

**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED EMPLOYEE
EMPOWERMENT AND PERCEIVED QUALITY OF SERVICE AT THE
MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF KISUMU**

BY

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DECLARATION

This Management Research Project is my own original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

**To my Parents,
The Late Mr. Ben Okeyo,
And Mrs. Sarah A. Okeyo
For their love of education**

And

A special dedication to my dear husband and children,

Mr. Ben Otieno Awaa,

Dr. Beryl A. Otieno

Edith A. Otieno

**For their immense encouragements, patience and support
throughout the entire course.**

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to determine the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service in the Municipal Council of Kisumu. To achieve the objective, the researcher used a cross section descriptive survey design in which a sample size of 84 respondents was drawn from a target population of 950 employees of the MCK through stratified random sampling procedure. The primary data was collected using questionnaires. Comparative data analysis was done using tables, mean - scores, percentage and correlation analysis. The study established that the perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service in the MCK were positively correlated ($r = 0.619$) meaning that with improvement in employee empowerment, service quality also increased. The study recommends that the MCK should put in place practices and policies aimed at ensuring that the supervisors clearly define what is expected of their junior staff, giving honest feedbacks and recognizing work well done. The study further recommends that the MCK should put timeframes for employees to complete tasks or services to customers. Most customer respondents disagreed that when the employees promised to do something, they did it promptly. The study suggests that future researchers should do the same study in other public and private institutions. This is because the findings of this study were based on an institution in the public sector and therefore the results may not be generalized to the organizations in the private sector. Future researchers should also do a longitudinal study to monitor the trends of quality of service and the determinants affecting them. This is because the state of quality is never constant but varies with time.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BPR	– Business Process Re-engineering
CA	– Competitive Advantage
EI	– Employee Involvement
HR	– Human Resource
HRM	– Human Resource Management
MBA	– Masters in Business Administration
MCK	– Municipal Council of Kisumu
M.S	– Mean Score
TQM	– Total Quality Management

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Today's organizations need to acquire the skills necessary for coping with challenges brought by competitiveness. Accompanying the change in competitiveness are changes in the way organizations are evaluated. The new performance standards are efficiency; defined as the ability to produce higher volume with same or fewer resources, quality; defined as matching products or services to a human need, customization; tailoring goods and services to individual clienteles and timeliness; delivering innovations to customers, making continuous improvements and developing new applications quickly (Carnevale & Carnevale,1993).

Developments in human resource management techniques and practices to promote work motivation particularly through employee performance, work design, reward systems, employee supervision, organization development, and change strategies have enabled organizations to create conditions which foster, promote, support and reinforce employee empowerment. These techniques and practices give organizations the competitive edge both in the short and long-term, as well as in their domestics and international markets (Pyne, 2004)

Key organizational practices associated with empowerment climate include information sharing, autonomy through boundaries, and team accountability (Randolph, et-al, 1995). Information sharing refers to the sharing of potentially sensitive organization information with employees throughout the organization. Autonomy through boundaries refers to

organizational structures and practices that assist employers in autonomous behavior, the setting of work goals and procedures, and any other area of responsibility.

Team accountability implies that teams in organization are the mechanisms of decision making and performance (Randolph 2004).

1.1.1 The Concept of Perception

Perception is the process by which an individual selects, organizes, and interprets stimuli into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world (Leon et al, 2008). It can be described as how we see the world around us. Personal characteristics that affect perception include a person's attitude, personality, interests, past experiences and expectations. For example, it's possible that all employees in a firm may view it as a great place of work, favorable working conditions, interesting job assignments, good pays, excellent benefits, an understanding and responsible management- but, it is very unusual to find such an agreement. Perception is important to the study of an organization behavior because people's behavior is based on then perception of what reality is, not on reality itself. The world as it is perceived is the world that is behaviorally important (Robbins et al, 2009). When an individual looks at a target and attempts to interpret what he or she sees, that interpretation is heavily influenced by the personal characteristics that affect perception and includes a person's attitude, personality, motives, interests, past experiences and expectations. For instance, if you expect individuals holding public office to be unscrupulous you may perceive them as such regardless of their actual traits. Characteristics of the target being observed can also affect what is being perceived. The relationship of a target to its background also influences perception as does the tendency to group close things and similar things together.

In the context of employee empowerment, perception can influence the outcome of activities. It is crucial that employees' interest in being empowered is nurtured and consciously sustained. Staff deliberately become active participants when empowered and believe in the ability of empowerment to have a positive impact on their work performance, a strong organizational culture of management and sharing of knowledge and experiences gained during their work experience is institutionalized and most important, management affords opportunities and a friendly climate for staff to apply the new concept on the job. Then an organization can fully realize a return on its empowerment investment.

1.1.2 The Concept of Employee Empowerment

Empowerment of employees in service organizations is a necessity in view of the nature of service itself. Without empowerment in the delivery of intangible-dominant services, employees would be bounded, lacking confidence and creativity, which could lead to under-performance during service encounters. Empowerment is at both the individual employee level and the organizational level. The employees who experience a high degree of autonomy in their work; specify the schedule of their work in accordance with the organizational policy. They are competent and have the skills needed to deal with necessary requirements of service delivery. Looy et al, (2003) describes empowerment as a means of providing service employees with enough autonomy to allow them handle unforeseen situations such as complaints.

Herrenkohl et al, (1999) refers to empowerment as employees being more proactive and self-sufficient in assisting an organization to achieve its goals. The top management

makes it possible for employees to gain access to information back and forth the organization, and participate in the goal setting of the organization. The employees are motivated to deliver their best, because they are well-informed about what is going on within the organization. This is made visible in the employees reward system (bonus) where they are part of the goal setting of the organization, and work towards achieving the general set goals. Moreover, the employees feel that they are a “part and parcel” of the organization, and put in their best to see that the objectives of the organization are met. They have the autonomy to make decisions regarding customer service. This is in accord with what Looy et al, (2003) argument that the most important reason for empowerment at the individual employee level is the belief that autonomy motivates people, and makes them more willing to take initiatives and make decisions, than being dictated to regarding their jobs. The employees are able to call customers on phone, schedule a meeting when there is an unresolved issue with the customers regarding payments due to a service or any other pertinent matter. This helps them in resolving customer problems before they think of seeking redress in other alternative ways such as switching to other service providers. This is in line with Gronroos (2001) argument that the impact of employee empowerment is more pronounced during instances of service recovery, and delivery of consistent service quality, which enhances customer satisfaction with the organization.

According to Zeithaml et al, (2006), satisfied employees make for satisfied customers (and customers can in turn reinforce employees’ sense of satisfaction in their jobs). Employees are satisfied with working, based on the responses, the average number of years the employees are at the organization, and the autonomy and freedom they have in

controlling the service process. Looy et al, (2003) also support the above observation when citing Schlesinger et al, (1991) that employee empowerment enhances employee satisfaction, which is caused by the latitude, and autonomy given to them to serve customers using their skills and competence. Moreover, the satisfaction of the employees enhances their productivity and retention. The environment facilitates the pushing down of information, knowledge, rewards, and power necessary to stimulate actions of taking initiatives and acting independently which is a feature of empowerment. In various streams of literature on employee empowerment, Looy et al, (2003), Coleman Jr. (1996), Zeithaml et al, (2006) all suggest that autonomy is the driving force of empowerment, as it creates the motivation for the employees to deliver high service quality, and work to achieve organizational set goals and objectives.

1.1.3 The Concept of Service Quality

An acceptable outcome is an absolute necessity for good perceived quality, but an excellent service process creates a distinct and sustainable competitive edge Gronroos (2001). Looy et al, (2003) defines service quality as a form of attitude representing a long run overall evaluation of the service received. Arising from the perspective that the service quality perceived by the customer may be different from the quality of service actually delivered by the service provider as studies have shown is always the case. Sureshchander et al, (2002) describe service quality as the degree of discrepancy between the customers' normative expectations of the service and their perceptions of the service performance. Gronroos (2001) argues that because of the complexity that characterizes most services, their quality tends to be complex too, as compared to the quality of goods, which are traditionally related to the technical specifications of the goods. In the case of

goods, the outcome or end result of the process is transferred to the customer while, in services whether ranging from high-tech to high-touch or from discretely used to continuous services, the way the service employees perform their tasks, what they say, and how they do it also influence the customers view of the service and their experience of it.

Other factors that could affect the services comprise attitude of the other customers consuming the service and the atmosphere of the buyer-seller interactions, the way the customer receives the service also influences his view of the quality of the service; the way he experiences the simultaneous production and consumption of the service is quality dimension. The quality of service can be classified into two parts based on how the customer perceives the service and what the customer receives: “The HOW and the WHY”: The HOW is the Technical quality which is concerned with what the customer receives and how he receives it while the WHY is the Process quality which involves how the service counter is taken care of and how the service provider functions.

The third dimension of service quality that research suggests is that of the physical environment of the service encounter, which is the WHERE of the service quality perception. However according to Zeithaml et al, (2006) service quality is the customers’ perception of the service component of a product and a critical determinant of customer satisfaction more so, that service quality focuses specifically on dimensions of service, and is a dimension of customer satisfaction even though the two of them tend to be used interchangeably. Customer satisfaction on the other hand is a broader concept and is made up of other additional factors including the perceived service quality.

1.1.4 The Municipal Council of Kisumu (MCK)

Kisumu, Kenya's third largest city is situated on the Western Edge of the country on the NE shores of Lake Victoria. The city has progressively increased from 53Km² in 1976 to 417km² presently. It became a municipality in 1963 when Kenya became an independent country. With an estimated population of 585,000 residents, Kenya Population Census (2009), Kisumu experiences a high immigration rate mainly from the surrounding districts. It has grown from a railway terminus and port in 1901 to become a principal administration, commercial and industrial centre in the Lake Victoria region. The MCK has thus become a public institution, whose level and quality of service delivery has socio – economic as well as political implications for the whole of Kenya. The geographical position and profile of Kisumu, naturally and strategically places it as a dynamic competitive growth centre for industry, transportation, communication and commerce in the East Africa Region.

Due to the various challenges faced over the last few years, the MCK has initiated various programs intended to change its employee performance and service quality to the customers MCK Strategic Plan (2007 – 2012). For the MCK to achieve its key objective of delivering quality services to Kisumu residents, it has become necessary to seriously involve members of staff at all levels. This calls for staff members to be fully empowered to take the initiative, make decisions and solve problems promptly. So far no study has been conducted on the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service in the MCK hence the need for the study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There has been limited emphasis in empirical research on employees' perceptions of empowerment. Recent studies have instead focused on management practices Nesan and Holt (2002). It is however necessary to examine the individual's perception of empowerment within organizational context as this plays a vital role in the way empowerment is perceived by the employee. Staffs deliberately become active participants when empowered and believe in the ability of empowerment to have positive impact on their performance, a strong organizational culture of management and sharing of experiences (Pyne, 2004).

The Kisumu Municipal Council has previously faced many challenges such as overcrowding of hawkers selling along the major streets of the city; inadequate sanitation; limited water supply for residents; polluted water; inefficient solid and liquid waste management; bad roads; dilapidated houses; just to mention a few. Furthermore the Council has suffered serious financial shortages despite the fact that it collects revenue everyday from residents and the business community (MCK Strategic Plan, 2007-2012).

Despite the aforementioned drawbacks, the MCK has in the recent times tried to redeem its public image by restructuring its operations and improving its service delivery to the residents of Kisumu. This has borne fruits to some extent as it has managed to rid the city of garbage, enhanced beautification, fixed roads and ensured employees are paid on time. The council signed Performance Contract with the PS Ministry of Local Government which was intended to ensure achievements of the agreed targets and prepare employees of MCK for the desired changes in working styles, attitudes and work ethics, MCK

Strategic Plan, (2007-2012). This leads to the question of whether the perceived empowerment of employees at the MCK is what has resulted to the perceived quality services seen? The proposed study seeks to fill this gap in knowledge.

Even though a lot of research has been done on employee empowerment, none has covered the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived Quality of Service especially in an institution that is emerging from poor governance and underperformance. Thus there's a wide gap in knowledge which needs to be filled by this research. The researcher therefore sought to answer the following question: What is the relationship between the perceived employee empowerment and the perceived quality of service in the MCK?

1.3 Objective of the Study

To determine the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service in the Municipal Council of Kisumu.

1.4 Value of the study

The study will be valuable to;

Local Authorities in Kenya as it will provide insights about what employee empowerment really is.

The MCK which will be in a position to utilize the findings of the study and recommendations to develop more appropriate strategies that will go a long way in helping the council achieve its objectives.

Scholars who will benefit from the study which is expected to contribute to the existing literature in the field of employee empowerment and its relationship to quality service particularly in the local authorities. **Future scholars** who will use the results of this study as a basis for further research in the area of empowerment.

The study will also encourage and reinforce **interest of managers** in employee empowerment and quality service as a tool for remaining competitive in today's rapidly changing work environment.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature of past studies that are related to this study. It has the following sections: employee empowerment, the Psychological/ Individual Perspective, Employee Empowerment Programs, The Potential Benefits of Employee Empowerment, Limitations of Employee Empowerment and Employee Empowerment and Service Quality,

2.2 Employee Empowerment

Empowerment has become one of the most salient concepts in modern management theory and practice. Definitions vary, but for the purpose of this study, empowerment is defined as: the process of providing employees with the necessary guidance and skills, to enable autonomous decision making (including accountability and the responsibility) for making these decisions within acceptable parameters that are part of an organizational culture.

Similarly, Vogot (1997), defined empowerment as the act of giving the people opportunity to make workforce decisions by expending their autonomy in decision making. Empowerment also has been described as the breaking down of the traditional hierarchical structures. As in an empowered organization, the line personnel closest to a problem, are given the authority to solve the problem Blanchard (1997). Leitch et al, (1995) described employee empowerment as 'the importance of giving employees both the ability and the responsibility to take active steps to identify problems in the working environment that affect quality or customer service and to deal effectively with them'.

According to Argyris (1998) empowered employees are not only preferable but also essential to implement the organization's goal to be fiscally sound and environmentally responsible.

The introduction of a new program will yield optimal results when employees are treated as major stakeholders in an organization Mohrman et al., (1996). Empowered employees are motivated and committed to participate and engage in improving the company performance. Employees who are not empowered have less commitment for improvement than the empowered employees Argyris (1998). Management can encourage employee empowerment by changing the organizational structures that support empowerment Leitch et al, (1995). One way that management can encourage employee empowerment is by changing the forms of organization. The traditional top down organization inhibits employee empowerment; instead, a flatter, horizontal organization should be in place to encourage employee empowerment. Companies need to shift to a more open form of participative management in order to empower their employees Mallak and Kursted (1996). Workers can contribute more effectively when management moves the decision power down to the employees, allowing them the freedom and power to make suggestions and implement goods business practices Wever and Vorhauer (1993).

Empowered employees who have autonomy and decision making power are also likely to be more involved in the improvement of the environment. Employee Involvement (EI) can be described as a participative process to use the entire capacity of workers, designed to encourage employee commitment to organizational success Cotton (1993). In addition Enander and Pannullo (1990), believe employee involvement may affect cultural change

and significantly reduce pollutants at their starting place. Since many of the efforts in pollution prevention rely on employees working and interacting with other departments, employee involvement becomes a necessity to improve chances for success. Employee involvement in the form of quality circle allows diverse skills to be tapped, encourages a measure of simple fun, and provides an audience for the demonstration of effective performance Storey (1992). Everyone in the organization from top to bottom, from offices to technical service, from headquarters to local sites must be involved in decisions and activities in which they have a stake or over which they are expected to exercise responsibility. People are the source of ideas and innovation and their expertise, experience, knowledge and co-operation have to be harnessed to get ideas implemented in the organization Dale (2003). There are two dimensions of empowerment, namely psychological or individual and multidimensional perspective.

2.2.1 The Psychological/ Individual Perspective

The psychological dimension of empowerment moves away from the traditional study of management practices and instead emphasizes employee' perceptions and experiences of empowerment. Through such an approach, the emphasis is upon perceptions and beliefs of power, competence, control and self-efficiency Psoinos and Smithson (2002). The work of Conger and Kanungo (1988) is often used as a starting point in literature on psychological empowerment, for they claimed that empowerment involves motivational concept of self-efficiency. This notion was further refined by Thomas and Velthouse (1990) who developed a cognitive model of empowerment. They defined empowerment as increased intrinsic task motivation and outlined four cognitions which they claim are

the basis of worker empowerment: sense of impact; competence; meaningfulness; and choice.

A very similar definition of empowerment was outlined by Lee and Koh (2001) who described four dimensions (listed below) as describing the psychological state of the subordinate: meaningfulness; the meaning of the value of a tasks goal or purpose judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards; competence: an individual's belief in his or her capability to perform tasks activities skillfully; self-determination (or choice): autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviors' and processes of the degree to which an individual can influence certain outcomes at work. The higher an individual 'scores' in each of these elements, the greater the sense of empowerment. However, the authors are careful to point out that the behavior of the supervisors must also be examined, for it would not be appropriate to say that they were empowered, if their supervisor did nothing intentional to empower them. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) considered that six key variables influence these cognitions. They include environmental events, task assessments, global assessments, interpretative styles, behaviors and interventions. Those who favor the psychological nature of empowerment argued that it is simply not enough to implement a change in management practices (as deemed appropriate in some empowerment literature) but it is also necessary to ensure that those practices are fully realized.

There has been limited emphasis in empirical research on employees' perceptions of empowerment and recent studies have instead focused upon management practices Nesan and Holt (2002). This may be considered somewhat surprising as essentially empowerment is a perceptual matter, or as one writer puts it empowerment is a cognitive

state of perceived competence and goal internalization Menon (1995). It is, however, necessary to examine the individuals' perception of empowerment within organizational context, as this plays a vital role in the way that empowerment is perceived by employees.

2.2.2 The Multi-Dimensional Perspective

It has been suggested that to empower successfully, it is necessary to examine the role of managers/leaders, as they have considerable impact upon the psychological sense of empowerment held by the employee. The way in which managers/leaders can implement and maintain empowerment strategies is multi-dimensional, as outlined below. Johnson (1994) considered that it is necessary for managers to give people the power to do their job. However, Vogt and Murrell (1990) viewed the power relationship as a complex interactive process whereby empowerment is an act of developing and increasing power by working with others. Therefore, until power is shared (and employees perceived that power is shared) empowerment is not possible

The dynamic relationship of the leader with employees is frequently cited as crucial in the empowerment literature. Honold (1997) and Johnson (1994) both argued that the leader is responsible for creating a common goal they communicate and share. Furthermore, the leader should continually monitor that their subordinates feel empowered. The leader may also play a part in recognizing the contributions made by employees by emphasizing effort of an employee as important Psoinos and Smithson (2002). There may be limits to the rewards that leaders are able to offer, and so senior management may also need to consider the implementation of profit related incentive schemes (Cunningham et al., 1996).

The leader /manager may also be influential in team development by concentrating on strategies that encourage self-management and group decision autonomy. It is argued that managers/leaders must focus on team empowerment as well as individual empowerment if the organization environment relies upon cohesive teams Dainty et al., (2002). The final area in which managers/leaders play a pivotal role is training. As noted in the previous section, it is necessary that employees believe themselves to be capable and training can be a key mechanism that provides employees with this reassurance. Pastor (1996) argues that the principal training focus should be on communication development so that they can engage in this new participative and facilitative management/leadership style.

In summary, it is evident that management and leaders may influence individual perceptions of empowerment in many ways. Thus, a multi-dimensional approach is necessary if a culture of empowerment is to be implemented and maintained. The way in which this is achieved is context dependant and managers/leaders need to adapt empowerment to the needs of their own particular organization.

2.3 Employee Empowerment Programs

Employee Empowerment programs include measures taken by the management to increase the capability of employees to perform their duties and develop themselves Jackson (1999). These programs are availing information to employee, coaching and mentoring, provision of opportunity for employee involvement and participation in corporate decision making, and encouraging innovation and creativity among staff. These programs results in enhanced corporate competency through Human Resources.

According to Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zirgami, (1985) the supervisor must see potential in the employee and work to bring that potential out through the process that is best described as mentoring or coaching and which entails: determining the skill level of the employee, sharing information about the goal to be achieved and why it is important to the organization as a whole, providing appropriate supervisory support, a directing style for those tasks with which the employee has some skills but is lacking experience or motivation, a supporting style for those tasks where the employee knows what to do but is still lacking confidence in their abilities and delegating style for those tasks where the employee is motivated and fully capable.

The supervisor should also ensure that the employee is consistently growing in skill by providing new responsibilities for which a higher level of supervision is needed, mentor the employee such that they absorb both the organizational culture and the value of empowerment present in the organizational structure, ensuring that appropriate skills to obtain needed resources, provide support for the continued empowerment of the employee and share information about the employees' and the organization's effectiveness (Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zirgami, 1985)

Many organizations take deliberate steps in empowering their employees. According to Sitterly (1998) most organizations have exactly the level of empowerment the management wants. This is demonstrated by amount of communication, level of training provided, opportunity for personal growth, soliciting and implementing of ideas, recognition and system promotion and advancement criteria, unaccountable little signals from management that demonstrate whether employees are valued or not Sitterly (1998). One of the strongest sign is when an employee take the lead to advance their

knowledge and skills with education and training either provided by organization or outside the organization (Friedman, 1992)

2.3 The Potential Benefits of Employee Empowerment

The benefits of empowerment can be broadly divided into two areas; benefits for the organization and benefits for the individual. Much of the research into empowerment has focused on organizational benefits assuming these are the driving forces behind attempts to engender empowered working Cunningham et al., (1996). Global competition and a changing business environment have instigated organization change in response to increased pressures to improve efficiency and performance. Specifically organizations have sought improvements in cost control, flexibility, quality improvement Psoinos and Smithson (2002). It has been argued that empowered organizations have demonstrated improvements in various economic performance areas. However, measurement of the economic benefits of empowerment specifically may be difficult as often it is introduced as part of a broader initiative such as BPR and TQM (Psoinos and Smithson, 2002).

While the primary motive of empowerment is usually to improve the economic performance of the organization, benefits to the individual employee have also been identified. Nykodym et al, (1994) found that employees who consider themselves empowered have reduced conflict and ambiguity in their role, as they are able to control (to a certain extent) their own environment. They suggest that this reduces emotional strain on the employee. On a similar theme, it was reported that empowered employees have a greater sense of job satisfaction, motivation and organizational goals. Despite these benefits being frequently cited, the nature and meaning of this job satisfaction and motivation have not been fully explored within the academic field.

Measurement of the employee benefits is very difficult to achieve. Unlike organizational benefits which can be measured using objective “facts”, individual benefits are much more subjective and complex. Certain factual measures, such as absence and turnover rates have been applied in this aim, as too have the investors in people awards which can be used as an indirect indicator of the company’s commitment to the development skills. However, it is often considered that softer measures of employees’ attitudes may be more appropriate than these “objective” measures (Psoinos and Smithson, 2002).

2.4 Employee Empowerment in Service Organizations

As listed by Gronroos (2001) the benefits are, quicker and more direct response to customer needs, customers experience spontaneity and willingness to help, by the employees at unusual circumstances compared to the traditional mode of having to wait for a decision by a supervisor. This has an effect on perceived service quality; quicker and more direct response to dissatisfied customers in service recovery: like as above employees are able to help them recover in event of service failure without the supervisor’s intervention. Employees are more satisfied with their jobs and feel better about themselves: the feeling of job ownership leads to less job absenteeism and reduced employee turnover.

Employees will treat customers more enthusiastically, considering the motivating effects of empowerment, they become enthusiastic part-time marketers. Empowered employees can be a valuable source of new ideas as a result of direct contacts they have insights into customer problems, ideas and wishes which they can share with management to facilitate improvements. Empowered employees are instrumental to creating good word of mouth

referrals and increasing customer retention as a result of serving customers in a quick, skillful and service-oriented manner, surprising them and making them spread good word of mouth and stay with the same service provider. Although praised in much service literature as being the ultimate management practice for service organizations, as Yeh-Yun Lin (2002), ascribes that a major step in transforming an organization is to empower employees to act on the organizational vision. It however does not guarantee success for organizations practicing it. This shows that employee empowerment can have both positive and negative implications to organizations practicing it as indicated earlier.

2.5 Limitations of Employee Empowerment

Managers are faced with many difficulties when attempting to empower employees and these may prevent a business from becoming an empowering organization. First, there is often resistance to the change both from managers/leaders and from employees themselves. It is often assumed that employees will buy into empowerment, as the benefits are “obvious”. However, this has been disputed by Johnson (1994) who claims that previously disempowered employees may resist empowerment, as they fear the increased levels of responsibility and accountability. Further, employees may consider empowerment to be just empty rhetoric and yet another management attempt to exploit them. Adler (1993) demonstrated that empowerment is linked to downsizing as frequently these two activities occurred simultaneously. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that employees may be reluctant and suspicious of management schemes. Managers/leaders may also be resistant to empowerment for this may be perceived as relinquishing power. They may view the reduction of their power as a threat Denham et al., (1997), particularly as they too fear job loss or loss of status as the organizational

structures become flatter during the downsizing process. They may also vary in their inclination to introduce empowerment in spite of its being a component of organizational policy.

The gap between rhetoric and practice is a further area that is open to criticism. A number of studies have identified that, in some instances, the problems encountered are present in name only Honold (1997). While this is not a barrier to empowerment per se, it can lead to inaccurate criticisms of the empowerment concept and more importantly, those who supposedly empower and those who are empowered may be disillusioned and reject empowerment as ineffective. Furthermore, it is important that those who incorporate an empowerment strategy do not believe that it will solve all organizational problems; if they do they will ultimately be disappointed.

2.6 Employee Empowerment and Service Quality

Interest in employee empowerment in service industry firms has been associated with many of the key issues related to employment practices in general, namely in gaining CA through improved service quality. Paradoxically, however, attempts to gain competitive advantage through service quality can present some major problems for service operators. In the first instance, there are difficulties in defining the successful service encounter, particularly in the intangible sources of customer satisfaction. Customers vary considerably in their expectations of service quality Rust and Oliver (1994). Indeed individual customers may define and re-define their needs from service deliverers as their circumstances, experiences and expectations change. In turn, customer evaluates a

successful service encounter, and thereby repeat visits. This evaluation will be a product of the extent to which their experience matches their expectations (Foulkes, 1994).

Whilst there are difficulties in defining successful encounters, front line staff plays a crucial role in the service encounter. There are in fact, some base level customer expectations of employee performance. These are positive interpersonal contacts, service deliverer attitudes, courtesy and helpfulness that are all closely related to customer evaluation of service quality Adelman et al, (1994). Hence human resources management and the strategies needed to engage employees emotionally in the objective of customer service take on a new and urgent meaning. This leads to the second difficulty for service deliverers. Unlike other resources used within an organization there is a problem in predicting the levels of output, efficiency and general effectiveness which will be the outcome of a given level of labour employed. Human resources can be uniquely unstable. Under certain circumstances they physically leave the organization, they may collectively resist management instructions or individually just not give a fair days work for a fair days pay. Clearly, these are problems shared by all employers and given the pivotal role of service delivery employees, these issues are of particular concern to service sector employers.

The response of many employers in the sector has been to look to manufacturing industry for models of control which minimized the significance of individual idiosyncrasies. What Levitt (1972) called the 'production-line approach to service' or the 'industrialization of service' (1976). Based on essentially Taylorist (1947) views of job design, they establish standardized procedures and one best way of doing each task. In many cases this extended to scripting the interaction with clients and left little to the

discretion of the individual service deliverers. The consequence of this has been the rapid growth of organizations specializing in high volume, mass produced, standardized services which minimized the significance of labour input in the delivery of predictable tangible and intangible products attributes to customers (Bowen and Lawler, 1992).

Whilst the above strategy was tremendously successful over the two decades preceding 1990, many of these operators now see the limits of standardization and control. A part from high labour turnover which has been endemic in many of these firms, any attempt to compete on service quality cuts across the rigidities of the production line approach. Firstly, even the most standardized operation encounters occasions when customer service needs are difficult to predict and quick response is needed at the point of the service encounter. A small child in a family group at a McDonald's is getting restive and the quick intervention of a crew member with a balloon or a hat calms the child. A customer knocks over his coffee in a Welcome Break and the service operative replaces it without charge. Whilst these responses may well be prescribed in operational manuals, they still require employees to act with initiative and discretion. The intangible element of the service encounter requires some form employee participation, even in highly standardized and Tayloristic situations.

The second problem is in the quality of the service encounter itself. Hochschild's (1983) work with air stewardesses reveals much in common with "the commercialization of feelings" across the service sectors in general. She makes the point that seeming to love job becomes part of the job; and managing the appropriate feelings of enjoyment of the customer helps the worker in this effort. Fineman (1993) also comments on the interplay between feelings and performance in service interactions. Enabling employees to sense

their own power and the significance of their role in the service drama may help employees manage the emotions required of their performance. It is here that empowerment of employees seems to offer the prize of generating feelings of commitment to the service encounter with the appropriate amount of power and the freedom to use that power to meet customer needs as they arise (Van Oudtshoorn and Thomas, 1993).

For the advocates of empowerment, empowered employees willingly take responsibility for the service encounter, they respond more quickly to customer needs, complaints and changes in customer tastes Barbee and Bott (1991). The organization will experience lower labour turnover, there will be high staff morale and employees will take responsibility for their own performance and its improvement Barry (1993). Employees' inherent skills and talents will be put to work for the organization Ripley and Ripley (1993) so as to produce more satisfied customers and greater profits.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods and procedures that were used to conduct the study. It includes research design, target population, the sample, and sampling design, data collection and data for analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This was a cross sectional descriptive survey within one organization. This design was considered appropriate because of the need to collect, analyze and interpret complete data (Kothari, 2009)

3.3 Target population

The target population for this study comprised 950 employees of the Municipal Council of Kisumu.

3.4 Sample

The sample size was 84 respondents drawn from the major departments of the MCK. These departments were: Housing, Security, Town Clerk, Accounts, Internal Audit, Environment, Treasury, Quality Assurance, Children and Youth. This number consisted 10% of the target population. Mugenda (2008) suggests that for descriptive studies 10% of the accessible population is enough.

The researcher used stratified random sampling technique. The target population was subdivided into 9 departments of the MCK as presented in table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Distribution of respondents in departments in the MCK

Departments	Strata size	Sample size
Accounts	79	7
Environment	80	7
Quality Assurance	79	7
Housing	102	9
Children and Youth	102	9
Security	113	10
Internal Audit	113	10
Treasurer	124	11
Town Clerk	158	14
Total	950	84

Source: KMC- Human Resource Department

3.5 Data Collection

The primary data was collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections in line with the research objective and contained both open and close ended questions. The closed - ended questions were selected to guide and restrict the response to the study area of interest as well as help respondents make quick decisions. Open ended questions were also used to enable respondents express their profile, Section **A** focused on empowerment of the MCK employee, while section opinions. Section **B**, captured the respondents **C** captured the customers profile and perception on quality service at the MCK. The responses to the questionnaire were set in a Likert scale with respondents being given an option: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree and don't know. These questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents and collected within a week by the researcher, once filled.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data was first edited for completeness and consistency. Descriptive statistics was used such as mean scores, frequencies and percentages to establish measures of central tendencies of the data. Correlation analysis was used to establish the relationship between employee empowerment and perceived quality of service offered by MCK. The correlation analysis was computed at 1% level of significance.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and results of the study. The study targeted 95 staff members in the Municipal Council of Kisumu. However only 88% of the respondents completed the questionnaires. This was in line with the observation made by Coopers & Schindler (2000) who said that a questionnaire response rate of at least 75% is adequate for a study. The study set out to determine the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality service in the MCK.

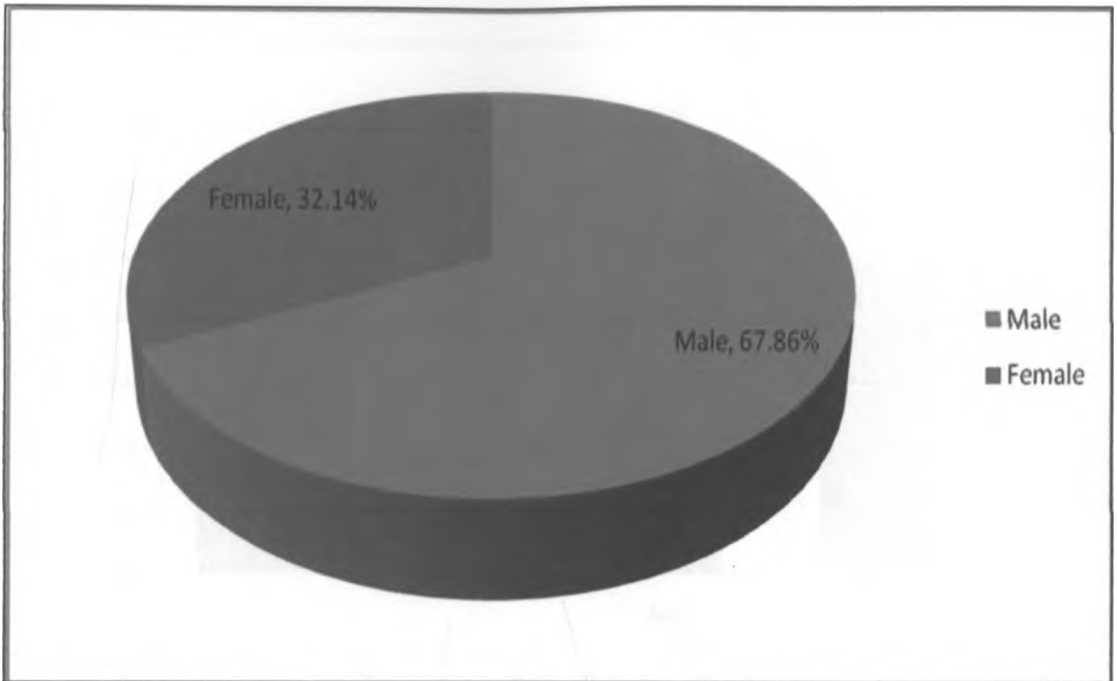
4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the study respondents. The study solicited information on the demographic characteristics such as gender, age, educational background, department, designation, years of experience and attendance of training programs.

4.2.1 Gender Distribution of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the gender distribution of the respondents. The findings are presented in figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of the Respondents by Gender.

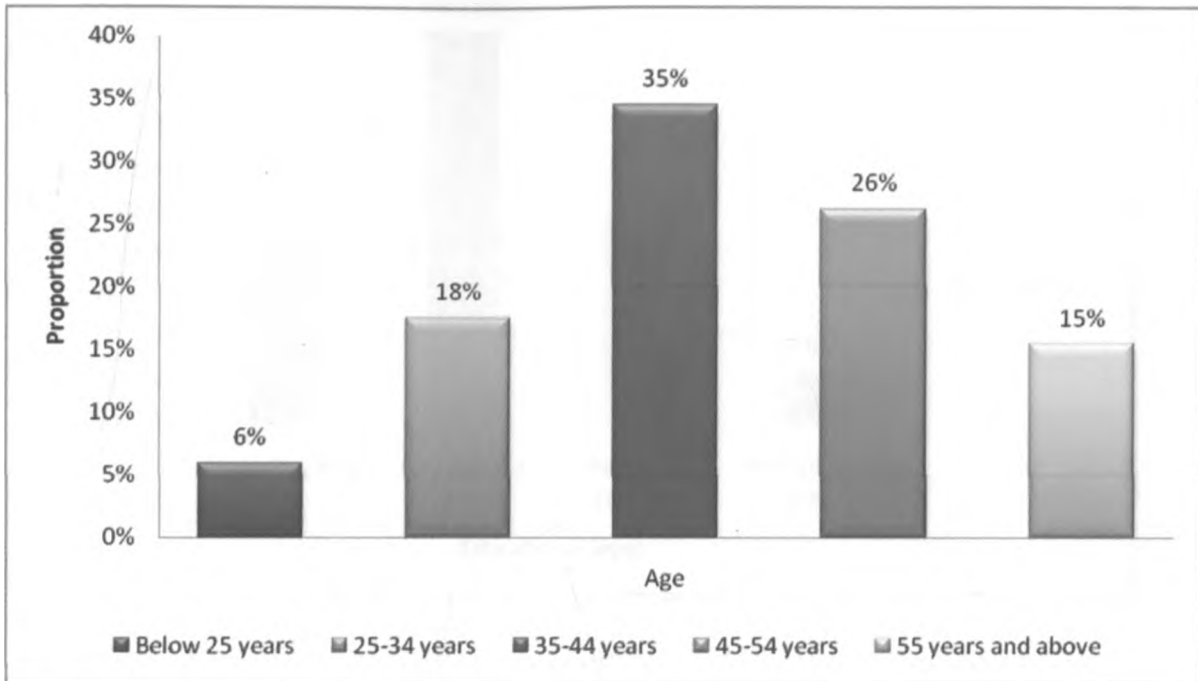


An examination of gender revealed that there were a total of 57 (67.86%) males and 27 (32.14%) females in the sample. These results show that the study captured the employee empowerment across gender.

4.2.2 Age Distribution of the Respondents

Data on age distribution on the respondents was analyzed. The results are presented in Figure 4.2

Figure 4.2: Distribution of the Respondents by Age

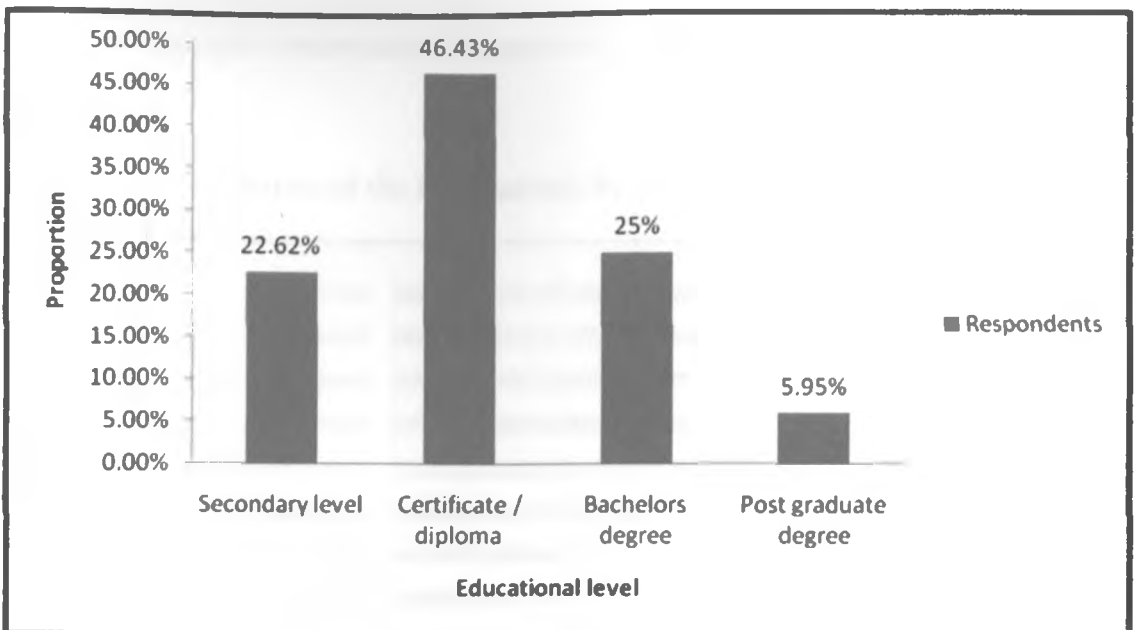


From the results in figure 4.2, the age distribution appeared to follow a normal distribution with the mode age category being the age category between the ages 35 and 44 years. Few respondents were below 25 years or above 55 years. A total of 5 (6 %) respondents were below 25 years, 15 (18%) were between 25 and 34 years, 29 (35%) were aged between 35 and 44 years, 22 (26%) were aged between 45 and 54 years and lastly 13 (15 %) were over 55 years of age.

4.2.3 Educational Background of the Respondents

The study established the educational background of the respondents. This was an attempt to understand the knowledge level of the employees in the MCK and also the ability to empower the employees.

Figure 4.3: Distribution of the Respondents by Educational Level

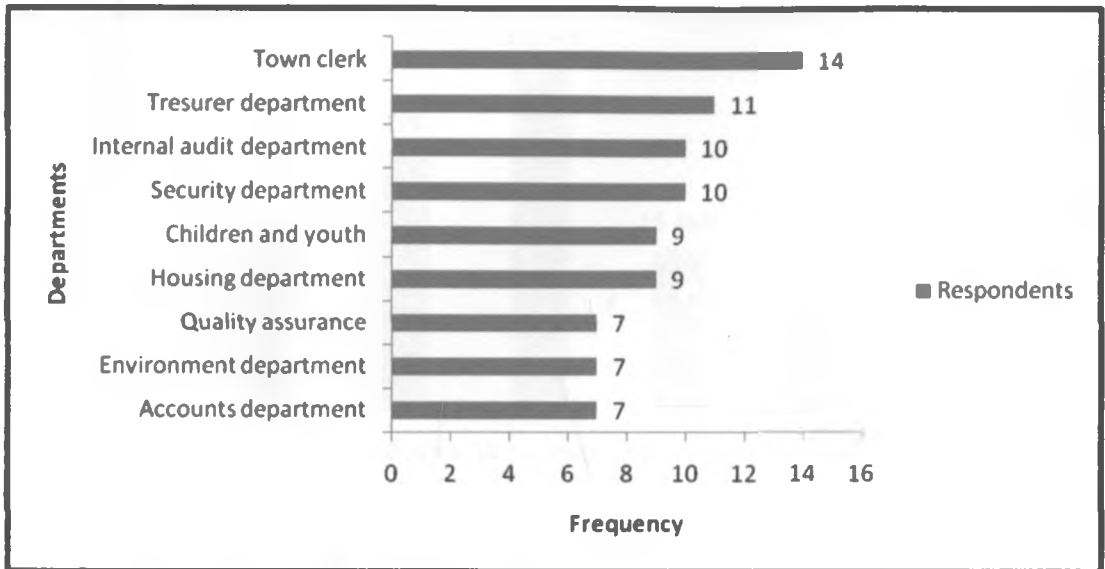


From the findings in figure 4.3, all the respondents had some formal education with all of them having attained beyond primary level of education. This showed that all the respondents were able to read and understand the instruments of data collection which were the questionnaires. The mode educational level attained by the respondents was the college level of education where the respondents had attained either diploma or certificates. A total of 21 (25%) respondents were having bachelor degrees, and 5 (5.95%) respondents were having post graduate degrees. These results show that a proportion of (77.38%) respondents had certificate, diplomas, bachelor degrees or post graduate degrees as their highest level of education. These employees could easily be empowered as they had requisite professional qualifications.

4.2.4 Respondents of Job departments

In this study respondents belonged to 9 departments as presented in figure 4.4 below.

Figure 4.4: Distribution of the Respondents by the Departments of MCK



The study captured views of the respondents from 9 departments, namely Housing, Security, Town clerk, Accounts, Internal Audit, Environment, Treasurer, Quality Assurance, Children and Youth. From figure 4.4, Accounts department had 7 (8.33%) respondents, Environment had 7 (8.33%) respondents, Quality Assurance had 7 (8.33%) respondents, Housing had 9 (10.71%) respondents, Children and Youth had 9 (10.71%) respondents, Security had 10 (11.90%) respondents, Internal audit had 10 (11.90%) respondents, the Treasurer had 11 (13.10%) respondents and lastly the Town clerk department had 14 (16.67%) respondents. These results show that the study captured the views of all the departments.

4.2.5 Work Experience

The study sought to establish the number of years respondents had been in service. Figure 4.5 presents the results.

Figure 4.5 Distributions of the Respondents by Years of Work Experience

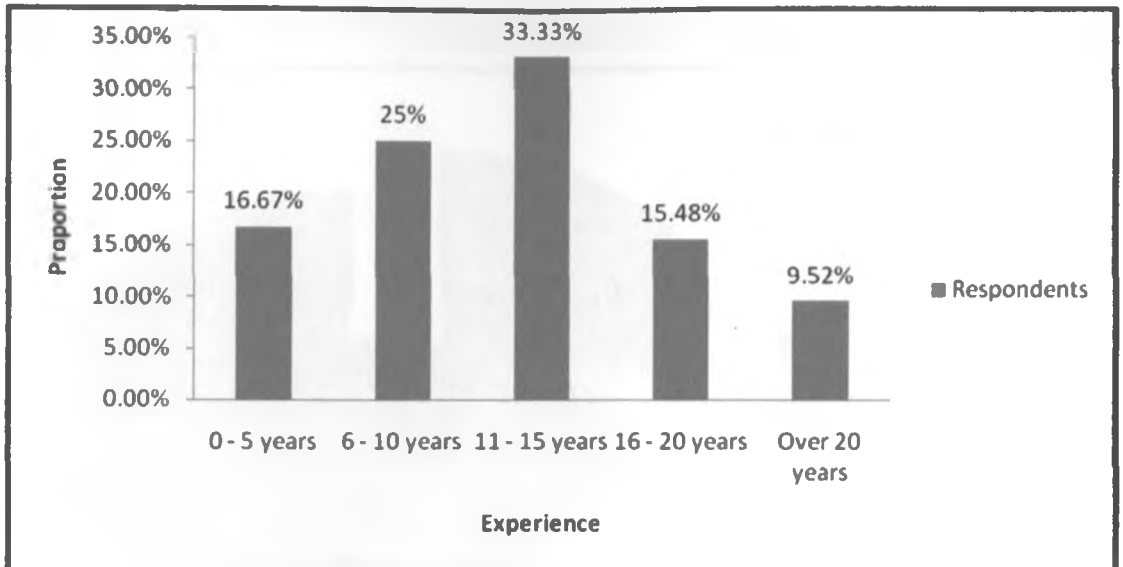
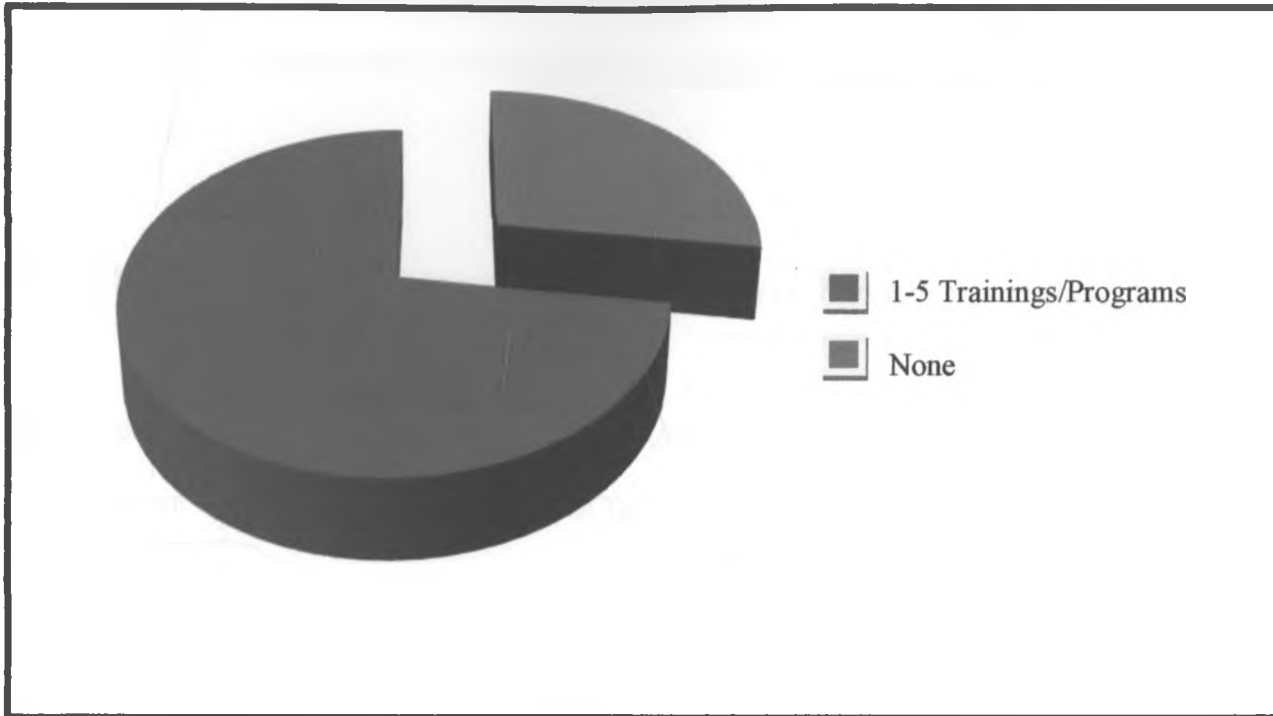


Figure 4.5 shows that 33.33% of respondents had between 11 and 15 years of work experience, 25% respondents had between 6 and 10 years of work experience, 15.48% respondents had between 16 and 20 years of work experience and 9.52% had over 20 years of work experience. Only 16.67% respondents had less than 5 years of work experience. These results show that most of the respondents had over 5 years of work experience which is adequate for them to have knowledge on matters that were of concern to the researcher.

4.2.6 Participation in Training Programs

The researcher sought to find out whether the employees had participated in a training program while in the organization. Figure 4.6 below presents the results.

Figure 4.6: Number of Training Programs attended by the Respondents



The results presented in figure 4.6 show that 23 (27.38%) respondents had not attended some training while in the organization; a total of 61 (72.62%) respondents had attended 1 to 5 training programs while no respondent had attended over 5 trainings programs while in the organization.

4.3 Relationship between Perceived Employee Empowerment and Perceived Quality of Service in the Municipal Council of Kisumu

The study investigated the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service in the MCK. This was done by asking the employees to rate statements on various aspects of empowerment presented on a 5- point Likert – type scale. The scores represented each employee’s perception of his or her level of empowerment.

4.3.1 Means and Standard Deviations for Employee Perceptions of their Empowerment

The descriptive statistics (mean scores and standard deviations) for perceptions of empowerment were computed and presented in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Descriptive statistics on employees' perceptions of their empowerment

Statements	N	Mean score	Standard deviation
My supervisor behaves in ways that demonstrate respect for others.	40	4.143	0.84
My supervisor listens to me before making decisions affecting my area of work.	40	4.095	0.62
My supervisor takes the initiative to always empower employees in the department	43	4.095	0.51
My supervisor makes sure I have all the information I need to do my work	39	4.071	0.59
My supervisor allows me to make decisions about my own work	42	4.036	0.48
My supervisor keeps me focused on customers' needs	41	3.964	0.56
My supervisor me regularly about the state of the department	36	3.929	0.62
My supervisor encourages me to make suggestions	37	3.917	0.78
My supervisor makes sure I have the training I need to do my job	34	3.905	0.52
My supervisor makes an effort to locate and remove barriers that reduce efficiency	35	3.869	0.54
My supervisor provides me with an environment conducive to teamwork	35	3.857	0.64
My supervisor explains how my job fits into the organizations Objectives	35	3.821	0.26
My supervisor lets me do my job without interfering	36	3.774	0.47
My supervisor rewards me for meeting company goals	36	3.714	0.58
My supervisor clearly defines what is expected of me	8	2.595	0.44
My supervisor provides me with honest feedback of my performance	7	2.405	0.03
My supervisor openly recognizes work well done	8	2.214	0.55
Total mean and standard deviation scores		62.404	9.03
Overall mean and standard deviation scores		3.671	0.531

NB: A mean greater than 3.5 meant that employees were empowered in line with the aspect that was being studied. The overall mean of 3.7 therefore meant that the MCK employees perceived themselves as highly empowered.

Table 4.1 presents summary statistics in terms of mean scores and standard deviations of the respondents' views. This summary statistics sought to understand the empowerment of employees in the study. The respondents were presented with a set of questions that investigated the employee empowerment. For each question the scores were summed up and divided by the total number of respondents to give the mean score of the statement. A mean score greater than 3.5 meant that the employees were empowered in line with the aspect that was being studied, while a M.S less than 3.5 meant that on average, the employees were not empowered in line with the aspects under study. The standard deviation of the response was also computed. A small standard deviation of less than 1 meant that the mean response was explaining most of the views of the respondents.

From table 4.1, 77.38% respondents agreed that their supervisor behaved in ways that demonstrated respect for others (M.S=4.143); 73.81% respondents agreed that their supervisors listened to them before making decisions affecting their areas of work (M.S= 4.095); 72.62% respondents agreed that their supervisors took the initiative to always empower employees in their departments (M.S= 4.095); 72.62% respondents agreed that their supervisors made sure they had all the information they needed to do their work (M.S= 4.071); 70.24% respondents agreed that their supervisors allowed them to make decisions about their own work (M.S= 4.036); 70.24% respondents agreed that their supervisors kept them focused on the customers' needs (M.S= 3.964); 70.24% respondents agreed that their supervisors supervised them regularly about the state of their departments (M.S= 3.929); 71.43% respondents agreed that their supervisors encouraged them to make suggestions (M.S= 3.917); 70.24% respondents agreed that their supervisors made sure they had the training they needed to do their job (M.S=

3.905); 66.67% respondents agreed that their supervisors made efforts to locate and remove barriers that reduced their efficiency (M.S= 3.869); 67.86% respondents agreed that their supervisors provided them with an environment conducive to teamwork (M.S= 3.857); 66.67% respondents agreed that their supervisors explained how their jobs fitted into the organizations objectives (M.S= 3.821); 64.29% respondents agreed that their supervisors let them do their job without interfering (M.S= 3.774) and lastly 65.48% respondents agreed that their supervisors rewarded them for meeting company goals (M.S= 3.714). Since these mean scores were greater than 3.5, it meant that the respondents were empowered in their work.

Only 3 statements had mean scores less than 3.5. These were the statements that explored whether the supervisors clearly defined what is expected of the employees, whether the supervisors provided them with honest feedback about their performance and whether the supervisor recognized work well done. They each had M.S of 2.595, 2.405, and 2.214 respectively.

The study also investigated the perception on service quality at the MCK .The scores were summed up and divided by the total number of respondents for each statement to give a mean score. A mean score greater that 3.5 meant that the respondents were satisfied with the service quality while a mean score of less than 3.5 meant that the respondents were not satisfied. Table 4.2 shows the response of the respondents on employees' perceptions of service quality

4.3.2 Means and Standard Deviations for Employees Perceptions of Service Quality.

The descriptive statistics (mean scores and standard deviations) for perceptions of service quality were computed and are presented in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Descriptive statistics for employees' perceptions of service quality

Statement	N	Mean score	Standard deviation
Staff give you undivided attention	40	4.143	0.61
Would you recommend another person to get services from the council?	42	4.131	0.55
Staff deals with customers other related needs	40	4.095	0.72
Employees have the knowledge to answer your questions	39	4.071	0.49
The employees in charge of customer care has the best interests of the customer at heart	44	4.048	0.38
When things go wrong the staff show understanding	42	4.048	0.49
The staff get things right the first time	41	3.964	0.81
Operating hours are convenient to customers	36	3.929	0.54
Staff are consistently courteous with you	37	3.917	0.39
Employees tell customers exactly when services will be provided	34	3.905	0.48
The staff understand your specific needs	36	3.869	0.54
Employees are always willing to help	35	3.857	0.46
Behavior of staff instills confidence in you	36	3.714	0.48
When a customer has a problem, the staff show sincere interest in solving it	17	3.643	0.24
When the staff promise to do something by a particular time they will do so	8	2.786	0.52
Employees gives prompt service to customers	8	2.214	0.92
Total mean and standard deviation scores		60.334	8.62
Overall mean and standard deviation scores		3.771	0.539

NB: A mean greater than 3.5 meant that employees perceived improved service quality in line of the aspect being studied. Therefore an overall mean of 3.8 clearly indicates that the MCK employees perceived their service quality as highly improve

From table 4.2, 77.38% respondents felt that the MCK council staff gave customers undivided attention (M.S= 4.143); 75% respondents would recommend other persons to get services from the council (M.S= 4.131); 73.81% respondents felt that the staff dealt with customers' other related needs (M.S= 4.095); 72.62% respondents said that employees have the knowledge to answer their questions (M.S= 4.071); 73.81% respondents said that the employees in charge of customer care had the best interests of the customer at heart (M.S= 4.048); 71.43% respondents said that when things go wrong the staff showed understanding (M.S= 4.048); 70.24% respondents had it that the staff get things right the first time (M.S= 3.964); 70.24% respondents supported that the operating hours were convenient to customers (M.S= 3.929); 71.43% respondents said that staff are consistently courteous with them (M.S= 3.917); 70.24% of respondents supported that employees told customers exactly when services were to be provided (M.S= 3.905); 67.86% respondents supported that the staff understood the customer's specific needs (M.S= 3.869); 67.86% respondents said that the employees were always willing to help (M.S= 3.857); 65.48% respondents said that the behavior of staff instills confidence in them (M.S= 3.714); 75% respondents said that when a customer has a problem, the staff show sincere interest in solving it (M.S= 3.643). These results showed that the services offered at the MCK were of high quality.

However two statements had mean scores less than 3.5 meaning that the quality of service as captured in these statements was poor. These statements were: staff doing something when they promise to do it and employees giving prompt service to customers. These statements had mean scores of 2.786 and 2.214 respectively.

In order to establish the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service at the MCK, the study used Pearson’s correlation analysis. Perceived employee empowerment was captured using 18 statements as presented in table 4.1 while perceived service quality was captured using 16 statements presented in table 4.2. The scores for these two variables were to establish the nature of the relationship between them. Table 4.3 below presents the results.

Variable definition in the correlation analysis

Employee Empowerment = X

Customer Service Quality = Y

Table 4.3: Correlation coefficient for the relationship between perceived empowerment and perceived service quality

		X(Employee empowerment)	Y (service quality)
X	Pearson Correlation	1	.619*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	84	
Y	Pearson Correlation	.619*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed) / P value	0.011	
	N	84	84

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

As shown in table 4.3, the correlation between employee empowerment and employee perception of quality service was 0.619 which was significant at 1% level of confidence meaning that with improvement in employee empowerment, service quality also increased significantly.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this study, the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service in the Municipal Council of Kisumu was determined using the structured questionnaire. The literature review focused mainly on the concept of employee empowerment, its dimensions, programmes, benefits, service organization, limitations and service quality. From the research findings of this research project, several conclusions can be drawn in determining the relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality service in the MCK.

5.2 Discussion and Summary of the Findings

70.24% of the respondents indicated that they had attended a varied number of training programmes relevant to their work. 77.38% of the respondents agreed that their supervisor behaved in ways that demonstrated respect for others, 77.81% agreed that their supervisors listened to them before making decisions affecting their areas of work while 66.67% respondents agreed that their supervisors made effort to locate and remove barriers that reduced efficiency. According to Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zigarmi (1995), the supervisor must see the potential in the employee and work to bring it out through mentoring, determining the skill level of the employee, providing training as needed depending upon the employee's skill level. For autonomy to work, management must equip employees with special tools to provide them on how to act during certain issues and make certain decisions Ginnodo (1997). This is consistent with the objectives and

findings of this study .The Municipal Council of Kisumu should continue equipping its staff with required skills to enable them perform their duties efficiently.

On service quality, 77.38% respondents agreed that the MCK staff gave them undivided attention while 75% would recommend other persons to get services from the Council, 72.62% respondents revealed that the employees had knowledge to answer their questions while 65.48% accepted the fact that behaviour of staff instilled confidence in them. Adelman et al, (1994) argue that successful encounters from frontline staff play a crucial role in service encounter. Base level customer expectations of employee performance include positive interpersonal contacts, service deliverer's attitudes, courtesy, helpfulness that are closely related to customer evaluation of service quality, Foulkes (1994). This is consistent with research objectives and findings. The MCK management should therefore continue updating their employees with current skills to enable the staff provide quality service since quality is dynamic.

67.86% disagreed that their supervisors clearly defined what was expected of them, 80% stated that their supervisors did not openly recognize work well done while 76.38% indicated that their supervisors did not provide them with honest feedback .According to Cole (1997) employee empowerment entitles authority, legitimate power, recognition and job enrichment where individuals have more access to information regarding what is expected of them. Cole (1997) further suggests that employees should be given honest feedback if they have to improve on their performance and participative management which the MCK employees desire. The commitment of top management of MCK is very essential and necessary in this aspect as it filters down to service quality. Management

should therefore be trained to provide clearly defined expected roles and prompt feedbacks to their staff.

5.3 Conclusion

The study showed that most employees of the MCK are empowered in their jobs with an overall mean score of 65%. Being allowed to make decisions about one's work (70.24%), supervisors made sure they had the training they needed to do their job (70.24%) and supervisors efforts to locate and remove barriers that reduce efficiency (67.78%) are among the factors that influence employees' perception of being empowered.

The study also established that the MCK offered quality service with a mean score of 68%. Employees' knowledge to answer customers' questions (72.62%), operating hours being convenient to customers (70.24%) and staff understanding their customers' specific needs (67.86%) are among factors that influence perception of service quality.

Following the results of the study, it can therefore be concluded that the perceived employee empowerment and the perceived quality of service in the MCK are positively correlated ($r=0.619$) meaning that with improvement of employee empowerment, service quality also increased.

5.4 Recommendation for Policy and Practice

The study recommends that the MCK should put in place practices and policies aimed at ensuring that the supervisors clearly define what is expected of their junior staff, give honest feedbacks and recognize work well done. This is because from the findings of the study these factors had mean scores less than 3.5.

The study further recommends that the MCK should put time frames for employees to complete tasks or services to customers. This was evident from most respondents disagreeing that when the employees promised to do something, they did it promptly.

5.5 Limitations of Study

There were a number of limitations that affected the outcome of the study. For instance, data was collected from only one institution in Kisumu. The findings of the study may therefore not be used to generalize for all the institutions in the whole country because some socio – economic activities in Kisumu are unique to Kisumu and no other area in the country.

Some respondents may have feared to give correct account of their supervisors as they were afraid that this could result in strained relationships between them.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

There is need to replicate this study in other in other public / private institutions.

Future researchers should also do longitudinal studies to monitor trends of quality of service and the determinants affecting them since quality is not constant.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The University of Nairobi

School of Business

P.O. Box

KISUMU

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA.

I am a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) student at the University of Nairobi. I am required to submit as part of my course work assessment a research project on **“Relationship between perceived employee empowerment and perceived quality of service at the Kisumu Municipal Council”**

You have been selected to participate in the study. I would appreciate if you could assist me in answering in full the herewith attached questionnaire for the purposes of this research. Where need be, I will be willing to avail myself for further explanation on collection of the questionnaire. Please be assured that all your responses shall be kept strictly anonymous and confidential and shall only be used for academic purposes and destroyed after analysis. A copy of the research findings shall be availed to you if you so wish after completion of the study.

Thank you in advance,

Okeyo Pamela Atieno
M.B.A Student (Researcher)
University of Nairobi

Professor K'Obonyo
Project Supervisor
University of Nairobi

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A:

RESPONDENTS PROFILE FOR MCK EMPLOYEES

1. What is your gender?

Male []

Female []

2. What age bracket do you belong?

a. Below 25 years []

b. 25 – 34 years []

c. 35 – 44 years []

d. 45 – 54 years []

e. 55 years and above []

3. What is your educational background?

a. Primary level []

b. Secondary level []

c. College level(Certificate/diploma) []

d. University level(bachelors degree) []

e. Post graduate level(Masters degree & above) []

f. Others, specify []

.....

4. What is your designation/post?

.....

5. What is your current department?

.....

6. Please indicate the number of years you have served in the council by ticking an appropriate box below.

a. 0 – 5 years []

b. 6 – 10 years []

c. 11 – 15 years []

d. 16 – 20 years []

e. Over 20 years []

7. How many training programmes, relevant to your work, have you attended since you joined the council?

a. None []

b. 1 – 5 []

c. 6 – 10 []

d. 10 and above []

8. Who assigns you work?

.....

SECTION B: EMPOWERMENT

To what extent do you agree with the following statements as an accurate description of your supervisor's behavior. Please mark the response that best describes your Supervisor.

My supervisor	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
Lets me do my job without interfering					
Makes an effort to locate and remove barriers that reduce efficiency					
Encourages all of us to work as a team					
Clearly defines what is expected of me					
Provides me with honest feedback of my performance					
Openly recognizes work well done					
Keeps me focused on customers needs					
Makes sure I have the training I need to do my job					
Allows me to make decisions about my own work					
Listens to me before making decisions affecting my area					
Provides me with an environment conducive to teamwork					
Rewards me for meeting company goals					
Informs me regularly about the state of the department					
Encourages me to make suggestions					
Makes sure I have all the information I need to do my work					
Behaves in ways that demonstrate respect for others.					
Explains how my job fits into the organizations' objectives					
Takes the initiative to always empower employees in the department					

How would you describe the supervisor's general belief in, and approach to empowerment?.....

SECTION C: CUSTOMERS PERCEPTIONS OF SERVICE QUALITY AT MCK

RESPONDENTS PROFILE

1. What is your gender?

Female []

Male []

2. What age bracket do you belong?

a. Below 25 years []

b. 25-35 []

c. 35-44 []

d. 44-54 []

e. 55 years and above []

3. What is your level of education?

a. Primary []

b. Secondary []

c. College (certificate/Diploma) []

d. University []

e. Post graduate (Masters degree and above) []

f. Others. Specify

4. Please indicate the number of years you have been a customer of KMC

a. 0-5 years []

b. 6-10 years []

c. 11-15 years []

d. 16-20 years []

e. Over 20 years []

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the quality of services you have been receiving from MCK.

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
When a customer has a problem, the staff show sincere interest in solving it					
The staff get things right the first time					
Employees tell customers exactly when services will be provided					
Employees gives prompt service to customers					
When the staff promise to do something by a particular time they will do so					
Staff deals with customers other related needs					
Employees are always willing to help					
Behavior of staff instills confidence in you					
Operating hours are convenient to customers					
Staff are consistently courteous with you					
Employees have the knowledge to answer your questions					
Staff give you undivided attention					
The staff understand your specific needs					
The employees in charge of customer care has the best interests of the customer at heart					
When things go wrong the staff show understanding					
Would you recommend another person to get services from the council.					

Thank you for the time you have spent filling this questionnaire