

# Influence of Governance Practices on Sustainable Development in the County Governments in Kenya: A Case of Kitui County

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**Abstract**— The purpose of this study was to assess the influence of governance practices on sustainable development in County Governments in Kenya: A Case of Kitui County. The objectives were; to determine the influence of ethical, human resource management, performance evaluation and risk management practices on sustainable development in Kitui County and to assess the influence of risk management on sustainable development in Kitui County. The study was guided by the governance and sustainable livelihoods theories. The study adopted mixed methodology and thus applied concurrent triangulation research design. Questionnaires were used to collect data from junior employees whereas interviews were used to collect data from senior management employees. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically along the objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively and inferentially using multiple linear regression to assess the relationship between governance practices and sustainable development. This was conducted with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 23). The quantitative findings using tables and charts. The study established that realization of sustainable development in Kitui County is still low with many employees being unproductive, not meeting daily deadlines and inefficient as well as high unemployment rates. There are too many unethical work practices, ineffective human resource management practices, infrequent performance evaluation and ineffective risk management practices which has compromised realization of sustainable development. Thus, the study recommends that employees should be trained to understand the essence of productivity at work places, meeting of daily deadlines and being efficient. The county government should enforce adherence to ethical practices as a way of realizing sustainable development. The county government should recruit new employees, remunerate the existing ones very well and ensure promotions of the employees. The county government should constantly conduct job analysis and evaluation in order to place right employees for the right jobs and ensure that no employee has too much workload which might compromise efficiency and productivity. The county government, besides provision of safety materials, should train staff on personal and environment safety measures. This should go a long way in implementing OSHA Act to reduce cases of accidents and injuries which might slow employees' productivity and efficiency.

**Index Terms**— Sustainable Development, Governance Practices, Ethical Practices, Performance Evaluation Practices, Human Resource Management Practices, Risk Management Practices.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Governance is concerned with the processes, systems, practices and procedures either the formal and informal rules which that govern institutions, the manner in which these rules and regulations are applied and followed, the relationships that these rules and regulations determine or create and the nature of those relationships. Essentially, governance addresses the leadership role in the institutional framework. On the other hand, governance practices are the approaches and techniques used to improve organizational performance, focusing specifically on operations management, performance, human resource and workforce development. According to Bardhan and Mookherjee (2012), such practices include; human resource practices, adherence to ethical standards, performance evaluation, risk management and definition of roles and responsibilities.

Bardhan and Mookherjee (2012) posit that establishing and implementing good governance practices is the single most useful activity an organization's board of directors can do to create a higher functioning board while building the right foundation for achieving an organization's vision and mission. Cognizant of this assertion, Bryson, Crosby and Bloomberg (2014) assert that governments are such organizations and governance practices which they adopt must be geared towards attaining sustainable development. In devolved systems, situation is similar and county governments are tasked to formulate policies geared towards enhancing success and operations of good governance as a strategy to realizing sustainable development. In an assessment of the progress of devolved governance system in India, Zuidema (2016) notes that governance practices such as maintenance of ethos and ethical practices, risk management, sound human resource practices, performance evaluation and proper definition of staff roles and responsibilities.

According to Zuidema (2016), staff in the county governments should be knowledgeable and have expertise relevant to their departments and are qualified and competent, and have strong ethics and integrity, diverse backgrounds and skill sets and sufficient time to commit to their duties. Zuidema (2016) further asserts that county governments ought also to regularly identify and assess the risks they face, including financial, operational, reputational, environmental, industry-related and legal risks. However, the extent to which these governance practices adopted by county governments contribute to realization of sustainable development is yet to

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be fully exhausted. Shafritz (2018) posits that sustainable development entails job creation, improved service delivery and employees' productivity.

These assertions are consistent with the postulations of United Nations General Assembly (2012) that sustainable development is the form of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In other words, the concept of sustainable development aims to maintain economic advancement and progress while protecting the long-term value of the environment and provides a framework for the integration of environment policies and development strategies (United Nations General Assembly, 2012). However, these have not been wholly achieved. In many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, devolution of governance to lower levels have been embraced and practices such as adherence to ethical standards, defining roles and responsibilities for staff, managing risks and constant conducting of performance evaluation being at the center of decision-making (Ganahl, 2013).

In Nigeria, Adeniyi and Okonkwo (2014) indicate that, devolved units, which have ensured that staff adheres to ethical practices and embraces integrity in their daily operations, have witnessed 13.7% increase in number of job opportunities, 85.7% efficiency in service delivery and increased employees' productivity. This points to the fact that, by formally adopting and affirming their commitment to maintaining high standards of governance practices coupled with well-define roles and responsibilities of the staff, county governments are able to realize indicators of sustainable development. In Kenya, there is recognition that components of a healthy environment such as clean air and water, are considered public goods in that they are non-rivalries and non-excludable and that it is up to the governments to maintain the provision of these goods and services (Muchiri, 2012). According to Muchiri (2012), good governance which drives the achievement of development results and must also rise to the challenge of achieving equitable and sustainable development.

In Kitui County, service provision in many of the sectors addressed by the SDGs, including water, sanitation, health, education, planning, waste management, and transport, is the responsibility of the county Government of Kitui (Mwenda, 2010). However, in Kitui County, though touted as the best idea of realizing sustainable development as envisaged in Kenya Vision 2030, much as has not been achieved as anticipated since devolution of governance and functions took place. For example, Kaburi et al (2017) report that unemployment levels are still high in Kitui County, employees' productivity is low and service delivery is still low, hence the study.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Governance practices are critical in realizing the objectives of any organization as enshrined in mission and vision of such organizations as the county governments. In devolved systems, situation is similar and county governments are tasked to formulate policies geared towards enhancing success and operations of good governance as a strategy to

realizing sustainable development. However, in Kitui County, this is not the case and sustainable development is yet to be fully realized. As stated in the background, employees' productivity is low as well as service delivery (Kaburi et al, 2017). A report by Mwenda (2010) on the progress of County Government of Kitui reveals that unemployment rates stand at 67.1% against the national aggregate of 46.3%, poverty levels at 71.5% with service delivery at the Kitui County Government still below expectations. Despite these statistics, few studies have interrogated the governance practices adopted by Kitui County Government and how such practices influence realization of sustainable development.

## Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the good governance theory which was postulated by Gisselquist (2012). The good governance theory is associated with governing methods and structures in developing countries and it is particularly relevant to governance in organizations. In the context of this study, good governance theory, therefore, is a governance theory that sets some basic principles according to which an effective county government, whatever its form, must be run. Such principles include accountability, control, responsiveness, transparency, public participation, economy and efficiency amongst others. Thus, in the context of this study, this theory was very relevant as its principles will aid the understanding of this study and may also be used as indices to measure or assess governance in Kitui County Government.

This study was also guided by the Sustainable Livelihoods Theoretical Model (SL Approach) which was identified in early 1990's by Department for International Development (DFID) in 2010 to eradicate poverty; on the basis of the energies and talents of the poor people thus encouraging activities that are pro-poor. Poor people are taken to be actors that is; capable to identify and address their livelihood priorities while outsiders listen and respond. The latter need to support and enhance existing livelihood strategies and copying mechanisms of the poor. In this context, this theory is relevant in that effective governance is an idea aimed at realizing sustainable development and sustaining livelihoods of the poor.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, mixed methodology was adopted which offered a better understanding of the research problem than a single method design. Thus, this study applied concurrent triangulation research design since it is a single-phase design in which researcher implemented the mixed methods, that is, quantitative and qualitative methods, during the same timeframe and with the same weight. The target population for this study comprised of 20 senior management employees and 450 junior employees in the County Government of Kitui all totaling to 470 respondents from which a sample size of 216 respondents was determined using Yamane's Formula. Stratified sampling was used to create five strata based on the number of departments. From each department, two senior management employees using purposive sampling whereas 41 junior employees were selected using simple random sampling to eliminate feelings of bias amongst the

respondents. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation and inferentially using multiple linear regression in Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 23) to establish the relationship between governance practices and sustainable development and presented using tables.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this section, the data analysis, presentation and interpretation are reported. The following specific objectives guided the study:

- i. To determine the influence of ethical practices on

**Table 1: Response Rates**

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Achieved Rate (%)	Return
Senior Management Employees	10	8	80.0	
Junior Employees	206	200	99.2	
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>93.6</b>	

**Source: Field Data (2019)**

From Table 4.1, Junior Employees registered a response rate of 93.6%. This confirmed the findings of Creswell (2014) that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate and of suitable levels to allow for generalization of the outcomes to the target population.

**Table 2: Views of Junior Employees on Realization of Sustainable Development**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Employees are not productive at their work places	75.0	11.5	4.5	7.5	1.5
Employees rarely meet their daily deadlines, inefficient and people often complain of delays in service delivery	65.0	10.5	3.0	11.0	10.0
Employees do not complete their tasks in time	75.0	10.5	2.5	9.0	3.5
Employees do not take few hours to undertake tasks	88.5	2.5	1.5	4.5	3.0
Unemployment rates in Kitui County is very high	65.5	11.0	4.0	13.0	6.0

**Source: Field Data (2019)**

Table 4.2 reveals that 75.0% of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees are not always productive at their work places as did 11.5% who agreed. However, only a paltry 4.5% were undecided, 7.5% disagreed whereas 1.5% strongly disagreed. During the interviews, the Senior Management Employees expressed similar views that productivity amongst employees is low. On further probing, one Senior Management Employee noted that, in different departments, employees register low output compared to what is expected of them. Majority (65.0%) of the Junior Employee strongly agreed with the view that employees rarely meet their daily deadlines, inefficient and people often complain of delays in service delivery. 10.5% agreed. However, 3.0% were undecided, 11.5% of the Junior

sustainable development in Kitui County, Kenya.

- ii. To examine the influence of human resource practices on sustainable development in Kitui County, Kenya.

- iii. To establish the influence of performance evaluation on sustainable development in Kitui County, Kenya.

- iv. To assess the influence of risk management on sustainable development in Kitui County, Kenya.

#### A. Respondents' Background Information

In this study, 206 questionnaires for Junior Employees were administered. In return, 40-Senior Management Employees and 120-Junior Employees' questionnaires were filled and returned. This yielded response rates shown in Table 1;

#### B. Sustainable Development

The study sought to assess the extent to which sustainable development has been realized in the county governments and the results are shown in Table 2:

Employees disagreed whereas 10.0% strongly disagreed.

Similar views were expressed by the Senior Management Employees during the interviews. These findings are not consistent with the assertions of Bebchuk and Hamdani (2012) that the desired result of sustainable development is a state of society where living conditions and resource use continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural system. Sustainable development can be classified as development that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations. The study also revealed that three-quarters (75.0%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees do not complete their duties and tasks in time. 10.5% of the Junior Employees agreed. However, 2.5% were undecided, 9.0% disagreed whereas 3.5% strongly

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disagreed. Majority (88.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees do not take few hours to undertake their tasks and duties. A paltry 2.5% of the Junior Employees agreed. 1.5% were undecided, 4.5% of disagreed whereas 3.0% strongly disagreed.

During the interviews, the Senior Management Employees also noted that many employees rarely complete their tasks. Senior Management Employees indicated that they have had a lot of disciplinary issues with my staff bordering on their inability to meet deadlines and complete tasks. On the same breath, majority (65.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that unemployment rates in Kitui County is very high. 11.5% agreed. 4.0% were undecided, 13.0% disagreed whereas 6.0% strongly disagreed. Similar views were expressed by Senior Management Employees who further noted that cases of unemployment are high in

Kitui County. These findings are inconsistent with the assertions of Bebchuk and Hamdani (2012) that the overall goal of sustainable development (SD) is the long-term stability of the economy and environment; this is only achievable through the integration and acknowledgement of economic, environmental, and social concerns throughout the decision-making process. Thus, these findings are indicative of the fact that realization of sustainable development is still a mirage in many parts of the country with high unemployment rates, low employees' productivity and inability to meet deadlines.

### C. Ethical Practices and Sustainable Development

The study sought to find out how the extent to which adherence to ethical practices influence realization of sustainable development and results are shown in Table 3;

**Table 3: Views of Junior Employees on the Influence of Ethical Practices on Sustainable Development**

Test Items	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Employees rarely adhere to code of behavior designed by the county government as a way of contributing towards realization of sustainable development	80.5	8.5	1.5	5.5	4.0
Employees' ability to complete tasks as required by county government has improved sustainable development	78.5	14.5	2.5	3.0	1.5
Employees rarely adhere to rules and regulations set by the county government and has not helped achieve sustainable development	69.5	12.0	2.0	10.0	6.5
Employees rarely manifest healthy interpersonal relations towards their colleagues as a way of realizing sustainable development in the county	74.5	17.0	2.5	3.5	2.5

Table 3 reveals that majority (80.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees rarely adhere to code of behavior designed by the county government as a way of contributing towards realization of sustainable development as did 8.5% who agreed. However, only a paltry 1.5% were undecided, 5.5% disagreed whereas 4.0% strongly disagreed. Similar views were expressed by Senior Management Employees who also noted that employees rarely follow code of behavior. They noted that many employees come to work late and face disciplinary cases. This has compromised realization of sustainable development in Kitui County. The study also found out that majority (78.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees' ability to complete tasks as required by county government has improved sustainable development. 14.5% agreed. However, 2.5% were undecided, 3.0% disagreed whereas 1.5% strongly disagreed.

These findings corroborate the findings of a study carried out in Nigeria in which Ariely (2013) established that ethical behaviour in public life has not been the norm with much of the corruption dealings boil down to individual acts. According to Ariely (2013), systemic corruption and unethical behavior in offices, however, represents an absence of public service ethos amongst individuals, the disregard of formal rules, and a failure to identify or take corrective action, either because the causes are not understood, solutions are not apparent, or there is a resigned acceptance that corruption is

integral and inevitable. Ariely (2013) asserts that ethics in public life is not just the exercise of personal morality by public sector managers, but integrity policies can be codified as standards for behaviour in public service for all officials. These findings attest that failure to adhere to code of behavior is a phenomenon among employees and has compromised realization of sustainable development. The study also revealed that majority (69.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees rarely adhere to rules and regulations set by the county government and has not helped achieve sustainable development. On the same breath, 12.0% agreed. However, 2.0% were undecided, 10.0% disagreed whereas 6.5% strongly disagreed. On the same question, Senior Management Employees sometimes employees flout rules and regulations at work stations. Majority (74.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees rarely manifest healthy interpersonal relations towards their colleagues as a way of realizing sustainable development in the county. 17.0% agreed. At the same time, 2.5% were undecided, 3.5% disagreed whereas 2.5% strongly disagreed.

During the interviews, Senior Management Employees also indicated that cases dealing with interpersonal relations amongst employees have been on the rise. They indicated that the county has witnessed cases of many of fights, insults and disrespect for each other amongst the staff. Some have faced disciplinary committees and even got suspended with some dismissed summarily. These findings corroborate the

findings of a study carried out in KwaZulu Natal Province in which Batson (2011) established that a person of integrity is not simply an individual, but an individual-in-relation. This indicates that unethical practices in the county government include; non-enforcement of law, lack of transparency and accountability, breakdown or erosion of values and norms, weak management systems, procedures and practices, lack of professional integrity, greed and abuse of discretionary

power.

### Inferential Findings on the Influence of Ethical Practices on Sustainable Development

To ascertain the influence of ethical practices on sustainable development, data were collected on the number of cases attributed to unethical conduct and the number of new employees recruited since inauguration of the County Government of Kitui. The results are shown in Table 4:

**Table 4: Results of Number of Cases of Unethical Practices and Number of Employees Recruited since Inauguration of Kitui County**

Number of Cases Attributed to Unethical Practices	Number of Employees Recruited since the inauguration of Kitui County
202	1344
247	1890
354	2012
462	2219
579	2358

Table 4 indicates number of cases attributed to unethical practices at workplace affects sustainable development by improving employment rates. In other words, there is a direct

link between ethical practices and sustainable development. The results in Table 4 were subjected to Linear Regression which generated as shown in Table 5:

**Table 5: Linear Regression Model**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1123.733	248.921		4.514	.020
Number of Cases Attributed to Unethical Practices	2.280	.632	.902	3.608	.037

a. Dependent Variable: Number of Employees Recruited Since Inauguration of Counties

From Table 5, the linear regression equation can be generated as;

**Number of Employees Recruited = 1123.733 + 2.280Number of Cases from Unethical Practices.** These results from the linear regression equation indicates that the coefficient for number of cases attributed to ethical practices is 2.280. This implies that for every additional increase in the number of cases attributed to unethical practices at workplaces in the county, the number of employees recruited is expected to increase by a factor of 2.280, though due to unethical practices such as corruption and nepotism. The value 1123.733 denotes that, besides ethical requirements, county government need to employ staff with qualifications designed for specific jobs.

These include; levels of training, experience and attitude towards work. Results in Table 4.5, the p-value, 0.037 is less than 0.05, that is, a low p-value ( $0.037 < 0.05$ ) indicates that the null hypothesis,  $H_0$ , is rejected. Thus, there is significant

relationship between ethical practices and sustainable development. These findings further lend credence to the assertions of Ariely (2013) that ethics in public life is not just the exercise of personal morality by public sector managers, but integrity policies can be codified as standards for behaviour in public service for all officials. This indicates that failure to adhere to code of behavior is a common phenomenon among employees and has compromised realization of sustainable development.

### Human Resource Management Practices and Sustainable Development

The study sought to establish how human resource management practices adopted by Kitui County influence sustainable development and results are shown in Table 6;

**Table 6: Views of Junior Employees on the Influence of Human Resource Management Practices on Sustainable Development**

Test Items	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Kitui county government rarely recruits staff as a strategy for realizing sustainable development goals	59.5	15.5	4.5	11.5	9.0
Timely staff remuneration is not often carried out as a way of realizing sustainable development in the county	56.5	23.5	2.5	9.5	8.0

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Re-training of staff is not often conducted by the county government as a strategy for realization of sustainable development	51.5	8.5	7.0	22.5	10.5
Staff promotions in the county is not commonly done to improve productivity and efficiency in service delivery as goals of sustainable development	68.5	15.5	3.5	8.5	4.0

Table 6 reveals that a fair majority (59.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that Kitui county government rarely recruits staff as a strategy for realizing sustainable development goals as did 9.7% who agreed. However, only a paltry 4.5% were undecided, 11.5% disagreed whereas 9.0% strongly disagreed. During the interviews, Senior Management Employees also concurred that recruitment of new staff is not usually undertaken to reduce the existing workload. On further probing, one Senior Management Employee noted that, in different departments, recruitment of new employees is a rare occurrence. The county relies much on the old staff who were there before the inauguration of county government. The study revealed that a fair majority (56.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that timely staff remuneration is not often carried out as a way of realizing sustainable development in the county whereas 23.5% agreed. However, 2.5% were undecided, 9.5% disagreed whereas 8.0% strongly disagreed.

The study also revealed that slightly more than half (51.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that re-training of staff is not often conducted by the county government as a strategy for realization of sustainable development. On the same breath, 8.5% agreed. However, 7.0% were undecided, 22.5% disagreed whereas 10.5% strongly disagreed. In the same vein, majority (68.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that staff promotions in the county is not commonly done to improve productivity and efficiency in service delivery as goals of sustainable development. Meanwhile a small proportion of 15.5% of the Junior Employees agreed. On the same breath, 3.5% were undecided, 8.5% disagreed whereas 4.0% strongly disagreed.

During the interviews, Senior Management Employees also concurred that promotions are rarely done. One Senior Management Employee further noted that it is long since junior staff were promoted to higher ranks and this has really demoralized them to perform. These findings lend credence to the findings of Chan and Kuok (2011) that strategic human resource management practice refers to the generally accepted rules or procedures set to guide organization to achieve the set goals as they appear in the mission and vision of the organization. Chan and Kuok (2011) noted that, in today's knowledge recruitment, selection, orientation, rewards, compensation, organizations where value is locked in the heads of performance appraisal, training and development and the work force, best strategic human resource management practices only can ensure labor relations. Chan and Kuok (2011) further assert that practices are the flow of information through interrelated stages of analysis towards the achievement of the set sustainable development goals. This shows that when quality working life initiatives are implemented effectively, they are likely to cause employees to perceive the employer employee relationship as a profitable exchange hence feel obliged to develop a bond with the organization which may lead to better performance.

### Inferential Findings on the Influence of Human Resource Management Practices on Sustainable Development

To further ascertain the influence of human resource management practices on sustainable development, data were collected on the number of employees who have been promoted since inauguration of county governments and the number of new employees recruited since the inauguration of the County Government of Kitui. The results are shown in Table 7:

**Table 7: Results of Number of Employees Promoted and Number of Employees Recruited since Inauguration of Kitui County**

Number of Employees Promoted	Number of Employees Recruited since the Inauguration of Kitui County
14	1344
23	1890
34	2012
41	2219
55	2358

Source: Field Data (2019)

Table 7 indicates number of employees promoted have increased though minimally which has affected sustainable development by improving employment rates. In other words, there is a direct link between promotion of employees as a human resource management practice and sustainable development. The results in Table 8 were subjected to Linear Regression which generated as shown in Table 8:

**Table 8: Linear Regression Model**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1194.308	181.446		6.582	.007
Number of Employees Promoted	23.063	4.999	.936	4.613	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Employees Recruited Since Inauguration of Counties

From Table 8, the linear multiple regression equation can be generated as; **Number of Employees Recruited = 1194.308 + 23.063Number of Employees Promoted**. These results from the linear regression equation indicates that the coefficient for number of employees promoted is 23.068. This implies that for every additional increase in the number of employees promoted from one job group to another, the number of employees recruited is expected to increase by a factor of 23.068. The value 1194.308 denotes that, besides promotion, county government need to employ staff with qualifications designed for specific jobs such that promotion and motivation and other human resource management practices act as other peripheral factors which contributes towards sustainable development. Results in Table 4.8, the p-value, 0.019 is less than 0.05, that is, a low p-value (0.019 < 0.05) indicates that the null hypothesis,  $H_{02}$ , is rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between human resource management practices and sustainable development.

These findings further corroborate the assertions of Chan

and Kuok (2011) noted that, in today's knowledge recruitment, selection, orientation, rewards, compensation, organizations where value is locked in the heads of performance appraisal, training and development and the work force, best strategic human resource management practices only can ensure labor relations. Chan and Kuok (2011) further assert that practices are the flow of information through interrelated stages of analysis towards the achievement of the set sustainable development goals. Thus, whenever there is effective implementation of human resource management practices, they cause employees to perceive the employer-employee relationship as a profitable exchange hence feel obliged to develop a bond with the organization which lead to better performance.

**Performance Evaluation Practices and Sustainable Development**

The study also sought to examine the extent to which performance evaluation practices adopted by Kitui County influence realization of sustainable development and results are shown in Table 9;

**Table 9: Views of Junior Employees on the Influence of Performance Evaluation Practices on Sustainable Development**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Staff in the county government are rarely rewarded as a way of motivating them to realize sustainable development	78.0	11.0	2.5	5.5	3.0
Job analysis is often carried out by the county government, though has not been effective in realizing the sustainable development goals	69.5	25.5	1.5	2.0	1.5
County Government has often conducted evaluation on employees' ability to meet targets as a way of realizing sustainable development	74.5	19.5	1.5	3.2	1.3
Kitui county government rarely effect any pay increment as a way of motivating me to realize sustainable development	76.5	10.5	3.0	7.0	4.0

Table 9 reveals that a fair majority (78.0%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that staff in the county government are rarely rewarded as a way of motivating them to realize sustainable development. 11.0% agreed. However, only a paltry 2.5% were undecided, 5.5% disagreed whereas 3.0% strongly disagreed. However, during the interviews, the Senior Management Officers refuted these claims and stated that staff in the county government are promoted annually, experience, on merit and based on performance. This contradiction points to the sensitive nature of staff promotion as a way of enhancing realization of sustainable development. These findings corroborate the findings of a study carried out in Colombia in which Campion and Thayer (2011) established that employees who receive good scores on their evaluation are generally motivated to perform well and maintain his/her performance. That is, positive feedback on evaluation gives employee a feeling of

worth and value especially when accompanied by salary increment.

The study revealed that a fair majority (69.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that job analysis is often carried out by the county government, though has not been effective in realizing the sustainable development goals. Slightly more than a quarter (25.5%) of the Junior Employees agreed. However, 1.5% were undecided, 2.0% disagreed whereas 1.5% strongly disagreed. In the same token, Senior Management Employees also concurred that job analysis is often done as a way of improving employees' productivity. The study also revealed that majority (74.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that County Government has often conducted evaluation on employees' ability to meet targets to improve efficiency and productivity as a way of realizing sustainable development. On the same breath, 19.5% agreed. However, 1.5% were undecided, 3.2% disagreed whereas

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1.3% strongly disagreed. Similar views were expressed by Senior Management Employees who also responded in favor of the view that evaluation of employees' ability to meet job targets is often undertaken as a strategy of improving their productivity. These findings are consistent with the assertions of Greasley et al (2015) report that, in Tanzania, performance evaluation is a way of providing review and evaluation of an individual job performance has its own negative and positive effect on the employee's productivity in an organization. According to Greasley et al (2015), companies where employees were constantly appraised, they felt motivated and thus improved their efficiency, reduced absenteeism and witnessed enhanced productivity. These findings affirm the fact that when the goals of the employee are clarified, his or her performance challenges identified, the effect is to motivate the employee to achieve those goals.

Table 4.9 reveals that a fair majority (76.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that Kitui county government rarely effect any pay increment as a way of motivating them to increase employees' productivity and efficiency as indicators of sustainable development whereas 10.5% agreed. However, only a paltry 3.0% were undecided, 7.0% disagreed whereas 4.0% strongly disagreed. Senior Management Employees concurred, but pointed out that failure by the Kitui County Government to affect any pay

increase is attributed to financial constraints. One Senior Management further indicated that it is the desire of the County Government to remunerate its staff very well as a way of enhancing realization of sustainable development. However, this has not been possible owing to limited financial resources and strict budgetary allocations from the national government.

These findings support the assertions of Muchiri (2012) that, in most firms in Kenya, evaluation helps to identify the skilled and performing employee of an organization to increase their salary and other benefits that can make them satisfied on their job. This affirms that performance evaluation strategies such as pay rise for employees enable them to improve their performance, provide a basis for rewarding or penalizing employee in relation to the contribution.

### Inferential Findings on the Influence of Performance Evaluation Practices on Sustainable Development

To further ascertain the influence of performance evaluation practices on sustainable development, data were collected on the number of times Kitui County Government conducts performance evaluation in a year and the number of new employees recruited since the inauguration of the County Government of Kitui. The results are shown in Table 10:

**Table 10: Results of Frequency of Annual Performance Evaluation and Number of Employees Recruited since Inauguration of Kitui County**

Frequency of Performance Evaluation	Number of Employees Recruited since the Inauguration of Kitui County
1	1344
2	1890
3	2012
4	2219
6	2358

**Source: Field Data (2019)**

Table 10 indicates frequency with which the county government does performance evaluation of its employees has improved sustainable development through increased employment rates. This implies that the more the

performance evaluation is conducted among employees, the higher the employment rates. The results in Table 4.10 were subjected to Linear Regression which generated as shown in Table 11:

**Table 11: Linear Regression Model**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1369.919		7.894	.004
Frequency of Performance Evaluation	185.838	.914	3.890	.030

a. Dependent Variable: Employees Recruited Since Inauguration of Counties

From Table 11, the linear multiple regression equation can be generated as; **Number of Employees Recruited = 1369.919 + 185.838Frequency of Performance Evaluation**. These results from the linear regression equation indicates that the coefficient for number of employees promoted is 185.838. This implies that for every additional increase in the number of times performance evaluation is conducted, the number of employees recruited is expected to increase by a factor of 185.838. The value 1369.919 indicates that, besides conducting performance evaluation or job analysis, county government need to employ staff with

qualifications designed for specific jobs such that analysis of their performance practices acts as other determinants of their productivity which enhances sustainable development. Similarly, from the results in Table 4.11, the p-value, 0.030 is less than 0.05, that is, a low p-value (0.030 < 0.05) indicates that the null hypothesis,  $H_{03}$ , is rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between performance valuation practices adopted by county governments and sustainable development. As established earlier, these results further corroborate the findings of Greasley et al (2015) that performance evaluation is a way of providing review and



evaluation of an individual job performance has its own negative and positive effect on the employee's productivity in an organization. Thus, in organizations where employees are constantly appraised, they feel motivated and thus improve their efficiency, reduced absenteeism and witnessed enhanced productivity. When goals of the employee are clarified, his or her performance challenges identified, the effect is to motivate the employee to achieve those goals,

which, in essence, enhances employee development, increases productivity and sustainable development.

### Risk Management Practices and Sustainable Development

The study also sought to examine the extent to which risk management practices adopted by Kitui County influence sustainable development and results are shown in Table 12;

**Table 12: Views of Junior Employees on the Influence of Risk Management Practices on Sustainable Development**

Test Items	Ratings				
	SA %	A %	U %	D %	SD %
Employees always adhere to safety standards as designed by the county government to improve employees' productivity and efficiency	75.0	10.0	5.5	3.5	6.0
Kitui county government do provide safety materials, though inadequate to help realize sustainable development goals as productivity and efficiency	70.5	18.5	3.5	4.0	3.5
The county government usually controls access to different offices in order to reduce incidences risks and improve staff productivity and work efficiency	68.5	21.5	4.5	3.0	2.5

Source: Field Data (2019)

Table 12 reveals that a fair majority (75.0%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that employees always adhere to safety standards as designed by the county government to improve employees' productivity and efficiency in service delivery whereas 10.0% agreed. However, only a paltry 5.5% were undecided, 3.5% disagreed whereas 6.0% strongly disagreed.

During the interview, Senior Management Employees, however, disagreed with the Junior Employees by stating that employees rarely adhere to safety standards as designed by the county government. On further probing, one Senior Management Employee noted that many employees do not follow safety standards as spelt in the Occupational Safety and Health Act. They rarely follow laid down safety procedures, labels and signage and manifest negative attitude towards the safety rules and regulations. These findings lend credence to the findings of a case study conducted in Indianapolis on financial risk management in which Johnson and Packer (2010) found that it was important for employees to manage risks having both internal and external support. These have forced many institutions to put in place measures and policies which oversee the risks and monitor their occurrence in order to reduce their effect on the performance of the institution. This indicates that employees are majorly exposed to various risks associated to their business, internal environment and the external environment.

Majority (70.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that Kitui county government do provide safety materials, though inadequate to help realize sustainable development goals as productivity and efficiency in service delivery whereas only 18.5% agreed. However, 3.5% were undecided, 4.0% disagreed whereas 3.5% strongly disagreed. This view was supported by the Senior Management Employees. Majority (68.5%) of the Junior Employees strongly agreed with the view that the county government usually controls access to different offices in order to reduce

incidences risks and improve staff productivity and work efficiency. 21.5% agreed. However, 4.5% were undecided, 3.0% disagreed whereas 2.5% strongly disagreed. Senior Management Employee also observed that, in order to reduce incidences of risks to employees and improve their productivity, the County Government has decided to control access to different offices with security checks enhanced.

These findings corroborate the assertions of Freihart (2010) that the primary goal of risks management includes: stabilizing enrollments, that is, reverse declining enrollment, control growth and plan for fluctuations, stabilizing finances, improving services, that is, shorten response time to staff issues, increase satisfaction and reduce paperwork, improving access to information, that is, putting our information systems to optimum usage, reducing vulnerability to demographic changes and responding to economic forces that is, expansion, recession and employment rates. These findings also support the findings of a study carried out in Sudan in which Wadi (2014) established that safe and orderly environment, school facilities were significantly related to employees' work performance.

This indicates that county governments should put measures to ensure that employees are competent enough to put measures to avoid accidents at work stations. This further points to the fact that risk management is key to realization of sustainable development. In other words, identification of risk exposures, assessing and prioritizing risks and application of appropriate techniques and resources help control and minimize probability or impact of unfortunate events happening.

### Inferential Findings on the Influence of Risk Management Practices on Sustainable Development

To ascertain influence of risk management practices on sustainable development, data were collected on the number of mitigated risks and the number of new employees recruited since the inauguration of the County Government of Kitui

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and results are shown in Table 13:

**Table 13: Results of the Number of Mitigated Risks and Number of Employees Recruited since Inauguration of Kitui County**

Number of Mitigated Risks	Number of Employees Recruited since the inauguration of Kitui County
11	1344
17	1890
23	2012
31	2219
44	2358

Source: Field Data (2019)

Table 13 indicates that risks managed and mitigated against by the county government plays a key role in determining the number of employees recruited which, in

turn, enhances sustainable development. The results in Table 13 were subjected to Linear Regression which generated as shown in Table 14:

**Table 14: Linear Regression Model**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1270.860	207.860		6.114	.009
Number of Risks Mitigated	27.529	7.504	.904	3.668	.035

a. Dependent Variable: Employees Recruited Since Inauguration of Counties

From Table 14, the linear multiple regression equation can be generated as; **Number of Employees Recruited = 1270.860 + 27.529Number of Risks Mitigated**. These results from the linear regression equation indicates that the coefficient for number of employees promoted is 27.529. This implies that for every additional increase in the number of risks identified, managed and mitigated against by the county government, the number of employees recruited is expected to increase by a factor of 27.5298. The value 1270.860 indicates that, besides managing risks, county government need to employ staff with qualifications designed for specific jobs such that management of risks towards them adds value to their levels of productivity which enhances sustainable development. Similarly, from the results in Table 4.14, the p-value, 0.035 is less than 0.05, that is, a low p-value ( $0.035 < 0.05$ ) indicates that the null hypothesis,  $H_{04}$ , is rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between risk management practices adopted by county governments and sustainable development. These findings further corroborate the findings of Johnson and Packer (2010) that it was

important for employees to manage risks having both internal and external support. These have forced many institutions to put in place measures and policies which oversee the risks and monitor their occurrence in order to reduce their effect on the performance of the institution. This indicates that employees are majorly exposed to various risks associated to their business, internal environment and the external environment.

### Relationship between Governance Practices and Sustainable Development

To generate a multiple linear regression model showing the relationship between governance practices and sustainable development, data were collected on the number of cases attributed to unethical practices, number of employees who have been promoted since inauguration of county governments, number of times Kitui County Government conducts performance evaluation and number of mitigated risks in relation to the number of employees recruited since the inauguration of the County Government and the results are shown in Table 15:

**Table 15: Results of Sustainable Development (Number of New Employees Recruited) and Governance Practices**

Sustainable Development (NNER)	Governance Practices			
	EP	HRMP	PEP	RMP
1344	202	14	1	11
1890	247	23	2	17
2012	354	34	3	23
2219	462	41	4	31
2358	579	55	6	44

Key: **NNER**: Number of New Employees Recruited; **EP**: Ethical Practices; **HRMP**-Human Resource Management Practices; **PEP**-Performance Evaluation Practices and **RMP**-Risk Management Practices

Table 15 indicates that realization of sustainable development as manifested through employment rates depends largely on governance practices adopted by the

county governments. These include; ethical, human resource management, performance evaluation and risk management practices. These results were subjected to Multiple Linear Regression which results are indicated in Table 16:

**Table 16: Multiple Linear Regression Model**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-1214.780	.000		2.234	.045
EP	-16.040	.000	-6.342	1.321	.034
HRMP	285.226	.000	11.578	3.235	.003
PEP	-5025.085	.000	-24.703	4.049	.041
RMP	620.972	.000	20.397	1.013	.001

a. Dependent Variable: NNER

**Sustainable Development (NNER) = -1214.780 – 16.040EP + 285.226HRMP – 5025.085PEP + 620.972RMP + 160.73600.** These results further affirm the fact that sustainable development in terms of employment rates is determined by a multiplicity of governance practices adopted by the county government. However, ethical practices and performance evaluation enhances sustainable development to a lesser extent compared to other independent variables or practices. In other words, the main practices which enhance sustainable development in terms of number of new employees recruited are professional qualifications (constant) human resource management practices such as rewards and salary increment and management of risks which threaten safety of the employee.

#### V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

From the study findings, employees are not always productive at their work places, rarely meet their daily deadlines, inefficient and people often complain of delays in service delivery characterized with high unemployment rates. This indicates sustainable development is yet to be fully realized. Employees still find it difficult to adhere to code of behavior designed by the county government, complete their tasks, adhere to rules and regulations and manifest healthy interpersonal relations towards their colleagues as a way of realizing sustainable development in the county. The Kitui County Government rarely recruits new staff, provides low remuneration, rarely conducts staff re-training and promotion. Kitui County Government engages in rewarding of staff, job analysis and pay increment, though to a limited extent. The county government rarely rewards staff, rarely conducts job analysis nor does it affect pay increment for employees as a practice for realizing sustainable development. Many employees always adhere to safety standards as designed by the county government, county government do provide safety materials and controls access to different offices in order to reduce incidences risks and improve staff productivity and work efficiency. These have forced many institutions to put in place measures and policies which oversee the risks and monitor their occurrence in order to reduce their effect on the performance of the institution.

#### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that the Kitui County Government should: train employees to understand the essence of productivity at work places, meeting of daily deadlines and being efficient. Enforce adherence to ethical practices as a

way of realizing sustainable development. Recruit new employees, remunerate the existing ones very well and ensure promotions of the employees. This will go a long way in enhancing sustainable development. Conduct job analysis and evaluation in order to place right employees for the right jobs and ensure that no employee has too much workload which might compromise efficiency and productivity. Train staff on personal and environment safety measures, besides provision of safety materials. This should go a long way in implementing OSHA Act to reduce cases of accidents and injuries which might slow employees' productivity and efficiency.

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