

Human Resource Practices and their Impact on Employee Commitment in the Catholic Education Agency, Diocese of Buea, SWR Cameroon

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the impact of Human Resource Practices on Employee Commitment among teachers of the Catholic Education agency in the Diocese of Buea. Among the human resource practices considered were compensation, recognition, training, and working conditions. With a total of 1000 employees, 278 employees participated in the research. Questionnaires were used to collect the data based on convenience sampling. A survey research design was utilized in the research. The findings revealed that there was a positive relationship between the aforementioned practices and employee commitment. Conclusions, recommendations and indications for future research are discussed in the paper.

KEYWORDS: *Human resource practices, compensation, recognition, training, working conditions, organizational performance, organizational commitment*

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INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a term used to represent that part of an organization's activities concerned with the recruitment, development and management of its employees (Wood & Wall, 2002). The diocese of Buea employs about 1000 workers in the education sector. These workers are made up of teaching staff, administrative staff and auxiliary staff. These staff members are made up of different age groups and educational backgrounds. One thing however unites them, that is, they are administered from one central office, the education secretariat and have the same human resource management policies and procedures. The human resource office at the education secretariat is engaged in ensuring that the human capital in the agency is efficient in service delivery. This study sets out to understand whether there is any relationship between the human resource practices and the commitment of the employees in the diocese of Buea.

According to Saari (2010), public institutions are facing myriads of issues in enhancing the performance and commitment of their employees. Among the issues were lack of commitment, absenteeism, rude behaviour and inefficiency in performing tasks given to them. These same issues are faced by the private sector too especially where there are many employees. The question has always been what actually accounts for this attitude among employees. Batau and Mohamed (2016) in their research hinted at a cause when they stated that the public sector's performances were marred by the lackadaisical attitude and lack of sense of responsibility among public sector employees. Batau and Mohamed (2016) highlighted that it was a popular assumption that inadequate reward, less work benefits, lack of opportunity for career advancement, non-conducive work environment, unattractive remuneration, lack of training and development and

the absence of recognition provided by the public organization to their employees had led them to emotionally and mentally detach from the organization. We shall therefore pick out some of the human resource practices like: Compensation, recognitions, training programs and working environment.

The commitment of employees is key to organizational performance. The employer is therefore bound to ensure employee commitment through practices that motivate and enhance it without which there is bound to be disintegration or stagnation of the institution. For Awamleh (1996), stronger and more generalized commitment may enhance organizational development, growth and survival. In addition, organization will never attain its competitiveness in term of quality; either it is product quality or service quality if the workers are not satisfied with the company. This is corroborated by Herzberg (1996) who made it known that the presence or absence of many attributes, originating internally from within the organization, influences an individual's attitude concerning their job and also their commitment towards the organization. This reveals that the factors that influence employee commitment can often come from within the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee commitment is an essential aspect of every organization's success. As Guest (1987) has suggested, HRM policies are designed to 'maximise organizational integration, employee commitment, flexibility and quality of work'. Organizational commitment is the relative strength of the individual's identification with, and involvement in, a particular organization. According to Armstrong (2006) commitment consists of three factors: a strong desire to remain a member of the organization; a strong belief in, and acceptance of, the values and goals of the organization; a readiness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. There are three types of commitment that have been identified in the working environment. These according to Meyer and Allen (1997) are the affective, the normative and continuance commitment. Accordingly, affective commitment is defined as an attachment based on the emotions of an employee which enables them to work with devotion, accept the goals as well as objective of employer, maintain the desire to stay in organization and contribute towards the accomplishment of targets set by the organization (Mowday, 1998). Affective commitment is indicated by some of the following according to Mathieu and Zajac (1990) and Riketta

(2002): High job satisfaction, commitment, less turnover, less intention to leave the organization and high performance. Continuance commitment is generated when an individual, before leaving the organization, thinks in terms of perceived cost associated with time, money and efforts invested in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Finally, normative commitment is associated with the feeling of obligation to stay in the organization. The employee thinks that it is morally and legally right to maintain their membership with the organization. (N. J. Allen & Meyer, 1996).

Human resource management on the other hand according to Storey (1989) can be regarded as a 'set of interrelated policies with an ideological and philosophical underpinning'. Becker and Gerhart (1996) went a step further to classify its components into three levels: the system architecture (guiding principles), policy alternatives and processes and practices. We shall look at three of these components of human resource practice: compensation, training programs, working conditions, and recognition.

Compensation

Compensation, also known as variable pay (Curran & Walsworth, 2014) and incentive pay (Green & Heywood, 2008) has become increasingly important for employees satisfaction to perform productively at work (Pendleton et al., 2009). Compensation represents a major element in the human resource practices and aids in achieving success in any organization.

Various types of compensation, including performance-compensation, profit-related compensation and employee share-ownership, are identified as strategic tools for shaping positive employee attitudes such as job satisfaction (Heywood & Wei, 2006), organizational commitment and trust in management (Moriones et al., 2009). Various forms of compensation provide great incentives that help to enforce employee commitment and consequently affecting the level of achievement and success in the system. Irrespective of company size, commitment is essential for the attainment of organizational success. Studies have shown a positive impact between compensations and employee attitudes, there are indications that different compensations arrangements may increase work (Green, 2004).

Compensations are one of the most important factors motivating individuals to grow, develop and sustain learning, stimulate productivity and strive to improve the overall performance of the Organization (Casio, 2013). One can therefore agree with Kang and

Yanadori (2011) that Strategically, compensation is a key element of the organization's ability to attract and retain its most valuable source of sustainable competitive advantage of the human capital.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment.

Recognition

According to Abena and Dorcas (2016), research has shown that though financial rewards positively reinforce performance-enhancing behaviours and satisfy employees to some extent, but for committed employees, recognition must be given to keep them motivated, appreciated and committed. Employee recognition has been identified to be a strong motivational tool that enriches employees' energies towards the accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives and also have significant positive relationship with employee performance (Rahim & Daud, 2013). Recognition is understood as the art of giving praise and showing appreciation to others for excellent performance and significant contribution by an employee to an organization. According to Mohamad (2011), there are two types of recognition which are formal and informal. Formal recognition includes performance-based award, new employees recognition and etc whereas the informal recognition refers to the simple gestures by employers or just saying a thank you to show gratitude and acknowledgement for a job that had been done well by the employee. Park, Erwin and Knapp (1997) stated that praise, appreciation, and positive feedback from supervisors and colleagues for a job well done are crucial in generating job satisfaction and commitment among employees. It would be worthwhile therefore to say that recognition is a main contributor to an employee's motivation and feeling of importance and acceptance within an organization.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment.

Training Programs

Employee training or development refers to the planned and organized effort by an organization to equip employees with specific knowledge, improve their skills and abilities and change their attitudes (Al Salem, 2010). According to Armstrong (2006) Commitment is enhanced if managers can gain the confidence and respect of their teams, and development programmes to improve the quality of

leadership should form an important part of any strategy for increasing commitment. Management training can also be focused on increasing the competence of managers in specific areas of their responsibility for gaining commitment, such as performance management. For Bosninih & Al-Farsi, (2003) therefore, training is to be understood as a process of positive adjustment through which the individual acquires knowledge and expertise, information does not possess, behavioural patterns, skills, attitudes, and habits which are needed to raise the individuals efficiency and thereby increase productivity. According to Choudhary and Lamba (2013), there are various kinds of training programs that can be conducted. These include the following: Orientation training, Job training, Safety training, Promotional training, Refresher training, Remedial training, and so forth all aimed at enhancing the skills of employees. From the research of Joudeh (2010), training is capable of achieving certain benefits such as: It raises the trainee employee productivity as a result of increasing his knowledge, developing his skills and refining his abilities.

It contributes to reduce rates of errors committed during work, which leads to raise the level of customer satisfaction. It enhances employee's morale as a result of raising their skills and abilities to reach the required level of their job performance, thereby reducing turnover and absenteeism rates. It improves the trust between boss and subordinates as well as their relations. It increases the ability of staff to exchange views and information with other participants in training courses. There are many more benefits that flow from training programs, according to Joudeh (2010). There seems to be therefore a correlation between training and commitment as reported by the following researchers: Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) found that there is link between training and development opportunities for employees with the levels of commitment shown by them after they have received training and development from the organization. Cherrington (1995) said that a successful training and development program would create and develop more favorable attitudes in employees thus it will help to increase their commitment towards the organization. In addition, Cherrington (1995) also added that the learning situation is fundamentally reinforcing because commitment towards organization is associated with the acquiring new knowledge or skill.

Hypothesis 3:

There is no significant relationship between training and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between training and employee commitment.

Working condition

The working condition or environment matters a lot and contributes towards commitment. From their longitudinal research in 12 companies, Purcell, Kinnie, Hutchinson, Rayton, and Swart (2003) concluded that what seems to be happening is that successful firms are able to meet people's needs both for a good job and to work 'in a great place'. They create good work and a conducive working environment. In this way they become an 'employer of choice'. People will want to work there because their individual needs are met – for a good job with prospects linked to training, appraisal, and working with a good boss who listens and gives some autonomy but helps with coaching and guidance. According to Beiz (2001) and Shruti (2012) the working environment is about the condition and atmosphere of a workplace where the task or the job is completed. It has therefore to do with the physical and geographical location, the surroundings of the workplace such as a construction site or office building. Also involved are the safety level, the quality of air, noise level, and additional perks and benefits such as the availability of free child care or pantry facility that allow staffs to make refreshments for themselves, adequate parking and more.

For Onuka (2012), a fortified work environment is essential in ensuring employee commitment and consequently result to better firm's performance. The environment takes into consideration more than just the physical environment. It is an assemblage of factors. In this wise, Armstrong (2006) intimates that Creating a great place to work starts with developing the image of the organization so that it is recognized as one that achieves results, delivers quality products and services, behaves ethically and provides good conditions of employment. Organizations with a clear vision and a set of integrated and enacted values are likely to project themselves as being well worth working for.

Hypothesis 4:

There is no significant relationship between working conditions and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between working conditions and employee commitment.

The literature review above can be summarized by the use of a diagram. Figure 1 below is a summary of the human resource practices which form part of the independent variable and the employee commitment which is the dependent variable and their indicators.

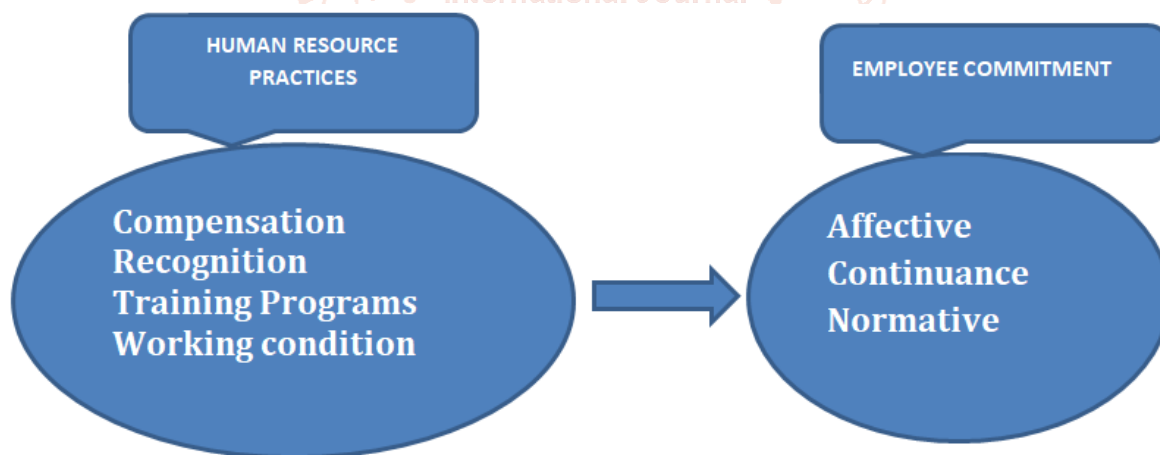


Figure 1: Conceptual diagram depicting the impact of human resource practices on employee commitment

Exchange theory

Homans the originator defined social exchange as the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costing between at least two persons (Homans 1961). The theory has been further developed by Peter M. Blau and Richard M. Emerson. According to Armstrong (2006) the Exchange theory sets out to explain organizational behaviour in terms of the rewards and costs incurred in the interaction between employers and employees. Accordingly, there are four concepts: 1) *Rewards* – payoffs that satisfy needs emerging from the interactions between individuals and their organizations. 2) *Costs* – fatigue, stress, anxiety, punishments and the value of rewards that people have lost because of lack of opportunity. 3) *Outcomes* – rewards minus costs: if positive, the interaction yields a 'profit' and this is satisfactory as long as it exceeds the minimum level of expectation. 4) *Level of comparisons* – people evaluate the outcome of an interaction against the profit they are foregoing elsewhere. This theory can therefore be used to understand the transactional relationship between the employees and the employers in the catholic education agency of the diocese of Buea. This is because it explores the rewards, costs, outcomes and levels of comparisons ongoing between the employer and employees and also among employees.

Research Methodology

The study utilized a quantitative method. A survey research design was utilized to carry out the research. A convenience sampling technique was adopted in this research due to the various available resources. Following the Krejcie and Morgan sample size calculation method. A total of 278 respondents were chosen out of the 1000 employees of the Catholic Education Agency from both the primary and secondary sectors of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Buea. A questionnaire was used to collect the required data. In the process, anonymity, confidentiality and other ethical issues were strictly observed to ensure quality data collection.

Table: 1 Reliability Analysis Report of the Questionnaire

Variables	Cronbach Alpha Coefficients	Variance	No of items
Compensation	0.760	0.001	8
Recognition	0.785	0.001	8
Training programs	0.757	0.002	8
Work conditions	0.854	0.223	8
Staff commitment	0.798	0.190	8
Overall reliability analysis value	0.774	0.083	39

The internal consistency of respondents was satisfactory for all the sub-variables with the coefficient values ranging from 0.754 being the lowest to 0.854 as the highest value. The overall coefficient value of the questionnaire is 0.774 above the recommended threshold of 0.7. Based on this, it was concluded that the participants are consistent in their responses which makes the questionnaire reliable for the study.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the field was first processed using EPIData 3.1 whereby, all the participants' responses were keyed in accordance with each of the test items. During this process of data entering, the demographic information and the test items were coded with numbers to facilitate the data entering and the questionnaires were also assigned with serial numbers. The reason for coding and assigning each questionnaire a serial number was to ensure that on the data base, one should easily trace the individual responses of participants and carry out any verification in areas of uncertainty if need arose. After the data were completely entered for all the participants, the data was exported to SPSS version 25 for further consistency, data range and validation checks with the purpose to first identify invalid codes (data cleaning) with the aid of exploratory statistics. After the data was thoroughly checked for possible errors, the quantitative data was analysed using the descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The descriptive statistical tools used are frequency count, percentages, mean, standard deviation and multiple responses set which aimed at calculating the summary of findings for each variable for a quick comprehension of the overall findings.

In addition to the descriptive statistics, the Spearman's rho test was used to test the hypotheses of the study by establishing if staff compensation, recognition, training programs and work conditions put in place by the agency do have significant effect on staff work commitment. This test was used because the data was not approximately normally distributed. Finally, findings were presented using frequency distribution and thematic tables with all inferential statistics presented at 95% level of confidence interval with alpha set at 0.05 levels, accepting 5% margin of error.

Table: 2 Test of Normality

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
Compensation	.229	275	.000
Recognition	.175	275	.000
Training	.228	275	.000
Working condition	.219	275	.000
Staff commitment	.153	275	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used in testing the normality trend of the data because the sample size is above 50. With less than 50%, the Shapiro-Wilk test is used. As earlier mentioned, statistics from the test of normality (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) showed the data significantly deviate from the normal distribution pattern for all variables (p -value < 0.05) which justify the use of Spearman's rho non-parametric test over the Pearson parametric test. It should be noted that for data to be approximately normally distributed, the p -value should be above 0.05.

Presentation of Findings

This section of the work presents the findings of the study starting with the demographic description of the respondents. Data was successfully collected from 278 staff working in the Catholic Education Agency, Diocese of Buea in the Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon.

Table: 3 Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic information		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	148	53.2
	Female	130	46.8
Age group	Below 30	62	22.3
	Below 50	153	55.0
	Above 50	63	22.7
Longevity in the agency	Below 10 years	92	33.1
	Below 20 years	117	42.1
	21 years and above	69	24.8
Post of responsibility	Administrator	76	27.3
	Teaching staff	159	57.2
	Auxiliary staff	43	15.5

n=278

Among the 278 personnel sampled for the study, 53.2% (148) are male and 46.8% (130) female. Based on age group, 55.0% (153) are below 50 years, 22.7% (63) are above 50 years and 22.3% (62) are below 30 years. With reference to longevity in service, 42.1% (117) of personnel have worked for less than 20 years, 33.1% (92) have worked for below 10 years and 24.8% (69) have worked for 21 years and above. Finally, based on post of responsibility, 57.2% (159) are teaching staff, 27.3% (76) are administrators and 15.5% (43) are auxiliary staff.

Findings by study variables

Employees' commitment

Table: 4 Respondents Opinion on Employees Commitment

Statements	SA	A	Neutral	D	SD	Mean
Employees are generally committed to their jobs	182 (65.0%)	85 (30.6%)	11 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.62
I can stay in the agency until retirement	94 (33.8%)	178 (64.0%)	6 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.32
The employee feels that the company cares about them	150 (54.0%)	120 (43.2%)	8 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.51
All employees are hard working.	94 (33.8%)	166 (59.7%)	18 (6.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.27
Employees often complete their task on time.	109 (39.2%)	146 (52.5%)	20 (7.2%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.30
Employees are always willing to put in their all to ensure success	129 (46.4%)	134 (48.2%)	13 (4.7%)	2 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)	3.40
Employees work absenteeism is somehow high.	17 (6.1%)	32 (11.5%)	14 (5.0%)	75 (27.0%)	140 (50.4%)	3.48
Employees always have the passion to see work through to the end.	178 (64.0%)	84 (30.2%)	13 (4.7%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.57
Total response	953 (45.7%)	945 (45.3%)	103 (4.9%)	83 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.43

In aggregate, 91.0% of the staff with a mean of 3.43 on a scale of 1-4 indicated that employees are committed to their work while 4.0% denied and 4.9% neutral. Specifically, 96.0% (267) indicated that employees are generally committed to their jobs. Also, 97.8% (272) of respondents accepted that they can stay in the agency until retirement. 97.1% (270) of respondents opined that the employee feels that the company cares about them. Also, 93.5% (260) of respondents accepted that all employees are hardworking while 6.5% (18) are neutral.

Furthermore, 91.7% (255) opined that employees often complete their task on time while 7.2% (20) are neutral and 1.1% (3) disagreed. Furthermore, 94.6% (263) of respondents agreed that employees are always willing to put in their all to ensure success while 0.7% (2) disagreed and 4.7% (13) neutral. Finally, 94.2% (262) of respondents accepted that employees always have the passion to see work through to the end while 1.1% (3) disagreed and 4.7% (13) neutral.

Compensation

Table: 5 Respondents Opinion on Compensation

Statements	SA	A	Neutral	D	SD	Mean
The agency is concerned about employees' needs	145 (52.2%)	122 (43.9%)	9 (3.2%)	2 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)	3.47
The company provides employees with the type of benefits they need	110 (39.5%)	154 (55.4%)	14 (5.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.35
The salary is favourable	90 (32.4%)	164 (59.0%)	24 (8.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.24
There are some non-cash compensations like free houses, etc. given to employees	96 (34.5%)	160 (57.6%)	19 (6.8%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.26
The agency often gives some compensation based on employee's performance.	92 (33.1%)	163 (58.6%)	21 (7.6%)	2 (0.7%)	0 (0.0%)	3.24
The compensation/salaries are fairly distributed among workers.	87 (31.3%)	171 (61.5%)	20 (7.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.24
The compensation system is reviewed periodically.	88 (31.7%)	168 (60.4%)	22 (7.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.24
I am still working here because of the salary	111 (39.9%)	141 (50.7%)	26 (9.4%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31
Total response	819 (36.8%)	1243 (55.9%)	155 (7.0%)	7 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3.29

With reference to compensation overall, 92.7% of respondents with a mean of 3.29 on a scale of 1-4 indicate that their agency compensate them while 0.3% denied and 7.0% neutral. Specifically, 96.1% (267) of respondents opined that their agency is concerned about their needs while 0.2% (2) disagreed and 3.2% (9) neutral. Similarly, 94.6% (264) of respondents indicates that they are provides with the type of benefits they need. Furthermore, 91.4% (254) agreed that their salary is favourable while 8.6% (24) neutral. Also, 92.1% (256) of respondents agreed that some non-cash compensations like free houses, etc. given to employees while 6.8% (19) are neutral. Similarly, 94.7% (255) of respondents indicated that their agency often gives some compensation based on employee's performance while 7.6% (21) are neutral. Furthermore, 92.8% (258) of respondents indicated that compensation/salaries are fairly distributed among workers. To elucidate, 92.1% (256) of respondents indicated that compensation system is reviewed periodically while 7.9% (22) are neutral. Finally, 90.6% (252) of respondents indicated that they are they still working in the agency because of the salary while 9.4% (26) are neutral.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment.

Table: 6 Relationship between Compensation and Employee Commitment

		Compensation	Employee commitment
Spearman's rho	R-value	1	.293**
	p-value	.	.000
	N	278	278

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, the findings showed that there is a significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment (R-value 0.293** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment was accepted.

Table: 7 Respondents Opinion on Recognition

Statements	SA	A	Neutral	D	SD	Mean
Employees often receive awards of recognition.	111 (39.9%)	148 (53.2%)	17 (6.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.32
The agency often appreciates those who perform well.	135 (48.6%)	129 (46.4%)	11 (4.0%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.42
Employees often feel recognized.	87 (31.3%)	161 (57.9%)	30 (10.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.21
There are tips given as motivation sometimes	115 (41.4%)	150 (54.0%)	13 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.37
Stakeholders feel impressed with the work of the workers	82 (29.5%)	155 (55.8%)	41 (14.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.15
The agency have a culture of celebrating employees	107 (38.5%)	139 (50.0%)	32 (11.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.27
There is a good separation bonus given to those leaving the agency	105 (37.8%)	153 (55.0%)	20 (7.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31
Those with exceptional skills are promoted.	144 (51.8%)	115 (41.4%)	19 (6.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.45
Total response	886 (39.8%)	1150 (51.7%)	183 (8.2%)	5 (0.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3.31

With reference to recognition, in aggregate, 91.5% of respondents with a mean of 3.31 on a scale of 1-4 indicate that staff are given recognition while 0.2% disagreed and 8.2% neutral. Specifically, 93.1% (259) of respondents indicated that employees often receive awards of recognition while 6.1% (17) are neutral. Similarly, 95.0% (264) of respondents indicated that the agency often appreciates those who perform well 1.1% (3) disagreed and 4.0% (11) neutral. In the same trend, 95.4% (265) of respondents accepted that there are tips given as motivation sometimes. Also, 89.2% (216) of respondents opined that employees often feel recognized while 10.8% (30) are neutral. Closely 88.5% (246) of respondents accepted that their agency have a culture of celebrating employees while 11.5% (32) are neutral. Furthermore, 92.8% (258) of respondents indicated that there a good separation bonus given to those leaving the agency while 7.2% (20) are neutral. Finally, 93.2% (259) of respondents accepted that employees with exceptional skills are promoted while 6.8% (19) remained neutral.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment

Table: 8 Relationship between Recognition and Employee Commitment

		Recognition	Employee commitment
Spearman's rho	R-value	1	.342**
	p-value	.	.000
	N	278	278

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, the findings also showed that there is a significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment (R-value 0.342** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment was accepted.

Training Programs

Table: 9 Respondents' Opinion on Training Programs

Statements	SA	A	Neutral	D	SD	Mean
The agency is often concerned about quality employees	124 (44.6%)	148 (53.2%)	6 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.42
The agency always organizes orientation for new employees	109 (39.2%)	148 (53.2%)	21 (7.6%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.32
There are often seminars organized for employees in the field.	105 (37.8%)	160 (57.6%)	13 (4.7%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.33
Technological tools are used for training.	110 (39.6%)	144 (51.8%)	21 (7.6%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.30

The agency always uses experts for training sessions.	126 (45.3%)	138 (49.6%)	14 (5.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.40
The agency sometimes send employees for special capacity building programmes	111 (39.9%)	148 (53.2%)	19 (6.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.33
The agency has a culture of encouraging personal learning.	146 (52.5%)	119 (42.8%)	10 (3.6%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.47
The agency assigned experienced workers to assist the new employees settle in the system.	119 (42.8%)	139 (50.0%)	17 (6.1%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	3.37
Total response	950 (42.8%)	1144 (51.5%)	121 (5.4%)	6 (0.3%)	0 (0.0%)	3.37

With reference to training programs, 94.3% of the staff with a mean of 3.37 on a scale of 1-4 indicated that staff are provided with training while 0.3% disagreed and 5.4% neutral. Specifically, 97.8% (272) of respondents accepted that the agency is often concerned about quality employees. Similarly, 92.4% (257) of respondents agreed that their agency always organizes orientation for new employees while 7.6% (21) are neutral. Furthermore, 95.4% (265) of respondents accepted that seminars are often organized for employees in the field while 4.7% (13) appear neutral. Also, 91.4% (254) of respondents accepted the use of technological tools during training. In the same weight, 94.6% (264) of respondents indicated that their agency always uses experts for training sessions while 5.0% (14) were neutral. Also, 93.1% (259) of respondents agreed that their agency sometimes send employees for special capacity building programmes while 6.9% (19) remain neutral. Finally, 92.8% (258) of respondents agreed that their agency assigned experienced workers to assist the new employees settle in the system while 6.1% (17) are neutral and 1.1% (3) disagreed.

Hypothesis 3:

There is no significant relationship between training and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between training and employee commitment

Table: 10 Relationship between Training and Employee Commitment

		Training	Employee commitment
Spearman's rho	R-value	1	.283**
	p-value	.	.000
	n	278	278

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, the findings also showed that there is a significant relationship between training program and employee commitment (R-value 0.283**, p -value $0.000 < 0.05$). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between training program and employee commitment was accepted.

Working conditions

Table: 11 Respondents Opinion on Working Conditions

Statements	SA	A	Neutral	D	SD	Mean
The working environment is generally good	157 (56.5%)	121 (43.5%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.56
The employees are generally receptive or welcoming	102 (36.7%)	171 (61.5%)	5 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.35
The work environment is not toxic**	20 (7.2%)	13 (4.7%)	10 (3.6%)	89 (32.0%)	146 (52.5%)	3.45
Workers have all the basic tools they need for their work	142 (51.1%)	128 (46.0%)	8 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.48
There is a good relationship among workers	92 (33.1%)	177 (63.7%)	6 (2.2%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (1.1%)	3.33
Workers are generally happy irrespective of the challenges they face.	161 (57.9%)	114 (41.0%)	3 (1.1%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.57
Workers motivation package is good.	146 (52.5%)	120 (43.2%)	12 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3.48
Many workers quit their jobs in the course of the year**.	10 (3.6%)	28 (10.1%)	21 (7.6%)	91 (32.7%)	128 (46.0%)	3.23

Total response	1074 (48.5%)	1011 (45.7%)	65 (2.9%)	30 (1.4%)	33 (1.5%)	3.43
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****Items with coding reversed during calculation of total response**

In aggregate, 94.2% of respondents with a mean of 3.43 on a scale of 1-4 indicated that staff working conditions are good while 2.9% disagreed and another 2.9% neutral. Specifically, all respondents 100% (278) indicate that their working environment is generally good. Similarly, 98.2% (273) of respondents agreed that employees are generally receptive / welcoming while 1.8% (5) are neutral. Also, 84.5% (235) of respondents rejected that their work environment is not toxic. Furthermore, 97.1% (270) of respondents indicated that workers have all the basic tools they need for their work while 2.9% (8) appear neutral. Also, 97.8% (272) of respondents reported a good relationship among workers in their agency. Furthermore, 98.9% (275) of respondents agreed that workers are generally happy irrespective of the challenges they face. Also, 95.7% (266) accepted that workers motivation package is good while 4.3% (12) are neutral. Finally, 78.7% (219) of respondents denied that many workers quit their jobs in the course of the year while 13.7% (38) agreed and 7.6% (21) neutral.

Hypothesis 4:

There is no significant relationship between working conditions and employee commitment.

There is a significant relationship between working conditions and employee commitment

Table: 12 Relationship between Working Conditions and Employee Commitment

		Working Conditions	Employee commitment
Spearman's rho	R-value	1	.271**
	p-value	.	.000
	n	278	278

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistically, the findings also showed that there is a significant relationship between work conditions and employee commitment (R-value 0.271** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between work conditions and employee commitment was accepted.

Summary of findings and conclusion

The present study showed that there is a significant relationship between human resource practices and employee commitment in the Catholic Education Agency of the Diocese of Buea. This is based on the indicators of human resource practices chosen for the study which included compensation, recognition, training programs and working conditions.

In summary, findings showed that majority of staff sampled 91.0% with a mean of 3.43 on a scale of 1-4 indicated that employees are committed to their work while 4.0% denied and 4.9% neutral.

With reference to compensation, majority of the staff 92.7% with a mean of 3.29 on a scale of 1-4 also indicate that their agency compensate them while 0.3% denied and 7.0% neutral. And, further analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment (R-value 0.293** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between compensation and employee commitment was accepted.

Furthermore, majority of the staff 91.5% with a mean of 3.31 on a scale of 1-4 also indicate that staff are given recognition while 0.2% disagreed and 8.2% neutral. And, further analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between recognition and

employee commitment (R-value 0.342** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between recognition and employee commitment was accepted.

Similarly, majority of the staff 94.3% of the staff with a mean of 3.37 on a scale of 1-4 also opined that staff are provided with training while 0.3% disagreed and 5.4% neutral. And, further analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between training program and employee commitment (R-value 0.283** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between training program and employee commitment was accepted.

Finally, majority of the staff 94.2% with a mean of 3.43 on a scale of 1-4 indicated that staff working conditions are good while 2.9% disagreed and another 2.9% neutral. And, further analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between work conditions and employee commitment (R-value 0.271** , p-value 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, the hypothesis that states there is a significant relationship between work conditions and employee commitment was accepted.

There is therefore a great significant relationship between human resource practices and employee commitment in the Catholic Education Agency of the Diocese of Buea in the south west region of Cameroon.

Recommendations for further research

For further research, other areas of human resource practices like recruitment and transfer or appointment of workers could be considered. More so, a mixed method research could be used in which case the results would be triangulated to see if they match. This would give more credibility to the research carried out.

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