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## **Ethical Issues in Recruitment, Selection and Employee Performance in Public Universities in Nyeri County, Kenya**

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### **Abstract**

Ethics plays a crucial role in recruitment and selection because human resource is the key source of competitive advantage for an organization if properly hired and managed. It is therefore important to put in place ethical consideration to ensure that candidates are reviewed according to their merit, fairness and equity and to also ensure that they possess the right knowledge, skills and abilities for the job. The main objective of the study was to examine how ethical issues in recruitment and selection affect employee performance in two public universities in Nyeri County. The study adopted descriptive research design in order to gather the required information. The study used stratified random sampling as its sampling design. The finding of the study revealed that ethical issues in recruitment and selection had positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance with discrimination being ranked the most unethical practice in recruitment and selection.

**Keywords:** Ethics, Ethical Issues, Recruitment and Selection, Employee Performance.

### **Introduction**

Ethics is the aspect of conduct governing behavior of an individual or a group. There are two things involved while making ethical decisions; normative decisions which suggest that something is, better or worse, right or wrong, good or bad and secondly, morality which refers to the accepted standards of behavior by the society (Dessler, 2008). People with ethical behaviors are trustworthy, impartial and fair. Respect the rights of others and mind in the impact of their actions on society. Conversely, unethical people are selfish and dishonest. Willing to say or do whatever they can in order to achieve their personal interests (Yalokwu, 2002).

Human resource management (HRM) is the process of hiring, training, appraising, and rewarding employees, ensuring fair practices, , labor relations, as well as health and safety. HRM also entails the section of management which is concerned with the managing of people at work (Dessler,

2011). Conaboy & Richard (2005) connotes that transparent and just HRM practices and policies are the basis of creating an ethical and a professional public service. An ethical environment is created through maintaining the principle of merit in the recruitment, hiring and promotions, fairness and transparency in the selection criteria, resonate performance management and setting a good example by leaders (Vickers, 2005). In addition, Vickers (2005) argued that, proper pronounced, unbiased and HR conduct on disciplinary procedures, training opportunities, appropriate remuneration, and the like if enforced and implemented will promote a professionalism culture and improved performance. Etomi (2002) defined recruitment as an apprehensive method of appealing to an adequate number of persons with the precise profile with regards to experience, qualifications, skills and other pertinent attributes to indicate their interest and ability in working for the organization

Etomi (2002) observed that employee selection is concerned with identifying the candidates from the recruitment pool who best fulfill the organizational employment needs. It is also the process through which the recruits are sorted down to the few who are appointed. As provided for under the Public Officers Ethics Act of 2003 of the laws of Kenya, it is the responsibility of public officers to ensure that selection of new staff is done on the basis of integrity, competence, qualification and suitability or elected in fair elections Government of Kenya (GOK), (2003). While recruitment is a positive activity, selection on the other hand is viewed as a negative process since it involves picking out the best of those who had indicated interest in working for the organization and turning down the rest. This presents a HR dilemma for HR managers because it involves discrimination. Aturu (2005) define discrimination as any discrepancy, elimination or favoritism made on the basis of age, sex, race, religion, national origin, pregnancy/child birth, disability, familial/marital status sexual orientation, prior arrest/conviction record which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality at work or during selection. Recruitment and selection should be based on merit and not on the said factors.

Sexual harassment is another unethical practice, a violation of sexual Offences Act of 2006 of the laws of Kenya (constitution of Kenya). The Act describes sexual harassment as any uninvited sexual moves, request for sexual errands, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. According to Milkovich and Boudreau (2004) forms of sexual harassment comprise: verbal and/or written harassment (jokes, offensive language); physical assault (ranging from touching to serious assault); visual display (posters, graffiti, obscene gestures); coercion (pressure for sexual favours); intrusion (pestering, spying, following) that occurs at work during and after recruitment. When employment decisions are made based on these unethical issues, it results to selection of incompetent employee who do not add value to the organization. This not only affects performance for the individual employee but also that of the entire organization. On his part Taylor (2008) views sexual harassment as nepotism, favouritism, god fathers', and quota system as the major forms of unfair practices in recruitment and selection process. According to GoK (2003), a public officer shall not practice nepotism or favouritism. This is because such conduct undermines the government commitment as an ambassador for equal employment opportunity to all Kenyans regardless of gender, race, and tribe or affiliation.

Bribery is dishonestly persuading someone while executing his/her official duties to act in ones favour by a gift of money or other inducement. Price (2004) found out that taking bribes before and after the process of recruitment and selection, lack of accurate job preview as well as non-disclosure of the positive as well as the negative characteristics of the job to applicants at the entry point into the organization leads to undue anticipations and could cause frustration and eventual turnover.

If recruitment and selection is done based on unethical issues like nepotism, sexual harassment and discrimination and bribery and employees selected do not have the right knowledge skills and abilities, this will highly affect individual performance and performance for the entire organization. In addition, unethical practices cause employee turnover and as a result their duties and responsibilities are delegated to existing employees which results to conflict among employees.

### **Objective of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to assess how ethical issues in recruitment and selection affect employee performance in public universities in Nyeri County, Kenya.

### **Statement of the Problem**

HRM is an interesting area of study since people are the key in the competitiveness of an organization if properly managed. In order to enhance long term organizational performance, good relationship between management and employees, maintain good organizational reputation, reduce level of turnover and to make certain that the organization attracts employees with adequate knowledge skills and abilities, the organization must ensure that there is fairness and equity during recruitment and selection process. This will motivate employees, boost their morale, reduce labor turnover and absenteeism, and, have morally upright employees.

Despite existence of various policies and organizational culture to promote ethical behaviour in organizations, the level of ethical practices in recruitment and selection is still very low. This has impinged heavily on the work place. Consequently, public organizations are currently faced with notable challenges of attracting and retaining qualified personnel. This leads to recruitment of incompetent employees who lack knowledge, skills and ability for the job.

Research has been done on HRM practices but very little has been done to explain how ethical issues in recruitment and selection affect employee performance. This study therefore seeks to fill the knowledge gap by investigating how ethical issues in recruitment and selection affect employee's performance in public universities.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Justice Theory**

The study was based on justice theory proposed by Dessler (2008) who was of the opinion that an organizational justice has three components that is distributive justice, procedural justice and interpersonal justice. Interpersonal justice entails the manner in which managers conduct their interpersonal dealings with employees, the degree to which managers treat employees with

dignity as opposed to abuse or disrespect. To treat people justly is to deal with them fairly and equitably.

Adams (1965) the proponent of this theory distinguished between distributive and procedural justice, he argued that distributive justice refers to how rewards are distributed. According to him people will feel that they have been treated justly if they believe that rewards have been distributed in accordance with their contributions, that they receive what was promised to them and that they get what they need. While Procedural justice refers to the ways in which managerial decisions are made and HR procedures are managed. People will feel that they have been treated justly if management's decisions and procedures are fair, consistent, transparent, and non-discriminatory and properly consider the views and needs of employees. Just decisions require fairness, equity, and impartiality on the part of decision makers, particularly with respect to the ultimate burdens and benefits that will accrue from the decision (Christopher, 2012).

Public organizations are currently faced with notable challenges of attracting and retaining qualified personnel. As the economy struggles with inflation, many employees are currently changing jobs as others are retrenched un-notified. This is now becoming a major ethical dilemma which if left unchecked will cause untold suffering to various civil servants and continue the cycle of poor performance by public entities compared to their private counterparts. Fairness and justice in employee management in organizations hangs in the air, especially where qualified employees are denied access to promotion or even given employment opportunities, unfair or inadequate reward systems as well as un-healthy or risky working environments are a common practice.

Employees should be treated fairly and rewards distributed in an equitable manner in an organization. The management should also come up with decisions and procedures which are fair and that suits all, consistent and transparent and which considers views and needs of employees. As a result, employees will feel recognized and part of the organization and this will boost their performance.

### **Ethical Issues in Recruitment and Selection**

Despite nearly fifty years of enforcement of equal employment opportunity laws in which hiring managers are prohibited to make hiring decisions based on non-job related factors ( sex, race, religion, national origin, color, disability, and age), the effectiveness of diversity management programs (e.g., promoting women in traditionally male occupations) have had limited success (Falkenberg & Boland, 2007). Taylor (2008) posits that recruitment involves actively soliciting applications from potential employees which is considered a positive activity that requires employers to sell themselves in the relevant labour markets so as to maximize the pool of well-qualified candidates from which future employees can be chosen.

Etomi (2002) defined recruitment as the process of attracting a sufficient number of individuals with the right profile in terms of qualifications, experience, skills and other relevant attributes to indicate their interest in working for the organization. As provided for under the Public Officers Ethics Act (2003) of the laws of Kenya, it is the responsibility of public officers to ensure that

selection of new staff is done on the basis of integrity, competence, qualification and suitability or elected in fair elections. Etomi (2002) stated that employee selection is concerned with identifying the candidates from the recruitment pool who best meet organizational requirements for employment, it is also the process through which those who are recruited are winnowed down to the few who are hired. While recruitment is a positive activity, by contrast selection is viewed as a negative process or activity in so far as it involves picking out the best of the bunch and turning down the rest presenting HR managers with some ethical dilemma.

Discrimination includes any distinction, exclusion or preferences made on the basis of race, sex, age, religion, national origin, pregnancy/child birth, familial/marital status disability, sexual orientation, prior arrest/conviction record which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality at work or during selection (Aturu, 2005). Discrimination on the basis of the said factors is unethical practices in recruitment and selection. Sexual harassment is a violation of sexual Offences Act (2006) of the laws of Kenya (constitution of Kenya). The Act defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favours, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. According to Milkovich and Boudreau (2004) forms of sexual harassment include: physical assault (ranging from touching to serious assault); verbal and/or written harassment (jokes, offensive language); visual display (posters, graffiti, obscene gestures); coercion (pressure for sexual favours); intrusion (pestering, spying, following) that occurs at work. When submission to such conduct is made and used as the basis for employment decisions, it creates an intimidating, hostile and offensive working environment for employees.

Taylor (2008) noted nepotism, favouritism, god fathers', and quota system as the major forms of unfair practices in recruitment and selection process. According to Public Officers Ethics Act (2003) of the laws of Kenya, a public officer shall not practice nepotism or favouritism. This is because such conduct undermines the government commitment as an ambassador for equal employment opportunity to all Kenyans regardless of gender, race, and tribe or affiliation. Price (2004) found out that asking for bribes prior to and after recruitment and selection exercise, lack of realistic job preview as well as non-disclosure of the positive as well as the negative characteristics of the job to applicants at the point of entry into the organization leads to undue expectations and could cause frustration and eventual turnover.

All selection and recruitment methods should have utility and validity (London, 2001). It is important to be choosy during recruitment, with the criteria being on those whose ability to add value is high. However, when ethics are not considered, there are possibilities that individuals put into the workforce are limited in terms of ability to add value. If recruitment and selection is done based on unethical issues like nepotism, sexual harassment and discrimination and employees selected do not have the right knowledge skills and abilities, this will highly affect their individual performance and performance for the entire organization. In addition, it can also create conflict between employees because in most cases the duties which they ought to perform will be delegated to other employees.

## Employee Performance

Keller and Price (2012) in their study found that the organizational performance is what an enterprise delivers to stake holders in financial and operational terms. It is evaluated through such measures as net operating profit, return on capital employed, total returns to shareholders, net operating costs, and stock returns. They argue that an efficient and effective organization is able to align, execute, and renew itself faster than the competition to sustain exceptional performance over time. Goetzl, Ronald and Ozminskowski (2008) were of the opinion that many employers associate reduced employee performance to morale, motivation, elevated absenteeism, employee turnover and moral issues. Finer (2000) notes that employees' performance level never exceeds 50% of an individual capacity to perform particularly when not effectively motivated. The employees may stunt in low morale often displayed in poor professional conduct and poor work performance. Generally employees' productive performance and professionalism can be enhanced through motivational practices responsive to their needs. Professionalism is a prerequisite arising from a specific body of knowledge and its ethical code of conduct (Gibbs 2004). How employees behave at work, is not result of random influences but highly motivated employees perform better, thus enhancing their professional growth and ethical foundations through training and experience. Laurie (2007) suggested that at the organizational level, management needs to exercise control over the behaviour and actions of staff in order to ensure a satisfactory level of performance.

## Methodology

### Research Design

Burns and Groves (2003) delineate a research design as a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control with factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings.

This study used descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way to identify conditions or relationships that exists, or effects that are evident, or trends that are developing (Best & Kahn, 2009). The design is also suitable for analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data to address the research problem. The study engaged the target population in finding out Ethical issues in recruitment and selection and their effects on employees' performance in public universities in Nyeri County.

### Target Population

Orodho and Kombo (2005) defines target population as set of all elements that possess the information sought by the researcher. The target population was three hundred and thirty five (335) employees who were non teaching staff in two public universities in Nyeri County (DeKUT and Karatina University). This population was categorized according to their respective departments which included academic affairs, marketing, public relations office, procurement, human resource, security, housekeeping, library, quality and finance office as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Target Population**

Departments	Dedan Kimathi University		Karatina University	
	Population size (n)	Proportion (%)	Population size (n)	Proportion (%)
Academic Affairs	12	7	13	6

Marketing	3	2	6	3
Public Relations Office	4	3	5	3
Procurement	9	6	8	5
Human Resource	10	6	9	5
Security	50	31	49	28
Housekeeping	45	27	52	29
Library	11	7	15	7
Quality Assurance	3	2	5	3
Finance & Accounting	14	9	12	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Human Resource Office (October 2016)

### Sampling Design

Ogula (2005) define sampling design as a process or technique of choosing a sub-group from a target population to participate in the study. The study used stratified random sampling technique to draw the sample. A stratified sampling technique is a population sampling technique that requires the population to be divided into smaller groups, called strata (Charles & Fen, 2007). Stratified random sampling ensures that specific groups are represented, even proportionally, in the sample(s) by selecting individuals from strata list. The researcher took a sample size of 30% of the target population to get a sample of 101 respondents, which according to Paton (2002) is adequate for a descriptive study.

According to Ngechu (2004), stratified random sampling technique has a greater precision for estimating the overall population parameters and warrants a more representative sample derived from a relatively homogeneous population without any bias. The target population was grouped into strata as illustrated in Table 2

**Table 2 Sample size**

Departments	Dedan Kimathi University		Karatina University	
	Population size (n)	Proportion (nx30%) Sample	Population size (n)	Proportion (nx30%) sample
Academic affairs	12	4	13	4
Marketing	3	1	6	2
Public relations office	4	1	5	2
Procurement	9	3	8	2
Human resource	10	3	9	3
Security,	50	15	49	14
Housekeeping	45	14	52	15
Library	11	3	15	5
Quality	3	1	5	2
Finance	14	4	12	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>52</b>



### **Method of Data Collection**

Questionnaires were used as the chief tool collecting data. A questionnaire is a technique of data collection where selected respondents are requested to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order (Sekaran, 2006). The study used structured questionnaires with a five likert scale. Kothari (2004) opines that use of a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection enables a researcher to collect large amount of information in a reasonably short span of time and guarantees confidentiality of the source of information through anonymity while ensuring standardization.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected was quantitative and qualitative in nature. Zikmund (2003) defines data analysis as the whole process, which kicks off instantaneously after data collection and at the point of result interpretation. It involves coding, classifying and analysing gathered data to ensure completeness and accuracy. Linear regression was employed for data analysis. Primary data from the questionnaire was coded and entered into the computer for computation of descriptive statistics. Results were analyzed with the support of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 to come up with frequencies, mean and percentages that was presented in pie charts, graphs and tables. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) defined content analysis as a research method for the interpretation of the content of text data through systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns.

### **Findings and Discussion**

#### **Response Rate of Respondents in Public Universities in Nyeri County**

Out of the 101 respondents sampled by the study, 91 responded giving a response rate of 90.1% of the target sample, which was very good according to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003).

#### **Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The background information of respondents was deemed necessary because the ability of the respondents to give satisfactory information on the study variables greatly depended on the number of years the respondent has worked in the institution, educational background, age among other considerations.

#### **Response by Departments in Public Universities**

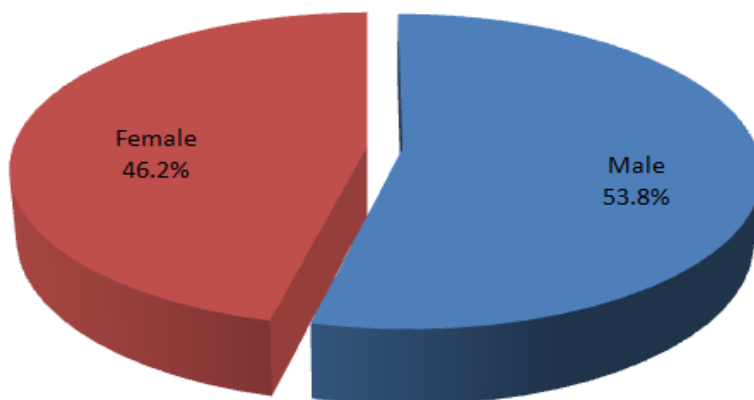
The study sought to involve all the non teaching staff and hence categorized various departments as follows; academic affairs, marketing, public relations office, procurement human resource, security housekeeping library, quality, finance and accounting. The responses from various departments were as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3 Response by Departments in Public Universities in Nyeri County**

Response by Departments	Frequency	Percent (%)
Academic affairs	6	6.6
Marketing	3	3.3
Public relations office	2	2.2
Procurement	4	4.4
Human resource	5	5.5
Security,	28	30.8
Housekeeping	27	29.7
Library	7	7.7
Quality	2	2.2
Finance and accounting	7	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Gender of the Respondents**

The section sought to establish the gender composition of the personnel working with universities under this study to explore the extent to which gender affects ethical issues in recruitment and selection.



**Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents**

Findings in Figure 4.1 indicate that 53.8% of the respondents were male while 46.2% were female. The study revealed that both gender were adequately represented in this study hence views from both gender were represented.

**Work Experience of the Respondents**

In order to establish whether the respondent can articulate the issues in this study relating to ethical issues in recruitment and selection, the study sought to establish the period under which the respondents have worked with the university. The results are as presented in Table 4.2 .

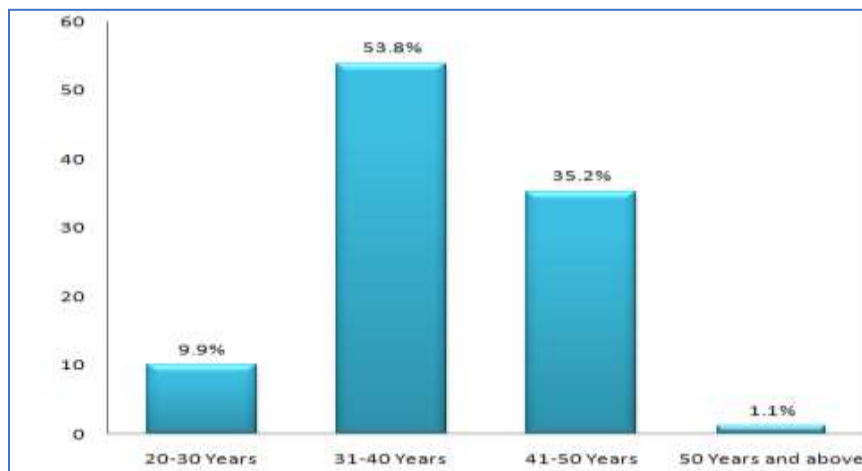
**Table 4: Work Experience of the Respondents**

Work Experience of the Respondents	Frequency	Percent (%)
Below 2 Years	9	9.9
2-4 Years	21	23.1
4-6 Years	38	41.8
6-8 Years	17	18.7
8 Years and above	6	6.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From Table 4.2, the results indicate that 9.9% respondents have worked for the organization for more than 2 years and more than 8years respectively. This indicates that more than 60% of the employees have worked for the two institutions for more than four years, which is an adequate period to familiarize with ethical issues in recruitment and selection.

**Age Category of the Respondents**

The age of employees has been used in many studies as a measure of an organization’s maturity or level of structure stability or establishment. The study thus sought to establish the age category of the respondents. The results are as presented in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 2: Age category of Employees in Public Universities in Nyeri County**

As shown by Figure 4.2, the study revealed that more than 50% of the employees are between the age group of 31-40 years. This is a clear indication that they are in their productivity stage in life if properly managed is more likely to enhance performance for the entire organization.

**Ethical Issues in Recruitment, Selection and Employee Performance**

The study sought to find out how ethical issues in recruitment and selection affect employee performance in public universities in Nyeri County. Likert scale was employed with a scale of one to five where one represented strongly disagree and 5 represented strongly agree.

**Table 5: Ethical Issues in Recruitment and Selected and Employee Performance**

	N	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Dev
Subjecting all potential candidates to similar evaluation criteria	91	4.0769	.10853	1.03528
Advertising all employment opportunities	91	4.0549	.10171	.97025
Adherence to well documented recruitment policy and code of ethics	91	4.0330	.09172	.87497
Requirement to declare any existence of conflict of interest by interviewer	91	3.6154	.09346	.89156
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	<b>91</b>			

Data in Table 4.2 shows that subjecting all potential candidates to similar evaluation criteria was rated highest with a mean score of 4.08(SD=1.04) followed by Advertising all employment opportunities with a mean score 4.05 (SD=.97). Adherence to well documented recruitment policy and code of ethics had a mean score of 4.03 (SD= .87) while requirement to declare any existence of conflict of interest by interviewer had a mean score of 3.62 (SD=.89). The finding of this study reveals that all ethical issues in recruitment and selection process considered in this study were rated above average, an indication that they may have a major effect on employee's performance. The finding also concurs with earlier study by Conaboy (2005) who recommends that fair and transparent HR policies and practices are the foundations of creating a professional and ethical public service. Vickers (2005) noted that HRM, through upholding the merit principle in recruitment and promotions, transparency in the selection process, sound performance management and setting a good example by managers plays a key role in creating an ethical environment. He further argued that, well articulated and fair HRM policies on appropriate remuneration, training opportunities, disciplinary procedures and the like if implemented and enforced will promote a culture of professionalism and improved performance. According to London (2001) all selection and recruitment methods should have utility and validity, however, when ethics are not considered, there are possibilities that individuals put into the workforce are limited in terms of ability to add value.

### **Influence of Recruitment and Selection on Employee performance**

The bivariate linear regression analysis results of recruitment and selection on employee performance were as shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Model Summary for Recruitment and Selection**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.382 <sup>a</sup>	.146	.137	1.13701

a. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment and selection

From the regression results above, the R value was 0.382 indicating that there is a positive relationship between the recruitment and selection and employee performance in public

universities. The R squared ( $R^2$ ) value of 0.146 shows that 14.6 percent of employee performance is explained by recruitment and selection ethical considerations when all other factors were held constant. The remaining 85.4 percent is explained by other factors not considered in this study.

**Table 7: ANOVA Table for Recruitment and Selection**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	19.689	1	19.689	15.230	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	115.059	89	1.293		
	Total	134.747	90			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Recruitment and selection

The model was significant with the F ratio = 15.230 at p value  $0.000 < 0.05$ . This is an indication that recruitment and selection have a positive and significant effect on employee performance.

**Table 8: Regression Coefficients for Recruitment and Selection**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.349	.317		7.412	.000
	Recruitment and selection	.348	.089	.382	3.903	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

The beta coefficients of the resulting model indicated there was positive and statistically significant relationship between recruitment and selection on employee performance at  $\beta$  value of 0.348 and P value 0.000 which is less than 0.05. The bivariate linear regression model equation fitted using unstandardized coefficients is;  $Y = 2.349 + 0.248X_1 + e$ . This implies that employees' performance would increase by 0.348 units when recruitment and selection ethical considerations go up by one unit. The study also implies that holding all factors constant, employee performance in public university would be 2.349 units. The finding of the study that recruitment and selection had positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance concurs with Vickers (2005), who noted that human resource management, through upholding the merit principle in recruitment and promotions, transparency in the selection process, sound performance management and setting a good example by managers plays a key role in creating an ethical environment. He concluded that ethical considerations in HR are becoming increasingly important in all industries, since HR remains the most vital section that can develop and nurture ethically inclined professionals. According to Lenkau & Maket (2012), to move the organization in the direction of becoming an ethical organization, the challenges faced fall into three key areas: first, the HR function will have to develop and implement HR practices and procedures that embody the core values of an ethical organization; second, the HR function must develop the process to identify and then to assist other functions in implementing those changes across the organization; and third, the HR function must create a

culture that supports the growth in individual ethical capability and organization commitment to the goal of becoming an ethical organization.

## **Conclusion and Recommendation**

### **Summary of the Finding**

The objective of the study sought to find out how ethical issues in recruitment and selection affect employee performance in public universities in Nyeri County. The findings of the descriptive statistic indicated that there are some elements of discrimination in the universities in areas pertaining recruitment and selection process even though the study was not categorical on the form of discrimination. In order to enhance recruitment and selection ethical issues subjecting all potential candidates to similar evaluation criteria, advertising all employment opportunities, adherence to well documented recruitment policy and code of ethics and requirement to declare any existence of conflict of interest by interviewer were aspects found to have greater impact. Subjecting all potential candidates to similar evaluation criteria, advertising all employment opportunities was ranked high with a mean of 4.08. To ascertain the relationship between ethical issues in recruitment and selection and employees' performance in public universities, Nyeri County, the study tested the relationship between the two variables using linear regression analysis. At 5% level of significance the regression results indicated a positive and significant relationship between ethical issues in recruitment and selection and employees' performance in public universities with  $\beta=0.351$  at  $p$  value  $0.018 < 0.05$

### **Conclusion**

The general objective of the study was to find out how ethical issues in human resource management affect employees' performance in public universities in Nyeri County, Kenya. The finding of the study revealed that ethical issues in recruitment and selection had positive and statistically significant relationship on employees' performance. This can be attributed to the fact that if the employees feel that they are not discriminated during the recruitment and selection process their level of performance may be enhanced. The study concludes that ethical issues in recruitment and selection can be addressed by subjecting all potential candidates to similar evaluation criteria, advertising all employment opportunities, adherence to well documented recruitment policy and code of ethics and requiring interviewer to declare any existence of conflict of interest during recruitment and selection process.

### **Recommendations**

Following the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made. Findings clearly show that ethical issues in recruitment and selection had positive and statistically significant effect on employees' performance. Following these findings, this study recommends that universities should come up with policy on ensuring that ethic and integrity is adhered to during recruitment and selection process.

### **Areas for Further Research**

This study makes an important contribution in our understanding of the ethical issues in recruitment and selection and employees' performance in public universities. The study recommends further research in the following a study focusing on ethical issues faced by teaching

staff in both private and public universities and how they affect their output and that of the entire university. This study considered recruitment and selection, future researchers should also focus on other types of composition variables of ethical issues in human resource management that may affect employee performance in public universities.

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