FACTORS INFLUENCING TRAINING DECISIONS AT MALPLAST INDUSTRIES LTD, KENYA

BY

VICTOR AMOS OTIPA

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2016
DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this research project is my original work and that all sources that have been used/quoted have been acknowledged in the references.

Sign………………………… Date…………………………

Full Name:   Victor Amos Otipa

Reg. No.   D61/61557/2010

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

SUPERVISOR:

Sign………………………………………… Date…………………………

Prof. Peter O. K’Obonyo

School of Business

University of Nairobi
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DEDICATION

This Project is dedicated to my loving wife Carolyne, my children Daniel, Megan, Wayne and Jayden for their understanding, support and encouragement throughout my studies and to my late father Simeon and my mother Alice for establishing for me a very solid foundation for education.
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ABSTRACT
Differentiation on the basis of the skills, knowledge, and motivation of the workforce is becoming increasingly important as organizations attempt to compete in a global economy. Training refers to a systematic approach to learning and development to improve individual, team, and organizational effectiveness. There is documented evidence that training activities have a positive impact on the performance of individuals and teams. Training activities can also be beneficial regarding other outcomes at both the individual and team level (e.g., attitudes, motivation, and empowerment). Unlike the newly industrializing economies of South East Asia such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Korea, Kenya’s manufacturing sector, despite its potential, has not been dynamic enough to function as the engine for growth for the Kenyan economy. Many reasons have been cited for this; top among them the lack of technical skills among workers in the manufacturing sector. Human resource managers consider the following major categories when making training decisions: worker characteristics (education, age, ability, sex, tenure, motivation and ethnicity), job characteristics (occupation, earnings, casual employment and hours worked), enterprise characteristics (industry, firm size, sector, human resource policies, technological change and the self-employed and employers) and sociopolitical and economic environment (competition, unemployment, legislation and national characteristics).

This was a case study using qualitative approach. The objective of this study was to establish the factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd. The study targeted all the top and middle level managers of the company. There are 6 top level managers and 9 heads of departments. The total number is 15 which was the target population. The study used census since the population was small. Primary data was collected using semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed using the content analysis technique. The study found that educational qualification was the employee characteristic that had the greatest influence on training decisions. It was also found that occupation was the job characteristic with the greatest influence on training decisions. On social economic and political factors, competition was found to have the greatest influence on training decisions while technological changes was the enterprise characteristic with greatest influence on training decisions.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Globalization demands for organizational competition in a global economy, a situation that is making differentiation on the basis of skills, knowledge as well as motivation progressively more important. According to Goldstein & Ford (2002), training involves a methodical approach to learning and development to advance individual, team, and organizational efficiency. Previous studies indicate that positive results on performance of both individuals and teams have been realized through training activities. Other outcomes such as attitudes, motivation and empowerment have also been found to have been positively changed through training activities. According to Long, Ryan, Burke and Hopkins (1999), human resource managers consider the following major issues when making training decisions: worker characteristics (education, age, ability, sex, tenure, motivation and ethnicity), job characteristics (occupation, earnings, casual employment and hours worked), enterprise characteristics (industry, firm size, sector, human resource policies, technological change and the self-employed and employers) and sociopolitical and economic environment (competition, unemployment, legislation and national characteristics).

There are three theories underpinning this study; the Resource Based View (RBV), Knowledge Based View (KBV) and the Dynamic Capabilities Theory. RBV is anchored on the premise that tackles the critical issue of why there are fundamental differences among firms and how the firms deploy their resources to achieve and sustain competitive
advantage (Barney, 1991). In order to generate sustainable competitive advantage, every firm should identify the needed characteristics of its resources (Barney, 1991). The KBV of the firm, unlike the RBV which considers all resources, exclusively concentrates on the knowledge aspect and posits that organizations are heterogeneous units full of knowledge. The organizational resource base consists of knowledge-based assets (Grant, 1996). The dynamic capabilities theory explains how organizations accomplish two apparently conflicting essentials. Whereas they must possess enough stability to continue to deliver value in their own unique manner, they must also have enough resilience and adaptability to change swiftly and at the minimum possible cost when conditions so demand. The dynamics of the firm capabilities is deeply rooted in the firm knowledge base (Teece & Pisano, 1994).

Kenya’s Vision 2030 is geared towards transforming the country into a newly-industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life by 2030 (GoK, 2007). The industrial sector has been identified as key to addressing incidences of high poverty levels, unemployment, disparities in regional development, and meager foreign exchange earnings from exports of primary or semi-processed agricultural produce. The industrial sector also has strong linkages with other sectors and its growth will positively affect the other sectors. Though it has great potential, the sector lacks the prerequisite dynamism to enable it function as the engine for growth for the Kenyan economy as has been witnessed in the newly industrializing economies of South East Asia such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Korea. Many reasons have been cited for this, top among them the lack of technical skills among workers in the manufacturing sector. In order to be able grow, export, and create the much-needed jobs, Kenya’s
competitiveness in the manufacturing sector requires to be improved and one of the ways of doing this is by developing employee knowledge and skills through training (McKenzie & Woodruff, 2013).

1.1.1 Concept of Training

One of the best ways of accumulating, using and updating, as well as transferring knowledge to other people in the organization is through employee training (Snell, Morris & Bohlander, 2015). It is important to pay more attention to the knowledge management process as mentioned above. The best way of converting a manual worker into a white collar worker and ultimately enable such an employee to become a knowledge worker is by instilling knowledge. For the process of instilling knowledge to be successful, it requires that the workers should have the ability to manage themselves, the ability of problem solving, and decision making, as well as consciousness for continuous learning. Training is conducted when there is the need for performance improvement and effective utilization of human resources and building the ability of employees to use tools of work or when there are new joiners in the organization that are to be introduced to the organizational environment. Training may also be required when there are indications that training is needed as attested to by the production records, accident incidences, human errors, expansion of operations, new technology, labour or worker turnover, cases of promotion or career growth and transfers (Osborne & Martin, 2003).

In Pittsburgh in September 2009, as the world was recovering from its worst recession, G20 Leaders singled out introduction of quality jobs as an absolute necessity for the recovery, and undertook to implement recovery strategies that promote decent work, help
preserve employment and prioritize job growth (Snell, Morris & Bohlander, 2015). Leaders acknowledged the role of skills development, stating that every country needed to strengthen the ability of workers to adapt to changing market demands and to benefit from innovation and investments in new technologies, clean energy, environment, health and infrastructure by formulating and implementing appropriate national policies. The ILO has pledged to private enterprises and governments all over the world to continue to support their national strategies for skills development. Training should be considered against the background of continuous performance improvement. A working environment that is conducive, suitable learning resources and the continuous use of motivational strategies are required for changing and improving work practices. According to Osborne & Martin (2003), competencies, the abilities that an employee requires in order to be able to do work to the expected standards, should be the basis of training.

1.1.2 Training Decisions

According to Goldstein & Ford (2002), training involves a methodical approach to learning and development to advance individual, team, and organizational efficiency. Trainings at the workplace are often carried out for remedial purposes, to equip the employees with the prerequisite knowledge and skills to continue performing effectively in their current roles or to prepare the employees for future advanced roles. Training in preparation for future roles in the organization is termed as development. According to Jones, George and Hill (2000), training mainly focuses on teaching the organization’s members how to perform their current jobs whereas development focuses on preparing the members for future roles. In this review, training is assumed to include development.
Managers are often faced with situations where they are required to make training decisions regarding which individual or groups of employees to train, mode of training, length and timings of trainings as well as optimum training budgets. According to Noe (2010), training is any deliberate activity intended to transfer or modify knowledge, skills, and attitudes through learning experiences. Among the reasons for which personnel may require training are the necessity to uphold existing competence levels and the need to react positively to the demands of changing circumstances and new operational trends and technologies among other reasons. According to Long, et al. (1999), human resource managers consider the following major categories when making training decision: worker characteristics (education, age, ability, sex, tenure, motivation and ethnicity), job characteristics (occupation, earnings, casual employment and hours worked), enterprise characteristics (industry, firm size, sector, human resource policies, technological change and the self-employed and employers) and sociopolitical and economic environment (competition, unemployment, legislation and national characteristics).

### 1.1.3 Malplast Industries Ltd

Malplast Industries Ltd is a prominent manufacturer of inflexible plastic packaging utilized in various industries including pharmaceutical, beverage, edible oil, paint, cosmetics, lubricants, industrial and consumer chemicals and power. Situated on East Gate Road off Mombasa Road in Nairobi, the company specializes in Polyethylene Terephthalate and High Density Polyethylene packaging material ranging from 60ml to 20 litres. Having started operations in October 2004 as a small scale manufacturer with less than twenty employees, Malplast Industries Ltd has rapidly expanded into one of the
leading manufacturers of its kind in Sub Saharan Africa. The company prides itself in its ability to produce custom-made products for its wide range of customers and currently employs nearly 400 workers on a permanent basis. Its mission statement is ‘to support the growth of the regional economy by providing identities to industry through increased access to bespoke packaging’ (Malplast, 2016).

1.2 Research Problem

As organizations endeavor to compete in the global economy, ability-based differentiation as well as differentiation based on knowledge and enthusiasm of the employees is becoming progressively important. According to Goldstein & Ford (2002), training involves a methodical approach to learning and development to advance individual, team, and organizational efficiency. Previous studies indicate that positive results on performance of both individuals and teams have been realized through training activities. Other outcomes such as attitudes, motivation and empowerment have also been found to have been positively changed through training activities. According to Long et al. (1999), human resource managers consider the following major issues when making training decisions: worker characteristics (education, age, ability, sex, tenure, motivation and ethnicity), job characteristics (occupation, earnings, casual employment and hours worked), enterprise characteristics (industry, firm size, sector, human resource policies, technological change and the self-employed and employers) and sociopolitical and economic environment (competition, unemployment, legislation and national characteristics).

Malplast Industries Ltd has made some milestones as far as training of its employees is concerned. According to the Human Resource records of Malplast Industries Ltd, the
company doubled its employee training budget from Kshs. 5 million in 2014 to Kshs.10 million in 2015. This has enabled more employees to undergo trainings in the form of workshops among others. Furthermore, the company has encouraged and even sponsored most of its top employees to go for further studies to improve their skills in management. Despite these efforts, the company still has a lot of challenges to tackle. First, there is growing competition from Chinese plastic products which are not only cheaper but of better quality. Because Malplast Industries Ltd’s employees lack enough technical knowhow to manufacture such high quality products in large scale like the Chinese, it is a great challenge and the company has been forced to import some of the components from China (Malplast, 2016).

Various studies have been conducted on factors influencing training decisions. Atieno (2015) studied factors influencing staff training and development decisions in state-owned hotels in western Kenya. The study found that the major factors influencing staff training and development decisions were the need to enhance productivity and improve performance, introduction of new approaches and processes to business and the need to match employee specifications with the job requirements and stake holders’ needs. This study largely investigated the objectives of the company and not factors influential in making training decisions both internal and external. Mogeni (2013) studied factors in training and development perceived to influence motivation in selected business process outsourcing firms in Kenya. Results showed that in all the organizations, there are some elements of motivation lacking, which could have been realized through training and development. This study focused on factors in training and development that are thought to impact on motivation but not factors influencing training decisions.
Rabemananjara and Parsley (2006) studied employee training decisions, business strategies and human resource management practices in Ontario Canada. The study found that medium-sized and large businesses have a higher likelihood of providing training activities to their employees than small businesses. First, the study scope was a developed country in which employees are relatively more skilled than those in a developing country like Kenya. Furthermore, the study investigated the influence of only a single attribute of company characteristics that is company size instead of focusing on the many factors that influence training decisions.

Sanjeevkumar and Yanan (2011) studied training factors and its impact on training effectiveness in Kedah State Development Corporation (KSDC), Kedah, Malaysia. The study found that KSDC’s management had put in place various programs as a show of commitment to both human resource development and the firm’s social responsibilities. It was also found that KSDC offers various training and development geared towards the latest technological advances. This study did not reveal the impact the training factors had on the organizations. Furthermore, the findings might not apply in Kenya, a less developed country as compared to Malaysia. Luong (2015) studied factors influence training effectiveness in micro and small enterprises in Shanghai China. The study found the vital factors that considerably influence the training effectiveness to be organization’s internal barriers, managerial support and training motivation. This study did not look at external factors that influence training effectiveness such as the environment and technological advancement. The present study filled the above research gaps by asking the question; what are the factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd?
1.3 Research Objective
The objective of this study was to establish factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd.

1.4 Value of the Study
The study will benefit Kenyan firms in the manufacturing as well as service sectors. The study will help the management in these organizations have a deeper understanding of employee training and its importance to gaining a competitive advantage. By understanding the various factors considered in making training decisions, human resource managers will come up with better training programmes that will increase the skills and knowledge of their employees which will increase productivity, motivation and product quality which will in turn lead to gaining of a competitive edge.

The study will help the government and other stakeholders particularly the various trade unions, the Federation of Kenya Employers and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers in developing and implementing policies that help organizations embrace employee training and development that is needed to make Kenya’s manufacturing sector more competitive in the world market while simultaneously helping the country towards attaining Vision 2030.

The findings will also be valuable to future researchers and academicians as it will extent the existing knowledge besides acting as a source of reference. In addition, the study gives suggestions for areas for further research that future scholars and academicians can further knowledge on employee training. Academicians can do further research on the
factors influencing training decisions in the service sector as well as government agencies in the country in order to generalize of the findings.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the three theories underpinning the study as well as discussing the factors considered in making training decisions for employees. The three theories are the Resource Based View, Dynamic Capabilities and Knowledge Based View. Lastly, the chapter will review some of studies similar to the present.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

This study was anchored on three theories namely Resource Based View, Knowledge Based View and Dynamic Capabilities Theory.

2.2.1 Resource Based View (RBV) Theory

Although the resource based view was coined by Penrose (1959), Wernerfelt’s (1984) expounding of the resource based view of the firm gave the first concrete statement of the theory. Wernerfelt’s (1984) statement of the theory was further developed by Rumelt (1984), Dierickx and Cool (1989) and Barney (1991). The prerequisite characteristics for a sustainable competitive advantage as argued by Barney (1991) became a key article in popularizing the theory within the strategy. RBV of the firm has turned scholar’s attention on the black box of the firm. Theoretically, the main assertion of RBV attempts to answer the basic question of why organizations differ from each other and how they deploy their unique resources for the achievement and sustenance of competitive advantage.

Barney (1991) came up with a framework for identifying the firm resources needed for the firm to create a competitive advantage that is sustainable. The resources must be:
valuable (have the capability to exploit opportunities and/or neutralize threats), are exceptional among the firm’s competitors as well as potential competitors, unique, and cannot be substituted (Barney, 1991). Cappelli and Singh (1992) studied the implications of the RBV on strategic human resource management (SHRM). They established that most fit-based SHRM models are based on the assumption that a given business strategy demands a unique set of behaviours and attitudes from employees and that a unique set of responses from employees can be achieved through certain human resource policies.

2.2.2 Knowledge Based View (KBV) Theory

Grant (1996) argues that the KBV of the firm is an extension of the RBV of the firm since it posits that firms are heterogeneous units full of knowledge. Knowledge-based assets make up the resource base of the organization. Barney (1991) asserts that the focus of research should be determined by the unique characteristics of the intangible resources, especially knowledge. Knowledge resources of the firm are the foundation upon which sustainable differentiation occurs, since they are difficult to imitate and hence ensure sustainable competitive advantages (Wright, Dunford & Snell, 2001).

The KBV of the firm literature posits that performance difference between firms is as a result of differences in knowledge resources (capabilities and competences). As a result, an important KBV of the firm proposition states that the organization exists for the purpose of creating, transferring and transforming knowledge into competitive advantage (Grant, 1996). Furthermore, stickiness can cause the transfer of knowledge through the organization to be difficult. It is an indication of the presence of internal factors that hinder the true achievement of competitive advantage. Stickiness also inhibits the realization of a meaningful gain from the available knowledge assets of the firm.
2.2.3 Dynamic Capabilities Theory

According to Teece and Pisano (1994), the dynamic capabilities theory explains how organizations accomplish two apparently conflicting essentials. Whereas they must possess enough stability to continue to deliver value in their own unique manner, they must also have enough resilience and adaptability to change swiftly and at the minimum possible cost when conditions so demand. The dynamics of the firm capabilities is deeply rooted in the firm’s knowledge base. Firms actually engage in learning something new as they adapt their capabilities over time, and/or whenever they are acquiring or developing new capabilities. According to Teece, Pisano and Shuen (1997) the concept of dynamic capabilities can be defined as the firm’s ability in integrating, building and reconfiguring internal and external competencies with the objective of addressing rapidly changing environments.

Eisenhardt & Martin (2000) content that a firm invests least in developing dynamic capabilities when the organization depends on the process of accumulating experience, learning happens in an essentially semi-automatic fashion based on the alterations that workers adopt in reaction to unacceptable performance. This however is dependent upon the continuous availability of adequately experienced workers with regard to the occurrence, availability of good systems to monitor performance and powerful enough incentives that will ensure that workers will take corrective action whenever non-conformity is detected (Winter, 2003).
2.3 Factors Influencing Training Decisions

This study will be reviewing four broad categories of factors that influence training decisions namely enterprise characteristics, Sociopolitical and economic environment, worker characteristics and job characteristics.

2.3.1 Enterprise Characteristics

Leckie et al. (1996) argue that employees in small businesses are provided with little training compared to their counterparts in larger businesses. Further, small businesses shun structured training in preference for on-the-job training. These businesses often cite various barriers including insufficient time, prohibitive cost of training and unavailability of information. Large organizations have a higher capacity to absorb the possible momentary reduction in productivity that may occur as a result of some of the employees being withdrawn for the purpose of attending trainings than the small firms. This implies that the larger firms have more capabilities in taking employees off the job or finding their replacements when trainings are necessary. Further, the larger firms are more likely to enjoy better economies of scale when they offer trainings to their employees. According to Noe (2010) cost is a major barrier to training among small companies. He concluded that the per capita cost of training is significantly lower in large firms than in small firms. Consequently, given the ease of accessibility and convenience in execution, small firms favour on-the-job training. This method of training is devoid of the fixed costs typically associated with structured training. Small businesses also cite lack of information on training opportunities as a barrier to training. Ridoutt et al (2012) mention the vital missing information on training as training suppliers and programs available.
According to Shariff and Al-Makhadmah (2012), employers often consider technology and innovation when making decisions on the level of support for training. More innovative companies that are more advanced in terms of technology, which are quality management conscious and which have human resource strategies have a higher likelihood of supporting training initiatives. Baldwin and Peters (2001) likewise established that non-innovative firms are less likely to support training activities than their innovative counterparts, though the former also prefer on-the-job training. Innovative firms especially welcome the idea of enhancing the ability of employees to innovate and solve problems by exposing them to experience, a situation in which they progressively learn as they work. According to Chowhan (2005), whether or not training is conducted in a firm and the intensity of such training is dictated by the level of technological competency within the firm, rather than by the firm belonging to an industry that is technologically advanced or technologically active. The business strategy of the organization also informs training decisions. Besides defining the organization of work, the business strategy also impacts on the level of competency of the employees required for the firm’s operations. Accordingly, different business strategies of firms have a big impact on the trainings offered by the firms (Luong, 2015).

The industry in which an organization operates and its size are both significant factors influencing training decisions (Sanjeevkumar & Yanan, 2011). Small organizations spent less per employee in training compared to large organizations. However, whereas midsize and large organizations spend more per employee than small organizations, very large organizations are more likely to spend less. The latter have bigger budgets for expenditure on direct learning, but are likely to spend less per employee since...
employees are available to absorb the cost of developing and maintaining the training. The type of industry also impacts strongly on the type and cost of training, since every industry has its own unique training needs. Sanjeevkumar & Yanan (2011) argue that it is vital for these factors to be considered when benchmarking organization data compared with reported metrics. For example, high-tech manufacturing organizations invest more on training than service industries and other manufacturing firms. Even when organizations in the same industry are considered, every organization will have its own unique needs and challenges depending on their operations and available knowledge resources. The organizational learning for a particular organization is expected to take cognizance of these needs and address them accordingly. This will have an impact on their alignment with the presented benchmarking statistics. Besides organizational size and industry, methods of training delivery and training type offered also affect the direct learning cost per employee (Luong, 2015).

Different organizations have different human resource policies; the objectives of the HR departments of different firms differ (Baldwin & Peters, 2001). Some organizations want to achieve the goal of profit maximization or shareholder wealth maximization with the need to develop the employee coming as a secondary objective. Other firms will treat and pursue these two goals as having equal importance. The training methods, intensity of the training and frequency will also depend on the HR policy of the specific organization. Learning and development departments have the responsibility of providing training content to take care of a variety of needs (Bashir et al., 2011). Typically, about one-third of their content is focused on managerial and supervisory skills, mandatory and compliance training, and profession- or industry-specific training. The remaining two-
thirds of content cover other topics including processes and procedures, customer service, sales training, and executive development among others. Various delivery methods can be used to impart training. An instructor is involved in one way or another in more than two-thirds of organizations' formal learning hours, with 55 percent happening in an instructor-led classroom, 9 percent led by an online instructor, and 5 percent is led remotely by an instructor (Atieno, 2015).

2.3.2 Sociopolitical and Economic Environment

Far-reaching changes in the structure of employment in countries such as Kenya are a consequence of important changes in the global economy and the dawn of new technologies (Mogeni, 2013). One such a change is the need for organizations to continuously improve the skills of their workforce in light of the rapid technological changes as a means of maintaining or improving productivity levels. Besides recruitment of skilled employees, employee training is one of the major means through which personnel skill level is raised. Demographic changes are also creating challenges for society and organizations’ social policies. The growing number of older workers within the firm is one of the most dynamic changes that is currently occurring. This trend is largely attributed to health, economic, social and legislative changes, and is poised to create both opportunities and challenges over the forthcoming decade. This scenario poses a challenge for the government, employers and trade unions alike with regard to development of employment policies and practices that suit a progressively more age diverse workplace (Sanjeevkumar & Yanan, 2011).

Most countries experienced massive job loss, alarmingly high unemployment and underemployment following the global and economic crisis. As a result of this situation,
today’s job seekers face fewer job opportunities and are have the likelihood of accepting part-time employment and work that does not exactly match their skills. Employees who end up working in jobs that do not correspond to their skills have limited opportunities for skill development and are likely to end up ruining their respective careers. For the job crisis to be comprehensively addressed, there is an urgent need to not only create jobs, but ensure that the jobs are of good quality and that the jobs and skills of the workers are in compatible. Bashir et al. (2011) conducted a study from Asian countries like China, India and Pakistan and established that there was an increase in awareness among employees regarding their rights and expectation to evaluate their performance according to inputs as a result of education and globalization. Exposure to Western HR management practices were found to change the behaviour of employees towards prevailing Asian countries’ HR management practices (Bashir et al., 2011).

2.3.3 Worker Characteristics

Questions such as who is eligible for training new recruits, employees with impending promotion or transfer, redundancy prospects, employees belonging to designated training schemes, managers, supervisors, or all workers have to be asked when making decisions on training. Training managers need to consider the learning and development needs of individual employees as well as those of the various teams in the firm. Training needs analysis heavily banks on identifying the current knowledge and skills for individual workers, a responsibility normally assigned to the line manager. The responsibility of identifying the knowledge and skills already possessed by employees normally belongs to the line manager. The manager needs to be able to articulate what the skills are to all stakeholders in order for a skill review to be meaningful. This can be achieved by
creating a skills checklist, a list containing all probable skills relevant to the job in a language that is easy for all stakeholders to understand (Rabemananjara & Parsley, 2006).

The more educated an employee is, the more likely he/she is to be preferred for training. Zeytinoglu et al. (2008) found that the likelihood of Canadian workers with a university degree taking part in employer-sponsored training activities was twice that of their high school diploma counterparts. Further, highly qualified workers (managers and professionals) have a higher likelihood of accessing training programs than employees in cadres such as sales staff, administrative personnel and production workers with no certification. The underlying principle is that the more educated employees have a higher likelihood to present better returns on training, thereby reducing the training investment risk that the employer will be exposed to (Zeytinoglu et al., 2008).

According to previous studies, employee mobility at the national level is an important factor influencing training decisions. The level of the returns on training is directly influenced by the factors of production’s mobility rate, such as employee mobility and changes in technology (Groot, 1999). High labour mobility is likely to result in low returns on training and low investments in on-the-job training, since employees may be less willing to invest in the training of high risk workers in terms of mobility. For example, Autor, Katz and Kearney (2008) found that Europe’s labour mobility in general is much lower than in the United States. Consequently, the effects on wages associated with training in the United States appear to be lower than in the European countries. In a study to carried out to compare training in automobile plants in Japan and the United States of America, Lynch (2007) found that many American firms found it difficult to implement the Japanese-style, long-term training due to the high propensity of American
workers to move and United States management’s failure to build trust-based employment relations.

2.3.4 Job Characteristics

Participants’ level of prior knowledge and their previous training and experience in the area of interest can be evaluated through a knowledge and skills assessment process. Trainings’ learning objectives and content can then be easily developed using the results of this assessment (Mndeme, 2011). Job analysis is often a vital part of the process of training needs analysis. Rather than consider the capabilities of the incumbent, job analysis considers the duties and responsibilities under the given job and the capabilities required for an employee to competently perform in the job. Jobs such as secretary, supervisor, or accountant are a compilation of tasks and responsibilities generally associated with the employee’s job title. It is the responsibility of HR specialists to conduct a job analysis whenever a fundamental changes are made to an existing job or when a new job is created. Job analysis is often utilized as an HR management tool in classifying jobs and in hiring (Luong, 2015).

In order to maximize the effectiveness as well as minimize duplication during the job analysis process, it is imperative to involve all stakeholders (Groot, 1999). The HR department often compiles a job list whose purpose is ensuring that all jobs belonging to a given job family, process or operation have been identified and documented. Once the job list is already in place, it is the responsibility of the training manager to ensure that the list is updated from time to time in order for it to be useful as the basis for a training needs analysis. A job analysis approach to training needs analysis helps break down an employee’s job into basic logical parts. This approach enables
managers to gather and analyze the finer details concerning different aspects of the particular job. These include the responsibilities, inherent tasks, conditions under which the responsibilities are performed, the required standards of performance and the measures. Based on the foregoing information, it then becomes possible for the training manager to identify the skills, knowledge and attitudes required in performing the job in question to the desired standards as well as establish the relevant performance measures (Coetzer et al, 2012).

2.4 Empirical Studies on Factors Influencing Training Decisions

Atieno (2015) studied factors influencing staff training and development decisions in state-owned hotels in western Kenya. The researcher employed a case study and the target population comprised the four state-owned Hotels in Western Kenya. These state owned Hotels are Kisumu Hotel, Sunset Hotel, Kericho Tea Hotel and Golf Hotel Kakamega. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data. The study found that the major factors influencing staff training and development decisions were the need to enhance productivity and improve performance, introduction of new approaches and processes to business and the need to match employee specifications with the job requirements and stakeholders' needs.

Mogeni (2013) studied factors in training and development perceived to influence motivation in selected business process outsourcing firms in Kenya. These business process outsourcing firms were Spanco Raps Kenya Limited, Kencall Kenya Limited and Techno Brain Kenya Limited. Data was collected by use of a semi-structured questionnaire. Results showed that training in itself did not necessarily improve employee
motivation and that trainings need to be linked to performance improvement, reward and recognition, career growth and progression.

Rabemananjara and Parsley (2006) studied employee training decisions, business strategies and human resource management practices. The aim of this study was to confirm, as argued in literature, whether large and medium-sized organizations train their employees more than small organizations. Using the 2001 Workplace and Employee Survey of Statistics Canada, the study found that large and medium-sized organizations had a higher likelihood of providing training to their employees compared to small organizations. However, it was found that the small organizations carry out trainings as intensively as their medium-sized and large counterparts once they develop a commitment to invest in employee training.

Sanjeevkumar and Yanan (2011) studied training factors and its impact on training effectiveness in Kedah State Development Corporation (KSDC), Kedah, Malaysia. The objective of the study was to establish the factors affecting training. These factors included types of training, the environment in which the trainings were conducted, working environment and the personal characteristics of the employees. The study also sort to find out the factors affecting training effectiveness on human resource practices in Kedah KSDC and to determine the main factors which influence employee training on human resource practices. The study found that the management is committed to human resource development as well as its social responsibilities through various programs. It was also found that training and development programs are offered by the KSDC and that training programs are geared towards the latest technological advances.
Luong (2015) studied factors influence training effectiveness in micro and small enterprises in Shanghai China. The purpose of this study was to identify and examine the factors affecting the effectiveness of training in micro and small enterprises which were divided into three broad groups: the organizational factors, the management-related factors and the individual-related factors. Qualitative approach was employed in this study. The data was collected by the distribution of questionnaires and face-to-face interview with people at different positions, including managers, employees and trainees in the selected companies. The study found the fundamental factors which mainly influence the training effectiveness to be the organization’s internal barriers, managerial support and training motivation.

Ridoutt, Dutneall, Hummel and Smith (2002) studied factors influencing the implementation of training and learning in the workplace. The data was collected through a self-completion mailed questionnaire. The main method used to analyze this data was log linear modeling. Various questions in the survey were used to formulate a set of indices of training activity (dependent variables). These indices were: volume of training, diversity of training, reliance on external training, training reform engagement, formalization of training, individualization and learning. The role of workplace change as a trigger to training activity was confirmed in the study for the two industries included in this study. The study found that a majority of the indices of training activity, including training volume, were positively influenced by the advent of new products or services development and technological innovation.

The empirical studies reviewed above have not addressed the effect of factors such as enterprise characteristics, sociopolitical and economic environment, worker
characteristics and job characteristics on employee training decisions by organizations. Similarly, the empirical studies have not focused on the manufacturing industry in Kenya which has been most affected by the twin sins of lack of sufficiently skilled workers as well as influx of cheap imports from countries such as China. These are the research gaps that the present study tried to fill by investigating factors considered in training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research design that will be used in this study, the population of the study, sampling technique and sample size, data collection procedure and instrumentation. The chapter also discusses how data was analyzed and presented.

3.2 Research Design

According to Yin (2009), research design is the arrangement of the structure for collection and analysis of data in a way that is aimed to bring together relevance to the research objectives with economy in the research procedure. This was a case study using qualitative approach. A case study method was used because it permits investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as organizational and managerial processes. The qualitative approach was employed as it gives a deeper analysis of a single or small number of units (Creswell, 2008).

3.3 Data Collection

The study targeted all the top and middle level managers of the company. According to Malplast Industries Ltd’s Human Resource department, there are 6 top level managers and 9 heads of departments. The total number is 15 which was the target population. The study used census since the population was small.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collected primary data. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with a fairly open framework which allows focused, conversational, two-way communication (Ngechu, 2004). The researcher followed a
guideline but was also able to further probe relevant leads in the conversation that strayed from the guide when it seemed necessary. Semi-structured interviews are relatively quick and easy to administer and may be of particular use if clarification of certain questions are required or if there are likely to be literacy or numeracy problems with the respondents (Ngechu, 2004).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using the content analysis technique. The object of (qualitative) content analysis can basically be any kind of recorded communication, i.e. transcripts of interviews/discourses, protocols of observation, video tapes and written documents in general. However, not only the manifest content of the material is analyzed, but also so-called latent content as well as formal aspects of the material. This technique is appropriate for analyzing qualitative data like in our case. Content analysis comprises techniques for reducing texts to a unit-by-variable matrix and analyzing that matrix quantitatively to test hypotheses (Creswell, 2008).
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the presentation and interpretation of the study findings. The purpose of the study was to establish factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd. Data was collected from respondents using semi structured interviews and analyzed using content analysis. The respondents head the various divisions/departments of the Company and are charged with the responsibility of determining the specific divisions’/departments’ training decisions and ensuring that the same are executed efficiently and effectively.

4.2 Response Rate and Demographic Data

The study targeted all the managers at Malplast Industries Ltd that are involved in making training decisions. This group consists of 6 top level managers and 9 heads of departments. Only 12 of them agreed to be interviewed. This gives us a response rate of 80%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argued that for a sample size to be representative enough there should be a response rate of at least 50%.

Table 4.1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 12 respondents interviewed, 9 respondents representing 75% of the respondents were male as shown in Table 4.1 above. This indicates that a majority of the respondents were male although there were only 3 female employees in the target population.

4.3 Age of Respondents

The study found that most of the respondents were above 35 years of age as indicated in Table 4.2 below:

**Table 4.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25-29 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-45 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The results show that the senior management team of Malplast Industries Ltd consists of employees from various age groups. The respondents did not exhibit any particular pattern of responses that corresponded to their respective age groups.

4.4 Tenure of Respondents

The study sort to establish the tenure of the respondents and the findings were as shown in Table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3: Distribution of Respondents by Tenure**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upto 3 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 6 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The study found that the respondents were evenly distributed between those who had served Malplast industries Ltd for less than 4 years and those that had been with the company for at least four years as at the time of the interview.

### 4.4 Training Decisions

All the 12 respondents said that they were involved in making training decisions in the company. The most common training decisions made by the respondents are the type of training to be done and selection of the employees to be trained. The respondents said that the first decision they make is determining whether there are any training needs. After identifying the training needs they then decide the type of training to be done. The type of training needs will determine whether the training will be done within the organizations or without.

In most cases, the training is done in-house but in others where more complex training is needed and the company does not have the training materials or manpower to train, employees are taken to colleges/universities within or without the country. In some other cases, employees are sent to partnering companies outside the country for hands-on experience. At Malplast Industries Ltd, employees sent outside the country mostly go to India. The other major training decisions that the respondents make are the employees to
be trained. These include the number, position in the company and other characteristics such as education levels among others.

4.5 Enterprise Characteristics

The respondents felt that there are several enterprise factors that they consider when making training decisions. Table 4.4 below indicates the factors that the respondents feel are most important to them when making training decisions.

Table 4.4: Dominant Enterprise Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firm Size</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational HR policies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technological changes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author (2016)

According to the respondents, the major enterprise factor influencing training decisions is technological changes. The rigid plastic packaging industry is continuously changing in terms of technology and Malplast Industries Ltd keeps training its employees in order to enable them to keep pace with the technological changes, which the company readily embraces as a means of reducing production costs and maintaining a competitive edge.

The other factors that respondents felt influence their training decisions are firm size and industry. All respondents who consider these factors felt that less training would be required if the firm was smaller. Similarly, all respondents said that they would have organized or approved more training for their subordinates if the firm was larger and
hence more capable of absorbing the training cost. However, only two respondents regarded firm size as the most important factor influencing their training decisions. The other enterprise characteristic that the respondents considered when making training decisions was company HR policies. They felt that the company’s preference for internal promotions was an important factor influencing their training decisions, though only 1 respondent felt that it was the most important factor. No respondent mentioned employment status for the self-employed and employers as being a key factor in influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd.

4.6 Social-Political and Economic Factors

It was found that among the social-political and economic factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd were external availability of skilled labour, competition, need for legal compliance, organizational culture and the overall cost of training.

The three respondents who said that availability of skilled labour outside the organization was an important factor all argued that there would be little need to train employees when the desired skills are readily available in the labour market. All the eight respondents who said that legal requirements was a significant factor in making training decisions said that they needed to conduct the trainings to conform to legal requirements. On company culture, the respondents said that the organization has embraced a culture that encourages training. If training was not valued at the organization, there would be little or no need to train employees as the returns on trainings would diminish significantly.
Table 4.5 indicates the factors that the respondents considered as the most important when making training decisions.

**Table 4.5: Dominant Social-Political and Economic Factors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External availability of skilled labour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company culture</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal requirements</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training cost</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Author (2016)*

The findings indicate that 50% of the respondents felt that competition has the greatest influence on the training decisions they make in the company. The need to increase market share, or at least maintain the current market share, in an industry with a growing number of new entrants has driven Malplast Industries Ltd towards aggressive training of its employees.

**4.7 Employee Characteristics**

The study established that the respondents considered various employee characteristics when making training decisions including ability, age, education, gender, tenure and motivation. Ability in this study was used to refer to both current capabilities and future potential of the respective employees. Table 4.6 summarizes the findings of the study on employee characteristics.
41.7% of respondents interviewed said that the employee factor that has the greatest influence on training decisions is education. According to the respondents, employees who have relatively superior education are considered for training more as compared to those with less educational qualifications. Higher educational qualification is associated with higher IQ and more exposure. These employees will easily absorb what they are taught during training and this means it will cost the company less because the period of training is reduced as compared to employees of lesser educational qualifications, as the latter will not be able to easily understand complex concepts. These same employees with higher educational qualifications and hence a wider exposure will also be more capable of passing the skills they acquire during training to their colleagues which in turn reduces the cost associated with training every employee in the company. A more educated employee will further be favoured because he/she has a higher likelihood of transforming the training into meaningful work.

**Table 4.6: Significant Employee Characteristics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Author (2016)*

Another highly considered employee characteristic influencing training decisions is ability. According to the respondents, there is need to assess current and future potential before making training decisions. Employees who perform better or can easily adapt to
Emerging changes are favoured in training decisions. Employees with ability or potential to discharge a wider range of duties will be favoured in training decisions. Whereas all respondents concurred that ability was an important factor in making training decisions, only four considered it as the most important factor.

Motivated employees, those who understand why they do what they do, are a better prospect for training. This is because they are more likely to take what they are taught more seriously, take it into practice and also pass it to other employees. Motivated employees are more likely to embrace training, and training is in turn more likely to improve their motivation. Past performance of employees is also another factor. They are more likely to be considered for training not only as a way to reward them but also because the company will benefit more if the best performing employees also happen to be more skilled. Training poorly performing employees or employees with a poor disciplinary record is considered a waste of company resources.

Whereas 50% of the respondents felt that age is an important consideration when making training decisions, only one of them regarded it as the most important factor. The other respondents who said that this was a significant factor said that they had a preference for younger employees since they were likely to offer better returns on training while 1 respondent disagreed and felt that older employees require more training because their performance would have started deteriorating and remedial trainings will be necessary in addition to general trainings. Only one respondent mentioned gender as an important factor, arguing that female employees are a more risky group since their maternal responsibilities make their return on training lower than their male counterparts.
While all respondents felt that tenure was an important factor influencing training decisions, none of them selected it as the most important factor. Further, the respondents differed on the way tenure influences their training decisions, with 9 arguing that the employees who have stayed longer have proven their loyalty and are likely to stay even longer with the organization, hence utilize the training more for the organization’s benefit. The rest of the respondents however felt that those employees who had stayed for a shorter period require more training to enable them grow their skills to the skill level of their longer serving counterparts. No respondent considered ethnicity as an important factor influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd.

4.8 Job Characteristics

The study found that the respondent consider various job characteristics when making training decisions. These characteristics include complexity of the job, employee earnings, hours of work and occupation.

According to all the 9 respondents who said that job complexity was an important factor in making training decisions, the need to train employees increases with the complexity of their respective jobs. Most respondents said that the employee occupation determines the frequency and intensity of training while some felt that the employees whose monthly or annual working hours are higher require more training. On earnings, the respondents said that employees with lower income are more likely to leave for better prospects after they are trained, unless their remuneration is significantly improved.

Table 4.7 shows the breakdown of the number of respondents who considered each of the job characteristics as the most important in making training decisions.
Table 4.7: Prominent Job Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earnings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Complexity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>58.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author (2016)

58.3% of the respondents interviewed said that the job characteristic that has the greatest influence is the employee occupation while a further 33.3% said that they base their training decisions mainly on the complexity of the job. There are also other jobs which, though relatively complex, only require training after a very long period of time. These include engineering jobs that require high training at first but because engineering does not change that frequently, engineers in the company do not undergo training as frequently as computer programmers working in design. Both sets of respondents nevertheless unanimously agreed that there is a very close relation between occupation and the complexity of the job in terms of the skills required to do it. We can therefore conclude that the two sets of respondents agree with each other.

Whereas no respondent considered earnings as the main factor considered in training decisions, 50% of the respondents said that they considered this factor as well. Respondents interviewed said that the low income earning employees tend to have the highest rate of turnover and thus pose a higher risk. The company doesn’t invest much in training this cadre of employees because it is believed that they can leave the job anytime. High earning employees are more likely to stay longer and hence more likely to give better rates of return on training. Four respondents said that employees working for
longer hours are given priority in trainings as their returns on training are likely to be higher. It was established that Malplast Industries Ltd does not engage casual employees, hence this factor was not applicable to the organization.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

On the kind of training decisions made, it was found that the most common training decisions made by senior management employees of Malplast Industries Ltd are the type of training to be done and selection of the employees to be trained. The respondents said that the first decision they make is determining whether there are any training needs. After identifying the training needs they then decide the type of training to be done. The type of training needs will determine whether the training will be done within the organizations or without.

The major enterprise factor influencing training decisions is technological change. It was found that the company frequently makes training decisions since the company always tries to maintain or improve its market share through skill improvement to match emerging technology. If the training cost is too high, approvals may not be granted. Training cost should never exceed expected returns on training. Top management support was also found to be another enterprise factor influencing decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd.

On social-political and economic characteristics, it was found that competition was the most important factor. Legal requirements like quality standards required within the country and in other countries also demand that the company invests more on training in order to meet the minimum requirements. National and county governments as well as certain certifications make particular trainings compulsory.
It was found that the employee factor with the greatest influence on training decisions is education. Employees who have relatively superior education are considered more for training as compared to those with less educational qualifications. A more educated employee is favoured because he/she has a higher likelihood of transforming the training into meaningful work. Another prominent employee characteristic influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd is employee ability, based on which the respondents felt they are both able to reward good performance in invest in the better performing employees and those with greater potential through training. Whereas motivation did not feature prominently as the main characteristic considered by the respondents, it was listed as an important factor by all respondents, since motivated employees are more likely to take what they are taught more seriously, take it into practice and also pass it to other employees.

On the job characteristic influencing training decisions, it was found that occupation and job complexity having the highest influence on training at Malplast Industries Ltd. For the highly specialized jobs like designing new products, the employees doing these kinds of jobs undergo training more frequently than any other cadre. This is because technologies in designing products are changing everyday and so the employees must be up to date with the current technology if the company must come up with products that are competitive in the market. For the less specialized jobs like operating a molding machine, employees do not need a lot of training. This means that the more complex a particular job is the higher the intensity and frequency of training.
5.2 Conclusions

On the kind of training decisions made, the study concludes that the most common training decisions made at Malplast Industries Ltd are the type of training to be done and selection of the employees to be trained. On enterprise factors, the study concludes that major factor influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd is technological change. On the social-political and economic factors influencing the training decisions, the study concludes that competition is the most important factor influencing training decisions. The study further concludes that legal requirements by national and county governments as well as certain certifications makes particular trainings compulsory and this influences training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd.

On the employee factors, the study concludes that the factor with the greatest influence on training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd is education. At Malplast Industries Ltd, the more educated employee will be favoured because he/she has a higher likelihood of transforming the training into meaningful work. The study also concludes that younger employees at Malplast Industries Ltd are more considered for training than older ones. This is because younger employees are more energetic than the older employees. They are not only more capable of withstanding the rigors of training but also have a longer period remaining before they retire. The study also concludes that Malplast Industries Ltd considers for training motivated employees, with those who better understand why they do what they do having better prospects for training.

On the job characteristic, the study concludes that occupation and complexity of the job go hand in hand and have the greatest influence on training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd. It can also be concluded that for the highly specialized jobs like designing
new products, the employees doing these kinds of jobs undergo training more frequently than any other cadre. This is because technology in designing products is changing everyday and so the employees must be up to date with the current technology if the company must come up with products that are competitive in the market. For the less specialized jobs like operating a molding machine, employees do not need a lot of training. This means that the more complex a particular job is the higher the intensity and frequency of training.

5.3 Recommendations

The study recommends that the management of Malplast Industries Ltd consider other social-political and economic factors such as purchasing power, rate of economic growth, household income levels and the level of interest rates that could also influence training decisions. On the employee factors, the study recommends that the company should not discriminate employees on grounds of age. All employees should be treated equally for the long term welfare of the company. It is important to remember that the older employees were once energetic and that when they were so, they worked hard to bring the company to its level today. The study also recommends that management does not choose employees for training only by their educational standards. This is because there are employees who have more experience but may not have had very high educational qualifications. These employees may even be better in performance than the more educated ones and so it is important that they undergo training to improve their productivity.
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

The objective of this study was to establish factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd, a manufacturing firm. The researcher recommends that other studies on the same subject be conducted on firms in other sectors of the economy and in particular the service sector. By so doing and after getting the findings, a generalizations can be made on the the factors influencing training decisions among Kenyan firms.

After getting the findings on the factors influencing training decisions at Malplast Industries Ltd, the researcher also recommends that studies be conducted using a case study of the same firm but focusing on other attributes of training such as the effect of training on employee performance. This will make scholars and managers in general to understand in depth the whole concept of training as far as Malplast Industries Ltd is concerned.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Do you make training decisions in your organization?
   i. If yes above, what kind of decisions do you make?

2. Kindly list the enterprise characteristics you consider when making decisions on employee training?
   i. How do these characteristics influence the decisions you make?
   ii. Which of these characteristics do you consider most when making training decisions and why?

3. What are some of the social-political and economic factors influencing your decisions on employee training?
   i. How do these factors influence such decisions?
   ii. Which of the factor(s) do you think has/have a greater influence in your decisions and why?

4. Which factors unique to an individual employee do you consider when making employee training decisions?
   i. In what ways do these factors influence your decisions?
   ii. Which of the above factor(s) do you think has/have a greater influence in your decisions and why?

5. Are there any job characteristics that inform your employee training decisions? If yes, what are these characteristics and how do they affect those decisions?
   i. In what ways do these characteristics influence your decisions?
   ii. Which of the above characteristic(s) do you think have a greater influence in your decisions and why?
6. Of the four sets of characteristics: job, worker, social-political and economic and enterprise characteristics, which set do you think influences your training decisions the most and why?

Thank you for your cooperation!