

ABSTRACT

The increasing use of temporary workforce is becoming an integral part of today's emerging employment trend. Studies have been carried out on new employee socialization and other attitudinal constructs in conventional employment structures; however the emergence of outsourcing has brought a new dimension to the relationship. Most studies have approached socialization, commitment and identification separately; and in majority of cases targeting regular or permanent employees, with concentration in Europe or North America; with a few cases in Asia and Africa; however a few studies conducted in Kenya on socialization have not considered its influence on commitment, socialization and tenure and have concentrated on regular employees. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of socialization on commitment and identification and tenure in outsourcing relationships. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of socialization on commitment and identification; the influence of socialization on tenure of employees and to establish the relationship between commitment and identification. The study was guided by the social exchange theory with socialization as the independent variable and commitment, identification and tenure as dependent variables. The study population comprised all the 51 active companies listed at the NSE, but spread across the country, with a sample of 23 obtained through cluster sampling. The respondents were drawn from outsourced employees, the agent and the client organizations. Secondary and primary data were used in the study. Primary data was collected using structured and semi structured questionnaires. Pre-test was conducted to establish the reliability and validity of instruments. Cronbach's Alpha test revealed a coefficient of 0.843 which is above the minimum threshold. Qualitative data was analyzed using tables, graphs and pie charts. Inferential statistics and Pearson's correlation technique with the help of SPSS computer software was used to analyse quantitative data. Regression results showed R^2 of 0.320 on commitment and identification was significant at $p=.006 < p=.05$ for identification and $p=.039 < p=.05$ for commitment; R^2 of .565 on tenure was significant at $p=.000 < p=.05$; and a relatively strong association between commitment and identification $r=.583$, $p < .01$. The null hypotheses were therefore rejected. The study concludes that outsourced employees are socialized and that Socialization influences commitment and identification; socialization influences tenure; and that commitment and identification are related. The study recommends that outsourced employees should go through socialization like regular employees so as to enhance commitment and to engender identification that may result into continuity in employment. The study outcome would assist organizational managements and other policy formulators make informed decisions on outsourcing. Future research may consider the cost of socialization and performance of outsourced employees.