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Labor Turnover in the Sugar Industry in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

This study was an exploratory study that aimed at establishing the reasons why workers leave Kenya's sugar industry. The study further sought to establish the human resource practices in the sugar industry, assessed the extent of labor turnover, determined factors causing labor turnover and identified possible solutions to labor turnover in the sugar industry. The researcher gathered information through the use of two questionnaires, one for managers of the selected sugar firms and one for non managerial staff. Data was analyzed by use of basic descriptive statistical tools. The study revealed that labor turnover is widespread in the sugar firms and that it affects all categories of staff in these firms. The study also observed that labor turnover is spread throughout the year and that it frustrates and impacts negatively on the sugar firms. The study found that salary is a major factor causing labor turnover followed by training, promotion, performance appraisal and work condition. Other factors like recognition, job content, participation in decision making and leadership style did not feature prominently as causes of labor turnover. Participation in decision making and leadership style has a major bearing in performance of workers and productivity. It was also revealed that although lack of employee commitment and motivation can be major causes of labor turnover, they are dependent on all the other factors causing labor turnover.

Key words: Labor turnover, Sugar Industry, Kenya, Staff Retention, Greener Pastures.

1. Introduction

The success of any organization depends on its human resources, its technology and the type of materials it has. Technology and materials cannot operate in isolation; they need the human touch and hands to make an organization perform effectively and efficiently. It is against this background that workers are very critical to the success or failure of any organization and the Sugar industry is not left out. In a research done by Kerr (2004) on Australian labor, revealed that Australian labor history has long been seen as a vigorous area of Intellectual Endeavour. It has broadened significantly from its easy narrow focus on institutional histories and labor biographies to include social concerns, race, class, gender, the work place locality and state. Labor movement has faced major challenges with declining union density, hostile regulatory environment, wage inequality, rising job insecurity and labor movement. Labor movement has switched from traditional industrial issues to broadened union incorporating a wider social agenda. (http://www.history cooperative.org.2005). The current state of the economy characterized by information explosion, liberalization, globalization and intense competition from within and out side the country has led many organizations both in the private and public sector become preoccupied on how to increase the "added value" of their employees. There is need to encourage employees to remain in the organization and to increase productivity beyond that which is at a minimum accepted standard using scarce resources, (Kimathi, 2000).

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research was to establish the reasons why workers leave Kenya's sugar industry.

Specific objectives were: -

(i) To establish the Human Resource practices in Kenya's sugar industry.
(ii) To assess the extent of labor turnover in Kenya's sugar industry.
(iii) To determine the factors causing labor turnover in Kenya's sugar industry.
(iv) To identify possible solutions to labor turnover in the sugar industry.

2. Causes of Labor Turnover

The causes of labor turnover are: - morale, job satisfaction, promotion prospects, inadequate salaries, (Revill, 1987), more responsibilities and working conditions, (Bryant, 1987)). These personalities attributes turnover to supervision, personnel policies, dislikes for job, poor working conditions, unequal workloads and job security. For the purpose of this study, the researcher assessed the following factors; motivation, supervisory management, working conditions, career management, salary, training, employee commitment, performance appraisal and job content.

3 Research Methodology

Exploratory and descriptive research designs were used. The population of the study consisted of all the sugar firms in Kenya's sugar industry and these include; Mumias, Miwani, Sony sugar, Nzoia, Chemelil, Muhoroni, Ramisi and West Kenya sugar companies. However, Mumias, Nzoia , Chemelil and Sony were in full operation. Ramisi shut down. Muhoroni and Miwani were undergoing receivership, though Muhoroni was semi operational, it is crushing sugarcane but Miwani was not crushing. (Kenya sugar board statistics, 2005). A random sample was used to select respondents from the three selected firms. A total of 120 respondents were interviewed. Both managerial and non managerial staffs were targeted. This sample was chosen due to financial and time constraints.

3.1 Variables

The independent variable corresponded to the factors influencing labor turnover in Kenya's sugar industry. These include: training, motivation, salary, employee commitment, and career management, performance appraisal, working conditions, leadership styles, job content, recognition and decision making. The dependent variable was labor turnover.

4.0 Research Findings

120 questionnaires were distributed, of which 114 were distributed to non-managerial staff and 6 were distributed to managers of the sugar firms. 110 out of 114 non- managerial staff responded while only 3 out of 6 managers responded. The researcher noted that the participation of respondents was generally good (94.17%). Non managers' participation was 96.49% and managers participation was 50%. However, the researcher noted that non-managerial staff was more willing to volunteer information but managers were a bit skeptical and reluctant to give out information.

4.1 Employees Age bracket

Results indicate that 2.7% of the employees were between the age brackets of 18 to 23, 14.2% fell between 24 – 29, 26.5% fall between 30 – 35, 23% fall between 36 – 41, and 19.5% fell between 42 – 46, 11.5% fell between the age bracket of 47 – 52 and 2.7% are in the age bracket of 53 and above. It is further revealed that majority of workers were between the age bracket of 30 – 35 that is going by the percentage of 26.5% and that 84% of the employees were below 47 years of age.

4.2 Level of Education

Result indicates that all employees have a given level of education whereby 2% have primary level of education, 94% have secondary level and 4% have University level of education. The majority of employees (94%) have secondary level of education.

4.3 Courses attended by employees

Results indicate that 61.9% of employees have undergone training in certificate courses, 23% have diploma qualifications, none (0%) have higher diploma, 3.5% have bachelors degree, 1% have post graduate degree, 2.7% have been trained in-house (received training within their organizations related to the jobs they are doing) and 8.8% have not received any training at all. From the study, it was further noted that all those who had not attended any course were either security guards, messengers or clerks and that they had served in their organizations for a period of more than five years save for three cases (30%) of which one had served for a period of 1-2 years and two had served for a period between 3-4 years. It was also noted that this category of staff who had not received training were between the age brackets of 47 and 53 and above and that most of them (70%) had previously worked in other organizations before joining their current organizations. This category of staff further indicated that they did not have any intention of leaving their organizations because their age brackets would not allow them secure other better places as they were approaching retirement age.

From the study it was further revealed that 3 (30%) out of 10 (100%) employees who indicated that they had not attended courses had actually received some short training though these training were not related to the jobs they were currently doing. 1 (10%) employee had undergone a theological training, 1 (10%) had undergone a driving course and 1 (10%) had undergone a government rated mechanic course but 2 (67%) of these employees were working as security guards and one (33%) was working as a plant operator, jobs which were not related to the courses they had undertaken. Results show that majority of the workers (95%) have attended diploma courses and below and only 5% of the employees have university degrees. The study showed that there is need to redesign jobs in the sugar industry or match the employees' jobs with their qualifications; a lack of this or poor job design can be a serious cause of job dissatisfaction that would ultimately lead to high labor turnover.

4.4 Length of Service of Employees in their Organization

Result indicated that 2% of the employees had served in their organizations for less than one year, 18% had worked in their organizations between 1–2 years, 45% of the employees had worked between 3–4 years and 35% had worked for 5 years and above. It is further revealed that the majority of employees (45%) had worked between 3–4 years in their organizations. Result also reveals that a great percentage of the workers (65%) had worked for less than 5 years in their organizations.

4.5 Employment history, and employees expectations upon joining their organizations

Employees were asked to indicate whether they had worked elsewhere or not; 34% (38/113) responded by indicating that they had worked elsewhere while 66% (75/113) indicated that they had never worked anywhere other than their organizations. The respondents were further asked about their expectations upon joining their organizations, some had only one expectation but majority had more than one expectation. The study shows that 31% (34/100) of employees joined their organizations in anticipation of higher posts or promotions, 55% (61/110) joined their organizations with the hope of getting high salaries, 8% (9/110) expected to receive better working conditions, 4% (4/110) wanted job security, 12% (13/110) wanted to have better working experience, 3% (3/110) joined their organizations in order to manage people, 16% (18/110) expected their standards of living to improve, 4% (4/110) expected to participate in decision making, 6% (7/110) joined their organizations to enable them stay with their family members, 2% (2/110) hoped that they would buy cars and only 1% (1/110) expected to receive some recognition in their work places. Majority of employees (55%) joined their organizations in the hope of better salaries. When the respondents were further asked if they had realized these expectations, 30% (33/110) revealed that they had realized some of the expectations while 70% (77/110) indicated that they had not realized their expectations. When the 77 (100%) employees were asked whether absence of their expectations would make them leave, 60 (78%) employees indicated that they would leave the sugar firms. 17 (22%) employees however indicated that they would still stay even if they had not realized their expectations. Majority of employees (78%) would leave their organizations due to non-realization of their expectations.

4.6 Salary Structure of the Sample Firms

Managers were asked to indicate the basis of determining the salary structure of their firms and their responses indicated that all (100%) firms base their salary award on number of grades while no firm awards salaries based on width of salary brackets or differentials. Further asked about what occupation were included in the salary structure, it was revealed that permanent and 'unionisable" workers are the workers included in the salary structure. Results show that 22% of the employees were earning Kshs.8,000 and below, 42% earned between Kshs.8,001 and Kshs.10,000, 32% earned between Kshs.10,001 to Kshs.20,000 and only 4% earned between Kshs.20,001 and above. The study showed that 60% of the respondents indicated that salary administration was poor, 29% indicated that it was fair, 7% indicated that it was good and finally 4% revealed that salary administration in the sugar firms was very good. When managers were further asked if they had given salary increment to their employees, all (100%) indicated that they had given their employees salary increment. However, from the research it was revealed that only 61% (67) of the employees had received salary increment while 39% (43) had not received salary increment. It was also revealed that 67% of the employees were not satisfied with the salary increment and only 33% were satisfied. It was further revealed that out of the 43 (100%) respondents who did not receive salary increment 35 (81%) were not motivated, while only 8 (19%) were motivated. When all employees (110) were asked about the effect of their salary levels on labor turnover, 14% indicated that their salary level would make them stay in their organizations and 86% indicated that they would leave their organizations because of the salaries they were paid. It is therefore revealed from the study that salary is a major factor causing labor turnover in the sugar firms. The study further showed that none of the sample firms (0%) gave competitive or very competitive salaries. The study also indicated that 33% of the firms administer very uncompetitive salaries while 67% of the sample firms give uncompetitive salaries. It is further revealed from the study that generally the salary administration is not competitive to match other employers and respondents subsequently indicated that for this reason, employees were likely to leave the sugar firms to join other industries.

4.7 Other Benefits Awarded to Employees

The study indicated that 33% of the firms gave holiday pay to only managerial staff while non managerial staff did not enjoy this privilege. All sugar firms (100%) gave company cars to their managerial staff but none (0%) was given to non-managerial employees, 33% of the firms gave their managerial staff the privilege of medical insurance and loan scheme, but they did not issue these benefits to non-managerial category of staff. All the sample firms (100%) allow both managerial and non-managerial staff to take advances from their organizations. Pension is not paid to any category of staff in the sugar firms. All the firms (100%) award sick pay to both categories of staff that is, managerial and non managerial staff.

4.8 Performance Appraisal in the Sample Firm

Results show that 58% of the firms have poor performance appraisal, 34% have fair performance appraisal and only 8% have good performance appraisal of their employees. Managers were asked to indicate how often they appraise their employees; all (100%) revealed that they appraise their employees yearly.

The study showed that all firms (100%) appraise their employees yearly. No firm (0%) appraises its employees weekly, monthly, after 2 years or after 3 years. However, one firm (33%) further indicated that it has not appraised its employees since the year 2001(for 4 years) when the firm underwent receivership but the frequency of employees' appraisal had been yearly before the firm underwent receivership.

4.9 Participation in Decision Making

Employees were asked to indicate if they participate in decision making and 110 (100%) employees responded; 29 (26%) responded that they participate in decision making, 81 (74%) indicated that they did not participate in decision making. When 81 respondents who indicated that they did not participate in decision making were further asked if lack of participation in decision making would make them leave, 37 (46%) indicated that they would leave while 44 (56%) indicated that they would still stay. However, it was revealed that although this factor can cause labor turnover, it is not a major factor because a greater percentage of respondents (54%) indicated that they would still stay in their organizations even without participation in decision making.

4.10 Leadership Style in the Sugar Industry

Results show that 25% of the sugar firms had democratic leadership style while 75% were practicing autocratic/dictatorial leadership style. No firm (0%) was practicing laissez faire form of leadership. It was however revealed that the two leadership styles did not completely exist in the sugar firms. The study revealed that leadership styles bordered democratic or autocratic style of leadership. 25% of the respondents indicated that leadership style tended towards democratic but was not fully democratic and 75% of the respondents indicated that leadership style was close to autocratic/dictatorial but was not fully autocratic/dictatorial. When respondents were further asked if the leadership style in their organizations would make them leave or stay, 39% (43/110) indicated that they would leave because of the leadership style while 61% (67/110) indicated that they would stay in their organizations even with the state of the leadership style then.

4.11 Training

The study indicated that training is handled poorly in their organizations, 28% indicated that it was handled fairly, 4.5% revealed that training was good and finally, 4.5% said that training was very good in their organizations. A great percentage revealed that training was poor in the sugar firms. Employees were further asked if they had been sponsored for training by the sugar firms and 28% (31) revealed that they had been sponsored for training while 72% (79) indicated that they had not been trained by their organizations. The study also revealed that out of 31 (100%) who had received training, 29 (94%) had also received salary increment and only 2 (6%) did not receive salary increment. When the 79 (100%) employees who had not been sponsored for training by their organizations were further asked if lack of opportunity for training would make them leave their organizations, 66 (84%) indicated that they would leave and 13 (16%) indicated that they would stay. It is quite evident that training is one of the major factors causing labor turnover in the sugar firms going by the large number of respondents, 66 (84%) who indicated that they would leave due to the absence of the same. The sugar firms need to give training of its employees a priority to avoid high turnover.

Managers of the sample firms were asked to indicate the level of satisfaction of their employees with the training program offered by their organizations. The study showed that employees were neither very satisfied nor satisfied with the training programs offered in the sample firms. Results also indicates that 67% of employees were dissatisfied with the training programs and 33% were very dissatisfied with the training programs offered in their organizations. Managers further revealed that there were limited chances of training and this is due to shortages of finances, therefore training was confined to health, safety and management committee workers which was done on legal requirements. Other area where training was given priority was in the line of operators and also foremen and artisans were upgraded by training.

4.12 Promotion

The study showed that 61% of the respondents indicated that the promotion was poorly administered, 36% revealed that it was fairly administered, 2% indicated that it was good and finally 1% said that the state of promotion in the sugar industry was very good. Employees were further asked if they had received promotion and 29% (32) indicated that they had been promoted while 71% (78) revealed that they had not been promoted by their organizations. The study also revealed that out of 32 (100%) respondents who received promotion 28 (88%) had also received salary increment and only 4 (12%) did not receive salary increment. It can be deduced that promotions attract salary increment. It was also revealed that 30 (94%) out of 32 respondents who received promotion were also motivated and only 2 (6%) received promotion but were not motivated. It was therefore revealed that promotion is positively related to motivation. When 78 (100%) employees who had not received promotion were asked if they would resign because of lack of promotion, 67 (79%) indicated that they would leave and 16 (21%) indicated that they would still stay in their organizations even without promotion. It is therefore evident that promotion is a major factor influencing labor turnover going by the substantial amount of employees (79%) who indicated that they would resign if they were not promoted. The respondents further indicated that those employees who were promoted, received promotion based on nepotism, ethnicity, “clanism” and all sorts of biases. They indicated that promotion was not just as it was not done on merit. From the study, it is very clear that promotion policy ought to be reviewed if staff retention is to be a meaningful experience since only a small percentage of the employees received promotion.

4.13 Employee Commitment

The study showed that employee commitment is not an independent factor, but it depends on other factors such as salary, promotion, training, leadership style and other human resource practices. To establish employees commitment to their organizations, employees were asked to indicate if they were specially attached or not to their organizations and the responses were as follows: 32% (36/110) indicated that they were specially attached and hence were committed to their organizations and 67% (74/110) indicated that they were not specially attached and were not therefore committed to their organizations. When the 74 respondents who indicated that they were not specially attached to their organizations were subsequently asked if lack of special attachment would make them leave or stay, all of them (100%) indicated that they would leave if greener pastures arose. It is therefore evident that there is a positive relationship between employee commitment and labor turnover.

4.14 Work Condition in the Sugar Firms.

The study showed the state of work condition in the sugar firms. Results show that 42% of the workers felt that the state of work condition was poor, 36% indicated that the state was fair and 22% felt that the state of work condition was good. When respondents were further asked if the state of work condition could influence labor turnover, 63% (69/110) of the employees indicated that they would leave the sugar firms because of the state of their work places. 37% (41/110) indicated that they would still stay. Respondents also indicated that they were working for long hours (12 hours) as opposed to the normal eight working hours which is recommended by Kenya's labor laws. Some employees also indicated that they did not have protective facilities and gadgets that would enable them perform appropriately. It is clearly evident from the study that strict adherence to legislation by the sugar firms should be observed such as maximum working hours and health and safety laws to enable the firms retain their human resources.

4.15 Recognition

The study revealed that 46% of the workers felt that the level of recognition was poor, 36% felt that they were given fair recognition and 18% indicated that they were given good recognition in their work place. When employees were further asked if the lack of recognition would make them resign or not, the responses were as follows:- 56% (62/110) indicated that lack of recognition of their work by their supervisors or organizations could make them resign while 44% (48/110) indicated that lack of recognition could not make them resign. This therefore reveals that lack of recognition is a factor causing labor turnover in the sugar firms.

4.16 Extent of Labor Turnover in the Sample Firms

Respondents (Managers) were asked to indicate whether labor turnover was widespread or not in their organizations, whether the sugar firms felt frustrated by exit of labor turnover, what category of staff was affected by labor turnover and what period the firms loose most staff. It was observed that staff turnover was widespread in the sugar firms. 67% (2) of the respondents indicated that turnover of staff was widespread in their organizations while 33% (1) indicated that it was not widespread.

4.17 The Period Sample Firms lose most Staff

The study showed that 33.33% indicated that staff turnover was spread throughout the year, 33.33% also said that turnover was spread over the year, therefore, there is no specific period that staff leaves the sugar firms giving a total of 67% indicating that staff leaves at any time of the year. Finally, 33.33% also indicated that turnover was spread over ten years.

4.18 Category of Staff affected by Labor Turnover and Impact of Labor Turnover

The study indicated that 33.33% of the respondent that unskilled staff was affected, 33.33% also indicated that semi-skilled staff was affected and finally another 33.33% indicated that skilled workers were most affected by labor turnover. The respondents also revealed that the accounts section and managerial staff in the category of skilled workers were most affected by labor turnover. It was further revealed that 3 (100%) sugar firms felt frustrated by exit of staff from their organizations. 100% of the respondents indicated that they were frustrated because of exit of staff while none indicated that it was not frustrated. It can be further revealed that there is labor turnover to a large extent in the sugar industry because if it were minimal, the firms would not be frustrated by exit of staff from their organizations.

Firms that indicated that they were frustrated with labor turnover were further asked to indicate the serious impact of workers exit in organizations. This study shows that exit of staff from organizations leads to increase in costs of recruitment of new personnel (100%), time taken to fit new people in organizations is long (100%), it leads to high maintenance and operating costs as firms resort to using inexperienced staff and also firms pay more in overtime (67%) and finally, it reduces productivity (100%).

4.19 Suggestions on what should be done to Retain Workers in Organizations

The respondents were finally asked to indicate the possible suggestions, which would help in retaining workers in their organizations It is evident from Table 1 in the Annex shows that the majority of respondents suggested that salary should be improved (81%) followed by motivation (56%) and promotion should be done on merit (39%). On salary, the respondents stated that salary grades should be revised since the salary structures were stagnating for a long time. Respondents indicated that the grading system should be improved to conform to other industries. The respondents also indicated that salary should be harmonized within departments to enhance a better scheme of service.

Table 2 shows that major factors causing labor turnover are salary (86%), motivation (85%), training (83%), promotion (79%), performance appraisal (76%) and work condition (63%). Factors like decision making (46%), leadership style (39%) and recognition (56%) featured as factors though minor factors causing labor turnover. Employee commitment was not ranked because it was noted that it depended on all other factors. From the table, it is also revealed that salary (56.4%) ranked number 1, training (26%) ranked number 2, promotion (18.2%) ranked number 3, performance appraisal (27.3%) ranked number 4, work condition (20%) ranked number 5, job content (21.8%) ranked number 6, leadership style (29.1%) ranked number 7 and finally employee commitment (46.4%) ranked last, that is number 8.

5.0 Summary and Conclusions

The results obtained from the research were consistent with the study objectives.

The main objective of this study was to establish the reasons why workers leave Kenya's sugar industry. The findings of this study revealed that majority of employees (26.5%) in the sugar firms were between the age bracket of 30 – 35 years of age and that 84% of the employees are below 47 years of age. The employees' ages can still warrant them exit to other industries if they are not satisfied with their present employers. The findings also revealed that a majority of workers (65%) have worked for less than 5 years in their organizations and that a minority of workers (26.5%) have worked between 3 – 4 years in the sugar firms. This short length of service of most employees could be attributed to labor turnover.

The study revealed that all employees have at least a given level of education. There are those with primary education (2%), secondary (94%) and university level of education (4%), but only 1% of employees have post graduate education. The study also revealed that not all employees have attended courses related to their jobs. 8.8% of the employees have not attended any course; 72% of the employees have not been trained by their organizations. This explains why only 1% of the employees have a post graduate training. It is evident that there are limited chances of training and further studies in the sugar firms and this could be a major cause of labor turnover.

The study revealed that labor turnover is widespread in Kenya's sugar industry. The findings also revealed that all the firms have felt frustrated by exit of staff which affects all categories of staff from their organizations; 100% of the sample firms indicated frustration as a result of exit of staff. The study shows that salary is a major factor causing labor turnover as indicated by a substantial number of respondents, 86% followed by training 83%, lack of promotion 79%, and performance appraisal 77%. Work condition 63%. Recognition, 56% and other factors such as decision making, 46% and leadership style 39% would also cause exit though they are minor factors. Job content did not feature prominently as a factor causing labor turnover. It was further revealed that although motivation recorded a big percentage (85%) as a cause of labor turnover, it is not an independent factor because it is influenced by many other factors such as salary, training, promotion, performance appraisal, work condition and all other factors investigated in this research. From the study, it is found that although decision making and supervisory management style did not feature prominently as causes of labor turnover going by their percentages, 46% and 39% respectively; these two factors would reduce performance in the sugar firms if workers are not satisfied with the way the two issues are handled.

The findings also show that salaries of the workers stagnate for a long time. It was also revealed that many employees are not graded because they fall under the category of casual workers and that, casual workers take too long before they are upgraded to permanent employment status. The study also shows that the salary awards in the sample sugar firms are uncompetitive and this is the major cause of exit of workers, since workers seek greener pastures where they can be awarded good competitive salaries which can enable them cope with inflation and increasing cost of living. From the study it is revealed that all the sugar firms do not have pension schemes for their employees. It is also revealed that all the sample firms give all their employees advances but there are certain privileges and benefits that are awarded only to managerial staff such as sick pay, company cars, holidays and medical insurance. The study therefore revealed that if all the human resource practices in the sugar firms were improved then worker satisfaction would be enhanced leading to worker commitment and thus workers would be retained in these organizations. The study shows that promotions were not done on merit and very few employees had been promoted (29%) and it was also noted that not all the employees who were promoted received salary increments.

The study further revealed that more autonomy (23%), more room for creativity (35%) and more participation in decision making (42%) would lead to workers performing well in their organizations. Participation in decision making featured prominently as a factor having a bearing in performance. The research found that high turnover led to increased costs of recruitment of new personnel, high maintenance and operating costs as firms resort to using inexperienced staff and paying more in overtime because the remaining workers have to go an extra mile to cover for their colleagues who have left working in these organizations. It also reduces productivity and finally, it takes a long time to fit new people in the organizations so that they are able to socialize with the organizations' culture and hence have organizational commitment.

6 Recommendations

From the findings the following recommendations are made:-
Competitive salary should be paid to workers so as to retain workers in the sugar firms. Salary administration should not stagnate for a long time but it should be reviewed regularly so as to gain worker satisfaction and motivation. Employers should widen the net of benefits to include more awards such as giving bonuses to workers, improved house allowances and widen medical cover. More employees should be trained so that they keep in step with the modern business world and technology so as to increase efficiency, to increase productivity and finally to produce quality products. Firms should explore training methods like on the job training and staff counseling. Many employees should also be taken for computer courses so as to ease work in the sugar firms. All firms should plan career progressions for their employees. All promotion should be accompanied by salary increments and it should be done on merit and not based on nepotism, racism, ethnicity, "clanism" or gender, this will enhance employee motivation and thus job satisfaction and worker commitment leading to reduced labor turnover. Employees work conditions should be improved by management. Employees should take regard of workers health. The normal eight working hours should be observed and not twelve working hours as is currently done in the sugar firms if high productivity is to be realized. Proper work facilities and protective facilities should be given to workers.

Managers of the sugar firms should adopt democratic leadership style. This move can enable organizations to achieve improved worker performance and increase productivity in the organizations. Managers should depart from traditional autocratic style of leadership which leads to dissatisfaction of workers and discourages good performance. More room for sharing of ideas by subordinates and superiors will enhance a healthy working environment and improve motivation thus reducing labor turnover in the sugar industry. Workers performance should be recognized; they should be treated with dignity. This can enhance motivation and improve performance. Managers should appraise their employees regularly and communicate the results promptly. Modern methods of appraisal like 360 degree should be used to appraise workers so that all the employees are involved to erase suspicion of employees when they are being appraised. Labor turnover should not be taken for granted. Exit of staff can have serious negative impacts to an organization.

6.1 Suggestions for Further Research

The overall findings of this research can be used to give hints and suggestions on the directions for future research. Future researchers should undertake a similar study on all the sugar firms in the country to allow the results to be generalized taking into account the limitations outlined in this research. A similar research should also be undertaken to investigate the causes of other types of labor turnover other than labor turnover by resignation. Future researchers should also consider investigating impacts of labor turnover on sugar firms. If the above studies can be undertaken, factors causing labor turnover and their impacts critically determined and proper analysis done, then labor turnover can be arrested and productivity of the sugar firms improved in Kenya's sugar industry

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ANNEX

Table 1 Suggestion on Worker Retention

N = 113

Suggestions	**Number of respondents/113**	**Percentage of respondents /100**
Improve salary	92	81
Improve motivation level	63	56
Promote on merit	44	39
Improve working conditions	36	31.9
Minimize working hours	33	29.2
Staff development and training programs should be increased	25	22.1
Improve supervisory style	11	9.7
Give more room for decision making	08	7.1
Improve job content.	7	6.2
Widen the net of benefits to include more awards on bonuses, house allowances and medical allowances.	4	3.5
Widen salary grading system/scale	03	2.7
Recognition	3	2.7
Improve job security	2	1.8
Improve performance appraisal	2	1.8
Computerize operations	2	1.8
Improve communication and freedom of sharing ideas.	1	0.8

Source: Survey, 2006

Table 2 Researcher's ranking of human resources practices and labor turnover

Human Resource practices	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Rank**
Salary	94/110	86	1
Training	66/79	83	2
Promotion	62/78	79	3
Performance Appraisal	77/101	76	4
Work condition	69/110	63	5
Recognition	62/110	56	6
Decision making	37/81	46	7
Leadership style	43/110	39	8

Source: Survey, 2006