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MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES, EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN
KAMWENGE DISTRICT HEALTH SECTOR**

BY

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OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER'S
DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION OF
MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

JUNE, 2018

PLAN A

DECLARATION

I, Ssozi Chris Gaanaafaa do declare that this is my original work and that it has not been presented to any other university/institution for any academic award.

Sign:.....



Date:.....

8/10/2018.

SSOZI CHRIS GAANAFAAA

DECLARATION

I, Ssozi Chris Gaanaafaa do declare that this is my original work and that it has not been presented to any other university/institution for any academic award.

Sign:.....



Date:.....

8th/10/2018.

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to establish the relationship between Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Engagement and Employee Performance in Kamwenge District Health sector. The population under this study comprised of employees in all health centre IIIs and IVs within Kamwenge district health sector. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design and employed the Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis. From a population of 202 employees who work in the health sector of Kamwenge District, the researcher sought to acquire a sample of 132 employees using the rationale of Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

A research instrument of close-ended questionnaires was designed so as to capture data on the research study objectives. It was tested for reliability and validity, analyzed using SPSS version 21 and results indicated that the variable items all had acceptable levels of reliability and validity since the coefficients for the CVI and the Cronbach Alpha were above 0.700. The researcher also carried out a parametric assumptions test of data cleaning, outliers, and normality, linearity, homogeneity, and multicollinearity tests.

The researcher then collected data from the rest of the sample, and acquired useful data from 100 employees representing a response rate of 75.6%. The data was aggregated to the unit of analysis before running the correlations and the regression models. According to the study, the findings confirmed a positive and significant relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

From the results of the study, we recommend that, the District health sector should emphasize and promote a transparent and independent recruitment and selection process to ensure that highly competent unbiased health workers are employed in order to improve performance. That employees have performance work plans and appraised regularly. Adequate and timely pay of health workers as a way of motivating them to be engaged and improve their performance on job. The District Health sector leadership should promote one to one interactions to ensure participatory decision making and implementations of solutions.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

In this section I present the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions, scope of the study and conceptual framework.

1.2 Background of the study

In this ever competitive and dynamic environment, employee performance takes center stage among executive's agenda in every organization, because without it, no firm can prosper and register significant growth with respect to its goals and objectives (Ismajliet *al.*, 2015). Accordingly, the concept has attracted intense debate from managers and practitioners alike on what should be done to ensure consistent performance from employees at the workplace. Despite this level of attention, organizations have continued to register dismal performance from their employees. For instance, Gallup report (2013) indicates that only 65% of employees globally are able to fulfill their targets timely and this has stifled accessibility of health services to those in need. Similarly, within sub-Saharan Africa, whereas human resource executives have made concerted efforts to derive maximum performance from their employees, the health sector has witnessed an unprecedented string of inadequate performance manifested by poor target completion rates, inadequate compliance to procedures and guidelines, and widespread inefficiencies (Basaza, 2016).

Such manifestations are also eminent among the health sector in Uganda and Kamwenge district in particular, where the performance of employees has been reported to be below the desired level leading to adverse performance outcomes (MHSDMU report, 2014). For instance, evidence derived from the health sector strategic plan (2016) indicates a decline in the general

performance of employees with respect to set targets on immunization of killer diseases. Notably, the proportion of children under 5 years who have received three doses of vaccine as per schedule reduced from 89% in the financial year 2013/14 to 78% in 2015/16 against a projected target of 90% that had been set (HSSP, 2016). Similarly, tuberculosis cure rate reduced from 73% to 64% during the same period. Besides, statistics from Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicate that the proportion of sick children under 5 years seen by a health worker using the integrated management of childhood illness guidelines reduced to 45% against a baseline target of 55% by close of 2016 (UBOS, 2016). More so, the outpatient new attendance rate stagnated at 80% for the past five consecutive financial years effective 2012 (MoH, 2016). These are occurrences that could be due to inadequate employee performance as employees' exhibit inadequate knowledge, non-compliance to policy, persistent absenteeism, poor interpersonal relations and patient neglect and ultimately leading to poor health service delivery (Intra Health Uganda, 2015). These facts notwithstanding, limited studies within the context of Kamwenge district have been conducted to examine what variables could be contributing to this undesirable performance.

Several scholars argue that employee performance is an outcome of different variables such as human resource practices (Jouda, Ahmad & Dahleez, 2016; Owor, 2016), degree of engagement (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2008), positive work environment (Malik *et al.*, 2011) and organizational support (Pati & Kumar, 2010). In this study, the variables of human resource practices and employees' engagement were adopted as predictive variables. In particular, Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez (2016) posited that human resource practices such as training, performance appraisal, compensation and rewards as well as recruitment and selection, guide and positively influence the level of employee's commitment in the organization leading to better performance outcomes.

These practices instill a sense of direction and foster team work where employees are encouraged to work better to achieve organizational goals and objectives. In relation to engagement, Schaufeli *et al.*, (2008), articulated that employees who are dedicated, absorbed in their schedules committed on their work are productive, express vigor and are focused which in turn leads to better performance in form of timely completion of timely work targets. More so, having a friendly and supportive work environment can give employees the confidence to become engaged in their work leading to better performance outcomes (Pati& Kumar, 2010). Despite this empirical review, most of these studies were context specific and their implementation and implication are usually limited to countries and environment where they were conducted. Therefore, they provide little (if any) explanation on what is happening within the health sector in Kamwenge district being a rural based District far from the central supervision and its inability to attract and retain the most critical cadres in the health sector. It is therefore imperative to initiate a study aimed at examining the relationship between human resource management practices, engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Employee performance is one of the hall marks for efficient service delivery in the health sector. However, it remains elusive and unsatisfactory within Kamwenge health sector despite the several interventions by Government and other implementing partners as statistics indicate that health sector performance in Kamwenge remained at 50-55% (Health Sector Annual Monitoring Report, 2017). According to Kamwenge District Health sector annual performance review report, 2016, it was indicated that the general attendance to duty of health workers is 62% below the required level of 90%. More so, there has been decline in the general performance of employees with respect to set achievement of performance targets as per performance work plans. (Intra-health, 2017). Besides, evidence from Uganda Bureau of Statistics indicate that the proportion of

sick children under 5 years seen by a health worker in Kamwenge using the integrated management of childhood illness guidelines reduced to 45% against a baseline target of 55% by close of 2016 (UBOS, 2016). Such practices are hence exhibited in terms of inadequate employee performance as employees exhibit inadequate knowledge, non-compliance to policy, persistent absenteeism at 40%, patient neglect, and ultimately leading to poor health service delivery (Nyamweya, N.N., Yekka, P., Mubutu, R.D., Kasozi, j., 2017), and MHSDMU, (2014). Report on Monitoring of Healthcare Services Delivery in Kamwenge District. These practices can be attributed to poor human resource management practices and employee disengagement.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The study seeks to examine the relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

1.5 Research objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- (i) To examine the relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.
- (ii) To examine the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.
- (iii) To examine the relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement within Kamwenge district health sector.
- (iv) To examine the relationship between Human Resource Management Practices, Employee Engagement and employee performance in Kamwenge District Health Sector.

1.6 Research questions

The specific research questions of this study are:

- (i) What is the relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector?
- (ii) What is the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector?
- (iii) What is the relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement within Kamwenge district health sector?
- (iv) What is the relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector?

1.7 Scope of the study

1.7.1 Geographical scope

The study will be carried out in Kamwenge district which is situated in western Uganda. This district is situated between the districts of Kasese, Rubirizi, Bushenyi, Ibanda, Kiruhura, Kyegegwa, Kyenjojo and Kabarole, and will concentrate on the district health sector. The reason for this choice is that a number of interventions to support the notion of employee performance in health sector have been put by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Public Service and other development partners aimed at improving the general employee performance of employees within the health sector through improved management of human resources who are central in ensuring effective service delivery. Nevertheless, the impact has been minimal. Two Health Centre sub-districts of Rukunyu Health Centre IV and Ntara Health Centre IV will be studied plus six Health Centre III's under their jurisdictions. These are: Mahyoro, Nyabban, Kamwenge, Bigodi, Bunoga and Rwamwanja respectively. The justification

for the selection of these facilities is that, by government policy Health Centre Sub Districts and Health Centre111's are the pivotal centers of curative and preventive health service delivery and have high population of health workers and clients where impact whether positive or negative can easily felt. The study focused on the performance of health workers as they determine the general performance of the health facilities because once the employees.

1.7.2 Conceptual scope

The study will focus on human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance as the study variables.

1.7.3 Time scope

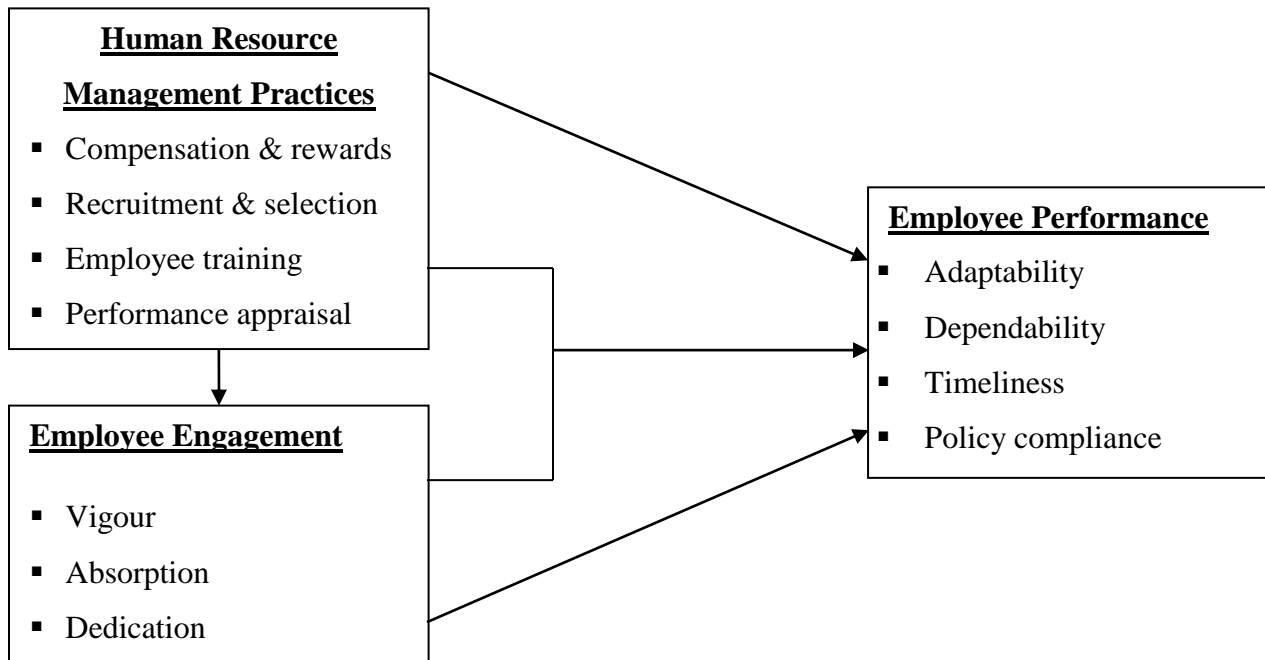
The study will be restricted to a period of five (5) years between 2012-2016. This is because it is when issues of deteriorating performance for employees have been widespread.

1.8 Significance of the study

- (i) Academic: The study enriches the existing body of knowledge by providing empirical findings on the relationship among variables. Thus, the findings of the study will be used by future researchers to conduct other studies in relation to these variables in a different perspective.
- (ii) Government: The study can be used by different district administrations in Uganda, and in particular, Kamwenge district to discover the best ways of managing employee performance to improve service delivery.
- (iii) Policy makers: The study will design tailor made recommendations to assist policy makers in government of Uganda to provide a conducive work environment for employees especially in the health sector with a view of stimulating their performance.

- (iv) Customers or patients: The patients especially the citizens in Uganda, who often seek health services from the government health facilities, will be able to benefit from the improved service delivery and wellbeing.

1.9 Conceptual framework



Source: Adopted from literature review by Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez(2016),Schaufeli et al., (2008),Akinbowale, Lourens and Jinabhai (2014) and modified by the researcher.

Figure 1: Relationship between human resource practices, employee engagement and employee performance

From the framework above, it is indicated that employee performance is dependent on human resource management practices used by HR managers as well as employee engagement among employees within organizations. This suggests that the three variables are interrelated. Thus, the framework indicates that employee performance can be improved in organizations through

implementation of appropriate human resource practices that promote employees' level of engagement. Specifically, human resource practices have been conceptualized in terms of compensation and rewards, recruitment and selection, employee training and performance appraisals carried out by human resource executives. These measures were also emphasized by Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez (2016) as the appropriate human resource practices that can stimulate employee performance within organizations. Similarly, the model also indicates that employee engagement can lead to sound employee performance when employees are dedicated to their job roles, absorbed and have the vigour to perform assigned tasks in a timely manner. These measures are in conformity with Schaufeli's *et al.*, (2008), study findings. Furthermore, the framework also demonstrates that performance of employees within organizations can be manifested when employees are adaptive to changing work environment, procedures and policies, dependable in articulation of their schedules as expected in service delivery, execute their tasks in a timely manner in view of attendance to duty and clients, being compliant to the policies within the organization. The same measures were also highlighted by Akinbowale, Lourens and Jinabhai (2014) as the realistic measures for employee performance at the work place.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the available literature on the relationships between the different variables used in this study. The researcher reviewed literature on the relationship between Human Resource Practices and employee performance, the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance, the relationship between Human resource practices and employee engagement and the relationship between Human Resource Practices, employee engagement and employee performance.

2.2 Employee performance

According to Gichimu (2010), employee performance is the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual or individuals, as set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resources within a changing environment. Likewise, Heckman, *et al.*, (2006), also indicated that employee performance refers to employee's accomplishment of assigned tasks. From these definitions, it can be observed that employee performance is associated with quantity and quality of output, timeliness of output, presence/attendance on the job as well as efficiency and effectiveness of work completed. In order to evaluate employee performance, pre-determined standards are set against which actual performances are measured and that without any rule of measurement; it will be difficult to assess the level of performance. In other words, before claims can be made that employee are under-performing, then there must be some performance expectations and targets. The objective of employee performance analysis is to review employee performance

against standards set and identify strengths and weaknesses of individuals both in terms of personal characteristics and delivery skills (Basaza, 2016). From an employees' perspective, employee performance represents the general belief of the employee about his or her behavior and contributions towards the success of the organization. Akinbowale, Lourens and Jinabhai (2014) noted that employee performance within the health sector can be manifested with respect to the employees' level of adaptability, dependability, timeliness and policy compliance. These are the tenets that make it possible for employees to perform better than others.

2.3 Human resource management practices

According to Tan and Nasurdin (2011), human resource management practices refer to organizational activities directed at managing the pool of human resources and ensuring that the resources are employed towards fulfillment of organizational goals and objectives. In every organization, human resources are the most important assets because they are the source of achieving competitive advantage (Ismajli *et al.*, 2015). In the same way, it is argued that one of the distinctive features of human resource management today is that better performance is achieved through people. As such, human resource managers employ different practices in order to attract, motivate and retain these critical assets of the firm. In the view of Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez (2016), human resource management practices include employee recruitment and selection, compensation and rewards, employee training, career development, performance appraisal, promotional activities as well as orientation and induction. Shaukat, Ashraf and Ghafoor (2015) noted that the work environment is constantly changing and demands new models of competitiveness which in turn require organizational capacities that will enable the companies to better serve their customers and distinguish them from their competitors. These organizational capacities come from the redefinition and redistribution of human resource

management functions and practices. Thus, effective human resource management practices in an organization link human resources with tactical goals and objectives to improve employee performance.

2.4 Employee engagement

According to Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2014), employee engagement is the level of commitment employees have towards achieving the goals and objectives of a company. It is measured by the level of their vigor, absorption and dedication towards execution of tasks related to their work. Employee engagement within organizations has received a great deal of attention because of its influence on the employee performance success of a company. Indeed, there is consensus among scholars that actively engaged employees tend to be more productive and more focused on growing sales and satisfying customers, attributes that are widely appreciated as measures for employee performance. Employee engagement also cultivates a culture of teamwork which is a prerequisite for sound performance within an organization. It is for this reason that more employers are measuring employee engagement as a way of gauging the overall performance of their employees.

In employee engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008). In other instances, employee engagement has been looked at as emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization (Schaufeliet *al.*, 2008) while scholars such as Markos and Sridevi (2010) look at employee engagement as passion for work, a psychological state which is seen to encompass the three dimensions of vigor, dedication and absorption. These attributes in turn link employee's level of involvement, satisfaction and enthusiasm for work to the positive performance

outcomes. This is because when employees are cognitively focused, affectively connected, attentive and absorbed in their work, their emotions and feelings are directed towards their job duties and responsibilities. More so, engaged employees are physically active, their behaviours and actions demonstrate extra effort and vigor leading to better performance outcomes.

Relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance

From literature, human resource management practices are considered as one of the best changes that human resource practitioners and specialists need to comprehend for an improvement in employee performance. This is in support with the study by Mwema and Gachunga (2014) who acknowledged that human resource management practices such as performance appraisals and training are important in determining employee performance because they guide human resource specialists in identifying staff training gaps as well as offering special attention to the poor performers a chance to uplift and also acquire special skills that are required while performing specific tasks in timely and effective manner. Consistent with the above, Iqbalet *al.*, (2013), revealed that performance appraisal and training are important practices in developing and motivating of employees to perform with high enthusiasm which increases their performances as a way of appreciation. Within the same view, Altarawmneh and Al-Kilani (2010) emphasized that performance appraisal is an important practice that plays a significant role in identifying employees competences with a purpose of instilling more basic knowledge and skills to increase their productivity and performances. Additionally, Shaukat, Ashraf and Ghafoor (2015) noted that human resource practices and employee performances are interrelated because employees need to be trained, motivated and compensated in order for them to perform better. The study revealed further that the value of organizational performance is locked within them and their performances can only be improved with best human resource practices.

A related study by Veld (2012) postulated that human resource management practices and employee performances are closely associated. It is revealed that practices such as job analysis, selection, and recruitment and labour relations increase job satisfaction amongst employees which increases their adaptability, timeliness and compliance while performing their tasks. Furthermore, Hassan (2016) revealed that there is a significant relationship between human resource management practices and employee performances because employee training, performance appraisal as well as compensations are motivational factors that increase job satisfaction and guide employees in making effective decisions that subsequently uplift performance. In line with the above, Nabi, Syduzzaman and Munir (2016) indicated that human resource management practices allow effective selection and staffing of high performing employees who are more dedicated while performing their duties which leads to high level of employee performance.

Moreover, Al-Qudah, Osman and Al-Qudah (2014) noted that employee performance is highly dependent on human resource practices such as employee training that instills necessary skills, knowledge, experiences and abilities that guide employees to perform the assigned tasks with a high degree of efficiency, timeliness and effectiveness. Similarly, Alnaqbi (2011) stressed that human resource management practices and employee performance are interconnected because with effective training and selection, employees are aligned with a positive behavior that pushes them to perform the more. Within the same view, recent findings by Shaukat, *et al.*, (2015), stressed that human resource management practices enhance supportive employee behaviors, attitudes and perceptions which increase job commitment while performing duties and tasks. Additionally, Katou and Budhwar (2010) postulate that human resource management practices are considerable activities that human resource practitioners need to undertake in order to

enhance employee performance. The study revealed that these practices are healthy in managing employees and work in institutions because they boost motivation and loyalty among employees which later increases on their performance.

A related study by Torre and Solari (2013) stressed further that employee performance is as a result of comprehensive human resource management practices such as effective training because it keeps employees more dynamic and effective with the altering situations in work environment thereby getting the necessary competences that increases performance over time. Consistently, Dessler (2011) highlighted that through training practices, employees are provided with the necessary skills, and knowledge that empowers them to execute tasks with more timeliness and policy compliance. More so, Mwema and Gachunga (2014) concluded that human resource managers should at least establish and adopt human resource management practices so as to clearly identify employee needs and help managers during decision making processes regarding promotions which increase team work and collaborations among employees hence improving performance. In addition, Gooderham, Parry and Ringdal (2008) emphasized that human resource management practices are directly linked with employee performance because they allow complete recognition of employee's skills, interests and knowledge during productivity which increases the quality of output. This concurs with the recent findings of Al-Qudah *et al.*, (2014), who observed that human resource practices such as effective recruitment and selection allow institutions to get hold of employees with quality skills and positive minds because they are constructive and always willing to reach organizational goals and objectives with a high level of performance.

However, it is worth noting that adopting human resource management practices alone does not guarantee an increase in employee performance (Grigoroudis, Orfanoudaki&Zopounidis, 2012).

This is because employee performance is the end-result of a complex process that considers organizational structure, pool of resources (financial and non-financial) in order to comprehensively implement programs that generate productive capabilities and competitive advantage of employees in the market. Similarly, as Zhang (2017) suggested, for an organization to register consistence in employee performance, there are several attributes involved, including the level of job satisfaction, organizational commitments as well as leadership practices. In other words, organizations cannot rely on adopting human resource management practices as a necessary condition for improving employee performance, but must also consider job satisfaction, organizational commitment as well as effective leadership to realize sound employee performance. This is in line with Iqbal, Ijaz, Latif and Mushtaq (2015) who revealed that there is a weak relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance. This is because some practices such as performance appraisal structures are ambiguous and complex in nature which rises much issues like misperceptions and frustrations among employees. The study further revealed that such systems may consume much of the organizational resources in the implementation process without necessarily improving employee performances. From the above literature, it is clear that the association of human resource management practices is likely to provide varied findings. However much this is the case, employee performance would be much realized only if there is interplay of variables.

Relationship between employee engagement and employee performance

The influence of employee engagement has been a common phenomenon discussed among human resource practitioners regarding the factors that influence employee performance. Numerous scholars and researchers in the field of human resource management have confirmed that employee engagement is vital in determining performance. Notably, Dajani (2015) indicated

that employee engagement is an important ingredient in influencing employee performance. According to the study, employees with a positive attitude and passion are likely to be more vigorous and dedicated while performing tasks assigned to them which consequently improves performance. This is in agreement with Sibanda, Muchena and Ncube (2014) who postulate that employee engagement enhances constructive and productive behavior amongst employees which increases their confidence while executing their tasks hence increasing timeliness and adaptability. Furthermore, Mathis and Jackson (2011) revealed that engaged employees identify more with the organization and are always intact with the set organizational aims and objectives. As a result of this, employees are energized to work hard in order to attain organizational goals and objectives which lead to increased employee performance. This concurs with the recent study by Kazimoto (2016) who stressed further that employee engagement is important in understanding employee performance. It is indicated that employee engagement is a motivational factor that drives employees to perform specific duties and tasks with a high degree of dedication and vigor which pushes them to devote much of their effort towards attaining organizational goals and objectives.

A related study by Shmailan (2016) emphasized the need for employee engagement in improving performance because engaged workers hold a positive attitude, always self-sufficient and feel highly valued and respected by organization which in turn improves their performance. Likewise, Marrelli (2011) found out that employee engagement and employee performance are significantly correlated. This is because engaged employees perform extremely well with much desire for work and a strong feeling of personal connection with teams which enhances their performance over time. The study postulates further that engaged employees are more motivated, innovative and always focus on organizational interests as well as offering opinions on how to

increase organizational outcomes. Additionally, Truss *et al.*, (2013), emphasized that the higher the employee engagement the better in the context of employee performance. The study revealed that fully engaged employees are always eager to take on new challenges in organizations with much enthusiasm and zeal which leads to a cohesive work environment culture associated with policy compliance, timeliness as well as adaptability while performing. Furthermore, Mathis and Jackson (2011) posit that employee engagement enhances the willingness of workers to contribute towards organizational productivity, profitability which pushes them to perform with more vigor and absorption which subsequently uplifts their performance.

In addition, a study by Sibanda *et al.*, (2014), emphasized that in order for organizations to increase employee performance, it is necessary for human resource practitioners to design an error free working environment to stimulate employee engagement. This is because a considerable level of employee engagement encourages workers to display greater knowledge and skills that are paramount in determining performance. Consistent with this argument, Shmailan (2016), also observed that engaged employees attach greater value to their jobs, smoothly communicate with their superiors and therefore feel motivated to perform with much vigor and dedication which later boosts employee performance in the long run. In addition, Dajani(2015) argues that employee engagement is pinnacle in determining employee performance because engaged employees are always reliable, motivated and willing to go beyond the job requirements because of the recognition and respect they receive from their superiors which later impacts on their performance.

Furthermore, Truss *et al.*, (2013), stressed that employee engagement is significantly associated with employee performance. The study indicated that engagement of employees is a push factor that drives workers to attain better skills from their superiors in the work place which encourages

employees to perform with much vigor and absorption hence improving on their proficiency. A related study by Allamehet *al.*, (2014), indicated that engaged employees are assets in organizational and employee performance because they are crucial in setting up a competitive advantage that keeps institutions on top of their competitors. The study stressed further that engaged workers provide a unique feature that helps an organization to attain its mission and generate important business outcomes with much timeliness and policy compliance. This concurs with the much recent findings of Dajani (2015) who emphasized that employee engagement is an important managerial ingredient that fosters employee performance. It is indicated that organizations with dedicated and vigorous employees stay competitive with improved performance because workers are always motivated and energized which pushes them to perform in a timely and effective manner. This is in agreement with Sridhar and Thiruvankadam (2014) who revealed that dimensions of employee engagement significantly influence employee performance. The study revealed that organizations with engaged employees register better performance because such workers are more determined and focused while performing their duties which leads to completion of specific duties and tasks on time.

In spite of the numerous scholars who have exhibited that employee engagement and employee performance are positively associated, there is growing evidence of contradictory views. For instance, a study by Miller (2014) indicated that the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance is a reverse one. The study observed that instead employee engagement rises when employee performance indexes are high. In other words, employees' attitudes, and behavior improve only when performance increases. Consistently, Ruganzi (2017) stressed further that despite the salient role of employee engagement in employee performance, human resource managers are still uncertain regarding the measurable indicators of employee

engagement which has limited them from putting up effective systems that encourage employee engagement and this subsequently continues to affect employee performance in various organizations. From the presentation above, some scholars contend that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance while others continue presenting contradicting views about the nature and extent of the relationship. Henceforth, the above findings are not conclusive which provides clear grounds for further empirical studies to clearly establish the relationship between the variables under this study.

Relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement

From literature, studies in relationship to human resource management practices and employee engagement have been subject to mixed findings. Those in support of the association such as Rao, Vani and Meesala (2014) revealed that human resource management practices are central in engaging employees. The study findings publicized that human resource management practices such as effective communication generates a bond between management and employees which enhance the commitment and engagement of employees on work. Additionally, Owor (2016) revealed that recruiting and selecting staff members as a practice of human resource management enables organizations to acquire employees with right skills and experience who can easily perform their tasks and obligations vigorously and more dedicated. This is in line with Truss *et al.*, (2013) who emphasized that human resource management practices enhance constant performance appraisal of employees which encourages employees to become more engaged. Furthermore, Sivapragasam and Raya (2018) stressed that human resource management practices such as effective compensation and reward systems improve employee welfare which influences them to perform specific tasks with more commitment and dedication. This is in line with

Bhuvanaiah and Raya (2014) who explained that with improved welfare, employees will be more energized which increases on their commitment and engagement.

Additionally, Schaufeli (2013) highlighted that extensive training is an important human resource management practice that imparts employees with the necessary skills, abilities and approaches to perform in a more dedicated and vigorous manner. A recent study conducted by Conway *et al.*, (2015), stressed that effective human resource management practices consider employee's well-being as important. As a result of this, employees feel that they are valued by their employer which prompts them to get more committed and attracted to their work. Within the same context, Owor (2016) revealed that human resource management practices and employee engagement are interconnected. According to the study, employee training and performance appraisals make employees feel more motivated and exhibit positive attitudes which boost their level of engagement. More recently, Sivapragasam and Raya (2018) suggested that human resource practitioners need to consider human resource management practices like effective reward and recruitment policies because it creates a favourable working environment which makes employees hold a positive mind towards their work.

Also, Owor (2016) observed that with human resource management practices put in place, employees feel trusted and valued which makes them perform their duties and obligations with much interest and vigour. Similarly, Hinkin and Tracey (2014) suggested that human resource management practices encourage employees to work with more energy and always committed towards achieving organizational goals and objectives which boosts employee engagement. Within the same view, Vanhala and Ahteela (2011) explained that human resource management practices are related to employee engagement. From the study, effective selection and employee training makes employees feel satisfied with their work which increases their chances of staying

within the institution. Further, Schaufeli (2013) revealed that human resource management practices play a key role in the enhancement of employee engagement. It is revealed that employees who are rewarded and well recognized for their good performance get more committed and engaged.

On the other, hand Mansoor and Hassan (2016) concluded that adopting human resource management practices does not obviously improve employee engagement. According to the study, employee engagement can be well understood if only measured against variables including teamwork, job role, communication patterns established and organizational management system at hand. Within the same line of argument, Bakar (2013) found out that in order to consistently improve employee engagement, there is need for an interplay of issues such as empowering leadership behavior, high performance work practices as well as religiosity. From the above presentation, it is clear that the association of human resource management practices and employee engagement is likely to provide contradicting views. In addition, it is evident that much as the relationship may exist, employee engagement may become more attainable if various issues are put into consideration.

Relationship Between Human Resource Practices, Employee Engagement and Employee Performance

Fundamentally, organizations with effective approaches to human resource management practices are normally those where aspects such as compensation and rewards, recruitment and selection, training and employee appraisal are well managed with an aim of engaging their workers who have the ability to execute their tasks with dedication and commitment (Al-Qudah, Osman & Al-Qudah, 2014). For instance, when employees are getting fair salary in terms of what the market offers or what equivalent staff earn in other sectors, they are bound to be more

engaged and committed to maintaining their performance. Similarly, in relation to employee training, skills transfer programs within firms are implemented with a hope that they will have a dual effect on engaging employees for better performance as they are intended to improve the knowledge, abilities, skills and adaptability on job thus greatly linked to improved employee performance (Dessler, 2009). This explains the relevance of human resource management practices in promoting employee engagement for better performance outcomes. Likewise, Shaukat, Ashraf and Ghafoor (2015) demonstrated that human resource management practices coupled with engaged employees influence employee performance in any specific organization that aims at achieving its targets and so did Cascio(2010), who concluded in their study that HRM practices like compensation, promotion and performance evaluation ignite the level of employees' engagement leading to meaning performance.

Furthermore, DeCenzo and Robbins (2010) observed that employees will offer a higher level of performance when they are engaged and they feel that appropriate HRM practices are designed in their favor to stimulate effective execution of their duties and responsibilities. Other scholars have also argued that effective HRM practices send overt and covert signals to employees about the extent to which they are valued and trusted, giving rise to feelings of engagement through obligation on the part of employees, who then reciprocate their level of effort into high levels of performance (Alnaqbi, 2011; Nabi, Syduzzaman&Munir, 2016). Likewise, it is argued that employees are motivated within the employment relationship to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviors when they perceive that their employer values them and their contribution is recognized through well laid down HRM practices like employee compensation, training, employee welfare, appraisal and recruitment. This motivates them to be fully engaged in their efforts to fulfill work targets from time to time. While it appears that HRM practices tend to

propose a positive link between HRM practices, level of engagement and firm performance, limited studies (if any) have examined the combined relationship between human resource management practices, engagement and employee performance. This study is among those to bridge this gap within the context of Kamwenge district health sector.

Summary of the literature review

The literature reviewed above is the reflection of several studies by different scholars to examine the human resource management practices and their predictive potential on the employee engagement and performance in different work places as experienced by companies or the organizations in the corporate world. However, most of the organizational experiences mentioned there in are derived from developed countries with different levels of development and work settings. The most important gap the researcher hopes to fill is the inadequate information available to explain the situation at hand in Uganda which is a developing country and especially in the area of the health sector where more funding and interventions of strengthening human resources for health have been greatly invested. As such, this study is one of those few to bridge this gap.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents research design, study population, sample size determination and sampling techniques, sources of data, measurement of variables, data collection procedures, data processing and analysis, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, ethical considerations and anticipated limitation of the study.

3.2 Research design

The researcher employed cross sectional research design. A cross sectional research design was used because it involves studying a variable in which data is gathered just once in a snapshot or in a given time period. Besides, a cross-sectional research design also allows examination of variables and outcomes in a single study. More so, findings from cross-sectional studies can be generalized to the overall population from which the sample was drawn despite their reliance on representative samples. Therefore, the researcher also adopted a quantitative research approaching which numerical data will be tabulated for easy processing and analysis.

3.3 Study population

The population under study was the health worker in Kamwenge District Health Sector and the minimum qualification was at least an ordinary level certificate. The targeted health workers were medical Officers, Clinical Officer, Nurses, Midwives, Nursing Assistants, Dental Officers, Laboratory Technicians and their assistants Porters plus Health Assistants comprising of all the 202 employees in health Centre IIIs and IVs within Kamwenge district health sector. These two categories of health facilities have been chosen because they are the key contact areas for most

health needs in the treatment of disease and acts as a referral Centre for all Health centre 11s, have more staffing than other health facilities and more specialized services like theatre, diabetic clinics, cancer screening to mention but a few. According to the Ministry of Health Uganda (2016), Kamwenge district has seven government HC IIIs and two HC IVs.

3.4 Sample size determination

The study used a sample of only 132 employees. This number was based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining a sample size from a known population.

3.5 Sampling technique

Proportionate simple random sampling technique was used to identify the target respondents until the required number was got in the respective categories as indicated in table 1 below. The reason for choosing simple random sampling was because of its simplicity, convenience and its ability to give every respondent in the target group an equal chance of participating in the study

Table 1: Sample size distribution for potential respondents

Health Facility	N	S
Rukunyu health sub district	40	26
Rwamwanja HC III	18	12
Bwizi HC III	15	10
Bigodi HC III	20	13
Kamwenge HC III	18	12
Ntara Health sub district	41	27
Nyabbani HC III	16	10
Mahyoro HC III	21	14
Kicheche HC III	13	8
Total	202	132

Source: Kamwenge District Local Government Abstract, 2016

3.6 Sources of data

This study used primary sources of data. Primary data was the focus of this study because it was collected purposely to satisfy the study objectives. Data was collected by administering a closed ended questionnaire designed in line with the study objectives.

3.7 Measurement of variables

Consistent with Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez (2016), human resource management practices were measured in terms of compensation and rewards, recruitment and selection, employee training as well as performance appraisals. In relation to employee engagement, constructs of vigor, absorption and dedication were used as suggested by Schaufeli's *et al.*, (2008), study findings. Furthermore, employee performance was analyzed in terms of adaptability, dependability, timeliness and policy compliance within the organization as highlighted by Akinbowale, Lourens and Jinabhai (2014).

3.8 Data collection procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the faculty of graduate studies and research at Makerere University Business School to serve in communicating to the respondents that the research study is solely for academic research and not for any other hidden agenda. Thereafter, a closed-ended questionnaire was distributed to the target respondents to provide their responses on the various statements raised. A questionnaire method was selected because it is simple, convenient and can be used to collect data from a big population size.

3.9 Data collection instruments

Closed-ended questionnaires (appendix 1) were used to obtain responses from the target group of employees in Kamwenge district health sector. The questionnaire was structured under two sub-

sections where the first covered the demographic characteristics of respondents while the second sub-section covered the independent variables of human resource management practices and employee engagement as well as the dependent variable (employee performance). The closed-ended questions helped the researcher to code data easily for subsequent analysis and this narrowed down the error gap while analyzing data (Sekaran, 2009).

3.10 Validity and reliability of research instruments

3.10.1 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the data collection instrument is relevant in measuring what it is supposed to measure (Drost, 2011). In this study, validity of the questionnaire was determined by computing the content validity index (CVI). This technique involved designing questions with five responses of “strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree and strongly agree” for experts to ascertain whether the dimensions and variables used in the study are appropriate enough to give reliable results. The opinions obtained formed the basis for rephrasing some questions until the final questionnaire was obtained. Using the formula, $CVI = K/N$ where, K = Number of items considered relevant/suitable and N = Number of items considered in the instruments, the CVI ratio was ascertained using the threshold of 0.7 as suggested by Amin (2005).

Reliability

According to Cronbach (1951), reliability refers to the consistency or dependability of a data collection instrument. In this study, reliability was ensured using Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The reliability of the research instrument in this study was ensured by pretesting to a group of 10-15 respondents from a different area and their views formed the basis for improving the

questions set in the final questionnaire. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above generated using the research software SPSS in this case was accepted. This ensured that the questions made similar meaning and could be consistently interpreted and understood the same way by different respondents.

Table 2: Showing the content validity index and Cronbach’s Alpha

Variables	CVI's	Cronbach's Alpha
Human Resource Management Practices	0.75	0.845
Employee Engagement	0.83	0.858
Employee Performance	0.79	0.776

3.9 Data processing and analysis

After collecting filled questionnaires from the field, the data were sorted, coded, cleaned and tabulated using SPSS version 20 to derive meaning from the data. This was followed by testing the assumptions for parametric tests. Given the nature of the research objectives and hypotheses, parametric tests were used as the main analyses.

3.11.1 Parametric Assumptions’ Test

Data Cleaning

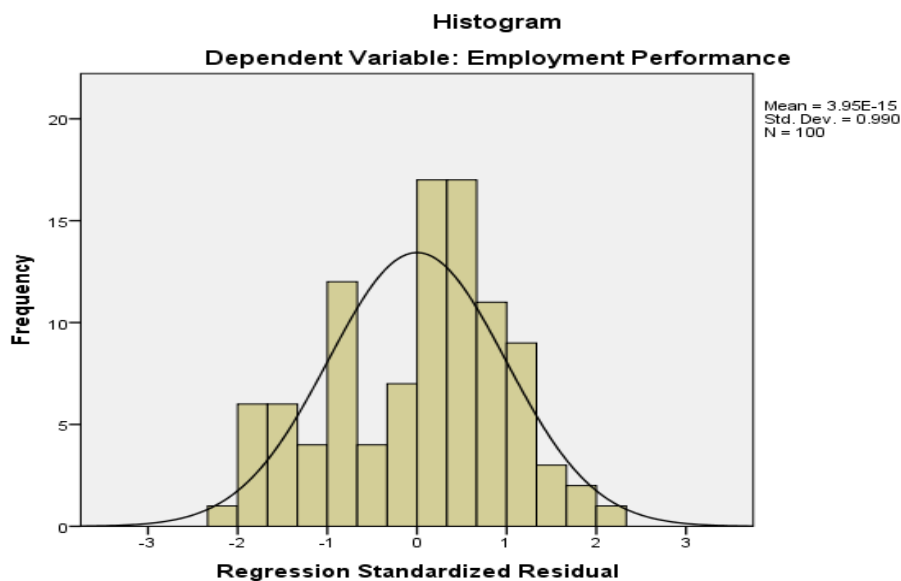
The data screening was performed in order to clean the data and assess whether the assumptions of parametric data were met. Following procedures prescribed by Field, (2005), this study tested the assumption of normality of the distribution of the data, homogeneity of variance, linearity of the data and multicollinearity.

Outliers

Outliers are values that are out of the range compared to the measurement scale (Field, 2006). An outlier check was conducted using minimum and maximum frequency counts, means and scatter plots. Based on this analysis, few identified outliers were due to data entry error and they were reference to the questionnaire. The rest of the results indicated that there were no values that were out of range.

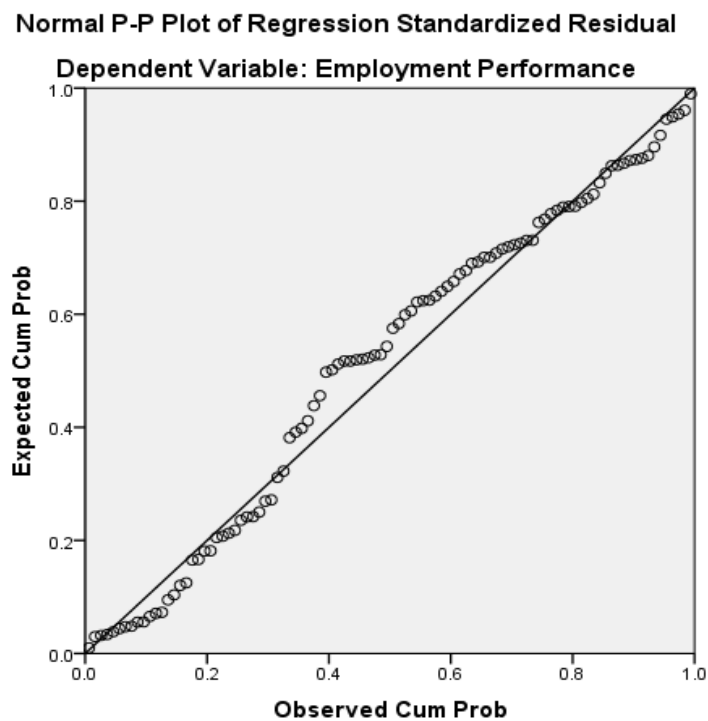
Normality test

Normality can be assessed to some extent by obtaining skewness (symmetrical) and kurtosis (peakedness) values of each measured variable. According to Field (2009), skewness and kurtosis indicate the deviation from normality whereas Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggest using a histogram to evaluate the shape of data distribution. Therefore, the bell-shaped histogram (figure 1) confirms that data are normal distributed in the current study.



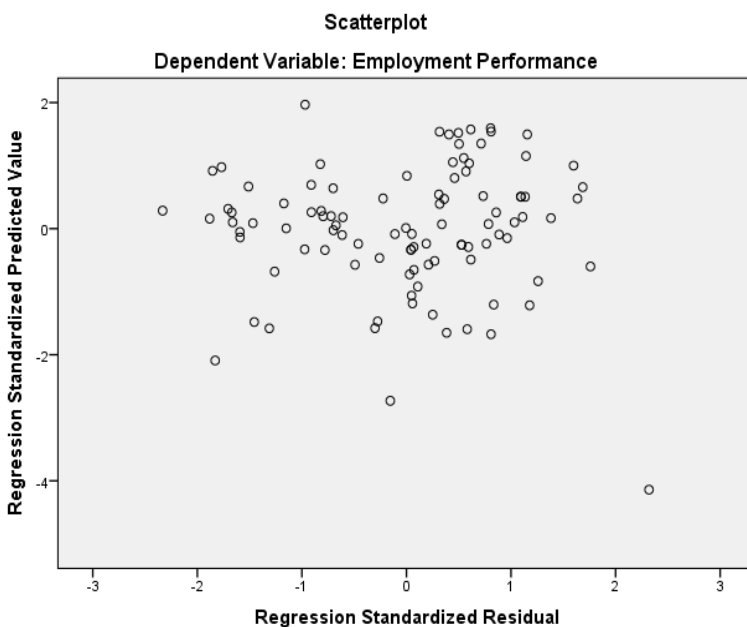
Linearity test

Linearity refers to the presence of a straight line relationship between two variables. As the regression analysis is only suitable for testing linear relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables, this assumption must be met before performing this analysis. Linear data is obtained when the scores are seen to be in the form of fairly straight line, not a curve. A normal probability plot (normal Q-Q plot) was used in this study to plot the residual against the predicted scores. Field (2000) noted that if the assumption of linearity between the independent variable and dependent variable is met, the plot of the residual against predicted scores will also be linear. Therefore, the normal plot results revealed a fairly straight line showing that the data was linear.



Homogeneity test

Homogeneity test was conducted to assess the suitability of data for parametric tests. This assumption means that the variance of one variable should be stable at all levels of the other variable (Field, 2009). Graphically, a scatter plot was drawn plotting the residual against the dependent variable. The results of the scatter plot (figure 3) shows that the points are dispersed around zero and there is no other clear trend in the distribution. This is an indication that homogeneity and linearity assumption were met. If the graph funnels out or if there is a curve in the graph, it indicates the probability of heteroscedasticity in the data which can violate the condition of multivariate analysis (Field, 2006), hence it is not the case for this study. Given the fact that the tests for parametric assumption were met, parametric tests were found suitable for the study.



Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity exists if there is high correlation between independent variable when regressed against each other. According to Tabachnick and Field (2001) these correlations must not

perfectly exceed .70. in the same way, Cooper and Schindler (2003) indicated that correlation of .8 or higher are problematic while Field (2006) described very high correlation to be correlation above .90. The correlation coefficient was found to be less than .90 implying limited threat of multicollinearity in the data. The collinearity diagnostic in regression were further used to check for the threat of multicollinearity. Therefore, two values were analyzed under this test: Tolerance value and Variance Inflation Factor (VIP). Tolerance value is an indicator of how much of the variability of the specified independent variable is not explained by the other independent variable in the model. It is calculated by the formula $1-R^2$ for each variable (Pallant, 2005). If this value is very small (less than .10), it indicates that the multiple correlation with other variables is high, suggesting the possibility of multicollinearity. VIF values above 10, indicate multicollinearity (Pallant, 2005). Data analysis of this study showed tolerance values ranging from 1.467 and above which were supported by VIF values below 10. Thus, there was non-multicollinearity among the study variables and the assumption was met.

Reliability Test

Reliability refers to the degree to which the instrument produces consistent findings over time which is determined by internal consistency of items that are used to measure variables-internal reliability (saunders et al, 2007; sekaran 2008). In other words, an instrument is reliable in case it produces the same results whenever is repeated. Reliability test indicates the extent to which it is without bias or error free, and hence ensures consistent measurement across time and across the various items in the instrument. Therefore, internal consistency refers to the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute (field 2009). In the current study, crobach's alpha was employed to determine the internal consistency of the 6-likert scales used to measure items of the study variables. In value with field (2006), a certain number

of items that were found to affect the reliability of the scales were deleted and the reliability increased to acceptable levels.

The following regression equations define the models in table 5

$$\text{Model 1: } EP = b_0 + b_1A + b_2G + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{Model 2: } EP = b_0 + b_1A + b_2G + b_3HRMP + \varepsilon$$

$$\text{Model 3: } SS = b_0 + b_1A + b_2G + b_3HRM + b_4EE + \varepsilon$$

Where:

SS = Employee Performance

b₀ - is a constant

b₁A – is the unstandardized B coefficient of age of respondents

b₂G- is the unstandardized B coefficient of Gender of respondents

b₃HRMP – is the unstandardized B coefficient of Human Resource Management Practice

b₄EE – is the unstandardized B coefficient of Employee Engagement

ε is the error term

3.12 Ethical considerations

The researcher requested for an introduction letter from the graduate research centre of Makerere University Business School to ensure that the researcher's motives of undertaking the study are not confused with any opportunistic tendencies. With the help of an introduction letter, the researcher then applied to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) for permission to carry out the study in the health facilities (HC IIIs and HC IVs) within Kamwenge district. After getting the proper authorization, the researcher requested management for the different health facilities to convene a meeting with staff to express the researcher's intention as well as the duration it would take the researcher to carry out the study. All health facilities were informed of the nature

of the study to be carried out, the purpose of the study and reasons for the study. This helped to minimize the suspicion that members could have had towards the whole exercise of data collection. In addition, to increase the respondents' level of confidentiality, the researcher designed the data collection instruments without putting an option for the respondent's name. This ensured that specific views provided by respondents could not be linked to the people who provided them and such an approach encouraged employees to participate in the study without fear of being victimized.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the study provided two types of data analysis; namely descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis helps the researcher to describe the relevant aspects of the phenomena under consideration and provide detailed information about each relevant variable. For the inferential analysis, the study used the Pearson correlation to measure the degree of association between variables under consideration and the regression analysis to estimate the contribution of human resource management practices and employee engagement on employee performance. This chapter also deals with the parametric assumptions' test, demographic characteristics of the respondents from the study.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Respondents were asked to provide information regarding their demographic profile which included gender, age bracket, level of education, marital status as follows.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Variable Name	Item	Frequency	Percent
<i>Age of the respondents</i>	20-29 years	35	35
	30-39years	47	47
	40-49years	14	14
	50 years and above	4	4
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Gender of the respondents</i>	Male	54	54
	Female	46	46
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Marital Status of the respondents</i>	Single	28	28
	Married	67	67
	Divorced	5	5
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Distribution by Level of Education</i>	Certificate	53	53
	Diploma	34	34
	Degree	11	11
	Masters & above	2	2
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Number of years worked in health sector</i>	< 3 years	44	44
	3-6 years	34	34
	7-10 years	10	10
	> 10 years	12	12
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Time spent in your current health Centre</i>	< 5 years	71	71
	5-9 years	18	18
	10-14 years	7	7
	> 15 years	4	4
	<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>100</i>

The results in table 3 indicate majority of the respondents were between the age of 30-39 years (47%) followed by those had had 20-29 years (35%) and least was age bracket of 50 and above years (4%)

Regarding the sex of the respondents, majority of the respondents were male (54%) and the female were 46%

The distribution of the status of the respondents indicated that majority of the respondents were married (67%) followed by the single (28%) and the least were the divorce (5%).

Concerning the level of education of the respondents, the results indicated that majority of the respondents were certificate holders (53%), these were followed by diploma holders (34%) and least were masters and above (2%)

Number of years worked in health sector by the respondents showed that most of the respondents had worked for less than three years (44%) followed by those who had worked for 3-6 years and the least group had worked for more than 10 years (12%)

The results also, indicated that, majority of the workers had spent less than 5 years (71%) at their current work place, followed by those who had spent 5-9 years (18%) and least number had spent more than 15 years (4%)

In order to interpret whether our objectives about relationships were supported or not, we used Pearson's correlation analysis. Below is a table of correlation analysis results

Pearson's Correlation analysis was conducted to measure the strength of linear associations between the study variables and is denoted by r . The Pearson correlation coefficient, r , can take a range of values from +1 to -1. A value of 0 indicates that there is no association between the two variables. A value greater than 0 indicates a positive association; that is, as the value of one variable increases, so does the value of the other variable. A value less than 0 indicates a

negative association; that is, as the value of one variable increases, the value of the other variable decreases. The study variables were measured on a continuous scale, and thus Pearson correlation was found to be the most appropriate to test the relationships between the variables

Table 4.0: Correlation Results

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Compensation and Reward(1)	1													
Recruitment and Selection(2)	.332**	1												
Employee Training(3)	.185	.521**	1											
Performance Appraisal(4)	.134	.534**	.413**	1										
Human Resource Management Practices(5)	.633**	.808**	.743**	.684**	1									
Vigour(6)	.198	.386**	.281**	.462**	.446**	1								
Absorption(7)	.197	.395**	.325**	.412**	.468**	.545**	1							
Dedication(8)	.079	.418**	.240*	.490**	.391**	.561**	.600**	1						
Employee Engagement(9)	.216*	.483**	.354**	.536**	.535**	.820**	.873**	.837**	1					
Adaptability(10)	-.008	.121	.099	.007	.067	.300**	.230*	.319**	.337**	1				
Dependability(11)	.087	.217*	.126	.264**	.237*	.271**	.499**	.364**	.469**	.288**	1			
Timeliness(12)	.014	.176	.085	.307**	.183	.187	.357**	.448**	.397**	.300**	.428**	1		
Policy compliance(13)	-.086	.212*	.231*	.331**	.205*	.222*	.309**	.378**	.363**	.435**	.430**	.571**	1	
Employment Performance(14)	.000	.242*	.181	.308**	.231*	.327**	.464**	.506**	.522**	.674**	.705**	.782**	.823**	1

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2tailed).

Objective (1) was to establish the relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

The results in table 8 shows that there is a positive significant relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector($r=.231$, $p<.05$). This implies that objective 1 was supported. This means that any positive change in human resource management practices is associated with a positive change in employee performance. In addition, employee performance has a positive and significant relationship with Recruitment and Selection and performance appraisal while Compensation and Reward and employee training components have a non-significant relationship with employee performance; furthermore, all dimensions of employee performance have a positive significant relationship with human resource management practices apart from adaptability and timeliness.

Objective (2) was to determine the relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

The results in table 8, shows that there is a positive significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.($r=.522$, $p<.05$). This implies that objective 2 was supported. This means that any positive change in employee engagement is associated with a positive change in employee performance. In addition, employee performance has a positive and significant relationship with all dimensions of employee engagement and also all components employee engagement has a positive significant relationship with employee performance.

Objective (3) was to identify the relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement within Kamwenge district health sector.

The results in table 4, shows that there is a positive significant relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement within Kamwenge district health sector ($r=.535$, $p<.05$). This implies that objective 3 was supported. This means that any positive change in human resource management practices is associated with a positive change in employee engagement. In addition, employee engagement has a positive and significant relationship with all dimensions of human resource management practice and also all components human resource management practice has a positive significant relationship with employee engagement.

Objective (4) was to examine the relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

Regression Analysis

The regression model of employee performance was estimated to establish the effect of Human resource management practices and employee engagement on employee performance.

Table 4.1: Regression model of employee performance

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	2.911	.267		10.898	.000
Human Resource Management Practices	-.046	.070	-.067	-.658	.512
Employee Engagement	.389	.071	.558	5.452	.000
<i>R Squared</i>	0.275		<i>F-stat:</i>		18.441
<i>Adjusted R Squared</i>	0.261		<i>Sig:</i>		.000
<i>Dependent Variable: Employment Performance</i>					

The regression model summarized in table 4.1 indicate that human resource management practices had a negative relationship with the employee performance (beta=-.067, $p<.05$) while employee engagement had a positive significant relationship with employee performance (beta=.558, $p<.05$). This implies that an improvement in employee engagement will lead to an increase in employee performance. Focusing on the size of standardized beta coefficients, employee engagement was a better predictor of employee performance.

Furthermore, the model was found to be well specified (F-Statistical=18.441, $p<.05$) implying that both the variables were appropriate predictors of employee performance, and the variation in all the independent variables combined caused up to 26.1% variation to employee performance in Kamwenge district health sector.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a discussion of the research findings, conclusion and recommendations, limitations of the study and areas of further study in relation to the study objectives. The discussion was focused on the relationship between human resource management practice, employee engagement and employee performance.

5.2 Discussion of the research findings

This section compares the findings of the study with the reviewed literature in an objective by objective manner.

The relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector

From the results of the study findings, there is a positive significant relationship between human resource management practices and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector. This means that any positive change in human resource management practices is associated with a positive change in employee performance. In addition, employee performance has a positive and significant relationship with Recruitment and Selection and performance appraisal while Compensation and Reward and employee training components have a non-significant relationship with employee performance; furthermore, all dimensions of employee performance have a positive significant relationship with human resource management practices apart from adaptability and timeliness.

Basing on the findings, kamwenge District Health sector should concentrate on recruitment and selection. This can be done through ensuring a transparent recruitment process that targets competence of applicants like knowledge, ability and skills because a competent staff is dependable as he already possess the required attributes that trigger performance on job as they already know what they are supposed to do on job. In addition, a well and competently recruited health worker enables him to perform better on job by being adaptable to his work environment as he is so flexible due to his tested competences during recruitment and selection.

Kamwenge District Health sector should ensure that all staff is given job descriptions, schedules of duties that will translate into a performance plan where appraisal is based at the end of a performance period as this will clearly state the performance output, performance indicators and means of measuring performance at the end of the performance period. When a health worker knows the level and required output on job he will be motivated to achieve the set targets and improve his performance on job as he is able to complete his tasks timely and comply with health sector policies since it is the basis for appraisal that could trigger a reward when he performs highly and avoid being sanctioned due to poor performance. Performance appraisal ensures that employees can assess their performance and design means of improvement by managing their time on task and on job. Maintaining enough and timely pay plus being rewarded for work well done and making sure that employees earn according to their level of education unlike the case today where health workers in kamwenge health sector feel cheated due to low pay not worthy of their qualifications and worthy of the job titles they hold. This will motivate them to perform even better as it will determine the worth and value of the job well done and fair compensation.

Management should also emphasize giving employees adequate training and refresher courses that health worker to acquire relevant knowledge, skills and abilities from time to time as this will enable to meet the performance requirements on job thus being able to perform on job and improving one's performance. All these will improve on employee performance in Kamwenge District Health Sector. The required training could be done well through having a training policy where the capacity building plan could be based so that capacity needs assessment is done to identify the performance gaps on which basis training will be effected to avoid misdirected trainings that would not comply.

These findings are in agreement with Mwema and Gachunga (2014) who acknowledged that human resource management practices such as performance appraisals is important in determining employee performance because they guide human resource specialists in identifying staff training gaps as well as offering special attention to the poor performers a chance to uplift and also acquire special skills that are required while performing specific tasks timely and effective manner. Consistent with the above, Iqbal *et al.*, (2013), revealed that performance appraisal is an important practice in developing and motivating of employees to perform with high enthusiasm as it is the basis for reward, sanction and performance improvement which increases their performances as a way of appreciation. Within the same view, Altarawmneh and Al-Kilani (2010) emphasized that performance appraisal is an important practice that plays a significant role in identifying employees competences with a purpose of instilling more basic knowledge and skills to increase their productivity and performances. , Shaukat, Ashraf and Ghafoor (2015) noted that human resource practices and employee performances are interrelated because employees need to be trained, motivated and compensated in order for them to perform better.

The relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector

The results indicated that there is a positive significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector. This means that any positive change in employee engagement is associated with a positive change in employee performance. In addition, employee performance has a positive and significant relationship with all dimensions of employee engagement and also all components employee engagement has a positive significant relationship with employee performance.

Management should focus on employee engagement through, increasing their vigour for work so that health workers can put in a lot of effort and energy to achieve the set targets leading to higher levels of performance as they are able to complete tasks on time and in accordance with the kamwenge health sector policies. This can be done through, encouraging employees to enjoy handling productive and challenging work schedules and aiming at achieving the set targets as per organizational goals and objectives, workers becoming very resilient, and encouraging them to have good perception when things go well. For worker's performance to increase, workers need to be dedicated through, feeling proud when they do any contribution at work, having good working relationship with their fellow colleagues, and feeling enthusiastic about their job which significantly determines their rate of duty attendance on time and managing their time on task, dependable and adaptable to work environment and complying to organization policies and procedures.

These findings are in line with Sibanda, Muchena and Ncube (2014) who postulate that employee engagement enhances constructive and productive behavior amongst employees which increases their confidence while executing their tasks hence increasing timeliness and

adaptability. Furthermore, Mathis and Jackson (2011) revealed that engaged employees identify more with the organization and are always intact with the set organizational aims and objectives. As a result of this, employees are energized to work hard in order to attain organizational goals and objectives which leads to increased employee performance. This concurs with the recent study by Kazimoto (2017) who stressed further that employee engagement is important in understanding employee performance. It is indicated that employee engagement is a motivational factor that drives employees to perform specific duties and tasks with a high degree of dedication and vigor which pushes them to devote much of their effort towards attaining organizational goals and objectives.

The relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement within Kamwenge district health sector

There is a positive significant relationship between human resource management practices and employee engagement within Kamwenge district health sector. This means that any positive change in human resource management practices is associated with a positive change in employee engagement. In addition, employee engagement has a positive and significant relationship with all dimensions of human resource management practice and also all components human resource management practice has a positive significant relationship with employee engagement.

Management should emphasize performance appraisals and process of managing performance as it triggers employee vigor and dedication to achieve their set performance targets and in order to achieve this they will be absorbed within their job schedules leading to their being engaged to their work and Kamwenge District Health sector. On the other hand, employee training will enable health workers of Kamwenge District health sector acquire the necessary skills,

knowledge and abilities leading to willingness to dedicate their time and efforts to manage challenging tasks on job since they have the competences to perform on job. Kamwenge District Health sector should establish and uphold an independent recruitment selection system to enable it attract the most competent health workers recruited and selected in order to have a competent based recruitment and selection system. This will attract highly skilled employees who will trust and uphold the name of their institution and help it to achieve its vision, mission and objective. Such Health workers will be dedicated, vigorous and highly absorbed into the Kamwenge Health Sector and due to higher levels of engagement will exhibit organization citizenship behavior.

In addition, Kamwenge District Health Sector should have a good compensation and reward policy of their employees so that the pay is commensurate to work done and the required effort, knowledge, skills and abilities leading to employee engagement. This can be done through having a policy in place that rewards and compensates individuals based on their qualifications, experiences, nature of work done and equal work for equal pay to trigger employee engagement.

Inducting and orienting newly recruited Health workers by enabling them to go through and explaining the performance appraisal management system and including helping them to come out with individual performance plans, making employees have performance system that is transparent and rewarding using the tool of appraisal will lead to their being engaged on job. On recruitment and selection, the management should inform the candidates about the job requirement and details, and informing workers about their salary they are supposed to take so that health workers accept the terms and conditions from the very beginning of the appointment

on job. This will increase on the employee engagement which will in turn lead to good employee performance.

These findings are in line with Schaufeli (2013) who highlighted that extensive training is an important human resource management practice that imparts employees with the necessary skills, abilities and approaches to perform in a more dedicated and vigorous manner. A study conducted by Conway *et al.*, (2015), stressed that effective human resource management practices consider employee's well-being as important. As a result of this, employees feel that they are valued by their employer which prompts them to get more committed and attracted to their work. Within the same context, Owor (2016) revealed that human resource management practices and employee engagement are interconnected. According to the study, employee training and performance appraisals make employees feel more motivated and exhibit positive attitudes which boost their level of engagement. More recently, Sivapragasam and Raya (2018) suggested that human resource practitioners need to consider human resource management practices like effective reward and recruitment policies because it creates a favorable working environment which makes employees hold a positive mind towards their work.

The relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge District Health Sector

From the study findings, there is a significant relationship between Human Resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance whereby any change in one of them will trigger a change in the other variables. For example, when an employee is compensated and rewarded fairly in accordance with his rank, qualifications and effort put in a work schedule, he will be dedicated, absorbed and vigorous at his work leading to his being adaptable, timely, dependable and compliant to the organization and its policies. In addition,

when employees are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes required for their jobs, they will be dedicated and absorbed to their schedules to enable them achieve results timely by attending to their task and schedules as required since they already have the competences of the job thus improving the performance on job. Furthermore, when health workers are recruited and selected on the basis of their competences and qualifications will have trust in the District health sector and be committed to it and apply his knowledge, skills and abilities towards achieving the organization objectives. It will be much easier to adapt and comply with the set policies and procedures.

The above findings are in line with, Owor (2016) who observed that with human resource management practices put in place, employees feel trusted and valued which makes them perform their duties and obligations with much interest and vigour. Similarly, Hinkin and Tracey (2014) confirmed that human resource management practices encourage employees to work with more energy and always committed towards achieving organizational goals and objectives which boosts employee engagement. Within the same view, Vanhala and Ahteela (2011) explained that human resource management practices are related to employee engagement. From the study, effective selection and employee training makes employees feel satisfied with their work which increases their chances of staying within the institution. Further, Schaufeli (2013) revealed that human resource management practices play a key role in the enhancement of employee engagement. It is revealed that employees who are rewarded and well recognized for their good performance get more committed and engaged.

5.3 Conclusions

In a nut shell, this study conceptualized employee performance through the employees within Kamwenge district health sector. The study mainly centered on the relationship between human resource management practice, employee engagement and employee performance

The findings confirm a positive and significant relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

Nonetheless, considering the two predictors in this study, the results show that employee engagement has a better contribution effect on employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector.

Regardless of these findings employee engagement and human resource management practices variables can be relied up on by health sector to predict employee performance because the regression model results revealed significant predictor of employee performance.

5.4 Recommendation

From the results, discussions and conclusions above, the following recommendations can be made;

The District health sector should emphasize and promote a transparent recruitment and selection process to ensure that highly competent unbiased health workers are employed in order to improve performance.

The District health sector should ensure that employees understand their job description, have schedules of duties and performance work plan to facilitate a conducive performance appraisal

process as a way of enabling employees to be committed, absorbed in their schedules and committed to their work.

The District Health sector should ensure commensurate and timely remuneration of health workers in form of their salaries leading to their being engaged to improve their performance on job.

The District Health sector leadership should promote mechanisms aimed at improving employee engagement in order to attract, retain and sustain employees in order to reduce high labour turnover rates and ensure timely completion of assigned schedules.

5.5 Limitations to the study

While conducting the research, the researcher encountered some limitations. These include;

The study data are cross-sectional and correlational, limiting causal inferences to be made. Also, in studies that are cross-sectional in nature it is very difficult to monitor behavior over time limiting the researcher from examining behavioral change over time.

The researcher used closed ended questionnaire as a research instrument, the data collected was only limited to the space provided, and this meant that vital information could have been left out during data collection.

The study only concentrated on health centre iv and iii's, it did not tackle the health centre ii's which could have changed the results.

The study was conducted in only government public health facilities in kamwenge where private clinics and health facilities were not part. Therefore, the findings may not necessarily representative of the whole spectrum of health service delivery in kamwenge District.

5.6 Areas for further research

Since the study was cross sectional carried out in Kamwenge district, a longitudinal study about human resource management practice, employee engagement and employee performance should be conducted.

The study was only centered on Kamwenge district in western Uganda; therefore, further studies should be conducted about the same variables to districts in Uganda to obtain a broader conceptualization of variables.

Further studies should be conducted on other factors that predict employee performance in Kamwenge district other than human resource management practice and employee engagement.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire form

Dear Respondent,

Am called Ssozi Chris Gaanaafaa, a student of Makerere University Business School offering a Masters of Business Administration (Human Resource Management Option) degree. This study is aimed at understanding the relationship between human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance in Kamwenge district health sector. You have been identified as one of the respondents, please spare a few minutes of your busy schedule to fill this questionnaire. The responses will be used purely for academic research purposes. Your honest and sincere responses will be highly appreciated and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

SECTION A: Personal Background Information

- Qn. 1. Age: 20-29 years 30-39years 40-49years 50 years and above
- Qn. 2. Gender: Male Female
- Qn. 3. Marital status: Single Married Divorced Others specify.....
- Qn. 4. Highest education attained: Certificate Diploma Degree Masters&above
- Qn. 5. Numbers of years worked in health sector: < 3 yrs. 3-6 yrs. 7-10 yrs. >10 yrs.
- Qn. 6. Time spent in your current HC < 5 yrs. 5-9 yrs. 10-14 yrs. > 15 yrs.

SECTION B:

This section seeks to obtain your opinions about the human resource management practices, employee engagement and employee performance within Kamwenge district health sector. You are requested to fill the questions presented to you following the key provided. Key: 1-Strongly Disagree (S D), 2- Disagree (D), 3-Not Sure (N S), 4-Agree (A) and 5-Strongly Agree (S A).

A	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES	SD	D	NS	A	SA
CR0	Compensation and Rewards					
CR1	My monthly emoluments come timely	1	2	3	4	5
CR2	My salary is commensurate to the work I do	1	2	3	4	5
CR3	My monthly salary caters for my level of qualification and experience	1	2	3	4	5
CR4	My salary is above those paid by similar health facilities	1	2	3	4	5
CR5	My salary is enough to compensate me for my individual needs	1	2	3	4	5
CR6	My salary is competitive, reasonable and is reviewed regularly	1	2	3	4	5
CR7	My Employer provides sufficient salary to motivate all employees	1	2	3	4	5
CR8	Overall, I am satisfied with my organizations compensation package	1	2	3	4	5
CR9	I receive performance related bonuses	1	2	3	4	5
CR10	My seniority entitles me to receive additional benefits/rewards	1	2	3	4	5
CR11	Of recent, my employer has a plan to increase my monthly pay	1	2	3	4	5
RS0	Recruitment and Selection					
RS1	My organization ensures that the manager in Scharge of recruitment is competent.	1	2	3	4	5
RS2	My organization ensures that all employees recruited to the health centre are recruited centrally by the District service Commission	1	2	3	4	5
RS3	My organization informs the candidate about the job requirements and details.	1	2	3	4	5
RS4	My organization gives equal opportunity to all staff to apply for any vacant post within as an internal recruitment method.	1	2	3	4	5
RS5	My organization ensures that all potential employees go through a	1	2	3	4	5

	vetting process before they assume office and the process is transparent and trustworthy.					
RS6	My organization informs the candidates about the salary they will receive.	1	2	3	4	5
RS7	My organization ensures that all staff of the health centre are recruited basing on their competence, skills and abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
ET0	Employee Training					
ET1	My organization provides refresher courses periodically both on job and off job.	1	2	3	4	5
ET2	My organization encourages employees to seek knowledge through training.	1	2	3	4	5
ET3	My health centre always arranges seminars for staffs after a specified period of time	1	2	3	4	5
ET4	My organization emphasizes on improving one's performance.	1	2	3	4	5
ET5	My organization encourages employees to train as a way of increasing their chances of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5
PA0	Performance Appraisal					
PA1	My organization ensures that all staff go through appraisal process before they are formally confirmed	1	2	3	4	5
PA2	My organization ensures that appraisal process is explained to all new entrants before assuming their duties and responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
PA3	My organization conducts Staff appraisals regularly	1	2	3	4	5
PA4	My organization rewards and sanctions good and poor performance as a result of appraisal.	1	2	3	4	5
PA5	My organization ensures that the appraisal process is transparent, fair, trustworthy to all of us.	1	2	3	4	5
PA6	My organization ensures that all employees are appraised by their immediate supervisors.	1	2	3	4	5
PA7	Staff are informed of the appeal mechanism arising out the appraisal process.	1	2	3	4	5
B	EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT					

VG0	Vigour					
VG1	I do my work efficiently	1	2	3	4	5
VG2	I am always focused towards work whenever I wake up in the morning.	1	2	3	4	5
VG3	I feel energetic whenever at work	1	2	3	4	5
VG4	I enjoy handling challenging tasks	1	2	3	4	5
VG5	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	1	2	3	4	5
VG6	I can continue working for very long periods at a time	1	2	3	4	5
VG7	At my job, I am very resilient mentally	1	2	3	4	5
VG8	At my work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well	1	2	3	4	5
AB0	Absorption					
AB1	I feel happy when I am working intensively	1	2	3	4	5
AB2	I get carried away easily when I am working	1	2	3	4	5
AB3	I am immersed in my work	1	2	3	4	5
AB4	It is difficult to detach myself from my job	1	2	3	4	5
AB5	When I am working, I forget everything else around me	1	2	3	4	5
AB6	When I am at work, I find time moving very fast	1	2	3	4	5
DE0	Dedication					
DE1	I feel proud to associate with the health facility where I work	1	2	3	4	5
DE2	I feel valued for the work and contributions at the work place	1	2	3	4	5
DE3	The future vision for the health facility is worth undertaking	1	2	3	4	5
DE4	There is a sense of purpose in what I offer to the health facility	1	2	3	4	5
DE5	I have good working relationships with other colleagues at work	1	2	3	4	5
DE6	My job is enthusiastic	1	2	3	4	5
DE7	I feel this health facility is part of me	1	2	3	4	5
DE8	I am proud of what I do at my work place	1	2	3	4	5
C	EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE					
AY0	Adaptability					
AY1	I am very flexible to the needs of my job	1	2	3	4	5
AY2	I feel free when working with others in the same team	1	2	3	4	5

AY3	I easily adjust to the new policies and procedures at work	1	2	3	4	5
AY4	I find it easier to bounce back when I fail to meet my work targets	1	2	3	4	5
AY5	I am always positive about new assignments given to me by supervisors	1	2	3	4	5
AY6	I undertake additional assignments outside the usual responsibilities when needed	1	2	3	4	5
DY0	Dependability					
DY1	I can handle multiple tasks in a day	1	2	3	4	5
DY2	I always complete my tasks on time	1	2	3	4	5
DY3	My immediate supervisor trusts the work I do	1	2	3	4	5
DY4	I follow my supervisor's instructions as and when needed	1	2	3	4	5
DY5	I undertake my tasks and responsibilities under minimal supervision	1	2	3	4	5
DY6	I do not accept additional tasks and responsibilities during working time	1	2	3	4	5
DY7	I am willing to be accountable for responsibilities assigned to me	1	2	3	4	5
TS0	Timeliness					
TS1	I am efficient in executing my tasks	1	2	3	4	5
TS2	I follow a work plan for the daily tasks assigned to me	1	2	3	4	5
TS3	I am consistent at meeting monthly work targets	1	2	3	4	5
TS4	I endeavor to report to my duty station timely	1	2	3	4	5
PL0	Policy compliance					
PL1	I am aware of all the policies and procedures of my job	1	2	3	4	5
PL2	I embrace protocol while executing my tasks	1	2	3	4	5
PL3	I consult from my supervisor before making decisions	1	2	3	4	5
PL4	I abide by the rules and guidelines that pertain my job	1	2	3	4	5
PL5	I always prepare timely reports as expected by my supervisors	1	2	3	4	5

Thanks for your time