STRESS MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT KENYA AIRWAYS

BY

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This proposal document is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other University.

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ABSTRACT

Kenya Airways has had numerous challenges such as expensive ticketing which has led to reduced revenue, poor investment practices leading to loss of money as well as poor human practices leading to industrial unrest. Such challenges have threatened emotional fitness of employees because they worry about being laid off. Studies that have looked at stress management and employee performance have not zeroed in on work place quality, work place counseling as well as flexible work scheduling. It was therefore imperative to examine stress management and employee performance at Kenya Airways Company. In conducting the study, the current research took advantage of cross-sectional study design and collected primary data using questionnaires. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics and hence mean and standard deviation as well as regression and correlation were used. The study found out that stress management explained 47.7% (R^2 =0.477) variation of employee performance. Additionally, the research established that flexible work schedule had significant positive correlation with employee performance (β =0.460, p< 0.05); work place counseling had insignificant negative correlation with employee performance (β = -0.184, p < 0.142); and that work place quality had a significant positive relationship with employee performance (β =0.463, p < 0.05). The study concluded that both work place quality and flexible work scheduling have roles to play in employee performance but not work place counseling. The study recommended policy and practice should include work place quality and flexible work schedule to enhance employee performance.

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First, I thank God Almighty for giving me strength to undertake this study.

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I acknowledge my entire family especially my father George Abonyo, for he has always said "educating a girl child is best present to the entire clan" and for my daughter for her patience during the study

DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my beloved daughter Larveene Keysha for the moral support and giving me quality time to carry out my research.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Stress is a trope in everyday life just like it is in work places which means that there is no way it can be avoided. However, as Mount (2002) points out, some stresses have negative health outcomes while some level of stress is necessary to push individuals to deliver on their mandates and to realize their objectives to the best manner possible. As such, it is the stress that contributes to the negative health outcome that makes stress management in organizations a salient feature. On the other hand, there is employee performance and it is not in doubt that negative stress, especially that one that contributes to negative health outcome as Park et.al (2012), may affect employee performance no matter the indicators of performance. Therefore, stress management and employee performance are not only interlinked as Mount (2002) further points out, stress management is a factor to be considered in any organization whose agendum is to meet the objectives for which it is established. However, the link is not as obvious as any managers or researchers would imagine since there are no clear indicators about the level of stress that would lead to poor performance or good performance given that stress is both a good thing and a bad one.

The following theories can be used to further explore stress management and performance. Transactional theory of stress and coping as Bodenmann (1997) observes, involves the relationship between two individuals. One individual demonstrates stress signal while interacting with the other while the other responds in a manner that makes coping feasible in the dyadic relationship. Transactional theory of stress and coping (TTSC) therefore puts emphasis on one individual to recognize the stress or the stress

signals in another and respond to it in a manner that makes it possible for coping to take place. Theory of preventive stress management (TPSM) also finds suitability in the present study. The theory according to Cooper (2002) is embedded in a philosophy of proactivity, in the sense that organizations and individuals working for them are one and the same. As such putting proactive measures to prevent stress as a way of mitigating the same contributes positively to the health of the organization to which the organization leadership has a responsibility.

The Kenya Airways as Parliamentary Report (2019) points out has numerous systemic problems including infrastructure, punitive taxes, as well as cut throat competition from other international airlines. Such problems induce stress among employees because there is inherent fear of employee furloughing and layoffs. Layoffs and furloughing are stressors because when employees lose means of survival, their stress levels are more likely to increase.

1.1.1 Stress Management

Stress management as defined by Lumley and Provenzano (2003) is an approach, process or step taken by organization or individual employee to scale down or eliminate stressors that contribute to organization stress and thereby ensuring organizational well-being and the well-being of the organizational employees. Boss, Bryant, and Mancini (2017) define stress management as provision of psychologically conducive work environment that helps employees of the organization to cope with stress. Cooper (2002) defines stress management as the proactive measures that individuals and organizations put in place to deal with stress before it affects employees. This therefore means that stress management

is dealing with possible stressors before they become stress to organizational employees at individual level or at a group level.

There are several variables of stress management phenomenon including work place counselling. As Kirk-Brown and Wallace (2011) points out, work place counselling, which is mostly offered through employee assistance programs, helps employees to deal with stress in a relationship framework. The counselor must therefore balance the needs of the employee and the overall goal of the organization. Work place quality is another aspect of stress management strategy. The physical work place quality such as space, lighting, location as Petreanu, Lordache&Seracin (2013) explains, are capable of either reducing or increasing stress levels among employees. Modern work place amenities and safe environments are therefore aspects that those who are concern with managing stress may look into. Flexible work schedule is also relevant in stress management in the work place. As Vahle-Hinz, Kirschner, and Thomson (2003) observes, flexible work arrangement mitigates work place stress depending on how it is leveraged. Work schedules that give employees autonomy and employees can work from home has the potential to reduce stress, yet if employees are not discipline to finish their work on time, it increases stress. As Bunce (2011) contends, individual intervention strategies are all those strategies such as exercise, eating right, prioritization of activities, time management and more that an individual employee cold leverage to deal with stress at an individual level. Stress audits as Cooper and Cartwright (1994) argues, helps organization to identify possible stressors for purposes of elimination in the greater scheme of stress management.

Stress management as Dar et.al (2011) observes is a wide area of techniques that focuses on ways in which stress can be mitigated in organizations of all sizes so as to minimize the negative outcomes of stress. Stress management therefore manifest in different ways depending on one organization to another. According to Cortton and Hart (2003) the manifestation of stress management can be in terms of flexible work schedule, work place counseling or even work place quality since such constructs, upon proper implementation may reduce stress. On the other hand, Ajal (2012) opines that stress management is entirely dependent on individual organization and techniques used are not universally standardized.

1.1.2 Employee Performance

Employee performance is not uniform, it is contingent on situation and context. By definition LePine, Zhang, Crowford and Rich (2015) defines employee performance as the attributes of employees and their initiative that helps organization to achieve its objectives. Therefore, employee performance has different indicators and different measurement styles depending on the organization measuring it and the reason for which it is measured. While this may ring true, Bamba (2016) asserts that employee performance by definition is the extent to which an organization objective is achieved or not achieved by employees which means that employee performance can be positive or negative. Organizations tends to prefer positive performance since it is the reason for which virtually all organizations are established. Negative employee performance derail the overall goal of the organizations. Employee performance as defined by Okiro, Aduda, and Omoro (2015), is the extent to which employees achieve their mandate within an organization subject to organization goals and objectives. Although employee

performance may result to both financial and non-financial achievement for the organization, and the extent of which such goals are strategically accomplish is what employee performance is all about (Okiro et.al, 2015).

This study looks at employee performance in terms of employee performance indicators. Timeliness as Mount (2002) points out is tied to employee performance because the faster the deliverables the more productive the employees. Creativity is yet another indicator of employee performance and as Bamba (2016) asserts, it occurs when an employee is performing at peak and can go beyond duty to create better templates for work. Another employee performance worth looking at is work quality. As Nasudin et.al (2006) observes, work quality occurs when the totality of employee output, real or imagined, satisfies the intended clients. Minimal absenteeism also finds itself relevant in the discourse of employee performance as Dextras-Gauthier et.al (2012) puts it, when there is minimal or no absenteeism at work, it means that employees are engaged in their work. Client feedback is yet another measure of employee performance. As Bamba (2016) argues, when employees are responsive and provide feedback to clients of the organization in good time, it indicates employee performance because it solves the questions that the customer may have on the organization.

1.1.3 Kenya Airways

Kenya Airways is not a young airline. As Lagat (2013) observes, the beginnings of Kenya airways is traceable to the collapse of the East African Community in the 1970s wherein Kenya Airways became the national airline in 1977 after the collapse of the East Africa Airways. Since then, Kenya Airways has grown to become the third largest airline in Africa. With such expansion, Kenya Airways has also expanded the airbus fleet to

include Boeing, Embraer, and Dreamliner. Kenya Airways makes several landings at various airports in Kenya with several crews/employees as well as onboarding passengers.

Kenya Airways according to Ochieng and Ahmed (2014), has made it easier for travelers from Kenya to the rest of the world to begin their quick and safe journey. In point of fact, the airline has had a strong safety record save for the accidents that took place in Douala and Abidjan. As a public enterprise, Kenya Airways plays by the rules of public organization just like other business centric public organizations. Other than providing employment Kenya Airways also contribute to the airline revenue. Consequently, the dynamics of organization existence such as employees come into a sharp focus particularly the organization mental health in which stress is the major concern.

According to an observation by a Parliamentary Report (2019), Kenya Airways has been rocked by a lot of problems in the recent past. For example, there has been prohibitive tax regimes that affect the organization profitability, massive losses as well as fierce competition from other airlines and which collectively has contributed to 8.56 pretax loss of 8.56 billion in the year 2019 and the year 2020 is not looking any better. A loss-making business organization according to Cooper (2002) may contributes to organization stress. Such is because organization employees believe inherently that they are likely to be furloughed or laid off at the slightest provocation which generally may or may not contribute to poor employee performance within the organization such as Kenya Airways.

1.2 Research Problem

The argument that stress management contributes to organization performance can be misleading. There are instances where stress management may lead to employee performance, Boss, Bryant, and Mancini (2017) explains that when stressors are removed by application of stress management such as work place counselling, is more likelihood that employees are more likely to be productive. However, as Park et.al (2012) contends, human beings are so diverse that the application of a given program to eliminate or manage stress may not work for everyone else. For example, some people may prefer therapy, others may prefer quality work environment, others may prefer flexible schedule among others, yet a single organization may not provide all the interventions that may be suitable to each and every employee. Additionally, different studies measure different variables and therefore even if there was a study that links stress management and employee performance, such a study cannot be taken and generalized in all situations.

Kenya Airways has had numerous challenges that has out pressure on its operational efficiency. For instance, there has been poor investment practices and decisions by management that has led to losses of money. Expensive tickets especially compared to other airlines has also contributed to customers looking for cheaper options and hence reduced revenue generation capabilities. Routing arrangements in areas that the airline don't fly has also contributed to loss of revenue. Human resource problems has led to numerous industrial unrest hence destabilizing the work environment ecosystem and peaceful coexistence among employees and the Kenya Airways as the employer. On top of such problems, frequent cancellation of flight for many reasons some of which could

be avoided has also jolted even the most reliable customers with the overall implication being loss of revenue in billions of shillings and stress among employees.

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Concerning stress management and performance, a number of studies have been conducted. KIM, Barry and Don (2016) studied stress management and coping strategies in the United States of America. On their part, Imtiaz and Ahmad (2009) stress and employee turnover in both Pakistan and Islamabad in India. In South Africa, Naidoo (2011) considered stress management and performance of teachers in public schools. Another study was conducted in South Africa police department. The research was conducted by Mostert and Joubert (2005) and was intended the relationship between stress and coping skills in the police department. On their part, Musyoka, Ogutu, and Awino (2012) sought to explore the relationship between employee stress levels and performances of enterprises listed in the Nairobi Stock Exchange in Kenya. Another study in Kisumu was conducted by Kendi (2012) and was meant to look at stress and its effect on school principals in Kisumu County.

Although credible studies exist that looks at stress management and performance, such studies have different motivational focuses apart from aviation industry. The studies also use different methodologies which have their own limitations. Together with the inconsistent findings, such studies cannot be generalized everywhere. In addition, the studies have not looked at flexible work schedule, work place counseling, as well as work place quality and how they collectively influence employee performance in aviation industry like Kenya Airways. How does stress management impact employee performance at Kenya Airways?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to examine the relationship between stress management and employee performance in Kenya Airways.

1.4 Value of the Study

The utility of the study could be made manifest in a number of ways such as policy formulation. The outcome of the study could be employed to formulate policies that could make the centrality of stress management in organizations more profound. For instance, the outcome of work place counseling could inform counseling programs not just within Kenya Airways but also in many other organizations. In the same domain, work place quality and its impact on performance could also be used to inform policy directions within public enterprises to improve performance. On the same line, the outcome of flexibility with work schedule could also help in informing policy on flexible work arrangements in a manner that contribute to performance in the organization.

Theory building could be another value of the study in general while in particular it could build transactional theory of stress and coping (TTSC) as well as theory of preventive stress management (TPSM). In regard to transactional theory of stress and coping, the study could relate and compare the findings to find out whether transactions such as counselling can mitigate stress and thereby improve performance. In the event that there could be a significant correlation, then the theory could be strengthened by such findings. On the other hand, theory of preventive stress management by findings that could show that actions put in place to prevent stress actually prevent stress and contribute to performance within the organization.

In management practice, the study could also be utilized to add value to both managers and employees. For example, in the event that there are findings that work place consoling reduce stress and improve performance. Organization managers could put in place counseling programs and benefit from improved employee performance. Similarly, work place quality could also be ingrained in organizations to improve employee performance subject to the study findings. Further, managers could strive to inculcate flexible work schedule within organizations if the finding shows that the arrangement reduce stress and improve employee performance.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section of the proposal addressed a number of themes which are related to stress management and employee performance. It looked at the theory underpinning the study in relation to stress management and employee performance. Furthermore, the section addressed empirical literature related to the study variables. It finally discussed summary of gaps that the study intends to fill.

2.2 Theories Underpinning the Study

The study will address two main theories namely, transactional theory of stress and coping, and theory of preventive stress management. Theories provide a framework upon which a scientific study is premised and by extension explain and predict the phenomena under investigation.

2.2.1 Transactional Theory of Stress and Copping

Transactional theory of stress and copping according to Bodenmann (1997) was developed by Lazarus and Folk in early 1980s as an attempt to provide solution to work place stress in particular and in dealing with harmful stress in general. A theoretical framework had to be found upon which to anchor stress management studies that had since taken root not only in academic research, but also in management practice. This was as a result of an understanding prevalent at the time, and continues to date, that proper stress management could lead to performance in organizations regardless of the performance metrics. It is for such reasons that Lazarus and Folk as postulated by Bodemann (1997), developed transactional theory of stress and coping.

The main assumptions of transactional theory of stress and copping as Lazarus and Launier (1978) points out is that the mitigation of stress is contingent on a dyadic relationship between two individuals in the organization. For instance, if an employee manifests signals of stress, another employee may recognize such stress signals and handle the employee in a way that not only reduce the stress, but also in a way that makes coping with the stress a realistic alternative. In many contemporary organizations as Kirk-Brown and Wallace (2011) contends, there are employees whose work is mainly to deal with employee matters including stress management and such employees include work place counselors. The overall mandate in many work places is to help employees leverage their own resources to address and possibly remove the stressors that contribute to work place stress. Transactional theory of stress and coping therefore fits the bill in the current study dealing with stress management and employee performance. Although the theory is relevant, its possible limitation just like any other theory as Bodemann (1997) postulates, is that the other individual expected to recognize the stress on her coworker may actually fail to recognize such stress signals and hence more stress in the work place.

2.2.2 Theory of Preventive Stress Management

The theory of preventive stress management (TPSM) theory according to Cooper (2002) was developed in 1979 by a number of academicians and health professionals including Nelson, Hurrel, and Quick in an effort to mitigate not just organizational stress, but also stress among individuals whether or not they were at work. As Cooper (2002) contends, employees and organization are one and the same thing and for organization to thrive, employees must be made to thrive, particularly in terms of their health and in this case psychological health. Preventive stress management theory therefore focuses on

unhealthy stress that leads to distress not the eustress which is a healthy stress within employees.

The fundamental assumption of preventive stress management theory according to Quick et.al (1979) is that the prevention of stress rather than treatment of a stressed employee is the best way of handling work place stress and which contributes to performance of organizations no matter their performance measurement. The theory therefore finds relevance in the current study in the sense that preventive stress management is one of the ways of stress management and if done well, contributes to the reduction of harmful stress and hence employee performance of the organization of whatever shape and size and location. However, the limitation of preventive stress management theory as Cooper (2002) postulates is that when the all the stressors are not identified and dealt with before the stress happens, it becomes unfeasible since identification of all stressors is not a mean task especially in larger organizations.

2.3 Empirical Review of Literature

The empirical literature in this section is centered around three main variables namely work place counseling, flexible work place schedule as well as work place quality. Work place counselling as Kirk-Brown and Wallace (2011) presupposes is a situation whereby the employer brings an in-house psychological counselor through employee assistance program to help employees remove or cope with work place stress and by extension improve performance. On the other hand, flexible work schedule as Vahle-Hinz (2003) asserts is also a factor in stress management strategies. For instance, allowing employees to work from home may reduce stress of travel and influence performance. Similarly, work place quality as Petreanu et.al (2013) points out also finds itself in the stress

management mix since quality of work place such as good work relationships may reduce work stress and influence performance favorably.

On the subject of work place counseling, several studies have been conducted. For example, Brande et.al (2017) investigated work place bullying and coping strategies with a sample of 3105 respondents. The study results revealed that coping skills contributed to productivity. Another study conducted by Ajal (2012) investigated work place environment and organizational performance with a sample of 350 respondents. The study showed that problem solving skills contributed to performance. On their part, Dar et.al (2011) looked at stress and job performance. With a sample of 143 respondents, the study concluded that uncovering underlying causes of stress contributed to performance. Contrary findings were recorded by Cotton and Hart (2003) who used a sample of 250 respondents and established that better understanding of employees did not contribute to performance. On their part, Trice and Bayer (1984) investigated employee programs and emotional wellbeing using a sample of 80 respondents and established that developing effective solutions to problems contributed to productivity. Although the studies are feasible, they not only used small sample sizes that makes overall generalization difficult, they are also contradictory. Above all, they have failed to link the five dimensions of work place counseling to employee performance collectively which creates a gap in knowledge.

Other studies have also been done on flexible work schedule and performance. For instance, Mungania, Waiganjo, and Kihoro (2016) sought to establish the relationship between performance and flexible work schedule with 43 banks as the sample. The study utilized inferential statistics and established that flexible terms of work contribute to

performance. On the other hand, Martinez-Sanchez et.al (2007) investigated teleworking and performance. The study data was analyzed using inferential statistics and establish a significant positive correlation between teleworking and performance. Additionally, Dextras-Gauthier et.al (2012) undertook to study work condition and health and used inferential statics to analyze data. The finding revealed that flexible work hours contribute to performance. Another study by Ivancevich et.al (1990) sought to explore stress management and performance. The study utilized inferential statistics and established that self-scheduling did not contribute to performance. Another study conducted by Narsudin et.al (2006) investigated work climate and stress management. The study utilized inferential statistics and revealed that flexible location contributed to organization performance. Although the studies are scientific, they not only have contradictory findings, but also used inferential statistics to analyze data yet inferential statistics alone has limited outcome. The studies also did not employ the five dimensions collectively and how such dimensions influence employee performance in Kenya Airways hence a gap in knowledge.

Other studies have investigated work place quality and performance. Such studies include the study conducted by Maas and Gassel (2005) which looked at automation and performance in the construction industry. The results showed that automation contribute to performance. On their part, Drettner, Falck, and Simon (1977) concluded that air conditioning contributes to performance in the pharmacological industry. Braddy and Cummings (2010) established that work relationship contributed to performance in the hospital industry. Contrarily, Ogol (2015) established no significant relationship between clean work environment and performance in the agricultural sector. Djuic et.al (2014)

also established no significant correlation between spacious work environment and performance in the medical sector. Although the studies are tenable, they are also contradictory in terms of their findings. Besides, the studies focused on different sector other than aviation industry. The studies also left out how the five dimensions collectively influence employee performance in aviation industry in Kenya, hence a gap in knowledge.

2.4 Summary of Gaps

Generally, the empirical studies reviewed had inconsistent findings and methodological limitations. Low sample sizes that makes overall generalization difficult, use of inferential statistics alone that limit generalization as well as different motivational focus of the studies are some of the limitations of the studies reviewed. Additionally, the studies also did not show how, flexible work schedule, work place counseling as well as work place quality collectively contribute to employee performance in Kenya airways.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This conceptual frame discusses the relationship between independent variable and dependent variables. Independent variables are flexible work schedule, work place counselling and work place quality while dependent variables are timely work completion, attention to detail, work quality and client feedback

Independent variable   Dependent variable
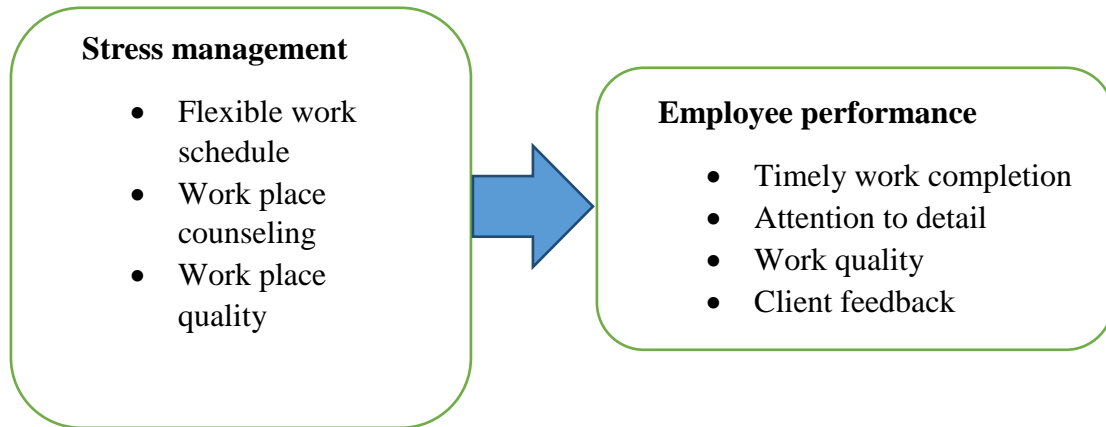
Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

Source: Research Data (2020)

Conceptual framework in figure 2.1 is the conceptual framework of the study with the variables that the study will operate. The independent variables on the left side are work place counseling, flexible work schedule, as well as work place quality. Such variables when properly implemented in the organization like Kenya Airways, will mitigate stress and hence contribute to timely work completion and hence employee performance in the organization.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section focused on the research design, population of the study, sampling, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study used a descriptive cross-sectional design. Cross-sectional research design according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) is a type of observational research that measures what the study ought to measure over a specific period of time. The relevance of cross-sectional study design in the current study therefore was that the study was conducted at a specific period in time and not a longer period. In such case therefore cross-sectional research design was more suitable.

3.3 Population of the Study

The study population was the entire 3900 employees of Kenya Airways. Employees at Kenya Airways is justified for the study given that they understand the challenges better and were therefore able to provide insights on how stress management framework in the organization relates to employee performance.

3.3.3 Sample size Estimation

The sample size was obtained by using Taro Yamane's statistical formula (Yamane, 1973) with a margin of error being 0.05 and confidence level pegged at 95% as shown hereunder.

$n=N/1+N(e)2$

Where:

n= the sample size requires for the study

N= the total population

e= the error term at 0.05

Therefore:

n=3900/1+3900(0.05)2

n=3900/1+9.75

n=3900/10.75

n=363

3.3.4 Sampling Technique

The study used simple random sampling strategy to include employees from all level of management including top level management, middle level management as well as lower level management. Saunders et.al (2012) postulates that sampling provide a framework in which elements are given equal chance to be part of the study. The study recognized that by sampling, employees were given equal chance of participation in the study and ultimately contributed to reliable generalization

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher visited the organization prior to data collection for familiarization purposes and to know the status of employees including their availability to participate in the study. The study collected primary data and used questionnaire to solicit information

from the managers, airplane crew, ticketing staff and flight attendants. Afterwards, the study used questionnaires to collect data from the respondents. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), questionnaires are useful in a study because they are easy to administer and also takes a short time to gather relevant data. Given that the current study conducted the study at a specific time, questionnaires were the most suitable tool and instrument to gather study data. Section 1 of the questionnaire handled demographic information, section 2 addressed question on flexible work schedule, and section 3 dealt with work place counseling. Additionally, section 4 handled work place counseling while the last section addressed questions on employee performance.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study data was analyzed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. By using descriptive statistics, the study used mean and standard deviation as well as frequencies and percentages. On inferential statistics, the study used regression and correlation. The regression was characterized by the following formula:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 X_i + \beta_3 X_i + \varepsilon_i \text{ Where}$$

B_0 –Is the constant or intercept

β_i (i=1,2,3)-Are the regression coefficients or change induced in Y by each Xi

X_1- work place counseling

X_2- flexible work schedule

X_3- work place quality

Y_i- employee performance

ε_i- Is the error component.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS AND

DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The second last section of the study operationalized the variables of the study and thereby presenting the findings and discussions in line with the major variables that underpinned the study. From the total respondents, the study obtained 300 successfully returned questionnaires representing 83% of the total questionnaires issued. Only 36 questionnaires were not sent back representing 17%, this was due to various reasons including travels, leave of absence and communication challenges. However, the researcher acknowledges that a return rate of 83% was enough for the study to continue.

4.2 Distribution by Respondent's Demography

Characteristics of the participants were necessary for the research so as to ensure that the generalization of findings were, to a large extent, reliable. For such reason, the respondent characteristics were brought to bear in three waves which were: gender, education attainment as well as age of the participants.

4.2.1 Gender Dynamics

Gender of the participants was important for the research because a study with only one set of gender may be limited and less comprehensive. Therefore, the research intended to establish the gender dynamic of participants towards the bigger goal of ensuring that the generalization was reliable and could be depended upon. The research demonstrated that male participants were 200 (67%) while female respondents were 100 (33%) hence both genders were represented as demonstrated in Figure 4.1 that follows.

Gender of respondents

0%
33%
67%

Male
Female
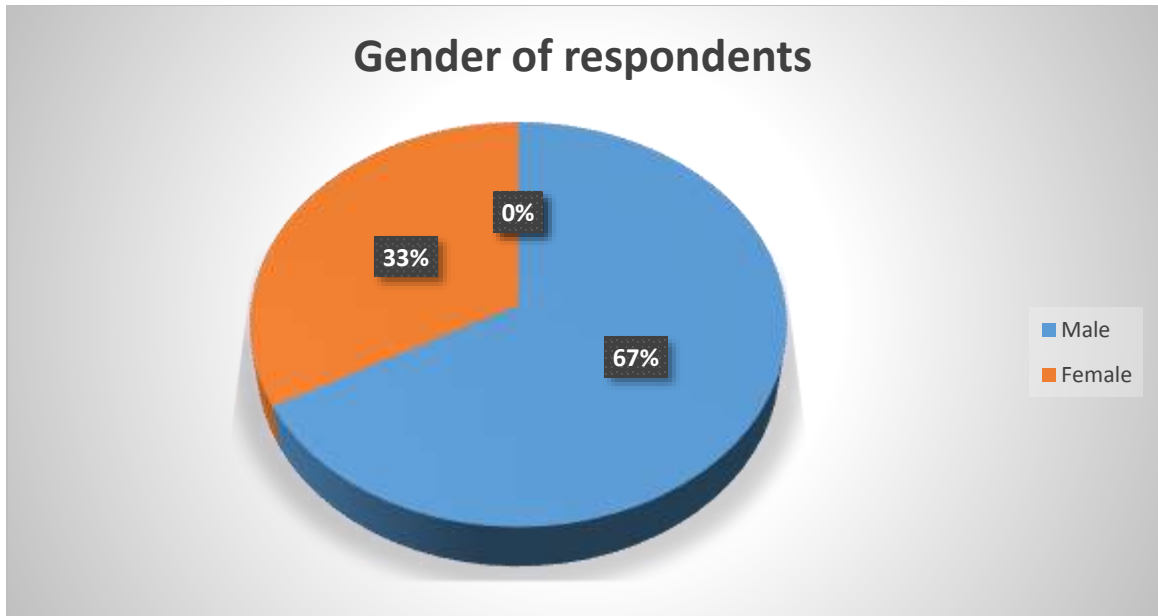
Figure 4.1 Gender of respondents

Source: Study data (2020)

4.2.2 Education Level of Respondents

The necessity of level of education in a scientific research is mostly relevant for the research to know whether or not the research participants are, unaided, able to not just read, but also comprehend the subject matter of the research and by extension, provide responses that could make reliable generalization achievable. Fortunately, all research participants had some level of education as illustrated in Figure 4.2 and which made the generalization reliable. Majority of Kenya Airways employees were found to have tertiary education 150 (50%), this was followed by employees who had university level of education at 100 (33%) and then a few employees had only secondary education at 50 (17%) as shown.
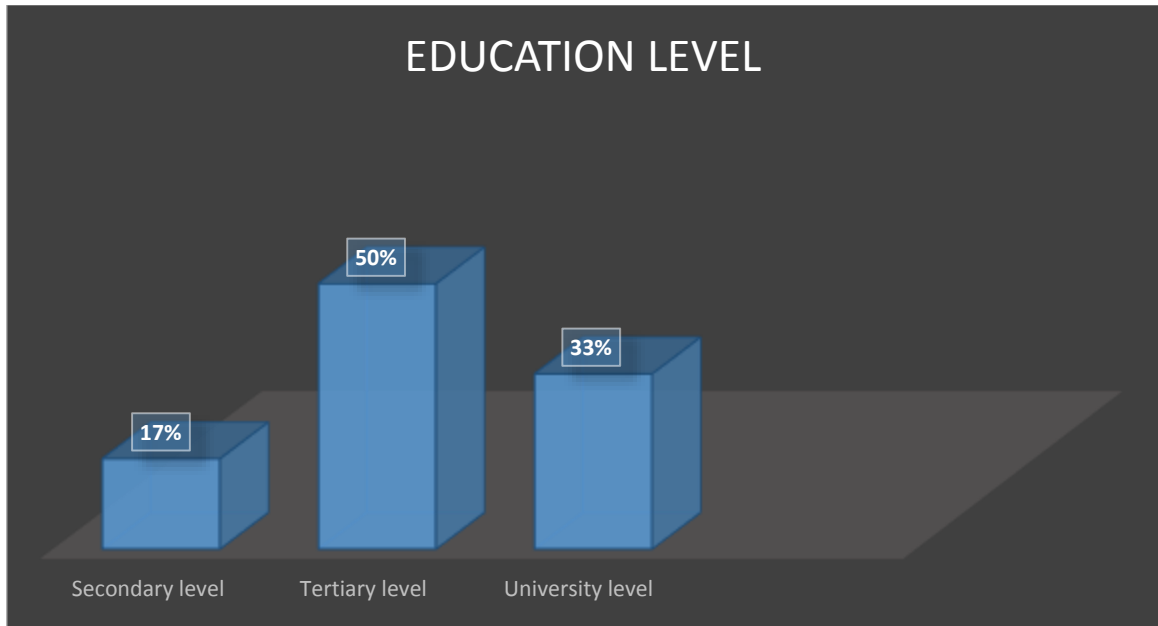
Figure 4.2 Education level of participants

Source: Research data (2020)

4.2.3 Categorization In terms of Age

Age of participants is important for the research. From the age category of the research participants, the researcher can deduce their experience at work and also their capacity to provide reliable responses. Such is because younger participants may lack comprehensive insight of the organization while older generation of employees may lack innovativeness as a result of new technology. Therefore, a combination of both old and younger employees, provide the necessary mix in terms of experience and soundness of judgment that contributes to reliable responses and hence reliable generalization. According to the research results, employees aged 41-50 as well as employees aged 32-40 were 100 (33%) each while employees aged 51-60 as well as employees who were aged 21-30 were 50(17%) each. Figure 4.3 paints the picture more vividly.
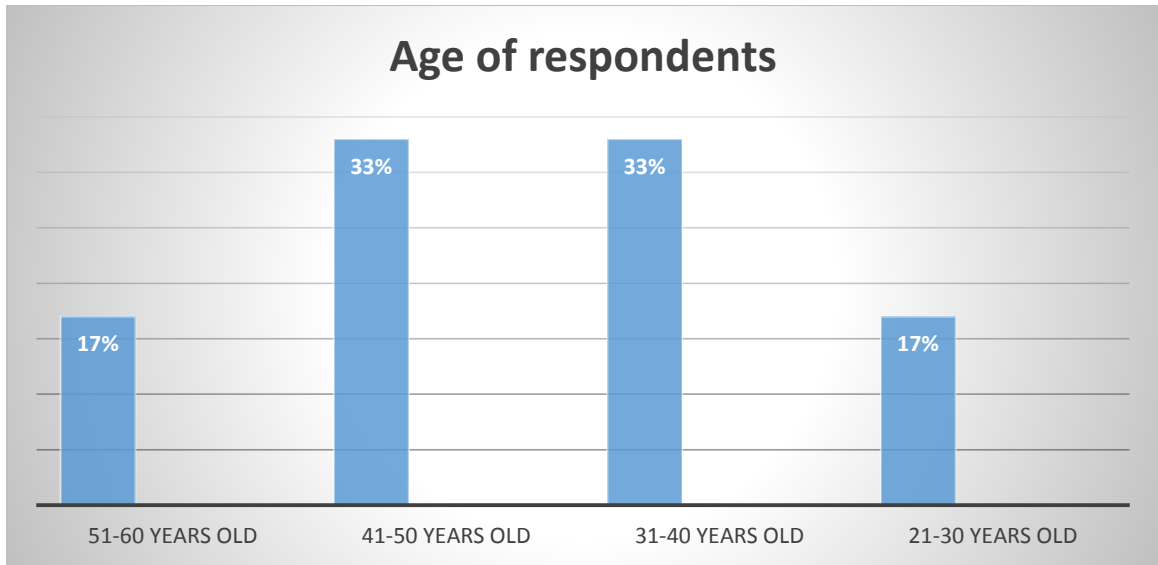
Figure 4.3 Age of Respondents

Source: Research data (2020)

4.3 Extent of Variables of the Study

The main variables of the research were flexible work schedule, work place counseling, as well as work place quality. Each and every descriptive statistics of the variables were analyzed and results presented.

4.3.1 Extent of flexible work schedule

In regard to the extent of flexible work schedule a number of significant factors were observed. Allowing employees flexible work hours had 3.88 and 0.122 as mean and standard deviation; autonomous self-scheduling had 3.52 and 0.931 while teleworking stood at 4.11 and 0.112 as mean and standard deviation in that order. Further, flexible location and flexible terms of employment had 3.71 and 0.634; 4.21 and 0.532 and mean and standard deviation respectively. The average mean and standard deviation of 3.886

and 0.466 means that the extent of flexible work schedule was significant and the responses were consistent as shown in Table 4.1 that follows.

Table 4.1 Extent of flexible work schedule

Dimensions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Deviation
Employees are allowed flexible work hours as a way of providing flexible work schedule	300	1	5	3.88	.122
Employees are allowed autonomous self-scheduling as a way of flexible work schedule	300	1	5	3.52	.931
Employees are allowed teleworking as a way of flexible work schedule	300	1	5	4.11	.112
The location of the organization is flexible to employees as a way of flexibility of their work	300	1	5	3.71	.634
Employees are given flexible terms of employment as a way of flexibility of work	300	1	5	4.21	.532
Averages				**3.886**	**0.466**

The extent of work place counseling was also measured and the results yielded various significant factors. Coping skills as a result of counseling had a significant factor of 3.01 and 0.034 for mean and standard deviation. Problem solving skills as a result of work place counseling had a mean of 3.02 and standard deviation of 0.941 while uncovering underlying causes of stress as a result of counseling stood at 2.89 and 0.862 for mean and standard deviation in that order. Further, better under understanding among employees as a result of work place counseling stood at 3.55 and 0.211 for mean and standard deviation whereas developing effective solutions for problems as a result of counseling stood at

3.01 and 0.456 for mean and standard deviation respectively. The average mean and standard deviation were 3.096 and 0.456 meaning that the extent of work place counseling was significant while the responses were consistent as shown in Table 4.2 that follows.

Table 4.2 Extent of work place counseling

Dimensions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Deviation
Counseling program provides employees with coping skills in the work place	300	1	5	3.01	.034
Work place counseling provides employees with problem solving skills	300	1	5	3.02	.941
work place counseling program helps employees uncover underlying causes of stress	300	1	5	2.89	.862
Work place counseling helps employees with better understanding among themselves	300	1	5	3.55	.211
Work place counseling program helps employees develop effective solution to problems	300	1	5	3.01	.231
Averages				**3.096**	**0.456**

On the other hand, the extent of work place quality was equally measured using specific dimensions. According to the results in Table 4.3, the results, which represented mean and standard deviation were as follows: automation: 3.81 and 0.801; air conditioning infrastructure: 3.51 and 0.321; healthy work relationships among employees: 3.22 and 0.721; clean work environment: 2.99 and 0.525; spacious work station 4.49 and 0.772.

The average mean and standard deviation were 3.604 and 0.628 which means the extent of work place quality was high and the responses from participants did not vary greatly.

Table 4.3 Extent of work place quality

Dimensions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Deviation
Automation in the work place create a conducive environment for work in the organization	300	1	5	3.81	.801
Air conditioning infrastructure is conducive for work in the organization	300	1	5	3.51	.321
Work relationships among employees in the organization is healthy and there is no tension	300	1	5	3.22	.721
There is always clean work environment which makes it conducive for employees in the organization	300	1	5	2.99	.525
There is spacious work station in the organization which makes work environment to be conducive for employees	300	1	5	4.49	.772
Averages				**3.604**	**0.628**

In order to correlate the independent and dependent variables, it was also necessary to measure the extent of performance and the results are shown in Table 4.4 below. As a measure of performance, timely work completion had a significant factor of 3.22 and 0.821 for mean and standard deviation. Attention to detail had 3.22 and 0.821 while work quality had 2.71 and 0.202 as mean and standard deviation respectively. Finally, client feedback had a significant factor of 4.71 and 0.871 which represents mean and standard

deviation. The average mean and standard deviation were 3.613 and 0.504 which means that the dimensions were significant measure of performance and the variability among responses was slim.

Table 4.4 Employee Performance

Dimensions	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Deviation
Timely work completion is a measure of performance	300	1	5	3.22	.821
Attention to detail is a measure of performance	300	1	5	3.81	.132
Work quality is a measure of performance	300	1	5	2.71	.202
Client feedback is a measure of performance	300	1	5	4.71	.871
Averages				**3.613**	**0.504**

4.4 Interdependence between stress management and employee performance

The researcher sought to determine the fitness for use of the model employed in the study. The predictors were the independent variables which were flexible work schedule, work place counseling, as well as work place quality. Dependent variable was employee performance. The results were as shown in Table 4.5 that follows. Independent variable was explained by 47.8% variation. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.477$) and the model was found to be fit for use since the F statistic was significant. The value of Durbin Watson is 2.001 meaning that the variables did not affect themselves whatsoever.

Table 4.5 Summary of the Model

R	R Square	R Square change	F change	Durbin Watson
.647	.477	.478	20.879	2.001

Predictors: mean score of independent variables

Dependent variable: employee performance

In equal measure, it was necessary to analyses the variance to established whether the model was fit for use. Table 4.6 demonstrates the findings of ANOVA.

Table 4.6: ANOVA Results on the Estimated employee performance Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	20.244	3	7.081	21.872	.000[b]
Residual	21.230	69	.322		
Total	41.474	72			

a. Dependable variable: Dependable variable: employee performance mean score

The analysis of variance in Table 4.6 reveal that $F_{(3, 69)} = 21.872$, $p < 0.01$ meaning that the model was fit for use which showed that the model was fit for use. It is therefore deducible the dependent variable together explained employee performance at Kenya Airways.

Table 4.7: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	Collinearity Statistics

	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.329	.319		4.194	.000	.701	1.974		
1.Flexible work schedule mean score	.322	.096	.460	3.372	.001	.132	.513	.397	2.516
2.work place counseling mean score	-.125	.084	-.184	-1.484	.142	-.291	.043	.436	2.295
3.work place quality mean score	.446	.115	.463	3.897	.000	.218	.675	.548	1.826

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance at Kenya Airways.

The model specification of the model was $Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i + \beta_2 X_i + \beta_3 X_i + \varepsilon_i$ and by putting together the regression coefficients the following equation is obtained:

Y = .1.329 + .460Xi -.184Xi + .463X…………………………………equation 4.1

R^2 =0.477 (47.7%)

4.5 Discussions of Findings

On the first variable, the study established that flexible work schedule had significant positive correlation with employee performance (β =0.460, p< 0.05). The finding is in consonance with the finding of other researchers such as Mungania, Waiganjo, and Kihoro (2016) as well as Narsudin et.al (2006) who both establish a significant positive relationship between stress management and performance. Although the previous studies were scientific, they not only have contradictory findings, but also used inferential statistics to analyze data yet inferential statistics alone has limited outcome. The studies also did not employ the five dimensions collectively and how such dimensions influence employee performance in Kenya Airways hence a gap in knowledge. The current study

therefore creates new knowledge by filling the gap using the five dimensions of stress management which are: flexible work hours, autonomous self-scheduling, teleworking, location, flexible terms of employment and how they collectively influence employee performance. The finding also supports the theory of preventive stress management in the sense that when the stress is prevented, it ensures that employee is able to perform his or her duties as required.

The second variable was work place counseling and the researcher sought to establish how it influence employee performance. The research findings revealed that there was insignificant negative correlation between work place counseling and employee performance (β = -0.184, p < 0.142). The finding contradicts the finding of other researchers such as Brande et.al (2017) and Ajal (2012) who established a positive relationship between work place counseling and employee performance. Although the studies were feasible, they not only used small sample sizes that makes overall generalization difficult, they were also contradictory. Above all, they failed to link the five dimensions of work place counseling to employee performance collectively which created a gap in knowledge. The current study therefore fills the gap and creates new knowledge having established that work place counseling has insignificant negative correlation with employee performance. The findings support transactional theory of stress and coping in the sense that when a senior employee fails to recognize the stressors in the junior employee, then the stress from the junior employee does not get mitigated and thereby contributes to employee underperformance.

The last variable was work place quality and the researcher intended to establish how work place quality influence employee performance. The findings revealed that work

place quality had a significant positive relationship with employee performance (β =0.463, p < 0.05). The finding supports the finding of other researchers such as Maas and Gassel (2005) as well as Drettner, Falck, and Simon (1977) who also established a significant positive relationship between work place quality and employee performance. Although the studies were tenable, they were also contradictory in terms of their findings. Besides, the studies focused on different sector other than aviation industry. The studies also left out how the five dimensions collectively influence employee performance in aviation industry in Kenya, hence a gap in knowledge. The gap can now be filled and hence create a new knowledge that work place quality significantly influence employee performance in regard to the five variables which are automation, air conditioning infrastructure, work relationships, clean work environment, as well as spacious work stations. The finding also supports theory of preventive stress management in the sense that when stress is prevented, it influences employee performance positively.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents summary of findings in line with the research variables, conclusions as well as recommendations. It also addresses limitations that the researcher came across in the process of conducting the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

On the first variable, the study established that flexible work schedule had significant positive correlation with employee performance (β =0.460, p< 0.05). The second variable was work place counseling and the researcher sought to establish how it influence employee performance. The research findings revealed that there was insignificant negative correlation between work place counseling and employee performance (β = -0.184, p < 0.142). The last variable was work place quality and the researcher intended to establish how work place quality influence employee performance. The findings revealed that work place quality had a significant positive relationship with employee performance (β =0.463, p < 0.05).

5.3 Conclusions

The objective of the study was stress management and employee performance at Kenya Airways. The study concludes that work place quality as well as flexible work schedule have significant positive correlation with employee performance. Hence, the two variables have a role in employee performance and

The research also concludes that work place counseling has insignificant negative correlation with employee performance. Therefore, work place counseling does not play a role in employee performance at Kenya Airways.

5.4 Recommendations

On practice, the study recommends that Kenya airways and other public enterprises should enhance work place quality and flexible work schedule since they enhance employee performance and therefore are good stress management factors. On the other hand, the research recommends that Kenya Airways should disregard work place counseling because it does not have a role in employee performance and therefore resources should not be channeled in work place counseling especially in line with employee performance.

On policy, the study recommends that Kenya Airways and other organizations in similar capacity should formulate policies that guarantees stress management as well as employee performance. Such policies should include work place quality as a way of mitigating work place stress. The policy should also include flexible scheduling in the work place. However, the policy should disregard work place counseling since it does not play a major role in employee performance.

On theory, the study recommends that the current research should be used as a source of knowledge because it creates knew knowledge. Other researchers, scholars and seekers of knowledge should utilize the research to understand more and get knowledge on stress management and employee performance. Research organizations and individuals can also

use the study and the knowledge created thereto in conducting other studies in related discipline.

For further study, the research recommends that other researchers should explore the influence of stress management on organizational performance in private organizations to see how the results compare.

5.5 Limitations

Research design was the major limitation given that cross-sectional research design only captures data in one point in time and therefore ignores historical perspective. However, the researcher acknowledges that the design is scientific enough to enable reliable generalization of the findings. Another limiting factor was in the communication. Some respondents took a lot of time to respond to the inquiries and questionnaires sent. However, the researcher was patient enough to ensure that all study participants filled the questionnaire and hence the response rate was high enough to enable the study to proceed.

5.6 Suggestion for further study

For further study, the research recommends that other researchers should explore the influence of stress management on organizational performance in private organization to see how the results compare. Such is because one single research may not explore all variables and all areas of research even within the same

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

This study is intended to examine stress management and employee performance of Kenya Airways. As selected study participant, you are requested to provide your answers as honestly as possible so as to inform the study generalization. Do not write your name anywhere in the questionnaire given that your name will not be revealed during data analysis. Your identity as a study participant will be kept confidential.

SECTION ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Kindly tick as appropriate in the boxes provided

1. Gender Characteristics
- Other   [   ]
- Female   [   ]
- Male   [   ]

2. Education Attainment
- Secondary education   [   ]
- Tertiary education   [   ]
- University education   [   ]

3. Age of respondent
21-30   [   ]

31-40   [   ]

41-50   [   ]

51-60   [   ]

SECTION TWO: FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE

In this sub-part, the researcher would like to know more about flexible work schedule in your organization. You are therefore requested to make apparent your views in the boxes provided.

Flexible work schedule	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Employees are allowed flexible work hours as a way of providing flexible work schedule					
Employees are allowed autonomous self-scheduling as a way of flexible work schedule					
Employees are allowed teleworking as a way of flexible work schedule					
The location of the organization is flexible to employees as a way of flexibility of their work					
Employees are given flexible terms of employment as a way of flexibility of work					

SECTION THREE: WORK PLACE COUNSELING

In this sub-part, the researcher would like to know more about work place counseling in your organization. You are therefore requested to make apparent your views in the boxes provided.

Work place counseling	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Counseling program provides employees with coping skills in the work place					
Work place counseling provides employees with problem solving skills					
work place counseling program helps employees uncover underlying causes of stress					
Work place counseling helps employees with better understanding among themselves					
Work place counseling program helps employees develop effective solution to problems					

SECTION FOUR: WORK PLACE QUALITY

In this sub-part, the researcher would like to know more about work place quality in your organization. You are therefore requested to make apparent your views in the boxes provided.

Workplace quality	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Automation in the work place create a conducive environment for work in the organization					
Air conditioning infrastructure is conducive for work in the organization					
Work relationships among employees in the organization is healthy and there is no tension					
There is always clean work environment which makes it conducive for employees in the organization					
There is spacious work station in the organization which makes work environment to be conducive for employees					

SECTION FIVE

In this sub-part, the researcher would like to know more employee performance in your organization. You are therefore requested to make apparent your views in the box provided

Employee performance	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
Timely work completion is a measure of performance					
Attention to detail is a measure of performance					
Work quality is a measure of performance					
Client feedback is a measure of performance					