

ABSTRACT

Human relations and conceptual skills are management skills which enable managers to interact and communicate successfully with other persons and picture the entire organization as one and relate all parts of the organization together respectively. Middle – level managers have most contact with the employees or subordinates while the Top – managers or Senior Executives relate mostly with all parts of the organization and outside world. For instance, it is a managerial skill to give praise and recognition to others and not everybody is naturally good at giving praise and recognition hence the need to practice frequently. A manager must be able to understand, work with, and relate to both individuals and groups to build a team environment. As the managers rise through the ranks to top positions and move into the international environment and function within global enterprises, human relations and conceptual skills will become even more important. Since every individual is unique, with different backgrounds, likes and dislikes, expectations, and many others, there is a possibility that they have different perceptions on how their male and female leaders or managers treat them, lead in their organization, and interact with all other parts of the organization and outside world. This study therefore, sought to determine the employees' perception on the role of gender in human relations and conceptual skills among managers. Non management staff were targeted in this study and asked to give an extent to which they rate male and female managers in terms of human relations and conceptual skills at the Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing. A descriptive survey was used in this study because of there was need to collect data from a cross-section of employees in the department. Target population included 758 non- managerial staff from 12 divisions of the department with a sample size of 76 respondents. The sample frame was from the employees' Integrated Personnel Payroll Database (IPPD) system of June 2013. It adopted both purposive and stratified random sampling technique and a predetermined semi-structured questionnaire with closed and open- ended questions in obtaining the primary data .The questionnaires were administered to the respondents by personal delivery and 39 respondents responded and returned the questionnaires for analysis which attributed to 51.3% of the total respondents targeted. Data was collected, analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics. A computer based Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Program was used to analyze the data. Data was then presented in the form of tables, charts, mean, frequency, and standard deviations. The results of the study showed that female managers have more human relations skills than male managers as perceived by their subordinates. It was also revealed from the research findings that male top managers (senior executives) are excellent in relating all parts of the department together and are able to lead and coordinate all the activities at the top management level as compared to their female counterparts. It was concluded therefore that female managers as perceived by their subordinates are able to relate well with people (human relations skills) and male managers are good at strategic level of management since they possess more of the conceptual skills when compared with their female counterparts as perceived by their subordinates. They can also relate well department's various subunits to fit its broader environment.