

**EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANIZATION PERFORMANCE OF  
AFRICAN ECONOMIC RESEARCH CONSORTIUM IN KENYA**

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## DECLARATION

This research work has not been submitted to any other university for a degree or award.

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the candidate completed the work described in this project and submitted it for review under my supervision.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my supervisor; Dr. Caroline Nderi. My husband; Mr. Lorian Egesa, children Emma, and Olivia for the endless support. To my mother Mrs. Mary Mudachi for believing in me.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I cannot be thankful enough to the most-high; the Almighty God for seeing me through. I would not have made it were it not for His sufficient grace. I shall forever remain indebted to my Supervisor Dr. Caroline Nderi for the commitment and fervent support. Your priceless guidance and mentorship were far much than the call of duty.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>AERC:</b>	African Economic Research Consortium
<b>BSC:</b>	Balance Score Card
<b>EVA:</b>	Economic Value Added
<b>HR:</b>	Human Resources
<b>MVA:</b>	Market Value Added
<b>NACOSTI:</b>	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
<b>NGO:</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>RBT:</b>	Resource-Based Theory
<b>ROE:</b>	Return on Equity
<b>ROI:</b>	Return on Investment
<b>ROS:</b>	Return on Sales
<b>SET:</b>	Social Exchange Theory
<b>SPSS:</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- Career development:** refers to number of staff undertaking training opportunities, sharing of best practices and its implementation, and employee retention rates.
- Communication:** refers to clarity on vision, mission, goals and objectives, frequency of management interaction with employees and accessibility of management by employees.
- Organization performance:** refers to increased employee productivity, annual goals & objectives, efficiency of business processes and satisfied internal and external stakeholders.
- Organizational culture:** refers to shared beliefs & values, work environment, and employee perception, behavior and understanding.

## ABSTRACT

Business analytics and business intelligence have a subcategory called "corporate performance" that focuses on the "well-being" of an organization. It was evaluated on the basis of financial performance for a very long time. The idea of corporate performance has, however, expanded recently. In addition to other tasks, non-financial performance now includes brand equity, risk management, and human resource management. At the African Economic Research Consortium, the overall purpose of this project was to investigate the relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance. The research objectives were to: determine how organization culture affects organization performance, to identify the role of communication on overall organization performance and to examine the influence of career development on organization performance. The study is informed by resource base view theory, social exchange theory, and Kahn model of employee engagement in human resource. The research used case study research design. Target population comprised of 455 employees who work at African Economic Research Consortium. A sample size of 138 was selected using stratified random sample. Self-administered questionnaires delivered over email were used to gather data. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics aided by Statistical Package for Social Sciences programme. The findings revealed a strong and positive correlation between organizational culture and performance ( $\beta=0.248$ ,  $p=0.003$ ). Additional findings demonstrate a positive and significant relationship between career development and firm performance ( $\beta=0.238$ ,  $p=0.011$ ). Additionally, there is a positive and significant relationship between communication and organizational performance ( $\beta=0.453$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This study concludes that to improve organizational performance, organizational culture must support and be in accordance with the planned strategy and performance of employees' daily activities. The study concluded that if managers and senior executives are good communicators, they can expect to bring out the best in each individual and improve performance. This study suggests that all firms increase their efforts to foster a positive corporate culture because culture is now a tactical instrument in the market for achieving long-term competitive advantage. The study shows that AERC offers career development programs for its employees, such as training. The training program must be adapted to the needs of employees. The management of AERC should communicate directly to junior staffs and also create a good relationship with the employees.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Hodgetts (1999) defines HRM in terms of attitudes and assumptions, strategic traits, the crucial role of managers, and key levers. It focuses on a collection of policies identified by “high-level management” or “high-efficiency work systems”. The author defines beliefs and assumptions as a component that gives human resources a competitive edge and those human resources should move away from mere compliance and rule to employee commitment. The author continues to stipulate that for human resource management to be a strategic quality, top management involvement is critical and that the management of managers themselves is crucial to the core activities of the business. Human resource cannot be left solely in the hands of personnel specialists, and that managing culture is more important than managing processes and systems in terms of critical levers.

Corporate performance in a broad view is described as a business intelligence and strategic management tool. It encompasses collaborative efforts, successful performance in both financial and non-financial metrics, and organizational failures. Companies that want to be successful must put in place variable frameworks to ensure their actual performance is checked. The use of balance score cards, key performance indicators and excellence model frameworks determine how competitive organizations should operate (Holbeche, 2009).

Wilkinson (2009) states that people are valued differently across cultures with an instrumental view of human resources to achieve high business performance. The differentiation between a humanistic and instrumental view of employees can be closely related to the differentiation in cultural values underpinning management practices in the East and West.

The impact of employee engagement on organizational success and long-term sustainability has drawn a lot of attention in recent years. To be successful, you must strike the correct balance between employer and employee needs (Holbeche, 2009). Employee engagement is critical to organizational performance because it motivates employees to work toward the organization's goals and objectives. In the current economic situation, many businesses are considering layoffs, restructuring, and continuous improvement to achieve profitability and long-term viability (Statistics SA, 2017). To compete in the market, businesses must encourage positive employee engagement as a tactical instrument for attaining a competitive edge.

Line managers' major role is to oversee organizational effectiveness, and this is an area where collaboration between line managers and human resources may be quite advantageous. A shared awareness of the organization's goals, shared expectations of how people can participate, employees with the skills and talents to satisfy those expectations, and individuals who are totally devoted to the organization's employing goals are all necessary for effective performance.

High-performing firms continue to prioritize employee input and, as a result, boost levels of employee engagement to produce significant commercial gains. According to Guillory (2000), attractive and competitive companies are constantly working to increase the value of their human resources and invest in activities aimed at increasing employee engagement.

The purpose of this study is to determine the connection between employee engagement and organizational performance. The objectives of this inquiry are as follows: Find out what factors affect employee engagement at work and how those factors relate to organizational performance. The culture of an organization, the management of an organization, the channels of communication within the organization, and the opportunities for personal growth within the organization will be

the topics of interest as we look at how the aforementioned factors translate into the success of the business.

Like several other scholarly works, this research postulates that employee engagement affects organizational performance. Positive and inclusive organizational cultures, leadership styles, communication techniques, and development opportunities have all been seen to influence a company's competitive posture in the industry and hence decide its performance in the past. However, studies demonstrate that strategies for increasing employee engagement are crucial in affecting performance. According to Barnat (2012), an organization's employee engagement practices influence whether it succeeds, endures, or fails based on how its stakeholders carry them out. Other academic research has revealed that employee engagement strategies significantly affect an organization's success (Li, Gouhui & Eppler, 2010). As a result, successful employee engagement will provide a substantial competitive advantage to a firm (Sage, 2015). Employee engagement methods are likely to have an impact on the success of NGOs, who are not an exception.

### **1.1.1 Organization Performance**

The effectiveness and efficiency with which an institution uses its resources to satisfy customers and achieve organizational goals is measured by organizational performance (Jones & George, 2003). Measuring effectiveness is very important so that the organization's management can evaluate the specific actions taken by companies and managers. However, this is not just an exercise, especially for companies with multiple goals such as customer loyalty, productivity, profitability and adaptability to an ever-changing environment, employee satisfaction, growth and social responsibility. Compared to their competitors, the company develops and develops over the years (Sabina, 2009). The measurement of corporate performance, however, is a significant problem for science and practice. Efficacy, product quality, productivity, work-life balance, innovation, and

profitability are the seven performance factors that, according to the Sink and Turtle model from 1989, interact in a complex way to determine how well an organizational system performs.

Company continuity is influenced by good performance, which may be classified into financial and non-financial business performance (Gibcus & Kemp, 2003). The financial performance of an organization is an important aspect of its efficiency. Market share, expansion, diversification, and product development are all factors that affect business efficiency. Using best practices and innovation to improve business operations, as well as employee objectives including work happiness and wellness, learning, and growth, are non-financial indicators of corporate performance, according to Kaplan and Norton's balanced scorecard from 1996.

Others favor a more inclusive definition of efficiency that takes non-financial factors like effectiveness, quality, and image into account (Waiganjo et al., 2012). Organizational performance, according to Richard (2009), is the accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the organization. In addition to market share, return on investment (ROI), and financial viability, firm efficiency must be evaluated in terms of both qualitative and quantitative indicators. Lasthaus (2000) supports this by classifying organizational performance indicators into two categories: efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is the ability of an organization to achieve its goals, including relevance, organizational and financial sustainability, and the ability to produce more income than it spends. It also refers to the organization's capacity to deliver the best service or product within the most efficient structure.

### **1.1.2 Employee Engagement Practices**

People can help a business develop or destroy its competitive edge by bolstering or deflating the organizational culture, claim Siddhanta and Roy (2010). In order to maintain employee engagement, it is critical that their views and behavior reflect the corporate culture. According to Garber (2012),

people prefer to work for companies that have a good reputation, and this type of organizational culture should be encouraged since it increases organizational engagement because employees are proud of and contribute to the reputation. According to social exchange theory, a supportive work environment encourages employee involvement by creating a fair wage and income structure (Suharti & Suliyanto, 2012). Employee engagement rises when a company creates a culture that fosters a sense of belonging among its staff (Smith et al., 2016).

According to several academics, good leadership promotes clear communication, transparency, self-awareness, and ethical behavior, which is a key component in employee engagement (Dajani & Maximo, 2015). When leaders make educated judgments regarding development and productivity, employees gain confidence in their leaders' talents and competences, which increases employee engagement. Bakar (2013) cites earlier research on empowerment as a technique for encouraging leadership development and assisting people and teams in accomplishing corporate objectives. Employee engagement is correlated with various leadership paradigms, with the effects of classical, transactional, visionary, and organic engagements having varying degrees of strength, according to Zhang and Avery (2014).

Internal communication, according to Mishra et al. (2014), is a critical technique that firms can use to assist employees create trust. They claim that effective internal communication is necessary to educate employees about the organization's vision and objective in order to boost employee engagement. Communication, according to Harter and Adkins (2015), is the cornerstone for good and healthy management-employee interactions. According to Welch (2011), when communication is used as an effective method for communicating company values, it can increase employee participation in achieving goals. He added that open and efficient communication from management is necessary to maintain high levels of employee engagement. Employees today have more

information to help them achieve personal and corporate goals, according to Mmutle (2014). Transparency, leadership, organizational relationships, and trust, according to Baik (2016), are all barriers to effective communication.

Anitha (2014) believes that organizations must provide training and career development to keep employees interested. This helps individuals gain confidence in their job abilities and increases engagement. When a company disregards human development as a tactical tool, people and businesses might become frustrated (Caplan, 2014). Organizations should guarantee that all employees have a career development plan that identifies areas and issues in present jobs, as well as a roadmap for future responsibilities, so that growth opportunities are tailored to their specific goals, aspirations, and needs. According to Sterling (2016), job advancement is a key factor in employee happiness. Managers must establish strong working connections with staff members as they transition into new roles and take into account their accomplishments, talents, and needs.

### **1.1.3 African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)**

The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) is a leading capacity building organization dedicated to advancing research and education on information economic policy in sub-Saharan Africa. It was founded in 1988 to fill a glaring gap in economic policy analysis and research related to the need to strengthen postgraduate economics in sub-Saharan Africa. Its objective is to strengthen local capacity for objective, in-depth investigation of issues with economic governance in sub-Saharan Africa. Its main objectives are: to increase the capacity of local researchers to conduct policy-related economic research and to promote the maintenance of this capacity in Africa; and promote its implementation in a political context.

The acquisition of highly trained and diversified people, together with enhanced retention tactics to retain competent staff, has attributed to the institution's rise in regional and global presence. The

human resource function as a strategic function compliments the overall business strategy and has in place strategies that boost employee performance. Despite the numerous initiatives that have been implemented, there are still challenges faced when it comes to employee engagement. The data shows that the engagement metrics stand at 43.2% which is low. There is a need to deploy more efforts to ensure that employees remain engaged and perform effectively to meet the demands of the evolving organization. People's feelings about their jobs are inextricably tied to their level of involvement and, eventually, their output (Holbeche & Springitt, 2003).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Employee engagement is critical to organization performance because it motivates employees to work toward the organization's goals and objectives. Many businesses are considering layoffs, restructuring, and constant improvement to attain profitability and viability in the current economic climate (Statistics SA, 2017). Businesses need to promote positive employee engagement as a strategic tool for gaining a competitive edge in order to compete in the market. Enhancing employee engagement isn't simply about increasing productivity, according to Harvard Business Review (2013). According to a recent Gallup meta-analysis of 1.4 million employees, businesses with high levels of engagement produce 22 percent more.

African Economic Research Consortium has put in place structures that enable employees to be comfortable in the workplace by adopting competitive compensation practices and providing a good work environment for its employees to thrive. However, the low engagement metrics which stand at 43% are not equal to the organizational investment. Employee engagement as a strategic driver is yet to be explored to drive organizational performance and provide impact. Failure to explore this affects the institution because employees lack meaningfulness, the perception of work being

worthwhile or important, lack of responsibility and accountability for one's effort and the knowledge on the outcome of their work from a satisfactory perspective.

Most of the studies conducted have focused on different aspects that contribute to a positive work environment. The information spans diverse organizations which shows there is need to do more research in this topic. Muthika (2016) focused on employee empowerment, effective leadership, training and development and mentorship. Diagone (2017) focused on organizational performance with respect to quality of relationships, quality of personnel and quality of services. According to Namanga (2018), employee remuneration influences, work environment, training, and employee involvement as a factor to organization performance were all investigated. Mbaya (2011) explored reward and compensation principles to link employee performance.

This research contributes to the existing literature and sought to examine another set of variables that is, the culture of on organization, career development opportunities including leadership styles and communication as a tool that affects organizational performance. The link between high employee engagement and workplace productivity was the main topic of discussion. The level of engagement included factors like aligning employees to organizational strategy and enabling employees to be more impactful. Concerns according to Lipma (2017) have been raised by leadership and management on whether or not employee engagement practices are adopted or implemented in the workplace, the underlying impact on employee productivity and performance remains the same. That is, there was significant difference between organizations that implement engagement practices over those that do not. In addition, the role of strategic human resource will be discussed as a crucial driver of this strategy.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

To investigate the effect of employee engagement practices on organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To determine how organization culture affects organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya.
- ii. To identify the role of communication on overall organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya.
- iii. To examine the influence of career development on organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. What is the influence of organization culture on organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya?
- ii. What role does communication play on organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya?
- iii. What influence does career development has on organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium in Kenya?

### **1.5 Assumptions of the Study**

The scope of this study was to determine the influence of engagement practices at AERC in driving organization performance. The data collected at AERC might be useful to other INGO in research. The study's premise is that participants would be willing to cut out time to complete the questionnaires. The researcher further anticipated that AERC and other INGO managers would use

the study's findings sought to examine how engagement methods affect performance. This study analyzed the underlying drivers and factors that drive employee engagement metrics. It backed up previous research that showed that personnel are typically the deciding factor between organizations that succeed and those that never reach their full potential. In addition, it provided information to show that when employees are provided with new opportunities to gain experience and new skills, this plays a critical role in both individual performance and corporate performance. Organizations that can search deep within themselves to find the core characteristics of their corporate culture are more likely to succeed.

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The survey may be beneficial to African Economic Research Consortium management as it might provide them with information of what contributes to employees being highly engaged and what influences high internal work motivation, work performance, high job satisfaction resulting to a reduction of low absenteeism and voluntary staff turnover.

These results might be used as a starting point for new organizational management researchers, but they might also contribute to theory development by increasing our knowledge of how organizational setting concerns or contextual elements affect employee engagement practices and performance. Additionally, this study contributed to the theory-building process by emphasizing the moderating effects played by employee engagement plans and organizational innovation on the relationship between strategy creation, implementation, and evaluation as predictors of firm performance.

### **1.7 Scope of the Study**

The research was conducted at AERC in Kenya. The focus was on employee engagement practices and organization performance of African Economic Research Consortium. The main variables were

organization culture, communication and career development. The study employed a descriptive case study design. Target population included senior management staff, middle management staff and support staff. The study was carried out in the period from 2022 to 2023.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study was a case study and therefore was confined to one entity. This might mean that the results gained may not be applicable to other industries. However, future researchers can focus on other industries. The target respondents included senior managers whose availability was a challenge. To mitigate this obstacle, the researcher made prior appointments with the management and this ensured adequate response rate.

### **1.9 Organization of the Study**

The first chapter presented background of the study, research problem, objectives, significance, scope and limitations of the study. Chapter two discusses literature review including theoretical, empirical literature as well as research gaps. The third chapter outlines research methodology. Chapter four presents research findings and discussions. The final chapter provides summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The findings of numerous researchers who looked into the subject of the study were compiled in this chapter. It also includes a review of the research on the impact of employee engagement strategies on organizational performance and looks at elements including organizational culture, career development, and communication and how they affect institutional performance.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.2.1 Resource Base View Theory**

In organizational performance research, resource-based theory (RBV/RBT) is commonly employed (Innocent, 2015). RBV outlines the organization's unique resources and competencies, which distinguish it from competitors in similar industries. RBV also strives to provide an answer to the topic of how businesses might improve their organizational performance and get a competitive advantage over their competitors. RBV demonstrates that organizational success is based on the organization's internal qualities. Organizational capacity (internal knowledge and skill) and organizational assets (tangible and intangible) are internal elements (Chuang, 2012). According to RBV, an organization's resources include, among other things, its assets, talents, processes, managerial skills, technology resources, and knowledge resources (Barney, 1991). These assets and competencies have boosted organizational performance and provided the business with a competitive edge (Barney, 1991).

RBV aids companies in discovering their distinctive internal resources, enhancing organizational performance and giving them a competitive edge (Hsu & Pereira, 2008). Further, the research highlights RBV's importance in a range of industries, establishing a correlation between an

organization's internal resources and its success (Innocent, 2015). The company's distinctive internal resources and strategic organizational qualities that lead to great organizational performance and a competitive edge over competitors will now be referred to as organizational culture, organizational communication, and staff development possibilities (Ahmed & Othman, 2017; Innocent, 2015).

The RBV of this study's recommendations and objectives state that organizational factors like organizational culture, growth opportunities, and organizational communication are unique organizational resources and highly valued elements that support the accomplishment of predetermined organizational goals like market leadership and excellence.

### **2.2.2 Social Exchange Theory**

According to the SET, promotional actions between a company and its employees promote organizational involvement (Aldhuwaih, 2013). Employees will join the business and use their talents and knowledge to achieve their goals based on the SET recognition, with the assumption that the organization will provide better possibilities for development and culture. As a result, a positive relationship between employees and the organization leads to higher organizational engagement and, as a result, improved performance. To describe labor-management relations, SET emphasizes three principles: rationality, reciprocity, and specificity (Blau, 1994; Cheung, 2000; Foa, 2012). According to the rationality principle, employees have a relationship with the company that can provide desired rewards and satisfy their needs and desires. Worker-employer relationships are always reciprocal, according to the second principle of reciprocity. According to the third specificity principle, only reciprocity can preserve the commercial relationship between workers and businesses (Foa & Foa, 2012; Cheung, 2000; Blau, 1994).

Workers will place a strategic priority on firm actions that encourage employee loyalty to their superiors, such as communication, development opportunities, and a positive organizational culture.

On the other side, employee engagement can be a pleasant experience for staff members, motivating them to stay with the company and having a significant impact on organizational performance, including performance (Pinho et al., 2014). Consequently, a connection between resource sharing and organizational performance is made thanks to the connections between organizational culture, communication, growth opportunities, and performance (Foa & Foa, 2012). The needs of the business and the employee will probably be met by this reciprocal organizational structure. In essence, the links between organizational culture, organizational communication, growth opportunities, and organizational performance are based on the three SET principles.

### **2.2.3 Kahn Model of Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement, as described by Khan (1990), is “simultaneously engaging and expressing an individual’s self of choice’ in task behaviors that improve relationships with work and for others personally.” “Active participation and complete role fulfillment.” Khan (1990) proposed the first paradigm of personal and non-personal engagement. According to the engagement paradigm, employee involvement can take place on three different levels, including physical, emotional, and cognitive. These three levels are influenced by three psychological elements, including importance, security, and availability. Sakovska's assessment of workers' productivity (Khan, 1990).

According to Kahn (1990), workers were also more engaged in circumstances that offered them a sense of psychological safety and meaning as well as when they were more psychologically accessible. He also delves into why the three psychological states of purpose, stability, and accessibility are crucial to properly comprehending why individuals are committed to their jobs. Meaning is defined as a good "feeling of return on investment in the position," security is defined as the freedom to express yourself "without fear of negative consequences for one's self-image, status, or profession," and availability is defined as "a sense of belonging." Each of these

psychological issues and employee engagement are highly correlated (May et al., 2004). An empirical test of Kahn's model revealed that interest, security, and availability had an impact on employee engagement. According to Khan (1990), job enrichment, job matching, and peer relationships are all essential positive factors that lead to excellence.

## **2.3 Empirical Review**

This section presents review of empirical literature on the study variables.

### **2.3.1 Organization Performance**

Improving organizational efficiency is a goal that is pursued by every organization. Organizational efficiency is most easily defined as a representation of the organization versus its goals and objectives. Financial metrics such as revenue, profit, net operating income, ROE (return on equity), ROS (return on sales), and other crucial revenues have historically been used to evaluate the performance of organizations. Traditional financial measures, while practical and valuable, cannot generate profits for firms in a highly competitive climate (Wu, 2010).

Different measuring information is required by the new organizational model so that managers can make the best decisions and shareholders can closely analyze the company's performance. New financial and particularly non-financial information has increasingly grown in importance and value for stakeholders when measuring results. Non-financial data can indicate intellectual capital and social responsibility while also increasing organizational knowledge when included in performance criteria (Wu, 2010). Economic value added (EVA), market value added (MVA), learning and growth perspectives, and other models that cover perspectives like human resources, performance, and stakeholder satisfaction have all emerged in the business world as new ideas and models for measuring organizational performance. BSC (Balance Score Card), which includes a financial perspective, a customer perspective, an internal process and learning and growth perspective.

### **2.3.2 Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement has grown in importance as an organizational concept in recent years. In the current corporate context, it has evolved into one of the primary goals of HR professionals and top management (Bhatla, 2011). Many HR practitioners, employers, and academic researchers throughout the world have been paying close attention to employee engagement (Larkin, 2009).

The human resources of any company are a vital asset. The employees of a company determine whether it succeeds or fails (Khan, 2013). Businesses require dedicated workers to preserve their survival and seamless operation in today's world of globalization and industrialization, where market competition is strong. Employee engagement is a well-known practice in the business sector. Khan (1990) first used the phrase "employee engagement," defining it as "the level of employee interest and participation." Many businesses and consultants connect organizational civic behavior, job happiness, job involvement, and other crucial aspects of the workplace to employee engagement (Kumar & Swetha, 2011). Both the diversity of the workforce and the global nature of employment are changing in today's corporate climate. To gain a competitive edge in the market, every firm strives to use its human resources as efficiently as possible (Heaney, 2010). Employees that perform well on their jobs have positive relationships with their coworkers, which benefits the workplace.

Employee passion and enthusiasm to improve manufacturing and business performance are encouraged in an engaged workplace (Kumar & Swetha, 2011). High-level involvement in local and worldwide organizations aids in the retention of talent, the development of consumer loyalty, and the enhancement of corporate performance and stakeholder value (Wilson, 2009; Sridevi & Marcos, 2010). A company's productivity and profitability increase when its employees are motivated and enjoy their work (Larkin, 2009). It's a strategy that companies can use to deal with the inherent ambiguity of doing business. An organization that knows the factors that drive

employee engagement will have a difficult time competing with its competitors (Kumar & Swetha, 2011). Employees who enjoy their jobs are approximately three times more dedicated to them than those who do not (Kular et al., 2008).

As a result, businesses must concentrate on factors that contribute to employee engagement in order to increase organizational success (Basbous, 2011). Employee involvement can be a critical factor in evaluating a company's effectiveness. It could affect overall shareholder value, customer satisfaction, corporate reputation, and staff productivity, loyalty, and retention (Sundaray, 2011). Productivity, quality enhancement, customer service, employee collaboration, reduced employee turnover, absenteeism, and conflicts are just a few advantages that engaged employees may bring to the table (Wilson, 2009). In order to gain a competitive edge in today's business environment, organizations all over the world are increasing employee engagement through greater productivity, profitability, decreased attrition, and organizational security (Mani, 2011).

### **2.3.3 Organizational Culture and Organization Performance**

Corporate culture and performance have been linked in a number of cross-sectional studies. This has been done in both major Western organizations (Deshpandé et al., 2013) and commercial organizations (Chahal et al., 2016). The relative relevance of organizational performance is a point of contention in the literature on organizational culture. A considerable favorable association between organizational culture and performance has been demonstrated in a number of prior research (Ozmen, & Eris, 2012; Altindag et al., 2011). The use of different tools on these structures is one of the key causes for the disparity in outcomes (Liu & Fu, 2011).

Some problems need to be addressed in this area, according to (Song & Jing, 2017). The same holds true for a company's strategy and culture (Storey & Hughes, 2013). When organizational strategy and culture are consistent, organizational processes are found to function more successfully than

when they are not (Moorman, 1995). As a result, organizational culture plays a crucial role in determining the efficiency and performance of the company (Puapuni, 2016; Majid et al., 2016; Rauch et al., 2009; Nazir & Lone, 2008). Additionally, current research indicates that organizational culture affects performance in both direct and indirect ways (Puapuni, 2016; Sokro, 2012; Chuang et al., 2012).

Despite the role of organizational culture, research demonstrates that there is still room for improvement in this relationship from both a philosophical and scientific standpoint (Weinzimmer et al., 2012; Sackmann, 2010). In the relevant literature, however, there is no firm evidence for this link (Uzkurt et al., 2013; Han & Verma, 2012; Hartnell et al., 2011). According to academics, a strong and positive corporate culture adopts initiatives that benefit the organization's employees and customers (Innocent, 2015). Employee behavior, organizational activities, and most crucially, organizational performance are all influenced by organizational culture (Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2016). Other studies have found a link between company culture and organizational involvement that is favorable (Majid et al., 2016; Azizollah et al., 2016).

Several studies have also looked at the role of organizational culture as a mediating factor (Kim et al., 2016; Majid et al., 2016; Pinho et al., 2014; Zaman et al., 2012; Chen, 2004; Abdul Rashid et al., 2003; Yousef, 2000). The accomplishment of the organization's vision and goals depends on understanding organizational culture. This has been proven in previous study to have a major impact on organizational outcomes.

#### **2.3.4 Career Development Opportunities and Organization Performance**

Employee retention and motivation are greatly aided by career development. Organizations must ensure that the work assigned to employees is in line with their career goals. Employees will be happier and more engaged as a result, leading to increased production (Mutunga, 2009). Employee

development, acquisition of new skills, knowledge, and potential realization are all possible for staff members in organizations with strong employee engagement. Employee engagement is affected by career development, and the most competent employees who meet the stated goals are retained (Vazirani, 2007).

Employee career development is a regulated, managed, and planned phenomenon that seeks to create a balance between the demands of individual employees and the expectations of the organization's workforce (Mutunga, 2009). Employees can give businesses a competitive advantage, according to a growing body of knowledge. Building organizational development strategies that motivate workers, assist companies in gaining and maintaining a competitive advantage, and enhance employee engagement with the company's vision and values are the challenges facing HR managers today. Employee engagement is aided by training and development (Sundaray, 2011). Learning new abilities might pique your interest in previously uninteresting elements of your profession. New and present employees gain the knowledge and skills they need to do their tasks as efficiently as possible through training, resulting in improved performance. Since gaining new talents is fun, employees who increase their skill levels through training are more likely to be totally committed to their work (Swarnalatha & Prasanna, 2012).

According to, the importance of training and development tasks is rising along with other HR responsibilities (Khan, 2013). It is concentrated on the communication of knowledge and skills related to specific tasks. The opportunity to increase awareness of the organization's development initiatives is provided by the training. Training is advantageous in reducing fatigue difficulties since it helps employees accomplish their responsibilities properly. A person who is hired for a particular position must receive the training required for that role. One of the reasons for employee turnover

was a lack of abilities, highlighting the importance of training, retraining, and additional skill training.

### **2.3.5 Communication and Organization Performance**

Employee retention and engagement are dependent on effective communication. Employee retention is still a long way off without good communication. Employee participation in decision-making and open, responsive, two-way communication play an essential role in attracting and maintaining skilled individuals who can provide better results (Lockhead, & Stephens, 2004). Information can be exchanged in a variety of forms, both tangible and immaterial. This is critical for the organization's seamless operation and serves as a motivating factor for personnel. An open-door policy should be implemented in all organizations. Within the organization, there should be uplink and downlink communication via proper communication channels. Employee engagement is likely to be high, as is their performance and the business as a whole, if they can participate in decision-making and benefit from being heard by their management (Mutunga, 2009).

Understanding how to collect and analyze employee feedback to act on the engagement engine is an important step towards increasing employee engagement. He also emphasizes how, in order to expand and keep consumers and workers engaged and satisfied, a firm cannot overlook internal communication as a vital performance area. As a result, managers must establish genuine relationships with their staff as well as internal business communication. Effective internal communication keeps employees engaged at work, resulting in increased productivity, retention, and revenue for the company.

## 2.4 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gaps

This section presents summary of literature review and research gaps.

**Table 2.1: Summary of Literature Reviewed and Research Gaps**

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Study</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Gaps</b>	<b>Focus of current research</b>
Muthika (2016)	<b>Employee Engagement and Organizational Performance in Nairobi: A Case Study</b>	Organizational performance is boosted by employee engagement strategies.	Focus was only on one organization. PACT. The areas of focus are employee empowerment, effective leadership, training, development and mentorship.	The main purpose of this study was to provide more information in the topic of study. The areas of focus will compliment this study and provide more information on employee engagement.
Diogene (2017)	<b>Employee Engagement and Organizational Performance: An African Evangelistic Enterprise Case Study (AEE)</b>	Employee satisfaction and business performance are related.	Focus was only on African Evangelistic Enterprise. Its focus on organizational performance was Importance of AEE, Quality of Relationship, Quality of Personnel, Quality of its services.	The current study focused on building on the parameters previously discussed in this paper and include other critical factors like the Organization Culture and Career Development Opportunities.

Namange (2018)	Employee Engagement Strategies and Performance	Employee engagement and organizational performance are influenced by employee-management connections, according to the research.	An NGO that conducts research was the focus. Its main emphasis was on how well the organization performed in terms of employee pay, the working environment, training, and employee involvement.	This study contributes to existing literature on organization performance from a HR perspective. The topic of organization performance is wide it will focus on additional variables not discussed at length in previous studies such as employee engagement and organization culture.
Mbaya (2011)	Employee Performance in Kenya's National Museums: The Impact of Reward and Compensation Systems	The results indicate that reward and remuneration have an impact on employee performance, both positively and negatively.	This study only looked at reward and compensation systems and principles and its effect on employee performance.	This study recognizes that monetary resources are not the only driving factors that impact employee and organization performance. It explores non-monetary variables like organization culture that affect the institutions performance.

Source: Researcher (2022)

This study recognizes the importance of employee engagement practices and factors such as organizational culture, organizational communication, and employee development activities that can directly and indirectly help improve organizational effectiveness. There is room for further research, as seen by several researchers who have looked at the topic.

Furthermore, this paper emphasizes the importance of paying more attention to the organization's important role of organizational culture, which can lead to the implementation of a strategy of organizational level engagement and influence engagement among organizational members, resulting in increased organizational efficiency. The identification of the most important organizational elements that determine organizational performance will be the next theoretical contribution. In addition, it offers new ideas on productivity issues. Similarly, this conceptual research contributes greatly to the corpus of knowledge already available. First, it broadens the scope of communication by treating it as a single dimension and gives a way to assess its effectiveness. Second, the influence of organizational culture in determining whether or not organizational performance improves. In addition, this study shows that employee development opportunities have a significant impact on organizational performance.

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

The independent variable is employee engagement practices, while the dependent variable is organization performance.

## Independent Variables

## Dependent Variable

### Employee engagement strategies

Organization Culture

- Shared Beliefs & Values
- Work environment
- Employee perception, behavior and understanding

Career Development

- No. of staff undertaking training opportunities
- Sharing of best practices and its implementation
- Employee retention rates

Communication

- Clarity on vision, mission, goals and objectives
- Frequency of management interaction with employees
- Accessibility of management by employees

### Organization Performance

Organization Performance

- Employee productivity
- Annual goals & objectives met
- Efficiency of business processes
- Internal & external stakeholders satisfaction

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

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary of the technique employed in this inquiry. It contains details on the study plan, the intended audience, the sample size, the methods used for data collecting, and the data processing techniques.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study employed a descriptive case study methodology to gain understanding of the effects of AERC's employee engagement policies on organizational performance. Cooper and Schindler (2003) stated that descriptive case study design is an approach that allows in-depth multi-factual investigation of complex problems in their real-life environment. This is especially useful when there is a need to get an in-depth assessment of a topic, event or phenomenon of interest in a natural, real-life context. In this study, the unit used is AERC. As a result of the case design technique's examination of a sample of the population and provision of a numerical description of societal trends, attitudes, or opinions (Creswel, 2009).

#### **3.3 Target Population**

This research targeted employees of African Economic Research Consortium employee who total 455 employees who comprise senior management, middle management and support staff.

**Table 3.1: Target Population**

	Senior Management Staff	Middle Management Staff	Support Staff	Total
Population	55	100	300	455
Percentage	12%	22%	66%	100%

**Source: AERC Human Resource Department (2022).**

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

Stratified proportionate random sampling, which divides the population into smaller groups known as strata, was used in this study (Chandran, 2004). In a stratified random sample, strata are created according to the shared traits or traits of individuals. This strategy was selected because it enables the researcher to get important data that can't be obtained in any other way.

### 3.5 Sample Size

A total of 138 employees were chosen for this study. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), depending on the size of the population, 30% of the sample population is sufficient. The sampled staff were selected randomly to represent the whole population.

**Table 3.2: Overall Sample**

Respondents	N	n1	% of overall sample
Senior Management Staff	55	18	18
Middle Management Staff	100	30	22
Support	300	90	60
Total		138	

N= Total Respondents per Category

n1=Sample per Category of respondents

### **3.6 Data Collection Instrument**

For this study, open-ended and closed-ended questionnaires and interviews were utilized as the research instruments to get a complete understanding of the research question. The primary interview candidates were from top management. In order to gather data that the respondents might have omitted about study factors, the researcher performed structured interviews to gain correct information and in-depth material about the case being researched.

A questionnaire is a group of questions and possible answers given to participants. The goal is to compile information about people's beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. To understand how the sample thinks or behaves, the researcher will compile the responses of the participants. According to (Chandran, 2004), case study research is the optimum setting for using questionnaires. This helped the researcher make the decision to use questionnaires. The collection of responses were aided by research assistants.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher requested AERC management for approval before beginning this study, after which the researcher delivered 40 questionnaires to participants and conducted 10 interviews. The research assistant received instruction from the researcher on how to gather the data. Prior to the staff meeting where the questionnaires were distributed, the researcher urged the human resources officer to bring it up. The researcher also invited the research assistant to the AERC headquarters. Responders received the questionnaires through email in addition to at their workstations for respondents outside the office. After completion, the surveys were delivered or returned by email to the researcher for review.

### **3.8 Pilot Testing**

Two weeks prior to the distribution of the surveys, the investigator got in touch with the AERC Human Resource Manager to obtain permission to speak with five randomly selected employees in order to test the validity of the tool. The researcher next made the necessary adjustments to the research instrument to get them ready for data collection. Pilot data was used to check for validity and reliability of the research instrument. Content validity was ensured by incorporating views of experts such as research supervisor on the instrument. Reliability was checked using Cronbach's Alpha, which was used to determine the coefficient of internal consistency and dependability of the instrument in order to assess its dependability and reliability (Cronbach, 1951). The coefficient value of 0.7 and above was used as the cut off.

### **3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Data from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics aided by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program. Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were used to provide description of study variables. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable. Data was presented in tables and graphs.

#### **Data Analysis Model**

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

$\alpha$  = constant

$\beta_0, \dots, \beta_3$  = Beta coefficients

Y – Organizational Performance

$X_1$  – Organizational Culture

$X_2$  – Career Development

$X_3$ –Communication

$\varepsilon$  - error term

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher obtained permission from the institution and NACOSTI. The researcher acquired authorization before distributing the questionnaires because the study's topic was delicate and respondents might fear they would suffer damage based on their responses. Respondents were not forced to provide any information that was used to identify them. The researcher behaved professionally, discreetly, and honestly to ensure that the information provided was solely used for its intended purpose.

**CHAPTER FOUR**  
**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**4.1 Introduction**

The response rate, the findings of the reliability tests, and a descriptive analysis are all provided in this chapter for each research variable. The chapter also contains the correlation as well as the regression results.

**4.2 Response Rate**

The research sample was 138 employees of African Economic Research Consortium. The response rate is shown below.

**Table 4.1: Response Rate**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Successful	95	68.84%
Unsuccessful	43	31.16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Results showed that 95(68.84%) instruments were totally filled and returned. Therefore, the total success rate was 68.84% which implies a successful response rate. Babbie (2004) asserted that a rate above 60% is a good response for the study. The remaining 43 questionnaires were either not filled or not returned. This was attributed to respondents who promised to fill the questionnaires but never communicated.

### 4.3 Reliability Results

**Table 4.2: Reliability Assessment**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of items</b>
Organizational culture	0.805	7
Career development	0.711	5
Communication	0.735	6
Organizational performance	0.848	10

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

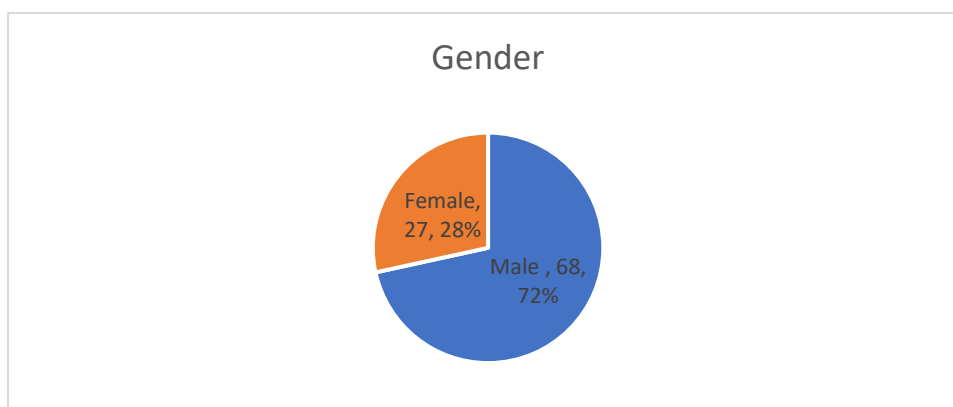
According to Table 4.2's findings, every scaled item had a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.7 or higher; as a result, every variable met the reliability cutoff of 0.7 or higher and was deemed reliable for this study. This level of construct measure reliability was above threshold set.

### 4.4 Demographic Characteristics

Demographics that were considered included gender of the respondents, position held, age, education level as well as the number of years worked at African Economic Research Consortium.

#### 4.4.1 Respondents' Gender

Figure 4.1 shows distribution in terms of gender.



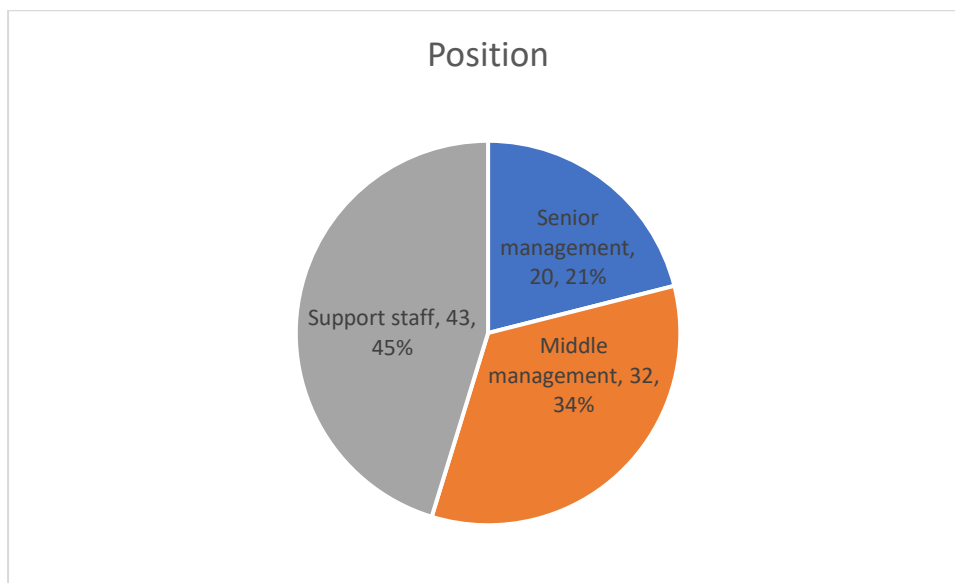
**Figure 4.1: Respondents' Gender**

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Figure 4.1 shows that 68(72%) of the participants were males while the minority 27(28%) were females. The results therefore implied that most African Economic Research Consortium employees were men. This could be attributed the nature of work conducted by the institution which specializes in building capacity in training, research and policy outreach.

#### 4.4.2 Position held by the Participants

Figure 4.2 presents participants' position at AERC.



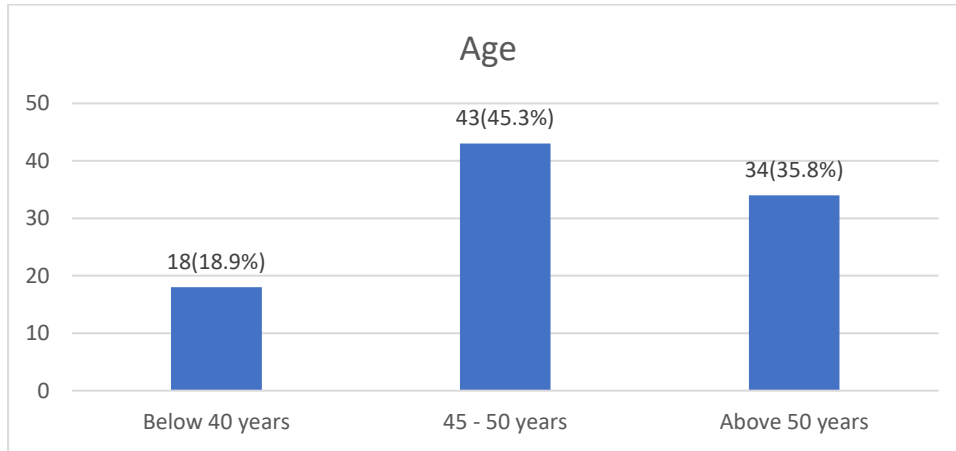
**Figure 4.2: Position of the Participants**

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Figure 4.2 shows that 43(45%) of the participants were support staff, 32(34%) were middle managers while 20(21%) were senior managers. The results therefore implied that most African Economic Research Consortium that were interviewed were support staff. This could be attributed to availability of support staff to the fill in the questionnaires.

### 4.4.3 Participants' Age

Figure 4.3 shows participants' age distribution.



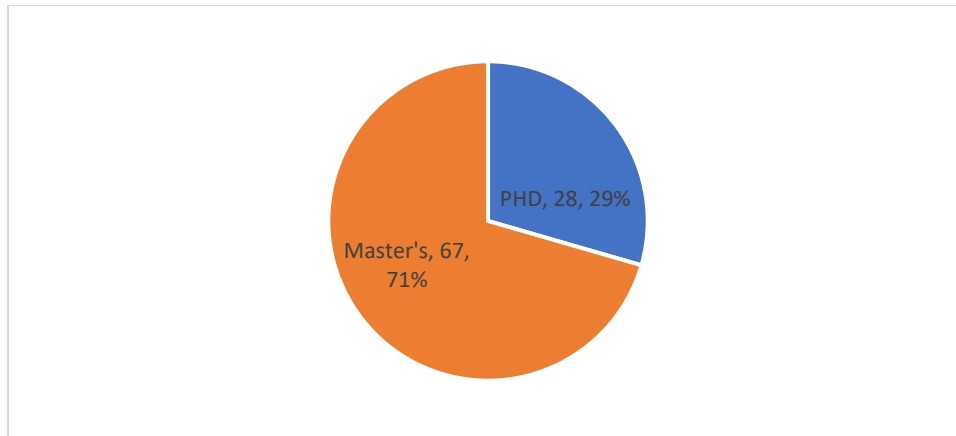
**Figure 4.3: Participants' Age**

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Results show that 43(45.3%) of the participants were aged between 45 – 50 years, 34(35.8%) were aged above 50 years while 18(18.9%) were aged below 40 years. The results therefore imply that most African Economic Research Consortium employees were aged above 45 years. This could be attributed to long working duration by most of the employees in the institution.

### 4.4.4 Education level of the Respondents

Figure 4.4 shows participants education level.

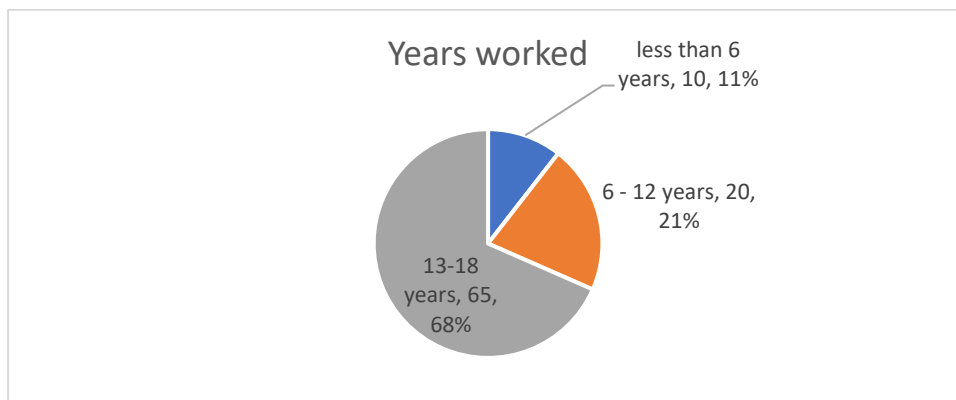


**Figure 4.4: Participants education level**

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

Figure 4.4 indicates that 67(71%) of the participants had Master's degree while 28(29%) had PHD. This meant that most employees of the African Economic Research Consortium were educated, and could therefore improve their company's organizational performance. The reason most staff have high qualifications is because of the nature of the institution which specializes in building capacity in training, research and policy outreach.

#### 4.4.5 Years of Work



**Figure 4.5: Years of Work**

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The results show that the majority of respondents, 65 (68%) had worked for 13 to 18 years, while 10 (11%) had worked for less than 6 years and 20 (21%) had worked for 6 to 12 years. This suggests that the majority of African Economic Research Consortium personnel had been with the company for a considerable amount of time and were thus well-equipped to answer the questionnaire since they had solid institutional memory and expertise.

#### **4.5 Descriptive Results**

The descriptive results for both the dependent and the predictor constructs are captured in subsection 4.5.1 to 4.5.4.

##### **4.5.1 Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance**

Descriptive statistics data was collected using a Likert scale as follows: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1. Results for organizational culture are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Respondents Responses on Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>No extent</b>	<b>Little extent</b>	<b>Moderate extent</b>	<b>Great extent</b>	<b>Very great extent</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.Dev</b>
I understand the organization's mission and vision.	20 (21.1%)	9 (9.5%)	19 (20%)	21 (22.1%)	26 (27.4%)	3.25	1.49
I know what behaviors are to be exhibited at work as I carry out my day-to-day work.	7 (7.4%)	0.00%	19 (20%)	20 (21.1%)	49 (51.6%)	4.09	1.18
Our way of doing things enables us to have a competitive edge over our competitors.	9 (9.5%)	6 (6.3%)	26 (27.4%)	25 (26.3%)	29 (30.5%)	3.62	1.25
Our mission statement gives meaning to the core values of the institution.	10 (10.5%)	5 (5.3%)	11 (11.6%)	24 (25.3%)	45 (47.4%)	3.94	1.33
I am able to maintain a reasonable balance between work and my personal life	6 (6.3%)	8 (8.4%)	13 (13.7%)	25 (26.3%)	43 (45.3%)	3.96	1.23
I would recommend working here to a friend	8 (8.4%)	9 (9.5%)	16 (16.8%)	22 (23.2%)	40 (42.1%)	3.81	1.31
My physical working conditions are good	5 (5.3%)	6 (6.3%)	16 (16.8%)	23 (24.2%)	45 (47.4%)	4.02	1.18

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The study results show that 47(49.5%) of the respondents indicated that the vision and mission of the organization was clear to them to a great extent (mean=3.25, std. dev=1.49). This implied that the mission of the African Economic Research Consortium was not clear to more than half of the employees. In addition, the majority of respondents, 69 (72.7%), said they knew, to a large extent, what behaviors were expected at work as they went about their daily tasks (mean=4.09, std.

dev=1.18). This implied that most employees of African Economic Research Consortium were able to carry themselves in the rightful manner within the organization. Further findings revealed that the majority of respondents, 47 (or 49.5%) indicated that their processes gave them a significant competitive advantage over their rivals (mean=3.62, standard deviation=1.25). This correlates with the Resource Base View theory which states that an organizations unique resources and competencies distinguishes it from its competitors. As a result, it was claimed that African Economic Research Consortium was fiercely competitive. The majority of respondents, 69 (72.7%), said that the organization's mission statement helped them understand the institution's essential values in a significant way (mean: 3.94; standard deviation: 1.33). This implies that the African Economic Research Consortium's objective provides its staff with a clear understanding of the company.

The majority of respondents, 68 (71.6%), said that they were able to manage their personal and professional lives to a considerable level (mean: 3.96; standard deviation: 1.23). This implies that African Economic Research Consortium improves employee work-life balance. Results showed that the majority of respondents aged 62 (65.3%) said they would strongly advise their friends to work for the organization (mean: 3.81; standard deviation: 1.31). This suggests that the majority of African Economic Research Consortium employees were content with their working circumstances. The majority of respondents, 68 (71.6%), said that their physical working conditions were good to very good (mean=4.02, std. dev=1.18), according to the results. This infers that African Economic Research Consortium had created a good working condition for the employees. These results were in line with those of Puapuni (2016), who discovered that organizational culture is a crucial organizational instrument that affects the efficiency and productivity of the organization.

#### 4.5.2 Career Development and Organizational Performance

Descriptive statistics data was collected using a Likert scale as follows: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1. Results for career development were presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Career Development**

Statement	No extent	Little extent	Moderate extent	Great extent	Very great extent	Mean	Std.Dev
The organization provides employees an opportunity to advance and improve their skills and competencies.	11 (11.6%)	0.00%	4 (4.2%)	18 (18.9%)	62 (65.3%)	4.26	1.30
I have an elaborate career development plan that guides my personal contribution and performance.	7 (7.4%)	4 (4.2%)	10 (10.5%)	22 (23.2%)	52 (54.7%)	4.14	1.22
Job training, employee development is encouraged and appreciated by management.	7 (7.4%)	4 (4.2%)	6 (6.3%)	18 (18.9%)	60 (63.2%)	4.26	1.21
Career growth opportunities determine my commitment to the organization	9 (9.5%)	2 (2.1%)	8 (8.4%)	24 (25.3%)	52 (54.7%)	4.14	1.25
In my current position, I have numerous opportunities to put my skills to good use and advance my career.	4 (4.2%)	11 (11.6%)	17 (17.9%)	25 (26.3%)	38 (40%)	3.86	1.19

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The findings reveal that 80(84.3%) of the participants noted that the organization provide employees an opportunity to advance and improve their skills and competencies to a great extent (mean=4.26, std. dev=1.30). This implies that African Economic Research Consortium gave their employees opportunities to advance their career. Additionally, the results demonstrate that the majority of respondents 80 (84.3%)—said they had a detailed professional development plan that substantially influenced their own contribution and performance (mean: 4.14; standard deviation: 1.22). This implies that African Economic Research Consortium had greatly invested in career development of their employees. Further, results showed that majority 80(82.1%) of the respondents indicated that job training, employee development was encouraged and appreciated by management to a great extent (mean=4.26, std. dev=1.21). This findings align with the Social Exchange Theory which focus on three principles rationality, reciprocity and specificity. Employees have a relationship with a company that provides desired rewards and both employer and employee give and receive. This implies that African Economic Research Consortium had invested heavily on training and developing their employees. In addition, 76(80.0%) of the participants indicated that career growth opportunities determined the commitment to the organization to a great extent (mean=4.14, std. dev=1.25). This infers that employee’s commitment was highly determined by the career opportunities that the employees were given by the organization. Further, 76(80.0%) of participants indicated that in their current position, they had numerous opportunities to put their skills to good use and advance their career to a great extent (mean=4.14, std. dev=1.25). This infers that African Economic Research Consortium made good use of their employees. The results of the study corroborated Sundaray's (2011) conclusions that career development improves performance by helping both new and existing employees acquire the information and skills they need to carry out their responsibilities as effectively as feasible through training.

### 4.5.3 Communication and Organizational Performance

Descriptive statistics data was collected using a Likert scale as follows: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1. Results for communication are presented below.

**Table 4.5: Respondents Responses on Communication and Organizational Performance**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>No extent</b>	<b>Little extent</b>	<b>Moderate extent</b>	<b>Great extent</b>	<b>Very great extent</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std.Dev</b>
I understand the vision and mission of AERC	8 (8.4%)	4 (4.2%)	25 (26.3%)	40 (42.1%)	18 (18.9%)	3.59	1.11
My line manager is easily accessible and provides me with an opportunity to clarify work related aims and outputs.	10 (10.5%)	6 (6.3%)	10 (10.5%)	24 (25.3%)	45 (47.4%)	3.93	1.34
My employment position, work outputs, and objectives are all crystal obvious to me.	10 (10.5%)	1 (1.1%)	18 (18.9%)	38 (40%)	28 (29.5%)	3.77	1.20
I have a platform that allows me to engage with leadership and share my opinions in relation to work.	10 (10.5%)	4 (4.2%)	9 (9.5%)	50 (52.6%)	22 (23.2%)	3.74	1.18
I have a platform to share best practices with my colleagues and learn from my colleagues.	5 (5.3%)	12 (12.6%)	18 (18.9%)	35 (36.8%)	25 (26.3%)	3.66	1.15
The leadership efforts on communication are consistent and provide me with a sense of stability.	9 (9.5%)	8 (8.4%)	23 (24.2%)	26 (27.4%)	29 (30.5%)	3.61	1.27

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The results show that majority, 58(61.0%) of the participants understood the vision and mission of AERC to a great extent (mean=3.59, std.dev=1.11). This implies that slightly more than half of the respondents understood the mission of their organization. This supports Kahn's Model of Employee Engagement where active participation and complete role fulfillment come from employee involvement at three levels which include physical, emotional and cognitive participation. Further, 69(72.7%) of the respondents indicated that their line manager is easily accessible and provides them with an opportunity to clarify work related aims and outputs to a great extent (mean=3.93, std.dev=1.34). This implies that the AERC managers were able to provide support to their junior staffs. Additionally, 60 (69.5%) of the participants stated that they are very aware of their employment status, work outputs, and goals (mean=3.77, standard deviation=1.20). This infers that most employees at AERC understood their job very well.

Results also show that majority 72(75.8%) of the respondents indicated that they had a platform that allowed them to engage with leadership and share their opinions in relation to work to a great extent (mean=3.74, std.dev=1.18). This infers that employees at AERC were given a chance to share their opinions and ideas concerning their organization. In addition, majority 60(63.1%) of the respondents indicated that they had a platform to share best practices with their colleagues and learn from their colleagues to a great extent (mean=3.66, std.dev=1.15). This infers that there was great team work amongst employees at AERC. 55 (57.9%) of the participants said that their leaders' communication efforts are constant and provide them a strong sense of stability (mean: 3.61, standard deviation: 1.27). This infers that AERC had good communication strategies amongst the managers and other employees. These results corroborated those of Mutunga (2009), who discovered that communication significantly impacted organizational performance.

#### 4.5.4 Organizational Performance

Descriptive statistics data was collected using a Likert scale as follows: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1. Results for organizational performance are captured below.

**Table 4.6: Respondents Responses on Organizational Performance**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>No extent</b>	<b>Little extent</b>	<b>Moderate extent</b>	<b>Great extent</b>	<b>Very great extent</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev</b>
The work environment at AERC is favorable.	10 (10.5%)	2 (2.1%)	6(6.3%)	28 (29.5%)	49 (51.6%)	4.09	1.27
This organization's beliefs, policies, processes, and systems, as well as the manner it conducts business, satisfy me.	10 (10.5%)	0	12 (12.6%)	26 (27.4%)	47 (49.5%)	4.05	1.26
Employees' performance is reviewed on an annual basis.	8 (8.4%)	4 (4.2%)	21 (22.1%)	26 (27.4%)	36 (37.9%)	3.82	1.23
I would still choose to work for my current employer.	9 (9.5%)	13 (13.7%)	15 (15.8%)	32 (33.7%)	26 (27.4%)	3.56	1.29
I am able to meet my annual goals and targets	7 (7.4%)	5 (5.3%)	12 (12.6%)	37 (38.9%)	34 (35.8%)	3.91	1.17
You have the right tools that allow you to be effective and productive at work.	9 (9.5%)	1 (1.1%)	11 (11.6%)	25 (26.3%)	49 (51.6%)	4.09	1.24
I am responsible for reaching particular objectives.	5 (5.3%)	4 (4.2%)	11 (11.6%)	20 (21.1%)	55 (57.9%)	4.22	1.14
The organization focuses on satisfying internal and external stakeholders	7 (7.4%)	6 (6.3%)	8 (8.4%)	24 (25.3%)	50 (52.6%)	4.09	1.24
I am present psychologically when I come to work	3(3.2%)	18 (18.9%)	29 (30.5%)	15 (15.8%)	30 (31.6%)	3.54	1.21
I am motivated and satisfied when at work	11 (11.6%)	23 (24.2%)	18 (18.9%)	19(20%)	24 (25.3%)	3.23	1.37

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The findings indicate that 77(81.1%) of the participants noted that their work environment at AERC was favorable to a great extent (mean=4.09, std.dev=1.27). This infers that AERC ensured that their employee had a good working environment. Further, 73(76.9%) of the participants indicated that their organization's beliefs, policies, processes, and systems, as well as the manner it conducted business, satisfy them to a great extent (mean=4.05, std.dev=1.26). This infers that AERC has good organizational culture that favors the employees.

The findings indicate that 62(65.3%) of the participants indicated that employee's performance is reviewed on an annual basis to a great extent (mean=3.82, std.dev=1.26). This infers that AERC reviews the employee performance annually. In addition, results show that majority 58(61.1%) of the respondents indicated that they would still choose to work for their current employer to a great extent (mean=3.56, std.dev=1.29). This infers that majority of the AERC employees were comfortable with their organization. Further, results showed that majority 71(74.7%) of the respondents indicated that they were able to meet their annual goals and targets to a great extent (mean=3.91, std.dev=1.17). This infers that most employees at AERC were effective in their jobs. In addition, 74(77.9%) of the participants indicated that they had the right tools that allowed them to be effective and productive at work to a great extent (mean=4.09, std.dev=1.24). This infers that AERC had equipped their employees with the relevant tools and equipment's to carry out their jobs. Further, 75(79.0%) of the participants agreed that they were responsible for reaching particular objectives to a great extent (mean=4.22, std.dev=1.14). This infers that the AERC employees were working towards achieving the organization objective. Results also show that majority 74(77.9%) of the participants indicated that the organization focuses on satisfying internal and external stakeholders to a great extent (mean=4.09, std.dev=1.24). This infers that AERC management minded the interest of their stakeholders. Further, 45(47.4%) of the participants indicated that they

are present psychologically when they come to work to a great extent (mean=3.54, std.dev=1.21). This infers that AERC has enhanced work life balance of their employees. Results revealed that 45(47.4%) of the participants were motivated and satisfied when at work to a great extent (mean=3.23, std.dev=1.37). This infers AERC had focused on satisfying their employees which enhanced their performance.

#### 4.6 Regression Results

This section presents regression analysis results on effect of organizational culture, communication, and career development on organizational performance at AERC. The section highlights Model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficients outputs.

**Table 4.7: Model Summary**

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.848a	0.719	0.71	0.435289

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The correlation value (R) was 0.848, as shown in Table 4.7. This suggests that at AERC, employee engagement practices and organizational performance are strongly correlated. R squared was 0.719 as well. This suggests that staff involvement accounts for 71.9% of the variability in organizational performance at AERC, the dependent variable. The study findings agreed with Basbous (2011) who found that in order to improve organizational performance, firms must focus on characteristics of employee engagement.

**Table 4.8: Analysis of Variance**

	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Regression	44.084	3	14.695	77.553	.000b
Residual	17.242	91	0.189		
Total	61.326	94			

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

The F statistic in Table 4.8 is 77.553, and the P-value associated with it is 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 p-value. Results indicate that employee engagement has statistically significant effect on organizational performance at AERC at a 95% confidence level. Results further reveal that the model was fit for further analysis.

**Table 4.9: Regression Coefficients**

	<b>Unstandardized Coefficients</b>		<b>Standardized Coefficients</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
	<b>B</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Beta</b>		
(Constant)	0.250	0.245		1.023	0.309
organizational culture	0.243	0.080	0.248	3.028	0.003
Career development	0.236	0.091	0.238	2.595	0.011
communication	0.462	0.090	0.453	5.110	0.000

**Source: Research Data (2022)**

**Regression Equation:**

$$Y = 0.250 + 0.248X_1 + 0.238X_2 + 0.453X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Y – Organizational Performance

$X_1$  – Organizational Culture

$X_2$  – Career Development

$X_3$  – Communication

Organizational culture and performance have a positive and substantial link, according to regression of coefficients ( $\beta = 0.248$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ). The findings do suggest that an increase in organizational performance of 0.248 units would follow a unit increase in organizational culture. These results were in line with those of Puapuni (2016), who discovered that organizational culture is a crucial organizational instrument that affects the efficiency and productivity of the organization.

Results also indicate a positive and significant link between career growth and organizational success ( $\beta = 0.238$ ,  $p = 0.011$ ). According to the findings, a unit increase in career development will result in a 0.238 unit increase in organizational performance. The results of the study corroborated Sundaray's (2011) conclusions that career development improves performance by helping both new and existing employees acquire the information and skills they need to carry out their responsibilities as effectively as feasible through training.

Additionally, the findings show a strong and favorable correlation between communication and organizational performance ( $\beta = 0.453$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The results showed that a one unit increase in communication will translate into a 0.453 unit gain in organizational performance. These results corroborated those of Mutunga (2009), who discovered that communication significantly impacted organizational performance.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The research's findings are summarized in this section. Additionally, it offers the conclusions and advice. The chapter's concluding section emphasizes the suggestions for additional research.

#### **5.2 Summary of Key Findings**

##### **5.2.1 Organizational Culture and Organizational Performance**

The first objective was to determine how organizational culture affects performance at AERC. Regression results indicated that organizational culture had a positive and significant effect on organizational performance at AERC.

##### **5.2.2 Career Development and Organizational Performance**

The second objective was to determine how career development affects performance at AERC. Regression results indicated that career development had a positive and significant effect on organizational performance at AERC.

##### **5.2.3 Communication and Organizational Performance**

The third objective was to determine how communication affects performance at AERC. Regression results indicated that communication had a positive and significant effect on organizational performance at AERC.

#### **5.3 Conclusion of the Study**

On the objective one on how organizational culture affects performance at AERC, the study concluded that organizational culture had a favorable and substantial impact on organization performance. An effective and adaptable mission is viewed by AERC as having a strong and positive

impact on performance. The implication is that organizational culture contributes significantly to positive change in organizational performance.

The study also concluded that career development had a favorable and substantial impact on organizational performance with regard to objective two, which looked at how performance at AERC is affected by career development. The implication is that career development contributes significantly to positive change in organizational performance.

The study further concluded that effective communication had a favorable and substantial impact on organizational performance based on objective three, which examined how communication impacts performance at AERC. Therefore, creating a platform for the employees to engage with the managers to share their opinions in relation to work enhanced employee productivity which later enhanced employee performance. The implication is that communication contributes significantly to positive change in organizational performance.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

This research recommended that AERC management should be intentional in investing in its organizational culture because culture has become a strategic tool in the market to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. In addition, AERC's leadership must also emphasize an organizational culture that supports the overall welfare of employees. This is because employees are an important asset for the organization and apart from working to ensure the organization achieves the desired goals, there are also career growth goals to be achieved.

The study also recommends that AERC management ought to embrace career development programs for employees such as training. The training program must be adapted to the needs of employees. There should be a training program for employees at all levels to increase their

competency level. Training must be evaluated to determine its impact on employee performance. Training should be both internal and external. AERC should promote mentoring programs and assign experts to train staff. AERC must manage people's career expectations and, where promotion is not possible, look for cross-references that will change the experience and make the job more interesting.

The management of AERC should communicate directly to junior staffs and also create a good relationship with the employees. The managers should always try to get feedback from their junior employees and look at ways for improving communication.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further research**

The researcher focused on employee engagement practices and organizational performance at AERC. The study was done with only one capacity building organization and thus further studies can focus on other capacity building organizations in Kenya. Also, the R-squared of this study is not 100%. This means that there are other employee engagement practices that have an impact on company performance. Therefore, further research can focus on other employee responsibilities such as work-life balance, workplace design and training.

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**Appendix I: Letter of Introduction**

**Kasiki Mudachi Egesa**

**Cell. No: 0721898623**

**Email: emudachi@yahoo.com**

**Dear Sir/Madam,**

**RE: FILLING OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am an MBA postgraduate student at Kenyatta University, School of business, working on a research project on Employee Engagement Practices and Organization Performance at African Economic Research Consortium.

I respectfully request your help in data collection by completing the enclosed questionnaire. The information provided is for academic purposes only and is processed with the highest possible reliability. A duplicate of the final research report will be available upon request.

Thank you.

Yours Sincerely,

**Kasiki Mudachi Egesa**

**D53/CTY/PT/39535/2016**

## Appendix II: Questionnaire

### Section A: Background Information

1. Indicate your gender: Male  Female

2. Which category best describes you? (Please tick one)

Senior Management  Middle Management  Support Staff

3. Age in Years:

- Below 35 [ ]
- 35– 40 [ ]
- 40 – 45 [ ]
- 45–50 [ ]
- 50 and above [ ]

4. Indicate your highest level of education:

- Diploma [ ]
- Higher National Diploma [ ]
- Bachelor's Degree [ ]
- Post graduate [ ]

5. Indicate how many years you have been at AERC:

- Less than 6 years [ ]
- 6-12 years [ ]
- 13-18 years [ ]
- 19-24 years [ ]
- 24 years and above [ ]

**Section B: Organization Culture**

Kindly select an appropriate scale value that represents your view on the statements below that support organization culture.

*Key: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1.*

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The vision and mission of the organization is clear to me					
I know what behaviors are to be exhibited at work as I carry out my day-to-day work.					
Our way of doing things enables us to have a competitive edge over our competitors.					
Our mission statement gives meaning to the core values of the institution.					
I am able to maintain a reasonable balance between work and my personal life					
I would recommend working here to a friend					
My physical working conditions are good					

**Section C: Career Development Opportunities**

Kindly select an appropriate scale value that represents your view on the statements below that support career development opportunities.

*Key: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1.*

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The organization provides employees an opportunity to advance and improve their skills and competencies.					
I have an elaborate career development plan that guides my personal contribution and performance.					
Job training, employee development is encouraged and appreciated by management.					
Career growth opportunities determine my commitment to the organization					
In my current position, I have numerous opportunities to put my skills to good use and advance my career.					

**Section D: Communication**

Kindly select an appropriate scale value that represents your view on the statements below that supports communications.

*Key: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1.*

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the vision and mission of AERC					
My line manager is easily accessible and provides me with an opportunity to clarify work related aims and outputs.					
My employment position, work outputs, and objectives are all crystal obvious to me.					
I have a platform that allows me to engage with leadership and share my opinions in relation to work.					
I have a platform to share best practices with my colleagues and learn from my colleagues.					
The leadership efforts on communication are consistent and provide me with a sense of stability.					

**Section E: Organizational Performance**

Kindly select an appropriate scale value that represents your view on the statements below that correspond to organizational performance.

*Key: Very Great Extent =5, Great =4, Moderate Extent = 3, Little Extent =2, No Extent =1.*

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The work environment at AERC is favorable.			1		
This organization's beliefs, policies, processes, and systems, as well as the manner it conducts business, satisfy me.			2		
Employees' performance is reviewed on an annual basis.			3		
I would still choose to work for my current employer.			4		
I am able to meet my annual goals and targets			5		
You have the right tools that allow you to be effective and productive at work.			6		
I am responsible for reaching particular objectives.			7		
The organization focuses on satisfying internal and external stakeholders			8		
I am present psychologically when I come to work			9		
I am motivated and satisfied when at work					

## Appendix III: Authorization Letter from Kenyatta University



KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: [dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke)

Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke)

P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 810901 Ext. 4150

Internal Memo

FROM: Dean, Graduate School

DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2022

TO: Evelyn Kasiki Mudachi  
C/o Business Administration Dept.

REF: D53/CTY/PT/S9535/2016

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL**

This is to inform you that Graduate School Board at its meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> August, 2022 approved your Research Project Proposal for the M.B.A Degree Entitled, "Employee Engagement Practices and Organization Performance in Africa Economic Research Consortium."

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, Subject to Clearance with Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking and progress report forms per semester. The forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Also, please ensure that you publish article(s) from your thesis before submitting it to Graduate School for examination as per the Commission for University Education and Kenyatta University guidelines.

Thank you.

**ANNBELL MWANIKI**  
**FDR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Chairman, Business Administration.

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Caroline Nderi  
C/o Department of Business Administration  
Kenyatta University

AM/ee

Appendix IV: NACOSTI Permit

Republic of Kenya  
Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **856866**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**



This is to Certify that **Ms. Evelyn Kaviki Madachi** of **Kenyatta University**, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: **Employee Engagement Practices and Organization Performance in Africa Economic Research Consortium for the period ending: 15/September/2023.**

License No: **NACOSTI/P/22/20272**

**856866**  
Applicant Identification Number

*W. Williams*  
Director General  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

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