

THE MODERATING ROLE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN SUPERMARKET CHAINS, IN KERICHO COUNTY

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Abstract: The stiff competition from both local and international players continues to cause unrest in the retail sector resulting to poor performance. This study sought to determine the moderating role of performance appraisal on affective commitment and employee performance in Supermarkets, in Kericho County. The study targeted 357 employees of all the Supermarkets in Kericho County. A sample size of 189 was determined using Yamane's sample size formula and a stratified random sampling was utilized to select the actual respondents. Structured questionnaires were used to collect requisite data which were subjected to Hierarchical multiple regression for test of both direct and indirect effects of respective study variables. Study findings indicated that affective commitment ($\beta = 0.975, p < 0.0001$) had a significant and positive effect on employee performance as evidenced by R^2 of 0.63. The study found that performance appraisal significantly moderated the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance by improving the predictive power of the regression model from 62.7% to 95.4%. Organizations should put in place a fair, sensible and reasonable performance appraisal system to enable high performance in view of the positive moderating effect on the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance.

Keywords: Performance appraisal, affective commitment, moderating role, employee performance

INTRODUCTION

Background

The current business environment is complex, dynamic, highly competitive and unpredictable as a result of globalization (Schuler et al., 2011). It is widely agreed that employee performance is tightly related to the organizational performance since effective and efficient employee performance will positively influence the organizational performance. However, these should be adapted in a proper way because settings of the work environment and behavior of colleagues also significantly impact on the motivation and the performance of employees (Abdikarin et al., 2013). According to Hakala (2011) as cited by Nnanna (2020) explains that the following indicators are used to measure performance; quantity produced or sold, quality like the ratio of output repeated or rejected, timeliness in terms of speed in the completion of tasks or provision of services, rate of absenteeism/tardiness, creativity and initiative, and adherence to policies.

Further, it has been pointed out by previous studies that employee performance is depended on numerous factors, which include; motivation, appraisals, job satisfaction & commitment, training and development, and top management support (Mekonnen, 2014; Soud, 2014; Gitongu et al., 2016). As the previous literature has demonstrated, organizations with committed employees enjoy a competitive advantage and a higher rate of survival compared to those without (Aityan & Gupta, 2012). It necessarily follows that all organizations should have a culture that promotes employee commitment to enhance their performance. Werner et al. (2012) asserts that the most capable employees in an organization will not perform well unless they are motivated. Further, it has been pointed out that as the employee performance increase, so does the overall organizational performance (Hueryren & Dachuan, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

According to Lawler (2010), successful organizations possess internal resources and capabilities that are valuable, rare, and inimitable and lack substitutes. Pankhania and Modi (2013) opine that great performance is said to evolve from a carefully managed process of training, coaching, supervising and empowering employees to constantly improve the quality of the goods and the services. The retail sector has been hit hard by dismal performance in terms of sales turnover, for instance, Uchumi Supermarket closed some of its wide network of branches and retrenched its employees in 2006 and 2015. This was attributed to mismanagement of resources and low staff morale besides other factors (Star, 2015).

As such, researchers like Gitongu, Kingi and Jean (2016) studied determinants of employees' performance in Kenya Ports Authority and called for further research to be carried out to unearth other determinants of employees' performance. Similarly, Resurreccion (2012) calls for further research on the impact of other human resource practices as a potent tool to achieve business performance. It is against such gaps that this study attempts to introduce performance appraisal as a moderating variable in the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance

Research Objective

To assess the moderating role of performance appraisal on the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance.

Research hypothesis

H₀₁: Performance appraisal does not significantly moderate the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Becker's Side-Bet Theory

Becker's (1960) side-bet theory provided this study with a lens for understanding how employees develop commitment to an organization. According to the side bet theory of organizational commitment, commitment increases with the accumulation of side bets or investments. Becker described commitment in general as a disposition to engage inconsistent lines of activity as a result of the accumulation of side bets that would be lost if the activity was discontinued. This study drew Becker's exchange theory to explain how employees develop commitments as a result of placing stakes valuable to them in the institution and hence sticking to the organization for long.

Goal Setting Theory

This theory was put forward by Locke (1968) that goals can motivate employees to superior performance because goals indicate and give direction to an employee about what needs to be done and how much effort is required to be put in. This theory posits that there is a positive relationship between goals and performance. According to Locke (1968), for goals to motivate, they should satisfy five principles namely; clarity, challenging, commitment, feedback and task complexity. Similarly, the goals of the organization should be aligned to the individual employee goals because employees keep following their goals (Kangangi, 2014). Mekonnen (2014) observed that the act of inducing employees each with distinctive needs and personalities to pursue personal and organizational objectives encourages them to perform better.

Locke and Latham broke down goals into two main characteristics: Content and Intensity. The Content involves the outcome of the task, whereas the Intensity is the resource required to accomplish it which can be both mental and physical. The theory highlighted the importance of considering the whole process of completing a goal and

not just the outcome, involving employees in directing the route taken to complete a task was emphasized to increase their motivation to reach the target. In this study, the goal-setting theory is used to underpin the emphasis on setting specific and challenging goals with appropriate feedback for improved performance, as Lunenburg (2011) states. Goal setting improves the performance of employees to a greater extent.

Empirical Review

Effect of Affective Commitment on Employee Job Performance

Akintayo (2010) describes employee commitment as the degree to which the employee feels devoted to their organization. Bloemer et al. (2013) opines that affective commitment works as the driver which increases various competencies that benefit employees and in turn promotes the employee performance. Employees who are affectively committed are usually involved in the organization and are quick to generate ideas and come up with innovative suggestions and are always improving their performance (Colla et al., 2019; Jatmiko et al., 2020; Jauhari et al., 2017; Vuong et al., 2020). Beck and Wilson (2000) opine that the development of affective commitment involves recognizing the organization's worth and internalizing its principles and standards. Similarly, Leonard (2000) listed six factors that have the greatest influence on employee (affective) commitment, i.e., fairness at work, care and concern for employees, satisfaction with day-to-day activities, trust in employees, organizational reputation, and work and job resources.

Beck and Wilson (2000) stated that members who are dedicated on an emotional /affective basis stay with the organization because they sight their personal employment association as congruent to the goals of the organization. Meyer et al. (2002) identified several outcomes of affective loyalty to be lower rate of earnings and absenteeism, increase in the job productivity, job performance, organizational citizenship behavior and employee health and well-being.

Effect of Performance Appraisals on Employee Performance

Aslam (2011) opined that ambiguity in the appraisal process is one of the factors that led to poor motivation and acted as a key stumbling block in the delivery of expected performance by university teachers. Performance appraisal can also play a significant role in persuading performance improvement (Khan, 2009). This is because by appraising individual's performances, areas of relative strengths can be identified and reinforced while areas of shortcomings can be communicated to the appraisees and been encouraged to redirect their work habits so as to better their performances. PA is an essential instrument in PM designed to; identify employee current performance against set targets, strengths and weaknesses so as to improve performance (Shehu, 2008; Mutsuddi, 2012). It also provide a basis for rewards or punishments, motivate high performance, institute training and development, identify potential capabilities, provide basis for succession planning, validate selection process and to encourage supervisory understanding of the employees with a mutual benefit (Shehu, 2008; Mutsuddi, 2012).

Kane and Lawler (2009) indicated that the three main functional areas of performance appraisal systems are administrative, informative, and motivational. Finally, the motivational role entails creating a learning experience that motivates workers to improve their performance. Further still, although good performance appraisal may be good for an organization, it may be bad if not professionally handled. Depending on the appraisal feedback; negative or positive, its impact to the employee may damage the organization if not taken well by the employee (McCourt & Eldridge, 2003, pp. 211-212). It can demoralize the employees hence affecting their commitment and work performance.

Zhang (2012) conducted a workplace employment relations survey on the impact of performance appraisal on employee performance and found that performance appraisal has a positive and insignificant relationship with employee performance. If employees perceive the PA process as fair to all, the PA process becomes a critical avenue for influencing a variety of positive employee attitudes such as job performance and commitment to the organization (Singh & Rana, 2013). Pettijohn et al. (2001) postulate that if PAs are perceived by employees to be fair, it can be used to improve employees' levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and work motivation. Other contemporary research studies have also linked performance appraisal to performance of employees (Singh & Rana, 2014; Nyarangi, 2018).

Further, performance appraisal has been studied in relation to job satisfaction and reported that performance appraisal positively and significantly predicts the satisfaction of employees (Mollel et al., 2017; Karimi et al., 2011). Besides, Neha and Himanshu (2015) study showed that the employees who were satisfied with the performance appraisal system of their organization were committed to their organization. Brown et al. (2010) studied the relationship between the PA quality measured by clarity, communication, trust and fairness of the PA process, and job satisfaction and commitment. They found that employees who reported a low PA quality, (i.e. low levels of trust in supervisor, poor communication, lack of clarity about expectations, perceptions of a less fair PA process) reported lower levels of job satisfaction and commitment.

Knowledge gap

Numerous studies have been conducted about employee commitment and employee performance, (Memari et al., 2013; Tolentino, 2013; Abrahamyan et al., 2014; Ireferin & Mechanic, 2014). However, most of these previous studies were not related to Kenyan business environment and specifically the retail sector, and so some of the findings of these studies may not be applicable to Kenya. Further, survey of the available literature indicates that studies on the effect of organizational commitment on employees' performance in the retail sector are scanty. It is therefore pertinent to examine the role of organizational commitment in employee performance in the context of Kenyan supermarkets.

Dost and Zi-ur-Rehman (2012) suggested further studies on other factors that may have direct impact on employee performance. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) as cited in Abrahamyan et al. (2014), suggested that the understanding of the relationship between commitment and employee performance will be enriched by the identification and investigation of potential moderators. This study therefore attempted to investigate the moderating role of performance appraisal on organizational commitment and employee performance in supermarket chains in Kericho County.

METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was carried out in Kericho County, in the South Rift Valley region. The county has a population of 901,777 people, (KNBS, 2019). The main economic activity in the county is tea farming, with three multinational firms owning hundreds of acres of tea plantations, other economic activities include dairy farming, pineapple farming, flower farming. The supermarkets in Kericho County are located mainly in Kericho town which is the biggest town in the County. These Supermarkets have helped in growing the economy and providing jobs in the county besides enhancing competition which has led to improved efficiency in the exchange process.

Target Population

According to Cox (2010), a target population for a survey is the entire set of units for which the survey data are to be used to make inferences. The study targeted 357 employees drawn from the supermarkets in Kericho County (Supermarkets Management). Target population above was chosen since it is accessible to information required by the researcher and they are directly affected by the organizational activities.

Table 1: Supermarkets' Population

Supermarket	Team	Supervisors	Cashiers	Packers	Shop	Clerks	Bakery	Security	Total
	leaders				attendants		staff		
Naivas	1	8	18	17	25	3	6	9	87
Kipchimatt	1	10	17	19	32	4	15	12	110
Parkmart	1	2	6	8	17	2	9	3	48

Quickmatt	1	2	7	10	16	2	-	4	42
Shivling	1	6	10	12	17	4	12	8	70
TOTAL	5	28	58	66	107	15	42	36	357

Source: (Kericho Chamber of Commerce, 2021)

Sampling design

Cooper and Schindler (2001) opine that sampling is picking a part of an entire population selected then inferences are made from that whole population.

Sampling frame

Cox and Hassard (2005) point out that a sampling frame is the collection of all objects within the population of interest to the researcher. The sample was obtained from the five Supermarkets in Kericho County.

Sampling Technique

Probability sampling techniques involve determining the sample scientifically, as such this study adopted stratified random sampling to come up with the sample (Saunders et al., 2012). The employees were grouped into eight strata based on the designations where random sampling was used to select respondents from each stratum hence giving each a chance of participating (Joseph, 2012).

Sample size

The study sample frame involved different departments which include, the manager, all the supervisors, cashiers, packers, shop attendants and clerks, security personnel and bakery staff. From the target population of 357 employees, the study employed Taro Yamane's (1973) scientific formula to come up with a sample size of 189 employees. The study allowed the error of sampling $n = 0.05$.

$$\left(n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \right)$$

Where; n =Sample size, N =Population size, e =the error of Sampling

$$\text{Therefore; } n = \frac{357}{1 + 357(0.05^2)} = 188.63$$

Stratified sampling technique was adopted to select the strata where respondents would be picked from. This is useful in obtaining a sample population that best represents the entire population being studied besides checking on bias in sample selection. The employee were stratified in to eight strata based on designations, the actual respondents were picked using random sampling. Neyman's (1934) allocation formula was used to come up with sample size for each stratum. This was to enhance precision considering the sample size is fixed. Neyman's formula below was applied,

$$n_h = \left(\frac{N_h}{N} \right) n$$

Where, n_h -The sample size for stratum h , n -Total sample size, N_h -The population size for stratum h , N -The total population, Hence, the tabulated distribution;

Table 2: Sample Size Distribution

Supermarket	Team Leaders	Supervisors	Cashiers	Packers	Shop Attendants	Clerks	Bakery staff	Security	Total
Naivas	1	4	10	9	13	2	3	5	47
Kipchimatt	1	5	9	10	17	2	8	6	58
Parkmart	1	1	3	4	9	1	5	2	26
Quickmatt	1	1	4	5	8	1	-	2	22
Shivling	1	3	5	6	9	2	6	4	36
TOTAL	5	14	31	34	56	8	22	19	189

Source, (Author, 2021)

Data Collection Types and Procedures

Types and Sources of Data

The research relied on primary data. The primary data was obtained from respondents through the use of self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire was made up of close-ended questions.

Questionnaires

Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. The choice of this method of data collection was selected because questionnaires can reach a large group of respondents within a short time and with little cost, at the same time use of questionnaires enabled the respondents to remain anonymous and be honest in their responses (Kasomo, 2007). The questionnaires consisted of only closed ended questionnaires because they are easier to administer and analyze since each item is followed by an alternative answer. Gall et.al. (2003) observed that questionnaires give detailed answers to complex problems and therefore, are most effective. The questionnaires were calibrated with a five-point Likert Scale, with anchors ranging from 5-strongly agree, 4-agree, 3-neutral, 2-disagree, and 1-strongly disagree.

Data Collection Procedures

After the approval of the proposal by the research supervisors, the researcher undertook a preliminary survey in supermarkets management to seek approvals to collect data and for familiarization purposes. Subsequent to this, the researcher visited the selected branches and personally administer the questionnaires to employees. The questionnaires were picked based on the availability of the respondents, immediately or at a later date.

Reliability of Research Instrument

Hair et al. (2014) defined reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument gives consistent results or data after being used severally. The data was pre tested for reliability and validity to establish issues such as random errors, internal consistency technique was used. Mugenda and Mugenda (2007) states that a relatively small sample of 10 to 20 respondents can be chosen from the target population during piloting which is not included in the sample chosen for the main study. This study used 20 respondents for the pilot study hence this helped the researcher to identify the most likely source of errors and thus respond to them before the actual study. The test for reliability establishes the extent to which the results will be consistent. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the internal consistency reliability, the researcher decided on it because it's the easiest to compute using software and it requires only one sample of data to estimate the internal consistency reliability. As per the Cronbach alpha value, the minimally acceptable measure of reliability of $\alpha > 0.7$, was considered reliable.

Validity of Research Instrument

Validity refers to the degree in which a test or other measuring device is truly measuring what it was intended it to measure. It indicates the degree to which an instrument measures the construct under investigation (Bell & Bryman, 2007). The researcher discussed the items in the instrument with supervisors and colleagues, views on the content and structure of the research instruments and face validity obtained from supervisors and colleagues review were incorporated in the final draft of the instruments.

Hypothesis Testing

The following hypotheses were be tested on a significance level of 0.05.

Table 3: Hypotheses Testing

Null Hypothesis	Hypotheses Testing	Interpretation
Ho1: Affective commitment has no significant effect on employee performance	$p \leq 0.05$	Reject
	$p > 0.05$	Fail to reject

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Sample Characteristics

The section presents the demographic information of the respondents. The demographic information of the respondents focused on their gender, age category, academic qualifications and job tenure (Table 4).

Table 4: Characteristics of the study's sample

Panel	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Respondent's gender	Male	105	56.1
	Female	82	43.9
Respondent's age	18 – 30 years	31	16.6
	31 – 35 years	72	38.5
	36 – 40 years	44	23.5
	41 – 45 years	40	21.4
Highest education level	Diploma	72	38.5
	Certificate	71	38.0
	Secondary	44	23.5
Duration of working in the supermarket	Less than 2 years	0	0
	2 – 3 years	82	43.9
	4 – 5 years	105	56.1

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Composite Means for Variables in the Study

Composite variables for each construct were computed by summing up all the items for each construct and then, taking an average. Table 5 presents descriptive results for the composite variables.

Table 5: Composite Means for the Study's Constructs

<i>n</i> =187	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std.Dev	Skew	Kurtosis
Employee performance	1.86	5.00	3.835	.70980	-.434	.666
Affective commitment	2.17	4.67	4.136	.49668	-1.367	1.894
Performance appraisal	3.00	4.75	4.062	.49973	-.339	-1.020

Key: Min= minimum; Max=maximum; Std. Dev.=standard deviation.

Source: Survey Data (2022)

Correlation Analysis

The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, *r*, was used to establish the degree of relationships between the constructs of commitment, performance appraisal, and employee performance. These results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Correlations between employee performance and independent variable

Variable (<i>n</i> = 252)		Employee performance	Affective commitment	Performance
Employee performance	R	1		
performanceAC	R	0.730**	1	
PA	R	0.368**	0.445**	1

Key: *r* = Pearson correlation coefficient; ** = correlation significant at .01 levels (2-tailed). AC=affective commitment; PA=performance appraisal.

Source: Survey Data (2021)

The results showed significant, positive and strong effects between affective commitment ($r=0.730$, $p<0.0001$), and employee performance. The results suggested that when affective commitment increases, employee performance also increases and vice versa. The relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance was found to be significant and positive but weak ($r=0.368$, $p<0.0001$). Correlations amongst the independent variable was found not to be too high, which implied that multicollinearity in the data might not have been a problem, that is, the dependent variable likely measured its own construct independently.

Regression Analysis

Hierarchical multiple regression was employed to determine the moderating role of performance appraisal on affective commitment and employee performance in supermarket chains in Kericho County. To ensure the validity of the results, the assumptions behind the test were tenable and confirmed.

Multiple Regression Analysis Results

A hierarchical approach was used in developing the moderated multiple linear regression. Table 7 shows the model results obtained in the five-step hierarchical multiple regression conducted.

Table 7: Multiple Linear Regression Model 1 to 5

Predictor Variables	Model1 <i>B</i>	Model 2 <i>B</i>	Model 3 <i>B</i>
Main Effects			
Constant	0.211 ^{ns}	0.261 ^{ns}	-0.895 ^{**}
Affective commitment	0.621 ^{**}	0.636 ^{**}	1.260 ^{**}
Moderator			
Performance appraisal		-0.033 ^{ns}	0.325 ^{**}
Interaction Terms			
ACxPA			0.736 ^{**}
R	0.792	0.792	0.937
Adjusted R2	0.621	0.619	0.874
ΔR^2	0.627 ^{**}	0.000 ^{ns}	0.250 ^{**}
ΔF	102.637	0.109	370.296
P	p<0.0001	0.742	p<0.0001

KEY: B= b coefficient (unstandardized); ns= Not significant. *, ** Coefficient significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level, respectively; AC–Affective commitment, PA–Performance appraisal.

Source: Survey data (2021)

Model 2 (Table 7) investigated the effect of organization commitment and performance appraisal on employee performance. The results indicated that performance appraisal did not significantly affect employee performance ($B = -0.033$, $p=0.742$). The introduction of performance appraisal alone had no effect on employee performance, with the change in employee performance of ($\Delta R^2=0.000$), which was not significant, $\Delta F (1, 182) = 0.109$, $p=0.742$.

Model 3 (Table 7) presents the moderating effect of performance appraisal on the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance, that is, it shows the effect of adding the interaction term (AC x PA) on the model consisting affective commitment and performance appraisal. A significant and positive moderating effect of performance appraisal on the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance was found ($B=.736$, $p<.0001$). The interaction between performance appraisal and affective commitment had 25% change in employee performance ($\Delta R^2=.250$). The interaction between performance appraisal and affective commitment improved the prediction of employee performance from 61.9% to 87.4%, which was significant, $\Delta F (1,181) = 370.296$, $p<0.0001$.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 8: Summary of hypotheses tests

Hypothesis	Statistic	P-value	Conclusion
H ₀₁ Affective commitment has no significant effect on employee performance.	Coefficient estimate = 0.975	$p<0.0001$	H ₀₁ was rejected and a conclusion drawn that affective commitment has a significant and positive effect on employee performance.
H ₀₂ Performance appraisal does not significantly moderate the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance.	Coefficient estimate =1.914	$p<0.0001$	H ₀₂ was rejected. Performance Appraisal significantly and positively moderate the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance.

DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

Affective commitment was found to have a significant and positive effect on employee performance. This finding was in concert with other studies, for instance, Dixit and Bhati (2012), Khan et al., (2010), Chan et al., (2008), Madigan et al., (2009), Jing and Xiao-hua (2009), and Markovits et. al., (2007). For example, a survey conducted by Jing and Xiao-hua (2009) found positive relationship between affective commitment and work performance whereas Markovits et.al., (2007) suggested that affective organizational commitment was found to be most influential with respect to levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, notably, as the employee satisfaction increases, there will be increase in work performance.

Affective commitment causes employees to have a strong emotional bond to their organization and will want to work in them because they want to. Affective commitment creates employees who act as brand ambassadors to their organization, bringing others into the talent pool of the organization. Employees become enthusiastic, wanting to give something to add to the organization's health. Employees with affective commitment put more effort not because they earn more but because they feel their organizations as a place where they can satisfy their natural need for social acceptance. Such employees have positive behaviors and will even promote the organization to outsiders and protect it against external criticism. Usually, such employees have their personal goals that are congruent to the goals of the organization (Beck & Wilson, 2000; Sezgin, 2009; Colquitt et al., 2013; Bagraim, 2010; Wang 2004). All these factors could explain why affective commitment could lead to an increase in employee performance. As Meyer and Allen (1991, 1997) stated, "employees with a strong affective commitment stay because they want to and are more likely to carry out their duties well".

Results from descriptive statistics suggested that most respondents had higher affective commitments. For instance, most respondents were very happy to spend their careers in the supermarkets, felt as if the supermarket's problem were their own and felt like 'part of my family' at the supermarkets. In addition, most were found to be emotionally attached to their supermarkets, supermarkets had personal meaning to respondents, and felt strong sense of belonging. In addition, the composite mean for affective commitment (4.14) was the highest relative to the other types of commitment, continuance (3.39) and normative (3.54). This indicated that of the triad of commitments, the strongest amongst supermarket employees was affective commitment. Supermarkets in the study area should therefore engage in actions that maintain and improve this type of commitment, as it leads to improved employee performance.

CONCLUSION

There was a positive significant relationship between affective commitment and employee performance. These findings are in consensus with Sahoo et al. (2010) whose findings showed that affective commitment produces the desired results. This means the more an employee's affective commitment, the better the employee is likely to perform. This can be attributed to the fact that affective commitment comes from within employee and it is not forced out of them.

Based on the research findings, we can, therefore, conclude that the effect of organizational commitment on employee performance is significant since all the independent variables (affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment) have a significant effect on the dependent variable (employee performance). The above findings are consistent with Khan et al. (2010) who investigated the impact of employee commitment among a sample of 153 workers in Pakistan where results showed a positive relationship between employee commitment and their performance. The study found a significant and positive moderating role of performance appraisal on the relationships between affective, continuance, and normative commitment and employee performance. The findings implies that organization commitment is most potent on employee performance when performance appraisals are at the highest level, that is, organization commitment only produces the greatest increase in employee performance when performance appraisals are at the highest level.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, we recommend that supermarkets should focus on appealing emotionally to their employees to earn their affective commitment, as this improves their performance. Secondly, supermarkets

should improve on policies which appeal to the moral and ethical dimensions of their employees to improve their normative commitment, hence improve their performance. Supermarkets and organizations should enact policies that make workers really want to stay at the firm rather than be forced to stay because of the costs of leaving, because continuance commitment causes a significant albeit small effect on employee performance. On the other hand, supermarkets should implement policies which assess and ensure their employees do not feel compelled to work. Organizations should put in place a fair, sensible and reasonable performance appraisal system since it has a positive moderating effect on the relationship between employee commitment and employee performance. Supermarkets should keep in mind past literature that explains that performance appraisal terms in human resource management are predictive of worker roles, attitudes and commitment to an organization and hence the process should be very fair (Salleh et al., 2013).

Suggestions for Future Study

Conducting a replication of this study especially in other sectors needs to be done to see whether findings from this study also applies. This study assessed the moderating effect of performance appraisal on organizational commitment and employee performance, but future studies can consider investigating other dimension as moderating variables on organizational commitment and employee performance.

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