

**INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEES
PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. A CASE OF ELECTORAL AND
BOUNDARIES COMMISSION**

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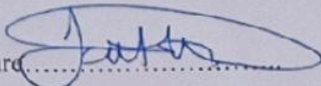
**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION OF MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY**

27TH NOVEMBER 2024

DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

Declaration by the Student

This research proposal is my original work and has not been presented for degree in any other university or for any other award

Signature: 


Date: 23RD JUNE 2025

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Declaration by Supervisor

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research project to my family, my husband Francis Gitonga and my children Victory, Amani and Imani for their boundless love and support.



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I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to everyone who played a role in the completion of this research project. Firstly, I am immensely grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Teresia K Mutisya, for her priceless guidance, steadfast support, and perceptive feedback throughout every phase of this research. Her knowledge and encouragement were crucial in shaping the direction and methodology of my study to comply with the rigorous research standards outlined in my proposal. I also appreciate my colleagues for their valuable discussions and input in refining this proposal.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CIPD-Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

COVID 19-Coronavirus disease

EAP-Employee Assistance Programs

HR-Human resources.

HRM-Human resource management.

IEBC- Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

ILO-International Labour Organization

PALWECO-Programme for Agriculture and Livelihoods in Western Communities

SHRM-Society for Human Resource Management

SPSS- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences.



Mount Kenya University

ABSTRACT

Human resources has been recognized as one of the most crucial assets to organizational success. Therefore, organizations are establishing ways to create effective and efficient human resources through the implementation of evidence-based human resource practices. This research aimed to explore the influence of human resource practices on employee performance at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission. The study objectives were to establish the influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback, determine the impact of comprehensive training and development, assess the effect of flexible work arrangements, and evaluate creative compensation benefits on employee performance. The study was grounded in goal setting theory, human capital theory, Hackman and Oldham Job Characteristics Theory, and expectancy theory. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing a sample size of 249 employees randomly selected from the target population. Data was collected using structured questionnaires with five-point Likert scales, dichotomous questions, and open-ended questions. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the data. Performance appraisal emerged as the strongest predictor of employee performance ($\beta = .358, p < .001$). Comprehensive training and development programs showed a significant positive relationship with employee performance ($\beta = .182, p = .016$). Flexible work arrangements showed no significant relationship with employee performance ($\beta = -.057, p = .445$), with employees expressing dissatisfaction with existing practices. Similarly, creative compensation benefits showed no significant relationship with employee performance ($\beta = .009, p = .900$), with widespread employee dissatisfaction reported. The study recommends enhancing performance appraisal systems, strengthening training initiatives, revising flexible work policies, redesigning compensation packages, and improving organizational communication to optimize human resource practices for improved employee performance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.1.1 Human Resource Practices.....	6
1.1.2 Employee Performance.....	8
1.1.3 Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission.....	9
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	10
1.4 Objectives	13
1.5 Research Hypothesis	13
1.6 Significance of the study	14
1.6.1 Academia	14
1.6.2 Managerial implications.....	14
1.6.3 Policy.....	14
1.7 Scope of the study.....	15
1.8 Limitations	16

1.9 Delimitations	17
1.9 Assumptions	17
1.10 Operational definition of Key terms.....	17
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	20
2.0 Introduction.....	20
2.1 Theoretical Review	20
2.1.1 Goal setting Theory	20
2.1.2 Human Capital Theory	23
2.1.3 Hackman and Oldham Job Characteristics Theory (1974)	24
2.1.4 Expectancy theory	25
2.2 Empirical Review	26
2.2.1 Performance Appraisal Practices and Employee Performance.....	26
2.2.2 Comprehensive Training and Development and Employee Performance	30
2.2.3 Flexible Work Programs and Employee Performance	34
2.2.4 Creative Compensation Benefits and Employee Performance	37
2.4 Conceptual Framework	41
2.5 Literature Recap	44
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	46
3.0 Introduction.....	46
3.1 Research Philosophy	46
3.2 Research Design	47
3.3 Target Population.....	47

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques	48
3.5 Data Collection Instrument and Procedure	49
3.6 Pilot Study.....	50
3.8 Data Analysis Procedures	51
3.9 Ethical Considerations.....	52
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	53
4.1 Introduction.....	53
4.2. Reliability tests	53
4.3. Demographics and background characteristics	54
4.3.1 Respondents' gender	54
4.3.2 Respondents' age	54
4.3.4 Respondents education level	55
4.4 Performance appraisal	56
4.5 Comprehensive Training and Development.....	59
4.6 Flexible working arrangements	61
4.7 Creative compensation benefits.....	64
4.8 Employee performance.....	67
4.9 Correlations.....	74
4.9.1 Performance appraisal and employee performance.....	74
4.9.2 Comprehensive training and development and employee performance	74
4.9.3 Flexible work arrangements and employee performance	74
4.9.4 Creative compensation benefits and employee performance	75

4.10 Regression.....	76
4.10.1 Diagnostic tests for linear regression.....	77
4.10.1 Regression results.....	83
4.10.2 Performance Appraisal and Employee Performance.....	83
4.10.3 Comprehensive Training and Development and Employee Performance.....	83
4.10.4 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Performance.....	83
4.10.5 Creative Compensation Benefits and Employee Performance.....	84
4.11. Discussion.....	85
4.11.1 The influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of IEBC employees.....	85
4.11.2 The influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees.....	87
4.11.3 The influence of flexible work arrangements on the performance of IEBC employees..	89
4.11.4 The influence of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees.....	91
CHAPTER FIVE.....	93
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	93
5.1 Introduction.....	93
5.2 Summary of the major finding.....	94
5.2.1 The influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of IEBC employees.....	94
5.2. The influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees.....	94

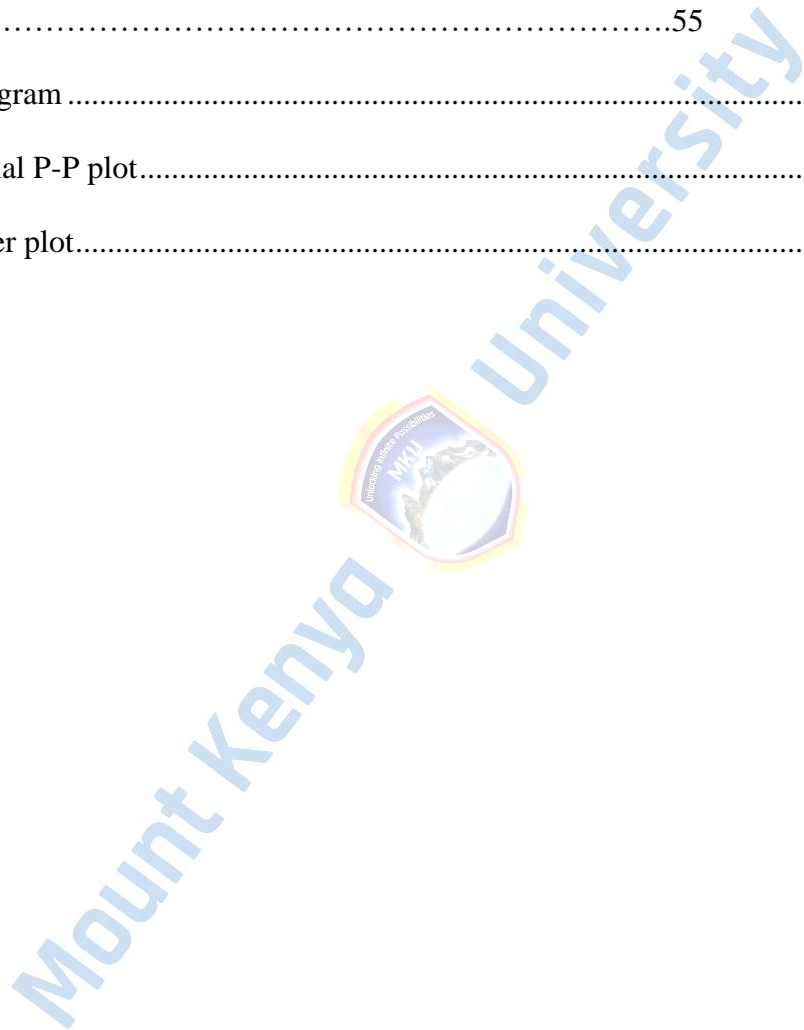
5.2.3 The influence of flexible work arrangements on the performance of IEBC employees....	95
5.2.4 The influence of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees.	95
5.3 Conclusions	95
5.4 Recommendations.....	97
5.4.1 Managerial Recommendations	97
5.4.2 Policy recommendations	97
5.5 Suggestions for future research	98
References	99
Appendix 1: Questionnaire.....	114
Appendix 2: University Introduction letter	120
.....	121
Appendix 3: NACOSTI permit.....	122
Appendix 4: Field Entry Authorization	123
Appendix 5. Turnitin report.....	124
Appendix 6. Map.....	127

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1:IEBC employees' perceptions of various aspects of the performance appraisal process.....	57
Table 4.2:Employees' perceptions of various aspects of training and development	60
Table 4.3: IEBC employees' perceptions of flexible work arrangements.....	62
Table 4.4:IEBC employees' perceptions of compensation and benefits.....	65
Table 4.5:Correlation analysis	76
Table 4.6:Regression model summary.....	80
Table 4.7:Regression model ANOVA.....	81
Table 4 8:Regression model coefficients.....	82
Table 4 9:Summary of the findings	84

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2 1:Conceptual framework	43
Figure 4.1:Respondents age.....	55
Figure 4.7:Histogram	77
Figure 4.8:Normal P-P plot.....	78
Figure 4 9:Scatter plot.....	79



CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Employee performance challenges in public sector institutions have become a global concern, particularly affecting service delivery and organizational effectiveness. Electoral management bodies worldwide face unique performance pressures due to their critical role in safeguarding democratic processes. This chapter provides an overview of the relationship between human resource practices and employee performance in the context of Kenya's Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). The chapter discusses the background of declining employee performance, examines key human resource practices including performance appraisal, training and development, flexible work arrangements, and compensation benefits. It establishes the study's objectives, significance, scope, and limitations while highlighting the critical need for evidence-based human resource interventions in public electoral institutions.

1.1 Background of the Study

Employee performance has become a critical concern for organizations worldwide, with mounting evidence showing that poor human resource management practices are significantly undermining organizational effectiveness and service delivery (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021; Chen et al., 2020). Organizations across different sectors are experiencing declining employee productivity, reduced engagement levels, and compromised performance outcomes due to inadequate HR systems and practices (Wilkinson, 2019).

Traditionally, human resource management (HRM) has been recognized as an important contributor to achieving various organizational objectives such as employee productivity,

engagement, and performance (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021; Chen et al., 2020). The benefits associated with the investment in HRM have led the organization to focus on specific practices, such as performance appraisal practices, training and development, flexible work programs and creative compensation benefits (Wilkinson, 2019). However, despite this recognition, employee performance continues to deteriorate in many organizations due to the failure to implement effective HR practices that directly address performance challenges.

The authors (Rubel et al., 2018; Rubel et al., 2021) have used the HRM practices to describe the specific HR practices that enhance human capital and organizational success. Research increasingly shows that when organizations fail to implement high-commitment HRM (HCHRM), high-performance work systems (HPWSs), and high-performance work practices (HPWPs), employees experience reduced motivation, lower job satisfaction, and compromised performance outcomes (Rubel et al., 2020; Salin & Notelaers, 2020; Gahan et al., 2020).

Globally, employee performance is declining due to poor HR practices implementation. Several research studies (Gahan et al., 2020; Hauff et al., 2020; Abboh et al., 2022) have indicated that when organizations fail to effectively utilize human resources, employees experience demotivation, reduced commitment, and poor performance outcomes. Despite the evidence of the importance of human resources to employee and organizational outcomes, O'Riordan (2017) indicates that poor HR practices are directly contributing to decreased employee and organizational performance. The global workforce is experiencing performance challenges characterized by low productivity, high turnover rates, absenteeism, and reduced quality of work output due to inadequate HR support systems (El-Kassar et al., 2022).

Internationally, electoral bodies are experiencing significant employee performance challenges that threaten democratic processes and election integrity. Globally, election workers are demonstrating poor performance characterized by inadequate voter engagement, procedural errors, and compromised election integrity due to insufficient HR practices (Trubetskaya & Mullers, 2021). This poor performance undermines democratic values and threatens the credibility of electoral processes worldwide (Pyrzynska & Skoczylas, 2020).

Studies from developed countries reveal that electoral body employees are experiencing performance deterioration despite available resources. Research by James (2019) indicates that election workers in various countries are showing signs of decreased job satisfaction, high stress levels, and poor decision-making capabilities, directly linked to inadequate HR management practices. Employees in electoral bodies that lack proper development opportunities demonstrate poor performance in critical areas such as voter engagement and election administration (James, 2019). The failure to implement effective HR practices has resulted in election workers who are inadequately prepared, poorly motivated, and unable to perform their duties effectively (James & Jervier, 2017).

In countries where HR practices are poorly implemented, election workers experience significant performance challenges including inadequate compensation, poor working conditions, and lack of professional development, leading to compromised election outcomes (Herron et al., 2016). For example, voluntary-based recruitment systems have resulted in election workers who lack commitment and demonstrate poor performance during critical electoral processes.

Even in developed countries with substantial resources, employee performance in electoral bodies remains compromised. A study in the UK indicated that electoral body staff

experienced high stress levels and performance deterioration during the Brexit referendum due to inadequate HR support systems and poor organizational reforms (Clark & James, 2016). In the United States, lower-level election board employees demonstrate inconsistent performance and high turnover rates due to poor HR practices, inadequate funding, and lack of proper recruitment strategies (Wall et al., 2017). These performance issues directly impact election integrity and democratic processes.

In the African context, employee performance in electoral bodies is severely compromised due to poor HR practices implementation. African electoral body employees are characterized by low productivity, inadequate skills, poor decision-making capabilities, and compromised professional conduct, all directly linked to poor HR management systems (James, 2019). The transformation of electoral institutions across African countries is being hindered by poor employee performance resulting from inadequate HR strategies and practices (Mozaffar, 2015).

African countries face critical employee performance challenges in electoral bodies due to inadequate financial resources that prevent the establishment of effective HR management practices. Consequently, employees demonstrate poor performance characterized by inadequate training, simple procedural errors, poor result transmission, and compromised election integrity (Miezah, 2017). The lack of internal accountability HR practices has resulted in election officials who demonstrate unprofessional conduct and poor performance standards (Maphunye, 2017).

African electoral body employees are demonstrating weak performance characterized by unprofessionalism, favoritism, and inability to execute their duties effectively due to poor HR systems (Kissi, 2014). Despite hiring experienced staff, structural and internal HR issues

prevent employees from performing their duties effectively, resulting in compromised electoral processes (Cheeseman & Elklit, 2020).

To address these employee performance challenges, some election bodies have established mechanisms for improvement. These include establishing independent electoral bodies empowered to implement effective HR practices (Nabaho & Kiiza, 2014), securing adequate resources for HR development (Clark, 2019), and implementing training and capacity-building programs to enhance employee performance (The International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2023). However, many organizations continue to experience poor employee performance due to inadequate implementation of these HR improvement mechanisms.

Organizations worldwide are focusing on performance appraisal to address declining employee performance (Kehoe & Wright, 2019). However, many employees continue to experience poor performance due to inadequate feedback systems, lack of behavior modification mechanisms, and poor guidance for future job engagements (Armstrong, 2018). Employee training and development initiatives are being implemented globally to address poor performance outcomes (Ismael et al., 2021). However, many organizations continue to experience employee performance challenges due to inadequate technical training, poor soft skills development, insufficient compliance training, and lack of leadership development programs (Laing, 2021; Brown, 2017; The Association for Talent Development, 2023).

Flexible work arrangements are being implemented worldwide to address employee performance issues related to work-life balance and motivation (Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). However, employees in organizations without flexible arrangements continue to

demonstrate poor performance characterized by high absenteeism, turnover, and low productivity levels (Jooss et al., 2020).

Compensation initiatives are being used globally to address employee performance challenges (Amjad et al., 2021). However, employees in organizations with poor compensation practices continue to demonstrate low motivation, poor commitment, and inadequate performance outcomes (Milkovich et al., 2017).

1.1.1 Human Resource Practices

There is no standard definition of the HR practices. According to Villalobos (2020), the HR practices are HR practices related to recruiting talented employees, maintaining commitment and a flexible workforce, and rewarding employees appropriately to achieve strategic goals such as increased workforce productivity and employee performance. Šikýř (2014) regards the HR practices as the practices related to managing the workforce that are applied to organizations working under similar conditions and to achieve similar goals. They are applied to enhance organizational competitiveness and performance (Šikýř, 2014).

Some researchers have focused on HR practices based on various perspectives. One of the perspectives is the high-performance HR practices. High-performance HR practices are designed to maximize employee productivity and effectiveness (Arthur et al., 2014). These include work-life balance, training and development, employee involvement, and performance management. The studies have indicated that high-performance HR practices are associated with positive employee outcomes such as citizenship behaviors, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Arthur et al., 2014). High-performance HR practices are also associated with reducing costs, absenteeism, and turnover and creating an environment that empowers employees to make productive decisions (Gahan et al., 2020). The focus on

high-performance HR practices as the HR practices is associated with the disadvantage of not being applicable to all types of organizations because the effectiveness varies depending on the type (Boon et al., 2019). Specifically, in this research, it is not used because high-performance HR practices focus on maximizing profitability (Han et al., 2019) which is not the goal of IEBC and other public institutions. Another reason why high-performance HR practices are not used in this research is that public institutions are often characterized by bureaucratic processes such as hierarchy decision-making that hinder the implementation of these practices (Erno, 2019; Stanton & Manning, 2014).

Another view is that high-commitment practices involving improving the organization's effectiveness by increasing employee commitment (Chen et al., 2018). There are various views on high-commitment HR practices. According to Arthur et al. (2014), high-commitment HR activities can be viewed as employee involvement in managerial decision-making, training in group problem-solving, and formal participation programs. Parveen et al. (2020) indicates that the programs include internal and externally equitable reward systems, comprehensive training, and development, and selective staffing. Mostafa (2017) regards high-performance HR practices as job security, training, empowerment, employee involvement, and team working.

The HR practices are also viewed as high-involvement practices involving employee involvement in decision-making, formal employee engagement activities, socializing activities, competitive wage rates, maintenance of skilled employees, and training in problem-solving skills (Arthur et al., 2014). Another view is well-being-oriented HR practices, which are the practices that improve social climate (characterized by shared codes, trust, and cooperation of the individuals within the organization), employee resilience, and

employee performance (Cooper et al., 2018). The HR practices are also regarded as flexibility-oriented HR practices aimed at achieving the flexibility and coordination of the HR system and subsystems Lakshman et al. (2020).

According to Villalobos (2020), HR's practices are recruiting talented employees, maintaining commitment and a flexible workforce, and rewarding employees appropriately to achieve strategic goals such as increased workforce productivity and employee performance. These include work-life balance, training and development, employee involvement, and performance management (Villalobos (2020). This research adopted Villalobos's (2020) approach or definition of HR practices by looking at performance appraisal, training and development of employees, flexible working arrangements, and compensation benefits. This approach was chosen because it captures the broad elements of the HR practices that contribute to employee performance.

1.1.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance is one of the most important focuses of an organization (Chahar, 2020). The research by (Chahar, 2020; Parashakti et al., 2020; Cherian et al., 2021) has indicated that companies that employees have high performance are associated with better outcomes in terms of organizational performance such as reputation, financial performance, stakeholder engagement and competitive advantage.

There are various metrics used for assessing employee performance. The measures can be broadly categorized into qualitative and quantitative measures. Qualitative employee performance measures are based on subjective factors that cannot be quantified (Mittal et al., 2019). Some qualitative measures of communication skills are teamwork and collaboration, problem-solving skills, ethical behavior, and continuous learning (Armstrong & Taylor,

2020). The quantitative measures involve using numerical data to assess the employee job performance. The quantitative measures are widely used because they provide a clear and measurable way to evaluate an employee's performance. Examples of quantitative measures include production, quality, goal achievement, and feedback and reviews (Wilkinson, 2019). This study adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a holistic picture of employee performance.

1.1.3 Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission

Chapter Seven established IEBC., Article 88 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. The article gives the institution various powers, the key being the conducting and supervising the elections in Kenya. Precisely, the institution is responsible for the registration of voters and revision of the voters' register, regulation of the process used by the political party to nominate the candidates, delimitation of wards and constituencies, settlement of election disputes, voter education, developing code of conducts for the candidates, regulation of the amount of money spent by the candidates, and monitoring of political candidate's compliance with regulations (Government of Kenya, 2010).

The commission was responsible for the 2013, 2017, and 2022 elections. Researchers (Nkari, 2014; Harbeson, 2014) have praised the commission due to conducting fair and free elections, which has reduced the risk of political instability. Also, the interaction with the technology has been seen as a major step towards increasing its effectiveness (Kigwiru, 2019). The commission engages the regular stakeholder engagement forums to collect the stakeholders' views regarding various elements, such as voters' education and inclusivity, which fosters transparency and inclusivity (Mutie, 2022).

Like any other organization, it relies on HR to achieve the intended goals. Specifically, it is through its workforce that the organization can carry out its activities, such as voter education, stakeholder engagement, and conducting elections (Kerebi, 2018). The organization's HR strategy includes talent acquisition and planning, workforce planning, training and development, performance management, compensation benefits, and employee relations, among others (Mwangi, 2014). Adopting the evidence-based human resource practices by the institution is likely to lead to better employee performance; thus, the research focused on assessing the impact of HR practices on employee performance in the context of IEBC.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Employee performance in Kenya's public sector institutions, particularly in independent constitutional bodies, has deteriorated significantly, threatening service delivery and organizational effectiveness. Statistical evidence from the Public Service Commission (2023) indicates that employee productivity in government institutions has declined by 35% over the past five years, with absenteeism rates increasing from 12% to 28% during the same period. The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2022) reports that public sector employee turnover has reached 42%, compared to the global average of 15% for similar institutions.

The Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) specifically faces critical employee performance challenges that compromise its constitutional mandate. Performance audit reports by the Auditor General (2022) reveal that IEBC employee efficiency ratings have declined from 78% in 2018 to 54% in 2022, indicating a 24-percentage point deterioration in performance standards. The Commission's own internal assessment (IEBC, 2023) shows that only 38% of employees meet performance targets, with 62% consistently

underperforming in key areas including voter education delivery, election administration, and stakeholder engagement.

Employee performance indicators at IEBC demonstrate concerning trends: Staff productivity assessments show a 40% decline in task completion rates between 2019 and 2023 (IEBC Performance Review, 2023). Quality of service delivery has deteriorated, with stakeholder satisfaction ratings dropping from 72% to 45% over the past four years (Kenya Civil Society Organizations Survey, 2023). Employee engagement scores have fallen to 33%, significantly below the public sector average of 55% (Public Sector Employee Survey, 2022).

The performance challenges are directly linked to inadequate human resource practices implementation. Research by Kiprotich and Wanyama (2022) found that 67% of IEBC employees reported inadequate performance appraisal systems, while 73% indicated insufficient training and development opportunities. A study by Mwangi et al. (2023) revealed that 78% of IEBC staff expressed dissatisfaction with compensation packages, and 65% reported lack of flexible work arrangements as major performance impediments.

These poor performance outcomes have severe consequences for Kenya's democratic processes. The 2022 General Election post-election evaluation report highlighted that 45% of electoral irregularities were attributed to employee performance failures, including inadequate voter education (23%), poor election administration (12%), and insufficient stakeholder engagement (10%) (Kenya Election Observers Group, 2022). International election monitoring bodies reported concerns about IEBC staff competency, with 38% of observed polling stations showing procedural errors linked to employee performance deficiencies (European Union Election Observation Mission, 2022).

Despite extensive research demonstrating positive correlations between effective HR practices and employee performance in private sector contexts (Rubel et al., 2018; Rubel et al., 2021; Cherif, 2020; Ciobanu et al., 2019), there exists a significant research gap regarding the specific impact of performance appraisal practices, training and development, flexible work arrangements, and compensation benefits on employee performance in Kenya's independent constitutional bodies. Previous studies have not adequately examined how these four critical HR practices influence performance outcomes in the unique operational context of electoral management bodies.

The knowledge gap is particularly critical given that IEBC operates under distinct constitutional mandates, public accountability requirements, and democratic service delivery expectations that differ significantly from private sector organizations. Current literature lacks empirical evidence on how performance appraisal feedback systems, comprehensive training programs, flexible working arrangements, and creative compensation benefits specifically affect employee performance in electoral management contexts.

Furthermore, existing research has not adequately addressed the relationship between these HR practices and measurable performance outcomes in institutions responsible for safeguarding democratic processes. Without this understanding, IEBC and similar institutions cannot implement evidence-based HR interventions to improve employee performance and, consequently, enhance service delivery to the Kenyan public.

Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this critical knowledge gap by empirically examining how performance appraisal practices and feedback, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation benefits influence

employee performance at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission.1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of human resource practices on IEBC employees' performance.

1.4 Objectives

- i. To establish the influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of IEBC employees.
- ii. To determine the influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees.
- iii. To assess the impact of flexible work arrangements on the performance of IEBC employees.
- iv. To assess the impact of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees.

1.5 Research Hypothesis

H₁: There is no significant influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of the IEBC employees.

H₂: There is no significant influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees.

H₃: There is no significant influence of flexible work arrangement on the performance of IEBC employees

H4: There is no significant influence of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees."

1.6 Significance of the study

1.6.1 Academia

The study will contribute to the academic literature on HR practices in the public sector. Researchers can use the results of the findings to advance the empirical models and theoretical framework in public HR management. Also, the study findings can be groundwork for further research on HR practices and their effectiveness in the public sector.

1.6.2 Managerial implications

In addition to the contribution to the literature, the study results can assist the management of government institutions in establishing the strategies likely to influence employee commitment and, consequently, their performance and overall organizational performance. The study findings can also be used as a basis for developing a framework intended to improve the HR policies in government institutions. IEBC can use the study results to establish or modify its policies to enhance employee performance.

1.6.3 Policy

The empirical evidence provided by the study can offer valuable insights that can assist in the refinement of the policies to comply with the existing HR standards and frameworks. It can also assist in the development of policies to improve public sector employee performance.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study covered the permanent field employees working at IEBC across all 290 constituencies in Kenya. The methodological scope was limited to quantitative research design using structured questionnaires to collect primary data on the relationship between HR practices and employee performance. The study did not employ mixed methods or qualitative approaches that could provide deeper insights into employee experiences.

Conceptually, the study focused exclusively on four HR practices (performance appraisal practices and feedback, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation benefits) and their influence on employee performance. The study did not examine other potential HR practices such as recruitment and selection, employee relations, succession planning, or organizational culture that might also influence performance outcomes.

The data collection period was limited to one month (March 2024), which may not capture seasonal variations in employee performance or the long-term effects of HR practices implementation. This temporal limitation restricts understanding of performance trends over extended periods.

The study period covered three months (February to April 2024) for the entire research process, limiting the ability to conduct longitudinal analysis that could better establish causal relationships between HR practices and performance outcomes over time.

Geographically, the study was confined to IEBC permanent field officers in Kenya, excluding temporary staff, headquarters personnel, and similar electoral management bodies in other East African countries that might provide comparative insights.

1.8 Limitations

The study faced several research design and methodological limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, it employed a cross-sectional survey design, which restricts the ability to establish causal relationships between human resource (HR) practices and employee performance. A longitudinal approach would have provided stronger evidence of causation by tracking changes over time. Also, the model of analysis relied on multiple regression, which assumes linear relationships between variables. This approach may not have adequately captured potential non-linear relationships or interaction effects among HR practices, possibly weakening the accuracy of conclusions drawn about their true nature and impact.

In terms of population and sampling, the study focused exclusively on permanent field staff. The exclusion of temporary staff, senior management, and headquarters personnel limits the generalizability of the findings to the broader organization. The data collection instruments also introduced limitations. The study relied solely on self-administered questionnaires using 5-point Likert scales, which are prone to response bias and social desirability bias, and may result in limited variance in responses. The absence of objective performance metrics or multi-source feedback reduces the validity of the employee performance assessments. Furthermore, some employees were unwilling to participate due to confidentiality concerns, despite assurances of anonymity. This non-response bias potentially affected the representativeness of the sample, while the self-reporting nature of the data collection method raises concerns about the accuracy of responses.

Scope limitations were also evident. Given the study's exclusive focus on the IEBC, a unique independent regulatory agency, the findings may not be easily generalized to other public

institutions, which may differ significantly in structure, mandate, and operational environment. Finally, the one-month duration of data collection may not have captured the full spectrum of employee performance variations or accounted for seasonal influences on the effectiveness of HR practices, thereby limiting the comprehensiveness of the findings.

1.9 Delimitations

The study was delimited to 161 permanent employees of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), focusing on four human resource practices: performance appraisal, training and development, flexible work arrangements, and compensation benefits. The research employed quantitative methods using structured questionnaires. To ensure validity, a pilot study with 35 temporary employees was conducted, and ethical research principles were followed throughout the study.

1.9 Assumptions

The study assumed that the data collected through the self-reported measures (questionnaire) was accurate and reflect participants' true attitudes, behaviors, and performance. It also assumed that the selected organizations had implemented the chosen HR practices. It also assumed that the study results are generalizable to broader contexts such as other government institutions and regions.

1.10 Operational definition of Key terms

Compensation Benefits The total package of financial and non-financial rewards provided by IEBC to employees in exchange for their services, including basic salary, allowances,

bonuses, health insurance, retirement benefits, and other monetary and non-monetary benefits that enhance employee welfare and motivation.

Creative Compensation Benefits Innovative and flexible reward systems beyond traditional salary structures, including performance-based bonuses, recognition programs, professional development funding, wellness benefits, and customized benefit packages designed to meet diverse employee needs and enhance job satisfaction.

Comprehensive Training and Development Systematic and continuous learning programs designed to enhance employee knowledge, skills, competencies, and career advancement opportunities through formal training sessions, workshops, mentoring, on-the-job learning, and professional development initiatives that improve job performance and organizational effectiveness.

Descriptive Statistics Statistical methods used to summarize, organize, and describe the main characteristics of collected data through measures of central tendency, variability, and distribution patterns, providing a clear overview of the sample characteristics and variable relationships without making inferences about the broader population.

Employee Performance The measurable output and behavioral demonstration of how effectively and efficiently IEBC employees accomplish their assigned tasks, meet job requirements, achieve organizational objectives, and contribute to the institution's constitutional mandate within specified time frames and resource constraints.

Flexible Work Arrangements Alternative work structures that provide employees with options regarding work schedules, location, and timing, including flexible working hours, remote work opportunities, compressed work weeks, job sharing, and part-time arrangements

that enhance work-life balance while maintaining productivity and service delivery standards.

Human Resource Management The strategic organizational function responsible for planning, implementing, and managing policies, practices, and systems related to employee recruitment, development, performance management, compensation, and relations to achieve organizational objectives while ensuring employee satisfaction and legal compliance.

Human Resource Practices Specific organizational activities, policies, and procedures implemented to manage the employment relationship effectively, including performance appraisal systems, training programs, compensation structures, and work arrangements designed to enhance employee performance, engagement, and organizational success.

Inferential Statistics Statistical techniques used to make predictions, draw conclusions, and generalize findings about a larger population based on sample data analysis, including hypothesis testing, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and confidence interval estimation that support research conclusions and decision-making.

Performance Appraisal Practices and Feedback Systematic processes and methods used by IEBC to regularly evaluate, measure, and communicate employee job performance, including formal assessment procedures, goal setting, performance reviews, constructive feedback provision, and development planning aimed at improving individual and organizational performance.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter critically reviews the literature related to the HR practices and employee performance. The theoretical framework is included and linked to the study phenomena. The empirical and theoretical review enabled the identification of research gaps. The specific content of the chapter is an empirical review grouped according to the specific objectives, a theoretical review analyzing Goal Setting Theory, Human capital theory, Job Characteristics Model, and Expectancy Theory, a conceptual framework illustrating the relationship between the variables, and a chapter conclusion, summarizing the chapter and research gap.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 Goal setting Theory

The goal-setting theory, conceived by Edwin Locke in the 1960s through his seminal article "Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives," posits that setting clear, specific goals and providing appropriate feedback significantly motivates workers and enhances performance outcomes. According to the theory, the pursuit of well-defined goals serves as a core motivational mechanism, implying that managers should establish clear yet challenging goals to optimize employee performance (Locke & Latham, 2015). Over the decades, this theory has attracted substantial scholarly support. Bandura (1991), through his social cognitive theory, illustrated how goals enhance self-regulation and performance by providing

direction and energizing behavior. Similarly, Ryan and Deci (2000), via their self-determination theory, reinforced the idea that goal setting satisfies fundamental psychological needs, thus boosting intrinsic motivation.

Latham and Locke (2007) provided further empirical backing through meta-analyses showing that specific, challenging goals consistently result in higher performance across diverse contexts. Seijts and Latham (2005) demonstrated that learning goals complement performance goals, particularly in complex tasks. Longitudinal evidence from Wood and Locke (1990) confirmed sustained performance improvements in organizational settings where goal-setting principles were effectively applied. Modern scholars, including Ordóñez et al. (2009) and Schweitzer et al. (2004), have contributed nuanced perspectives by identifying boundary conditions that refine the theory's application. Additionally, Berkman and Lieberman (2009) offered neurological evidence by linking goal-setting to the activation of brain regions responsible for motivation and self-control.

Locke and Latham also identified five fundamental principles for effective goal setting: clarity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity. Clear goals help individuals focus their efforts, understand expectations, and measure progress. Challenging goals generate positive tension and stimulate sustained effort. Commitment increases when employees are involved in setting goals, enhancing ownership and alignment with organizational objectives. Feedback enables ongoing evaluation and adjustments, while considering task complexity ensures goals remain achievable without becoming overwhelming or demotivating (Locke & Latham, 2015).

The theory is relevant to this study's exploration of performance appraisal practices and feedback at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). IEBC's appraisal systems rely on establishing specific performance objectives, aligning with the theory's emphasis on goal clarity. For example, specific targets related to voter education or election logistics align with the prediction that clear goals enhance performance. Furthermore, the theory's feedback principle supports the need for continuous monitoring and communication of progress at IEBC, particularly during the high-pressure election cycles that demand consistent high performance. The challenge principle resonates with IEBC's constitutional mandate, where ambitious goals are essential for motivating staff and ensuring electoral credibility. The commitment principle is equally pertinent; involving IEBC employees in goal-setting can foster stronger alignment with organizational goals, ultimately enhancing performance outcomes.



Despite its strengths, goal-setting theory presents several limitations that may impact its application within the IEBC. One concern is the potential for tunnel vision, where employees focus narrowly on achieving measurable goals at the expense of other vital responsibilities, such as relationship building or ethical decision-making (Ordóñez et al., 2009). The pressure to achieve ambitious goals may also lead to unethical behavior, particularly if goals seem unattainable (Schweitzer et al., 2004)—a serious risk for an institution like IEBC, where integrity is paramount. Additionally, the theory may not be effective for highly complex or creative tasks, such as resolving electoral disputes or conducting civic education, which may not align with rigid goal structures (Seijts & Latham, 2005).

Another limitation lies in the theory's assumption of uniform individual response to challenging goals. Research indicates significant variation in how individuals are motivated (VandeWalle, 1997), and IEBC's diverse workforce may require more tailored motivational strategies. Moreover, the theory's individual focus may conflict with IEBC's need for team-based collaboration, especially during coordinated efforts in national elections (Crown & Rosse, 1995). Lastly, consistently high or poorly managed goals could lead to stress and burnout, particularly in the high-pressure, politically sensitive environment in which IEBC operates (Locke & Latham, 2006). Nonetheless, despite these limitations, goal-setting theory remains a valuable lens for understanding how performance appraisal systems can enhance employee effectiveness at IEBC, provided that its application is carefully adapted to the organization's specific operational context and the well-being of its workforce.

2.1.2 Human Capital Theory

The human capital theory was developed by Becker (1962) and Rosen (1976). Becker (1962) and Rosen (1976) argued that workers have abilities or skills, which can be improved through education and training. Since its development, it has undergone changes to include broader aspects such as organizational learning and personal development (Winterton & Cafferkey, 2019).

The theory argues that focusing on the training and education of employees can increase their productivity (Tan, 2014). Human capital consists of expertise, skills, and knowledge possessed by employees, which are gained through experiential learning, higher education, and training, among others (Petrillo et al., 2018). The human capital theory views human capital as being important as being important in all organizational functions (Aman-Ullah et al., 2022). The theory has been applied (Ployhart et al., 2014); Odhon & Omolo, 2015) to

determine how the training and education initiatives impact employee productivity. Contemporary literature (Georgiadis & Pitelis, 2016; Vidal-Salazar et al., 2015) finds that organizations with better human capital have better performance at the individual level and the firm's level. Thus, the theory was relevant in this study to explain how comprehensive training and employee development affect employee performance. Specifically, through the examination of the training and development under the arguments of the human capital theory, the study can identify how the organization's investments in human capital affect employee performance.

2.1.3 Hackman and Oldham Job Characteristics Theory (1974)

The theory was developed by Hackman and Oldham's (1974). Hackman and Oldham's (1974) suggested that personal and work-related outcomes are influenced by five core job dimensions; skills variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. The skills variety is the activities and skills necessary to successfully complete the assigned task (Ali et al., 2014). The challenging work is associated with better job satisfaction. Non-routine tasks that are unpredictable are more satisfying than predictable and routine ones. Task identity means the capability of the individual to complete the job or task activity. The capability to take an activity from start to finish is associated with more satisfaction. Task significance indicates the degree to which the workers perceive their job roles as having a significant impact on organizational performance (Allan, 2017). Therefore, the workers who have a sense that their assigned responsibilities contribute to the organizational performance are more satisfied. Autonomy denotes the ability of the workers to make decisions, such as how they can accomplish the tasks and deadlines without or with little involvement from the supervisor and others in the chain of command. The feedback is the information the workers

receive about their performance. Feedback is important because it allows workers to identify areas of weakness and strengths, which is important for improving their performance. The core activities lead to three psychological states: experienced responsibility for the outcomes of work, experienced meaningful of work, and knowledge of the actual results of the work activity (Mind Tools, 2023)

The theory was applicable in this study to explain how flexible work arrangements affect employee performance. The model suggests that specific job characteristics, such as feedback and autonomy, influence job outcomes (Allan, 2017). Thus, flexible work practices are job characteristics that affect employee performance; hence, the study explored the relationship between the specific job characteristics used by IEBC and how they impact job performance.

2.1.4 Expectancy theory

The theory was developed by Victor Vroom's (1964), in his work "Work and Motivation". Generally, the theory argues that individuals are motivated to perform based on their expectations of the outcomes of their actions. Specifically, it states that people are motivated because they believe that the work effort will lead to acceptable performance (expectancy), their performance will be rewarded (instrumentality), and the rewards will be positive (valence). When all these three factors are present, the individuals will be motivated (Wardayati, 2016). The stronger the rewards, the more the motivational force (Filipova, 2016). The theory was relevant in this study because it has been used (Tanjung et al., 2022; Vidal-Salazar et al., 2015) to explain the various compensation approaches and the efforts of the worker's motivation and performance. Thus, the creative compensation packages used by

the organization are analyzed based on three domains: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Performance Appraisal Practices and Employee Performance

Performance appraisal is the process and method used by the organization to evaluate employee performance relative to the organization's performance goals and provide them with feedback (Dijk, 2015). According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), 2022), it is part of performance management aimed at informing administrative decisions such as redundancy, bonuses, and pay and or supporting the employee's professional growth and development. The performance appraisal includes the methods of providing feedback regarding the level of performance, enabling the employee to adjust their work strategies to align with the organization's objectives. Most organizations provide employees with feedback on their performance (CIPD,2022).

According to Dijk (2015), feedback is the action taken by the external agent to provide information regarding the employee's work performance. Effective employee appraisal practices and feedback are associated with positive employee performance (Aburumman et al., 2020). There is no standard approach to conducting an effective employee performance review and providing feedback (CIPD, 2022). CIPD (2022), indicates that performance review should be based on reliable data related to job performance (performance of the key task activities), contextual performance (activities that go beyond the job and have a wider organizational benefit) and adaptive performance (capability of responding to the changes). Good quality feedback should include job-specific information that is credible, constructive

and unbiased. Another strategy is always focusing on positive feedback because positive feedback is associated with better employee outcomes. If negative feedback is included, it should be framed constructively and positively. Another strategy is ensuring that the employees regard the information that leads to the feedback as reliable, credible, and unbiased (CIPD, 2022).

There is evidence that performance appraisal and feedback impact employee performance. Mose (2023), researched on the influence of performance appraisal practices on the performance of the energy sector in Kenya using a sample of 8820 employees working in the Kenya energy sector. The study indicated that the appraisal leads to improved employee productivity. The study also established that an effective performance appraisal model leads employees to be interested in achieving the intended organization's goals. Providing information on employee performance appraisal enables employees to know what is expected of them; hence, they are able to reevaluate their strategies to align with the intended organization's goals. Providing adequate feedback provides opportunities for employees and supervisors, which is crucial for career development (Mose, 2023).

Wairimu and Gachunga (2014), researched the effect of performance appraisal on the productivity of the World Health Organization in Kenya as the case study. The study indicated that performance appraisal had a positive impact on employee performance. Expressly, the study indicated that the performance appraisal strategy leads to good time management and achievement of the organization's goals, helps employees achieve their workplace goals, and enables the managers to make informed decisions. The positive impact of the employee performance appraisal on the employee performance is supported by research by Adolfsson et al. (2023) involving 85 workers selected from Novartis,

Switzerland. The researcher concluded that through performance appraisal accompanied by constructive feedback, the organization can assist individuals in understanding their strengths and areas that require improvement, aiding them in developing their knowledge and competencies.

A study involving 479 staff from 51 Barclays Bank of Kenya branches established that good performance appraisal practices through management support and fair compensation enhance employee productivity (Kariuki, 2014). The study also revealed that performance appraisal enhances employee career progression by linking the reward and the performance. This positive impact on employee performance appraisal is supported by research involving 100 participants from the Lebanese Retail Sector. The research results indicated a positive association between performance appraisal and employee performance (Helal, 2022).

Some studies have focused on the public sector. For example, Astuti and Rachmawati (2023) ,used qualitative research using semi-structured interviews with 14 line managers from Indonesian government agencies. The research indicated that effective employee appraisal policies lead to better employee performance. This research aligns with another research by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2020) that indicated that objectively implemented performance appraisal in government institutions is a powerful tool that promotes civil service performance. Research on performance appraisal practices in the Brazilian and United States public sectors indicated that performance appraisal practices increase employee performance (Estolano, 2014). However, the researchers noted that the performance appraisal practices of both countries were associated with inefficiency that undermined their ability to reach the intended goals, such as improving employee performance.

Some studies have indicated that employee performance appraisal does not affect employee performance. Umihanic and Cebic (2014), researched the impact of performance appraisal on the performance of employees in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The study indicated that the performance appraisal practices did not positively impact the employee's motivation. Another research indicated the barriers to the effective implementation of performance appraisal practices, such as invalid methods of obtaining performance judgments, ineffective employee performance feedback and limited utility of performance evaluations, lead to the failures of the performance appraisal to achieve the intended goals (Murphy, 2020); including the overall enhancement of the employee performance. According to Adler et al. (2016), regardless of how the performance evaluation systems are designed, they are always regarded as failures by the management and employees.

Adler et al. (2016), view of problems of performance appraisal is supported by Aguinis (2022), who narrates that despite the importance of performance appraisal and feedback, such as enabling the managers to identify the employee strengths and the areas that require improvement, aligning individuals with the organizational goals, improving communication and motivation, and identifying training needs, among others, some inadequacies affect the organization in implementing the good performance appraisal and feedback system (Aguinis, 2022). The drawbacks include using subjective judgment, which can lead to bias. Researchers have recognized bias (Javidmehr & Ebrahimpour, 2015; Belle et al., 2017) as being the primary contributor to the lack of effectiveness of the performance appraisal system. Another drawback is that the performance appraisal systems provide inadequate information on performance subtleties, primarily used by managers to compare the workers to increase their pay (Nyberg et al., 2016). The performance appraisal system is also not

standardized, with the managers from different units in the same organization yielding different results. For example, what is considered excellent performance may be considered unacceptable in another department in the same organization (Sirkoi et al., 2021). Another limitation of the performance appraisal is that when it is used as the basis of salary increases, it follows a normal curve; thus, it does not consider the employee behaviors, including the personality, which tends to have a non-normal curve; therefore, the competent employee may be denied the salary increases leading to dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2018).

Performance appraisal in Kenya also faces various challenges, such as bias, lack of training for the appraisers, underreporting of employee good evaluations, and corruption (Mwirigi & Namusonge, 2014). Other researchers indicating the failures of the performance evaluation systems are Head and Alford (2014) and DeNisi and Murphy (2017). Despite these studies indicating that performance evaluation is inefficient, most studies indicate the positive impact of the process on employee performance.

2.2.2 Comprehensive Training and Development and Employee Performance

Comprehensive training and development encompasses systematic learning interventions designed to enhance employee knowledge, skills, competencies, and capabilities necessary for effective job performance and career advancement (Freifeld, 2022; Brown, 2017). It indicates the organization's employees' competencies, work capabilities, and skills (Sartori et al., 2018). For electoral management bodies like IEBC, comprehensive training and development is particularly vital given the specialized nature of electoral administration, the need for technical competency in election management systems, and the requirement for staff to understand complex electoral laws and procedures. This theme is directly relevant to the study as it aligns with the second research objective, which aims to determine the influence

of comprehensive training and development on IEBC employee performance. Examining this relationship is crucial for understanding how skill enhancement programs can improve electoral service delivery and institutional effectiveness.

According to Yimam (2022), it is the process that equips the employees with the necessary knowledge to perform the job satisfactorily. The organization invests billions of dollars in employee training and development because of the positive impact on the employees and the organization. The United States employee training and development expenditures passed \$100 billion for 2021 and 2022 (Freifeld, 2022). In this research, the term comprehensive employee training is used. Comprehensive employee training is a training program that goes beyond basic training and development by encompassing continuous learning and caters to the different learning needs of the employees (Chellappa, 2023).

There is evidence in the literature indicating the impact of employee training and development on the performance of the employees. According to Mihardjo et al. (2020), employee training and development is an important human resource practice that positively affects skills, capabilities, and knowledge. Using a sample size of 100 employees working in Bangladesh, Karim (2019), established that environmental health and safety training, career development training, and orientation training positively impacted employee performance. However, job training had no significant impact on the employee's performance. The major limitation of this study is the small sample size, which increased the likelihood of type 1 and type 2 errors. Another study using a sample of 254 employees working in various companies in the Southern region of Jordan established that training was positively associated with employee performance and productivity (Mohammed, 2016).

The positive impact of employee training and development on employee performance is supported by research by Okechukwu (2017), which used 81 staff working in various Malaysian companies. The study concluded that training and development positively impacted employee performance and enabled the organization to achieve strategic goals related to HRM. Another research indicated that employee training and development positively impacts employee performance in the presence of motivation (Niati et al., 2021). Employee training and development are also important in promoting employee performance during a crisis, as established by Wolor et al. (2020). Specifically, Wolor et al. (2020) collected data from Indonesian employees during the COVID-19 crisis; the researcher established that among the other factors, such as life-workplace and e-leadership, employee training significantly impacted workplace performance.

The studies conducted in Kenya also indicate that employee training and development positively impact performance. For example, a study using a sample from NHIF Machakos County indicated that despite the challenges such as lack of team spirit, resistance to change, poor working conditions, poor compensation policy, and poor motivation, the employee training had a positive impact on the employee performance (Mohamud, 2014). This research indicated that employee training is important as a mitigation measure for the challenges likely to affect the employee and the overall organizational performance. A similar view is indicated in another study involving 112 employees from the Programme for Agriculture and Livelihoods in Western Communities (PALWECO) in Busia County. The study found that employee training had a significant impact on the performance of the employees (Wesonga, 2018). Other studies in Kenya supporting the positive relationship between employee training

and development and employee performance are Muthee and Genga (2019), Cherono (2017), and Mwangi and Munyua (2023).

Some researchers have researched how employee training contributes to employee performance. For example, Truitt (2021) established that training and development lead employees to improve their attitudes regarding training and work proficiency, supporting the organization in achieving goals. Another way that training and employee development initiatives equip employees is by equipping them with communication skills with colleagues, which is important for fostering teamwork. Good teamwork is linked with better employee and team productivity (Cheng & Ho, 2001; Maryville University, 2021). The employee training and leadership development initiatives contribute to the employee's performance by equipping the employees with appropriate behaviors such as teamwork, ethics, accountability, confidence, and positivity (Brown, 2017).

Despite most empirical information indicating that training and development positively affect performance, it may not have this effect when not properly planned and implemented. Research among the food outlets in South Africa indicated that training and development initiatives in the sector are poor. Hence, they do not achieve the intended goals, such as improving employee performance (Glaveski, 2019). According to Glaveski (2019), employee training and development initiatives do not achieve the intended function because they focus on theoretical aspects instead of real-world problems that employees encounter in the workplace. Also, the skills learned may not be related to the workplace roles (Glaveski, 2019). Overall, when training and development initiatives are properly implemented, employee performance will likely increase, as the empirical information indicates.

2.2.3 Flexible Work Programs and Employee Performance

Flexible work programs are a type of workplace arrangement that gives the staff flexibility on when, where, how long, and at what time to work (CIPD, 2022). These programs include flexible scheduling, remote work options, compressed workweeks, job sharing, and other arrangements that accommodate work-life balance needs while ensuring service delivery standards (Jooss et al., 2020). In electoral management contexts like IEBC, flexible work arrangements must balance employee needs with the critical requirement for coordinated electoral activities, peak-period staffing during elections, and maintaining security protocols for sensitive electoral processes.

CIPD illustrates various examples of flexible work programs. The first is term-time working, where the employees work on a permanent contract, with an allowance to take unpaid or paid leave during school holidays. The second one is part-time work, which involves working less than full-time hours. The third is flextime, which allows employees to choose with certain restrictions when to start and end work sessions. The fourth one is job sharing, involving the employees sharing their responsibilities. The fifth is compressed hours, which involve compressed working hours that do not necessarily involve reducing the working hours or the working hours' extension. The central feature of compressed working hours is that they allow employees to complete their tasks in fewer days without necessarily extending or reducing their working hours. The sixth is the annual hours, which involve a fixed number of working hours over a year but with variation in the working length of working days. The seventh is remote working, involving working in remote areas from the organization. The eighth are career breaks involving extended periods of unpaid leave. The ninth is hybrid, comprising the combination of workplace and remote working. The tenth is

zero-hour contracts involving a lack of a minimum number of working hours, and employees are called when required (CIPD, 2022). These are the most common flexible working arrangements, but there are others.

The flexible working arrangement can be formal or informal. Formal working arrangements are written when informal ones are not (Brown, 2017). There is evidence from the literature that flexible working practices are associated with a positive impact on employee performance. Jaiswal and School (2022) researched the impact of working from home on employee productivity, using a sample of 115 Indian IT workers that had a notable effect on the employee's performance, with the physical environment having no significant impact on productivity. Ahmad et al. (2023) researched the relationship between flexible work arrangements and job performance among the bank's employees. They concluded that the temporal and spatial flexibility offered by flexible work practices is associated with improved job performance. The results are supported by another study that utilized an integrated literature review, which indicated that applying technology in flexible workplace practices enables the organization to reduce workplace skills deterioration and maintain employee performance (Iheriohanma & Austin-Egole, 2020).

Furthermore, another study using an integrated review of the literature indicated that working from home encourages well-being, work-life balance, and job satisfaction, significantly increasing employee performance (Gorjifard & Crawford, 2021). However, there are costs associated with working from home, such as setting up a homework office and purchasing the related equipment and software. The positive impact of this arrangement is also supported by another research that determined that flexible work design is a part of the high-commitment human resource practices aimed at motivating employees (Wahab et al., 2020).

The studies conducted in Kenya also indicated that flexible work practices positively impact employee performance. For example, using a sample of 1470 employees working at Safaricom Limited, Mwaniki (2022) determined that telecommuting allows employees to save transport costs, making them more productive. Furthermore, telecommuting reduces absenteeism, which is directly associated with better employee performance. Additionally, the compressed hours give employees more time to conduct private activities, leading to better motivation and satisfaction and better employee productivity. This result is echoed by another study using a sample of 104 staff members at Kericho Referral Hospital. Flexible workplace arrangements in the form of part-time work shifts and temporary contracts positively impact employee performance (Kipkoech et al., 2018). Other studies (Bett et al., 2022; Muga, 2022; Dikirr & Omuya, 2023; Musinga et al., 2020) conducted in Kenya also indicated that flexible work arrangement positively impacts the employee's performance.

There is a legal framework that guides the organization in the development of flexible work arrangements. For example, Section 10 (2) (f) and (g) of the Employment Act (2008) indicates that the organization must state the work hours and the place of work in the employment contract. Section 10 (3) (d) of the Employment Act indicates that the employee contract must indicate the place of work. Regulation 7 of the act allows the employee and employer to collaboratively determine the rest day (Kenya Law, 2022).

Some studies indicate that flexible work practices do not significantly impact employee performance. For example, a Gallup (2023) survey among 140 countries indicated that individuals working remotely, either hybrid or part-time, experienced more anger and stress than those working onsite full-time. The negative impact of the flexible workplace arrangement is indicated by another research by Joyce et al. (2014) that indicated that

although there are practices that improve workplace health, some practices motivated by the firm's interests, such as involuntary part-time employment and fixed-term contract negatively affects health, consequently negatively affecting the employee performance. The adverse impacts associated with flexible work practices lead to an adverse impact on employee performance. For example, it causes isolation and may affect the individual's mental well-being, affecting the capability of the employees to perform the assigned jobs effectively (Yunus & Mostafa, 2021). Also, some practices, such as compressed workweeks involving many working hours, can cause fatigue and burnout, affecting overall productivity. Also, there is evidence that flexible working practices can disrupt the work-life balance, causing reduced employee productivity (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). This type of work arrangement can undermine the supervision and communication among the employees, hindering the overall effectiveness of leadership and teamwork. Soga et al. (2022) indicates the challenges of flexible work arrangements are difficulty in balancing career and family life, loss of productivity due to disruption of the work schedule, lack of team cohesion due to limited or absent face-to-face interaction, difficulty managing and controlling employees, and increased costs of required equipment and software purchase. Therefore, the organization needs to conduct a cost-benefit analysis before implementing flexible workplace initiatives to determine if this approach suits the organization's requirements (Ministerråd, 2018).

2.2.4 Creative Compensation Benefits and Employee Performance

Creative compensation is an innovative, non-traditional method of rewards and incentives (Fogleman, 2017). They go beyond traditional approaches to bonuses and rewards. Gerhart and Fang (2015) argues that creative compensation does not necessarily mean abandoning the traditional or direct compensation methods; instead, the methods used should meet the

employees' needs and motivate them. For public sector institutions like IEBC, creative compensation benefits must navigate regulatory constraints while finding innovative ways to motivate employees through recognition, professional development opportunities, flexible benefits packages, and performance-linked rewards that comply with public sector guidelines (Lestari et al., 2020). This theme is directly relevant to the study as it addresses the fourth research objective, which aims to assess the influence of creative compensation benefits on IEBC employee performance.

Several studies have focused on determining the relationship between creative compensation and employee performance. Lestari et al. (2020) researched the relationship between creative compensation and the performance of the temporary staff and established that it did not positively affect employee performance.

The researchers have focused on various types of creative compensation benefits. One of the sabbatical leaves. Sabbatical leave occurs when employees take a work break for an extended period for various reasons, such as spending time with the family, traveling, and education while receiving financial benefits (Verlinden, 2020). An analysis of the modern work practices in the Malaysian construction sector indicated that sabbaticals and flexible work practices are critical success factors that assist in improving employee performance (Misnan et al., 2022). The reason why sabbaticals are associated with better employee performance could be attributed to enabling the workers to concentrate on the activities that balance their career and personal life and giving them the opportunity to improve their skills. The

sabbatical leave also reduces the employees' burnout, allowing them to be re-energized and, consequently, improving their productivity (Society for Human Resource Management, (SHRM,2024).

Another creative compensation strategy is a well-being allowance, which is usually a part of employee well-being programs. The well-being allowance is the financial benefit allowing employees to focus on activities that improve their mental, physical, and emotional health. It primarily aims to enhance the employee's self-care (Gorjifard & Crawford, 2021). A meta-analysis of 1,882,131 employees from 82,248 business units established that employee well-being leads to higher employee productivity and the entire organizational performance (Neve et al., 2019). Therefore, according to Neve et al. (2019), the organization that has the well-being allowance or invests in activities to improve employee well-being is likely to benefit from better employee performance than those that do not. Similarly, Berry et al. (2014) indicated that strategically designed employee well-being activities enable the company to increase the well-being of the employees, leading to health cost savings. This view is further supported by another research involving analyzing the Standard and Poor's (S&P) 500 Index companies that indicated that investment in employee well-being activities leads to better workplace performance and the entire organization's performance (Grossmeier et al., 2016).

Another creative compensation method is providing employees with funding for continuing job education and professional development. Grossmeier et al. (2016) found that employee-funded education programs were associated with increased job performance. Investing in employee education equips employees with the knowledge required to perform challenging job roles, hence increasing their performance in the long run (Saengchai et al., 2019). This assertion is supported by another study that indicated that better employment compensation

practices, including tuition reimbursement, are associated with better organizational performance, which includes improved employee productivity (Boudreaux, 2020). The study involving 458 beneficiaries of employer-sponsored tuition benefits indicated the positive effect of the benefits on employee retention, tenure, and job performance (Pyle, 2015).

Another creative compensation approach is employer-provided childcare support. An employer-provided child care support program is a benefit the employer provides to cover all or partial employee childcare costs (Hipp et al., 2016). This approach can take many forms, such as reimbursing employers for childcare-related expenses, providing a childcare facility at the organization, and paying the childcare expenses directly on behalf of the employees (Office, 2022). There are studies indicating that this type of compensation approach is associated with improved employee performance. For example, the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2022) determined that employee-supported childcare is associated with multiple benefits, including improved employee performance among female employees. Another study indicated that providing childcare services to employees leads to improved employee performance, high motivation levels, and higher staff retention rates (Gullekson et al., 2014). Therefore, the organization that employs organization-supported childcare services will likely achieve enhanced job performance.

Some organizations have implemented pet-friendly policies, allowing pets in the workplace and providing pet insurance to improve employee well-being (SHRM, 2022). This approach also serves as a method of attracting and retaining talented employees. Research by Wagner and Cunha (2021) determined that allowing pets in the workplace leads to reduced stress levels, which can increase the company's performance. This view is supported by other research indicating that 87% of dog-friendly employers reported improved worker

performance (CESAR, 2023). These results show that there is consensus among the researchers that pet-friendly policies are likely to improve employee performance

Another approach is the Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs). EAPs are aimed at providing employees with assistance to deal with personal problems that affect job performance, such as drug and alcohol abuse and mental health problems (Joseph et al., 2017). These programs are associated with improved employee performance. A study involving 450 employees from Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) indicated that EAPs such as financial literacy and Alcohol, drug, and substance abuse cessation programs positively impacted employee performance (Onsare, 2022). This aligns with another study indicating that EAPs allow employees to deal with the organizational and personal challenges that affect their productivity, positively impacting their performance (Chen et al., 2023). Other studies indicating the role of EAPs in improving employee performance are Long and Cooke (2022) and Nkanata et al. (2021).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

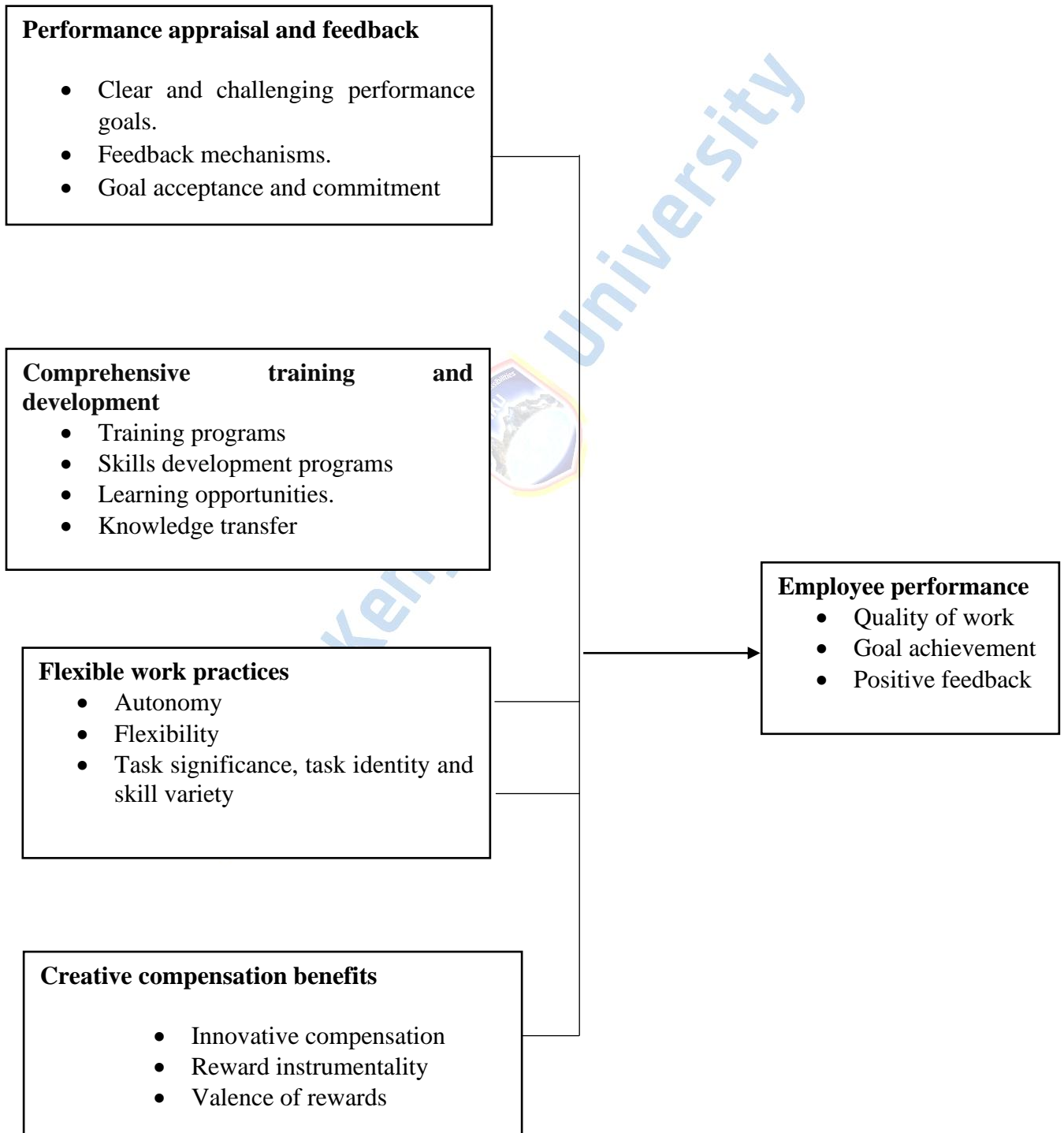
In this study, four independent variables; performance appraisal and feedback, comprehensive training and development, flexible work practices, and creative compensation benefits; are examined for their influence on the dependent variable, employee performance, within the operational context of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC). Performance appraisal and feedback encompasses the structured evaluation of employees through clearly defined performance goals, regular and constructive feedback, and employee commitment to goals. This variable is critical in the IEBC setting, where employees must meet specific deliverables such as voter education and election logistics.

Clearly communicated goals and timely feedback provide employees with a roadmap for performance and opportunities for continuous improvement. Comprehensive training and development includes job-specific training, skills development, leadership training, and knowledge transfer. At IEBC, these initiatives equip staff with the technical and soft skills required for effective electoral management, boost confidence in task execution, and ensure continuity and institutional knowledge.

Flexible work practices refer to the autonomy employees have over their tasks, the flexibility of work schedules and locations, and the intrinsic motivational aspects embedded in job design; namely, task significance, task identity, and skill variety. These practices enhance employee satisfaction, promote work-life balance, and improve motivation, particularly important in IEBC's high-pressure, cyclical work environment. Creative compensation benefits relate to innovative forms of financial and non-financial rewards, the perceived fairness and transparency of the reward system, and how well rewards align with employee preferences. In the IEBC context, these rewards play a critical role in recognizing effort, motivating high performance, and retaining skilled staff despite the constraints of public sector remuneration policies.

The dependent variable, employee performance, is measured through the quality of work produced, the achievement of established performance goals, and the receipt of positive feedback from supervisors and stakeholders. This focus reflects the Commission's need for high standards in electoral processes and its visibility and accountability to the public.

Figure 2 1: Conceptual framework



2.5 Literature Recap

The empirical information (Aburumman et al., 2020; Mose, 2023; Wairimu & Gachunga, 2014) and others have shown a positive relationship between the employee performance appraisal practices. Some studies (Murphy, 2020; Umihanic & Cebic 2014, Murphy, 2020; Adler et al. 2016, Aguinis, 2022), have indicated that performance appraisal does not enhance performance due to invalid methods of obtaining performance judgments, ineffective employee performance feedback, and limited utility of performance evaluations, leading to the failures of the performance appraisal to achieve the intended goals. This analysis of the performance appraisal effect on employee performance was guided by the Goal Setting Theory.

Regarding the influence of comprehensive training and development on employee performance, the literature (Karim, 2019; Mohammed, 2016) and others have indicated that training and development are associated with enhanced employee performance. However, Glaveski (2019) has a contrary view. The Human Capital Theory informs the objective.

Regarding the influence of flexible work programs on employee performance, the studies in the literature have revealed positive association between the two variables (Jaiswal and School, 2022; Ahmad et al., 2023; Iheriohanma & Austin-Egole, 2020). However, there are studies (Gallup,2023; Joyce et al.,2014; Yunus & Mostafa, 2021) indicating that flexible work programs may have negative impacts on the employees and organization. Therefore, it was important to evaluate this programs at the context of IEBC. This objective was analyzed using Hackman & Oldham's Job Characteristics Theory (1974).

On the relationship between creative compensation and employee performance, most studies (Verlinden, 2020; Misnan et al., 2022; and others) have indicated a positive relationship between the two. This objective is informed by the Expectancy Theory: Vroom (1964). This objective enabled to determine if the creative compensation benefits have similar effects on the employee performance, as the literature indicates; that is increased employee performance.

The reviewed literature has gaps because scanty scholarly information exists on the impact of HR practices in constitutional bodies such as IEBC. Also, considering that the organization has a unique culture and policies, the HR practices will likely differ from those reviewed by the literature sources. Furthermore, the existing research often generalizes findings across different sectors without accounting for sector-specific variations. Public institutions like the IEBC operate under different constraints and regulations compared to private organizations. This study addressed this gap by focusing on a public institution.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological approach used in this study. The specific topics addressed in the chapter are research philosophy, research design, target population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection procedures, pilot study, validity and reliability, data analysis procedure and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Philosophy

The research adopted the positivist philosophical approach. Positivism argued that knowledge could be obtained from neutral and quantifiable observation of the phenomena (Park et al., 2020). Therefore, the positivist approach indicated that answers to the research phenomena were obtainable through collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical data (Ryan, 2018). Using this research philosophy was appropriate for several reasons. First, because the method relied on quantitative data, it enabled data manipulation to identify the relationship between the variables. Therefore, it allowed the use of the statistical approach to identify the relationship between HR practices and employee performance. Additionally, the approach focused on measurable outcomes. Therefore, it enabled using quantitative measures collected from the sample to describe the phenomena and make differences. The approach was also suitable because it had been widely used in social research, including the study of HR strategies.

Interpretivism was not appropriate for this research because of its subjective nature. While the subjective interpretation of data would have been appropriate for understanding the research phenomena, it could not establish the relationship between the variables, which was the focus of this research (Hays, 2018).

3.2 Research Design

Research design are the procedures and methods for collecting and analyzing data necessary to solve particular research phenomena (Ranganathan & Aggarwal, 2018). The research adopted the descriptive case study design and analyzed the real-world situation facing organizations, people, or groups of people. It allowed the analysis of the tools relevant to the problem, policies, concepts, theories, connections, lessons learned, and forces behind the situation (Hays, 2018). This research design was appropriate for this research because, considering that IEBC is a unique constitutional body in Kenya, it has its unique culture and policies, which may influence HR practices and the employee's behavior. Therefore, this research approach allowed for the in-depth exploration of how HR practices affected employee performance in a unique IEBC environment. Other researchers have applied the approach (Andika, 2022; Cheronno, 2017; Hunja & Ndungu, 2022) to study various HR practices in public sector organizations; hence it has empirical backing.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised the 704 permanent field staff of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), as per IEBC records (2024). These employees were selected as respondents because they are directly affected by HR

practices, have long-term organizational experience, and are well-positioned to provide informed insights into the impact of these practices on employee performance.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sampling is the process of selecting the sampling units from the target population (Hays, 2018). The study targeted 704 permanent field employees (Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission, 2023); thus, the sampling method was purposive. Purposive sampling is the method of selecting participants who yield important information on the research phenomena (Campbell et al., 2020). From this purposive sample (704), simple random sampling was used randomly pick the respondents. The following formula was used to identify the sample size;

The following formula was used to calculate the sample size:

$$n = \frac{\frac{Z^2 \cdot p(1-p)}{E^2}}{1 + \frac{E^2}{N}}$$

$$n = [1.96^2 * 0.5 * (1 - 0.5) / 0.05^2] / [1 + (1.96^2 * 0.5 * (1 - 0.5) / (0.05^2 * 704))]$$

$$n \approx 249$$

The parameters are: Population size (N): 704, Confidence level (Z): 1.96 (for 95% confidence level), Margin of error (e): 0.05. Using this formula, the target sample size is 249.

Therefore, a total of 249 employees will be randomly selected.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument and Procedure

3.5.1 Data collection Instrument

The research primarily relied on the primary data collected using the questionnaires. The questionnaires were appropriate because they allowed the collection of data from a large number of respondents across the different locations of IEBC. The approach was also suitable because it allows standardization, and everyone to answer the same questions, allowing for easier analysis and comparison of information (Jones et al., 2014). Another rationale for using questionnaires is the cost-effectiveness of the method of collecting the data. The questionnaires also allowed the collection of the data anonymously. Anonymous data collection is associated with a better response rate and obtaining honest and truthful information (Ranganathan & Caduff, 2023).

The questionnaire was organized into 6 sections: Section 1 collected demographic information, section 2 concentrated on performance appraisal practices and feedback, section 3 will focused on comprehensive training and development, section 4 will focused on flexible work arrangement, section 5 will focused on creative compensation benefits and Section 6 on employee performance.

3.5.2 Data collection procedure

Qualtrics survey was used to administer questionnaire electronically. This approach was suitable because it allowed data collection quickly, anonymously, and at low costs. (Regmi et al., 2016). The questionnaire link was sent to the participant emails, including the introduction letter, to inform the participants of the research purpose, benefits, risks, and ethical provisions. To improve the response rate, the participants were encouraged to refer their colleagues to the questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale was used. The link to the questionnaire was active for 4 weeks, after which it was closed to facilitate the data clearing and analysis.

3.6 Pilot Study

A pilot study will be conducted to assess its feasibility. Hasan et al. (2006) indicate that the pilot study should be conducted in a research population that is different from the main study because the experience gained by the subjects may lead to bias if the same subjects are used. Therefore, the study used IEBC temporary employees for piloting. According to Connelly (2008), the pilot study represents 10% of the total population; hence, 35 temporary employees of IEBC will be used for piloting purposes. The pilot study was used to identify the flaws in methodology and research instruments and refine the areas that require improvement.

Various types of reliability were assessed. Internal consistency assesses the degrees to which the instrument achieves similar scores when repeated under similar circumstances (McCrae et al., 2011). The internal consistency of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The acceptable alpha level was above 0.7 as recommended by (Taber,

2018). Another reliability measure was an inter-item correlation, which assesses the extent to which one item's scores relate to other items' scores on the scale (Piedmont, 2014). The validity tests that were assessed are face validity and content validity. Face validity assesses if the instrument is appropriate for research aims and objectives. Experts and non-experts evaluated the face validity to determine if items are appropriate for the target group. Content validity assesses the relevance of the construct (Hays, 2018). Content validity was assessed by subject matter experts such as HR scholars and other professionals.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedures

The data was downloaded from Qualtrics surveys and subsequently exported to Excel for the purpose of data cleaning. For the analysis, the data was then processed using SPSS version 28. The questionnaire data was systematically coded to enhance the analysis. The descriptive statistics using means, percentage frequency, and tables was used summarize the data. The inferential statistics using correlation and regression was used to analyze the relationship between the variables. Pearson's correlation was used to assess the association between the variables, and multiple linear regression to understand how changes in independent variable (HR practices) predict dependent variable (employee performance). Before regression, the tests of regression assumptions will be conducted. The tests will include linearity, statistical independence, homoscedasticity and normality. Below is the regression equation.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where:

- Y = Employee Performance
- β_0 = Constant term
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Coefficients of the independent variables

- X1= Performance appraisal and feedback
- X2= Training and development
- X3= Flexible work arrangements
- X4 = Creative compensation benefits
- ϵ = Error term

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The introduction letter was included to inform the participants of the purpose of the study, the benefits and risks, and procedures taken by the researchers to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. This introduction letter served as informed consent. The data was anonymized to safeguard confidentiality, and participants were not required to include their identification details in the questionnaire. To minimize the psychological burden on the participants, the time required to complete the questionnaire was kept minimal (10 minutes). Permission was obtained from the appropriate institutions, such as the university, IEBC and NACOSTI. The researcher avoided misrepresentation, falsification and fabrication of data. Furthermore, the procedures, methods, and results were reported honestly. The research acknowledges the authors to allow the location of the sources used in the research and allow others to trace the information back to its original source.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter presents the descriptive and inferential statistics results of the data collected to investigate the influence of various HR practices on employee performance at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) of Kenya. The results were interpreted and linked to the literature and theoretical framework. The chapter starts with reliability tests and presents the demographic information, followed by inferential statistics. There is a section dedicated to discussion after the results to enable easy identification of the raw data or findings without being influenced by the researcher's interpretations.

4.2. Reliability tests

Table 4.1. Reliability test

Measure	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Interpretation
Scale (Overall)	35	.717	Acceptable reliability

The internal reliability was assessed using Cronbach alpha. The analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of $\alpha = .717$ for the 35 items, which is within the acceptable range of above 0.7, suggested by some researchers such as Taber (2018) as being acceptable. Corrected Item-Total correlation for items was above 0.3 which is often considered a good correlation. Therefore, the research instrument had adequate reliability and can be considered a consistent measure of employee perceptions related to performance factors at IEBC.

4.3. Demographics and background characteristics

Out of 249 target response rates, 161 were completed, giving a response rate of 64.66%. This is within the acceptable 44% recommended by Wu et al. (2022) and 60% suggested by Fincham (2018). This indicates that the survey met the suggestions for acceptable response rates.

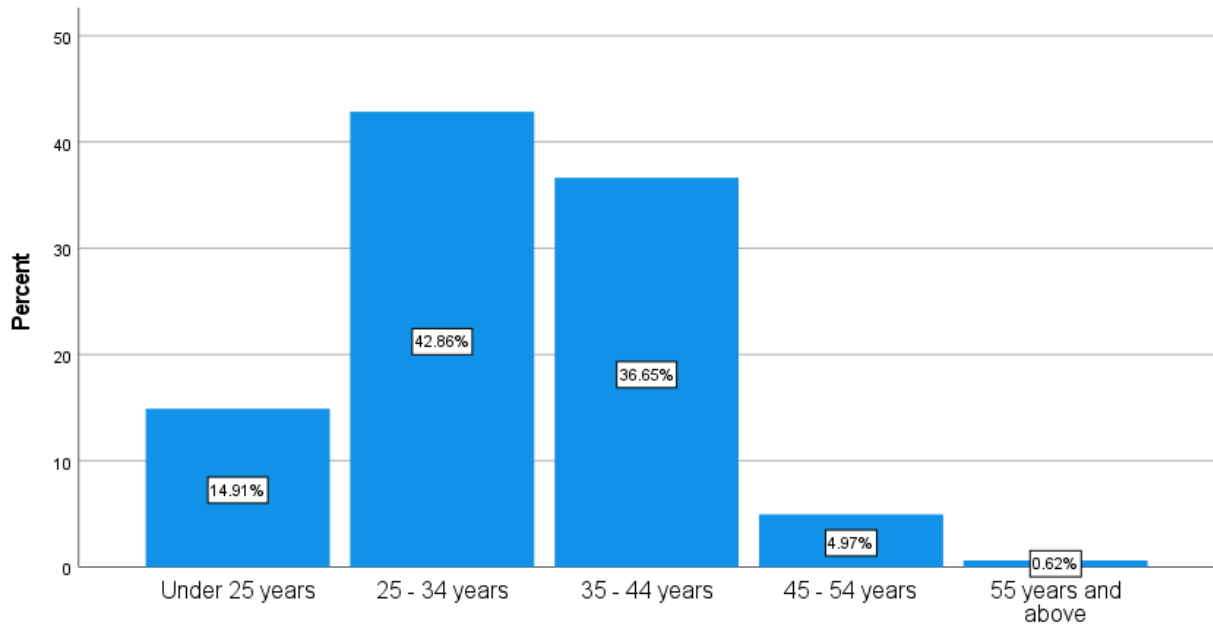
4.3.1 Respondents' gender

Out of 161 respondents, 85 out of 161 respondents were female, which is 52.8%, and 76 out of 161 respondents were male, which is 47.2%. The response rate shows that both genders were well represented, reducing the likelihood of gender bias. It may also suggest that most of the permanent IEBC field staff are female. However, it may mean that women may have been more available to participate in the survey, resulting in a higher female representation.

4.3.2 Respondents' age

Regarding age, the majority of participants were between 25 and 44 years old, with 42.9% (n = 69) in the 25-34 age group and 36.6% (n = 59) in the 35-44 age group. Those under 25 years comprised 14.9% (n = 24) of the sample. Older age groups were less represented, with 5.0% (n = 8) in the 45-54 age group and only 0.6% (n = 1) aged 55 years and above. The results may indicate that most of those working at IEBC as permanent field staff are aged 25-44 years, or these respondents were more available for the research than other age groups. The respondent's age distribution is indicated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Respondents age



4.3.4 Respondents education level

Regarding education level, most have diplomas and bachelor's degrees. Specifically, 53.4% ($n = 86$) of participants held a diploma, while 44.1% ($n = 71$) had a bachelor's degree. A small proportion, 2.5% ($n = 4$), held a PhD qualification. This distribution suggests that IEBC primarily employs staff with mid to high-level educational qualifications, with diploma holders forming the largest group.

4.4 Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal practices were analyzed using Likert-scale statements that measured: fairness of performance appraisals, effectiveness of feedback on performance improvement, motivational impact of feedback, and supervisor support following appraisals. The responses are indicated in Table 4.1. Regarding the fairness of the performance appraisal ($M= 4.20$, $SD = .927$), a large majority of employees viewed the process positively, with 42.2% ($n = 68$) agreeing and 43.5% ($n = 70$) strongly agreeing that appraisals were conducted fairly. Only 7.5% disagreed (5.6%, $n = 9$) or strongly disagreed (1.9%, $n = 3$) with the statement, while 6.8% ($n = 11$) remained neutral. The mean score suggests a strongly positive perception of fairness overall.

Concerning the impact of feedback on performance ($M= 4.12$, $SD = .770$), a significant majority reported positive perceptions, with 55.3% ($n = 89$) agreeing and 30.4% ($n = 49$) strongly agreeing that feedback from performance appraisals improved their performance. Only 3.1% disagreed (1.9%, $n = 3$) or strongly disagreed (1.2%, $n = 2$), while 11.2% ($n = 18$) remained neutral. The mean score indicates a strongly positive perception of feedback's impact on performance.

On the motivational effect of feedback ($M = 4.19$, $SD = .833$), a large majority found feedback motivating, with 50.3% ($n = 81$) agreeing and 37.9% ($n = 61$) strongly agreeing. Only 5.5% disagreed (4.3%, $n = 7$) or strongly disagreed (1.2%, $n = 2$), while 6.2% ($n = 10$) had a neutral opinion. The mean score suggests a very positive perception of feedback's motivational effect.

Regarding supervisor support following the performance appraisal ($M = 4.25$, $SD = .727$), a significant majority reported positive perceptions, with 48.4% ($n = 78$) agreeing and 39.8% ($n = 64$) strongly agreeing that supervisors were always supportive after appraisals. Only 2.5% ($n = 4$) disagreed, with no strong disagreements, while 9.3% ($n = 15$) were neutral. The mean score indicates a strongly positive perception of supervisor support.

In summary, these results show that IEBC employees generally have very positive perceptions of the performance appraisal process, its fairness, the impact and motivational effect of feedback, and the support provided by supervisors following appraisals.

Table 4.2: *IEBC employees' perceptions of various aspects of the performance appraisal process*

		Count	Column N %	Mean	Std Dev
My performance appraisals are conducted fairly	Strongly disagree	3	1.9%	4.20	.927
	Disagree	9	5.6%		
	Neutral	11	6.8%		
	Agree	68	42.2%		
	Strongly agree	70	43.5%		

The feedback from the performance appraisal improved my performance	Strongly disagree	2	1.2%	4.12	.770
	Disagree	3	1.9%		
	Neutral	18	11.2%		
	Agree	89	55.3%		
	Strongly agree	49	30.4%		
Feedback from the performance appraisal motivates me	Strongly disagree	2	1.2%	4.19	.833
	Disagree	7	4.3%		
	Neutral	10	6.2%		
	Agree	81	50.3%		
	Strongly agree	61	37.9%		
After the performance appraisal my supervisor is always supportive	Disagree	4	2.5%	4.25	.727
	Neutral	15	9.3%		
	Agree	78	48.4%		
	Strongly agree	64	39.8%		

4.5 Comprehensive Training and Development

Training and development was assessed through Likert-scale statements evaluating: relevance of training programs to job responsibilities, fairness of training opportunities, impact of training on work performance, and confidence in handling new challenges after training. The results are shown in table 4.2. Regarding the relevance of training programs ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.641$), the majority (62.7%, $n = 101$) agreed that the training programs were relevant to their job responsibilities. 28.6% ($n = 46$) strongly agreed, while 7.5% ($n = 12$) were neutral. A small percentage disagreed (0.6%, $n = 1$) or strongly disagreed (0.6%, $n = 1$). The mean score suggests a very positive perception of training relevance.

On the fairness of training opportunities ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.731$), most (46.6%, $n = 75$) strongly agreed that opportunities were fair, while 42.9% ($n = 69$) agreed. 9.3% ($n = 15$) were neutral. Only 1.2% ($n = 2$) disagreed, with no strong disagreements. The mean score indicates a very positive perception of fairness in training opportunities.

Regarding the impact of training on work performance ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 0.948$), the majority (44.7%, $n = 72$) agreed that training improved their work performance. 31.1% ($n = 50$) strongly agreed, while 14.9% ($n = 24$) were neutral. 8.1% ($n = 13$) disagreed, and 1.2% ($n = 2$) strongly disagreed. The mean score suggests a positive perception of training's impact on performance.

On confidence in handling new challenges post-training ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.071$), a significant portion (49.7%, $n = 80$) agreed that they felt more confident in handling new challenges after training. 18.6% ($n = 30$) strongly agreed, while 11.2% ($n = 18$) were neutral. 17.4% ($n = 28$)

disagreed, and 3.1% (n = 5) strongly disagreed. The mean score shows a moderately positive perception of training's impact on confidence.

Table 4.3: *Employees' perceptions of various aspects of training and development*

		Count	Column N %	Mean	Std Dev
The training programs offered by the organization are relevant to my job	Strongly disagree	1	0.6%	4.18	0.641
	Disagree	1	0.6%		
	Neutral	12	7.5%		
	Agree	101	62.7%		
	Strongly agree	46	28.6%		
The organization has fair opportunities that provide training equal and fair training opportunities for all employees	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%	4.35	0.731
	Disagree	2	1.2%		
	Neutral	15	9.3%		
	Agree	69	42.9%		
	Strongly agree	75	46.6%		

The training attended improved my work performance.	Strongly disagree	2	1.2%	3.96	0.948
	Disagree	13	8.1%		
	Neutral	24	14.9%		
	Agree	72	44.7%		
	Strongly agree	50	31.1%		
After training I feel confidence in handling new challenges.	Strongly disagree	5	3.1%	3.63	1.071
	Disagree	28	17.4%		
	Neutral	18	11.2%		
	Agree	80	49.7%		
	Strongly agree	30	18.6%		

4.6 Flexible working arrangements

Flexible work arrangements were examined using Likert-scale statements measuring: comfort with flexible work practices, effectiveness in managing work-life balance, impact on productivity and focus, and contribution to job satisfaction . The majority (36.6%, $n= 59$) strongly disagreed that they were comfortable with the flexible work practices offered by

IEBC. 18.0% ($n = 29$) disagreed, while an equal percentage agreed. 24.8% ($n = 40$) were neutral. The low mean score suggests overall discomfort with current flexible work practice. 41.6% ($n = 67$) agreed that flexible work programs enable effective work-life balance management. However, 26.7% ($n = 43$) strongly disagreed, and 14.3% ($n = 23$) disagreed. 16.8% ($n = 27$) were neutral. The mean score indicates a slightly negative perception overall of the role of flexible working in improving the work-life balance. On the impact of flexible working on productivity and focus, a significant portion (32.3%, $n = 52$) strongly disagreed that flexible work programs allow for productivity and focus. 23.6% ($n = 38$) disagreed, while 28.0% ($n = 45$) were neutral. Only 14.3% ($n = 23$) agreed. The low mean score indicates a negative perception of flexible work's impact on productivity. Regarding the contribution of flexible working on job satisfaction, half of the respondents (50.9%, $n = 82$) strongly disagreed that flexible work arrangements contribute to their job satisfaction. 14.9% ($n = 24$) disagreed, while 16.8% ($n = 27$) each were neutral or agreed. The lowest mean score among all items indicates a strongly negative perception of flexible work's impact on job satisfaction. The results are summarized in table 4.3

Table 4.4: *IEBC employees' perceptions of flexible work arrangements*

		Count	Column N %	Mean	Std.
I am comfortable with the flexible work practices offered by the IEBC	Strongly disagree	59	36.6%	2.39	1.446
	Disagree	29	18.0%		

	Neutral	40	24.8%		
	Agree	29	18.0%		
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
Flexible work programs enable me to manage work-life balance effectively	Strongly disagree	43	26.7%	2.77	1.319
	Disagree	23	14.3%		
	Neutral	27	16.8%		
	Agree	67	41.6%		
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
Flexible work programs allow me to be productive and focused.	Strongly disagree	52	32.3%	2.39	1.315
	Disagree	38	23.6%		
	Neutral	45	28.0%		
	Agree	23	14.3%		

	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
Flexible work arrangements contribute to my job satisfaction	Strongly disagree	82	50.9%	2.03	1.257
	Disagree	24	14.9%		
	Neutral	27	16.8%		
	Agree	27	16.8%		
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		

4.7 Creative compensation benefits

Creative compensation benefits were analyzed using Likert-scale statements assessing: adequacy of compensation beyond basic needs, feeling valued through benefits, motivational impact of benefits, and availability of non-formal flexible working arrangements. Equal proportions of employees (28.6%, $n = 46$ each) strongly disagreed and disagreed that the compensation offered by IEBC goes beyond basic needs. 27.3% ($n = 44$) were neutral, while

only 15.5% ($n = 25$) agreed. This is supported by low mean score ($M = 2.30, SD = 1.048$) suggesting overall dissatisfaction with compensation levels. Also, most (42.2%, $n = 68$) strongly disagreed that they feel valued by the benefits offered by IEBC. 16.8% ($n = 27$) disagreed, while 18.0% ($n = 29$) were neutral. 23.0% ($n = 37$) agreed. The low mean score ($M = 2.22, SD = 1.128$) indicates a generally negative perception of how benefits contribute to feeling valued. On whether the benefits motivate them to perform better, most (42.2%, $n = 68$) strongly disagreed that they feel valued by the benefits offered by IEBC. 16.8% ($n = 27$) disagreed, while 18.0% ($n = 29$) were neutral. 23.0% ($n = 37$) agreed. The mean score is low ($M = 2.22, SD = 1.128$) indicating an overall negative perception of how benefits contribute to feeling valued. On whether the benefits offered motivates better performance ($M = 2.58, SD = 1.338$) 28.0% ($n = 45$) agreed that benefits motivate better performance, while 26.1% ($n = 42$) were neutral. However, 21.7% ($n = 35$) disagreed and 24.2% ($n = 39$) strongly disagreed. The mean score suggests a slightly negative perception overall. The majority (53.4%, $n = 86$) agreed that the organization offers non-formal flexible working arrangements. 26.1% ($n = 42$) were neutral, while 11.2% ($n = 18$) disagreed and 8.7% ($n = 14$) strongly disagreed. This item received the highest mean score, indicating a generally positive perception of non-formal flexible work options. The results are inducted in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: IEBC employees' perceptions of compensation and benefits

	Co unt	Column N %	Me an	Std

The compensation offered by IEBC goes beyond basic needs	Strongly disagree	46	28.6%	2.	1.0
				30	48
	Disagree	46	28.6%		
	Neutral	44	27.3%		
	Agree	25	15.5%		
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
I feel valued by the benefits offered by IEBC	Strongly disagree	68	42.2%	2.	1.1
				22	28
	Disagree	27	16.8%		
	Neutral	29	18.0%		
	Agree	37	23.0%		
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
The benefits offered motivate me to perform better	Strongly disagree	39	24.2%	2.	1.3
				58	38
	Disagree	35	21.7%		
	Neutral	42	26.1%		
	Agree	45	28.0%		

	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
The organization offers non-formal flexible working arrangements.	Strongly disagree	14	8.7%	3.	1.0
				28	38
	Disagree	18	11.2%		
	Neutral	42	26.1%		
	Agree	86	53.4%		
	Strongly agree	0	0.0%		
	8	1	0.6%		

4.8 Employee performance

Employee performance was analyzed using Likert-scale statements focused on measuring various aspects of work effectiveness and productivity. The analysis used a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to evaluate: consistency in meeting performance targets, improvement in performance over the past year, recognition for performance, effectiveness in workload management, alignment with organizational goals and objectives, satisfaction with productivity levels, adequacy of supervisor support,

accuracy of performance evaluations, motivation to maintain high performance, and effectiveness in meeting deadlines. The results are indicated in table 4.5.

. The largest group (41.0%, $n = 66$) disagreed that they consistently meet their performance targets. 36.6% ($n = 59$) strongly disagreed, while 21.1% ($n = 34$) were neutral. Only 0.6% ($n = 1$) agreed or strongly agreed. The low mean score ($M = 1.88$, $SD = 0.804$) indicates a negative perception of meeting performance targets. Most (42.2%, $n = 68$) disagreed that their performance had improved over the last year. 40.4% ($n = 65$) were neutral, while 8.7% ($n = 14$) strongly disagreed. 6.8% ($n = 11$) agreed, and 1.9% ($n = 3$) strongly agreed. The low mean score ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 0.822$) suggests a generally negative perception of performance improvement. Regarding regular recognition for performance, 42.9% ($n = 69$) disagreed that they receive regular recognition. 28.0% ($n = 45$) were neutral, while 16.1% ($n = 26$) strongly disagreed. 11.2% ($n = 18$) agreed, and 1.9% ($n = 3$) strongly agreed. The mean score ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.951$) indicates a negative perception of recognition. On the effectiveness of managing workload, most (48.4%, $n = 78$) disagreed that they can effectively manage their workload. 24.2% ($n = 39$) were neutral, while 22.4% ($n = 36$) strongly disagreed. 3.7% ($n = 6$) agreed, and 1.2% ($n = 2$) strongly agreed. The low mean score of ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 0.845$) suggests a negative perception of workload management ability. On whether participants' performance is aligned with the organization's goals and objectives, the majority (41.6%, $n = 67$) agreed that their performance is aligned with organizational goals. 29.8% ($n = 48$) were neutral, while 16.1% ($n = 26$) strongly agreed. 11.8% ($n = 19$) disagreed, and 0.6% ($n = 1$) strongly disagreed. The mean score ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.916$) shows a moderately positive alignment with organizational goals.

On whether the participants were satisfied with their productivity level, most (44.1%, $n = 71$) agreed that they are satisfied with their productivity level. 32.9% ($n = 53$) strongly agreed, while 18.0% ($n = 29$) were neutral. 4.3% ($n = 7$) disagreed, and 0.6% ($n = 1$) strongly disagreed. The high mean score ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 0.861$) suggests high satisfaction with productivity levels. On whether there is adequate support from supervisors to achieve goals, 34.2% ($n = 55$) were neutral. 32.9% ($n = 53$) agreed, while 17.4% ($n = 28$) disagreed. 14.3% ($n = 23$) strongly agreed, and 1.2% ($n = 2$) strongly disagreed. The mean score ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.978$) shows moderately positive perceptions of supervisor support.

Furthermore, the largest group (39.8%, $n = 64$) agreed that their evaluations reflect their actual performance. 28.0% ($n = 45$) were neutral, while 18.0% ($n = 29$) disagreed. 12.4% ($n = 20$) strongly agreed, and 1.9% ($n = 3$) strongly disagreed. The mean score of ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.986$) suggests that most feel their evaluations are somewhat accurate. Most (34.8%, $n = 56$) agreed about feeling motivated to maintain high performance. 25.5% ($n = 41$) were neutral, while 21.1% ($n = 34$) strongly agreed. 16.1% ($n = 26$) disagreed, and 2.5% ($n = 4$) strongly disagreed. The mean score ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.071$) indicates a moderately positive motivation level. On whether the respondents were able to meet deadlines, the majority (35.4%, $n = 57$) agreed that they can meet deadlines effectively. 30.4% ($n = 49$) were neutral, while 16.1% ($n = 26$) disagreed. 14.9% ($n = 24$) strongly agreed, and 3.1% ($n = 5$) strongly disagreed. The mean score of ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.029$) shows a moderately positive perception of meeting deadlines effectively.

Statement	Response	Count	Column	Mean	Std.
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			N%		Deviation
I consistently meet my performance targets.	Strongly disagree	59	36.6%	1.88	.804
	Disagree	66	41.0%		
	Neutral	34	21.1%		
	Agree	1	0.6%		
	Strongly agree	1	0.6%		
I feel my performance has improved over the last year.	Strongly disagree	14	8.7%	2.51	.822
	Disagree	68	42.2%		
	Neutral	65	40.4%		
	Agree	11	6.8%		
	Strongly agree	3	1.9%		
I regularly receive recognition for my performance.	Strongly disagree	26	16.1%	2.40	.951
	Disagree	69	42.9%		
	Neutral	45	28.0%		

	Agree	18	11.2%		
	Strongly agree	3	1.9%		
I am able to effectively manage my workload.	Strongly disagree	36	22.4%	2.13	.845
	Disagree	78	48.4%		
	Neutral	39	24.2%		
	Agree	6	3.7%		
	Strongly agree	2	1.2%		
My performance is aligned with the organization's goals and objectives.	Strongly disagree	1	0.6%	3.61	.916
	Disagree	19	11.8%		
	Neutral	48	29.8%		
	Agree	67	41.6%		
	Strongly agree	26	16.1%		
I am satisfied with my level of productivity.	Strongly disagree	1	0.6%	4.04	.861

	Disagree	7	4.3%		
	Neutral	29	18.0%		
	Agree	71	44.1%		
	Strongly agree	53	32.9%		
I receive adequate support from my supervisor to achieve my performance goals.	Strongly disagree	2	1.2%	3.42	.978
	Disagree	28	17.4%		
	Neutral	55	34.2%		
	Agree	53	32.9%		
	Strongly agree	23	14.3%		
My performance evaluations reflect my actual work performance.	Strongly disagree	3	1.9%	3.43	.986
	Disagree	29	18.0%		
	Neutral	45	28.0%		
	Agree	64	39.8%		
	Strongly agree	20	12.4%		

	agree					
I feel motivated to maintain a high level of performance.	Strongly disagree	4	2.5%	3.56	1.071	
	Disagree	26	16.1%			
	Neutral	41	25.5%			
	Agree	56	34.8%			
	Strongly agree	34	21.1%			
I am able to meet deadlines effectively.	Strongly disagree	5	3.1%	3.43	1.029	
	Disagree	26	16.1%			
	Neutral	49	30.4%			
	Agree	57	35.4%			
	Strongly agree	24	14.9%			

4.9 Correlations

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables—performance appraisal, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation benefits—and the dependent variable of employee performance. The correlation coefficients range from -1 to +1, with values near ± 1 indicating stronger relationships, while values approaching 0 suggest weaker relationships.

4.9.1 Performance appraisal and employee performance

Performance appraisal demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with employee performance ($r = .397, p < .01$). This significant relationship suggests that effective performance appraisal practices were associated with enhanced employee performance.

4.9.2 Comprehensive training and development and employee performance

A weak but significant positive correlation was found between comprehensive training and development and employee performance ($r = .267, p = .001$). This indicates that increased training and development initiatives were linked to improved employee performance.

4.9.3 Flexible work arrangements and employee performance

The analysis revealed no significant correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee performance ($r = -.030, p = .703$). This suggests that flexible work programs had no substantial relationship with employee performance levels.

4.9.4 Creative compensation benefits and employee performance

Creative compensation and benefits showed no significant correlation with employee performance ($r = -.030$, $p = .703$), indicating that these benefits did not have a meaningful relationship with employee performance.

These correlational findings are summarized in Table 4.5, demonstrating that while performance appraisal and training initiatives showed positive relationships with employee performance, flexible work arrangements and creative compensation benefits did not exhibit significant associations.



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Table 4.6: *Correlation analysis*

		Employees performance
Performance appraisal	Pearson Correlation	.397**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.01
Comprehensive training and development	Pearson Correlation	.267**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
Flexible work arrangements	Pearson Correlation	-0.030
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.703
Creative compensation and benefits	Pearson Correlation	-0.030
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.703

4.10 Regression

A multiple regression analysis was performed to investigate the relationship between the independent variables—performance appraisal practices, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation benefits and the dependent variable of employee performance. The objective of the analysis was to assess the

extent to which each human resource practice serves as a predictor of employee performance at IEBC.

4.10.1 Diagnostic tests for linear regression

Various tests for regression assumptions were conducted. One is an autocorrelation test, which is tested using Durbin-Watson statistics. As indicated in Table 4.6, the Durbin-Watson statistic (2.083) was close to 2, indicating that the assumption of independence of residuals was met, supporting the validity of the regression model. Another test that was performed was the normality test, which was assessed using histogram Figure 4.7. The histogram resembles a bell-shaped curve, which is a characteristic of normal distributions, showing that the data follows a normal distribution. The PP plot was also used to assess the normality. As indicated in Figure 4.8, the points follow a straight line closely, which is a strong indication of normality. Also, there are no noticeable deviations from the line, suggesting that the data points are distributed similarly to a normal distribution.

Figure 4.2:*Histogram*

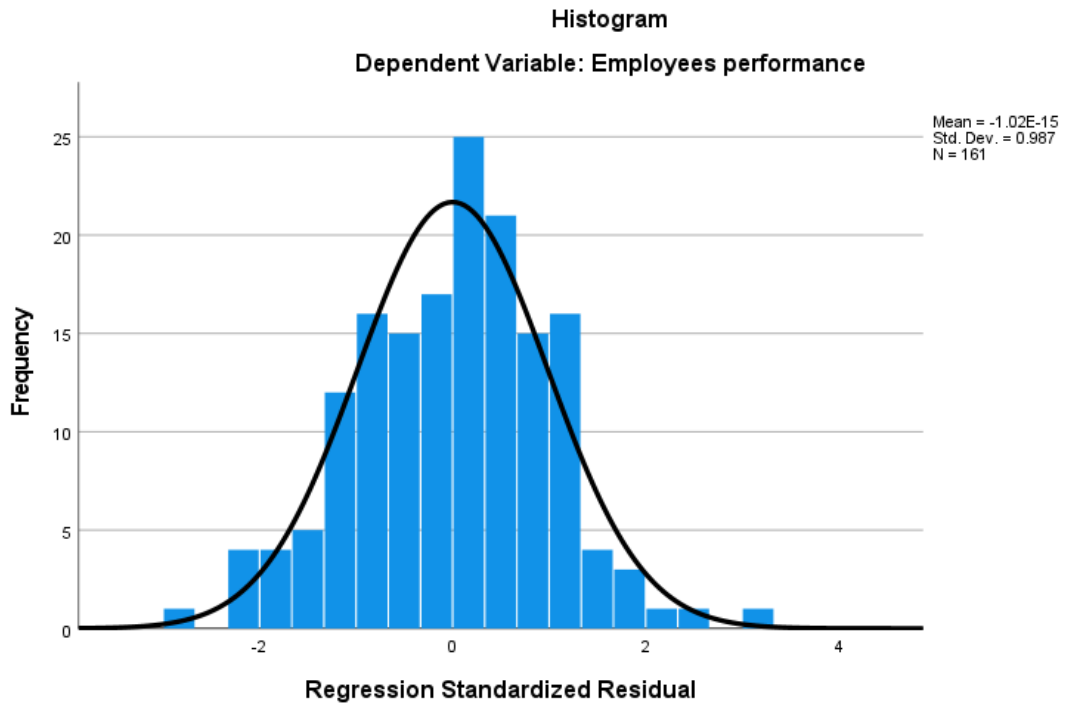


Figure 4.3: *Normal P-P plot*

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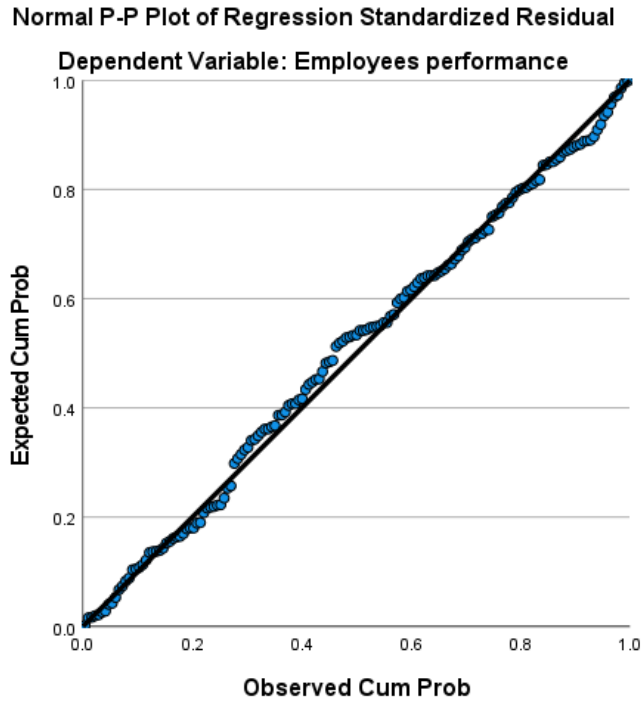
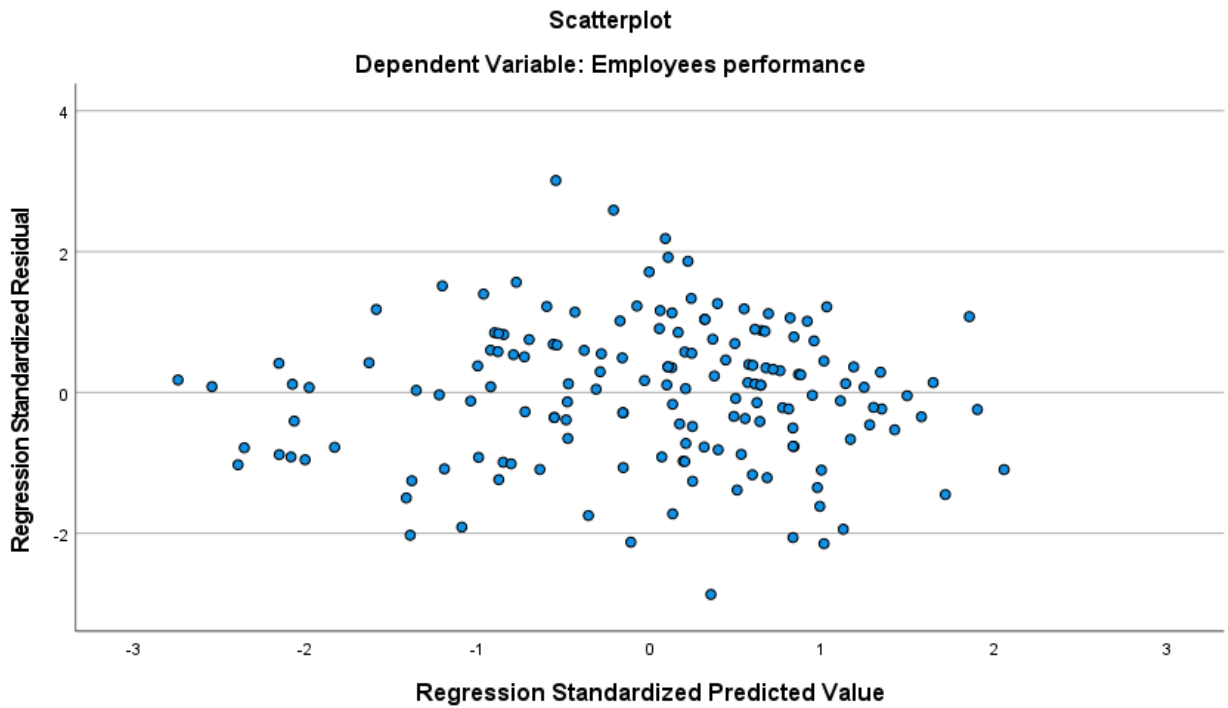


Figure 4 4: Scatter plot



Another test that was performed is a multicollinearity test, assessed using tolerance and VIF. As indicated in table 4.8, collinearity statistics were within acceptable ranges (Tolerance > 0.1 and VIF < 10 for all predictors), suggesting no significant multicollinearity issues. The constant term ($B = 1.358$, $t = 3.857$, $p < .001$) represents the predicted value of employee performance when all predictor variables are zero. Another test performed is homoscedasticity; shown in scatter plot in figure 4.10. From figure 4.9, the points are generally evenly scattered around the horizontal line at 0 (residuals); and there is no clear pattern of increasing or decreasing variance as the predicted values increase. Also, the points do not form a funnel shape, which would indicate heteroscedasticity (unequal variance of residuals).

From table 4.8, the regression model, which included performance appraisal, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation and benefits as predictors, explained a significant portion of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = .192$, Adjusted $R^2 = .172$, $F(4, 156) = 9.27$, $p < .001$). The multiple correlation coefficient ($R = .438$) indicated a moderate relationship between the predictor variables and employee performance. The model accounted for 19.2% of the variance in employee performance

Table 4.7: *Regression model summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
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1	.438 ^a	.192	.172	.38567	2.083
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Creative compensation and benefits, Performance appraisal , Flexible work arrangements, Comprehensive training and development

b. Dependent Variable: Employees performance

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the multiple regression model revealed a statistically significant relationship between the predictor variables (performance appraisal, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation and benefits) and employee performance, $F(4, 156) = 9.281, p < .001$. These results suggest that the combination of HR practices included in the model significantly predicts employee performance at IEBC

Table 4.8:Regression model ANOVA.

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.522	4	1.380	9.281	.000 ^b
	Residual	23.204	156	.149		
	Total	28.726	160			

a. Dependent Variable: Employees performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Creative compensation and benefits, Performance appraisal , Flexible work arrangements, Comprehensive training and development

Table 4 9:*Regression model coefficients*

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.	Collinearity	
	Coefficients		Coefficients			Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	1.358	.352		3.857	.000		
Performance appraisal	.331	.069	.358	4.817	.000	.936	1.068
Comprehensive training and development	.174	.071	.182	2.437	.016	.932	1.073
Flexible work arrangements	-.042	.055	-.057	-.765	.445	.945	1.058
Creative compensation and benefits	.008	.063	.009	.126	.900	.941	1.063

a. Dependent Variable: Employees performance

4.10.1 Regression results

The multiple regression analysis revealed varying impacts of human resource practices on employee performance, as shown in Table 4.10.

4.10.2 Performance Appraisal and Employee Performance

Performance appraisal emerged as the strongest predictor, demonstrating a significant positive relationship with employee performance ($\beta = .358$, $t = 4.817$, $p < .001$). The unstandardized coefficient indicated that when one unit of performance appraisal increase, the performance of employees increased by 0.331 units, holding other variables constant.

4.10.3 Comprehensive Training and Development and Employee Performance

Comprehensive training and development also showed a significant positive relationship with employee performance ($\beta = .182$, $t = 2.437$, $p = .016$). For every one-unit increase in comprehensive training and development, employee performance increased by 0.174 units, while controlling for other variables.

4.10.4 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Performance

Flexible work arrangements did not significantly predict employee performance ($\beta = -.057$, $t = -.765$, $p = .445$). This suggests that flexible work arrangements had no substantial impact on employee performance at IEBC.

4.10.5 Creative Compensation Benefits and Employee Performance

Similarly, creative compensation and benefits showed no significant relationship with employee performance ($\beta = .009$, $t = .126$, $p = .900$). This indicates that creative compensation benefits did not have a meaningful influence on employee performance in this context.

The regression equation representing the predicted value of employee performance based on the values of the four independent variables is;

$$Y = 1.358 + 0.331X_1 + 0.174X_2 - 0.042X_3 + 0.008X_4$$

Where: Y = Employee Performance (dependent variable) X₁ = Performance Appraisal X₂ = Comprehensive Training and Development X₃ = Flexible Work Arrangements X₄ = Creative Compensation and Benefits 1.358 is the constant (y-intercept).

Table 4 10: Summary of the findings

Hypothesis	
There is no significant positive influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of IEBC employees ($p < .001$).	Rejected
There is no significant positive influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees ($p = .016$).	Rejected

There is no significant influence of flexible work arrangement on the performance of IEBC employees (p = .445)	Failed to be rejected
There is no significant influence of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees (p = .900).	Failed to be rejected

4.11. Discussion

This subsection discusses the findings, links them to the literature, and theories, and provides an alternative explanation to the findings. It is organized according to the research objectives.

4.11.1 The influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of IEBC employees.

The results of this study are consistent with the prevailing body of research regarding the relationship between performance appraisal practices and employee performance . Studies by Mose (2023) in Kenya's energy sector, Wairimu and Gachunga (2014) at the World Health Organization in Kenya, and Helal (2022) in the Lebanese retail sector all found that effective performance appraisal led to improved employee productivity and performance The findings of this study align with earlier research, indicating significant relationship between performance appraisal and employee performance.

This aligns well with the goal-setting theory developed by Locke and Latham (2015). The theory suggests that setting clear, challenging goals, coupled with constructive feedback, can motivate employees to align their efforts with organizational objectives. The positive

perceptions reported by employees regarding the fairness of the appraisal process, the impact and motivational effects of feedback, and the supportive role of supervisors show the importance of these elements in driving employee performance. This resonates with the insights from Adolfsson et al. (2023), who found that performance appraisal accompanied by feedback can help individuals identify their strengths and areas for improvement.

However, the study contradicts with a few studies, such as the one by Umihanic and Cebic (2014) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which found that performance appraisal did not positively impact employee motivation. Research in the Brazilian and U.S. public sectors also suggested that performance appraisal practices were associated with inefficiencies that undermined their ability to improve employee performance (Estolano, 2014). These contradictory findings can be explained by factors like bias, lack of appraiser training, and corruption, as noted by Mwirigi and Namusonge (2014) in the Kenyan context. Additionally, some researchers, such as Adler et al. (2016) and Armstrong (2018), have highlighted limitations of performance appraisal systems, such as the use of subjective judgments and the mismatch between the normal curve used for salary increases and the non-normal curve of employee behaviors.

In summary, the findings of this study are consistent with the majority of the existing research, which indicates that well-designed and implemented performance appraisal systems can enhance employee performance. However, the contradictory evidence also suggests the need to carefully consider potential limitations to maximize the effectiveness of these practices.

The effective performance appraisal practices identified in this study directly support Kenya's Vision 2030 pillars, particularly the governance pillar which emphasizes accountability and

transparency in public institutions. By ensuring fair and effective performance management at IEBC, the organization can better deliver on its mandate of conducting credible elections, thereby contributing to SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Furthermore, the emphasis on constructive feedback and goal-setting aligns with the government's bottom-up economic transformation agenda, which requires competent and motivated public servants to implement grassroots development programs effectively. Enhanced performance appraisal systems at IEBC can ensure that electoral processes support democratic governance necessary for sustainable development at all levels.

4.11.2 The influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees.

The study found that the majority of employees had very positive perceptions of the training and development initiatives at the organization. Most agreed that the training programs were relevant to their job responsibilities, the opportunities for training were fair, and the training had a positive impact on their work performance. Employees also generally felt more confident in handling new challenges after receiving training. These results align with the majority of the existing research on the topic. Studies by Mihardjo et al. (2020), Mohammed (2016), and Okechukwu (2017) all found that employee training and development had a positive impact on employee performance, skills, and capabilities. This suggests that the organization's investments in comprehensive training programs, which go beyond basic training, are contributing to enhanced employee competencies and, in turn, better job performance.

However, the results contradict some studies. For example, Karim (2019) found that while some types of training, such as environmental health and safety, career development, and

orientation, had a positive impact, job-specific training did not significantly affect employee performance. Another study by Glaveski (2019) in the South African food industry indicated that poorly planned and implemented training initiatives failed to achieve their intended goals of improving employee performance. These contradictory findings highlight the importance of the quality and relevance of training programs. It may suggest that it is not just about investing in training, but ensuring that the initiatives are well-designed, aligned with employees' specific needs and challenges, and effectively executed.

The positive relationship between comprehensive training and development and employee performance observed in this study can be explained using the human capital theory. Developed by Becker (1962) and Rosen (1976), this theory suggests that by investing in the education and training of employees, organizations can enhance their skills, knowledge, and abilities, ultimately leading to increased productivity and better individual and organizational performance.

In summary, the study found that employees had very positive perceptions of the training and development initiatives at the organization, which aligns with the majority of the existing research on this topic. These findings can be explained using the human capital theory, which suggests that by investing in the development of their workforce, organizations can improve employee performance and contribute to overall organizational success.

The positive impact of comprehensive training and development directly supports Vision 2030's human resource development objectives, particularly in building a skilled and competent workforce. This aligns with SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by ensuring continuous professional development. In the context of Kenya's bottom-up economic transformation, well-trained IEBC staff are crucial for

implementing electoral reforms and innovations that support grassroots democratic participation. The enhanced capabilities resulting from training programs enable IEBC employees to better serve communities at the ward and constituency levels, facilitating more inclusive electoral processes that are fundamental to the bottom-up approach. Additionally, skilled electoral management contributes to political stability, which is essential for the success of community-driven development initiatives under the current government's economic agenda.

4.11.3 The influence of flexible work arrangements on the performance of IEBC employees.

The findings regarding flexible work programs and their impact on employee performance present a more contradictory picture compared to the previous findings on performance appraisal and comprehensive training and development. The study found that employees had mostly negative perceptions of the flexible work practices offered by the IEBC. The majority strongly disagreed that they were comfortable with the flexible work options, and they also had a negative perception of the impact of flexible work on work-life balance, productivity and focus, as well as job satisfaction.

These findings contrast with the majority of the existing literature, which has generally found a positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee performance. For example, studies by Jaiswal and School (2022) and Ahmad et al. (2023) concluded that the flexibility offered by remote work and other flexible practices was associated with improved job performance.

However, the study also highlighted some contradictory evidence from the literature. A Gallup (2023) survey across 140 countries found that remote and hybrid workers experienced more negative emotions like anger and stress compared to those working onsite full-time. Additionally, research by Joyce et al. (2014) suggested that some flexible work practices motivated by the firm's interests, such as involuntary part-time employment, can negatively impact employee health and performance.

These conflicting findings can be explained using the Job Characteristics Theory developed by Hackman and Oldham (1974). The theory suggests that specific job characteristics, such as autonomy, feedback, and task significance, influence employee motivation and performance. While flexible work arrangements can provide increased autonomy, the lack of supervision, communication, and team cohesion highlighted in the literature may undermine other critical job characteristics, leading to the negative perceptions and lack of performance impact observed in this study.

Furthermore, the literature review points to potential drawbacks of flexible work, such as the difficulty in balancing work and family life, loss of productivity due to disrupted schedules, and increased costs for the organization. These factors may have outweighed the potential benefits of flexibility for the IEBC employees, resulting in the overall negative sentiment towards these practices.

. Furthermore, the literature review (Joyce et al. 2014; Yunus & Mostafa, 2021) points to potential drawbacks of flexible work, such as the difficulty in balancing work and family life, loss of productivity due to disrupted schedules, and increased costs for the organisation. These factors may have outweighed the potential benefits of flexibility for the IEBC employees, resulting in the overall negative sentiment towards these practices.

In summary, the study's findings on flexible work arrangements stand in contrast to the majority of the literature, which has generally found a positive relationship between flexibility and employee performance. This discrepancy can be explained by the Job Characteristics Theory, as well as the potential downsides of flexible work arrangements highlighted in the reviewed studies. The organisation may need to carefully consider the implementation and impact of these practices to ensure they align with the needs and preferences of employees and the broader organizational context.

The challenges with flexible work arrangements at IEBC have significant implications for Kenya's development agenda. Vision 2030 emphasizes the need for efficient and effective public service delivery, which may be compromised by poorly implemented flexible work policies. This finding is particularly relevant to SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), as flexible work arrangements are often crucial for supporting work-life balance and inclusive employment. In the context of the government's bottom-up economic transformation, the negative perceptions of flexible work at IEBC could hinder the organization's ability to attract and retain talent needed for electoral innovations and community engagement initiatives. Moreover, as the bottom-up approach requires extensive fieldwork and community interaction, the lack of effective flexible work arrangements may limit IEBC's capacity to support grassroots democratic processes and participatory development programs that are central to the current government's policy framework

4.11.4 The influence of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees.

The results of this study suggest that innovative compensation benefits did not significantly influence employee performance within the organization. This is contrary to the majority of

the existing literature, which has found that innovative compensation approaches like sabbaticals, well-being allowances, and educational benefits can enhance employee motivation and productivity (Misnan et al., 2022; Neve et al., 2019; Pyle, 2015).

One potential explanation for the lack of a significant relationship could be the specific context and culture of the organization studied. The literature review suggests that creative compensation works best when it is strategically designed to meet the unique needs and desires of the workforce (Gerhart & Fang, 2015). If the benefits offered by this organization did not align with what employees truly valued, they may not have had the expected motivational impact.

Additionally, Vroom's expectancy theory posits that motivation is driven by the belief that one's efforts will lead to acceptable performance, which will then be rewarded (Wardayati, 2016). If employees did not perceive a strong link between their performance and the creative compensation provided, it may have diminished the motivational effect. The findings around employees' negative perceptions of how benefits contribute to feeling valued lend some support to this interpretation.

Of notable importance, the results do indicate that the organization offers non-formal flexible working arrangements, which were viewed positively by the majority of employees. This aligns with research suggesting that modern work practices like flexible schedules can be critical factors in improving employee performance (Misnan et al., 2022). It is possible that this type of creative benefit had a more significant impact than the other compensation approaches examined.

In conclusion, the findings of this study contradict much of the existing literature on the positive effects of creative compensation on employee performance. However, the specific

context of the organization, as well as the complexities of how different types of creative benefits are perceived, may help explain these results.

The limited impact of creative compensation benefits at IEBC presents challenges for Kenya's broader development objectives. Vision 2030's social pillar emphasizes creating a just and cohesive society, which requires motivated and well-compensated public servants. The findings suggest a potential misalignment with SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), as ineffective compensation strategies may not adequately address employee welfare and motivation. In the context of the government's bottom-up economic transformation agenda, this is particularly concerning as it may limit IEBC's ability to attract and retain the high-caliber staff needed to support democratic processes that underpin grassroots development initiatives. Effective electoral management is crucial for the success of the bottom-up approach, as it ensures legitimate representation and accountability at all levels of government. The organization may need to reassess its compensation strategy to align with employee values and expectations, thereby supporting both institutional effectiveness and the broader national development agenda that relies on strong democratic foundations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the key findings, conclusions derived from the research, and recommendations aligned with the study's objectives. The study

investigated the influence of various HR practices on employee performance at the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) of Kenya. The study examined the impact of performance appraisal practices and feedback, comprehensive training and development, flexible work arrangements, and creative compensation benefits on employee performance. At the end of the chapter is the recommendation for future research.

5.2 Summary of the major finding

In this section, the study presents the key findings from the research for each of the four HR practices examined and their relationship with employee performance at IEBC.

5.2.1 The influence of performance appraisal practices and feedback on the performance of IEBC employees.

Performance appraisal practices and feedback were generally perceived positively by IEBC employees. Feedback from appraisals was seen as beneficial for improving performance and motivating employees. Performance appraisal has been identified as the most significant predictor of employee performance among the HR practices examined.

5.2. The influence of comprehensive training and development on the performance of IEBC employees.

IEBC has been active in providing training opportunities, with most employees participating in recent training activities. Employees generally viewed the training programs as relevant to their job responsibilities and reported improvements in their work performance following training. The research demonstrated a substantial positive correlation between comprehensive training and development initiatives and employee performance.

5.2.3 The influence of flexible work arrangements on the performance of IEBC employees.

Most employees reported that IEBC does not offer flexible work options, and those aware of such arrangements expressed dissatisfaction with their implementation. Employees generally felt uncomfortable with the current flexible work practices and did not perceive them as conducive to productivity or job satisfaction. The study found no significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee performance at IEBC

5.2.4 The influence of creative compensation benefits on the performance of IEBC employees.

Regarding creative compensation benefits, most employees expressed dissatisfaction with these benefits and perceived them as having little to no impact on their performance. There was a general feeling that the compensation offered did not adequately address basic needs, and employees did not feel valued by the benefits provided. Similar to flexible work arrangements, creative compensation benefits showed no significant relationship with employee performance in the statistical analysis.

5.3 Conclusions

In this section, the study draws conclusions based on the research findings for each HR practice examined, linking results to theoretical frameworks and determining the significance of relationships between HR practices and employee performance.

The study concludes that performance appraisal practices and feedback have a significant positive influence on employee performance at IEBC. The high levels of perceived effectiveness, fairness, and motivational impact of the appraisal process suggest that IEBC

has implemented a relatively successful performance management system. This aligns with the goal-setting theory, emphasizing the importance of feedback in maintaining motivation and effort toward achieving goals.

The study highlights that comprehensive training and development programs significantly enhance employee performance at the IEBC. The high participation rates, perceived relevance of the training, and the positive effects on work performance suggest that the organization's investment in human capital development is yielding favorable outcomes. This finding aligns with the human capital theory, which asserts that investing in employee education and training can lead to increased productivity.

Regarding flexible work arrangements, the research concludes that flexible work arrangements, as currently implemented at IEBC, do not have a significant influence on employee performance. The lack of availability, high levels of dissatisfaction, and negative perceptions regarding productivity and job satisfaction suggest that IEBC's approach to flexible work arrangements may need reconsideration. This finding contradicts much of the existing literature on the benefits of flexible work arrangements and highlights a potential area for improvement within the organization.

On the creative compensation benefits, the research concludes that creative compensation benefits, as currently structured at IEBC, do not significantly influence employee performance. The high levels of dissatisfaction, perceived lack of impact on performance, and feelings of being undervalued suggest that the current compensation strategies are not effectively motivating employees or meeting their needs. This misalignment with employee expectations contradicts the principles of the Expectancy Theory and indicates another area requiring attention from IEBC management.

5.4 Recommendations

In this section, the study provides actionable recommendations for IEBC management based on the research findings, divided into managerial recommendations for immediate implementation and policy recommendations for structural changes.

5.4.1 Managerial Recommendations

The IEBC should continue to build on the current strengths of the performance appraisal system, maintaining its perceived fairness and effectiveness. It should also deal with the gap in feedback provision by ensuring all employees receive timely and constructive feedback after appraisals. The organization should implement regular training for supervisors on effective feedback techniques to further enhance the motivational impact of the appraisal process. Additionally, IEBC should implement a more frequent, informal feedback system to complement the formal appraisal process, allowing for more timely performance adjustments.

IEBC should strengthen its training and development initiatives by expanding the reach of training programs to ensure all employees have regular opportunities for skill development. The organization should also conduct regular needs assessments to ensure training programs remain relevant to job responsibilities and organizational goals. IEBC should consider introducing mentoring or coaching programs to complement formal training, providing ongoing support for skill application and development.

5.4.2 Policy recommendations

There is a need for a comprehensive review of IEBC's current flexible work policies and practices to identify areas for improvement. Based on the review results, various actions should be initiated, such as developing and communicating clear guidelines on available

flexible work options and how to access them. IEBC should also provide training for both managers and employees on effective implementation and utilization of flexible work arrangements.

IEBC should review its current compensation and benefits structure to address the dissatisfaction expressed by employees. This should include a thorough evaluation of the adequacy of compensation in meeting basic needs, as well as the perceived value and motivational impact of the benefits offered. The organization should consider restructuring its compensation and benefits package to better align with employee expectations and organizational goals.

5.5 Suggestions for future research

Qualitative research is necessary to obtain a better understanding of employee views and experiences regarding different HR practices at IEBC. There is also a necessity for the research to concentrate on the obstacles to successfully implementing flexible work arrangements within the Kenyan public sector environment and on creative compensation strategies that might be effective in the distinctive setting of IEBC and comparable public sector entities in Kenya. Additionally, it is important to conduct studies that include other factors like employee engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction to assess how they impact employee performance.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Section 1: Demographics

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age

Under 25 years

25 - 34 years

35 - 44 years

45 - 54 years

55 years and above

3. Educational Qualification:

Primary school

High School

Diploma

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

PhD



Section 2 : Performance appraisal

4. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 strongly agree, 1 strongly disagree), rate your agreement with the following statements.

	5	4	3	2	1
My performance appraisals are conducted fairly					
The feedback from the performance appraisal improved my performance					

Feedback from the performance appraisal motivates me.					
After the performance appraisal, my supervisor is always supportive.					

Section 3: Comprehensive Training and Development

5. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 strongly agree, 1 strongly disagree), rate your agreement with the following statements.

	5	4	3	2	1
The training programs offered by the organization are relevant to my job responsibilities.					
The organization has fair opportunities that provide training equal and fair training opportunities for all employees.					
The training attended improved my work performance.					
After training I feel confidence in handling new challenges.					

Section 4: Flexible Work Arrangements

6. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 strongly agree, 1 strongly disagree), rate your agreement with the following statements.

	5	4	3	2	1
I am comfortable with the flexible work practices offered by the IEBC					
Flexible work programs enable me to manage work-life balance effectively.					
Flexible work programs allow me to be productive and focused.					
Flexible work arrangements contribute to my job satisfaction.					

Section 5: Creative Compensation and Benefits

7. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 strongly agree, 1 strongly disagree), rate your agreement with the following statements.

	5	4	3	2	1
The compensation offered by IEBC goes beyond basic needs.					
I feel valued by the benefits offered by IEBC.					
The benefits offered motivate me to perform better.					
The organization offers non-formal flexible working arrangements.					

Section 6: Employee performance

8. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 neutrals, 2 disagree and 1 strongly disagree), rate your agreement with the following statements regarding your performance.

	5	4	3	2	1
I consistently meet my performance targets.					
I feel my performance has improved over the last year.					
I regularly receive recognition for my performance.					
I am able to effectively manage my workload.					
My performance is aligned with the organization's goals and objectives.					
I am satisfied with my level of productivity.					
I receive adequate support from my supervisor to achieve my performance goals.					
My performance evaluations reflect my actual work performance.					
I feel motivated to maintain a high level of performance.					
I am able to meet deadlines effectively.					



Appendix 2:ERC Certificate



REF: MKU/ISERC/4460
TO: MOSES KAGENDO FAITH

Date: 30 September 2024

REG: MBA/2021/78866

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. A CASE OF ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

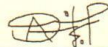
This is to inform you that **Mount Kenya University** has reviewed and approved your above research proposal. Your application approval number is **3182**. The approval period is **30/09/2024 - 29/09/2025**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements;

- i. Only approved documents including informed consents, study instruments, MTA will be used
- ii. All changes including amendments, deviations and violations are submitted for review and approval by **Mount Kenya University**
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to **Mount Kenya University** within 72 hours
- v. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to **Mount Kenya University**

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.


Yours sincerely,



Dr. Alfred Owino, PhD
Chairman, Mount Kenya University ISERC



Appendix 3: University Introduction letter


Mount Kenya University

DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

MBA/2021/78866
1st October, 2024

*National Commission for Science Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI)
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P.O Box 30623- 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA*

Dear Sir/Madam,


RE: MOSES KAGENDO FAITH- REGISTRATION NO. MBA/2021/78866


The purpose of this letter is to introduce the above named student who is pursuing **Master of Business Administration** in the department of **Accounting and Finance** in the school of **Business and Economics**.

The title of the research is **"Influence of Human Resource Practices on Employees Performance in Public Institutions. A Case of Electoral and Boundaries Commission."** It has been cleared by the University's Ethics Review Committee (Certificate attached) and now has to proceed to the field to collect data between **October, 2024 and December, 2024**.

Any assistance accorded to the student will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.


Dr. Samuel M. Karega, PhD
Director, Graduate Studies


Mount Kenya University
P.O. Box 342 - 01000, THIKA
Office of the Director,
Graduate Studies

Enc.


Main Campus, General Kago Road, P.O. Box 342-01000 Thika.
Cell: +254 709 153 000 / +254 709 153 200

Appendix 4: NACOSTI permit

REPUBLIC OF KENYA
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **840545** Date of Issue: **05/November/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Miss. Faith Kagendo Moses of Mount Kenya University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Meru on the topic: **Influence of Human Resource Practices on Employees Performance in Public Institutions. A Case Study of Electoral and Boundaries Commission for the period ending : 05/November/2025.**

License No: **NACOSTI/P/24/41530**

Applicant Identification Number: **840545**

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License, To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

Appendix 5: Field Entry Authorization

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way;
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. The license any rights thereunder are non-transferable
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

National Commission for Science, Technology and
Innovation (NACOSTI),
Off Waiyaki Way, Upper Kabete,
P. O. Box 30623 - 00100 Nairobi, KENYA
Telephone: 020 4007000, 0713788787, 0735404245
E-mail: dg@nacosti.go.ke

Appendix 6. Turnitin report

INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. A CASE OF ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

by Moses Kagendo Faith

Submission date: 20-Jan-2025 10:40PM (UTC+0300)

Submission ID: 2567804130

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INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON
EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS. A CASE
OF ELECTORAL AND BOUNDARIES COMMISSION

ORIGINALITY REPORT



Nickel Ore Processing Unit Pomalaa,
Indonesian", Open Science Framework, 2019

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142 Birhan Ambachew Taye, Temesgen Teferi Zewdu. "Assessing the Effect of Training and Development on Employee Performance: Evidence from CBE, Woldia District", Research Square Platform LLC, 2023

Publication

143 Gordon E. O'brien. "Evaluation of the job characteristics theory of work attitudes and performance", Australian Journal of Psychology, 1982

Publication

Exclude quotes Off

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Exclude bibliography On



Mount Kenya

University

Appendix 7. Map

