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
1	Regression	24.094	1	24.094	59.661	.0001 <sup>b</sup>		
	Residual	43.616	108	.404				
	Total	67.711	109					
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance								
b. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment								
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.403	.185	1.743	7.568	.0001	1.036	1.770
	Recruitment	.125	.068	.597	7.724	.0001	.390	.659
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance P<0.05								

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

As deducible from Table 4.18, the influence of rigorous recruitment on university performance is significant at a significance level of  $P < 0.05$ , given that adjusted R squared = .150 and  $F = 59.6$ , and  $P = 0001$ , where the 15% variation in university performance may be explained by rigorous recruitment.

The implication is that the rest (85%) variation may be caused by other factors other than rigorous recruitment. Both the t-value of 7.7 and the Beta Coefficient of .125 are substantially significant at  $P = 000$ , given a  $P < 0.05$  level of confidence.

This implies that for one change in rigorous recruitment, university performance changed or varied by approximately 15%. There were two possible interpretations from this finding. One is that the null hypothesis was rejected, and therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The second was that this finding is in line with the reviewed empirical literature. For instance, in a study using a quantitative survey approach to investigate the impact of impact of recruitment as a strategic human resource management practice by Government institutions in Iraq, it was found that the use of strategic recruitment impacts national university performance positively (Govand, & Nabaz, 2021). This was further affirmed by Sanket & Vijendra (2022), who found that Candidates with excellent technical skills, and appropriate responsibility taking ability, with excellent communication skills ought to be identified, hired and suited to work requirements appropriately, to enhance their performance.

In Africa, Kanyemba, Iwu, & Allen-Ile (2015), who studied the impact of rigorous recruitment and selection on organizational productivity of university staff in South Africa underscored that recruiting and selecting effectively impacted entity productivity and hence ought to be adapted crucially by all. Nondoh, Tsuma, Alala & Onyango (2020), investigated the effect of human resource planning practices on organizational performance of public universities in Kenya, and found that the level of quality recruitment determined the performance of a public university.

Similarly, Matolo & Iravo (2018), using a descriptive study on relationship between recruitment and selection and employee performance found that public universities stood to gain out of recruiting from outside because of enhanced performance.

These findings are also in line with the Resource Based Theory (Barney, 2001), which suggested a keen consideration of a strategic approach by organizations, in acquiring employees, because the people in an organization represent the key resource in strategizing towards achieving competitive edge. To this end, public universities ought to be alive to this fact.

This study opines that, as supported by the finding of this study regarding rigorous recruitment, one of the hallmarks which should define the extent to public universities are ought to be alive to the propositions of the Resource Based Theory is through rigorous, and hence strategic recruitment of employees, particularly in terms of adherence to the set policy, use of a robust job-description based selection process and ensuring merit based recruitment as much as possible. Hence, the empirical finding that there was a positive and significant influence of rigorous recruitment on performance of public universities in Kenya, has implications with respect to the public universities in Kenya.

The main one is that the public universities have to take deliberate measures in determining and selecting appropriate measures in the course of recruiting employees, as postulated by the Resource Based Theory (RBT), and supported by empirical literature. In this respect, therefore, rigorous recruitment represents a strategic practice which public universities should find necessary and not substitutable in ensuring that public universities, like any other organizations, are able to sustainably achieve competitive advantage in their markets, as corroborated by the findings of Govand, & Nabaz (2021).

### 4.8.3 Regression Results of Influence of Staff Training on Performance of Public Universities in Kenya

The third objective of this study was to determine the influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents from the public universities in Kenya were asked to respond to several questions formulated as statements, on staff training as it related to the performance of their respective universities.

In this study, staff training was conceptualized in terms of adherence to relevant training policy, use of induction as a foundational aspect of staff training for newly employed staff, and career development as a completing aspect in staff training. Performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized in terms of new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rate, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates. A five point Likert type scale, corresponding to a range of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagreed) was used.

Three statements were posed to the respondents are illustrated on Appendix II, Part B, sections 8.1 to 8.3. Based on this objective hypothesis three was derived as;

**H03.** There is no influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya.

The model which was used for linear regression was  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$ . In this model, Y = performance of public universities in Kenya,  $\beta_0$  = Constant,  $\beta_3$  = coefficient of the independent variable (staff training).  $X_3$  = staff training, and e = error term. The results of the regression analysis, based on objective three, and hypothesis three are presented on Table 4.19.

**Table 4.19: Regression of Influence of Staff Training on Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>								
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson			
1	.582 <sup>a</sup>	.338	.232	.64564	1.405			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Staff Training								
b. Dependent Variable: University Performance								
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
1	Regression	22.796	1	22.796	54.686	.000 <sup>b</sup>		
	Residual	44.602	107	.417				
	Total	67.398	108	.653				
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance								
b. Predictors: (Constant), Staff Training								
Coefficients								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound
1	(Constant)	1.408	.193	.6423	7.290	.0001	1.025	1.791
	Staff Training	.222	.084	.582	7.395	.0001	.455	.788
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance: P≤0.05								

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

From Table 4.19, the influence of staff training on university performance is significant at a significance level of  $P < 0.05$ , given Adjusted R square = .232 and  $F = 54.6$ , and  $P = 0.001$ , where the adjusted R square (23%), implied a variation in university performance which may be explained by a unit change in staff training. The implication is that the rest (77%) variation may be caused by other factors other than staff training.



Both the t-value of 7.2 and the Beta Coefficient of .222 are positive and substantially significant at  $P=0.000$ , given a  $P<0.05$  level of confidence. This implied that for one change in staff training, university performance changed by approximately 23%. There were three implications from this finding. One is that the null hypothesis was rejected, and therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The second is that this finding is in line with the reviewed empirical literature. In a study using a quantitative survey approach to investigate the impact of impact of employee training as a strategic human resource management practice in universities in Jordan, it was found that training had a relationship with the needs of staff, which also impacted on their performance (Al-Mzari, Al-Rifai & Al-Momany, 2015).

More recently, Olivia, Aldizard. Nurhidayati & Ardian (2022), seemed to affirm this finding by finding that Talent-based training and perceived organizational support relate positively to cognitive engagement and enhances individual performance. Similarly, Ogohi & Cross (2018), investigated the relationship between training needs of employees and university performance, and found that employee skills, their knowledge and capabilities acquired through training significantly affected the enterprise performance. Asserting the same, in Kenya, Leseiyo & Reuben (2019), investigated the impact of training of performance of public universities in Kenya, an found that a university's performance was correlated to the training of staff as they were able to serve better and increase customer delivery. All these studies seem to affirm the findings of this study on staff training. However, all of them did not address training at the strategic level, but rather at the functional level, unlike the current study.

The Human Capital theory, as articulated by Little (2003), seems to be in line with this finding on staff training as a strategic human resource management practice. The theory proposes that for every organization, investing in physical capital may return similar efficiencies and effects equal to investing in educating and the training of the human capital. In line with this finding of this study regarding staff training, it would appear that public universities in Kenya ought to strategically operationalize training, beyond the usual functional level, to include the formulation of a robust staff training policy, use of induction as a foundational aspect of staff training for newly employed staff, and career development as a completing aspect of staff training.

#### **4.8.4 Regression Results of Influence of Reward Management on Performance of Public Universities in Kenya**

The fourth objective of this study was to establish the influence of reward management on performance of public universities in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents from the public universities in Kenya were asked to respond to several questions formulated as statements, on reward management as it related to the performance of their respective universities. In this study, reward management was conceptualized in terms of fairness and equitability, availability of team rewards, and access to any other incentives beyond the standardized rewards. Performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized in terms of new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rate, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates. A five point Likert type scale, corresponding to a range of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagreed) was used.

Three statements were posed to the respondents are illustrated on Appendix II, Part B, sections 9.1 to 9.3. Based on this objective hypothesis four was derived as;

**H04.** Reward management does not influence performance of public universities in Kenya.

The model which was used for linear regression was  $Y = \beta_0 + B_4X_4 + e$ . In this model, Y = performance of public universities in Kenya,  $\beta_0$  = Constant,  $\beta_4$  = coefficient of the independent variable (reward management).  $X_4$  = reward management and e = error term.

The results of the regression analysis, based on objective four, and hypothesis four are presented on Table 4.20.

**Table 4.20: Regression Results of Influence of Reward Management on Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson		
1	.436 <sup>a</sup>	.190	.182	.71275	1.010		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Reward Management							
b. Dependent Variable: University Performance							
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>							
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	12.846	1	12.846	25.286	.000 <sup>b</sup>	
	Residual	54.865	108	.508			
	Total	67.711	109				
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance							
b. Predictors: (Constant), Reward Management							
Coefficients							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1.908	.182		10.50	.000	1.548	2.269
Reward Management	.204	.080	.436	5.029	.000	.245	.563
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance					P<0.05		

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

From Table 4.20, the influence of reward management on university performance is significant at a significance level of  $P < 0.05$ , given adjusted R square = .182 and  $F = 25.286$ , and  $P = 0001$ , where the implication is that 18% variation in university performance may be explained by reward management. The implication is that the rest (82%) variation may be caused by other factors other than reward management. Both the t-value of .5029 and the Beta Coefficient of .204 are positive and substantially significant at  $P = 0001$ , given a  $P < 0.05$  level of confidence.

This implied that for one unit change in reward management, university performance changed by approximately 18%. The null hypothesis, therefore, was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The findings suggest low (18%) variation in performance due to reward management, thereby reasonably giving credence to the negative perception by the respondents regarding reward management as a strategic human resource management practice as illustrated in the descriptive statistics.

This finding, with reference to reward management as a strategic human resource management practice, is corroborated by empirical literature variously. Noorazem, Sabri & Matt (2020), who studied the effects of reward management system on university employees in Malaysia, found that emoluments positively correlated to employee performance, and ultimately, to organizational performance. However, this study was contextualized in Malaysia. Similarly, Samuel (2021), carried out a comparative empirical study on reward management and performance of organizations in Nigeria, and found that rewarding employees positively impacted on their performance, and consequently, organizational performance.

Samuel's (2021) study, however, was contextualized in Nigeria, and in the public sector, rather than the public university subsector unlike the current study which has been contextualized in Kenya, and in public universities. This finding also seem to have been asserted more recently by Tripathy & Rohidas (2022), who found that there was a positive impact on productivity of the employees on rewarding them which created the essential motivation towards performance. Likewise, in the local context, Leseiyo & Ngui (2019), studied the influence of employee motivation, in terms of rewarding employees.

They affirmed the findings of the current study by finding that remuneration did influence employees' attitudes, which in turn influenced their performance and ultimately performance of the university. However, their study addressed motivation of employees, as an element of reward management, and at the functional level of human resource practice. This is as opposed to the current study, which has addressed reward management as a strategic human resource management practice.

Furthermore, the finding of this study, with respect to reward management as a strategic human resource management practice, is in line with the Resource Based Theory as proponent by Wernerfelt (1984), Prahalad & Hamel (1991), and Barney (2001), all who reiterated that organizations have to recognize employees as the key assets or resources which drive competitiveness. This way, they would readily and, therefore, strategically cater for them and make interventions which energize and propel them towards desired competitiveness and performance in the market. It is the considered view of this study that the Resource Based Theory (RBT), and the proposals it makes with regard to strategic use of employees, implies strategically rewarding them, as a basic requirement.

This finding of this study, therefore, that reward management as a strategic human resource management practice, positively and significantly influence performance of public universities, and as corroborated by empirical and theoretical literature, presents an opportune moment for public universities in Kenya. The universities is likely to turn around their performance levels, if and when they take reward management as a strategic practice, and, among other interventions, ensure the elements of fairness and equitability, availability of team rewards, and creative pursuit in providing extra incentives beyond the standardized rewards, are prioritized.

#### **4.8.5 Regression Results of Influence of Performance Management on Performance of Public Universities in Kenya**

The fifth objective of this study was to determine the influence of performance management on performance of public universities in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents from the public universities in Kenya were asked to respond to several questions formulated as statements, on performance management as it related to the performance of their respective universities. In this study, performance management was conceptualized in terms of communication, objectivity and reliability, and linkage to the training and development initiatives.

Performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized in terms of new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rate, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates. A five-point Likert type scale, corresponding to a range of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagreed) was used. Three statements were posed to the respondents are illustrated on Appendix II, Part B, sections 10.1 to 10.3. Based on this objective hypothesis five was derived as;

**H05** Performance management does not influence performance of public universities in Kenya. The model which was used for linear regression was  $Y = \beta_0 + B_5X_5 + e$ . In this model, Y = performance of public universities in Kenya,  $\beta_0$  = Constant,  $\beta_5$  = coefficient of the independent variable (performance management).  $X_5$  = performance management and e = error term. The results of the regression analysis, based on objective five, and hypothesis five are presented on Table 4.21.

**Table 4.21: Regression Results of Influence of Performance Management on Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson		
1	.532 <sub>a</sub>	.283	.277	.67030	1.258		
a. Predictors: (Constant), performance Management							
b. Dependent Variable: University Performance							
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>							
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
1	Regression	19.185	1	19.185	42.699	.0002 <sup>b</sup>	
	Residual	48.525	108	.449			
	Total	67.711	109				
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance							
b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Management							
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	1.745	.167	9.075	10.420	.0002	1.548	2.077
Performance Management	.293	.075	.532	5.029	.0002	.245	.643
a. Dependent Variable: University Performance							
P<0.05							

**Source: Research Data Analysis (2022)**

From Table 4.21, the influence of performance management on university performance is significant at a significance level of  $P < 0.05$ , given Adjusted R square = .277 and  $F = 42.699$ , and  $P = 0002$ , where the adjusted R value of approximately 28% suggests a variation in university performance, which may be explained by performance management as a strategic human resource management practice.

The implication is that the rest of the performance impact (72%) variation may be caused by other factors other than performance management. Both the t-value of .532 and the Beta Coefficient of .293 are positive and substantially significant at  $P = 000$ , given a  $P < 0.05$  level of confidence. This implies that for one unit change in performance management, university performance changed by approximately 28%. The null hypothesis, therefore, was rejected, and the alternate hypothesis accepted.

This finding on performance management as a strategic human resource management practice are consistent with the reviewed empirical literature. For instance, Jyoti & Mohsin, (2020), using a literature review technique to evaluate the prevailing performance management practices, trends and problems in higher education sector in India. They found that implementation of performance management enhanced general performance in universities, which pushed individual and university goal achievement.

The finding also seems to have been cross-confirmed by Gomes & Mendes (2022), by finding that there were positive effects out of performance management practices on organizational performance, and that performance improved where the performance management practices were aligned with the organizational culture. Elsewhere in Africa, Ezenweka & Okoro (2020), examined the effect of performance management on organizational performance in universities in Nigeria.



They found that well-managed performance appraisal impacted the employee productivity, and ultimately, university performance. Similarly, in the Kenyan setting, Ondari & Ondiba (2019), used a case study to examine the effects of performance appraisal systems on employee performance in Kenya's public universities.

They established that university employees were aware of the performance appraisal systems in use, and that the employees were affected by two main issues; provision of training for to performance appraisees as well as appraisers, and the use of a multiple-rating approach to realize input and feedback from the appraisers. The main finding under this objective, therefore, with regard to performance management as a strategic human resource management practice, and which are empirically corroborated, therefore, seem to be in line with the Human Capital Theory. This is especially as asserted by Schultz (1961), who proposed, that the people in an enterprise constitute the key asset which adds value to the organization, by ensured the desired performance of that organization.

Therefore, this finding regarding performance management as a strategic human resource management practice, and the performance of public universities in Kenya, provides useful insights into the relevance of strategic performance management as a strategic human resource management practice, proposing that, if and when the public universities strategize performance management, there is a real possibility that the universities may be able to generate a mechanism, among others, towards turning around their performance.

This is especially with respect to prompt and timely communication during and after any performance management initiative, enhanced objectivity and reliability in performance management initiatives.

This includes creating the all-useful linkages between performance management outcomes. This includes the essential training and development activities and programmes necessary to drive the performance of the universities through their employees' performance especially by public universities in Kenya.

#### **4.8.6 Regression Results of Moderating Influence of Human Resource Unit, on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities**

The sixth objective of this study was to measure whether human resource management unit moderates the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents from the public universities in Kenya were asked to respond to several questions formulated as statements, on human resource management unit as it related to the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of their respective universities.

In this study, human resource management unit was conceptualized in terms of physical facilitation, human resource policy formulation, human resource planning and full time employee establishment. Strategic human resource management unit was conceptualized as rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management. Performance of public universities in Kenya was conceptualized in terms of new programmes, research publications, student enrolment rate, student graduation rates and employee promotion rates. A five point Likert type scale, corresponding to a range of 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 2 (disagree) and 1 (strongly disagreed) was used.

Three statements were posed to the respondents are illustrated on Appendix II, Part C, sections 11.1 to 14.3. Based on this objective hypothesis six was derived as;

**H06.** There is no moderating influence of human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. For this objective, a multiple linear regression model:  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 K + \beta_3 X_i \cdot K + \varepsilon$  was used, Where; Y = Performance of public Universities,  $\beta_0$  = Constant.

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  = Coefficients for Composite Index for Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, Human Resource Management Unit and Interaction variable for Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, and Human Resource Management Unit respectively. K = Human Resource Management Unit,  $X_i$  = Composite Index of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices. The results are presented in Table 4.22.

**Table 4.22: Regression Results on Influence of Human Resource Unit on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of The Estimate	
1	0.553	0.402	0.448	0.23543	
Predictors: (Constant), HRM Unit, SHRMPs Dependent Variable – University Performance					
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	6.010	2	2.003	42.192	0.0001
1. Residual	8.075	104	0.59		
Total	14.085	141			
Dependent variable – Performance of public Universities Predictor variables (Constant), SHRMPs Interaction Variable – SHRMPs and HRM Unit					
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients Beta	t	Sig
	B	Std error			
Constant	.419	0.333	.524	1.259	0.0001
SHRMPs	0.425	0.165	.532	4.4977	0.0001
HRM Unit	0.445	0.185	0.268	2.690	0.008
SHRMPs*HRMU	0.385	0.163	0.505	2.005	0.005
Dependent Variable: University Performance					

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

From Table 4.22, Adjusted R square was 0.402. This implied that approximately 40% of the variation in the dependent variable, performance of public universities could be explained by predictor variable, strategic human resource management practices and the moderator, human resource management unit.

This also implied that there was 60% of the variation in the performance of public universities, which could be explained by other factors, other than strategic human resource management practices, and the moderator, human resource management unit. The Anova analysis show F (2,104) statistic at 42.192, with a P-value of 0.0001 ( $P < 0.05$ ). This showed that the model was statistically significant and could be used for further statistical analysis.

Likewise, from Table 4.23, the Beta coefficient of strategic human resource management practices is 0.425 with a P-value of .0001 ( $P\text{-value} < 0.05$ ). Human resource management unit had a Beta coefficient of 0.445 with a P-value of 0.008 ( $P\text{-value} < 0.05$ ), while the Beta coefficient of interaction variable, that is, strategic human resource management practices and human resource management unit was 0.385 with a P-value of 0.005 ( $P\text{-value} < 0.05$ ). Because the P-value for interaction variable was less than 0.05, this implied that human resource management unit had a statistical significant moderating effect on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities. The study, therefore, rejected the null hypothesis ( $H_06$ ), concluding that human resource management unit had a statistical significant moderating influence on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya

These findings on human resource management unit and its moderating influence of the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya is study seems to be consistent with the existing empirical literature.

For instance, Szelagowska-Rudzka (2017), who found that Implementation of strategic human resources management required designed improvement of the university HR management infrastructural system. Punia, Jaglan & Teena (2015), who found that the implementation of strategic human resources management required improvement of the university HR management system which would align the strategic human resource management practices to the overall mission, vision and strategy. Ali (2022), seemed to affirm the same by finding that Talent management is enabled through the human resources department which provides assistance through standard HR policies and strategic implementation of strategic HR practices.

In the African setting, this finding seemed to be affirmed by Ojokuku & Akanbi (2015), who found that the extent to which the HR department staff of a university understands the mission and vision of the university determined a great deal towards the performance of such a university. In addition, this finding regarding the human resource management unit as a moderating variable seem to support and affirm the Institutional Theory. This is because, according to Najeeb (2014), Paauwe & Boselie (2003) and Meyer & Rowan (1977), all who underscored the relevance of the Institutional Theory in human resource management by pointed out that all practices in organizations were either directly reflective or responsive to the prevailing rules and structural layouts that were inbuilt into their overall environments. Therefore, it was this in-built institutionalized environment which legitimized the operational basis of the organization, in terms of motivational schemes as well as the other ensuing constraining limitations which arose.

Furthermore, the relevance of the Institutional theory to the human resource management unit as a moderating variable in this study was particularly emphasised by DiMaggio & Powell (1983). They referred to institutional the concept of isomorphism in institutional theory, pointing out that based on this, there were three formations of institutional isomorphism, each of which implied the organization and operationalization of HRM within an enterprise. By extension, hence, the HRM unit was responsible for driving this operationalization through a designed HRM function responsible for the implementation of strategic human resource management practices.

The results out of this study, based on this evidence, can be said to be instrumental in expanding the propositions of the Institutional Theory, and by extension, therefore, the theoretical and empirical literature. In this regard, the current study's finding on the role of the human resource management unit, suggests that the public universities in Kenya, ought to take heed, and reconsider the operationalization of the human resource management function. This would particularly, where the criticality of the human resource management units in the universities would appropriately be the centre of such reconsiderations and actions.

#### **4.8.7 Regression Results on Intervening Influence of Employee Outcomes on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities**

The seventh objective of this study was to investigate whether employee outcomes intervened the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. Four items, made up of three statements each, were put to the respondents.

In each case, the statements were designed to aid the respondents in perceiving the extent to which employee outcomes existed in their respective universities. As conceptualized in this study, this was measured through indicators; level of motivation, level of commitment, level of teamwork and level of empowerment. Strategic human resource management practices was conceptualized and measured through; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management.

A five point Likert scale, with ranges 5 (strongly agree), 4 (agree), 3 (neither agreed nor disagreed), 2 (disagree), and 1 (strongly disagree), was used for this purpose. For this objective, a null hypothesis was derived thus;

**H07.** There is no intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. A stepwise regression analysis technique was used, the main regression model being;  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 K + \beta_3 X_1 \cdot K + \epsilon$ , Where  $Y =$  Performance of public Universities,  $\beta_0 =$  Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3 =$  Coefficients for Composite Index for Employee Outcomes, Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, and Interaction variable for Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Outcomes respectively, and  $K =$  Employee Outcomes

$X_1 =$  Composite Index of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices. The respective regression results at each step are illustrated below.

**Step 1:** Regress performance of public universities on strategic human resource management practices as a composite variable without considering the influence of employee outcomes – the intervening/mediating variable.



The starting model hence was;

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4 K_1 + e$  Where,  $\beta_0$  = Constant  $\beta_4$  = Beta Coefficient. Y= Performance of public universities, K = Composite Strategic Human Resource Management Practices.

The results of the regression test at step 1 are given on Table 4.23.

**Table 4.23: Regression Results on Intervening Influence of Employee Outcomes on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of the estimate	
1	0.665	0.421	.402	0.2402496	
Predictors: (Constant), SHRMPs Dependent Variable – University Performance					
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	6.235	2	1.559	26.002	0.000
Residual	7.850	128	0.058		
Total	14.085	141			
Predictors: (Constant), - SHRMPs Dependent variable – Performance of Public universities					
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardize dcoefficients		Standardize dcoefficients Beta	t	Sig
	B	Std Error			
Constant	1.680	0.130		12.889	.0001
SHRMPs	0.425	0.049	0.552	7.795	.0001
Predictors: (Constant), – SHRMPs Dependent Variable – Performance of Public Universities					

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

From Table 4.23, the adjusted R square was .402, implying that strategic human resource management practices accounted for 40% of the change in the performance of public universities. This finding also implied that 60% of the variation of performance, could be explained by other factors other than strategic human resource management practices. The F (2, 128) statistics was 26.002 with a P-value .0001 (P value < 0.05). The indication is that the model was so significant as to warrant use in further inferential statistical analysis. Likewise, the Beta coefficient for the bundle of strategic human resource management practices was .425 with P-value at .0001 (P-value < 0.05). The implication was that strategic human resource management practices had a positive statistically significant influence on the performance of public universities. This further implied that any unit change in the bundle of strategic human resource management practices was likely to lead to .425 (43%) change in the performance of public universities. The results can be summarized as per the model:  $Y = 1.680 + 0.425X_i + \varepsilon$

**Step 2:** Regression analysis of strategic human resource management practices on employee outcomes, excluding performance.

The model of analysis was; Hence.  $T = \beta_0 + \beta_5K_1 + e$

Where, T = Employee Outcomes, K = Composite Strategic Human Resource Management Practices,  $\beta_0 - \beta_3$  = Beta Coefficients, e = Error Term. The Results of regression at step two are shown in Table 4.24

**Table 4.24: Regression Results on Intervening Influence of Employee Outcomes on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std error of the estimate	
1	0.344	0.558	0.234	0.311749	
Predictors: (Constant), SHRMPs Dependent variable – Employee Outcomes					
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	6.403	2	6.403	55.609	.0001
Residual	12.050	119	.106		
Total	21.443	121			
Dependent variable – Employee Outcomes Predictors: (Constant), SHRMPs					
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients Beta	t	Sig
	B	Std Error			
Constant	1.444	0.197	0.543	5.814	.0001
SHRMPs	.725	0.084	0.640	8.605	.0001
Dependent variable: Employee Outcomes Independent variable – SHRMPs					

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Table 4.24 indicated that adjusted R square was .234. Meaning that strategic human resource management practices may explain 23% of the variation in employee outcomes. The finding also implied that the rest of the variation of employee outcomes could be explained by other factors, other than strategic human resource management practices. Hence, the minimal change in employee outcomes implies a 77% attributable to other factors other than SHRMPs. The F (2, 119) statistics was 55.609 with a P-value of .000 (P-value < 0.05). This showed that the analysis model was significant and fit for further statistical analysis.

Likewise, Table 4.25 indicated that the Beta coefficient of strategic human resource management practices, .725 with a P-value of .000 (P-value < 0.05).

$$\text{Hence; } T = 1.444 + .725X_1 + \varepsilon$$

**Step 3:** Regression analysis was conducted such that performance of public universities is regressed on the intervening variable (employee outcomes), while holding the independent variable (strategic human resource management practices) constant.

Hence.  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_6 T_1 + e$ , Where, T = Employee Outcomes,  $\beta_0 - \beta_3$  = Beta Coefficients, e = Error Term. The results of the regression analysis at step 3 are shown in Table 4.25

**Table 4.25: Regression Results on Intervening Influence of Employee Outcomes on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std error of the estimate	
1	0.654	0.428	0.426	0.2409804	
Predictors: (Constant), Employee Outcomes Dependent variable – Performance of Public Universities					
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	6.321	2	6.013	106.523	.0001
Residual	8.072	229	0.058		
Total	14.084	141			
Predictors: (Constant), Employee Outcomes Dependent variable - Performance of Public Universities					
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficient sBeta	t	Sig
	$\beta$	Std Error			
Constant	1.238	0.134		10.014	.0001
Employee Outcomes	0.605	0.50	0.653	10.175	.0001
Dependent variable: Performance of Public universities					

Source: Research Data Analysis (2022)

Table 4.25 shows that adjusted R squared was .426 implying that employee outcomes could account for the 43% of the variation in the performance of public universities. However, the other implication was that the balance of 57% variation of university performance could be explained by other factors other than employee outcomes.

The F (2, 229) statistics was 106.523 with a P-value .000 (P-value < 0.05). The model was therefore considered to be statistically significant for further statistical analysis. The Beta coefficient statistic for employee outcomes was .506 with a P-value at .000, indicating that employee outcomes did have a positive statistical and significant influence on the performance of public universities. The results were hence substitutable in the equation model as:  $Y = 1.238 + .605T + \epsilon$

**Step 4:** regressed performance on employee outcomes and strategic human resource management practices as a composite variable, identifying the levels of significance of the relationships between them accordingly. The analysis model was:  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_7X_1 + \beta_8T + \epsilon$   
Where T = Employee Outcomes,  $\beta_0$  and  $\beta_7 =$  Beta Coefficients, K = composite of strategic human resource management practices and e = Error. The results are presented in Table 4.26.

**Table 4.26: Regression Results on Intervening Influence of Employee Outcomes on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities**

<b>Model Summary<sup>b</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std error of the estimate</b>	
1	0.683	0.467	0.349	0.233405	
Predictors: (Constant), SHRMPs Dependent variable – Performance of Public Universities					
<b>ANOVA<sup>a</sup></b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Sum of squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig</b>
Regression	5.466	2	3.289	50.440	0.000
Residual	6.407	139	0.054		
Total	12.085	141			
Predictors: (Constant), SHRMPs Dependent variable - Performance of Public Universities					
<b>Coefficients</b>					
<b>Model</b>	<b>Unstandardize dcoefficients</b>		<b>Standardize dcoefficients Beta</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std Error</b>			
Constant	1.182	0.127	0.352	7.696	.0001
SHRMPs	0.361	0.050	0.404	5.492	.0001
Employee Outcomes	0.165	0.044	0.150	2.223	.001
Dependent variable: Performance of Public Universities Predictors: (Constant),SHRMPs and Employee Outcomes					

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

According to Table 4.26, adjusted R squared is .349. This implies that strategic human resource management practices and employee outcomes together accounted for approximately 35% of the variation in the performance of public universities.

This further implied that the rest of the variation of the performance of performance of the universities could be explained by other factors other than the combination of SHRMPs and employee outcomes.

In addition, the F statistic was 50.440, with a P-value of 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). The regression model was, therefore, considered statistically significant and to be used for further statistical analysis. The Beta coefficient of the composite index of strategic human resource management practices was 0.361 at a p-value of .0001 (P-value < 0.05). The Beta coefficient for employee outcomes alone was 0.165 with a P-value of .001 (P-value < 0.05). The results showed that strategic human resource management practices and employee outcomes would be statistically significant in predicting the performance of public universities, given that one unit change in the composite strategic human resource management practices would result in 0.361 change in performance of public universities. Similarly, one unit change in employee outcomes alone would result in 17% increase in the performance of public universities. The results also indicated that the 36% variation of university performance, caused by the composite of SHRMPs and employee outcomes was higher than when the strategic human resource management practices alone was regressed on performance of public universities at step one above, resulting in 40% as shown by adjusted R squared of 0.402.

The conclusion, therefore, based on this analysis, was that the effect of the strategic human resource management practices as a composite independent variable on the performance of public universities was significant when employee outcomes were controlled. Hence, the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya was partially mediated by employee outcomes.

This is because the results indicated in step one through to step three were significant. The results were summarized using the following equation model;

$. Y = 1.182 + .361X_i + .165T + \varepsilon$ , Where; Y = Performance of Public universities  $X_1$  = Composite Index of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, T = Employee Outcomes,  $\varepsilon$  = error term.

#### 4.8.8 Summary of Intervening Influence of Employee Outcomes on the Relationship between Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Universities' Performance

Hypothesis seven (H07) was tested through the four steps described above, with regression analysis based on respective statistic models at each step. The summarized results are presented in Table 4.27

**Table 4.27: Summary of Intervening Influence Employee Outcomes on the Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Universities' Performance Relationship**

STEP	TYPE OF ANALYSIS	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Beta	P-value	Significance
1	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Performance of Public Universities in Kenya	.421	.402	.425	.0001	Significant
2	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Outcomes.	.558	.234	.725	.0001	Significant
3	Employee Outcomes and Performance of Public universities in Kenya	.428	.426	.605	.0001	Significant
4	Strategic Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Outcomes and Performance of Public universities	.467	.349	.390	.0001	Significant

**Source: Research Analysis Data (2022)**



Based on the decision criteria (Table 3.5), it can be determined that employee outcomes had a positive statistically significant intervening influence on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and the performance of Public universities in Kenya .

Therefore, the Null hypothesis H07, was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis accepted. The conclusion was that employee outcomes did have a positive statistical and significant intervening influence on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities. This finding seems to partly confirm and also partially contradict Wubishet, Chekole & Wedajo (2018), and Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014).

According to Wubishet et al. (2018), there was no direct relationship between HRM practices and employee outcomes, although the HRM practices did initially affect employee outcomes, which in turn affected enterprise performance and indeed, the employee outcomes had a higher impact on this performance as compared the HRMPs alone. In contradiction, Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014), found that human resource management practices had a significant effect on employee outcomes, although at the same time, they found that employee outcomes did not affect firm performance nor mediate the human resource management practices-firm performance relationship.

This current study takes the considered view that Wubishet, Chekole, & Wedajo's (2018) was contextualized geographically in Ethiopia, and hence this may explain the divergence in findings. For Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014), the divergence may be explained by the contextual difference in terms of the research variables.

Whereas Sagwa, K'Obonyo & Ogutu (2014), studied employee outcomes in the context of functional human resource management practices, the current study contextualized employee outcomes in terms of strategic human resource management practices. This may, therefore, explain the contradiction in terms of the said findings. In addition, Sagwa et al's study addressed human resource management practices in the private sector firms, and, this is another probable explanation for the divergence of their findings vis-a-vis the current study's findings. Furthermore, according to Baron & Kenny (1986), three main conditions ought to be pursued in a regression to prove mediation; one, the independent variable should indicate a significant influence on the dependent variable on the first regression. Secondly, the independent variable ought to be deemed to significantly influence the mediating variable in the second regression.

Thirdly, the mediating variable should significantly influence the dependent variable when the two are entered as predicting variables. In line with Baron & Kenny (1986), and based on Table 4.28, all the three conditions were met at steps one, two and three respectively, as illustrated by the positive p-values which indicate statistical significance in each case. Under objective seven, therefore, the major finding was the intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities was positive and statistically significant. This was because the regression analysis at level four showed that coefficient of the composite index of strategic human resource management practices was 0.361 at a p-value of .000 (P-value < 0.05), while employee outcomes coefficient was 0.165 with a P-value of .001 (P-value < 0.05).

This implied that one unit change in strategic human resource management practices would result in .36% increase in performance of public universities. Similarly, one unit increase in employee outcomes would result in 17% increase in the performance of public universities.

The results of the regression of strategic human resource management practices and employee outcomes on performance of public universities could explain 35% variation in the performance of public universities as indicated by the adjusted R square of .349. Notably, this was higher than when the strategic human resource management practices alone was regressed on performance of public universities, resulting in 30% as shown by adjusted R squared of 0.302. This variation indicated partial mediation or intervention of employee outcomes, on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance.

The Resource Based Theory as proposed by Wernerfelt (1984), Prahalad & Hamel (1991), and Barney (2001), asserts that organizations have to recognize employees as the key assets or resources which drive competitiveness, and, therefore, strategically cater for them and make interventions which energize and propel them towards desired competitiveness and performance in the market. It is the considered view of this study that the Resource Based View, though indirectly, rather than directly, speaks to employee outcomes, particularly with regard to how the said outcomes; level of commitment, level of motivation, teamwork and empowerment, are propelled and sustained by effective implementation of strategic human resource management practices. To this end, the insights and findings of this study lend more credence to the Resource Based Theory.

In this case, and based on this study's finding that implemented strategic human resource management practices do influence employee outcomes, which in turn, influence performance of public universities, public universities should find it essential to be strategic at how they select and implement suitable SHRMPs, laying emphasis on the facilitative and central role of employee outcomes.

This is because, any implemented SHRMPs, have to positively impact on employee outcomes, out of which desired performance is sustainably achievable, through adequate levels of commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment.

#### **4.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Chapter Four presented the results of this study, mainly comprised of three main sections. The first presented the results of the general data analysis, including tests of validity and reliability, descriptive statistics by use of Tables, frequency distributions, mean and standard deviation, as well as Cronbach's Alpha coefficients and Pearson correlation coefficient. The results of the data collected for each variable were presented respectively. In the second and third sections, the results of the test of hypotheses and as well as results of the regression analyses were presented and discussed simultaneously. A summary of the results based on the hypotheses of the study is presented on Table 4.29.

**Table 4.28: Summary of Tests of Hypotheses and Results**

NULL HYPOTHESIS	FINDINGS	DECISION	CONCLUSION
HO1 Strategic human resource management practices do not influence performance of Public universities in Kenya	$\beta = .425$ $P = 0.001 < 0.05$ $R^2 = .402$ $F = 26.002$	Reject H01	Strategic human resource management practices had a positive statistically significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya
. HO2. Rigorous recruitment has no significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya.	$\beta = .125$ $P = 0.001 < 0.05$ $R^2 = .150$ $F = 59.661$	Reject H02	Rigorous recruitment had a positive statistically significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya.
.HO3. There is no significant influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya.	$\beta = .222$ $R^2 = .233$ $F = 54.686$ $P = 0.000 < 0.05$	Reject H03	Staff Training had a positive statistically significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya
H04. Performance of public universities in Kenya is not significantly influenced by reward management	$\beta = .204$ $R^2 = .182$ $F = 25.286$ $P = 0.000 < 0.05$	Reject H04	Reward Management had a positive statistically significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya
H05 .Performance management does not significantly influence performance of public universities in Kenya.	$\beta = .293$ $R^2 = .277$ $F = 42.669$ $P = 0.000 < 0.05$	Reject H05	Performance Management had a positive statistically significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya
H06. There is no significant moderating influence of human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.	$B_{SHRMPs} = .425$ $HRMU = .445$ $SHRMPs*HRMU = 385$ $R^2 = .448$ $F = 42.192$ $P = SHRMPs = .001 < 0.05$ $P = HRMU = .001 < 0.05$ $P = SHRMPs*HRMU = .006 < 0.05$	Reject H06	There was a positive statistically significant moderating influence of human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya
H07. There is no significant intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and	(i) $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_5 X_1 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (3.3)$ $\beta = .425$ $R^2_{SHRMPs} = .425$ $P = .000 < 0.05$ .	Reject H07	There was a positive statistically significant intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and

<p>performance of public universities in Kenya.</p>	<p>(ii) <math>T = \beta_0 + \beta_6 X_1 + \dots</math>          .....          .(3.4)  <math>R^2 = .234</math> <math>B = .725</math>  <math>P = 0.000 &lt; 0.05</math>          (iii) <math>Y = \beta_0 + \beta_7 T + \varepsilon</math>          .....          .(3.5)  <math>R^2 = .425</math> <math>B = EOs = .605</math>  <math>P = 0.000 &lt; 0.05</math>          (iv) <math>Y = \beta_0 + \beta_8 X_1 + \beta_9 T + \varepsilon</math>          .....(3.6)  <math>R^2 = .349</math> <math>B = SHRMP = .361</math> <math>P = 0.000 &lt; 0.05</math>  <math>\beta_{EO} = 0.165</math> \   <math>P = 0.000 &lt; 0.05</math></p>		<p>performance of public universities in Kenya</p>
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Source: Research Data (2022)

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter presented the findings, and the respective discussions. This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of this study, including conclusion and recommendations, major limitations encountered and recommendations for further research. The sections of the presentations are arranged according to the research objectives and hypotheses. In each case, results and findings are summarized and linked to the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

### **5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The value of strategic human resource management practices in steering performance in enterprises is empirically well documented, particularly in the private sector. However, the majority of this empirical literature seems to be confined to the private sector rather than the public sector. This notwithstanding, there is sufficient empirical evidence that the strategic human resource management practices vis-a-vis enterprise performance value proposition also applies in the public sector, including, and specifically for the purposes of this study, public universities in Kenya. Indeed, there is empirical evidence that, strategic human resource management practices did influence performance in public universities. However, and most importantly for this study, the latter empirical studies do not seem to have conceptualized nor factored-in, strategic human resource management practices in the context of the strategic human resource management unit as an agency of implementation of the SHRMPs, and employee outcomes as is the case in the current study.

Furthermore, it is empirically interesting, as far as this study is concerned, that despite the empirical evidence as illustrated in the statement of the problem, that strategic human resource management practices were found to propel performance in public universities, empirical evidence showed that public universities in Kenya have been reporting declining levels of performance over the last few years. For this study, this seemed to be a contradiction, going by the empirical evidence that strategic human resource management practices ought to propel performance, as discussed in the statement of the problem.

Furthermore, although there is substantial evidence illustrating the impact of human resource management units and employee outcomes on performance of enterprises, the available literature does not seem to reveal any studies directly linking the variables; strategic human resource management practices, human resource management unit and employee outcomes to the performance of public universities specifically. In this regard, no study has been found, directly alluding and or investigating the possibility of the SHRMPs' implementation role by the human resource management unit moderating the relationship between the implemented bundle of strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities, and also how the relationship between implemented SHRMPs and performance may be intervened by employee outcomes.

The current study contended that, there was a possibility that the contradiction alluded to above, where public universities have been performing adversely, yet they have been implementing strategic human resource management practices, may empirically be explained.



That is by the state of the universities' human resource management units as implementing and operationalizing agents of strategic human resource management practices on the one hand, the resulting employee outcomes, arising out of any implemented strategic human resource management practices, on the other hand.

This is because, as it is deducible from empirical literature, ill-organized and mal-structured human resource management units have been found to compromise the desired impact of implemented strategic human resource management practices. Consequently, employees may not be well impacted upon, if at all. Instead, the employee may be adversely affected, resulting in negative employee outcomes, including low level of commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment.

This would ultimately affect the performance of any enterprise, including public universities. Therefore, it was on this theoretical-cum-empirical gap that this study was premised, to empirically investigate the possibility that the declining performance of public universities in Kenya may be explained by the interplay among implemented strategic human resource management practices, structural state of human resource management unit and the prevailing employee outcomes.

The overriding purpose of this study was to empirically establish how strategic human resource management practices may influence performance of public universities in Kenya, and how this relationship may be moderated by implementation through the human resource management unit on one hand, and how employee outcomes may intervene the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya the other hand.

Primary data for the study was collected from 110 academic and non-academic employees of 31 public universities in Kenya, using a structured self-administered five-point Likert-type scale questionnaire.

The first objective of this study was to examine whether strategic human resource management practices influence performance of public universities in Kenya. The hypothesis extracted from this objective was that; there was no influence of strategic human resource management practices on performance of public universities in Kenya. As indicated on Table 4.18, the results of regression analysis indicated a positive and statistically significant influence of strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

The second objective of the study was to establish the extent to which rigorous recruitment influences performance of public universities in Kenya. From this objective, the hypothesis was; that rigorous recruitment has no significant influence on performance of public universities in Kenya. As presented in Table 4.19, the results indicated a positive and statistically significant influence of rigorous recruitment on public university performance.

The third objective of the study sought to determine if staff training influenced performance of public universities in Kenya, The hypothesis drawn from this objective was; that there was no significant influence of staff training on performance of public universities in Kenya. As illustrated in Table 4.20, the results showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between staff training and the performance of public universities in Kenya.

The fourth objective was to examine whether reward management affected performance of public universities in Kenya. The hypothesis extracted from this objective was that performance of public universities in Kenya is not significantly influenced by reward management. As presented on Table 4.21, the results indicated that there was a positive and statistically significant influence of reward management on the performance of public universities in Kenya.

The fifth objective was to determine how performance management influenced performance of public universities in Kenya. The hypothesis derived from this objective was that performance management did not significantly influence performance of public universities in Kenya. As indicated in Table 4.22, the results showed that there was a positive and statistically significant influence of performance management on the performance of public universities in Kenya.

The sixth objective sought to establish the extent to which the implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit moderates the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. The hypothesis extracted was that there was no significant moderating influence of the implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. As illustrated in Table 4.23, the results indicated a positive and statistically significant moderating influence of the implementation of strategic human resource management practices by the human resource management unit on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

The seventh objective of this study was to determine whether employee outcomes intervened on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. From this objective, it was hypothesized that there was no significant intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya. After a four step regression analysis as proposed by Barn and Kenny, As illustrated in the respective Tables 4.24, 4.24, 4.25, and 4.27 for each step, the results showed that there was a positive and statistically significant partial intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and performance of public universities in Kenya.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY**

Based on the objectives and findings of this study, it is concluded as follows: Under objective one, it was established that strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), entailing; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management have a positive and statistically significant influence on the performance of public universities in Kenya. Hence, the public universities in Kenya, which, based on the findings of this study, use certain strategic human resource management practices, including the bundle of four practices investigated, are called to action, towards realizing the importance of leveraging on strategic implementation of human resource management practices to change their performance prospects for the better.

Under objectives two to five, it was found, as illustrated in the respective Tables 4.19, 4.20, 4.21, and 4.22 respectively, that each of the individual conceptualized strategic human resource management practices (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management, and performance management) had a positive and empirically significance influence on performance of public universities in Kenya.

Respectively, therefore, under rigorous recruitment, public universities are called upon to consider strategically implementing rigorous recruitment, targeting to promote the extent to which there is adherence to policy, thorough job descriptions, and a deliberate leaning towards merit-based recruitment. Under staff training, the universities need to consider strategically implementing staff training with emphasis on a tailor-made training policy, deliberate new and existing employee induction, and position-specific career development paths for all employees.

For reward management, the universities are advised to innovatively implement reward management and incentive schemes which would be alive to the dynamics of the universities as public entities, and hence, leverage on fairness and equity in the rewarding, a deliberate leaning towards team-inclusive, rather than individual-oriented rewards, and gravitate towards robust and innovative approaches to rewarding, in line with the dynamics of the labour market.

Under performance management, the universities need to consider taking performance management beyond the basics of performance contracting as currently provided for. There is a need for a more employee-involving approach to performance management practices, as a natural motivational base.

This is with particular emphasis on better communication and education regarding the components of performance management, including performance appraisal, promoting levels of objectivity and reliability in the performance management system, as well as affirmative action towards linking performance management, for instance, performance appraisal, to the training, career, and personal goals of the employees. With reference to the four strategic human resource management practices, therefore, the public universities need to rethink, and hopefully, as a result, appreciate the critical role of strategic human resource management in the scheme of their visions, missions and core values. By doing this, the universities are likely to turn around the tide, in terms of declining levels of performance as evidenced in empirical literature, and affirmed in this study.

As conceptualized, investigated and found by this study, if and when public universities place and operationalize strategic human resource management, they are likely to advance their performance, in terms of increased enrolment rates, increasing graduation rates, increasing research publications as well as increasing staff promotion rates. Objective six, as presented in Table 4.23, found a positive and statistically significant moderating inflation of human resource management implementation role of the strategic human resource management unit. It was, therefore recommended that the universities re-engineer the implementation of strategic human resource management practices (SHRMPs), through reorganizing and restructuring their human resource management units.

This was likely to benefit the universities in two main ways; one is that, it would optimize the value to be gained from implementing selected strategic human resource management practices, including the four which were conceptualized, and studied herein.

This is in terms of heightened employee outcomes, including levels of commitment, motivation, teamwork and empowerment of the university academic as well as non-academic staff. Secondly, the re-engineered SHRM units would gain better implementation capacity, in terms of enhanced physical Facilitation, dynamic and robust human resource policy formulation, more focused need-specific human resource planning, and the desired balancing of full-time HR employee versus total employee establishment ratio.

Ultimately, as conceptualized in this study, the performance of the universities, would sustainably be impacted upon, because the universities would create the all-important HR capacity to drive creativity and innovativeness which is arguably the most critical prerequisite for competitiveness in the modern business environment. The critical role of employee outcomes in the public universities was affirmed by the findings of this study, as illustrated through the four step regression results on Tables 4.23 - 4.26, that there was a positive and statistically significant intervening influence of employee outcomes on the relationship between SHRMPs and performance of public universities in Kenya.

However, and most pertinently, the findings also indicated very low levels of employee outcomes, in the universities, as measured through level of commitment, level of motivation, level of teamwork and level of empowerment. Indeed, it is generally known that lack of commitment, low motivation and low team spirit, not to mention lack of empowerment, can only lead to demoralized and disengaged employees, who are not likely to drive the universities any further, in terms of performance.

Finally, under objective seven, it was found that employee outcomes had a positive and statistically significant partial intervening influence on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices, and performance of the public universities. This find has a major implication on the public universities because, in spite of implemented SHRMPs, empirical and industry evidence points to minimal gain, from the implemented SHRMPs, and hence the evident declining performance.

As concluded under objective six, employee outcomes in terms of levels of motivation, commitment, teamwork, and empowerment result from implemented SHRMPs. It, therefore, follows that the human resource management units in the universities, which ought to provide the essential capacity for successful implementation of the strategic human resource management practices ought to be a matter of strategic concern by the universities. This is because, in an environment where levels of employee outcomes, performance is almost definitely likely to be compromised, particularly as conceptualized and investigated in this study, in terms of innovative learning programmes, student enrolment rates, student graduation rates, and staff promotion rates.

Fundamentally, therefore, and with regard to the hypothetical position of this study, which was tested through the seven objectives as exemplified, it is concluded that the findings provide an empirical basis by which the problem of declining performance of public universities, in spite of the universities using certain SHRMPs may be explained.

The findings also help to underscore possible HR-oriented solutions to the operational and performance challenges that the public universities are facing now, and are likely to continue facing in the foreseeable future, a future most likely without the current government support, and a need to build capacity for advanced levels competitiveness.



#### **5.4 CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING THEORY**

This study was underpinned by three theories; the Resource Based Theory, the Human Capital Theory and the Institutional Theory. These theories are variously related to this study. However, of particular and weightier relevance to this study is the Resource Based Theory. This theory suggests a strategic approach by organizations to consider employees as key resources in strategizing towards achieving competitive edge. According to Barney (2001), the Resource Based Theory considers the people in an enterprise as the human capital resources which comprise of their skills, experience, intelligence, training, judgment, inter-relationships, and insights from employees.

In addition, and according to this theory, there are organizational capital resources which include an enterprises' formal structuring, the formal and informal administrative systems, which cater for the planning, managing, and coordinating of the systems and activities of such an enterprise. This study opines, based on the variables investigated, that is, strategic human resource management practices, the implementation of the same by the human resource management unit of public universities, employee outcomes, performance of public universities, all resonate with the Resource Based Theory.

In addition, the findings of this study seem to give credence and to advance the Resource Based Theory in at least two ways: First, the finding, after linear and multiple linear regression analysis as presented in Table 4.17, that strategic human resource management practices have a positive and statistically significant influence on the performance of public universities seems to be consistent with the proposition of the Resource Based Theory which considers the people in an enterprise as key capital resources in driving the performance of such an enterprise.

This study posits that the bundle of strategic human resource management practices (rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management) relate to the constituents of human capital resources espoused by the Resource Based Theory, that is the skills, experience, intelligence, training, judgment, inter-relationships, and insights of employees. A critical analysis of the latter is more than likely to reveal that some of them are provided for through strategic implementation, while the rest, like experience, intelligence, judgement and so on are outcomes.

The second way arises from the other two findings, as illustrated in Table 4.22, that the implementation of SHRMPs, through strategic human resource management unit had a positive and statistically significant moderating influence on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and university performance, and, also as illustrated in Table 4.26, that employee outcomes had a positive and statistically significant intervening influence on the relationship between strategic human resource management practices and university performance.

This is because, according to the Resource Based Theory, the human capital is not enough to propel performance-enhancing competitive advantage. There is a need for organizational capital resources which include an enterprises' formal structuring, the formal and informal administrative systems, which cater for the planning, managing, and coordinating of the systems and activities of such an enterprise. It is in this light, that this study posits that the implementation of SHRMPs by human resource management unit, which was found to positively and significantly moderate the relationship between SHRMPs and university performance, is one such infrastructure-cum-administrative system.

In the same way, employee outcomes, which were found to positively and significantly partially intervene the relationship between SHRMPS and university performance, as presented in Chapter Four, sections, 4.86 and 4.87, constitute the organizational capital espoused in the Resource Based Theory, without which, desired performance which drives competitive advantage and vice versa, may not be forthcoming. The findings of this study, therefore, would appear to push the frontiers of the Resource Based Theory, through providing opportunities and insights which may expand it going into the future.

## **5.5 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

This study investigated the influence of strategic human resource management practices on the performances of public universities in Kenya. This includes how the human resource management units within the universities and the employee outcomes arising out of implemented strategic human resource management practices may moderate and intervene respectively, the said performance of public universities. The study, therefore, contributes to the existing empirical knowledge with regard to the three variables variously. First, most studies which had investigated the influence of strategic human resource management practices on the performance of organizations had concentrated on the private sector, rather than the public sector.

This study focused on public universities as entities in the public sector, and, therefore, contributes to knowledge relating to the same variables, but in the public, and more specifically the university sub-sector. Secondly, no other study seemed to have investigated the influence of strategic human resource management practices in the context of human resource management practices and employee outcomes as variables in one study.

In this respect, this study contributed what it opines to be “new” or “fresh” knowledge, particularly with respect to the variables and constructs under human resource management unit, as conceptualized in this study. This is in line with, physical facilitation, human resource management policy formulation, human resource planning and full time employee establishment. The prior existing empirical literature, to the best knowledge of the researcher, did not seem to directly address these constructs, especially in the context of public universities in Kenya.

## **5.6 CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE**

In line with the conceptual framework applied in this study, and particularly with regard to the variables, this study made potentially important and useful findings. The main findings were that SHRMPs significantly influenced performance of public universities, that the implementation of SHRMPs by the units of the universities significantly had a moderating influence on the relationship between the implemented SHRMPs and performance of the universities. It was also found that employee outcomes, which mainly result from the implemented SHRMPs, had a significant partial intervening influence on the relationship between the implemented SHRMPs and performance of the universities.

These findings are expected to be significantly useful as points of reference and information in practice, by the public universities themselves, as well as by all other universities, private and public institutions in Kenya and abroad. All these institutions are more than likely to find the findings of this study, value-adding, in practice. This is because, for instance, the findings underscored the importance of a strategic approach to the implementation of SHRMPs through well-structured and facilitative human resource management units of an enterprise, and particularly of a public university.

In this regard, and as a matter of practice, therefore, enterprises, including public universities are called upon to give keen consideration, and re-orient their HR value systems in line with the dynamics of the current competitive business environment, where, for instance, the future of government-sponsored public universities most likely awaits. Furthermore, HR practitioners as well as managers and leaders in organizations should find the outcomes of this study interesting, as the results represent a viable decision-making framework with regard to the SHRMPs-enterprise performance nexus.

### **5.7 CONTRIBUTION TO POLICY**

In terms of policy formulation, public universities essentially rely on the various government-initiated statutes and institutions, including the Universities Act, Education Act, and other relevant regulations which govern the operations of higher educational institutions. However, the findings of this current study are implicative of gaps and shortcomings, with respect to the impact of the said policies, in real practice. Hence, the findings of this study that the strategic human resource management practices at work within the universities do not appear to be adding as much value as desired, mainly because the human resource management units were found deficient of the implementation capacity is a good case in point.

As far as this study is concerned, therefore, one of the major implications of the findings is that government policy is probably insufficient. As recommended by this study, there is a need for all organizations, and particularly public universities in this regard, to be more robust, dynamic, and innovative with regard to policy formulation.

The public universities need to ‘think outside the box’, such that, beyond the standardized policy framework by the government, they are able to pragmatically customize this framework, and align it to their operating circumstances. This way, the government policy framework ought to be the ‘stepping stone’, as the universities creatively, and strategically, leverage on human resource management policies, among others, to positively affect their performance on their core business, as expected.

## **5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study recommends that public universities consider re-engineering, and, therefore, revitalizing the implementation of strategic human resource management practices, given that, according to the findings, and the conclusion of this study, the bundle of four strategic human resource management practices investigated, that is, rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management, constitutes evidence that these practices were at work in the public universities.

What this study established more emphatically, however, was that this bundle, though implemented, does not seem to be bearing as much value as would be desired, towards impacting on the performance of the universities. In this regard, therefore, it would go a long way if public universities gave more attention to the human resource management function, especially by considering the use of a strategic approach in selecting the most relevant practices out of the wide range of potential practices available, as evidenced in empirical and theoretical literature.

Furthermore, the public universities need to note that the extent to which this bundle may impact on desired performance, fundamentally lays in appreciating the criticality of the human resource management function, and committedly using a strategic approach to the implementation of human resource management practices as a vehicle which would provide wheels to the mission, vision and core values of a public university as an enterprise. In essence, and for public universities in Kenya, a strategic implementation of a given bundle of human resource management practices, would most likely, be impactful in reviving their performance prospects.

Therefore, the universities need to consider each of the practices and act accordingly. For instance, with respect to rigorous recruitment it is recommended that the universities creatively and strategically adhered to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff, using merit, rather than nepotism, and guided by a selection procedure which entails a thorough job description for each vacancy to be filled. Likewise, in staff training, the universities ought to adhere to an elaborate training and development policy, embracing induction training for the benefit of new and also promoted workers, in such a way that continuous professional career development for all categories of employees would be adequately provided for.

Similarly, the public universities should be keen to the fact that, as much as the academic staff, for instance, are recruited already trained, there is a need for continuous professional development interventions aimed at adding to the capacity of staff to deliver on their mandates in a dynamic market. In other words, and from a human resource management perspective, the universities ought to creatively go beyond the statutory and regulatory provisions as provided by the CUE and the Universities Act.

At the foundational level, the public universities ought to be mindful of the need to creatively and innovatively institutionalize a well thought out policy framework on staff training. Such a policy ought to be comprehensive and provide for a mechanism for the critical induction process as well as mechanisms to enhance career growth and development of staff.

In reward management, the universities ought to ensure that job promotion as well as upward mobility are part of the rewarding mechanisms. They ought to consider that the terms of service and benefits readily motivated employees, especially where, and when these are coupled with innovatively and creatively instituted alternative university-driven incentive schemes other than those stipulated by the statutory government schemes. In this regard, therefore, public universities ought to look towards a value adding staff rewarding policy and framework beyond the government provided incentives which are often taken for granted.

In addition, there is a need for public universities to benchmark for best practices in this regard, to ensure, for instance, that university staff perceive fairness and equitability, and there is a measure of team rewarding and other competitive extra incentive schemes. On the same vein, strategic performance management would enable the universities to embrace the all-important communication to enhance appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates, while at the same time putting into practice performance appraisal systems to make it well defined, accurate, fair, objective and reliable, and not forgetting the foundational linkage from the performance appraisal to all the other strategic practices, especially training and reward management.



Furthermore, public universities should not overlook the critical role of performance management as a basic mechanism to drive overall performance. Hence, public universities, which are already expected to engage in performance contracting arrangements at the government level, ought to be creative at institutionalizing performance management best practices. These may include well planned and executed performance appraisal systems. Such performance management practices should be designed to promote effective performance expectation communication, linkages to the other strategic human resource management practices, like training and reward management and also the highest possible degree of objectivity and fairness in partnering with employees towards desired performance.

Perhaps more fundamentally, and as empirically established by this study, the implementation of strategic human resource management practices requires a well-organized facilitated human resource management unit. This way, for instance, the typical bundle of strategic human resource management practices investigated in this study; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management is likely to be implemented with a higher level of success. This is because a competent human resource management unit, which would be well organized, well equipped, well facilitated, driven by appropriate HR policy and HR Planning.

In addition, and most instrumentally, the universities ought to strategically assemble HR teams which would ensure adequacy in terms of full time HR employee establishment which is commensurate to the total number of employees in a given university, all encompassed in a robust human resource management plan.

The findings of this study on employee outcomes are likely to create the foundational basis for success in terms of performance. This is because, for a public university, like any other organization, to perform optimally, employee outcomes, with emphasis on levels of commitment, levels of motivation, degree of teamwork among employees and the levels of empowerment, may be said to be the 'fuel' that enables the engine to function.

Therefore, public universities ought to greatly advantage themselves towards optimum performance by re-engineering their human resource management units. This would in turn, enhance the extent to which strategic human resource management practices are successfully implemented. The end result would, more than likely, be a remarkably high level of employee outcomes, out of which the desired performance would be achievable, sustainably.

Finally, and as a matter of observation in this study, the public universities' dependence on Government funding may be said to be an arrangement which has been slowly, but surely, soon or later, grinding to a halt. On one hand, government funding, driven by the differentiated unit cost (DUC) arrangement has been reducing, especially for universities which mainly offer Arts and Humanities. This is especially as those universities who offer engineering, medicine and so on are allocated more funds. On the other hand, the plight of public universities is worsened by the dwindling enrolments by self-sponsored students across all public universities.

A general observation of the current trends suggests that, in the next few years, public universities may have to be forced to look for alternatives for perennial dependence on government funding and other administrative structural provisions.

They have to prepare themselves for a foreseeable future, outside of the provisions of the Universities Act, and other government agencies including Commission for University Education (CUE). In this most likely scenario, the universities, therefore, may have to operate independently of government capitation, and become wholly autonomous. In this respect, one implication, among others, is that public universities would have to compete and create competitive advantage, just like any other enterprise, in the private sector, in order to attract clients, the main ones of who are students.

It is needless to emphasize that this competitive business environment requires HR-oriented strategic thinking and action. In this regard, this study recommends that HR strategy, and therefore, strategic human resource management practices, implemented by robust, dynamic, well-structured and facilitated human resource management unit, presents a feasible path, among others, by which the public universities can prepare and equip for the future of fierce competition.

As aptly pointed out by Kashorda (2017), public universities had to diversify their income generating sources, as they established ways and means of reducing their operating expenditures, and through utilizing ICT in administration, in teaching and researching. However, he pointed out, the main challenge lay in providing the needed leadership by the universities' top managers, especially in the current environment of disruptive enterprise transformation. This study opines that this course of action will require making strategic, and difficult HR-oriented decisions, among others.

## **5.9 LIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY**

In the course of this study, two main limitations were experienced. The first limitation was that, being a census study involving all the 31 public universities in Kenya, it was quite daunting to crisscross the wide geographical area involved. Luckily, a combination of digital and face to face distribution of the questionnaire made it easier to get the respondents who would otherwise have been very difficult to reach. Indeed, in spite of the wide spread of the geographical location of universities, the researcher was able to reach the majority of respondents to fill an online questionnaire. Although there were a few technology and internet related drawbacks, this promoted a relatively high response rate as reported.

The second limitation was that the questionnaire, being structured and self-administered, could not totally control for the integrity of the data collected from the respondents in terms of objectivity and independence, given that the instrument was a Likert scale type of questionnaire, which mainly measured perceptions. Hence, it was not easy to guarantee control for the subjective nature of the constructs measured. However, it was assumed, and, also, hoped that the respondents, given their knowledge and social status as workers in universities, were most likely objective and trustworthy with their responses, especially considering the fact that they are key stakeholders of the public universities as sources of their professional livelihoods.

Thirdly, only one questionnaire was used for all the respondents, regardless of their category in terms of UASU, KUSU, KUDHEIHA, Academic Registrar and HR Registrar. For the purposes of data collection, each of these categories consisted of representatives of employees who were considered to have substantially sufficient knowledge and experience.

However, the extent to which, for instance, a KUDHEIHA representative was similarly and competently knowledgeable as compared to a UASU representative was not clearly determinable. Hence, this study considers this to be a limitation, in terms of the overall representativeness, and the extent to which all the 110 representatives were able to give equally sufficient and accurate information based the same questionnaire items. However, this study is of the considered opinion that the large number of respondents for each category may be said to be compensatory towards this limitation, such that the relatively many representative respondents of UASU, for instance, would cover for the deficiency likely to occur from the KUDHEIHA representative respondents.

#### **5.10 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study was delimited to public universities, rather than all the universities in Kenya. This may be considered as delimiting in terms of scope. However, this was informed by the fact that public universities were uniquely different, in terms of governance and organizational structuring. Hence, the study needed to specifically focus and investigate the public universities as government entities experiencing unique performance challenges. In addition, there was a need to limit the scope of the study, to enhance the chances of successful data collection, within the constraints of time and resources available. The delimitation, as far as this study is concerned, did not compromise the extent of the validity, and or the reliability of the results.

### **5.11 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

1. It is suggested that further and confirmatory studies may help to affirm or otherwise, the results of this study.
2. In addition, it would be interesting to compare the outcomes of another study using the same variables, but this time, to focus on private rather than public universities in Kenya.
3. Future research may look at whether or not, using a different set of typical strategic human resource management practices, other than the one conceptualized and investigated in this study, that is; rigorous recruitment, staff training, reward management and performance management, may present similar or different findings. Such studies may investigate the different set of strategic human resource management practices in the same public universities in the Kenyan context, or in a different context. In terms of local, regional or international scope, and consider using a different set of dependent variables, for instance the capacity of a university to attract funding for development.

### **5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter has presented the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations of this study. The summary was based on the problem that was investigated, the methodology used, the objectives, and the hypotheses of the study. The results, the implications of these to the existing theory, policy and practice were discussed. Finally, the limitations and delimitations of the study and suggestions on further areas of study in future are presented.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Stephen N. R. Mwaura  
Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship  
School of Business and Management Studies  
Faculty of Social Sciences and Technology  
Technical University of Kenya  
P.O Box 52428-00200  
Nairobi, Kenya.

21<sup>st</sup> May, 2022

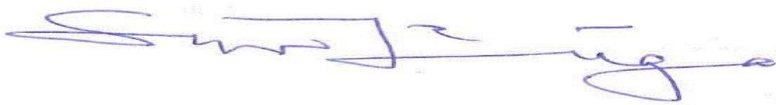
Dear Respondent,

I am a student at the Technical University of Kenya undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Business Administration (Human Resource Management). One of the requirements of the course is to undertake a research study, whose title is '*Strategic human resource management practices, human resource management unit, and employee outcomes and performance of public universities in Kenya.*'

I humbly request you to spare some time in the course of your work, to kindly fill in the questionnaire. I promise to take and treat all the information you will provide with highest discreteness and confidentiality and for the purpose of this research only.

Thank you in advance for your valued support, and may God bless you for your time and energy.

Yours Faithfully,



Stephen N. R. Mwaura.  
0722609676  
Steve\_ruga@yahoo.co.uk  
stephen.mwaura@tukenya.ac.ke

## APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent, my name is Stephen Njuguna Mwaura Ruga, a Ph.D. Student at the Technical University of Kenya. I am undertaking a study whose title is, “**Influence of strategic human resource management practices on performance of Public universities in Kenya**”. I humbly request your time and energy to complete this questionnaire. I promise that the research is for academic purposes only and will be handled with utmost confidentiality and discreetness. Please fill the questionnaire as honestly as possible.

### **PART A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. Name of your university: .....
2. Please indicate your staff category or department.  
UASU  KUSU  KUDHEIHA  Academic Registrar/   
equivalent  
  
HR Director/Manager/Registrar or Equivalent
3. Your Gender: Female  Male
4. Please indicate your age bracket below  
56+  46-55  36-45  25-35  less 25
5. Please indicate your Highest Level of Education  
Ph.D.  Masters  Bachelors  Certificate   
  
Diploma  Higher Diploma  Other
6. Years of service since first employed in university:  
26 and above  21-25  16-20  11-15  6-10  1-5

### **PART B: STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

In the following Table, please tick on the number which which corresponds to the statement that best expresses how you perceive the various strategic human resource practices as implemented by your university as follows: **(5) Strongly Agree (4) Agree (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly Disagree.**

Item	<b>PART B: STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES</b>	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Rigorous Recruitment</b>					
<b>7.1</b>	My university strictly adheres to the prescribed or customized recruitment and selection policy in hiring staff	5	4	3	2	1
<b>7.2</b>	Hiring is based on elaborate job descriptions of the vacant positions.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>7.3</b>	Merit, rather than nepotism counts in the recruitment process.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Staff Training</b>					
<b>8.1</b>	The university adheres to an elaborate training and development policy.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>8.2</b>	Induction training is strategically provided for new and also promoted workers.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>8.3</b>	Continuous professional career development for all categories of employees is adequately provided for.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Reward Management</b>					
<b>9.1</b>	Job promotion as well as upward mobility are part of the rewarding mechanisms in the university.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>9.2</b>	The terms of service and benefits are motivating to employees	5	4	3	2	1
<b>9.3</b>	There are other university-driven incentive schemes other than those stipulated by the statutory government scheme.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Performance Management</b>					
<b>10.1</b>	Communication is well done with appropriate feedback between supervisors and their subordinates in the university.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>10.2</b>	The performance appraisal system in the university is well defined, accurate, fair, objective and reliable.	5	4	3	2	1
<b>10.3</b>	The performance evaluation system in the university provides a link to the training and development programs as well as a mentoring system For the junior employees.	5	4	3	2	1
	<b>PART C: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT</b>					
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Physical Facilities</b>					
<b>11.1</b>	The space and layout of the HR department are adequate and proper for a conducive work environment.	5	4	3	2	1

11.2	There are sufficient HR personnel supporting the operations of the university	5	4	3	2	1
11.3	There is adequate supply of HR-related amenities like documents, forms and relevant information/communication for everyone in the university.	5	4	3	2	1
12.0	<b>Human Resource Policy</b>					
12.1	There is evidence of adherence to HR policy for each key area. of work	5	4	3	2	1
12.2	The policy documents are well communicated, understood and available/accessible as needed.	5	4	3	2	1
12.3	There is adequate involvement and consultation on policy adjustments, adaptations and any policy changes	5	4	3	2	1
13.0	<b>Full Time Employee Establishment</b>					
13.1	The number of HR personnel compared to the total number of employees in my university is adequate.	5	4	3	2	1
13.2	The total number of academic and non-academic staff is too large compared to total HR staff.	5	4	3	2	1
13.3	Neither the number of HR staff nor the number of employees in the university easily determinable.	5	4	3	2	1
14.0	<b>Human Resource Plan</b>					
14.1	There is an overall human resource plan by which all key activities like training, recruitment etc. are undertaken.	5	4	3	2	1
14.2	Human resource planning is scheduled and undertaken periodically.	5	4	3	2	1
14.3	There is a section with personnel responsible for HR planning	5	4	3	2	1
	<b>PART D: EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES</b>					
15.0	<b>Commitment</b>					
15.1	I believe in the vision, mission and goals of my employer	5	4	3	2	1
15.2	I enjoy doing extra work without necessarily extra incentive	5	4	3	2	1
15.3	I would prefer working here to any other place	5	4	3	2	1
16.0	<b>Motivation</b>					
16.1	I am highly motivated as an employee of the university	5	4	3	2	1
16.2	I am willing to take new responsibility at short notice.	5	4	3	2	1
16.3	Absenteeism from work is an unusual occurrence for me	5	4	3	2	1
17.0	<b>Teamwork</b>					
17.1	I work in an environment which promotes teamwork and collaboration	5	4	3	2	1



17.2	Given a choice, I prefer working independently	5	4	3	2	1
17.3	There is a high tendency for blaming each other when things go wrong	5	4	3	2	1
18.0	<b>Empowerment</b>					
18.1	I feel involved in decision making and trusted to be creative at my work	5	4	3	2	1
18.2	My responsibility at work provides sufficient authority for me to act and make decisions promptly	5	4	3	2	1
18.3	My work is meaningful and satisfying in achieving my purpose in life	5	4	3	2	1
	<b>PART E: PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES</b>					
19.0	<b>New Innovative Programmes</b>					
19.1	The university has had interesting numbers of innovative quality programs/courses	5	4	3	2	1
20.0	<b>Research and Publications</b>					
20.1	Research is well taught, with increasing research publications by faculty.	5	4	3	2	1
21.0	<b>Student Enrolment Rates</b>					
21.1	Student enrollment rates have been increasing for the last five years.	5	4	3	2	1
22.0	<b>Student Graduation Rates</b>					
22.1	My university has been graduating increasing number of graduates for the last five years.	5	4	3	2	1
23.0	<b>Employee Promotion Rates</b>					
23.1	In my university the number of staff promoted has been increasing yearly	5	4	3	2	1

## APPENDIX III: DIRECTOR TUK, SBMS RESEARCH LETTER



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES**

**Haile Seleassie Avenue,**

**Fax: 2219689**

**P.O. Box 52428, Nairobi, 00200**

**email: [vc@tukenya.ac.ke](mailto:vc@tukenya.ac.ke)**

**Tel: +254(020) 343672, 2249974,341639**

**website: [www.tukenya.ac.ke](http://www.tukenya.ac.ke)**

---

**DATE:** 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Technical University of Kenya

P. O. Box 52428 – 00200

**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam

**RESEARCH LETTER FOR STEPHEN NJUGUNA MWAURA RUGA**

The bearer of this letter is a student in this institution undertaking a PhD in Business Administration (Human Resource Management) course. As a requirement for this, students are required to carry out a research study in an area which is relevant to the course.

We would be very grateful if you could assist the student with the information he may require.

Yours faithfully

Prof. Elyjoy Micheni

**Director, School of Business and Management Studies**

**Education and training for the real world**

*ISO 9001:2015 Certified*



## APPENDIX IV: TUK RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER

  
**THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA**  
Halle Selassie Avenue, P. O. Box 52428, Nairobi, 00200, Tel: +254 (020) 343672, 2249974, 2251300, 341639,  
Fax: 2219689, E-mail: dvc.asa@tukukenya.ac.ke, Website: [www.tukukenya.ac.ke](http://www.tukukenya.ac.ke)

**Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor**  
**Academics and Student Affairs**

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REF: TUK/DVCASA/ReKE/010/Vol.IV 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2022

Ruga S. N. Mwaura  
C/o Faculty of Social Science and Technology  
School of Business and Management Studies  
Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship  
Student No.: ABBX/05001P/2020  
Mobile No. 0722-609676

Dear Mr. Mwaura

**SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO COLLECT RESEARCH DATA**

Reference is made to the above matter and your letter of 21<sup>st</sup> April, 2022 addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, The Technical University of Kenya, through various administrative offices of the University.

Your request for authority to collect data for your research study on *"Strategic human resource management practices, human resource management unit, employee outcomes and performance of public universities in Kenya"* has been carefully considered and approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

Further, the institution expects you to treat all information given with utmost confidentiality and anonymity. In the meantime, the undersigned takes this opportunity to wish you all the best in your academic pursuits.

Yours sincerely,



**Prof. Paul M. Shiundu**  
**DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR- ACADEMICS & STUDENT AFFAIRS AND**  
**PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY**

Copy to: Vice Chancellor – Technical University of Kenya

PMS/joo

---

Education and training for the real world  
 ISO 9001:2015 Certified

# APPENDIX V: TUK SGAS RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



## THE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

Haile Selassie Avenue, P. O. Box 52428, Nairobi, 00200, Tel: +254 (020) 343672, 2249974, 2251300, 341639,  
Fax: 2219689, E-mail: vc@kenpoly.ac.ke, Website: [www.tukenya.ac.ke](http://www.tukenya.ac.ke)

### Office of the Director School of Graduate and Advanced Studies

REF: ABBX/005001P/2020

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2022

**The Chief Executive Officer**

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation  
NACOSTI Building, Off Waiyaki Way  
P.O. Box 30623 - 00100  
Nairobi, KENYA.  
Tel: 020 400 7000/0713788787/0735404245

Dear Sir/Madam,

**REF: APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH PERMIT**

This is to inform you that **Mr. Ruga Stephen Njuguna Mwaura** is a registered PhD student in the Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship, School of Business and Management Studies, The Technical University of Kenya. The course is offered by, Research and Thesis. The title of his Thesis is "**Strategic Management Practices, Human Resource Management Unit, Employee Outcomes and Performance of Public Universities in Kenya.**"

Mr. Ruga has defended his research proposal and is currently proceeding for field work which will involve data collection using approved surveys and research methods.

This is to kindly request you to issue him with a research permit.

**Prof. Joseph O. Lalah**  
Director- School of Graduate and Advanced Studies  
File Copy: SGAS Student File  
JOL/smm



---

Education and Training for the Real World  
ISO 9001:2015 Certified

**APPENDIX VI: NACOSTI RESEARCH PERMIT**

  
**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**  
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Ref No: **757901** Date of Issue: **04/March/2022**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**



**This is to Certify that Mr. Stephen Njuguna Ruga of Technical University of Kenya, has been licensed to conduct research in Embu, Kakamega, Kisumu, Meru, Mombasa, Muranga, Nairobi, Nakuru, Nyeri on the topic: STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT, EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA for the period ending : 04/March/2023.**

License No: **NACOSTI/P/22/16177**

Applicant Identification Number: **757901**

  
**Director General**  
**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

Verification QR Code



**NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.**

**APPENDIX VII: NAIROBI COUNTY COMMISSIONER AUTHORIZATION LETTER.**



**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**  
**MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND CO-ORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT**  
**STATE DEPARTMENT FOR INTERIOR AND CITIZEN SERVICES**

Telegrams: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: Nairobi 316845, 341666  
When replying please quote

COUNTY COMMISSIONER  
NAIROBI COUNTY  
P.O. BOX 30124-00100  
NAIROBI

REF NO. ED 10/6 VOL. XXIV (118)

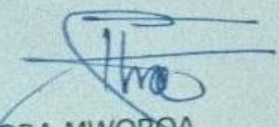
11<sup>th</sup> May, 2021

**Stephen N. M. Ruga**  
Technical University of Kenya  
P.O. BOX 52428 – 00200  
**NAIROBI**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Your letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2022 refers.

This office has no objection and authority is hereby granted to conduct a research on "Strategic human resource management practice, human resource management unit and employee outcomes on performance of public universities in Kenya" within Nairobi County for a period of four (4) months beginning from 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2022 to 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2022.

  
FLORA MWORWA  
**COUNTY COMMISSIONER**

CC: All Deputy County Commissioners  
**NAIROBI COUNTY**

**APPENDIX VIII: NAIROBI COUNTY DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION  
RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER**



## APPENDIX IX: PLAGIARISM CHECK REPORT

STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES,  
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT, EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES,  
AND PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

### ORIGINALITY REPORT

**14%**

SIMILARITY INDEX

**12%**

INTERNET SOURCES

**3%**

PUBLICATIONS

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STUDENT PAPERS

### PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	<b>Submitted to Kenyatta University</b> Student Paper	<b>3%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>erepository.uonbi.ac.ke</b> Internet Source	<b>2%</b>
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