

# HOW DOES EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION CONTRIBUTE TO STAFF TURN-OVER INTENTIONS IN A UNIVERSITY SETTING?

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## Abstract

The study aimed to establish the effect of employee representation on academic staff turnover intentions in chartered universities in Kenya. The study was anchored on the Universalistic Theory, the Harvard HRM model, and the Unfolding Model of the Voluntary Turnover model. A positivist research philosophy guided the study and used a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The study population was 17210 academic staff in chartered universities in Kenya, from whom a sample of 364 academic staff was drawn. A multistage sampling technique was used. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings were presented using tables, charts, and graphs. The results revealed that employee representation significantly negatively influenced academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya. The study's findings offer insight into the situational positioning of employee representations in influencing academic staff turnover intentions in Kenyan universities and managerial and epistemological insights for managers and scholars in HRM, respectively. The findings further contribute to policy development on employee representation and retention.

**Keywords:** employee representation, academic staff, turnover intentions, Universities

## Introduction

The most valuable asset available to an organization is its employees. Thus retention of employees in their jobs is essential for organizational success. Globally, organizations are keen on evaluating the attraction, hiring, development, motivation, retention, and separation of employees. Various reasons have been advanced on why employees quit their organizational jobs. They include workplace-related factors, a mismatch between work and the employee, lack of coaching and feedback, lack of growth and advancement opportunities, remunerations, lack of recognition, overwork related-stress, and lack of trust from the Management (Marchington, 2015; McCloskey & McDonnell, 2018; Wilkinson *et al.*, 2018). Adopting employee representation voice mechanisms is crucial to resolve these issues related to turnover intention (Puni *et al.*, 2016). Human resource management (HRM) literature on employee voice has grown enormously in recent decades. Given the broad scope of the concept and its importance in contemporary workplaces, researchers have focused on a wide range of aspects of em-

ployee voice. They have paid particular attention to the meaning of employee voice, evolution trends, consequences, and relationship with individual and organizational outcomes in shaping employee representations and influencing their effects in different countries (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2016).

Adopting relevant HRM strategies in organizations may be constrained by the unit, functional level, and first-line Management employee representations system. An essential component of employee voice mechanisms is the employee representation that may influence the adoption of employee-centered HRM practices is employee representation at various levels in the organizational hierarchy. The standard and popular representation method used by employees is trade unions, where employees form unions to safeguard their interests. Wilkinson *et al.*, (2014) provided evidence linking union voice to higher productivity, job satisfaction, and lower labour turnover rates. They further indicate that employee trade unions offer workers a collective voice to make their desires well-known to the Management.

Labour trade unions' representation reduces the probability that employee will quit their jobs and leave the organization for two fundamental reasons. First, unions offer employee voice mechanisms to gain greater compensation than they could net in comparable non-union employment. Second, unions give employees a voice in shaping a range of rules and working conditions, including policies that decrease pay inequality, complaint and arbitration and mediation processes for appealing administrative decisions, "just cause" for discipline and discharge, and seniority clauses preferred by employees. Cherry's (2018) study indicates poor employee representation is why people quit and leave the organization.

The HRM theoretical literature on the relationship between employee representations and turnover intentions considers employee representations a critical factor in employee success in the modern workplace. Employee representations result in better employee and organizational outcomes in the form of higher performance than it is supposed to generate. Empirically, the most recent development of this stream of research focuses on the declining role and power of unions in Western economies (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2016); Kim *et al.*, 2010; Bryson, 2004), the emergence and success of the high-performance work system practice (Harley, 2014; Wood & Wall, 2007; Combs *et al.*, 2006) and the adoption of different mixes of employee voice mechanisms in the same workplaces and on their potential outcomes (McCloskey & McDonnell, 2018; Wilkinson *et al.*, Marchington, 2015; Holland *et al.*, 2012; Benson & Brown, 2010).

The loyalty-exit theory asserts that employees have two ways to respond to dissatisfaction; either information management of their dissatisfaction or leaving the organization (Hirschman, 1970). Those reluctant to voice their dissatisfaction may exit silently (CIPD, 2019). Employee turnover intention is an employee's inclination to quit the job (Taylor, 2017). Employee turnover intentions are the last steps before quitting and leaving the organization or actual turnover Khan, (2015). Employees

not given opportunities to express themselves do not feel valued by the organization. Therefore, they will likely develop an increased desire to quit their jobs and leave the organization. Afifah and Aryana (2019) assert that employee representation can respond to felt employee dissatisfaction. Organizations may reduce employee turnover intentions by adopting a system of robust employee representation. In that case, Employees will look for alternative employment and not indicate anything is wrong until they leave the organisation. Effective employee representation can help reduce turnover intentions (CIPD, 2019).

The study's objective was to determine the influence of employee representation on academic staff turnover intentions in chartered universities in Kenya. The hypothesis was that no statistically significant relationship exists between employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions in chartered universities in Kenya.

### **Theoretical Review**

The current study was anchored on universalistic Theory, the Harvard model of HRM, and the unfolding model of voluntary turnover.

#### **The Universalistic Theory**

Dewar and Werbel (1979) postulated the universalistic Theory to identify the best practices in Human Resource Management (HRM). Several researchers such as; Delaney *et al.*, (1989), Huselid (1993), Osterman (1994), and Pfeffer (1994) contributed to the Universalistic Theory. These scholars contend that some HRM practices are superior to others, and therefore all organizations should undertake these superior practices. Pfeffer (1994) referred to the universalistic model as the "best" practice model founded on the postulation that there is a set of superior or best human resource management practices. Adopting them leads to outstanding organizational performance and a reduction in turnover.

These "best" human resource management practices are seen through enhanced employee attitudes and behaviours, reduced absenteeism and turnover intentions, higher skill levels, enhanced quality and efficiency, and increased profitability (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2008). Therefore all organizations will benefit and experience improved organizational output if they can identify, get dedicated to, and implement superior human resource management practices. One of the superior HRM practices is employee participation through union and non-union representation. Workers may unite in employee trade unions to safeguard their interests. As a result, employee trade unions become the legitimate agents of the employee in the organization. The Industrial Relations (I.R.) structure gets chastised on concessions and cooperation between administration and employee trade unions. Management may also use non-union representation as the best HRM practice. Thus union and non-union representation can be used as superior human resource management practices to realize sustainable competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1994). The lead Theory of the current research since every organization has a set of HRM practices, like employee representations, that it deems "best" and superior practice for adoption in HRM.

### **The Harvard Model of HRM**

The Harvard model of HRM (Beer *et al.*, 1984) created what is well-known as the Harvard framework. They suggested that human resource management involves all management decisions and actions that affect the organisation's and the worker's relationship. They argued that many challenges necessitated a broader, more complete, and strategic view of organizational human resources. They also underlined the need to employ a long-term strategy for human resource management and viewed employees as potential assets rather than fluctuating costs. They advocated that HRM's job be to provide regulations that regulate how H.R. strategies are conceived and implemented more mutually reinforcingly (Armstrong & Taylor, 2017).

The Harvard model of HRM, which emphasizes current humanistic orientation and soft HRM orientation, serves as a strategic road map for all managers in their relationships with employees. Its goal is to get employees' commitment instead of control. It is based on the idea that personnel should be consistent, competent, and cost-effective. HRM is depicted in the model as a set of broad strategic 'choices' made in response to the demands of organizational characteristics such as stakeholders, business strategy and conditions, management philosophy, and technology in the context of the external labour market and social, economic, and political conditions (Nankervis *et al.*, 2011). The Harvard model suggests that Human resource management strategies, policies, and processes, fall into four categories: employee influence and involvement, human resource flow, incentive systems, and work systems.

### **Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover**

Lee and Mitchell (1994) developed this voluntary turnover method. It was founded on the principles of Image Theory (Beach, 1990). The Lee and Mitchell model highlights the psychological processes involved in quitting a job and leaving an organization. An employee's decision to terminate an organization can take various forms. People use psychological and behavioural tactics when quitting and leaving an organization.

According to Lee *et al.* (1996), who tested the Lee and Mitchell model, employees choose one of four distinct decision paths when leaving their jobs. Reality "shock" is a factor in deciding which path to take. They categorized shocks as expected or unexpected, positive or negative, personal or organizational, and personal, job, and organizationally connected. Marriage, motherhood, and becoming debt-free are examples of individual shocks. Position and organizational-related shocks include corporate reorganization, new Management, and changes in work assignments.

Even though the unfolding model of voluntary turnover includes more turnover categories than traditional turnover models, systematic classification failure calls into question claims that it provides a complete picture of turnover. Employee representation triggers employee turnover intentions in one of four ways. This model links the relationship between HRM superior practices, such as employee representations, and turnover intentions in the current study.

### Conceptual and Empirical Review

Employee representations are divided into two categories: non-union and labour trade unions. Labour trade unions have arguably claimed the lion's share of interest in employee voice in the literature on industrial relations (Beis, 2017). Medoff (1984) linked labour union membership, increased output, and lower turnover intentions. (Dundon *et al.*, 2017) argued that labour trade union representation reduces the likelihood of employees quitting their jobs and leaving the company for two reasons. First, employee representation allows employees to earn more than a comparable non-labour trade union job. Second, labour unions provide employees with employee voice and the power to set various other workplace norms and conditions. Pay equity policies, grievances, arbitration procedures for challenging managerial decisions, "just cause" for discipline and discharge, and seniority clauses are included. Empirical evidence supports that union wage and employee representation reduce turnover intentions in active labour unions. Employee representatives are appointed to non-union organizations' various decision-making organs and committees to represent them (Beis, 2017).

Islam and Rahman (2016) studied the relationship between job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions among unionized bank employees in selected Banks in Bangladesh. The study employed a descriptive research design. A purposive sampling method was used, which yielded no probability sample, and hence the data may have been biased. Data

were analyzed using multivariate analysis techniques, specifically factor analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to explain the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The study found that representations, an excellent promotional system, a fair rewarding system, support in a personal emergency from the organization, and workplace flexibility in performing tasks were the most influential factors on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. This study suggests that if workers are paid satisfactorily and there is support for proactive representation, these variables will lead bank employees to a higher level of commitment to the team and a reduced turnover rate. It failed to indicate the representation programme put in place to protect employees. The study also lacks well-defined objectives inhibiting the study from incorporating the actual effect of employee representations on turnover intentions.

Park *et al.* (2014) investigated employee turnover intentions in union and non-union enterprises in the United States. The study examined workers' attitudes toward union and non-union construction companies regarding organizational commitment (O.C.) and turnover intentions. The research data was gathered via questionnaires. Employees in unionized firms are more loyal to their employers than non-unionized firms. Even though the regression coefficients of unionized components in commitment and turnover intentions were not statistically significant at the standard significance threshold, they had a higher turnover intention. The study was based in the USA, a developed country, relating organizational commitment and turnover intentions. Data were analyzed using frequencies and percentages and, therefore, incapable of testing relationships the current study intends to address.

Mwathie *et al.* (2017) investigated how employee productivity in Kenyan Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions is affected by representations and participation. This study used a cross-sectional survey research design. The 5718 employees targeted

principals, vice-principals, heads of departments, teaching staff, non-teaching professionals of TVET Institutions, Ministry of Science and Technology education officials, and TUC Secretary Generals. The decision was made to use stratified sampling. A standardized questionnaire and an interview schedule were used to obtain the primary data. The study revealed that representation and participation significantly influenced employee productivity and job satisfaction. The study suggested that each TVET organization should have an employee representative. The study addressed only one construct of employee voice mechanisms against employee productivity with no guiding theory. The study was also contextualized in TVET institutions. The current research established the effect of employee voice mechanisms on turnover intentions of teaching staff in Kenyan universities and the moderating effect of job satisfaction and leadership style on their relationship.

The above perspectives on employee representation highlight the opportunities for organization management to use labour trade unions to elicit employees' views. Upward communication means employees can communicate their issues through their representatives and established channels or informally, which is critical to success. Park *et al.* (2014) found that employees in unionized organizations are more committed to the organization than non-unionized organizations; however, they have higher turnover intentions. Mwathe *et al.* (2017) revealed that representation and participation significantly influence employee productivity and job satisfaction. However, none of these studies is contextualized in the university setting.

### Method

Positivist research relies on taking a large sample. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design using quantitative approaches, that is, the measurement of weights of the responses given by the respondents (Bryman & Bell,

2018). A descriptive cross-sectional survey studies large populations by selecting and studying samples to discover the relative incidence, distribution, and interrelations of sociological and psychological variables (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). The descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used because the parameters of a phenomenon were picked at a specific time to accurately capture the characteristics of the population relating to what, where, how, and when of the research topic (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The results were generalized to represent the entire population of the study. The descriptive cross-sectional design allowed for the description of relationships between variables under study, which enabled the study to collect and compare several variables simultaneously. The research design has been used in previous studies by Abigail (2018), Nkari (2015), Kombo (2015), and Muccheke (2013).

### Sample Size

The primary data for the research was obtained from a sample of chartered university academic staff in the rank of professor, senior lecturer, lecturer, assistant lecturer, and teaching assistants. The multistage sampling technique was used to identify sampling units at different stages according to the structure of the population. This sampling approach involved using several probability sampling techniques at several stages. Kilika *et al.*, (2012) and Mitalo (2018) also used a similar approach in their studies. Four multistage sampling techniques were adopted in this study. The first stage involved selecting fifteen (15) chartered universities from which the sample of academic staff was drawn. As of January 2020, there were 49 chartered universities in Kenya consisting of 31 public chartered universities and 18 private chartered universities. Bryman Bell (2018) indicated that for a study that includes target populations with five or more subgroups to be studied, the survey should only target 30 per cent of the people to enable a detailed examination of the population.

to enable a detailed examination of the population. To get the required sample of academic staff in the public and private chartered universities, the study took 30% of 49 chartered universities, which produced more than 30% of the population. A simple random proportionate sampling method was used to get public and private chartered universities. A total of 15 chartered universities out of 49 public and private chartered universities, which were 30% of all chartered universities, were selected, comprising nine public chartered universities and six (6) private chartered universities on a prorated basis. The second stage involved selecting public and

private chartered universities from which academic staff was sampled per region. The eight regions of Kenya are Coast Region, North Eastern Region, Eastern Region, Central Region, Rift Valley Region, Nyanza Region, Western Region, and Nairobi Region. The study used a simple random proportionate sampling technique to get the required universities per region from which a sample of academic staff was drawn.

The distribution of public and private chartered universities from which the sample of academic staff is drawn per region is shown by the sampling matrix in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sampling Matrix**

Region	Public chartered universities	Private chartered universities	Number to be sampled in Public chartered universities	Number to be tested in Private chartered universities	The total number to be Sampled in both Public and Private chartered universities
Nairobi	6	10	2	3	5
Coast	3	-	1	-	1
Rift Valley	6	2	2	1	3
Central	4	2	1	1	2
Eastern	5	2	2	1	3
Nyanza	4	2	1		1
Western	2	-	1	-	1
North Eastern	1	-	-	-	-
Total	31	18	9	6	15

The third stage involved selecting the sample from the study population of academic staff in fifteen (15) chartered universities. The total academic staff from the 15 chartered universities in Kenya is 6893, comprising 4993 academic staff in 9 public and 1900 in 6 private chartered universities. The sample size was obtained using an easy sample size calculator by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Using a population size of

7,000, a sample size of 364 respondents was appropriate to achieve a confidence level of 95 per cent and a 5% margin of error. The study then used a proportionate sampling technique to apportion the sample size of 364 respondents to every university. The summary of the sample distribution in the selected universities is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Distribution of the Sample in the Universities**

University	Population	Sample
Dedan Kimathi University of Technology	482	25
Kenyatta University	1,702	89
Egerton University	570	30
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology	453	24
Chuka University	270	14
Pwani University	171	9
Technical University of Kenya	616	33
University of Eldoret	313	17
Kisii University	416	22
United States International University	287	15
Africa Nazarene University	166	9
KCA University	238	13
Kabarak University	315	16
Mount Kenya University	694	37
Kenya Methodist University	200	11
Grand Total	6893	364

**Source: Researcher, (2020)**

The fourth stage involved selecting the academic staff from the academic ranks of professor, senior lecturer, lecturer, assistant lecturer/tutorial fellow, and teaching assistants. The study allocated a sample of 364 respondents proportionately to each of the 15 selected universities, as tabulated in Table 4. Then stratified random sampling technique was used to determine desired respondents from each academic rank. The serial number of each participant in an academic rank will be written on a piece of paper and placed in a basket. The basket

was shaken, one piece of paper was picked at a time, and the number on the form was recorded. The process was repeated until the desired number in every academic rank was achieved. If a paper had already been picked was picked again, the paper was folded and returned to the basket.

#### **Reliability and Validity Tests**

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to compute the research instrument's reliability. The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients**

Variable	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Comments
Employee Representation	7	0.926	Reliable

**Source: Primary Data, (2021)**

The result presented in Table 3 shows Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.926 for Employee Representation, indicating that the instrument is reliable. These values are within the acceptable minimum of 0.50 (Cronbach, 1951) and above the recommended value of 0.7. (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Reliability coefficients below 0.5 are unacceptable; below 0.6 and above 0.5 are poor; below 0.7 and above 0.6 questionable; below 0.8 and 0.7 are acceptable; below 0.9 and above 0.8 are good, and those greater than 0.9 are considered Excellent (Sharma, 2016). Therefore, the instrument's internal consistency was deemed satisfactory to data analysis to answer the study objectives.

**Descriptive Statistics of Employee Representations**

Employee representation was conceived in terms of labour and non-labour trade union representations. The existence of trade unions and non-trade union representatives, recognition of labour trade unions, regular meetings, sitting in university committees, providing avenues for representation, and Management resolving issues raised by representatives were investigated selected statements captured indicators of employee representation according to the literature reviewed. The findings are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Employee Representations**

Statements	Statistic		
	N	Mean	S.D
Employee representations supported through labour trade unions	353	3.23	1.34
Management provided Other avenues for representations	353	2.94	1.25
Management holds regular meetings with unions officials	353	2.88	1.20
Representatives sit in several university committees	353	2.86	1.25
Representatives Participate in decision making	353	2.78	1.25
Management addresses issues raised by unions	353	2.90	1.24
Management addresses issues raised by non-unions	353	2.75	1.18
Aggregate Score	353	2.90	1.04

**Note. N: Frequency; SD: Standard deviation  
Source: Primary Data, (2021)**

The results in Table 4 show the level and existence of employee representations aggregate (*mean = 2.90 and SD = 1.04*).

The average scores of items ranged between 2.75 and 3.32 (Range = 0.57). The perception that employee representations were supported through labour trade unions had the highest (mean score=3.23and SD=1.34), followed by Management providing other avenues for representations (mean score=2.94 and SD=1.25). The lowest rated was the employee attitude surveys report shared (mean score=2.75 and 1.18).

The aggregate standard deviation is relatively low compared to other items in the questionnaire, which can be attributed to the reliability of the selected indicators. As a result, the average scores of each item were close to each other, lowering the aggregate standard deviation. The implication is that, on average, academic staff was neutral that employee representations had been adopted and utilized effectively in Universities. The existence of labour trade unions in public universities and the non-existence of recognized unions in private universities can explain the phenomenon.



The Absence of Employee representations is expected to result in employee turnover intentions. Employee representations are not implemented adequately, affecting employee voice and the resulting motivation, as Maslow's need hierarchy theory alludes to.

**Descriptive Statistics of Academic Staff Turnover Intentions**

Turnover intentions among academic staff in Chartered Universities were conceived in this study in terms of the extent to which academic staff planned to quit their current job, had the intention to leave, had intentions to change jobs, thought of leaving their current job and were actively searching for a job in other organizations. Respondents were asked to rate the extent

to which they agreed or disagreed with the selected statements about academic staff turnover intentions on a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. According to the literature reviewed, selected statements captured aspects that were indicators of turnover intentions. Therefore, the study used a 3 item measure adopted from Jenkis (1993) and Kransz *et al.* (1995) to measure academic staff turnover intentions. The three items comprised serious thoughts of leaving, intention to leave, and active search for jobs elsewhere. The means and standard deviations for the academic staff were then computed. The findings are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5:**  
**Descriptive Statistics on Academic Staff Turnover Intentions**

Statements	Statistic		
	N	Mean	S.D
I am planning to quit soon	352	2.21	1.17
I am planning to work for a very short time	352	2.44	1.21
I am planning to quit long run	352	2.77	1.28
I am thinking about quitting	352	2.48	1.30
I have intentions to quit	352	2.48	1.30
I always think about changing job	352	2.55	1.36
I have been applying for jobs	352	2.64	1.35
I frequently consider working elsewhere	352	2.64	1.35
I have intentions to change job	352	2.64	1.37
I am actively searching for a job	352	2.55	1.37
I am scouting for another job	352	2.55	1.36
I am looking for a new job	352	2.64	1.35
I have been applying for jobs	352	2.65	1.41
Aggregate	352	2.56	1.12

**Note. N: Frequency; SD: Standard deviation**  
**Source: Primary Data, (2021)**

The result presented in Table 5 showed that on average academic staff turnover intentions in universities had aggregate (mean = 2.56 and SD = 1.12). The average scores of items ranged between 2.21 and 2.77 (Range = 0.56). The perception that academic staff is planning to quit in the long run rated the highest (mean score=2.77 and SD=1.28), followed by applying for jobs (mean score=2.65 and SD=1.41), and the lowest was employee attitude Surveys report is shared (mean score=2.21 and 1.17). The aggregate standard deviation is relatively low compared to those of other items in the questionnaire, which shows that average scores of academic staff turnover intentions indicators were close to each other. The implication is that, on average, academic staff disagreed on various statements on turnover intentions. Further, they did not seriously

think of leaving, had no intention to leave, and were not actively searching for jobs elsewhere.

**Correlation Analysis of the Relationship between Employee Representation and Turnover Intentions**

The study's objective sought to establish the influence of employee representations on academic staff turnover intentions in chartered universities in Kenya. Academic staff turnover intentions had three indicators: serious thought of leaving, intention to leave, and actively searching for jobs elsewhere. Correlation analysis was conducted for employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions. Pearson's Product Moment technique was used. The result of the correlation analysis is presented in Table 6:

**Table 6: Correlations Between Employee Representation and Turnover Intentions**

Employee Representation	Pearson Correlation	-.289**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	352			

**.\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Source: Primary Data, (2021)**

The correlation results presented in Table 6 show the correlation between employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions is weak negative and significant values (r = -0.289, p = 0.000 < 0.01). The implication is that an increase (improvement) in employee representa-

tions weakly reduces academic staff turnover intentions. This implies that employee representations are critical in influencing academic staff turnover intentions. Further, this suggests that university management needs to improve employee representations to avert academic staff turnover intentions.

**Regression of Employee Representations and Academic Staff Turnover Intentions**

The study's objective sought to investigate the relationship between Employee representations on academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya. The following null hypothesis  $H0_1$  was formulated to determine the relationship between employee representations and turnover intentions,

$H0_1$ : There is no statistically significant relationship between employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya.

To test the Null Hypothesis  $H0_1$ , a simple regression analysis was carried out between employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: regression analysis

**a). The Goodness-of-Fit of model**

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.289	.084	.081	1.072

**b). The Overall Significance of the Model**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	36.748	1	36.748	31.949	.000
Residual	402.583	350	1.150		
Total	439.331	351			

**c). The Individual Significance of the Model**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.463	.170		20.373	.000
Employee Representation	-.312	.055	-.289	-5.652	.000

**a). Dependent Variable: turnover intentions**

The regression results in Table 7(a) indicate that the coefficient of determination for employee representations (Adjusted  $R^2$ ) was 0.081. The results imply that employee representations in chartered Universities in Kenya explain 8.1% of the variation in the academic staff turnover intentions. Further, the regression results in Table 5 (b) indicate that fitted regression models linking the relationship between Employee Representations and academic staff turnover intentions are statistically significant

( $F - Statistic = 31.949, p = .000 < 0.05$ )

at 5% level. This implies that the suggested model is suitable for prediction purposes.

Results presented in Table 7(c) indicate a statistically significant negative linear relationship between employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions (

**regression coefficient =  $-0.312, p = .000 < 0.05$**

) at a 5% level. They are implying that one unit increase (improvement) in employee representations leads to a significant decrease in academic staff

turnover intentions by a factor of **0.312**. The null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between employee representation and academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya is not supported in the current study. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected, which means that employee representation significantly negatively influenced academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya. Further, it implies that employee representation negatively influences academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya. Based on the results, the regression model for the prediction of academic staff turnover intentions in public universities can be as follows:

$$Y = 3.463 - 0.312X_{1b} \dots\dots\dots$$

Where;

$Y$  = The independent variable (academic staff turnover intentions)

$X_{1b}$  = Employee representations

**3.463** =Y- Intercept(constant). Estimate the expected value of academic staff turnover intention when employee representations are Zero. (Constant)

**-0.312** =An estimate of the expected decrease in academic staff turnover intentions in response to a unit increase (improvements) in employee representations ( $X_{1b}$ ).

The findings on the hypothesis suggest that employee representations reduce academic staff turnover intentions in chartered universities in Kenya. The relationship between employee representation and academic staff turnover intentions was negative and statistically significant. It is important to observe that this phenomenon results from labour relations in Kenya. The results of this hypothesis can be attributed to a number of factors. First, the findings of this study highlight the relevance of employee representations in reducing turnover intentions, which was a major concern in this study. The result indicated an inverse relationship between employee representations and academic staff turnover inten-

tions. The descriptive statistics supported by showing that, on average academic staff were neutral on the existence of labour trade union and non-union representations with an aggregate (*mean = 2.90, SD = 1.11*). This phenomenon can result from employee participation in decision-making which is not yet realized in universities in Kenya.

Second, the findings of this study can be explained from the theoretical literature by the Universalistic Theory (Dewar & Werbel 1979). The Theory contends that some HRM practices are superior to others, and therefore all organizations should undertake these superior practices. Adopting superior HRM practices like employee representation leads to outstanding organizational performance and reduced turnover intentions. The Harvard model of HRM (Beer *et al.*, 1984) explained that human resource management is all about managerial decisions and activities affecting employees' relationships with Management. The model emphasizes current humanistic orientation and soft HRM orientation and serves as a strategic road map for all managers in their relationships with employees, such as employee representation which negatively influences employee turnover intentions. The Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover model (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) highlighted the psychological processes involved in quitting a job and leaving an organization. An employee's decision to terminate an organization can take various forms. People use psychological and behavioural tactics when quitting and leaving an organization. According to Lee *et al.* (1996), who tested the Lee and Mitchell model, employees choose one of four distinct decision paths when leaving their jobs. Reality "shock" is a factor in deciding which path to take. Employee representation may pacify employee turnover intentions, and the absence of Employee representation may result in shock that triggers employee turnover intentions in universities.

Finally, the findings of this study correspond with those of Mwathe *et al.* (2017), who discovered that employee representations and involvement significantly impact employee productivity and job satisfaction, implying that increased employee representations will result in high satisfaction. Individuals content with their jobs are more likely to stay with the same organization, resulting in reduced turnover intentions. Park *et al.* (2014) revealed that employees at unionized organizations are more loyal to the organization and have low turnover intentions than those at non-unionized organizations. Islam and Rahman (2016) found that trade union representation influenced job satisfaction and organizational commitment, resulting in lower turnover.

### **Conclusion**

The study sought to examine the effect of employee representation on academic staff turnover intentions. The hypothesis was meant to answer this objective by testing the relationship between employee representation and academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya. The study explained the conclusions arrived at using the descriptive statistics obtained on the indicators for employee representation. From the descriptive results on employee representation, the study noted that academ-

ic staff was neutral and neither agreed nor disagreed that employee representations have been adopted and utilized effectively in Universities. The existence of labour trade unions in public universities and the non-existence of recognized unions in private universities can explain the phenomenon. The Absence of Employee representations is expected to result in employee turnover intentions. Employee representation was not implemented adequately, affecting employee voice and the resulting motivation, as alluded to by the Harvard model of HRM. The correlation between employee representations and academic staff turnover intentions was weak negative and significant. Based on the findings of this study, this research concluded that employee representation negatively and statistically influenced academic staff turnover intentions in universities in Kenya.

### **Recommendation**

The Government, universities Council, and Management should pay more attention to the university sector's employee representation, which predicts academic staff turnover intentions. They need to try to improve employee representation and reduce employee turnover intentions.

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