

**UNIVERSITY
OF
LUSAKA**

School of Postgraduate Studies

**Effects of HRM Practices on Employees' Performance
in Lusaka's Formal Sector.**

**A
Dissertation Presented
in Partial Fulfilment for the Requirement of the Award
of
Master of Business Administration General
(MBAGEN)**

Student Name: MWEEMBA MULOONGO


Student number: MBAGEN211482393

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this paper is a presentation of my own original work in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of a Master's Degree in Business Administration (General). This is the first time this work has been submitted for an academic award. The references utilized in this research have been acknowledged and references have been provided.

Name of student:	ID:	Signature:	Date:
Mweemba Muloongo	MBAGEN211482393	MULOONGO	03/20/25

Approval

Approved by (Supervisor):	Signature:	Date:
Dr. M. Chawala		03/20/25

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the cherished memory of my late father, Charles Muloongo, whose unwavering love, guidance, and sacrifices laid the foundation for my education and personal growth.

Your steadfast belief in my potential and tireless support throughout my academic journey have been my source of strength and inspiration. Though you are no longer here to share in this milestone, your legacy of dedication and resilience continues to guide me every day.

Thank you for instilling in me the values of perseverance, integrity, and the pursuit of excellence. This work stands as a testament to your profound impact on my life.

Forever in my heart, this accomplishment is as much yours as it is mine.

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Lastly, I would like to extend my gratitude to essayists, scholars and researchers whose works are cited in this thesis. These valuable insights have moulded my thoughts concerning the subject matter thereby deepening my understanding about it, the dedication and the wealth of literature that underpins this study made me feel very grateful.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

HR..... Human Resources

HRM..... Human Resource Management

SPSS.... Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to describe how various human resource management practices such as compensation, training, career planning and employee participation influence employee performance. The study sought to establish the impact of each of these variables in relation to employee performance. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire from employees. Regression and correlation tests were performed on one hundred nine subjects out of a total population of one hundred and fifty. From the analysis, it is evident that the most effective HR practice for improving performance was training followed by compensation. Career Planning came last while employee participation was third in the list. Performance had a strong relationship with training which implies that trained people are more productive than untrained ones. Also, it was found out that participation in employees contributed towards better overall performance through their feeling of being involved and committed to their work.

In brief, the research suggests that organized HR approach is important to maintain the best employee performance through training and employee participation. Practical implications of the study include, broadening the range of trainings, making a case for management's input and providing distinct career lines to employees. A further study should check if these HR practices are effective in different sectors or organizations.

Keywords: Employee performance, human resources, training, career planning, employee participation, and compensation.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The role of HRM practices in determining employee's performance is of cardinal importance in Lusaka's formal sector. For example, some HRM practices that affect organizational performance include systems of hiring & recruiting, conducting interviews, measuring employee performance, managing it and compensation. With this being stated, there is an urgent need for effective HRM strategies as a pre-condition for attracting proper human resources, retaining them, motivating them and improving business outcomes as well as achieving organizational objectives (Phiri, 2024).

HRM practices according to Martocchio (2021) increase the involvement of employees in their work thereby enhancing their satisfaction while at the same time reducing staff turnover rates and enhancing loyalty to the organisation. For instance, Siwale et al., (2021) study on banks in Lusaka established how good HRM practices contributed towards improved job performance resulting from increased employee job satisfaction. Therefore, clear strategic recruitment policies must be put in place in organizations.

Strategic recruitment and selection are key drivers for organizational effectiveness leading towards high performance by ensuring right personnel are sourced. Recruitment should include other components other than professional skills and qualifications, such as cultural compatibility as well as growth potential. This would result in lower attrition levels and improved employee performance (Mwambela, 2024).

Therefore, needs assessment must be combined with training and development to ensure that an employee performing a certain task will have all the necessary skills to complete designated roles. For this reason, employees would be more adaptable in their work if they engage in activities such as continuous skills improvement hence, they will become more productive and contented with their roles. There is need for on-going training programmes to ensure that employees cope with technological innovations as well as changes in work environments common to formal economies (Mupashi, 2021).

According to DeNisi and Pritchard (2006), appraisal systems have transformed how employees' evaluations are done by using feedback from the employees themselves instead of relying entirely upon superiors. In regular appraisals, individuals seek to align themselves with organizational goals so that they can understand areas for development which match their strengths as well as areas requiring improvement. It was discovered that performance assessment techniques were directly related to employee motivation and productivity in organizations because they helped set goals and provide reviews.

According to Martocchio's (2021), combining different types of remuneration is favourable to employees whose pay is linked with their outputs at work. Following this line of thinking, Lazear, 2018 posited that higher wages would ensure that workers do not slack off while on duty. Phiri (2024) further argues that competitive wages are required in the formal sector, especially in Lusaka where there is a scramble for talent.

1.2. Background

Research has determined that human resources activities affect employee's performance which has become one of the sizzling topics to scholars in contemporary organizations. For Lusaka's formal sector, the necessity to grasp these effects is very important since the sector is thriving and is greatly contributing to the growth of the Zambian economy. A number of years back, HRM approaches were not common as much as in the present scenario, however, today they appear to be more strategically fitted into the business goals so as to enhance both employee productivity and organizational competitiveness. Once more, within Lusaka, as the city continues to witness industrialization with increasing number of industry classes such as financial, manufacturing, services and many others, optimizing a company's human resources capital for sustainable growth becomes imperative.

One study noted that HRM practices, which include core practices such as talent acquisition, employee training, performance management, and even competitive compensation, can be predictors of employee engagement and performance (Mwambela,2024). Sadly, there are other factors that limit the efficiency with which some firms function, and these include inadequate training capacity, poor strategic guidance and shifts in labor market cycles. One of the characteristic features of Lusaka's formal employment sector is the presence of diversity which calls for

pluralistic and adaptive HRM strategies aimed at meeting the different needs and expectations of the employees.

In addition, globalization and technological inventions provide challenges to the human resource indicating the need for continuous and high-level implementation of the available best-practices to enhance competitiveness (Siwale et al., 2021). For instance, the use of technology in HRM such as data analytical techniques and e-learning interactive services are redefining the way an organization manages its human resources. These political developments require shift of strategy towards meeting change management practices but instead enhance effectiveness.

In regard to Lusaka, Phiri (2024) remarks that there is new socio-economic context that qualifies Zambia on a broader level to have its HRM ability nurtured through challenges and opportunities. Illegal strikes and punitive laws as well as currency exchange rates shapes the world market that organizations in Lusaka operate in. Furthermore, other aspects such as the employee 's expectation of work, or the understanding of the organizational culture or the recruitment and selection are transforming into directions that would necessitate a more strategic HRM that is appropriate in contemporaneous times.

1.3. Problem Statement

The urgency to refine employee performance has been identified as a critical challenge for all organizations whose goal is to stay competitive in an ever-evolving economic environment. With this being stated, HRM practices, namely: compensation, training, career planning, as well as employee participation are all acknowledged as foundational catalysts of workforce productivity as well as overall organizational success (Armstrong et al., 2020). With this being stated, it is necessary to acknowledge that there is limited empirical evidence with regards to how HRM practices affect employee performance in Zambia, particularly in relation to Lusaka's formal sector.

It goes without saying that Lusaka plays the role of one of Zambia's most active economic hubs, comprising of a large portion of the country's formal workforce. Yet, multiple organizations within this sector struggle with perpetual HRM challenges in the form of high turnover rates, low productivity rates as well as employee disengagement.

These challenges are mainly resulting from the lack of data-driven strategies designed to address Zambia's socio-economic and organizational realities. Unfortunately, employers mostly rely on generic Human Resource Management models which may not be guaranteed to address local workforce needs (Bloom et al., 2011). These realities not only affect organizational efficiency but they also negatively impact an organizations potential for growth as well as competitiveness within the region(s) of operation.

It is evident that existing research in Zambia regarding HRM practices delves more on qualitative findings, paying little to no attention to quantitative, empirical outcomes that would be of great value to the construction of strategic decisions (Phiri, 2024). The existence of this knowledge gap disadvantages organizations in Lusaka due to lack of empirical evidence required to determine what specific HRM practices require prioritization so as to maximize productivity. Consequently, organizations are at a risk of wrongly applying resources towards policies that are of non-effect, further worsening employee performance.

Several studies have highlighted notable employee turnover rates across various sectors in Zambia: Research focusing on Ecobank revealed that employee turnover led to the loss of valuable knowledge and experience, decreased morale among remaining staff, and diminished confidence in team competence and performance (Mwansa et,al, 2023), a study at Ndola City Council identified factors such as remuneration and staff motivation as contributors to employee turnover, indicating that HRM-related challenges significantly impact staff retention in local government institutions (Chulu,2024). In Zambia's Western Province, research in the hospitality sector found that inadequate salary, poor work conditions, lack of incentives, absence of job rotation, and long working hours significantly influenced employee turnover, underscoring the critical role of HRM practices in employee retention (Mukumbuta, et., al, 2019).

Labor productivity in Zambia has experienced fluctuations, with recent declines raising concerns: Data indicates that Zambia's labor productivity dropped by 1.71% year-on-year in December 2023, following a growth of 3.40% in the previous year, highlighting a concerning downward trend (Global economic insights, 2023), The World Bank reports that between 2001 and 2019, while employment grew at a rate of 4.3%

annually, most new jobs were in agriculture and services—sectors with some of the lowest productivity rates. Notably, agriculture, employing 60% of Zambians, saw productivity drop by nearly 50% over two decades, directly linking to increased rural poverty despite overall economic growth (World Bank, 2025).

The persistent issues of high employee turnover and declining labor productivity in Zambia's formal sector necessitate a thorough examination of HRM practices. Understanding the relationship between HRM strategies and employee performance is crucial for developing interventions aimed at enhancing productivity and reducing turnover. This study seeks to provide empirical evidence to inform policy and practice, ultimately contributing to improved organizational performance and economic growth in Zambia.

Considering the strategic importance of Lusaka's formal sector in relation to Zambia's economic advancement and the undeniable necessity for effective HRM practices, there is an urgent need for research that provides quantitative data regarding the effects of HRM practices on employee performance.

This study aims to bridge the existing gap by providing practical, evidence-based understanding regarding the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance. By addressing this problem, this study will not only provide much needed academic insights in relation to HRM practices in Lusaka's formal sector, but it will also equip organizations with verifiable findings that can be applied in: enhancing productivity, effectively addressing employee turnover rates as well as stimulating sustainable growth among organizations in Lusaka's formal sector, and ultimately Zambia as a whole.

1.4. Main Objective

To describe the effect of Human Resource Management practices on employee performance in the formal employment sector in Lusaka.

1.5. Specific Objectives

1. To analyze the effect of compensation on employee performance.
2. To analyze the effect of training on employee performance.

3. To analyze the effect of career planning on employee performance.
4. To analyze the effect of employee participation on employee performance.

1.6. Research Questions

1. What is the effect of compensation on employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector?
2. How does training influence employee performance in the formal sector in Lusaka?
3. In what ways does career planning impact employee performance in Lusaka's formal employment sector?
4. How does employee participation affect employee performance in the formal sector in Lusaka?

1.7 Significance of the study

The study is significant since it helps to understand how HRM practices can enhance employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector. With this knowledge, organizations can develop strategies that enhance productivity and boost employee morale hence improving performance. The research findings would be useful to policy makers and business personnel who desire to make HRM policies regarding various performance issues in Lusaka thus improving the country's economy as a whole. Furthermore, this study will add value to earlier studies by investigating HRM practices in a fast-growing African city (Lusaka).

1.8. Scope of the Study

This study is primarily focused on formal sector employment in Lusaka, Zambia and looks at particular human resource management (HRM) practices such as compensation, training, career planning, and participation in decision-making that affect employee performance. The present study seeks to explore how various HR strategies have influenced operations of different organizations in the formal sector of Lusaka. The use of quantitative methods such as surveys will ensure the collection of data from different employees, so as to provide a broad view regarding HR practices

and how they affect employee performance. Individuals informally employed will not be included in this research so as to ensure a relevant understanding of the research.

1.9 Thesis Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter commences by providing an overview of the study including its background and problem statement; main objective and specific objectives; significance of the study; research methodology to be use, hence chapter arrangement. It discusses why the research is needed thereby putting much emphasis on effects of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee performance, specifically for employees in Lusaka's formal sector.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter evaluates the extensive literature on HRM and its effect on employee performance. It entails reviewing a host of research literature covered on: compensation, training, career development and employee participation in relation to the proposed concepts within this work.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This section focuses on the research questions and hypothesis of the study, not forgetting the research design and structure of methodology to be applied, clearly indicating the processes that will be used in data collection and analysis. It gives a breakdown of sampling procedures, methods of analysing collected data, and ethical considerations as well.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

This chapter contains collected data that will be gathered during the course of the study and interprets it with respect to the research questions that have been proposed.

It captures technical analysis, findings section and brief statements about variation in results between outcomes and benchmarks regarding the effect of HRM practices on employee performance.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter amalgamates the findings of the research and analysis with the literature that will be examined in chapter-2 of the research. It also examines HRM practices research initiatives specifically within Lusaka's formal sector that are ignored or missed out.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

Lastly, this chapter summarizes main findings that will be established during the research and will also provide relevant recommendations for different organizations operating in Lusaka's formal sector. Additionally, it will also highlight the areas where there will be need to enhance Human Resource Management practices, hence resulting into increased productivity while at same time exploring aspects that will require further scrutiny.

Chapter summary

It goes without question that HRM practices influence employee performance in organizations. With this in mind, in this study, the HRM practices will serve as the independent variables, while employee performance will be the dependent variable. This chapter gives a brief description of how HRM practices affect organizational performance.

The chapter will then present the problem statement, highlighting the gaps that exist between the desired scenario and the present state of HRM practices. The chapter will go on to indicate the general and specific objectives of the study, together with the research questions. The relevance of the study will then dissected, highlighting the contribution it aims to make to existing literature as well as HRM practices.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the available literature regarding Human Resources Management practices impact on employee performance, placing its focus on the following key areas: compensation, training, career planning, and employee participation. This chapter provides an in-depth exploration into multiple theories and empirical studies that elaborate how HRM practices influence employee performance.

2.2 Empirical Literature

2.2.1 Compensation

To enter the labour market, organizations offer their employees' wages in addition to other forms of immaterial benefits which increase their satisfaction, these actions by organizations towards employees are referred to as compensation.

Reports have revealed that correctly compensated employees are more productive and have an influence on how an organization generally fares in the market. Emerging trends in the US, UK, and other developed economies show that for employee motivation and retention purposes, emphasis should be on competitive salary packages as part of job offers. For instance, Martocchio's (2021) argues that engagement and productivity can be greatly improved by establishing structures and systems that aim to provide rewards based on an employee's level of performance.

Bloom and Van Reenen (2011) further argue that management financing takes into account the success of the organization as well as the structure and design of the employee compensation systems since it directly influences the employee's willingness to commit as well as their loyalty to the organization.

In an effort to improve employee drive and performance, there is need for financial motivation in the form of bonuses, profit-sharing and stock options. Lazear (2018) argues that employees whose compensation is a reflection of their high performance are likely to be more motivated to work harder and achieve better results. This argument is supported by the Equity Theory of Motivation, which states that people

are motivated to act in circumstances when they feel or believe they are compensated on a fair basis in respect to their contributions (Adams, 1963). As Pfeffer (1998) points out firms like Google and Apple are great examples of an organization with a good compensation plan that has a high sense of employee involvement and a high level of innovation among many other advantages that help the firm remain competitive.

As compensation for work does vary based on an individual's performance, the link existing between the two is more complex especially in the context of developing economies. For example, studies done in Nigeria and India, show that although economic compensation may be an incentive it is not the only determinant of performance as other elements like job security and opportunities for career growth are also important (Adewale et al., 2016). This view is in line with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory which argues that pay is a hygiene factor, which is devoid of a feeling of discomfort, but which is also less effective in motivating employees unless such people are offered intrinsic rewards of recognition or meaningful employment (Herzberg, 1968). Broadly, the results suggest that the cultural, economic and organizational context may influence the implementation of these compensation strategies.

It has been established that apart from the more conventional aspects of a compensation package, such as salary, organization shares or hands in extra elements that also need to be considered within the strategies. Their research indicates that businesses with revolving doors in high turnover industries may do especially well when non-monetary rewards are combined with routine ones, Neher et al., (2019). Non-monetary incentives such as recognition programs or wellness initiatives improved retention and performance in the hospitality industry's transient workforce (Lazear, 2018). These developments show towards the direction of a more comprehensive rewards policy that considers both types of motivators.

One important context change that is influencing compensation policies is changes in the demographics and their expectations from their employers. Work-life balance, career progression and working towards a social cause are emerging to be major aspects for millennials, and generation Z, who are now dominating the modern-day workplace, instead of receiving a hefty pay check (Deloitte, 2021). Now, more and more firms are adding in structured remuneration frameworks like bundles of flexible

benefits, remote working and other upskilling tools to help woo their younger employees.

Compensation is still the cornerstone and one of the most important principles of HRM, determining the efficiency of employees and the activity of the organization. Although financial incentives are fundamental in easing survival and fostering performance, several studies, on the contrary, have found non-financial incentives more useful as a means of improving satisfaction with work and permanency. Organizations must devise measures that are aimed at addressing correct mix of financial and nonfinancial compensation strategies in order to fit into employee expectations and achieve the targets for performance improvement.

In developed regions like the US and UK, study results show that having generous compensation packages is essential for attracting and retaining competent employees which influences employee performance and the organization (Martocchio, 2021; Bloom & Van Reenen, 2011). Inclusion of bonuses and stock options as part of pay incentives have been found to enhance motivation and productivity leading to creation of excellent cultures within organizations (Lazear, 2018).

In Asia, research done has shown the need for the performance-based compensation systems to be integrated with the organization systems to improve employee output. For example, Japan and South Korea have adopted performance-based salary models which are geared towards enhancing employee efforts in achieving aims hence promoting efficiency in the organization (Kim & Gong, 2009). They not only enhance performance but also help in the creation and sustenance of a high-performance workplace culture which is necessary to create a competitive edge over the rivals in the fast-changing business environment.

The use of compensation in motivating workers in Africa is similarly critical in nature but has its issues. There is evidence from South Africa that suggests that high reward and wage packages are important for recruitment, yet the South African economy's constraints frequently make it untenable for firms to provide such appealing packages (Kamoche et al., 2015). On the other hand, in Nigeria, compensation is also a strong factor for employee motivation and performance, where the focus is more on non-financial aspects like job security and health insurance as vital in keeping employees (Onwudinjo, 2021).

However, in Zambia, the formal sector of the economy has experienced major shifts in the compensation of employees as institutions seek to optimize employee outcomes. Inflation and monetary fluctuations are some of the economic constraints that are hindering the total reward employers can afford. Investment in fair and appropriate wage structures is reported to increase worker satisfaction and productivity in the firms that operate in sectors where competition is high as reported in the banking industry-based studies conducted in Lusaka (Siwale et al., 2021).

The Zambian context shows that there is marked empirical evidence correlating the two factors in question, namely compensation and employee performance. Organizations with better structures of compensation, both monetary and nonmonetary, have these attributes of experiencing low turnover and high employee engagement rates (Mwambela,2024). This relationship is especially strong in the finance and telecommunications industry where the need for talent is high, and remuneration is an important factor in the employment lifecycle.

Another recent survey conducted shows that remuneration remains the most important decision factor in the employment relationship and a concern than all other factors in satisfaction or performance. High performance organizations understand that when employees feel they are compensated fairly as well as competitively then they are more likely to be motivated, committed and highly productive and this in turn affects the outcome of the organization positively. In the contrary, the lack of proper compensation is the other bane to job satisfaction and high turnover rates suggesting that there should be developed systemic compensation plans Martocchio's (2021).

Compensation politics succeeded in showing that compensation management is critical for keeping a loyal and satisfied employee base. According to Phiri et al (2024) study, employees felt compensated positively by organizations that are engaged in fair and transparent compensation policies as this reinforced trust and loyalty, both of which are fundamental elements for the growth and sustainability of a business in Zambia. This loyalty extends to lower employee turnover, lower training and recruitment costs, and better overall organizational performance, showing the broad scope of the consequences of good compensation management.

It is important to note that, at the same time, compensation politics is not only about paying employees, but also ensuring that their input is recognized and appreciated.

Phiri et al (2024), in their research shows that organizations that provide employees with bonuses, promotions or any other means of reward when they achieve key milestones have noticed a favourable change when it comes to their performance and morale. This is essential for building an environment where people come to work because they want to and not have to.

H1: There is a positive relationship between compensation and employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector.

2.2.2 Training

Training is fundamental in Human Resource Management (HRM) practices as far as employee performance is concerned and stands to be beneficial. Organizations across the globe are aware of the significance of training programs as they help the staff in attaining necessary knowledge and skills required to fulfil the needs of the organization. Training initiatives help to fill skill gaps, promote creativity, and increase productivity (Noe et al, 2023). In the developed economies, like the USA and Germany, structured training exercises have proved to increase employee efficiency as well as organizational performance (Salas et al., 2012). Such findings are a sign that there is more to continuous education and growth than meets the eye.

Moreover, efficient training strategies aid in resolving both technical and soft skills and as a result workers are able to deal with different challenges in their roles. Employees with engaged training are prepared to work for companies with a better engagement strategy, and keep their position longer (Armstrong and Taylor, 2020). This is because training is an investment in job competence as well as in job satisfaction on the part of the employees as it proves the concern of the organization for their growth. In addition, training in organizations is supportive of RBV theory which says that human capital is an important asset for an organization which will fulfil its goals and aims (Barney, 1991).

In developing markets, training programs are getting more popular as an approach to developing staff and business effectiveness. There is evidence in India and Kenya that there is a positive effect of employee training on productivity, especially in industry and IT sectors of the economy (Kamoche et al., 2015; Singh & Mohanty, 2020). This is similar to Becker's work (1964) where he suggested that educating and training

individuals is an investment, and it is profitable to the individuals and the organization. Therefore, training can be regarded as a tool to reduce skill gaps and promote economic growth.

With the introduction of technology to training programs, the old methodologies of learning have changed for the better as training has become more efficient and easier to conduct. Online training modules and e-learning systems have seen a rise in popularity due to COVID-19 as remote working and online classes became a necessity. As Deloitte (2021) noted, tech-enhanced learning shows greater employee engagement and retention. The upskilling needed shows that workers are within a world of ever-changing requirements, which fits into the goal of lifelong learning. For example, IBM and Microsoft who focused on improving the innovations and performance of employees through custom courses focusing on the needs and limitations of the business itself.

Training also plays a crucial role in the psychological aspect of employees, promoting trust and instilling motivation in them. Employees with a positive view of training, as an avenue for promotion and progress are more likely to invest and engage themselves in the work (Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). In addition, training creates and keeps a mindset of ongoing development and innovation that any business needs when trying to ultimately improve individual performances as well as teamwork and organizational effectiveness through well-trained employees (Salas et al., 2012).

Training is a crucial HRM function as it affects the outcomes achieved by individual employees and the entire organization. It improves productivity in the short term by closing skill gaps and creating room for innovation, and in the long term by ensuring sustainability through employee engagement. Organizations should regard training activities as important and take advantage of technological tools while customizing them according to changing workforce requirements. This way, employees are ready to meet any current requirements and are prepared for what is expected in the future.

Regularly scheduled training sessions have been shown to improve employees' performance in their jobs and increase their feeling of satisfaction (Noe et al., 2023; Salas et al., 2012). A culture of continuous improvement and development is created in organisations by the establishment of training programs that are well designed and in line with organisational goals (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009).

In Japan and Singapore, the expenditure on employee skill training programs is high because there is a strong link between competitiveness and economic growth. Japanese and Singaporean firms do not hesitate to invest in employee skill development since the market is constantly evolving. Such investments appear to enhance employee and organizational performance (Chen et al., 2010). These regions have improved the impact of training programs through modern technologies, such as e-learning modules.

There are strong indications that employee training increases performance and motivation in Africa. Even though the continent is not fully equipped with the infrastructure and resources for best training, research conducted in South Africa and Kenya suggests positive outcomes resulting from the training culture. In Zambia's formal economy, employee training is said to be an underutilized asset, with companies within Lusaka spearheading employee productivity and morale by providing skill (Phiri et al, (2024). However, challenges such as high costs of resources prevent optimal utilization of this training value in Zambia.

The testimony from Lusaka stresses that training is an important element to increase the efficiency and productivity of employees. In the telecommunications industry, individuals provided with regular performance development training were found to perform better and have increased work engagement than those without this training (Mupashi, 2021). This means that organizations must consider training as one of the most important HRM practices to improve employee capabilities and performance.

Not only do some of them focus only on upgrading technical competences but they are also helpful in developing soft skills such as communication, leadership and collaboration. Lusaka's formal sector firms that provide these trainings have made significant strides in improving interpersonal relationships and teamwork within their institutions (Mwansa et al., 2021). Providing soft skills becomes essential so as to equip workers with knowledge required for navigating complex organizational structures and relating well with other staff members as well as customers.

It is also noted in the literature that training is important for employee retention and motivation. According to Mwambela (2024) staff have a high likelihood of staying loyal and motivated when they perceive their employer as being committed to their career advancement, thus reducing staff turnover rates and the respective costs. In Lusaka,

companies offering development programs are better placed to attract and keep highly skilled workforce thereby increasing their competitive advantage.

H2: There is a positive relationship between training and employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector

2.2.3 Career planning

Career development in Human Resource Management is highly emphasized since it greatly impacts employee engagement, motivation and performance. It looks to determine and reconcile career needs of individuals with the needs of the organization so that a sense of direction and purpose is brought to employees. The existing body of research appears to suggest that the clear set instructions within these areas of development and provision of clear progression structure within the organization enhances job satisfaction and lowers turnover (Greenhaus et al, 2018). Employees who notice that there are chances for them to progress upward are unlikely to stay idle or lack motivation and this tends to help the organization's success.

The organization focuses on its employees' growth as a strategic aim, requiring career planning. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), one of the aspects of managing talent is career planning that enables organizations to find and nurture potential talents. It does not only increase individual performance but also ensures availability of competent personnel capable of meeting the future requirements of the organization. For instance, multinational companies such as Google and Unilever make use of pre-set structures comprising different career management frameworks and associated combinations of leadership programs, mentoring and frequent career assessments, making sure that employees can be retained more effectively with improved productivity.

A theory of goal setting emphasizes the significance of wilfulness and planning in pursuit of goals or specific ends. In addition, Weber L. expects that employees should come up with a career template for the appraisal period which this template should contain objectives that are particular as well as indicating means towards realizing the objective. By knowing what they want to carry out in their career, employees become more proactive in learning new skills and getting experience necessary to obtain specific careers indicated in their goals. This increases productivity as employees work

with motivation on finding meaning and self-fulfilment in what they do. Furthermore, it ensures promises made are kept hence enhancing trust and loyalty by fulfilling employee's career aspirations (Rousseau et al., 1993).

In South Africa, it has been emphasized that through career planning, organizations can overcome issues related to high turnover rates within the labour market (Kamoche et al., 2015; Singh & Mohanty, 2012). These initiatives entail a clear career development strategy, career development programs, supplemented by cross-functional opportunities, which overall eases employee engagement and more broadly enhances workforce productivity. With this being stated, career planning is becoming increasingly important in developing economies where organizations see it as a means of solving skill gaps and enhancing performance.

The adoption of technology within the career planning process has also transformed the way organizations ease the development of their employees. Career development digital tools, such as AI-assisted career pathing tools and e-learning tools, enable employees to engage with their growth opportunities in ways that are tailored to their personal needs and preferences (Deloitte, 2021). For instance, LinkedIn Learning and IBM's Skills Build allow employees to be presented with recommendations on improvement of certain skills which enables them to achieve their goals. This shifting of technology together with the organization ensures that career planning does not become stagnant but is constantly evolving with the changing needs of the industry.

As much as there are advantages that come with the use of career planning, it has to be adequately organized, sufficient and congruent with the business strategy. Management and leadership need to communicate goals clearly, otherwise these initiatives will not yield the results intended. The study carried out by Hall (2004) mentions that leaders have to ensure constant learning and career growth is paramount within the organization and that policies supporting the same alongside resources are well defined. This fuels employees to start valuing and seeing career planning as a process that has had a lot of thought put into it rather than an event that happens occasionally.

In general, businesses that incorporate career planning in its HR activities usually have more engaged employees across the board. As proved in the examination conducted by Boxall (2012) and Baruch et al. (2000), the employees who are provided with a

definite career path along with development trainings demonstrate greater willingness to remain in the organization. Employees who have a sense of context about their articulation within a firm typically have a higher drive to perform well in order to reach certain professional benchmarks they have set for themselves (Arthur et al., 2005).

In the Asian region, implementing career development has been crucial when it comes to enhancing employee performance. Developed countries, such as Japan and China have put in place standard career progression development programs as part of their strategy and these have been successful in setting up outstanding companies (Lee, 2018). In most cases, mentoring, succession planning and personalized career development plans are usually included and are geared towards setting up thorough improvement.

As organizations from all sectors in Africa make efforts for improvement, career planning is being seen as a tool to improve performance of employees and organizations. In South Africa, organizations with all-embracing career planning have observed more satisfaction and useful work from their employees. Career planning has proved to be an indispensable tool by serving the interests of employees, allowing for highly competitive career programs and aid for employees in developing their careers. However infrastructural development could be a concern, and reports suggest that some markets are being overwhelmed (Kamoche et al., 2015; Singh & Mohanty, 2012).

With this in mind, there is need for the Zambian formal sector to place more emphasis on career planning. As organizations try to motivate employees, plans which take the form of well-defined structured career development must be devised in Lusaka by various organizations. In Africa, specific plans for aiding employees in career goals, in both the private and public sectors, have proven useful. It is believed that all sectors of the economy are capable of growth despite economic depression in many countries (Mwambela, 2024).

Reports indicate that there is a direct linkage between career planning and employee performance. Employees who actively seek careers tend to be more engaged when a clear career development plan is provided (Greenhaus et al, 2018). This relationship calls for the need to incorporate career planning in HRM practices in order to foster employee growth and contribute towards the success of the organization.

Subscription of employee share-value ownership explains the essence attached to employee retention in the organization. Employees begin to appreciate and trust the organization, which enhances their loyalty and may result in lower turnover rates and turnover costs (Mwambela,2024). Business environments are more likely to thrive when they invest in employee engagement practices, especially in career planning as this strategy enables them to retain more skilled employees who meet market norms.

In addition to this, a career plan enables the employee to grow their leadership skills and further their role in the company in the future. In Mwansa et al., (2021) study, nearly all formal businesses that facilitated leadership training reported improved overall team reports and performance. This makes sure that workers in the company become skilled at heading teams efficiently during various projects so as to better the overall success of the organization.

A culture within the business that encourages employee development and progress creates a trusting and cooperative environment which according to Phiri (2024) is crucial for the sustainable success of an organization. This atmosphere not only enhances staff performance but also builds organizational resilience in times of change. Moreover, literature stresses that career planning is vital in improving organizational culture.

H3: There is a positive relationship between career planning and employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector.

2.2.4 Employee participation

The active role an employee takes in an organization is crucial to performance management and, along the same lines, success of an organization. All round the globe, institutions that engage employees participatively via decision making and working together report much higher productivity and job satisfaction among the employees. Reports indicate that granting employees a voice in the decision-making process empowers them and enhances their commitment to the firm (Locke & Latham, 2019).

In first-world countries, for instance, such concepts as participative management and quality circles are integral ingredients of the corporate culture. Employees get urged to submit ideas or possible solutions for problems in order to make a cooperative

atmosphere that fosters growth through better performance and innovation (Kim & Mauborgne, 2014). This enhances self-efficiency and productivity by employing diverse perspectives in the organization.

Worldwide, workforce participation is starting to get recognized as an important aspect for organizational performance and competitiveness. Participation becomes ineffective due to cultural and structural constraints. Findings from studies have shown that companies that engage in participative activities experience higher employee satisfaction levels and improved output (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000). The involvement of employees is very important when dealing with issues like lack of motivation and high turnover levels among staffs of various organizations.

Competitiveness in the formal sector has increasingly embraced promoting employee participation in decision-making processes. As a result, many organisations are starting to value involving employees in decisions that shape their organization and developing a participatory culture. And despite hierarchical structures in organizations and scarcity of resources posing as challenges; nevertheless, organizations that prioritize employee participation tend to perform better than those that don't (Acemoglu & Autor 2011).

Data shows that employee participation is related directly to performance. Findings from the manufacturing industry revealed that organisations with more participative management style tended to be more productive and have higher levels of employee satisfaction than their counterparts who had high hierarchical management approach (Phiri, 2024). This correlation underscores the need for transforming the workplace into a healthy setting where workers can take the initiative towards achieving company goals.

As stated earlier, employee participation is also greatly responsible for promoting innovation and addressing possible problems. Companies that allow employees to actively take part in decision-making become more innovative and adaptable (Mwansa et al., 2021). This approach enables companies to use the different abilities and views that their staff have with a view of coming up with solutions that can improve company performance as well as increase success rate.

Furthermore, employee participation helps in creating a favourable organizational culture and climate. Phiri et al, (2024) argues that companies which are based on

participation principles have been able to build trust and collaborative culture which has increased the probability of keeping lifetime performance of the company. This does not only enhance performance but also employees' health and satisfaction therefore minimizing long-term average turnover rates which in turn reduces the costs associated with it.

Furthermore, literature emphasizes that there exists a link between employee participation and effective communication. With this being stated, companies that embrace participative practices tend to have better communication as well as teamwork leading to performance improvement (Mwambela,2024). These practices play a major role in addressing any existing barriers, by encouraging the establishment of an environment that allows employees to work hand-in-hand towards shared objectives.

***H4:** There is a positive relationship between employee participation and employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector.*

Justification for Using a Quantitative Research Approach:

The study on the effects of HRM practices on employee performance in Lusaka's formal sector employs a quantitative research methodology, which is justified for several reasons:

1. **Objective Measurement:** Quantitative research allows for the objective measurement of variables, enabling the assessment of the extent to which specific HRM practices influence employee performance. This objectivity is crucial for establishing clear, data-driven insights.
2. **Statistical Analysis:** The use of statistical tools in quantitative research facilitates the identification of patterns, relationships, and potential causations between variables. This is essential for determining the effectiveness of different HRM practices on performance metrics.
3. **Generalizability:** Quantitative studies often involve larger sample sizes, enhancing the generalizability of the findings across the broader population

within Lusaka's formal sector. This broad applicability is vital for informing policy and organizational practices.

4. **Comparative Analysis:** Quantitative methods enable the comparison of different HRM practices and their relative impacts on employee performance, providing a clear hierarchy of effectiveness that can guide decision-making.

In contrast, the referenced works by Armstrong and Taylor (2020) and Martocchio (2021) are primarily descriptive and theoretical, focusing on the synthesis of existing knowledge rather than the generation of new empirical data. While these resources are invaluable for understanding HRM concepts and frameworks, they do not provide the empirical evidence necessary to assess the specific impacts of HRM practices on employee performance within a particular context, such as Lusaka's formal sector.

Therefore, a quantitative research approach is most appropriate for this study, aligning with the objective to systematically evaluate and quantify the effects of HRM practices on employee performance within Lusaka's formal sector.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study's theoretical framework relies on three theories explaining how Human Resource Management (HRM) practices affect employee performance, namely, Expectancy Theory, Social Exchange Theory as well as the Human Capital Theory. These theories form the basis of understanding how compensation, training, career planning and employee participation influence performance outcomes in Lusaka's formal sector.

2.3.1 Expectancy Theory

Vroom's Expectancy Theory looks at the key components of the motivational aspect of HRM practices and their influence on employee performance. This theory states that people initiate actions based on the assumption that their actions are likely to yield an acceptable outcome and this outcome will be endorsed (Vroom, 1964). According to Vroom's Expectancy Theory, the reason why an "action" (e.g., engaging in a specific behaviour) is done depends on how appealing the outcome or result of that action is and the likelihood that the action will bring about that result.

For this study however, Expectancy Theory applies when it comes to HRM practices such as compensation, training, career development, and employee participation within Lusaka's formal sector. For example, employees tend to expect that through effective compensation programs, what they do at work is related to their earned pay thereby motivating them more. It has been noted that if employees are to reciprocate employers with good performance, then they should be given some assurance concerning returns which would be realistic like promotions and bonuses (Klein, 1991).

Expectancy in organizations is also influenced by training and career planning. Once employees feel like they have been given chances to hone their skills and advance in their career, they are bound to believe that their efforts will result in career growth and success. This expectation can drive them to do better as they see the potential rewards in the future and the overall success within the organization (Noe et al., 2023). For instance, in the formal sector where career development avenues differ widely, employees in organisations which implement training together with career planning, are likely to have expectations that they can achieve their career aspirations.

Moreover, employees' involvement in the decision-making process can serve to reinforce the effort to outcome linkage by providing employees with control and power over the workplace. Once employees believe that what they have to offer matters and can shape the decisions within the organization, they become more likely to expect successful results from their input making them more motivated and performing better (Griffin et al., 2016)

2.3.2 Social Exchange Theory

The interplay between employee-employer relations and how employees perform can be explained using the Social Exchange Theory (SET). This theory emerged from the work of sociologist George Homans and in his works, he explains that social behaviour is an outcome of an exchange aiming at maximization of benefits and minimization of costs (Blau, 1964). In the human resource management perspective (HRM), SET explains the relationship between employees and employers to be that of a resource exchange, but this resource is for social and economic and emotional benefits.

Since this is a study that employs Social Exchange Theory, it means that HRM practices such as compensation, training, career planning, employee participation, and so forth can be considered as dominant aspects of the exchange process. An example that we can give: in these cases where companies provide a fair salary and development opportunities, employees treat them as attractive resources that they get in return for what they offer, leading to improved satisfaction and effectiveness. Research shows that if employees feel supported by their organization, they are likely to return that support by increasing their effort and commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Training and career development stand out distinctively because they constitute an aspect in the exchange between an employee and an organisation on the other hand, the organizations argue that they build such loyalty among employees so that they would work hard to improve their performance in the firm. In Lusaka's formal sector for instance, where career opportunities are very highly rated, training coupled with career development opportunities increases the feeling of exchange with the firm (Wayne et al., 1997).

In addition, employee empowerment and inclusion in decision making may help in enhancing the exchange relationship by improving employees' sense of belonging. In those situations when employees participate in the development of organizational policies and strategies, they feel more responsible and committed to those policies and strategies which naturally improves motivation or performance. This kind of involvement is beneficial not only to individual employees but the entire organization because it enhances a culture where people work together as a team (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994).

2.3.3 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, presented by theorists such as Gar Becker and Theodore Schultz advocates for the importance of skill aesthetics as an investment for the employees to ensure proper productivity is maximized for the firm. This theory posits that employees are not just ranked by their economic output but also that they can be transformed through institutionalized learning via training and education into a more return yielding personnel for the firm, both economically and through value generation (Becker, 1964).

With regard to the scope of the current study, Human Capital Theory endorses the expectations that result from sub practices of HRM such as training, career planning and employee participation, which improve employee performances. Such developments have been shown to be associated with investment in activities designed to enhance the skill and abilities of individuals, thereby driving productivity as well as improving competitive edge. For example, recent findings suggest that training employees for improvements in their hard as-well-as soft skills leads to higher levels of competence and efficiency in the performance of their important job tasks (Becker, 1976).

Career development enables an organization to find suitable and rewarding career pathways for the employees. It offers individuals in an organization a sense of purpose that motivates them to perform better and achieve higher goals. This becomes more relevant in Lusaka where the formal economy barely highlights suitable opportunities for employees, thus showing a direct correlation between business growth and career planning (Acemoglu & Autor 2011).

In addition, involving employees in decision making has the potential to enhance human capital through the promotion of creative and innovative ideas. Instead, by leveraging employees to contribute to an idea's conception as well as organizational decision making, employees' ownership of their work increases and thereby increasing performance potential (Becker, 1976). This form of involvement of employees has the dual impact of enhancing the skill sets of the individual employees while also turning the culture of the organization into a more innovative and flexible one.

2.3.4 Gap Analysis

The review of related literature which was formed of several documents with empirical evidence reveals a number of insights and gaps on the effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee performance in the formal sector in Lusaka. There is however significant literature supporting the view that compensation, training, career planning, and employee participation have a positive impact on performance but with regards to the context of Lusaka and Zambia as a whole there exists some specific areas that require attention.

Compensation: Numerous studies carried out globally and within the region have shown that provision of adequate compensation to employees is one of the major factors that increase motivation and performance to employees. However, in the formal sector in Lusaka, the existing data on the impact of compensation management strategies such as performance-related pay and other nonfinancial benefits on retention of employees and their efficiency is insufficient. There is an opportunity for further study, which is, how distribution of compensation practices can perfect staff training and educational development in the interests of the organization and employees in Lusaka taking into account the existing economic challenges and inflation.

Training: Even though training is viewed as a key factor for improving employee performance, not much can be said empirically about the efficiency of the training programs currently available in the formal sector of Lusaka. There is a missing piece in explaining the particular training that is best able to improve performance and how technology can be employed to improve the training. Furthermore, it is necessary to carry out research that evaluates the influence of training on long lasting career opportunities and for the organizations.

Career Planning: One of such factors that influences employee motivation and possibility to stay with the organization is proper career planning, however, there is little information about the practice and effects of such career development programs that are available in Lusaka. The challenge is in deciding a set of best practices of career planning so as to synchronize with what the organisations intends to achieve and what the employees aspire to achieve. More research is needed to be able to design career planning as part of HRM processes that would respond to employees' needs in a competitive marketplace and help businesses grow by using the available talents.

Employee Participation: The literature reveals that employee participation improves performance by developing ownership and engagement. However, with reference to Lusaka's formal sector, there is a gap on the extent to which more of the empirical management practices such as participative management have been applied and their effect on the performance. Further research ought to be put in place which will examine the connection between culture, organizational factors and employee participation and also come up with measures which would foster inclusivity and teamwork.

2.3.5 Literature Synthesis

Table 2.1: Literature Synthesis

Author	Area of Study	Methodology	Results	Gap
Martocchio (2021)	Compensation in the US	Quantitative survey	Competitive pay boosts performance	Need for local context studies
Boxall (2012)	Career Success	Quantitative analysis	Clear career paths lead to success	Impact on diverse workforces
Kim & Mauborgne (2014)	Employee Participation	Qualitative review	Participation increases engagement	Cultural impact on participation
Onwudinjo (2021)	Non-Monetary Benefits in Nigeria	Survey research	Job security aids retention	Comprehensive benefit analysis needed

Phiri (2024)	Strategic HRM practices in Zambia	Case study	HRM practices effectively enhance performance	Best practices for effective HRM practices
Noe et al. (2023)	Training and Development	Review and analysis	Training enhances knowledge	Long-term career impact
Acemoglu & Autor (2011)	Human Capital	Economic modeling	Skill investment increases productivity	Application in modern settings
Blau (1964)	Social Exchange Theory	Theoretical analysis	Exchange relationships influence commitment	Need for empirical validation
Becker (1964)	Human Capital Theory	Theoretical framework	Skill investment boosts return	Impact in different sectors

2.3.6 Conceptual Framework

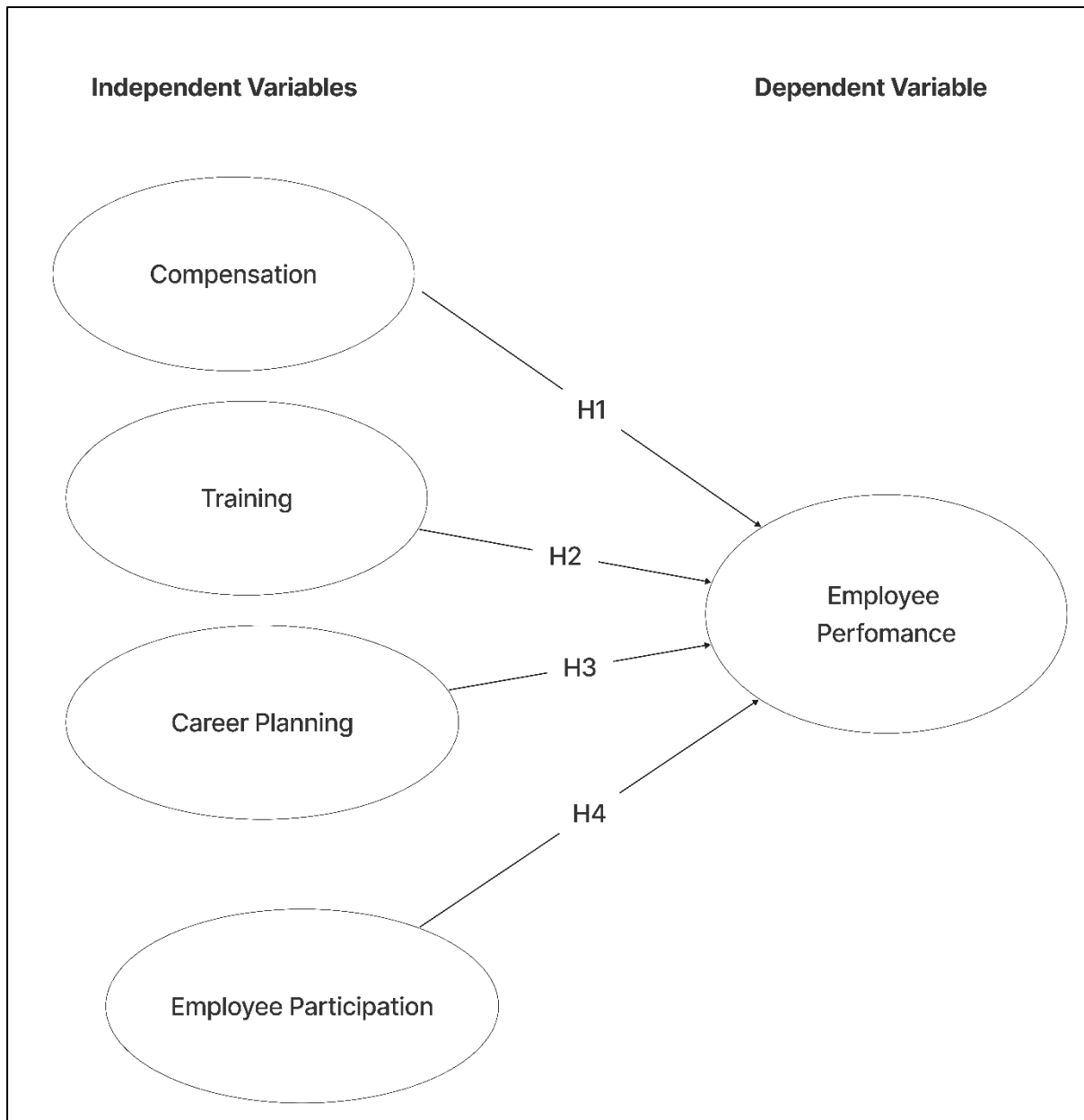


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (Author, 2024)

2.3.7 Operationalisation of variables

1. Compensation

Compensation will be examined with respect to how employees rate the fairness of their salaries and the competitiveness of their benefits. Among the questions in the survey, a rating of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) will be used to evaluate job aspect satisfaction, which includes reasons such as the reasonableness of the amount of salary to be earned, the reasonableness of the amount of salary to what is prevailing in the industry and the level of satisfaction towards the company's non-monetary incentive schemes.

2. Training

Training will be measured by evaluating employee perception of the adequacy in the quantity, quality and relevance of the training programmes which the organization has put in place. Survey items appropriate to this objective will be designed using a 5-point Likert Scale to assess the efficacy of the programs in relation to employee's career progression and performance at work.

3. Career Planning

This variable focuses on the awareness and satisfaction of employees with the career growth opportunities offered by the employer. Respondents will be asked to rate the importance of the clarity of the career advancement system, understanding and the extent to which the management promotes career development in relation to their goals using a 5-point Likert Scale, where 1: Strongly Disagree and 5: Strongly Agree.

4. Employee Participation

The extent to which employees are involved in governance within the organization will be the criteria used to define employee participation. Survey questions measuring perceptions of their ability to influence decisions, willingness of management to accept employees' insights, and the effectiveness of communication channels will also use the 5-point Likert Scale.

2.3.8 Hypothesis Development

H1: Higher satisfaction with compensation is positively associated with employee performance.

H2: Effective training programs are positively associated with employee performance.

H3: Well-structured career planning is positively associated with employee performance.

H4: Greater employee participation in decision-making is positively associated with employee performance at.

2.3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter combined a number of studies to try and explain why there exists a strong correlation between HRM practices and employee performance. The search for literature also revealed important insights and insufficiencies with the available knowledge thus providing direction to the hypotheses of the study. Whereas there is ample evidence to suggest that pay, training, career planning and employee participation enhance performance, evidence-based policy initiatives focused on the formal labour market in Lusaka were limited.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter broadly explains the methods and tools that were employed in investigating the relationship between Human Resource Management practices and employee performance in formal organisations in Lusaka. Additionally, it highlights the research method adopted by this study which is a quantitative model approach and cross-sectional survey design. This chapter also justifies a quantitative centred approach, on the grounds that it helped to achieve the research objective of hypothesis testing as well as establishing relationships among variables. Furthermore, it outlines how data was collected as well as how it was analysed with the assistance of SPSS to ensure that there was logical and statistical measuring of the relationship between employees' performance and HRM practices (compensation, training, career planning and employee participation).

3.2 Research Approach

The research methodology plays a cardinal role in any research as it highlights the instruments and techniques employed in the process of gathering, analysing and interpreting data. Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methodologies are all examples of available research methods that one can apply. They each have their own advantages for being preferred and are aligned with particular research questions or goals.

A qualitative study is one that seeks to interpret ideas and experiences. For this case, qualitative data for interpreting these can be gathered through interviews, focus groups or content analysis. Hence it might be said that they are best suited to delving deep into the intricacies of human behaviour and social processes (Creswell, 2014). However, there is also a need for quantitative information which converts numbers into useful statistics. Quantitative methods involve experiments, surveys, questionnaires etc. to measure and analyse variables as well as test logic (Bryman, 2016).

The decision to use a quantitative research approach for this study was influenced by the need to generate verifiable/empirical evidence necessary in determining the relationship that exists between HRM practices and employee performance, specifically in Lusaka's formal sector. The quantitative research method was the most

appropriate as it allowed the researcher to collect numerical data that was analysed statistically, which aligned with the research objectives of the study: to illustrate patterns as well as measure variables (Creswell, 2014).

Secondly, considering the diversity of Lusaka's formal sector, the quantitative research approach was able to contain the research sample size comprising of 109 participants, which in turn made it possible for the collection of a large dataset. This was cardinal in striking a balance with regards to representation of the study population without having to compromise on statistical validity and reliability (Babbie,2021).

Lastly, quantitative research approach utilises various processes in order to collect, analyse and interpret data, e.g., surveys (which was the research design used by the study) and Google Forms were utilised as the primary instrument for data collection. This ensured that participants were able to easily participate in the study by the use of their electronic devices (smart phones and p. c's). The implementation of the cross-sectional survey together with the Google Forms ensured that the researcher operated within the study's timeline, and they also helped with cost-cutting as the researcher did not have to spend much on logistics (Fowler, 2014).

3.3 Research Design

The research design used for this study was a cross-sectional survey design. In this design, data was collected at a single point in time and was utilised to scrutinize how the dependent variable (employee performance) related to several independent variables (compensation, training, career planning and employee participation). The cross-sectional survey played a key role in ensuring the collection of huge amounts of data from multiple respondents within a reasonable space of time at a low cost which proved beneficial for the researcher (Creswell, 2014).

According to Creswell (2014), a cross-sectional design was paramount in the gathering of research data at a single point in time, providing an accurate illustration of the current state of the relationship between HRM practices and their effect on employee performance. This was in alignment with the study's objective to describe current relationships amongst the independent and dependent variables without the need for a prolonged timeline for gathering research data.

Lastly, according to Field (2018), cross-sectional designs go hand-in-hand with quantitative research as they enable the measurement of multiple variables simultaneously, promoting statistical analysis, namely: correlation and regression, which were a requirement in determining relationships among variables in the study as well as the drawing of conclusions based on quantitative data collected.

3.4 Population

The research population comprised of a total of 150 employees from various organisations across Lusaka, and they all belonged to the formal sector. This population size was sufficient in terms of representing employees in Lusaka's formal sector as research has revealed that a sample size in the range of 100-200 participants is appropriate in the generation of meaningful statistical analysis involving performance metrics across multiple variables, therefore, the research population ensured the attainment of a valid sample size (Creswell, 2014).

3.5 Sample Size

Slovin's formula, is a statistical method applied in order to determine the appropriate sample size needed for a survey when the population being studied is large. It's employed in order to generate an estimation of a sample size that will provide a certain level of confidence with regards to study results (Ryan, 2013).

I calculated the appropriate sample size for this study using Slovin's formula.

According to Slovin's formula:

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

- n= sample size
- N = population size (150)
- e = margin of error (typically 0.05 for a 95% confidence level)

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = \frac{150}{1 + 150(0.05)^2}$$

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = \frac{150}{1 + 150(0.0025)}$$

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = \frac{150}{1 + 0.375}$$

$$\text{Sample size (n)} = 109.09$$

Therefore, rounding down for practicality in survey distribution, the sample size required for this study was 109. Since a balance between data that is accurate and feasible had to be struck, this figure assured that the research results were statistically dependable at a 95% confidence level while maintaining generalizability to the target population.

3.5.1 Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique was deemed the most appropriate techniques as it enabled the researcher to evaluate data from various subgroup's that make-up Lusaka's formal sector (type of industry, age group, educational-level, etc) and randomly selecting participants from each stratum, ensuring that sampling bias was addressed as well as promoting proportional representation of key industries within Lusaka's formal sector (Ryan, 2013).

The second justification for the application of stratified random sampling was due to the fact that in order to generate results that could be generalized, quantitative research demanded the use of statistically valid data. Stratified random sampling promoted this by making sure that all subgroups relevant to the study were proportionately incorporated (Babbie, 2021).

Lastly, the use of Google Forms by the researcher facilitated the manageable distribution of surveys to the research participants, which in turn ensured that stratified random sampling was logistically achievable. The use of email, WhatsApp group as well as professional networks such as LinkedIn targeted participants from vast industries within Lusaka's formal sector. Not only did this approach promote the coverage of all relevant subgroups, but it also greatly maintained cost-effectiveness of the study (Fowler, 2014).

3.6 Data Collection

For this research, the data collection that was carried out was done through Google Forms, an online survey tool designed to grant participants access to surveys via internet connected devices such as smartphones, tablets as well as computers (Raju, 2016).

Google Forms made it easier for respondents to answer the questionnaires anywhere and anytime. The use of email, WhatsApp groups as well as professional networks such as LinkedIn targeted participants from vast industries within Lusaka's formal sector. Not only did this approach promote the coverage of all relevant subgroups, but it also greatly maintained cost-effectiveness of the study by cutting numerous logistical issues that would have been there if data was collected physically (Fowler, 2014).

Furthermore, Google Forms arranged the responses in a prepared database thereby removing transcription errors as well as speeding up data processing (Raju, 2016). This approach proved cheaper and efficient since there was no need to buy and print paper copies of questionnaires as well as appointment bookings with respondents.

Google forms, on the other hand, enabled data collection in an unopened format that gave more candid answers with respect to questions on wages and performance evaluations. Additionally, this tool allowed for the real-time access of information thus enabling the researcher to go through the answers given by the respondents and refer back to them at a later date.

This is why this method was considered most appropriate for the study as it made data collection efficient, secure and easy.

3.7 Data Analysis

The data which was collected using surveys was then analysed using SPSS statistical software to ensure the constructed data was precise and trustworthy. The first step of data analysis involved cleaning the data, identifying any mistakes, or missing values in the collected set. This step aided with the analysis. Then, descriptive statistics like means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were used to ascertain the response characteristics for the data (Pallant ,2005).

For the purposes of inferential statistics, regression analysis was used to assess the extent to which the independent variables – compensation, training, career planning and employee participation - influenced the dependent variable which was employee performance. The analysis was instrumental in setting up the strength and significance of the hypothesized relationships. It also assessed the regression analysis assumptions, such as normality and linearity, to check the robustness of the regression model findings (Pallant, 2005).

Thirdly, bearing in mind that this study employed a cross-sectional survey design in order to generate data at a single point in time, SPSS was the most appropriate data analysis platform as it was equipped with the ability to process correlations, ANOVA as well as linear regression models (Creswell, 2014).

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was selected as the primary data analysis method due to its ability to quantify relationships between multiple variables and predict outcomes. This technique is particularly effective in assessing how various HRM practices—such as training, compensation, and career development—independently and collectively influence employee performance. According to (NIIT Editorial, 2023), regression analysis was the best analysis data method because:

Quantification of Relationships: Regression analysis enables the measurement of the strength and direction of the relationship between independent variables (HRM practices) and the dependent variable (employee performance). This allows for precise identification of which practices have significant impacts:

Control for Confounding Variables: By incorporating multiple variables, regression analysis can isolate the effect of each HRM practice on employee performance, controlling for potential confounders. This ensures that the observed effects are attributable to the variables of interest;

Predictive Capability: Regression models can be used to predict employee performance based on specific HRM practices, facilitating data-driven decision-making in HR strategies.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Let it be stated that there were ethical considerations that were recognised in this research so that the dignity, rights and welfare of all the participants were respected. In getting this data, the study ensured that approval was obtained from the Institutional Review Board also known as IRB to honour ethical standards. An informed consent form was used to explain to the participants about the purpose of the research, the participants' role in the study, and assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. There were no payments made to the participants and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time (Resnik, 2007).

The information obtained from the respondents was treated with utmost secrecy with access being restricted to the researcher only. Passwords protected all computer records, and paper records were stored in secured/locked cabinets.

Results were presented with ethical consideration in mind. Accurate reporting of the results was presented and if there were any limitations of the study, they were communicated. These are important ethical issues in the modern world, and these in particular were crucial in ensuring the adherence to the ethical principles of the study (Israel & Hay, 2006).

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used to address the research questions said in the preceding chapter. Firstly, it is concerned with how human resource management practices such as training, career planning employee involvement and compensation affect employees' performance. Additionally, correlation and regression analyses are done on these variables. Thus, main contributors that improve human resource practices within organizations are depicted.

4.2 Sample profile

Table 4.2: Sample profile (Source: Author, 2024)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)	Valid Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent (%)
Age Group	18-25	22	20.2	20.2	20.2
	26-35	21	19.3	19.3	39.4
	36-45	21	19.3	19.3	58.7
	46-55	26	23.9	23.9	82.6
	56 and above	19	17.4	17.4	100.0
	Total		109	100.0	100.0
Gender	Female	50	45.9	45.9	45.9
	Male	59	54.1	54.1	100.0
	Total	109	100.0	100.0	
Education Level	Bachelor's Degree	19	17.4	17.4	17.4
	Certificate/Diploma	22	20.2	20.2	37.6
	Doctorate	17	15.6	15.6	53.2
	High School Diploma	21	19.3	19.3	72.5
	Master's Degree	30	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total		109	100.0	100.0
Years in Organization	1-3 years	21	19.3	19.3	19.3
	4-6 years	17	15.6	15.6	34.9
	7-10 years	22	20.2	20.2	55.0
	Less than 1 year	23	21.1	21.1	76.1
	More than 10 years	26	23.9	23.9	100.0
	Total		109	100.0	100.0

From these figures, it is clear that this distribution is not biased but evenly spread with the highest percentage at **46-55** years which is **23.9%** and those over **56** years are least, making up to only **17.4%**. It therefore means that there is a sufficient level of maturity and experience among employees in this organization. This age bracket comprises fresh workers alongside old ones who hold different opinions on HRM policies and their impact upon the staff performance.

Males were slightly more than females by a slim margin of **54.1%** to **45.9%**, indicating that these figures were valid in representing the overall gender split across Lusaka's formal labour sector. Such equal representation of sexes provides support for both sides that are males and females in their roles as employees.

Regarding levels of education, the majority of the participants had masters' degrees, which accounted for **27.5%** in terms of educational qualifications. Next, there were certificates/diplomas contributing to **20.2%** and high school diplomas contributing to **19.3%**. The mix of these education-levels occurs among highly educated employees with various forms of formal schooling that result in differing HRM responses due to these level discrepancies identified.

Lastly, respondents were either long-serving or newly hired; this is where differences in tenure emerge. In these two most prolific categories, those who had worked for over ten years made up (**23.9%**) of the respondents and others who had been with the company for less than a year made up (**21.1%**).

4.3 Inferential analysis

Importance of Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a key tool in statistics for understanding how strong and in which direction variables relate to each other – helping form ideas and test theories. According to Pallant (2005) in the SPSS Survival Manual, she gives important insights into how variables connect – letting researchers find meaningful links, like the relationship between income and education in social studies. Though it does not show cause and effect, correlation analysis is very useful in predicting and making decisions in many areas – helping organizations improve plans using data insights. Pallant (2005), further stresses the importance of checking statistical significance and looking at complex factors to keep the observed relationships trustworthy and relevant.

Table 4.3: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Employee Performance	3.89	0.49	109	1.000						
2 Age	30.45	8.12	109	0.104	1.000					
3 Gender	0.51	0.50	109	0.011	0.139	1.000				
4 Compensation	3.72	0.62	109	0.459**	0.002	0.128	1.000			
5 Training	4.11	0.48	109	0.591**	-0.076	0.043	-0.027	1.000		
6 Career Planning	3.55	0.56	109	0.266**	0.187	-0.087	0.068	-0.080	1.000	
7 Employee Participation	3.67	0.53	109	0.373**	0.145	-0.070	0.046	0.009	0.122	1.000

* Indicates significance at $p < 0.05$. ** indicates significance at $p < 0.01$.

Source: Author, 2024

Impact of training on employee performance

The study reveals that training was the most significantly and positively correlated independent variable, with ($r = 0.591$, $p < 0.001$). These findings reveal the necessity for continuous training programs within the work environment so as to promote adequate learning as well as skill acquisition by employees. This means that the skills should be improved and abilities built to improve job performance in employees.

Impact of compensation on employee performance

Compensation also illustrated a positive relationship with employee performance, with ($r = 0.459, p < 0.001$). Which implies that reward systems including competitive wage structures can motivate workers leading to increased productivity. The strength of the relationship is an indication that appropriate compensation strategies can be beneficial to an organisation as it could lead to enhanced employee motivation.

Impact of career planning on employee performance

Surprisingly, career planning was moderately associated with employee performance, indicating a correlation of ($r = 0.266, p < 0.005$). These findings suggest that organizations that intentionally incorporate career planning into their HRM process are likely to have better performing employees.

Impact of employee participation on employee performance

Employee participation had a strong correlation to employee performance, at ($r = 0.373, p < 0.001$). This demonstrates its significance to enhancing performance particularly through employee commitment and involvement.

4.4 Model Summary

Table 4.4: Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.869 ^a	.754	.745	.20255

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Participation, Training, Compensation, Career Planning

Source: Author, 2024

The regression model suggests a high level of predictive accuracy, evident by an R-value of **0.869**. This means that the relationship between compensation, training, career planning and employee participation as independent variables and employee performance as dependent variable is very high. This implies that approximately **75.4** percent of changes in employee performance are brought about by this model as indicated by the R-Square value. Moreover, it is evident from the analysis of data in this study that this model provided a good fit (R-Square value is quite high). The Adjusted R-Square value of **0.745** was less than R-Square because more predictors were used and it also considers sample size which supports its vitality. These findings therefore indicate that all these variables contribute significantly to employees' performance hence none can be ignored by considering their individual importance. The Standard Error of Estimate (SEE) of **0.20255** indicates slight divergence from predicted values.

4.5 ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Table 4.5: ANOVA Output

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.107	4	3.277	79.874	<.001 ^b
	Residual	4.267	104	.041		
	Total	17.374	108			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Participation, Training, Compensation, Career Planning

Source: Author, 2024

The ANOVA table also provides additional support for the importance of the model. The Regression Sum of Squares is **13.107** with **4** degrees of freedom, while the Residual Sum of Squares is **4.267** with **104** degrees of freedom. The regressions Mean Square is **3.277** and for residuals it is equal to **0.041**. F-statistic is **79.874**, with p-value of **0.001**, confirming that the likelihood of the observed relation happening by chance is extremely low, further emphasizing that the strength of the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

4.6 Coefficients

Table 4.6: Coefficients (Source: Author, 2024)

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.815	.200		4.078	<.001
	Compensation	.245	.027	.445	9.123	<.001
	Training	.385	.030	.620	12.717	<.001
	Career Planning	.149	.030	.247	5.009	<.001
	Employee Participation	.181	.028	.317	6.465	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The table of coefficients serves as a guide to the conducting of the analysis by providing understanding on how each independent variable impacts employee performance:

- **Constant:** The constant (intercept) bears a value of **0.815**, p-value of **0.001**, which proves to be statistically significant. This constant, given that all independent variables are equal to zero, is the value which will be expected for Employee Performance, although such an assumption is likely to be unrealistic in this case.
- **Compensation:** Compensation's coefficient is **0.245** – standard error measures at **0.027** – and a t-value of **9.123**. The p-value of **0.001** means compensation impacts employee Performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) is **0.445** showing a moderately strong positive effect on employee performance.
- **Training:** The coefficient for training is **0.385** with a standard error of **0.030** and a t-value of **12.717**. The p-value is **0.001** – this shows training strongly impacts employee performance. The beta for training is **0.620** – this means training has the greatest effect among all factors, highlighting its importance in improving employee performance.
- **Career Planning:** Career planning holds a coefficient of **0.149** with a standard error of **0.030** and a t-value of **5.009**. Its p-value – **0.001** – shows it impacts employee performance. The Beta for career planning is **0.247** – indicating a positive yet smaller effect compared to compensation and training.
- **Employee Participation:** Employee participation's coefficient is **0.181** with a standard error of **0.028** and a t-value of **6.465**. The p-value of **0.001** shows its significance. The Beta value of **0.317** shows that employee participation also positively affects employee performance – though its effect is a bit less than compensation and training.

Table 4.7: Hypothesis testing results (Source: Author, 2024)

Hypotheses	Description	Test	Statistic	Supported or Not Supported
H ₁	<i>H₁: Compensation has a positive influence on Employee Performance.</i>	Regression	B = 0.445	Supported
H ₂	<i>H₂: Training has a positive influence on Employee Performance.</i>	Regression	B = 0.620	Supported
H ₃	<i>H₃: Career Planning has a positive influence on Employee Performance.</i>	Regression	B = 0.247	Supported
H ₄	<i>H₄: Employee Participation has a positive influence on Employee Performance.</i>	Regression	B = 0.317	Supported

4.7.1 Discussion of Hypotheses Against Existing Literature

Hypothesis H₁: Compensation and Employee Performance

Based on the results, it was found that compensation had a significant positive effect on employee performance (**B = 0.445, p < 0.001**). According to Lazear (2018) and Martocchio (2021), this is what researchers have been researching for when they realized that competitive pay increases motivation and effectiveness. On the other hand, Deci et al. (1999) assert that without intrinsic drivers, monetary incentives can only last for so long in improving performance; however, future research should examine intrinsic motivations as well.

Hypothesis H₂: Training and Employee Performance

These findings support earlier research on learning and development that training has been identified as the strongest predictor of employee performance among explanatory variables (**B = 0.620, p < 0.001**) (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Kamoche et al.'s (2015) work also suggested that skilled staff can enhance their productivity through training initiatives in emerging markets like those found in the sub-Saharan Africa.

Hypothesis H₃: Career Planning and Employee Performance

According to the finding of this survey, employee performance is significantly predicted by career planning (**B = 0.247, p < 0.001**). As per Greenhaus et al. (2018), if a career is well planned and developed, it can bring happiness and will make an employee remain in that organization for longer period. In contrast only slight impact existed which means that other variables may limit its use as the career development model suggested.

Hypothesis H₄: Employee Participation and Employee Performance

Employee Participation does predict employee performance as well (**B = 0.317, p < 0.001**). (Locke & Latham 2019) reported results that imply employees are motivated when they become involved in decision-making.

4.8 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher discussed in detail the relationship between HRM practices and employee performance using statistical tools. They had strong links with each other due to a positive association with: training, career planning, compensation, and employee performance as indicated by the results of correlation test conducted for this research.

Also, analysis from the regression model revealed that employee performance is mostly predicted by training followed by compensation and employee participation.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The results were analysed, and findings were discussed to decide the impact of compensation, training, career planning and employee participation on employee performance using statistical analysis. These findings were dealt with individually and the statistics were presented alongside the existing literature. The outcomes recommended what interventions could be employed in terms of human resource management practices that could lead to improved employee performance. Every subsection reflects on the findings and conclusions in relation to other sources of information for similarities and differences determination.

5.2 Discussion of Specific Objectives

Objective 1: To Examine the Effect of Compensation on Employee Performance

It was clear from the results of regression analysis that compensation had a substantial effect on employee performance albeit not huge, as its coefficient value was **0.245** and t-value was **9.123 (p < 0.001)**. The interaction coefficient between compensation and employee performance was positively associated with the correlation term of **0.459** not as strong as other measures for employee performance. This is to say that every organization should be able to compensate its employees well so that they can put-in their best, though this might not be the focus for this study. These findings support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory which viewed compensation as one of many hygiene factors that would prevent dissatisfaction but doesn't become a high motivator to someone (Herzberg, 1968).

According to research, employees must be well compensated if they are to be satisfied and not leave. As they contend that "employees' motivation is greatly influenced by the compensation as money is one of their basic needs, it's also a factor that happens to be a consideration in joining an organization" (Martocchio, 2021). Nevertheless, BPR effect may imply that reward becomes less important when employee motivation comes into play in highly autonomous jobs.

Moreover, culture's impact on organizational efficiency and market positioning can affect how much pay will increase employee productivity. In high performing companies where payment matches market rate, Pfeffer (1998) sees other issues like career development, work environment and recognition as being critical. This is in agreement with the findings obtained from the current study, revealing that the relatively low importance attached to compensation suggests the value of non-monetary forms of compensation as well in promoting employee performance.

Objective 2: To Assess the Effect of Training on Employee Performance

The most significant HRM practice on employee performance was training with an extremely high unstandardized coefficient of **0.385** and t-statistics of **12.717** ($p < 0.001$). The correlation co-efficient for training and employee performance was highest at **0.591** among the variables examined, indicating its level of impact on employee performance. Based on these findings, there is need for regular employee development programs and these findings are in support of Noe et al.'s (2023) assertion that such training ensures that employees are equipped with proper skills and knowledge leading to better employee performance.

Training further enables an organization to use its human capital more productively, and this distinctly supports Resource-Based Theory which argues that human capital is an indispensable resource for an organization and that investing in the skillsets of employees can create a competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). The results of this study in some way confirms this argument as these results also suggest that after engaging in training, people not only become more productive but also more successful with their organizations. This means that training is not only a correlational feature but rather a strategical feature in the case of aiding performance.

In addition to these, several models have argued previously that training programs lead to higher employee engagement levels and job satisfaction which in the end causes a decrease in turnover rates (Salas et al., 2012). Employees will be more engaged and committed if they know the organization cares about them, and their engagement and commitment levels will guide their performance. Therefore, training aids in developing skills and creating a sense of engagement and loyalty that is necessary for excellent performance.

To sum up the finding, training is indeed essential to performance management, and out of all types of HR practices this study looked at, it was the one that had the greatest influence on employee performance. Therefore, organisations should not cut back on training programs since they are liable to increase productivity, engagement and retention rates in great proportions.

Objective 3: To Examine the Effect of Career Planning on Employee Performance

As per the analysis, it was found that career planning has a moderated positive relationship with employee performance with a beta value equal to **0.247** and t-value equal to **5.009 (p < 0.001)**. It was also reported that the Pearson correlation coefficient for career planning and employee performance was **0.266**, which means that while it does exist it is a moderate relationship. These conclusions imply that career planning is needed but not as immediately influential as training, in terms of influencing employee performance. As Greenhaus et al. (2018) claims, motivation is enhanced by offering reason and sense of planning to employees which is ensured through career planning.

Motivation and passion for work are necessary among the employees, which can be achieved by using proper career development planning, based on clear structures that therefore lead to a direct positive career development when goals are achieved. This research has shown that workers with realistic career aims are more likely to be satisfied with their job and perform better when compared to those who do not have any goals in their careers. The Goal-Setting Theory suggests that individuals will strive hard whenever they want to achieve tasks which are difficult and specific (Rousseau, 1993). Hence, by applying career development planning with a lot of moderation in this case, it becomes evident that the latter is good for keeping them for purposes of progression rather than biting vice performance and effectiveness.

Additionally, employee emotional ties have been reported to lower employee turnover rates when the business provides its team a sense of direction, which goes to show how employees are reluctant to change jobs when they know their company has something to offer them (Hall, 2004). The moderate effect observed in this study

indicates that career planning does impact performance, but it increases performance even further if used with other motivational tools that include training.

Objective 4: To Describe the Effect of Employee Participation on Employee Performance

Employee participation significantly affected employee performance with a coefficient of **0.181** and a t-value of **6.465 (p < 0.001)**. The Pearson correlation which was derived for employee participation and employee performance was **0.373** which suggests a strong relationship. This is consistent with McGregor's Theory Y which says that people are more motivated if they are given trust and involvement in the decision making of the organization. The results of the study show that organizations that promote a participative culture are highly likely to experience increase in employee engagement and consequently productivity (McGregor, 1960).

Robbins et al, (2018) also validate the importance of employee participation in that they established participative decision-making increases employee loyalty by facilitating feeling of ownership and responsibility. It suggests that when employees have a sense that their ideas matter to someone, they become more invested in their work and as a result are more productive. Therefore, the results of this study support the idea that active participation of the employees in the decision making of the company helps to reach better performance.

Similarly, employee participation encourages innovation as employees are likely to offer practical solutions and take part in discussions that revolve around the organization's goals and challenges (Yukl, 2013). This participatory approach not only encourages high morale, but also uses the range of views that people in a team possess to address an issue. The employee participation is therefore not only good for performance, but it also enhances the culture of the organization by making it more innovative.

Implications of study:

Theoretical Implications

- **Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964):** The findings support this theory as employees are more motivated when they see a direct link between their efforts (training, participation) and expected rewards (higher pay, career growth).
- **Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964):** The study aligns with this theory, demonstrating that employees reciprocate fair treatment (good compensation, training opportunities) with higher commitment and performance.
- **Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964):** The research confirms that investing in employees' skills through training and structured career development enhances their productivity and economic value.

Practical Implications

- **Policy Recommendations:** Organizations should prioritize training programs and ensure competitive pay structures to retain skilled employees and boost performance.
- **Workplace Engagement:** Increased employee participation in decision-making processes can enhance commitment and reduce turnover.
- **Career Development:** Organizations should strengthen career planning initiatives, offering mentorship and internal promotion pathways to sustain employee motivation.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

- **Cross-Sectional Design:** The study only captured data at one point in time, limiting insights into long-term trends.
- **Sample Size Constraints:** Although statistically valid, a larger sample may provide broader generalizability.
- **Self-Reporting Bias:** Responses were based on employee perceptions, which may introduce bias in evaluating HRM effectiveness.

5.3 Chapter summary

This chapter encompassed a comprehensive review of the results obtained from the study and how the statistical findings met the research aims and how they were previously established in literature. The training provided to employees played a major role in improving productivity and skill enhancement, in fact, quite remarkably, training was the strongest predictor of employee performance. As a positive predictor, employee participation, too, proved to be a major factor as well since it inclusively focused on the decision-making and empowerment aspect.

Career planning also proved to be important as the findings suggested that it has a moderate/strong effect on long-term engagement while also creating satisfaction for the employees. Moreover, upholding the findings that were revealed, clear career progression opportunities were a motivational influence as well as for retention purposes, but its influence's strength was much lower compared to that of training and participation. Even though compensation is significant, the results showed that its influence was moderate, thus, meaning that money alone cannot boost best performance levels without the aid of instilled motivation factors.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the conclusions from the findings of this study will be outlined and also practical recommendations will be made in order to improve employee performance through suitable human resource management practices. The chapter investigates each research objective based on the results that were described in the previous chapter so as to comprehensively comprehend issues such as how compensation, training, career planning, and employee participation relate to employee performance. Apart from practical suggestions on management, the chapter will indicate possible areas of research in the future and the limitations of this study.

The study determined that compensation has a moderate relationship with employee performance although it is statistically significant. Greatly competitive compensation still is a requirement in motivation and retention of workers, however, if compared with other HR practices, it is not outstanding. This finding suggests that although there may be financial incentives such as those in form of bonuses and salaries, they may not have much effect on the intrinsic motivation which is more contributive to improved performance. In other words, the work of compensation helps make employee performance better but only if it is combined with some motivating factors.

From all assessed variables, training was found to be the greatest single predictor of employee performance. Therefore, training courses or programs play a crucial role in building an employee's knowledge, skills set and competence thus improving organization performance in general (Armstrong & Taylor 2020). Such a result shows a need for further development and growth of firm employees by investing in them. The presence of highly trained employees leads to lower turnovers within the organization since they are skilled and dedicated. As such, training is fundamental to any human resource activity within firms that aim at enhancing performance.

Although the relationship was of modest strength, it was seen that career planning positively related to employee performance. Training on the other hand has a direct impact on short term performance. This is contrary to career planning which is not likely to have an immediate aggressive but rather a postponed effect on employee commitment and gratification. A worker who is guaranteed a career change after a

specific period performs better as they are within the goals of the organization. Besides, job satisfaction within organizations has been achieved through fostering positive relationship between employee's attitude and behaviour towards their work. In order to hold onto employees appropriately and increase motivation for completion of duties given; organizations should provide chances for growing professionally in any career path one offers themselves to be pushed into by those around him or her.

Coaching and training play a major role and two or more people coming together creates innovation. Employee participation had a significant positive effect on employee performance as such employees perform better if they are allowed to contribute to decision-making and work in the organization's activities. These results offer some important insights into how well participative management works. It also stimulates involvement and sparks creativity because it acts as motivation for employees who feel that they own the decision being taken. Therefore, employees who are ready to get involved in organizational activities will be active and so improve the performance of the firm. Thus, active participating is a condition for improving its performance.

6.2 Recommendations

1. Effect of Compensation on Employee Performance:

- Compensation had a significant positive impact on employee performance ($r = 0.459$, $p < 0.001$).
- Competitive salaries and benefits enhance motivation and retention, reducing turnover in Lusaka's formal sector.

2. Effect of Training on Employee Performance:

- Training was the strongest predictor of employee performance ($r = 0.591$, $p < 0.001$).
- Well-structured training programs lead to higher productivity and skills development.

3. Effect of Career Planning on Employee Performance:

- Career planning had a moderate positive relationship with performance ($r = 0.266, p < 0.005$).
- Employees with clear career growth opportunities exhibit higher engagement and performance.

4. Effect of Employee Participation on Employee Performance:

- Employee participation had a strong positive impact ($r = 0.373, p < 0.001$).
- Involving employees in decision-making increases their commitment and productivity.

Actionable Recommendations for Organizations in Lusaka's Formal Sector

1. Enhance Compensation Strategies

- Introduce **performance-based incentives** such as bonuses and commission structures.
- Benchmark salaries against industry standards to ensure competitiveness.
- Provide **non-monetary benefits** such as health insurance and wellness programs.

2. Prioritize Employee Training and Development

- Implement **continuous learning programs** and on-the-job training.
- Use **digital learning platforms** to provide flexible training opportunities.
- Align training programs with **organizational goals** to maximize effectiveness.

3. Improve Career Development Opportunities

- Establish **clear promotion pathways** to motivate employees.
- Introduce **mentorship and coaching programs** to support career growth.
- Develop **succession planning strategies** to retain top talent.

4. Encourage Employee Participation

- Implement **open-door policies** for employee feedback.
- Engage employees in **strategic decision-making processes** to increase commitment.
- Establish **collaborative work environments** that promote teamwork and inclusivity.

6.3 Future research

Future research could explore the long-term effects of these HR practices on Employee performance across a broader range of industries and cultural contexts. Although this study included multiple organizations, there is room for further investigation into how organizational differences, such as size, structure, and sector, may moderate the relationship between HR practices and employee performance.

Future studies could also examine the impact of emerging technologies on HR practices, particularly in remote and hybrid work environments, where technology plays a critical role in managing employee engagement and performance.

Additionally, exploring the role of individual differences, such as personality traits, learning styles, and intrinsic motivation, could provide deeper insights into how HR practices are perceived and how they influence performance outcomes.

6.4 Limitations of the Study

This study has a few constraints, even if it involved many organizations, which makes the findings applicable to different contexts.

Firstly, the information in this study was based on reports given by individuals and these could be subjective depending on what they wanted to hear or how well they knew themselves.

The second limitation is limited to some HR practices that do not cover other possible influential determinants such as organizational cultures, leadership styles, and general economic conditions.

Lastly, although different firms being included leads to a wider view of things may exist, there are policies and practices for every organization which may lead to variations in applying these findings among individual firms. Thus, these limitations should be addressed in future researches by using more varied data collection methods so that other HR practices can be included as well; moreover, moderating variables should also be considered to have a comprehensive understanding about HR functions and employee performance.

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Questionnaire

This questionnaire is aimed at gathering feedback about the effects of different HRM practices on employee performance in the formal sector within Lusaka. Your answers will help us in investigating how rewards, training, career development and involvement of employees affects job performance.

It is divided into several sections focusing on various aspects of HRM practices and employee performance. With reference to a 5-point Likert scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

Remember there are no right or wrong answers and your frank opinions will be appreciated. Your completed questionnaires will remain confidential and anonymous with only the information used for research purposes.

Please take your time as you respond to every question carefully. It should approximately take you 10-15 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Thank you very much for taking part which will offer beneficial insights towards improvements of HRM Practices and Employee Performance in this sector.

Thank you for your participation

.

Demographic Information

1. What is your age group?

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56 and above

2. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

3. What is your highest level of education?

- High School Diploma
- Certificate/Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Doctorate
- Other (please specify)

4. How many years have you worked in your current organization?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years

- More than 10 years

5. What is your current job level?

- Entry-level
- Mid-level
- Senior-level
- Management
- Executive

Section A: Compensation and Employee Performance

	Question	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
C1	I am satisfied with the current salary I receive for my job responsibilities.					
C2	The compensation package offered by my organization motivates me to perform well.					
C3	My pay is fair in relation to my job responsibilities and performance.					
C4	My organization offers sufficient non-monetary benefits (e.g., health insurance, bonuses).					
C5	I believe salary increments are given fairly and based on performance.					

Section B: Training and Employee Performance

	Question	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
T1	The training provided by my organization enhances my job performance.					
T2	I am regularly given opportunities to participate in training programs.					
T3	The training I receive is relevant to my current role and responsibilities.					
T4	My job confidence has increased due to the training offered by my organization.					
T5	The organization encourages continuous learning and development.					

Section C: Career Planning and Employee Performance

	Question	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
CP1	I have a clear career path in my organization.					
CP2	My organization provides opportunities for career growth and advancement.					
CP3	My career goals align with the development plans provided by my organization.					
CP4	I receive adequate guidance on career planning from my supervisors.					
CP5	The organization supports skill development for long-term career growth.					

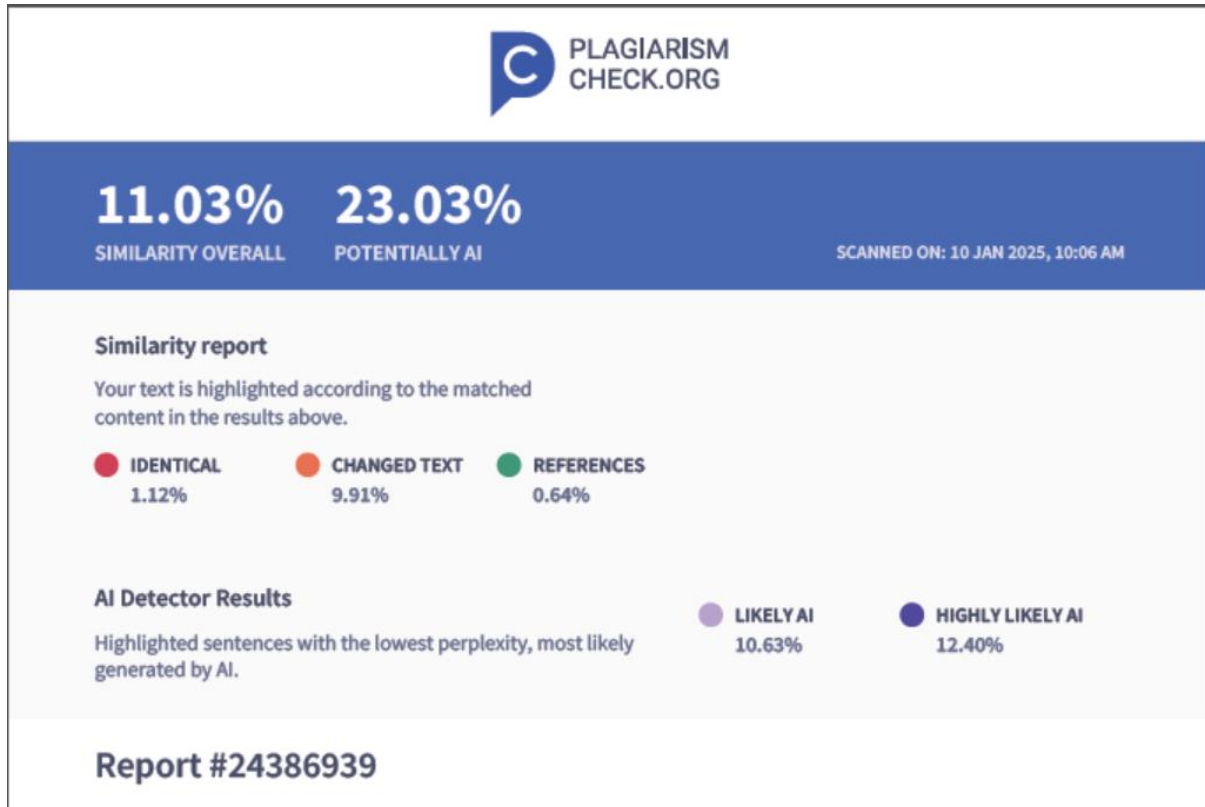
Section D: Employee Participation and Employee Performance

	Question	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
EMP1	I am encouraged to participate in decision-making processes.					
EMP2	My input is valued when decisions are made within the organization.					
EMP3	The organization promotes an open environment for sharing ideas and opinions.					
EMP4	I feel empowered to contribute to changes in workplace practices.					
EMP5	Regular meetings allow me to express my opinions and concerns freely.					

Section E: Employee Performance

	Question	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Disagree	3 - Neutral	4 - Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
EP1	I consistently meet or exceed my performance targets.					
EP2	My work quality is regularly praised by my supervisors and peers.					
EP3	I am able to manage my workload effectively to meet deadlines.					
EP4	I take initiative to improve my work processes and performance.					
EP5	My contributions positively impact the overall success of my team or department.					

Appendix: Plagiarism Similarity Report



Results

Sources that matched your submitted document.

● IDENTICAL ● CHANGED TEXT

EXTERNAL DATABASE	1. 1.92% University of Lusaka - 6 Jan 2025, 1:47 PM	● ●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	2. 1.78% University of Lusaka - 17 Jul 2024, 5:53 AM	●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	3. 1.56% University of Lusaka - 15 Jul 2024, 9:14 AM	●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	4. 1.43% University of Lusaka - 14 Jul 2024, 2:00 PM	● ●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	5. 1.42% University of Lusaka - 13 Jul 2024, 12:28 AM	● ●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	6. 1.34% University of Lusaka - 10 Jul 2024, 1:11 PM	●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	7. 1.2% University of Lusaka - 13 Jul 2024, 12:38 AM	● ●
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EXTERNAL DATABASE	9. 1.05% University of Lusaka - 12 Jul 2024, 1:40 PM	● ●

EXTERNAL DATABASE		
10. 1.02%	University of Lusaka - 12 Jul 2024, 10:06 AM	● ●
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12. 0.91%	University of Lusaka - 12 Jul 2024, 3:17 PM	●
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13. 0.9%	University of Lusaka - 9 Jan 2025, 7:15 AM	● ●
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14. 0.83%	University of Lusaka - 7 Jan 2025, 1:05 AM	●
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15. 0.82%	University of Lusaka - 30 Jun 2024, 9:37 AM	●
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16. 0.8%	University of Lusaka - 21 Jul 2024, 5:22 PM	● ●
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17. 0.79%	University of Lusaka - 19 Jun 2024, 2:36 PM	● ●
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EXTERNAL DATABASE	29. 0.69% University of Lusaka - 13 Jul 2024, 3:22 AM	●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	30. 0.69% University of Lusaka - 8 Dec 2024, 11:10 AM	● ●
EXTERNAL DATABASE	31. 0.68% University of Lusaka - 12 Jul 2024, 9:24 AM	●

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REPORT #24386939

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REPORT #24380939

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129. <small>EXTERNAL DATABASE</small> 0.33% University of Lusaka - 11 Jul 2024, 3:27 PM		
<small>AUTHOR: NWEEMBA MULOONGO</small>		75 OF 94

<p>130. EXTERNAL DATABASE 0.33% University of Lusaka - 13 Jul 2024, 12:17 PM</p>		
<p>REPORT #24380939</p>		
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<p>140. EXTERNAL DATABASE 0.3% University of Lusaka - 13 Jul 2024, 7:52 AM</p>		
<p>AUTHOR: MWESHA MULOONGO</p>		<p>76 OF 94</p>

141.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.3% University of Lusaka - 5 Jul 2024, 2:55 AM



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142.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.29% University of Lusaka - 13 Jun 2024, 7:23 AM



143.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.29% University of Lusaka - 9 Jan 2025, 4:23 AM



144.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.29% University of Lusaka - 15 Dec 2024, 2:20 PM



145.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.28% University of Lusaka - 26 Dec 2024, 11:36 AM



146.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.28% University of Lusaka - 30 May 2024, 3:17 AM



147.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.28% University of Lusaka - 7 Jul 2024, 2:28 PM



148.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

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149.

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150.

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151.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

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AUTHOR: MWEEMBA MULOOMBO

77 OF 94

152.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

0.27% University of Lusaka - 2 Jun 2024, 3:09 AM



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153.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

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154.

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155.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

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156.

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157.

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158.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

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159.

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160.

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161.

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162.

EXTERNAL DATABASE

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		PLAGIARISM CHECK.ORG
163.	EXTERNAL DATABASE	● ●
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164.	EXTERNAL DATABASE	●
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172.	INTERNET SOURCE	●
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174.

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175.

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176.

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177.

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178.

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179.

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180.

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181.

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182.

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183.

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184.

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185.	EXTERNAL DATABASE	0.21% University of Lusaka - 12 Jul 2024, 2:59 AM		
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187.	EXTERNAL DATABASE	0.2% University of Lusaka - 8 Jan 2025, 7:31 AM		
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191.	EXTERNAL DATABASE	0.2% University of Lusaka - 12 Jul 2024, 5:17 AM		
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206.

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207.

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208.

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209.

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215.

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216.

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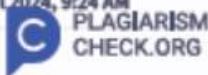
217.















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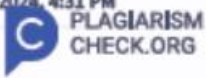
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0.13%	University of Lusaka - 30 Nov 2024, 3:14 PM	●
233.		
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<p>266.</p> <p>EXTERNAL DATABASE</p> <p>0.08% University of Lusaka - 20 Nov 2024, 10:45 AM</p>	●
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