

**EMPLOYEES PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENCES IN HUMAN
RELATIONS AND CONCEPTUAL SKILLS AMONG MALE AND
FEMALE MANAGERS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA), SCHOOL
OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

NOVEMBER 2013

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has not been presented for award of a degree or any other certificate in any university or institution of higher learning.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere acknowledgement first goes to my supervisor Prof. Peter K'Obonyo whose invaluable advice and guidance made the completion of this project possible. Secondly, my gratitude goes to the staff of the Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing who participated in this research for their assistance and cooperation. I also acknowledge my husband Wesley for his moral support and our children Faith, Newton and Abigail for cheering me through this project. I owe a debt of gratitude to my great friends Betty and Bii for unconditional support and guidance. Special thanks to my parents and siblings for their constant encouragement and much needed motivation and sincere thanks to God Almighty for His sufficient Grace through the entire journey, to Him be the Glory.

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my family, dear parents and siblings for their support and encouragement throughout the period. Their love, care, encouragement and enthusiasm inspired me to achieve this goal. Praise be to God Almighty for making this goal possible.

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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.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Issues of subordinates and managers, men and women interpersonal relationships have been of concern to the Department of cooperative Development and Marketing, necessitating the need for a study in the area of human relations and conceptual skills that are crucial in the smooth running and management of the public service organizations. There is a possibility that every employee have a different perception towards his or her manager's human relations and conceptual skills. Each individual's perception is unique and people often perceive the same situations in different ways (Rue and Byars, 2009). Hodgetts and Hegar (2008) examined individual behavior and the impact of perception on that behavior, and noted that people see what they either want to see or are trained to see. Therefore, in terms of human relations, the manager must try to understand the workers' perception of reality. Employees willingly accept management's methods only when they will resort to such perceptual pitfalls as selective perception. Also, many men perceive women as unsuitable for top management positions, although this perception is now beginning to change as evidenced by quite a number of women who are appointed and promoted to the top seats (Hodgetts and Hegar, 2008).

According to research by Robert L. Katz during the early 1970s cited by Robbins and Coulter (1999), he observed that manager's need certain skills to perform the duties and activities associated with being a manager. He found that managers needed three essential

skills or competencies: Technical, Human and Conceptual. He also found that relative importance of these skills varied according to the manager's level within the organization. In view of the above, this study focused on human relations and conceptual skills which male and female managers have as perceived by their subordinates in the Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing.

1.1.1 The Concept of Perception

According to Rue and Byars (2009), perception deals with mental and sensory processes an individual uses in interpreting information she or he receives. The authors states that perception begins when the sense organs receive stimulus. The stimulus is the information received, whether it is conveyed in writing, verbally, non-verbally, or in another way. The sense organs respond to shape, and organize the information received. When this information reaches the brain, it is further organized and interpreted resulting in perception. Further, their research studies shows that different people perceive the same information differently because no two people have the same personal experiences, memories, likes and dislikes. In addition, they observed that, phenomenon of selective perception often distorts the intended message: people tend to listen to only part of the message, blocking out the rest for any number of reasons.

Draft (2000) defines perception as a process people use to make sense out of the environment by selecting, organizing and interpreting information from the environment. He contends that employee perception of any aspects of their employment will be a function of the intensity or repetitiveness of that aspect. Paauwe and Richardson (1997) concluded that positive perception of employees with respect to employee selection,

personnel planning and reward has an effect on human resource results e.g. satisfaction, motivation, retention, trust and environment. These results in turn have effect on business performance indicators like profits and sales volume.

Graham and Bennet (1995) suggest that since every individual is different it is possible for one set of sensations to be perceived in different ways by different people, because they all interpret sensations through their own experiences, motives and attitudes. In the management of people, differences in perception can be the source of many difficulties and conflicts. Rue and Byars (2009) concluded that obviously, if differences exist in how physical objects are perceived, the potential for differences in perception in interpersonal communication is even greater. They pointed out that differences in perception can occur between younger and older employees, college graduates and non college graduates, and supervisors and subordinates. A manager should never assume that his or her actions and words will be perceived exactly as they were intended (Rue and Byars, 2009).

1.1.2 Gender differences

Bevan and Thompson (1992) cited by Price (2007) found that there are differences between men and women, other than the physical, but little agreement as to what they are. For example, the Authors found evidence that men and women rated working behavior differently: Males tended to favor and aspire towards qualities that were essentially individualistic and competitive, such as intelligence, dynamism, energy and assertiveness. Women stressed qualities of a more cooperative and consensual nature: thoughtfulness, flexibility, perceptiveness and honesty. They concluded that since male managers are prevalent, female are disadvantaged by being evaluated against male standards of behaviour. Given similar jobs and appraisal ratings, men are more likely to

be offered training or promotion (Price, 2007). Brynin (2006) as cited by Price (2007) argues that men have traditionally gained more than women from access to technologies at work that bring prestige, job security, more satisfaction and higher pay.

Brynin continues to explain that where female jobs have centered on technologies, they tend towards routine and possibly deskilled work. He argues that men and women appear to have learned that women are different and not equal in organizations. Wilson (2005) cited by Price (2007) study found that while the women did not necessarily perceive themselves as being seen to be different, men saw them as having different and inferior qualities. According to Price (2007) women were seen as “other” when measured against standards and norms set by men. Hofstede (1994) as cited by Price (2007) argues that, within any society, there is a men’s culture that is different from women’s culture. This difference may explain why traditional gender roles are so difficult to change.

Fortin (2005) cited by Price (2007) used data from three world value survey in the 1990s to investigate the impact of gender role attitudes and work values on women labour market outcomes across 25 countries. Fortin concluded that anti – egalitarian opinions were weakening but were still negatively associated with female employment rates and the gender pay gap. The persistent perceptions of women’s role as homemakers could help to explain the recent slowdown of gender convergence in pay. It seems that a class between family values and egalitarian views is another obstacle in achieving greater gender equality in the job market. Also women are more likely to under-estimate their own skill levels and therefore, inhibit their own progress. However, not all women meekly accept the Male order. Some deal with the situation by playing the game

according to the male rules. In a study of Greek Organizations employing both female and male managers, Bouvantis and Papalexandris (1990) cited by Price (2007) found no difference between leadership styles; their explanation was that women were imitating male patterns' behaviour in order to achieve success. Hodgetts and Hegar (2008) found some differences between men and women as shown in the table below;

Table 2.1 some differences between Men and Women

| Linguistic characteristics | Men | Women |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Asking questions | Not very likely to do so. | More likely to do than men |
| Giving feedback | Tend to be blunt and direct | Tend to be tactful and to temper criticism with praise. |
| Offering compliments | Restrictive with their praise. | Fairly generous with their praises. |
| Showing confidence | Not very likely to indicate they are unsure about something. | More likely to indicate uncertainty about an issue. |
| Making apologies | Tend to avoid saying they are sorry because it makes them "look bad." | More likely to say "I am sorry" when they make a mistake. |
| Taking credit | More likely to take credit for achievements. ("I did that") | More likely to share credit ("We did that"). |
| Use of indirectness | More likely to be indirect when admitting they do not know something or admitting that they made a mistake. (The report was late" rather than "I was late submitting the report.") | More likely to be indirect when telling others something that needs to be done. ("This is what needs to be done." rather than "this is what I want you to do.") |

Source: Richard M. Hodgetts and Kathryn W.Hegar (2008). Modern Human Relations at Work. South-western cengage learning. Pg. 457

1.1.3 Human Relations Skills

Managers spend a lot of time interacting with people inside and outside the organization. Management jobs are people intensive, thus, they need these skills to give them the ability to communicate, persuade, manage conflicts, motivate, coach, negotiate, lead employees and reconcile the needs of customers, suppliers etc. Robbins and Coulter (1999) states that human relations skills is the ability to work well with other people both individually and in a group. Because managers deal directly with people, this skill is crucial. In addition, the researchers continue to point out that, human relation skills remained just as important at the top levels of management as they did at the lower levels. In conjunction with that, managers with good human relations are able to get the best out of their people because they know how to deal with them. Rue and Byars (2009), state that when managers are interviewing job applicants, forming partnerships with other organizations, and resolving conflicts require human relations skills. Bennett (1994) concluded that all managers must exercise interpersonal skills at least occasionally, e.g. when briefing colleagues, attending committee meetings, or discussing targets with subordinates. The main categories of interpersonal skills that managers need to study are negotiation, delegation and employee counseling. Efficient personal organization is also an important executive ability.

1.1.4 Conceptual skills

Managers must also have the ability to think and to conceptualize about abstract situations. They must be able to see the organization as a whole and the relationships among its various subunits and to visualize how the organizations fit its broader environment (Robbins and Coulter, 1999). Conceptual skills are those that help managers

understand how different parts of an organization relate to one another and to the organization as a whole. Decision making, planning and organizing are managerial activities that require conceptual skills (Rue and Byars, 2009). These abilities are essential to effective decision making, and all managers are involved in making decisions. Conceptual skills are needed by all managers at all levels but Robert Katz cited by Robbins and Coulter (1999) proposed that these skills become more important as they move into top management positions.

1.1.5 The Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing

The Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing is in the Ministry of Industrialization and Enterprise Development following the recent merging of the ministries by the Government of Kenya. The department plays a key facilitative role in the activities of Cooperative Movement which is independent and autonomous. It is an important player in the social economic development of this country. However, the government, through the ministry has been working on enabling the cooperative sector to be vibrant, effective and globally competitive by forging close linkages between the Cooperative Movement and Government line ministries. Cooperatives cut across all sectors of the economy and provide an important framework for mobilization of both human and capital resources. They are now playing an important role in the achievement of Kenya Vision 2030 and the Millennium Development Goals.

The Department has registered millions of members in thousands of registered cooperative societies across the country. The Sacco subsector, in particular has mobilized billions of funds through savings from its members. The Government firmly believes that

the Mwananchi – owned and managed organizations are helping this country to revitalize the agricultural and financial sectors and the rural economy. Kenyans are expected to embrace the culture of savings through Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs) and to work together on the basis of the cooperative principles and goals. The members have also invested the funds in Small and Micro Enterprises (SMEs) that contribute significantly to the socio-economic growth of the country hence, social integration.

The Government in the recent past, through affirmative action employed women in the department to occupy management positions that were dominated by men. It is noticeable in the department generally that men are regarded or perceived as more skilled, educated, and trained to undertake the activities and functions of the organization/department and therefore placed to occupy senior posts in the department. In my own observation, male managers make decisions that concern the department at large while middle level positions are left for women to deal with subordinates and ensure that decisions made by them are implemented without fail. Women in the department like mother and children act as mediators between top managers and subordinates. They play supervisory duties, interpersonal and informational roles and keep close contact with subordinates as their management level could dictate. Through observation, employees/subordinates in most cases choose between a male or female manager/supervisor on issues to do with consultations, seeking clarifications, counseling, conflict resolutions, self disclosures, interpersonal issues, decision making and many others even when both sexes meet the qualifications to attend to those issues.

Female managers are occasionally approached on matters to do with counseling, personal and family problems/conflict/ issues to be solved, and partly on matters related to work or tasks and activities that require concrete decision making. On the other hand, male managers attract more attention from their subordinates when it comes to decision making processes, major problems that call for amicable solutions and task related problems. The gender relations among the subordinates and managers portray a serious problem that this study sought to investigate.

1.2 Research Problem

Human Relations and Conceptual Skills are management skills which every female and male manager should have for him or her to be an effective manager. Both men and women managers have perceptions concerning how they deal and work with people in the organizations and how they make decisions, plan, motivate, counsel, lead, negotiate and resolve issues that concern the organization as a whole. A key reason for continuing to develop managerial skills is that the manager's job is more demanding than ever and the workplace keeps changing. New telecommunications technologies continue to expand our reach and speed up our communications. These new technologies and new global political alignments mean that managers face new possibilities for forging relationships that will carry their organizations into the future. Success in management is related to certain types of knowledge and abilities. For example, the ability to reason, solve problems, and learn new concepts helps managers rise through managerial levels and attain and remain in top executive levels. The ability to communicate well verbally and non-verbally may be the most important components because it helps managers be

understood effectively and can reduce misinterpretations and misconceptions among the subordinates.

Department of Cooperatives Development and Marketing core functions are to: formulate and promulgate cooperative and legislative policy, registration of cooperative societies, settlement of cooperative disputes, cooperative education and training, audit, marketing, research and development, promotion of cooperative ventures, innovations, value addition and investment and mainstreaming good corporate governance in the cooperative sector. These functions are majorly carried out by men since they occupy top level management posts as compared to women. On the other hand, women are left for middle level management positions where they relate and work closely with the subordinates. Women therefore, relate well with others and thus have an edge over men in human relations skills. This however has not been tested empirically. Human relations skill is important in the attraction and retention of talented and building of a superior workforce whereas conceptual skills which help top or strategic managers to lead the entire Department require higher academic qualifications, high performance, international and global networking and most importantly an ability to manage the Department as a whole. Since men are considered to have advantage over women in education and training they are better off in top positions in terms of management hence assumed to have conceptual skills more than women. As the department grows and expands throughout the country, and as it continues to interact with outside parties like customers, suppliers, international communities, competitors in terms of advanced technology, it is a prerequisite that top managers are equipped with updated and relevant skills in order to

be on the track with the fast moving and ever changing world. Companies are now competing for talents and highly qualified personnel and the government especially the department is not left behind.

Oakley (2000) suggests that the presence of constraints imposed upon women in society, the family, and women themselves further limits their participation in senior management levels. Some of these constraints occur as myths, preconceived ideas, or unsupported notions. For example females are often thought of as being dependent, passive, fragile, non aggressive, non- competitive, inner- oriented, empathetic, sensitive, subjective and supportive. According to Wilson (2001) he argued that that women are quite adept at juggling work and family life, and have gained various job-transferable skills such as interpersonal, communication, organization and 'fire-fighting' ability. In addition, he states that we cannot ignore the fact that women generally are far more tenacious than their male counterparts and, on balance, are more likely to adopt a democratic style of management within the workplace that encourages staff commitment.

Rue and Byars (2009) concluded that obviously, if differences exist in how physical objects are perceived, the potential for differences in perception in interpersonal communication is even greater. They pointed out that differences in perception can occur between younger and older employees, college graduates and non college graduates, and supervisors and subordinates. Graham and Bennet (1995) suggest that since every individual is different it is possible for one set of sensations to be perceived in different ways by different people, because they all interpret sensations through their own experiences, motives and attitudes. Indeed, the available research studies support the fact

that there is differences in perception since people interpret sensations based on their own experiences, motives and attitudes and further bring forth evidence that there is a global trend where women's managerial careers are less successful than men's but how subordinates perceive their male and female managers in terms of human relations and conceptual skills has not been discussed. The big question that this study wanted to answer was 'how do the employees in the department of co-operatives development and marketing perceive their male and female managers in terms of human relations and conceptual skills?'

1.3 Research Objective

This study sought to determine the employees' perceptions of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among male and female managers at the Department of Cooperative Development and marketing.

1.4 Value of the Study

This study will benefit the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), Human Resource Managers and other Managers in various fields. Due to globalization, diversity becomes more important hence the need to understand how to work with people around the world and how to relate all other parts of the organization as a whole. Technology has enabled the innovation and speed and because technology is created by people, CEOs and Human Resource Managers need to ensure that human relations are not interfered with, while bringing together all other units and sub units.

During the hiring process, Human Resource Managers and other managers would want to know if a candidate / job applicant will get along and work well with their employees and customers. In my own observation, Personal qualities account for approximately 85 percent of the factors contributing to job success. In most cases, people who are fired from their jobs are fired because they fail to get along with people. In addition, employers continue to do background checks and emphasize the importance of human relations and conceptual skills as they look at hiring college graduates and persons to occupy top positions. Bateman and Zeithaml (1990) states that many current executives argue that graduates are deficient in interpersonal and communication skills. They commented that, “In many companies, the reason a manager fails is not because he/she doesn’t have the technical skills. It is because he/she doesn’t have the people skills.”

This study will also help employees in the department build solid, stable and healthy relationship with colleagues at work, which provides a more pleasant and less stressful work place. The human relations skills still helps employees build relationship with customers, the community and business partners as they are the essential assets to any given organization. In addition, as employees rise through the ranks they are required to acquire conceptual skills which help in decision making, planning, conflict resolutions and knowledge on how to relate different parts of the organizations together.

Academically, this study is expected to contribute to the existing literature in the field of Human Resource and Organizational Management as a whole. It should act as a stimulus for further research in this field and especially in Kenya.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review of skills of managers, human relations and conceptual skills, gender in management and its relationship with human relations and conceptual skills as by the definitions of various scholars.

2.2 Skills of Managers

Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancerich (1992) explain that certain general skills are needed for effective managerial performance, regardless of the level of the manager in the hierarchy of organization. These skills are human, technical and conceptual - needed by all managers. Lussier (2009) describe that all managers need technical, interpersonal (human relation) and decision-making (conceptual) skills. However, he states that the relative importance of these types of skills varies with the level of management. At all three levels of management, the need for interpersonal skills remains fairly constant since communication is at the heart of every human interaction, not just those of managers. However, top-level managers have a greater need for decision making skills, whereas first-line managers have a greater need for technical skills. Middle level managers tend to need all the three skills, but the mix required differs somewhat from organization to organization (Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancerich, 1992). Our focus here is on the two basic set of skills required of and routinely exercised by manager i.e. human relations and conceptual skills.

Research studies by Katz (1974), described technical skills as abilities to use the processes, practices, techniques and tools of the specialty area manager supervise. These skills are very important for lower level managers such as foreman in specialized field such as engineering, computers, finance or manufacturing. According to Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancerich (1992) Managers must accomplish much of their work through other people. For this, human skill is essential. Human skill is the ability to work with, communicate with, and understand others. A study by the authors above, of more than 1,400 managers at different levels in an organizational hierarchy reconfirms that the essential activities of individuals in the first level supervisory jobs are human skills. First level managers must motivate subordinates to change or improve performance, provide ongoing feedback, and resolve interpersonal and performance problems, as well as oversee the other activities involved in managing individual performance. The study also identified several activities that involve teaching and coaching efforts. Clearly, these activities require high levels of human skill, the skill to communicate in positive ways the expectations one has for performance of other individuals (Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancerich, 1992).

As stated by Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancerich (1992), Conceptual skill is the ability to see the big picture, the complexities of the overall organization and how various parts fit together. Managers with conceptual skills understand all activities and interests of the organization and how they interrelate. Managers with conceptual skills use them in entering new international markets, eliminating bureaucracy, developing a comprehensive plan in organizations. All managerial skills are essential for effective performance. Relative importance of the 3 skills to a specific manager depends on his/her

level in the organization (Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancerich, 1992). Diagnostic Skills - Managers are frequently called on to investigate a problem and then to decide on and implement a remedy. Diagnostic skill often requires other skills, because managers need to use technical, human, conceptual, or political skills to solve the problems they diagnose. Much of the potential excitement in a manager's job centers on getting to the root of problems and recommending solutions (Dubrin, 2009).

As one progress upward in the management ranks, technical skills become less important and conceptual skills become more important (Plunkett, Attner and Allen, 2008). Middle managers need to work within and visualize a larger piece of the organizational "pie" than do first – level managers. Top management must be concerned with the whole pie i.e. its basic ingredients and making it larger (Plunkett, Attner and Allen, 2008). The different skills are reviewed below.

2.2.1 Human Relations Skills

Graham and Bennet (1995) describes that everyone who has control over others shares in human resources management; it is not a function which the individual management can avoid and leave to specialists. He states that human resources are much more difficult to manage than material resources, partly because conflict often occurs between the employer's and employees' wishes and partly because, to an increasing extent, employees try to share in making decisions about working environments. Human Relations Skills are skills that are required to the same degree by all three levels of management (Plunkett, Attner and Allen, 2008). Herb Kelleher (1995) as cited by Plunkett, Attner and Allen (2008) recognizes that your own people are absolutely the key

to your success. If one serves his/her own people well, then they will serve the public well. He emphasized that everybody, be they a producer of products or a producer of services, is in the customer satisfaction business.

Bateman and Zeithaml (1990) refer human or people skills as interpersonal and communication skills which influence manager's ability to work well with people. Because managers must deal with others, they must develop their abilities to lead, motivate and communicate effectively with those around them. The ability to get along many different types of people and exchange information with them is vital in a successful management career. These skills are essential at all levels and in all parts of an organization. Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (1995) observed that human skills, although important for managers at every level, it is the primary skill needed by middle managers; their ability to tap the technical skills of their subordinates is more important than their own technical proficiency.

According to Bateman and Zeithaml (1990), interpersonal skill also known as human relations skill is a manager's ability to work effectively as a team member and to build cooperative effort in the unit. The Authors elaborate that communication skills are important components of interpersonal skills. They form the basis for sending and receiving messages on the job. Although interpersonal skills are often referred to as soft skills, it does not mean these skills are easy to learn or insignificant. Interpersonal skills are more important than technical skills in getting to the top and providing leadership to people. Dubrin (2009) added that an important subset of interpersonal skills for managers

is multiculturalism, or the ability to work effectively and conduct business with people from different cultures. Closely related is the importance of bilingualism for managers as well as other workers. Being able to converse in a second language represents an important asset in today's global and multicultural work environment.

Cole (2006) describes communication as the process of creating, transmitting and interpreting ideas, facts, opinions and feelings. Quality communication in any organization is as good as the people who contribute to the process. Cole explains that it takes a skill to lead an effective meeting and therefore, communication is a need we can exercise in every interpersonal relationship we encounter. Rue and Byars (2009) state that effective communication between individuals, especially between a manager and subordinates is critical to achieving organizational objectives and as a result, to manage people effectively. The researchers narrates that interpersonal communication is an interactive process between individuals that involves verbal and non verbal messages. Its basic purpose is to transmit information so that the sender of the message is understood and understands the receiver. They added that desire to share the information, or inform another person about it, creates the need to communicate. The receiver of the message perceives and interprets the message and hopefully creates a reply message as a response to it.

Research studies by Heller and Hindle (1998), narrate that in management, one communicates to get things done, pass on and obtain information, reach decisions, achieve joint understanding, and develop relationships. The Authors point out that there are always at least two parties involved in any communication, each of whom may have

different wants, needs, and attitudes. These wants and needs can present barriers if they conflict with those of the other party, and such barriers may stop one conveying or receiving the right message. Heller and Hindle noted that it is important to recognize that barriers exist. Communicating effectively – breaking down barriers is one of the first steps towards good communication. Maintaining eye contact, listening to what the other person is saying, and mirroring body language all help one communicate successfully. They continue to expound that, facing person you are talking to shows you are not afraid to listen to what is said, tilting your head slightly shows you are listening and breaking down barriers by adopting other person's pose and actions. Involving staff from an early stage in decision making encourages all members to feel that they can make a difference.

Rue and Byars (2009) experienced that often; however, many factors interfere and cause this process of communication to fail. Some causes of interpersonal communication failure, are conflicting or inappropriate assumptions, different interpretations of the meaning of words (semantics), differences in perception, emotions either preceding or during communication, poor listening habits, inadequate communication skills, insufficient feedback and differences in the interpretations of non verbal communications. Good managers therefore, always seek verbal and non verbal feedback, before continuing the communication process. The Authors continue to describe that the rise of work groups and teamwork has also contributed to increased value of human relations skills. The abilities to listen and show respect to the opinions of others are great starting points for team communication. A helpful attitude and an ability to persuade others towards a logical and sound decision, this allows an employee the chance to help his or her team even more.

2.2.2 Conceptual skills

Handy (1993) discussed the role of a manager and he suggests that the key variables a manager has to grapple with are people, work and structures, systems and procedures. These variables cannot be dealt with in isolation but within the constraints of an environment in which Handy sees three crucial components: The goals of the organization, the technology available and the culture of the organization (its values, beliefs, etc). According to Handy, all the six factors mentioned interact with each other, and change in one of them will inevitably lead to change in one or more others. To manage successfully is to balance these factors in a way that meets the needs of the organization at a particular period in time, which is essentially a contingency approach to management.

Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (1995) observations indicate that the importance of conceptual skills increases as one rises through the ranks of a management system. At higher and higher organizational levels, the full range of relationships, and the organization's place in time, are important to understand. This is where a manager must have a clear grasp of the big picture. In the view point of Bateman and Zeithmal (1990) conceptual and decision skills involves the manager's abilities to recognize complex and dynamic issues, to examine the numerous and conflicting factors that influence these problems, and to resolve such situations for the benefit of the organization and everyone concerned. The authors express that, as managers rise through an organization, they have to exercise their conceptual and decision skills with increasing frequency. They confront issues that involve more significant portions of the organization and they must consider a larger and more interrelated set of decision factors. In addition, they stated that senior

executives use these skills when they consider the overall objectives and strategy of the firm, the interactions among different parts of the organization, and the role of the business in its external environment.

The research conducted by Bateman and Zeithmal (1990) continue to point out that experience plays an important part in the development of conceptual and decision skills. This is because previous events in a career often allow a rising executive or entrepreneur to resolve a critical issue. A senior executive is expected to build a strong reputation for quality workmanship and efficiency. Bateman and Zeithmal (1990) state that strategic managers are primarily concerned with the interaction between the organization and its external environment. This interaction often requires managers to work extensively with outside individuals and organization. Strategic managers also set the major goals and plans of the organizations. According to Plunkett, Attner and Allen (2008), well developed conceptual skills equip the manager to identify a problem, develop alternative solutions, select the best alternative and implement the solution. According to the American Management Association's most recent - AMA Fast – Response Survey cited in Plunkett, Attner and Allen (2008), states that the gap between what happens, companies' needs and what managers can contribute is widest in the area of conceptual skills, including the ability to identify opportunities for innovation; and to recognize problem areas, and implement solutions.

Bateman and Zeithmal (1990) concluded that decisions often need negotiations, bargaining, or compromises. This occurs for both decisions requiring the cooperation or permission of outside organizations and decisions made within organization, with no

outside interferences. Some decisions must be negotiated with parties outside the organization. Managers negotiate many decisions that concerns new ideas to its employees. Ultimately, one will have to negotiate an acceptable proposal. In every stage of negotiation, manager must listen to employees or other's opinions and suggestions and often incorporate them into their original concept. According to Bateman and Zeitnaml (1990) successful general managers are experts in their own industries and knowledgeable about their own companies. They possess "encyclopedic detail" about specific industry products, markets, customers, technologies, competitors and government regulations. They also know their organization's histories, policies and procedures, products and personnel. They also know people. Over the years, they develop working relationships with their superiors, peers, and subordinates. They also have important contacts with customers, suppliers, competitors, bankers, local politicians, government officials, and others outside their organizations.

The sequence in decision-making indicates a rational approach that can be applied to the business of reaching decisions in organizations. It commences by seeking to ask the right questions, continues by encouraging creative answers, and concludes by ensuring that the chosen solution is monitored and evaluated (Cole, 2006). According to Rue and Byars (2009) studies they concluded that all managers regardless of their positions in the organization must make decisions in the pursuit of organizational goals. In fact, decision making pervades all of the basic management functions; planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling. They elaborated that although each of these functions requires types of decisions, all of them require decisions. Management decisions place greater

emphasis on the intelligence and design stages. If the decision – making process is viewed as only the choice stage, managers spend very little time making decisions. Decision making therefore as they emphasized is the process of choosing from among various alternatives.

Bateman and Zeitnaml (1990), states that to effectively manage Group decision making, managers should avoid dominating the discussion and should not allow another individual to dominate. This means encouraging quieter group members to air their opinions and suggestions and asking for dissenting view points. At the same time, the leader should not allow the group to pressure people into conforming. He or she should remember the dangers of group think and satisficing. And he/she should stay attuned to indications that group members may be losing sight of the primary objective: to come up with the best possible solution to the problem.

According to Plunkett, Attner and Allen (2008), without leaders who can attract and retain talent, manage knowledge and unblock people’s capacity to adopt and innovate, an organization’s future is in jeopardy. Leadership practitioners (leaders) accomplish this in part by exhibiting sets of values, skills, abilities and traits that are needed by and are an inspiration to others. Leadership as they defined involves gaining commitments from organizational members to achieve management’s goals and properly equipping them to do so. As Kotter (1994) of Harvard University explains, leaders initiate and facilitate change. Leaders face two basic tasks; first, to develop and articulate exactly what the organization is trying to accomplish, and second, to create an environment in which employees can figure out what needs to be done and then do it well. Plunkett, Attner and

Allen (2008) states that as a leader, managers create the environment, work to improve employees' performances and reduce conflict, provide feedback and encourage individual's growth.

Rue and Byars (2009) from their research studies found that leadership is the ability to influence people willingly to follow one's guidance or adhere to one's decisions. A leader is one who obtains followers and influences them in setting and achieving objectives. Effective leadership in organization creates a vision of the future that considers the legitimate long term interests of the parties involved in the organization, develops a strategy for moving towards that vision, enlists the support of employees to produce the movement, and motivates employees to implement the strategy. In order to perform this function of leadership, the leader must have the capability to comprehend that, human beings have differing motivating forces at varying times and in different situations, the ability to inspire, and the ability to act in a way that will develop a climate for responding to and arousing motivations

Plunkett, Attner and Allen (2008) suggest that managers no longer manage a homogenous workforce since organizations are composed of a heterogeneous mix of people that reflects the nation's population. Diversity includes people from differing age groups, genders, ethnic and racial backgrounds, cultural and national organizations, and mental and physical capabilities. Managers integrate the diversity that exists in their communities and in their external customers into their workplace. Managers also have to learn about and understand their employees' differences and find ways for themselves, their employees and their organizations to utilize and celebrate these differences. Stoner,

Freeman and Gilbert (1995) observe that education, travel, telecommunications, changing policies and etc have combined to breakdown intercultural barriers to an extent not seen in the past. Exciting new relationships and new possibilities are now available. The workplace is different from what it was 30 years ago. One very prominent example of this, as they state is the influx of women, bringing not just numbers, but talent and perhaps different approaches to relationships. The researchers concluded that managers of today's organizations must be prepared to deal with diversity in their organizations and to draw on the talents of all of their employees.

2.3 Gender in Management

According to Plunkett, Attner and Allen (2008) skills allow individuals to perform activities and to function in society. Cole (2006), concluded that attitudes towards the role of women as homemakers and or career people vary from one society to another. Some societies emphasized the women's role as wife, mother and homemaker. Their attitudes are generally biased against women taking on anything other than relatively low-level, part-time work. Education for women in such circumstances tends to be geared towards these assumptions about women's role. Cole states that by comparison, the expectations of men as breadwinners are high, and thus social action is geared to the education, training, and support of men in employment. Our focus here is on the two basic set of skills required of and routinely exercised by both male and female managers i.e. human relations and conceptual skills in relation to gender differences as they are needed to execute the five management functions i.e. planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling and play the interpersonal, informational and decisional roles. These are explained as follows:

2.3.1 Gender and human relations skills

Research by Hodgetts and Hegar (2008) revealed that men and women communicate differently in a number of ways. Men like to boast about themselves by giving blunt feedback, withholding compliments, and not admitting weaknesses or faults. Women are more likely to give carefully worded feedback, share credit for success, ask questions for clarifications and tactfully tell others what to do. However, these generalizations do not extend to all men and women and then does not point out the need for both groups to understand better how to communicate with the other. Many men as the researchers point out need to be more patient and less dominant; many women need to speak up and be more forceful in presenting their ideas and opinions. In short, communication as stated by the authors between sexes can be improved by realizing that both groups have different ways of communicating the same ideas (Hodgetts and Hegar, 2008).

Table 2.2 some contrasts about men and women

| Women are likely to: | Men are likely to: |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Respect the other person's feelings. | Respect the other person's rights. |
| Avoid being judgmental. | Value the importance of being decisive. |
| Search for a compromise. | Seek a solution that is objectively fair. |
| Rely on communicator. | Rely on rules. |
| Be guided by emotion. | Be guided by logic. |
| Challenge authority. | Accept authority. |

Source: Richard M. Hodgetts and Kathryn W.Hegar, (2008). Modern Human Relations at Work. South-western cengage learning. Pg. 566

On the issue of women and leadership, Eagly and Johnson (1990) conducted a literature review involving comparisons of styles between men and women managers. The conclusions were summarized and found that, firstly, women generally adopted a more democratic or participative style compared with men who tended to prefer an autocratic or directive style. Secondly, in contrived settings (e.g. assessments) men tended to be more task-oriented than women, but in ordinary work situations there were no noticeable differences in task-oriented style between the sexes. Thirdly, in contrived settings (e.g. assessments) women tended to be more interpersonally oriented than men, but again in the ordinary workplace, no such differences emerged. In concluding the study, Eagly and Johnson found that one consistent difference did remain, women managers were such more likely to adopt a democratic or participative style than their male counterparts. Ironically, such an approach to leadership is the most favoured by modern management gurus, most of whom are men!

Vinnicombe and Colwill (1995) in reviewing recent research and reporting on their own studies, comment in relation to verbal skills that: Among Adults, men tend to have an edge in the solving of analogies, but women out perform men in most other verbal tests, including vocabulary, anagrams and verbal in fluency. They noted that visual spatial ability which is important for engineers, architects and air crew, for example, is higher among men than women. So too is advanced mathematical ability, although at lower levels of performance there is little difference between the sexes. Vinnicombe and Colwill's (1995) own research suggests that, even though women are verbally superior to men, the styles of communication they adopt are devalued at work. They found that women tended to be more polite than men, had a strong tendency to qualify their

statements, and tended to use disclaimers. Such difference to others seems to be taken as a sign of weakness, especially by men, whom they found, typically listen less than women, interrupt more, and use more aggressive language. Vinnicombe and Colwill comments that, the verbal styles associated with women's speech are not only devalued; there is evidence that they are devalued more for women than for men.

The research as explained by Vinnicombe and Colwill (1995) shows that, women who use disclaimers are seen as less intelligent and less knowledgeable than women who do not use these "feminine" styles, and less intelligent and less knowledgeable than men who do use them. This evidence helps indicate the deeply ingrained male dominance of the work environment. This is a reflection of organizational culture, where the leadership culture of work has been established by men for men. Downey, Papageorgious and Stough as cited by Price (2007) concluded that in general, women are more likely to regard themselves as "enablers" of other people, seeing themselves as opening up information to employees, building up the confidence of their staff and encouraging them to develop and use their skills. In a study of 176 women managers from a number of industries across Australia, Downey, Papageorgious and Stough as cited by Price (2007), found that female managers displaying transformational leadership behaviours tended to show high level of emotional intelligence and intuition than women managers displaying less transformational leadership behaviours. They continue to point out that there is not denying, of course, that not only are men and women sometimes different in their approach but that this may sometimes lead to conflict.

Hodgetts and Hegar (2008) argue that managers need to know how to interact effectively with both genders. One way is by understanding some of the differences in the way each group behaves. For example, women tend to do better than men at articulating their ideas. They are particularly adept at finding the right words to convey what they want to say. They also tend to be better at reading emotions in faces and in deciphering postures, gestures and vocal inflections. As a result, many women are very effective in reading problem situations and figuring out how to deal with them. Research done by Helen Fisher, an anthropologist cited by Hodgetts and Hegar (2008) found that women tend to excel in processing information. Men tend to address a problem by formulating a simple, basic solution whereas women often gather more information and look at a variety of approaches to solving the problem. She continues to state that women are very effective in trying to build consensus and getting everyone to work together as a team. Many men in group situations try to win at the expense of others. Women on the other hand, tend to be more focused on win – win approaches, in which everyone goes away with a positive feeling (Hodgetts and Hegar, 2008).

2.3.2 Gender and conceptual skills

Cole (2006), observed that women are faced with difficulties in attempting to break into what has been, and still is mainly a man's world, which has been referred to as glass – ceiling. This is an analogy which attempts to describe the subtly transparent barrier that prevents women from gaining access to the more senior roles in their organizations. Hodgetts and Hegar (2008) explain that how people network tend to vary based on such factors as gender and ethnicity. In their research studies they revealed that many women tend to be conservative in their networking activities, whereas men tend to be bolder. One

reason is that in some organizations women who are aggressive in their networking are seen as being too pushy whereas men who behave similarly are regarded as forceful and confident. Successful women tend to use networks selectively. They quickly learn the organization's norms of behavior and operate within these parameters.

Bennet (1995) argued that, men and women are different on account of their chromosomic makeup. He reveals that there is a belief that men and women are quintessentially different and can contribute to sex stereotyping such as that men are tougher, more aggressive and competitive, rational etc whereas women are more emotional, interested in people rather than ideas, dependent, and so on, which can lead to discrimination and the absence of equal opportunities at work. Marshall (1993) argues that Western society has given predominance to male values, which have shaped its organizations, its language and its cultural norms. This leads, she claims, to assumptions that when they are perceived as different to men, women are considered to be inferior that is Female characteristics and values, such as emotions, intuition and interdependence, hence are denied legitimacy and are covertly or actively suppressed. Sadly, the same could be said of most human societies.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher describes the methods used and how the study was conducted. The chapter contains research design, the target population, sampling techniques, the data collection instruments and data analysis and presentation.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey was used in this study. This design was appropriate for this study because there was need to collect data from a cross-section of employees at the Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing.

3.3 Target population

The target population for the study included all non-managerial staff in the Department of Cooperative Development and Marketing. The department is composed of 12 divisions (units) with a staff establishment of 1,071. 213 are management staff, while 758 are non-management staff. The study population thus comprised 758 non-management staff of the Department.

3.4 Sampling Design

The sample size selected was 76 non-management staff drawn from the 12 divisions in the department. This is 10% of the population. This is consistent with the recommendation by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) who have suggested that 10% of the total accessible population is adequate. The sample frame was the employees' Integrated

Personnel Payroll Database (IPPD) system of June 2013. The study adopted both a purposive and stratified random sampling technique. The universe sampled was divided (stratified) into groups (divisions) that was mutually exclusive and included all the items in the universe. Below was a sample structure/ frame from the target population.

Table 3.1 Sampling Procedure

| Serial | Divisions | Target Population | | | Sample size (10%) | | |
|--------------|---|-------------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| 1. | Administration | 61 | 31 | 30 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| 2. | HRM | 24 | 13 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. | Accounts | 16 | 7 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 4. | Planning | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 5. | Finance | 5 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 6. | Supply C. Management | 8 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 7. | Tribunal | 17 | 7 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 8. | Registration | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 9. | Audit | 11 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 10. | Marketing | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 11. | Ethics & Governance | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 12. | Commissioner of Cooperatives offices (COCO) | 601 | 382 | 219 | 55 | 30 | 25 |
| TOTAL | 12 | 758 | 460 | 298 | 76 | 41 | 35 |

Source: Integrated Personnel Payroll Database (IPPD) June, 2013

3.5 Data Collection

The study used primary data that was obtained using a semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained closed and open – ended questions. A pretested questionnaire was administered to the respondents by personal delivery and e- mail by the researcher. The questionnaire comprised three parts. Part one was solicit demographic data; part two was addressing human relations skills; while part three focused on conceptual skills.

3.6 Data analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as measures of variations, measures of central tendency, mean, and standard deviations. It was appropriate to this study because descriptive statistics enable meaningful descriptions of scores and measurements using statistics. The data was presented by use of charts, graphs, and tables. The responses were coded into numerical form in order to facilitate statistical analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis and findings of the study as set out in the research methodology. The results were presented on the employees' perception of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among male and female managers at the department of cooperative development and marketing. The study sought answers to the following research question: what are the employees' perception of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among male and female managers at the department of cooperative development and marketing. The study targeted 76 respondents at the Department of Cooperative Development and marketing, out of which, 39 responded and returned their questionnaires, constituting a response rate of 51.3%. This response rate was sufficient and representative and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda's (2003) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good while a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. This commendable response rate was due to extra efforts that were made via follow-up e-mails and phone calls to remind the respondents to fill-in and return the questionnaires. The chapter covers the demographic information, and the findings based on the objective. The findings were then presented in tables as appropriate with explanations being given in prose thereafter.

4.2 General information

The respondents were required to provide information about themselves with respect to gender, job title, age, highest level of education, duration of working, employee's areas of

specialization, the employees' perceptions of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among managers.

4.2.1 Distribution of the respondents by age category

The study sought to establish the age of the respondents and the findings are as shown in table 4.1 below

Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by age category

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---------------|-----------|---------|
| (20-30) years | 7 | 17.9 |
| (31-40) years | 18 | 46.2 |
| 41 and above | 14 | 35.9 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

From the findings in table 4.1, majority of the respondents (46.2%) were in the age bracket of 31-40 years, 35.9% were above 41 years and only 17.9% were in age bracket of 20-30 years. Majority of the respondents were mature as they fell in the bracket above 30 years.

4.2.2 Gender distribution of the respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender. Findings are shown in table 4.2 below

Table 4.2: Distribution of respondents by gender

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| Male | 24 | 60.0 |
| Female | 15 | 40.0 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

As shown in table 4.2, majority of the respondents (60%) were male and the rest (40%) were female.

4.2.3 Respondents' work experience

The respondents were required to provide information on their work experience.

The findings are presented in table 4.3 below

Table 4.3: classification of the respondents by work experience

| | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------|-----------|---------|
| Below 5 years | 4 | 10.3 |
| (5-10) years | 17 | 43.5 |
| (11-15) years | 4 | 10.3 |
| above 15 years | 14 | 35.9 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

As shown in table 4.3, 43.5% of the respondents had worked for a period of 5-10 years, 35.9% had worked for a period above 15 years, those who were below 5 years together

with those in age bracket 11-15 years were 10.3%. These findings reveal that the vast majority had good experience.

4.2.4 Education level

The study further sought to find out the highest level of education attained by the respondents. The findings are shown below table 4.4

Table 4.4: Classification of the respondents by level of education

| | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| master degree | 6 | 15.4 |
| bachelor degree | 10 | 25.6 |
| Diploma | 16 | 41.0 |
| technical or professional course | 6 | 15.4 |
| Secondary | 1 | 2.6 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

It is evident from results presented in table 4.4 that 41% of the respondents had diploma, 25.6% had bachelors degree, 15.4% had maters degree, 15.4% had technical or professional courses, and 2.6% had only secondary education. These results reveal that most of the respondents had education above basic level

4.2.5 The area of specialization in the highest level of education

The research further sought to find out the area of specialization in the highest level of education. The respondents were mixed. Some were security warden, Information Communication Technology (ICT), law, supply chain management, procurement, finance, record management among others.

4.2.6 Gender of the immediate supervisor

The study sought information on the gender of immediate respondent's supervisor. The findings are presented in table 4.5

Table 4.5: Gender composition of immediate supervisor of the respondents

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| Male | 16 | 41.0 |
| Female | 23 | 59.0 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

As shown in table 4.5, majority of the respondents had immediate supervisor being female (59%), the rest (41%) had male supervisor.

4.2.7 Human relations skills of female managers

The researcher was interested in finding out perceptions of human relations skills of female managers. The respondents rated a series of statements depicting various types of human relations skills of female managers on a five-point Likert- type scale where: 1- not

at all, 2-to less extent,3-to moderate extent,4-to great extent,5-to very great extent .The mean and standard deviations were computed and presented in Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Means and standard deviations of the measures of human relations skills of female managers

| Human relations skills | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| listening to the views of others | 39 | 3.6154 | 0.781 |
| communicating effectively and respect for other people views | 39 | 3.7949 | 0.893 |
| counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties | 39 | 3.8718 | 0.922 |
| appreciating and thanking subordinates for good job done | 39 | 3.5897 | 1.207 |
| bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team | 39 | 3.5897 | 1.018 |
| encouraging employees participation in decision making and inviting their views | 39 | 3.4615 | 1.120 |
| recognizing good work contributions and motivating employees to perform much better | 39 | 3.5385 | .99594 |

From the findings presented in table 4.6, the highest rated human relations skills possessed by female managers is “counseling employees when they have problems or

difficulties” with a mean score of 3.87 out of a possible maximum of 5. This was followed by “communicating effectively and respect for other people’s views” with a mean score of 3.79. The least rated skill was “encouraging employees’ participation in decision making and inviting their views” (mean=3.46). Overall, all the seven skills had a mean score well above the mid-point of 2.5. This implies that the female managers at the department have fairly high human relations skills.

4.2.8 Human relations skills of male managers

The researcher was interested in finding out perceptions of human relations skills of male managers. The respondents rated a series of statements depicting various types of human relations skills of male managers on a five-point Likert- type scale where: 1- not at all, 2- to less extent,3to moderate extent,4-to great extent,5-to very great extent. The mean and standard deviations were computed and presented in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Means and standard deviations of the measures of human relations skills of male managers

| Human relations skills | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| listening to the views of others | 39 | 3.743 | 0.849 |
| communicating effectively and respect for other people’s views | 39 | 3.410 | 1.044 |
| counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties | 39 | 3.461 | 1.143 |

| | | | |
|--|----|--------|---------|
| Appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done | 39 | 3.230 | 0.930 |
| Bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team | 39 | 3.384 | 0.989 |
| Encouraging employees participation in decision making and inviting their views | 39 | 3.5641 | .94018 |
| Recognizing good work contribution and motivating employees to perform much better | 39 | 3.5641 | 1.18754 |

From the findings presented in table 4.7, the highest rated human relations skills possessed by male managers is “listening to the views of others” with a mean score of 3.74 out of a possible maximum of 5. This was followed by “encouraging employees participation in decision making and inviting their views and recognizing good work contribution and motivating employees to perform much better” with an equal mean score of 3.56. The least rated skill was “appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done” (mean=3.23). Overall, all the seven skills had a mean score well above the mid-point of 2.5. This implies that the male managers at the department have fairly high human relations skills.

Table 4.8: Comparative analysis of human relations skills of female and male managers

| Skills | Mean | | Std Dev. | |
|---|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | Male managers | Female managers | male managers | Female managers |
| Listening to the views of others | 3.743 | 3.6154 | 0.849 | 0.781 |
| Communicating effectively and respect for other people's views | 3.410 | 3.7949 | 1.044 | 0.893 |
| Counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties | 3.461 | 3.8718 | 1.143 | 0.922 |
| Appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done | 3.230 | 3.5897 | 0.930 | 1.207 |
| Bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team | 3.384 | 3.5897 | 0.989 | 1.018 |
| Encouraging employees participation in decision making and inviting their views | 3.5641 | 3.4615 | 0.940 | 1.120 |
| Recognizing good work contribution and motivating employees to perform better | 3.5641 | 3.5385 | 1.187 | 0.995 |
| Grand Mean | 3.4794 | 3.6373 | | |

As shown in table 4.8, the highest rated human relations skill is “counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties” with female managers taking the lead with a mean score of 3.87 as compared with male managers (mean = 3.461). This was followed by “communicating effectively and respect for other people’s views” with female managers scoring a mean score of 3.794 as compared with male managers with a mean

score of 3.410. The least rated human relations skill of managers is “appreciating and thanking employees for a good job done” by male managers with a mean score of 3.230 as compared with female managers with a mean score of 3.5897. Overall, all the seven skills had female managers scoring a grand mean of 3.637 and being rated the highest as compared with male managers with a grand mean of 3.479.

4.2.9 Human relation skills of the respondents’ immediate supervisor

From the findings, respondents said their immediate supervisors were team players, counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties, they like encouraging employees’ participation in decision making and inviting their views, appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done and some said their immediate supervisor posses all the mentioned skills among others.

4.2.10 whether the mentioned skills help to perform better (in their opinion)

The study sought to find out whether the mentioned skills that they viewed their managers have help them perform better, the findings are presented in the table 4.9below

Table 4.9: Importance of the skills in performance

| | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 33 | 84.6 |
| No | 6 | 15.4 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

From the study findings majority agreed that the mentioned skills helps to perform better 84.6%, the rest disagreed with the mentioned statement.

4.2.11 How to rate the level of human skills /interpersonal communication skills of managers in civil service?

The researcher further sought to find out the level of human skills /interpersonal communication skills of the managers in civil service and the findings are illustrated below table 4.10

Table 4.10: Rates of the level of human relations skills in the civil service

| | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Excellent | 7 | 17.9 |
| Good | 20 | 51.3 |
| Poor | 7 | 17.9 |
| very poor | 5 | 7.7 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

From the study findings majority of respondents 51.3% rated level of human skills/interpersonal communication skills in civil service as being good,17.9% rated the managers as being excellent and equal percentage rated them as being poor, only least minority rated them as being very poor 7.7%. This reveals that managers in civil service are above average in handling and working well with their subordinates.

4.2.12 The opinion on how to improve human relation skills of managers

The study sought to know what civil service need to do to improve the human relations skills of the managers and findings were that managers need effective managerial training as pertains to effective training, to avoid favourism in work places, continuous training in

relation to human personal handling, others said they there is need for training in decision making skills among others.

4.2.13 Conceptual skills of female top managers (senior executives)

The researcher was interested in finding out employees’ perceptions of conceptual skills of female top managers. The respondents rated a series of statements depicting various types of conceptual skills of female top managers on a five-point Likert- type scale where: 1- not at all, 2-to less extent,3-to moderate extent,4- to great extent,5-to very great extent .The mean and standard deviations were computed and presented in Table 4.11

Table 4.11: Means and standard deviations of the measures of conceptual skills of female top managers

| Conceptual skills | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees | 39 | 2.7179 | 1.16864 |
| planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives | 39 | 3.4615 | 0.91324 |
| Negotiating with other outside parties on good things that can improve service delivery in the civil service | 39 | 3.1795 | 1.18925 |
| Involving others in decision making process while respecting their opinions | 39 | 3.2308 | 1.20222 |

| | | | |
|---|----|--------|---------|
| embracing cultural/ethnic diversity and respecting gender diversity | 39 | 3.2821 | 1.29673 |
| Accountability in managing and distribution of resources | 39 | 3.3077 | 1.15060 |
| Communicating effectively | 39 | 3.4615 | 1.18868 |
| Encouraging team work in the entire department | 39 | 3.6154 | 1.04164 |

From the findings presented in table 4.11, the highest rated conceptual skill possessed by female managers is “encouraging team work in the entire department” with a mean score of 3.6154 out of a possible maximum of 5. This was followed by “planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives” and “communicating effectively” with an equal mean score of 3.4615. The least rated skill was “communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees” (mean=2.717). Overall, all the eight skills had a mean score well above the mid-point of 2.5. This implies that the female managers at the department have fairly high conceptual skills.

4.2.14 Conceptual skills of male top managers (senior executives)

The researcher sought to find out employees’ perceptions of conceptual skills of male top managers. The respondents rated a series of statements depicting various types of conceptual skills of male top managers on a five-point Likert- type scale where: 1- not at all, 2-to less extent,3-to moderate extent,4-to great extent,5-to very great extent .The mean and standard deviations were computed and presented in Table 4.12

Table 4.12: Means and standard deviations of the measures of conceptual skills of male top managers

| Conceptual skills | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees | 39 | 3.5641 | 1.09532 |
| planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives | 39 | 3.7179 | 1.07480 |
| Negotiating with other outside parties on good things that can improve service delivery in the civil service | 39 | 3.6410 | 1.06344 |
| Involving others in decision making process while respecting their opinions | 39 | 3.5641 | 0.94018 |
| Embracing cultural/ ethnic diversity and respecting gender diversity | 39 | 3.4615 | 0.88396 |
| accountability in managing and distribution of resources | 39 | 3.3333 | 1.15470 |
| communicating effectively | 39 | 3.4872 | 0.94233 |
| encouraging team work in the entire department | 39 | 3.8462 | 0.93298 |

From the findings presented in table 4.12, the highest rated conceptual skill possessed by male managers is “encouraging team work in the entire department” with a mean score of 3.8462 out of a possible maximum of 5. This was followed by “planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives” with a mean score of

3.717. The least rated skill was “accountability in managing and distribution of resources” (mean=3.333). Overall, all the eight skills had a mean score well above the mid-point of 2.5. This implies that the male managers at the department have fairly high conceptual skills.

Table 4.13: Comparative analysis of conceptual skills of female and male managers

| Skills | Mean | | Std Dev. | |
|--|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | Male managers | Female managers | male managers | Female managers |
| Communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees | 3.5641 | 2.7179 | 1.09532 | 1.16864 |
| Planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives | 3.7179 | 3.4615 | 1.07480 | 0.91324 |
| Negotiating with other outside parties on good things that can improve service delivery in the civil service | 3.6410 | 3.1795 | 1.06344 | 1.18925 |
| Involving others in decision making process while respecting their opinions | 3.5641 | 3.2308 | 0.94018 | 1.20222 |
| Embracing cultural/ ethnic diversity and respecting gender diversity | 3.4615 | 3.2821 | 0.88396 | 1.29673 |
| Accountability in managing and distribution of resources | 3.3333 | 3.3077 | 1.15470 | 1.15060 |
| Communicating effectively | 3.4872 | 3.4615 | 0.94233 | 1.18868 |
| Encouraging team work in the entire department | 3.8462 | 3.6154 | 0.93298 | 1.04164 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--|--|
| Grand Mean | 3.5769 | 3.2895 | | |
|-------------------|---------------|---------------|--|--|

As shown in table 4.13, the highest rated conceptual skill is “encouraging team work in the entire department” with male managers leading with a mean score of 3.846 as compared with female managers (mean = 3.6154). This was followed by “planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives” with male managers scoring a mean score of 3.7179 as compared with female managers with a mean score of 3.4615. The least rated conceptual skill of managers is “communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees” by female managers with a mean score of 2.7179 as compared with male managers with a mean score of 3.5641. Overall, all the eight skills had male managers scoring a grand mean of 3.5769 and being rated the highest as compared with female managers with a grand mean of 3.2895.

4.2.15 whether they prefer male or female manager?

The researcher sought to know the preference of respondent to either gender of managers and findings are in table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14: most preferred manager

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| male | 15 | 38.5 |
| female | 24 | 61.5 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

From the study findings majority of the respondents preferred female managers as compared to male 61.5%, only 38.5% preferred male managers.

4.2.15.1 Reasons for the above views

The study sought to know the explanation of respondent pertaining their choices, of those for male they said male managers are not emotional, male managers are well organized and encourage employees in decision making, female managers view issues from three dimensional view, they always make decisions after proper consultation, others said male managers are more understanding while some said it all depends on ones personality and management skills among others

4.2.16 whether the manager of their choice helps them attain goals and objectives

The study sought to find out whether the choices of managers had an impact on attainment of goals and objectives of firm, the findings are as follows, with effective communication objectives are realized, by encouraging team work and giving incentives goals are meet, they encourage dialogue and appreciating employees job is done better, female managers gives room to contribute in decision making these work more fun among others.

4.2.17 whether discussions and meetings help

The researcher further sought to know whether it was beneficial to meet for discussions with the managers and the finding are shown below in table 4.15

Table 4.15: Opinion on whether discussions and meetings help

| | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-----------|---------|
| Yes | 38 | 97.4 |
| No | 1 | 2.6 |
| Total | 39 | 100.0 |

From the study findings fast majority of respondents said the discussions and meetings with managers is important 97.4%, the remaining disagreed that it helps to meet managers for discussions 2.6%.

4.2.17.1 Explanation to the above view

The study sought explanation to the above view and findings are given as it supports work and personal development, healthy discussions or meetings help to solve any pending issues and highlight any problems, workers are able to achieve target of job, they communicate on emerging trends, while sharing of information makes one aware of what is happening among other reasons.

4.2.18 Comment and suggestion on human relations and conceptual skills

The researcher eventually sought to find out any other comments or suggestion on human relations and conceptual skills of male and female managers and the findings are given as both male and female managers are good but females need more exposure, they should recognize good work and motivate employees for better performance which is rare in civil service among other suggestions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study in line with the objective of the study. The research sought to establish the employee's perceptions of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among male and female managers

5.2 Summary

From the study findings among the divisions studied in the department which include: administration, human resource, accounts, planning, finance, commissioner of cooperatives offices in Nairobi and other county governments among others, the study findings are that majority of the respondents (46.2%) were in the age bracket of 31-40 years, 35.9% were above 41 years and only 17.9% were in age bracket of 20-30 years of age. Majority of the respondents were male (60%) the rest were female(40%), in the study findings majority of the respondents (43.5%) had worked for a period of 5-10 years, 35.9% had worked for a period above 15 years, those who were below 5years together with those in age bracket of 11-15 years were 10.3%.

Most of respondents (41%) had attained diploma level, 25.6 % had attained bachelor degree level ,15.4% had master degree equal in number to those who had technical or professional courses, only 2.6% had only secondary education, respondents had specialization in different fields some were security warden ,ICT, law, supply chain management, procurement, finance , record management among others. Respondents

said female managers like counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties to greater extent (mean=3.871), they also communicate effectively and respect other people's views (mean=3.794), listening to the views of others (mean= 3.615), appreciating and thanking subordinates for good job done as well as bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team (mean=3.589),they also agreed that they like recognizing good work contributions and motivating employees to perform much better (mean=3.538), and to least extent they said female manager like encouraging employees' participation in decision making and inviting their views (mean=3.461)respectively. To a greater extent male managers like listening to the views of others (mean=3.743),respondents agreed in equal extent that male managers like encouraging employees 'participation in decision making and inviting their views and also recognizing good work contribution and motivating employees to perform much better (mean=3.564) counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties (mean=3.461), respect for other people's views and communicating effectively (mean=3.410), bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team (mean=3.384), and to lesser extent they said male managers like appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done (mean=3.230) respectively. From the study findings majority of the respondents preferred female managers (61.5%), as compared to male of which only 38.5% preferred male managers. The discussions and meetings with managers is important (97.4%), the remaining disagreed that it helps to meet managers for discussions (2.6%). They gave explanation that discussions and meetings help as it supports work and personal development, healthy discussions or meeting help to solve any pending issues and highlight any problems, workers are able to achieve target of job,

they communicate on emerging trends, while sharing of information makes one aware of what is happening among other reasons.

5.3 Conclusion

The study on the 12 divisions namely human resource, planning, finance ,audit, tribunal commissioner of cooperatives offices, marketing among others on the employees perceptions of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among male and female managers in the departments of cooperative and marketing concludes that majority of the respondents preferred female managers as compared to male managers in the various divisions since female managers view issues from three dimensional view, they always make decisions after proper consultation. The importance of having meetings and discussions with manager's help to support work and personal development, healthy discussions or meetings help to solve any pending issues and highlight any problems, workers are able to achieve target of job ,they communicate on emerging trends ,while sharing of information makes one aware of what is happening among other reasons.

Research findings on employees' perception on human relations and conceptual skills of male and female managers are given as both male and female managers are good but when it comes to human relations there was to a greater extent that female managers are perceived to be relating well with subordinates on elements such as, listening to their views, and to an equal extent they counsel employees when they have problems or difficulties, appreciate and thank employees for good job done and bring and encourage subordinates to work as a team when compared with their male counterparts. However, study findings revealed that male top managers are perceived by their subordinates in the

department to a greater extent as better than female top managers (senior executives) in top or strategic positions.

It was proved from the study findings therefore that, such elements like encouraging team work in the entire department, planning and organizing activities to achieve departmental objectives, negotiating with other outside parties on good things to improve service delivery in the civil service, among others are possessed by male senior executives as compared to female. It can be concluded from the research findings that female managers are perceived as able to relate well with their subordinates since majority of them perform supervisory roles as reflected in the research question on who was the respondents' immediate supervisor and the majority of the respondents (59.0%) had their immediate supervisor being a female. The findings also provided that the preferred manager was a female (61.5%). On the other hand it can also be concluded that male senior executives are able to perform much better than female ones at top management positions in the department since they are the majority who occupy top seats where decisions are made and activities are planned. However, male managers as revealed from the study findings need to a greater extent develop more skills in counseling of employees so that when they are in problems or difficulties, they are able to be counseled and assisted out of the problems in the work place. Female on the other hand need to improve on communication of the vision, goals and objectives of the department to the employees.

5.4 Recommendation

The study recommends that government should provide more training to managers in civil service on the human relations and conceptual skills and more so to male managers in the areas of counseling, motivation of employees for a job well done and team work in order to realize the visions and objectives of the organizations. Female managers also need to be exposed to other areas of management especially strategic leadership programmes. There is need for improvement in their networking services so that they are able to negotiate well and effectively with outside parties on good things to increase productivity and service delivery in the civil service.

5.5 Areas of further studies

Since this study explored the employees perceptions of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among managers in the department of cooperative development and marketing, the study recommends that similar study should be done in other departments or government ministries for comparison purposes and to allow for generalization of findings on the employees perceptions of differences in human relations and conceptual skills among male and female managers in the department of cooperative and marketing.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

Part 1: Biodata and Personal Information

1. Job title (Designation)
2. Division:
3. Age [] 20 – 30 [] 31 – 40 [] 41 and above.
4. Gender [] Male [] Female.
5. Work experience in the Civil Service.
[] Below 5 years.
[] 5 – 10 years.
[] 11 – 15 years.
[] Above 15 years.
6. Highest level of Education.
[] Doctorate
[] Masters Degree.
[] Bachelor Degree.
[] Diploma.
[] Technical or Professional Course.
[] Secondary
7. Area of specialization in the highest level of education, specify (Economics, ICT, Engineering etc).
.....
.....
.....
8. Is your immediate supervisor a male or female? (please, tick inside the bracket)
[] Male [] Female.

Part 2: Human Relations Skills

2(a): Human Relations Skills of Female Managers

9. Rate the extent to which the statements below accurately describe Female Managers you are familiar with (tick where it applies)

| | | (1) Not at all | (2) To a less extent | (3) To a moderate extent | (4) To a great extent | (5) To a very great extent |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 | Listening to the views of others | | | | | |
| 2 | Communicating effectively and respect for other peoples' views | | | | | |
| 3 | Counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties | | | | | |
| 4 | Appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done | | | | | |
| 5 | Bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team | | | | | |
| 6 | Encouraging employees participation in decision making and inviting their views | | | | | |
| 7 | Recognizing good work, contributions and motivating employees to perform much better | | | | | |

2 (b): Human relations skills of Male Managers

10. Rate the extent to which the statements below accurately describe Male Managers you are familiar with (tick where it applies)

| | | (1) Not at all | (2) To a less extent | (3) To a moderate extent | (4) To a great extent | (5) To a very great extent |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1 | Listening to the views of others | | | | | |
| 2 | Communicating effectively and respect for other people's views | | | | | |
| 3 | Counseling employees when they have problems or difficulties | | | | | |
| 4 | Appreciating and thanking subordinates for a good job done | | | | | |
| 5 | Bringing and encouraging employees to work together as a team | | | | | |
| 6 | Encouraging employees participation in decision making and inviting their views | | | | | |
| 7 | Recognizing good work, contributions and motivating employees to perform much better | | | | | |

11. Which of the above mentioned human relation skills do your immediate supervisor have?

.....
.....

12. In your opinion, do the above mentioned skills possessed by your supervisor help you perform better / work well with others?

Yes No

13. How would you rate the level of human relation skills / interpersonal communication skills of managers in the civil service?

Excellent Good Poor Very poor

14. What do you think the civil service needs to improve the human relation skills of managers?

.....
.....
.....

Part 3: Conceptual Skills

3(a): Conceptual Skills of Female Top Managers (Senior Executives)

15. Rate the extent to which the statements below accurately describe Female Top Managers (Senior Executives) you are familiar with (tick where it applies)

| | | (1) Not at all | (2) To a less extent | (3) To a moderate extent | (4) To a great extent | (5) To a very great extent |
|---|--|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees | | | | | |
| 2 | Planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives | | | | | |
| 3 | Negotiating with other outside parties on good things that can improve service delivery in the civil service | | | | | |
| 4 | Involving others in decision making process while respecting their opinions | | | | | |
| 5 | Embracing cultural/ ethnic diversity and respecting gender diversity. | | | | | |
| 6 | Accountability in managing and Distribution of resources. | | | | | |
| 7 | Communicating effectively | | | | | |
| 8 | Encouraging team work in the entire department | | | | | |

3(b): Conceptual Skills of Male Top Managers (Senior Executives)

16. Rate the extent to which the statements below accurately describe Male Top Managers (Senior Executives) you are familiar with (tick where it applies)

| | | (1) Not at all | (2) To a less extent | (3) To a moderate extent | (4) To a great extent | (5) To a very great extent |
|---|--|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Communicating the vision, goals and objectives to employees | | | | | |
| 2 | Planning and organizing activities well with a view to achieve departmental objectives | | | | | |
| 3 | Negotiating with other outside parties on good things that can improve service delivery in the civil service | | | | | |
| 4 | Involving others in decision making process while respecting their opinions | | | | | |
| 5 | Embracing cultural/ ethnic diversity and respecting gender diversity. | | | | | |
| 6 | Accountability in managing and Distribution of resources. | | | | | |
| 7 | Communicating effectively | | | | | |
| 8 | Encouraging team work in the entire department | | | | | |

17. Do you prefer a male or female manager?

(i) Female Male

(ii) Please explain or give reasons to your answer

.....

.....

.....

18. In your opinion how does your preferred manager help you achieve your own objectives / goals and perform better?

.....

.....

.....

.....

19. Do you think discussions or meetings with your manager help you?

Yes No

20. If yes, explain how your manager helps you remain in the civil service.

.....

.....

.....

21. Any other comment and suggestion on human relations and conceptual skills of male and female managers?

.....

.....

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