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# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

# HYBRID WORK STRATEGY AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT THE NATIONAL TRANSPORT AND SAFETY AUTHORITY IN NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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#### **ABSTRACT**

**Background of the study:** This research study aimed to evaluate how the adoption of hybrid work strategies impacts employee performance within the National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA). The study's objectives included investigating the influence of workforce management and organizational culture on employee performance at the National Transport and Safety Authority. The job demands-resource theory and personenvironment theory guided the study.

Research Methodology: The research employed a descriptive survey design to gather data by describing the current phenomenon. The research encompassed a population of 222 workers situated at the NTSA main office in Nairobi, Kenya. The anticipated sample size was 130 employees. The study employed stratified random sampling, where relevant strata were formed by departments. To assess content validity, the evaluation involved a supervisor and two experts. Reliability testing will utilize the Cronbach's Alpha test, with a cutoff set at values greater than 0.7. A semi-structured questionnaire is set to be prepared and distributed among the selected respondents on purpose. The gathered data underwent scrutiny to ensure completeness, and a descriptive statistical analysis was carried out. Quantitative data results were showcased through tables and statements of fact. The study aimed to show that public sector could adopt the hybrid work strategy by showing how employees perform when given the room to have a flexible work strategy and what needs to be done to ensure they can work remotely when needed.

**Results and findings:** The findings indicated that 70.3% change in employee performance at NTSA was significantly explained by its hybrid work strategy workforce management (p<0.05) and organizational culture (p<0.05).

Conclusions and recommendation: It was concluded that hybrid strategy is a significant predictor of employee performance. It was recommended that human resource managers working with National Transport and Safety Authority should invest more resources in training of employees to ensure they acquire latest and relevant skills and competences to survive in an increasingly turbulent environment.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the technological progress during the Covid-19 pandemic, a hybrid work approach has become crucial in workplaces. This model requires employees to blend office and remote work, offering them more independence and flexibility. Hybrid work strategy has become increasingly popular, as a result of a need for flexibility and agility in the work environment. (McKinsey & Company, 2021). Employees can work remotely through the help of hybrid work strategy. Hybrid work strategy enables employees to work remotely while also providing opportunities for office face-to-face interactions (Nilles & Carlson, 2014). For generations, employees commute on a daily basis to work in a centralized office under the in-office strategy especially in a white-collar profession. Since the 1980s, there have been substantial and essential transformations in the employment nature over a relatively short time (Banerjee, 2021).

Technological advances have altered the way the economy operates and as a result, the world of work has transformed (McKinsey & Company, 2021). When covid-19 broke out, the whole world went to a shutdown with organizations closing businesses and employees working from home (remote working) to reduce the transmission of coronavirus, both public and private institutions have embraced the practice of employees working from remote locations. Historically, public-sector companies were less likely than private companies to provide flexible work environments. Positively, the significant change encouraged some businesses without a telework system to set one up and the majority of firms' have developed a network architecture that permits remote work environment (Gartner, 2021).

In Kenya, the hybrid work strategy has gained increased popularity, with many firms embracing it as a way to increase productivity, minimize costs, and enhance work-life balance for employees especially during and after the covid-19 pandemics, where most work places were voluntarily closed or employees required to work from home despite there being no official directive to close. Many gradually re-opened towards the end of 2020 but yet majority of the work force especially those 58 years and above opted to work from home. The adoption of hybrid work strategy in Kenya was used as a response to the pandemic. According to a survey by PwC Kenya, 83% of firms in Kenya have considered the adoption and implementation of the hybrid work arrangement post-Covid-19 (PwC, 2021). The survey extended by establishing that 64% of Workers in Kenya prefer a hybrid work model, citing flexibility and enhanced work-life balance as the main reasons for their preference. The Kenyan government has issued recommendations for remote work through the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, encouraging employers to implement flexible working schedules for their employees (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, 2021).

According to the survey done by Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), the adoption of the hybrid work model has led to reduction of costs associated with renting and maintains the physical work space and improved employees' productivity. According to the survey by KEPSA in 2021, 90% of employers stated that their employees maintained or increased their productivity levels when working from home. The hybrid work approach offers increased flexibility and work-life balance, enabling workers to more effectively juggle their personal and work-related duties. Despite the benefits of the hybrid work models, there also challenges that led to ineffectiveness of the strategy in Kenya, which includes lack of equal access to technology, poor infrastructure, new policies and guidelines to govern remote work and power supply (World Bank, 2021). These challenges have limited some of employees to work remotely effectively.

Employee performance involves achieving the company's goals and objectives efficiently and effectively. It reflects how well employees can fulfill the firm's vision and mission (Atatsi, Stoffers & Kil, 2019). It entails realization of established outputs at an organizational level (Sugiarti, Finatariani & Rahman, 2021). Employee performance is about assessing the overall level of productivity and realization of goals of the firm by employees in an organization (Kuswati, 2020). One of the primary objectives for businesses is to attain excellent employee performance (Ridwan, Mulyani & Ali, 2020). Employees of the public service are public servants employed through the public service commission and their functions are guided by Public Service Commission Human Resource Manual that explicitly provides for reporting time of employees to work as from 8am and to leave at 5pm which is the norm in the Kenyan public sector. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the Kenyan governments through the public service commission have started to embrace the hybrid work strategy in the public sector to eradicate the spread of the virus while offering services to citizens.

According to NSW Innovation and Productivity Council study, most workers in Australia do not prefer a full remote working environment. It is not also applicable to all functions in an organization. According to the 1500 sample survey, only 5% of the workers preferred to carry out their duties remotely while half of the employees could work remotely for 2 or 3 days a week. Before the advent of the pandemic, approximately 63% of the positions within the organization had the capacity for a hybrid or remote work setup. Lastly, 56% of the work in NSW cannot be completed remotely and requires employees to be engaged on the site (NSWIPC, 2020). The potential for remote work in NSW to stay significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels, possibly by 69%, is suggested in a report by Iometrics from 2020. Typically, employees in NSW favor a remote work schedule of 2-3 days per week. Younger workers detested working from home compared to other age groups such as the Generation X who preferred to work 2.5 days a week remotely unlike the 1.4 days per week for their younger counterparts.

The National Transport and Safety Authority (NTSA), envisions to ensure safe, reliable and efficient road transport system in Kenya, established in 2012 through an Act of Parliament No.33 of 2012 to coordinate all transport functions which were previously in

different agencies and departments such as the National Transport Authority, the Kenya Roads Board and the Kenya Vehicle Inspection Unit. The primary functions of the NTSA include vehicle registration and inspection, issuance of driving license and the enforcement of traffics laws and regulations. The authority also promotes road safety through awareness campaigns and public education and work in collaboration with other stakeholders to enhance the nation transport infrastructure. Recently, NTSA has transformed the transport sector through automation of its services which include; application of driving licenses, application of road service license used by Public Transport Operators (PSV), application of PSV badges, application of number plates and vehicle registration certificates, enrolment to driving schools, licensing of speed governor vendors among others which also allowed employees to work remotely without physically being present in the office. During the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 29% of government workers operated from remote locations, according to findings from a study by the Bureau for Employers Activities at the International Labour Organization (ILO). The majority of governmental institutions adopted modern digital solutions such as video conferencing platforms to streamline communication throughout the Covid-19 pandemic era. A reduction in Covid-19 cases saw some government workers start to report back to their offices while observing the Covid-19 guidelines such as maintaining physical distance. It prompted organizations to adopt a hybrid system that has remained to be predominant going into the future.

## **Statement of the Problem**

After gaining independence, Kenya's civil service grew quickly, becoming the largest in East Africa by a significant margin. However, as the economy started to contract in the 1980s, he government encountered increasing challenges in managing a sizable and inefficient public sector. In order to improve effectiveness, significant alterations were required within the civil service, particularly its incentive structure, to better meet the changing goals of the government. For this, Kenya adopted the Public Sector Reforms, for many developing nations, public sector reform is still a crucial and ongoing policy priority. This is being done in Kenya to restructure its administrative structure to better meet the government obligations towards its people through enhanced public service delivery that will lower poverty, enhance livelihoods, and maintain good governance. Although the initial initiatives to reform and alter Kenya's public sector were undertaken in 1965, it wasn't until the early 1990s that significant efforts were made to enhance the administration of the nation's public sector.

The focus of Public Sector Reforms and Transformation has been on human resource, performance and structural organization; little has been done on equipping each employee with technologically advanced tools to embrace remote working. The pandemic has changed the workplace in ways that haven't been seen in centuries. The epidemic has, at its root, fundamentally altered where and how people work. Large structural changes were required of businesses all across the world. Most organizations adopted new technologies

and tools for the first time. Many ingrained attitudes and behaviors have been upended by the use of the new tools, styles and technologies in the workplace. Kenya has made its strides in preventing spread of covid-19 and developed Post Recovery Strategies for Covid-19. Utilizing telecommuting is one of the strategies employed by the Government to restrict the spread of the Covid-19 virus, this put pressure on the Human Resource departments in Public Offices to ensure the transition can be accomplished while protecting the interests of an organization's primary stakeholder, its workers, and to critically assess their organizations' agility.

Accident statistics from NTSA showed that road fatalities and injuries have been on the rise, lingering poor performance of the Authority in achieving its vision. After the start of the pandemic, NTSA managed to direct staff to work remotely and even after the return-to-work order by the government staff managed to work in shifts. Automation of its services helped make work from home easier, but like in the Australian Public Service, there were several factors that have affected hybrid working of its employees which affects their performance. These factors included workforce management, culture, technology and collaboration.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the general as well as specific objectives;

# **General Objective**

To assess the effect of hybrid work strategy on employee performance at the National Transport and Safety Authority.

## **Specific Objectives**

The following were the specific objectives of the study;

- To establish the effect of work force management on employee performance at the National Transport and Safety Authority.
- To establish the effect of organizational culture on employee performance at the National Transport and Safety Authority.

## **Research Questions**

- i. What is the effect of work force management on employee performance at the National Transport and Safety Authority?
- ii. What is the effect of organizational culture on employee performance at the National Transport and Safety Authority?

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Theoretical Review**

The research was anchored towards Person-Environment Theory and Job Demands-Resources Theory

## **Person-Environment Theory**

The Person-Environment (P-E) theory is a framework used in vocational psychology to explain how individuals interact with their work environment and how this interaction affects their well-being and job performance. The theory posits that individuals and their environment are interdependent and that they mutually influence each other (Holland, 1997). This theory has been widely used in research related to career development, vocational decision-making, and work adjustment. According to P-E theory, individuals have unique characteristics that shape their interactions with the work environment. These characteristics can include their personality, interests, abilities, values, and needs. The work environment, in turn, has its own set of characteristics such as social, physical and organizational culture that can influence the individual's behavior and outcomes.

The P-E theory proposes that individuals will experience better outcomes and greater satisfaction when their personal characteristics match the characteristics of their work environment. The match between a person and their workplace is termed as person-environment fit (PE fit). PE fit can be perceived through various factors, like personality-job fit, interest-job fit, or values-organization fit. The P-E theory also suggests that individuals can engage in behaviors to change their work environment or adapt to it to improve the fit. This process of adaptation is referred to as work adjustment. Work adjustment can involve changing the job tasks, seeking feedback and support, developing new skills, or changing the work environment. In conclusion, the Person-Environment theory is a useful framework for understanding how individuals interact with their work environment and how this interaction affects their well-being and job performance. It highlights the importance of person-environment fit and work adjustment in promoting positive outcomes and reducing negative ones.

## **Job Demands-Resource Theory**

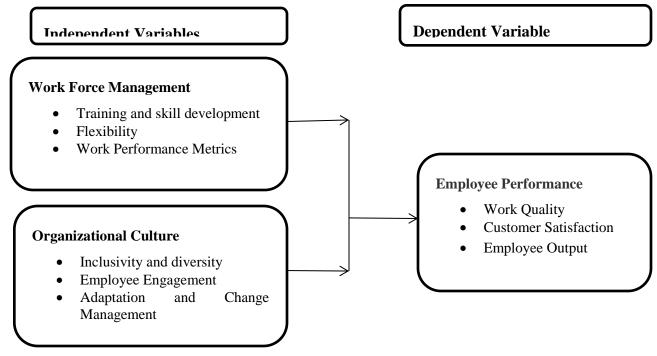
The Job Demands-Resources Theory (JD-R Theory) is utilized in organizational psychology to explain how job characteristics impact the well-being and performance of employees. According to this theory, job demands and job resources affect employee outcomes in distinct ways (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). This theory has been widely applied in research related to occupational health, well-being, and work engagement. The work-related aspects that require exertion or create stress, be it physical, mental, social, or organizational, are termed as job demands. These can encompass factors such as workload,

time constraints, emotional requirements, role uncertainty, and conflicts. On the other hand, job resources encompass the intellectual, societal, physical, or structural aspects of employment that assist companies in achieving their work goals, reducing work-related stress, and promoting general well-being. They can include personal development opportunities, social support, autonomy, feedback, and adequate job resources.

As proposed by the theory, job demands often result in burnout, whereas job resources can lead to work engagement. Burnout is the emotional exhaustion of an individual, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. It can result from prolonged exposure to job demands that exceed the employee's resources. Work engagement is a favorable mental state associated with one's job, marked by enthusiasm, commitment, and deep involvement in tasks. It can result from high levels of job resources that meet the employee's needs and expectations. The JD-R Theory proposes that job resources can mitigate the adverse impact of job demands on burnout by offering employees the essential assistance and resources to handle these demands, thus moderating the connection between job demands and burnout. Similarly, the JD-R Theory posits that the connection between job demands and burnout is influenced by job resources. To be more precise, job resources can alleviate the adverse impacts of job demands on burnout by furnishing employees with the essential assistance and means to manage these demands. Furthermore, he impact of job demands on how job resources affect work engagement is an important factor to take into account. Job demands can hinder the positive effects of job resources on work engagement by limiting the employee's ability to effectively use these resources. In conclusion, the Job Demands-Resources Theory serves as a valuable framework for comprehending how job attributes influence employee well-being and performance. It emphasizes the significance of job resources in fostering favorable results like work engagement and mitigating the adverse consequences of job demands like burnout.

## **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of the study is shown in Figure 1



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework** 

# **Empirical Literature Review**

### **Work Force Management**

Schwartz, Wilson, Boden, Moore, Bradbury and Fletcher (2020) did a study whose focus was on workforce management during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research was done in the United States and information was gathered with use of a questionnaire. After processing of the generated information, it emerged that the rise of the pandemic created opportunities and challenges in regard to labor force management among the human resource professionals.

Jahmani, Jawabreh, Fahmawee, Almasarweh and Ali (2023) did an assessment of employee management and the link with performance at firm level in Dubai within the hospitality sector. The adopted design was survey in nature and gathering of information was supported by questionnaire. After data processing, it was noted that employee management has an implication on performance at firm level. The research noted that among strategies that hotels leverage to enhance their organizational performance is employee management. Lydia and Evans (2023) studied to establish the link between the practices of managing employees and performance of staff in the County of Trans Nzoia in Kenya. The embraced design was correlational and a total of 102 staff were targeted, after gathering and processing of information, the study noted that career management and compensation are critical components of employee management practices at a firm level.

### **Organizational Culture**

Kuswati (2020) did a study with focus on organizational culture and performance of staff. The adopted design was descriptive and gathering of information was aided by questionnaire. It was shown that culture of the firm is positively linked with its performance. Wahjoedi (2021) did an analysis of the culture of the firm and performance with job satisfaction as the mediator among small and medium entities in Indonesia. In total, 50 staff were recruited and included in the study. Processed findings were that culture is a significant predictor of performance at an organizational level. Joseph and Kibera (2019) did a study on culture of the firm and the link with performance using evidence from Kenya's microfinance entities. Information was generated from primary sources guided by questionnaire and the analysis was that hierarchy and clan were the most adopted aspects of organizational culture among microfinances in Kenya.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### **Research Design**

The research design encompasses the arrangement, organization, and approach of the inquiry, aiming to yield findings that can offer insights into addressing the research quandary or inquiries (Creswell, 2014). The study used a descriptive research approach to collect numerical data that depicts the current phenomena. A descriptive survey research design is a method that establishes the recurrences of events and investigates the association among a minimum of two variables (Thanem & Knights, 2019).

### **Target Population**

Target population is a collection of items including individuals which have related attributes that the researcher has interest to explore (Atkinson, Delamont, Cernat, Sakshaug & Williams, 2021). Population is the entire group of individuals or events to which a researcher aims to extend the findings of a specific study (American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology, 2020). The study population were 222 employees from the National Transport and Safety Authority Headquarter Office in Nairobi, Kenya.

# Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study employed the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula to establish the required sample size, ensuring it accurately represents the entire population statistically. By applying this method, a appropriate sample size of 130 employees was determined, considering a population of 222 with a margin of error of +/- 5% and a confidence level of 95%.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

A data collection instrument serves as a means for researchers to gather information from both primary and secondary sources (Lê & Schmid, 2022). In this research, firsthand information was gathered by employing a semi-structured questionnaire. The main reason of adopting questionnaire as a toll for gathering information in this study is because of its potential to enable gathering of huge amount of information over limited time. The survey was organized with a combination of closed and open-ended questions, using a 5-point Likert scale that spans from 1 (representing strong disagreement) to 5 (indicating strong agreement). There were sections indicated on the questions guided the general information and specific variables of the study.

### **Pilot Testing**

Pilot test is a min study is conducted prior to the actual inquiry and it seeks to validate the questions to ensure it is reliable. To ensure that the research instrument is clearly stated and consistent, the researcher tried out instruments on respondents outside the study to establish its relevance. The piloting test involved ten (10) NTSA staff from one region in Kisumu which was a comparator to the headquarter in Nairobi, Kenya where the actual research will be conducted.

### **Data Analysis and Presentation**

The data collected was screened for accuracy and relevancy before analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed using descriptive statements and tools such as Excel, SPSS as well as manual methods. To present the data, the study used statistical methods such as mean and percentages. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS to explore the relationship between hybrid work strategies and employee performance, employing both correlation and regression methods. The following regression model was used:

 $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$ 

**Y**= Employee Performance

**X**<sub>1</sub>= Workforce Management

**X**<sub>2</sub>= Organizational Culture

 $\beta_0 = Constant$ 

 $\beta_1$  and  $\beta_2$  are Coefficients

 $\varepsilon$ = error term

The findings were presented through tables and figures.

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

### **Presentation and Discussion of Descriptive Statistics**

This section presents the findings on the specific objective variables of the study.

## **Work Force Management**

The results from analyzing descriptive statistics regarding the work force management within the framework of the hybrid work strategy were established and outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Work Force Management** 

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
The company has effective performance metrics and KPIs to measure performance of employees regardless you are working in the office or at a remote place	3.68	.699
We are satisfied with the tools and supplies provided by the organization to support our work	3.51	.759
The organization has allocated work and design jobs to support our remote working	3.50	.814
Our work has been planned and scheduled in such a way that can support in-person and remote working	3.49	.822
Average	3.55	.774

The findings in Table 1 are that there was workforce management as one of the hybrid strategies that had been embraced by NTSA (M=3.55, SD=0.774). Through this workforce management, respondents agreed that effective performance metrics and KPIs to measure performance of employees were in place (M=3.68, SD=0.699). Respondents were in agreement that work force management allowed them to be satisfied with the tools and supplies provided with (M=3.51, SD=0.759) besides being allocated with work and job design for supporting remote working (M=3.50, SD=0.814). The respondents also moderately agreed that the work has been planned and scheduled in such a way that can support in-person and remote working (M=3.49, SD=0.822). However, the relatively low ranking on most of these statements indicate that they had not been highly adopted by NTSA. The finding is in line with KEPSA (2021) where it was shown that the hybrid work approach offers increased flexibility and work-life balance, enabling workers to more effectively juggle their personal and work-related duties.

# **Organizational Culture**

The results of descriptive statistics related to the organizational culture were determined and outlined as presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Organizational Culture** 

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
Our company supports employee well-being and work-life balance	3.78	.822
The organization supports diversity, equity and inclusion in a hybrid work environment	3.63	.647
The organization encourages and supports continuous learning and development among employees in a hybrid work environment	3.61	.901
The organization promotes accountability and responsibility among employees	3.57	.823
Average	3.65	.798

The key finding in Table 2 is that organizational culture was an evident aspect of hybrid strategies at NTSA as agreed by majority of the respondents (M=3.65, SD=0.798). Through this organizational culture, respondents agreed that their well-being and work life balance (M=3.78, SD=0.822), the respondents also agreed that there is diversity, equity and inclusion in their hybrid work environment (M=3.63.SD=0.647), it was still established that the organization encourages and support continuous learning and development in the hybrid work environment (M=3.61, SD=0.901). The respondents also agreed that the firm promotes accountability and responsibility among employees in the organization on the hybrid set up work environment (M=3.57, SD=0.823) were all supported under the hybrid strategies that had been embraced. The findings are in line with survey by PwC Kenya (2021) where it was noted that 83% of firms in Kenya have considered the adoption and implementation of the hybrid work arrangement post-Covid-19.

## **Presentation and Discussion of Regression Results**

Regression analysis was conducted to determine how the hybrid strategy impacts employee performance, and the results are detailed in the following sections. Table 3 provides a summary of the model's breakdown. The findings are presented in subsequent sections.

**Table 3: Model Summary** 

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.855	.731	.703		2.63788

\*a Predictors: (Constant), Work Force management, organizational culture, Dependent Variable: employee Performance.

The findings in Table 3 show that the value of adjusted R-square is given as 0.703, which infers that 70.3% change in employee performance at NTSA is explained by its hybrid work strategy. It means that there are still other strategies aside from the hybrid work strategy that also affect employee performance and this should be the focus of further research. Table 4 gives an overview of the ANOVA findings after the analysis. and condensed in Table 4.

**Table 4: ANOVA Results** 

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	548.448	2	137.112	76.10	$.000^{b}$
Residual	201.794	112	1.80		
Total	750.242	114			

<sup>\*</sup>a Predictors: (Constant), Work force Management, Organizational culture

Table 4 shows that overall, the regression model used in this study was statistically significant (F=76.10, p<0.05). The details of the regression beta coefficients and their significance can be found in Table 5.

**Table 5: Coefficients and Significance** 

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	В	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	5.188	0.786		6.601	.000
Work force management $(X_1)$	.809	.153	.147	5.288	.000
Organizational culture (X2)	.814	.161	.076	5.056	.000

From Table 5, the following regression model is fitted:

### $Y = 5.188 + 0.809X_1 + 0.814X_2 + \varepsilon$

Where Y= employee performance

 $\varepsilon$  = error term

 $X_1$ = Work force management

X<sub>2</sub>= Organizational culture

Table 5 reveals that the organizational culture had the most significant impact on employee performance with a beta coefficient of 0.814, followed closely by work force management with a beta coefficient of 0.809

### 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusion

### **Work Force Management**

The findings on the first objective were that there was workforce management as one of the hybrid strategies that had been embraced by NTSA. Through this workforce management, respondents agreed that effective performance metrics and KPIs to measure performance of employees were in place. Respondents were in agreement that work force management allowed them to be satisfied with the tools and supplies provided with. Regression analysis indicated work force management as a significant predictor of employee performance.

## **Organizational Culture**

In regard to the second objective, the key finding was that organizational culture was an evident aspect of hybrid strategies at NTSA as agreed by majority of the respondents. Through this organizational culture, respondents agreed that their well-being and work life balance, their diversity, equity and inclusion, continuous learning and development as well as their accountability and responsibility were all supported under the hybrid strategies that had been embraced. Regression analysis indicated that organizational culture had significant effect on employee performance.

## **Recommendations of the Study**

## **Work Force Management**

The human resource managers working with National Transport and Safety Authority should invest more finances in training of employees to ensure they acquire latest and relevant skills and competences to survive in an increasingly turbulent environment. Clear performance measurement metrics should be established at National Transport and Safety Authority which meet the threshold of being specific, measurable, realistic and time bound.

### **Value Innovation Strategy**

The human resource managers working at NTSA should review the employee engagement practices and undertakings to ensure they contribute towards employee performance by improving output of staff. The top leadership working with National Transport and Safety Authority should cultivate and promote positive culture among employees.

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