

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT
PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN REGIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITIES IN KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has not been presented for the award of any degree in any other university.

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

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife Agettah and children Alex,Lilian and Michael for their inspiration, love, support and encouragement and which inspired me to achieve this goal.

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I would like to thank the almighty God for giving me the will and strength to carry out this research. I would also thank my family and parents for the encouragement and support. Lots of thanks and gratitude to my research project supervisor, M/s Florence Muindi for valuable advice, guidance and encouragement that she accorded me throughout this research process. To all my colleague who reviewed this research project, thank you very much for your clarification, corrections and criticisms that helped me to achieve the objective of this work. To my workmates Sammy, Lisa and Mukeku, I appreciate for your encouragement.

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ABBREVIATIONS

RDA	Regional Development Authorities
MORDA	Ministry of Regional Development Authorities
TARDA	Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority
KVDA	Kerio Valley Development Authority
LBDA	Lake Basin Development Authority
ENNDA	Ewaso Ng'iro North Development Authority
ENSDA	Ewaso Ng'iro South Development Authority
CDA	Coast Development Authority
MBO	Management by Objective

ABSTRACT

Employee empowerment programs have been widely adopted in the public sector as a way to improve organizational performance. Empowered employees improve performance largely by finding innovative ways of correcting errors in service delivery and redesigning work processes. This study seeks to establish the relationship between employee empowerment practices and employee performance in Regional Development Authorities in Kenya. The study used descriptive study survey design. The population of the interest comprised of all employees of the six Regional Development Authorities and a total sample size of 173 employees were interviewed and respondents were randomly selected. The study used primary data collection method. The analysis was done mainly using descriptive statistics such as mean scores, frequencies, and percentages. Pearson product moment correlation technique was used to establish the strength of the relationship between employee empowerment practice and employee performance. Whereas employee empowerment practices were found to be moderately embraced in regional development authorities, employees were in agreement that employee performance practice was in place and was being used. The study concluded that employee empowerment practices has impact on employee performance In today's global competitiveness there is a great desire on the part of the employees to play an active role in organization activities and as such every effort should be made to accommodate employees views. Therefore the study recommends that employee empowerment practices should be supported by both top and middle level management in the regional development authorities as this will improve employees performance tremendously.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

In order for Organizations to achieve their goals and objectives, they have to constantly adjust to their environmental (Pearson and Robinson, 1997). In an increasingly competitive world and changing business, organizations need effective strategies to manage business, deliver services and goods to customers, markets, products, technology and competitive conditions are rapidly changing. Therefore all Organizations must possess the capacity to adapt to these changes effectively. According to Armstrong (2000), strategies for managing performance aim at achieving increased Organizational effectiveness better results for individuals and teams and higher levels of skills, competence, commitment and motivation. Over the year many failures in introducing change have been described to a failure to take account of human and Organizational issues and in particular to a lack of empowerment. The term empowerment itself is fairly recent addition to Management vocabulary and could be seen as just another fad. The underlying concept however, has been around for many decades embodied in the use of words like participation and involvement (Mullins, 2002).

Employee empowering enables people to contribute to Organizational effectiveness as it allows all the talent knowledge to be utilized since those who are doing the job are those who know the job most and that employees cannot keep ideas to themselves on performance improvement (McKenna and Beach, 2002). Therefore, empowered employees are well placed to maximize their potential and in the process enhance the competitive advantage of their Organization. Focus on performance is an important key factor on employee empowerment. Present business environment has been much oriented towards efficiency and business process re-engineering as important major emphasis on performance improvement as main

way of increasing effectiveness. So quality and improving customer links is a fine approach to performance as everyone understands what is expected of them as individually or group and in turn Organizations knows what they can deliver.

According to Foy sited in Vikas (2000) empowerment is simply gaining the power to make your voice heard to contribute to plans and decisions that affect you, to use your expertise at work to improve your performance with it the performance of your whole Organization. Crosby et al (1997) said that empowerment involves giving employees responsibility for hands on production or service activities, the autonomy to make decisions or take action without prior approval. The production process control and quality assessment becomes part of everyone job and all individuals are given ability and authority to take positive actions that will lead to high performance. Empowerment improves performance because of the opportunities empowerment provides for employees to do their work more effectively. It develops an individual knowledge so that employees take a broader and more proactive orientation towards their job and are more willing to suggest new ways of doing things and to engage in meaningful team working. Employee empowerment speeds up the decision process and sometimes the decisions are better than they might have been (Robins and Coulter 2002). Wall and wood sited in Robbins and Coulter (2002) says that research has shown that empowerment can be one of the most effective tools in raising both productivity and profit. Empowerment makes greater use of the knowledge, skills and abilities of the workforce. It encourages team working and if there is meaningful participation, it can lead to the successful implementation of change programmes. Nixon sited by Mullins (2007) suggested that by empowering staff right through the organizations structure, every employee will have the power to be innovative and ensure performance is good.

1.1.1 The Concept of Employee Empowerment

According to Bateman and Snell (2002) empowerment is the process of sharing power with employees, thereby enhancing their confidence in their ability to perform their jobs and their belief that they are influential contributions to the Organization. Empowerment has been defined by Carver cited in Vikas (2000) as an authority, in terms of encouraging and allowing individuals to take personal responsibility for improving the way they do their jobs and contribute to the Organizational goals. Cook and Macaulay's (1997) defined empowerment as a change management tool which helps organizations create an environment where every individual can use his or her abilities and energies to satisfy the customer. It is all embracing how employees use their abilities and whether there are boundaries to responsibilities, the degree and type of power employees enjoy, power relation between employee, managers, individuals, teams and customers. Hanold (1997) defined empowerment as control of ones work autonomy on the job, variation of teamwork and pay systems that link pay with performance. He further divided empowerment into four categories which are the leaders role in creating empowerment context, the individual perspective of empowerment, collaborative work as empowerment and structural and procedural change as empowerment aims at changing organizational strategy with the objective of improving both individuals and organizations ability to act and enhance performance.

To foster empowerment, Management must create an environment in which everyone feels they have real influence over performance standards and business effectiveness within their area of responsibility (Bateman and Snell 2002). An empowering work environment provides people with information necessary for them to perform at their best, knowledge about how to use the information and how to do their work, power to make decision that give them control over their work and the rewards they do deserve for the contribution they make.

Empowering peoples starts with listening. Every Manager should have styles of listening to his subordinates. Organizations which have developed listening processes are likely to have highly committed and motivated employees.

Empowerment is likely to improve productivity only when employees are willing to accept increased responsibilities, are group oriented and have good interpersonal skills, when organizations culture is characterized by trust, risk taking and employee participation, when employees have trained in empowerment skills and given the necessary resources and management has put into place a comprehensive control systems that monitors employees actions and alerts management quickly of major problems (Robbins 2001). The result is that people take more initiative and preserve in achieving their goals and their leader's vision even in the face of obstacles.

1.1.2 Employee Empowerment Practices

The management perspective on empowerment has a long history and offers a set of tangible practices that can pull to improve performance (Speitzer, 1995). Organizations are implementing employee empowerment practices with the hopes of building employee's commitment, overcoming work dissatisfaction and reducing absenteeism, turnover, poor quality work, and sabotage and more giving employees great autonomy in their work. There are various empowerment practices that organizations can employ to empower employees. They include; training, participation, decision-making, delegating, provision of resources, communication and team working amongst many others. While management has the obligation to create the environment that fosters employee empowerment, employees have the duty to accept the opportunity and demonstrate they are willing and capable of being empowered. Employees need to be trained to acquire new skills which will be commensurate

with their tasks necessities as well as handle the additional decisions-making requirements In order for empowerment to flourish communication must be embraced. Beardwell et-al (2004) pointed out that communication is key to employee empowerment and must be embraced across the organization. The organizations views on strategy, vision, future direction of organization and the position of the organization relative to its customers and competitors should be shared through communication (Price 2007).

Spreitzer (1997) believes that empowerment is about delegating decision making within a set of clear boundaries. This means that managers should delegate responsibility and hold people accountable for results. To empower without adequate resources is only likely to lead to harmful levels of stress on the individuals. If there are inadequate resources the individuals will be in position of role conflict because they will not know how to allocate the scarce resources. It is the responsibility of management to provide necessary resources to employees to foster empowerment Employees can be empowered to make decisions, build relationships and take steps needed to improve quality within the system designed by management (Karunkonda,1999). Employee participative in goal setting leads to goal acceptances by employees while the supervisor plays important role by providing employees with interim performance feedback on the progress towards goal Empowerment makes greater use of the knowledge, skills and abilities of workforce and encourages team working. (Mullins, 2002).

1.1.3 The Concept of Employee Performance

Performance is degree of accomplishment of the tasks that make up an employee job. It reflects how well an employee is fulfilling the requirements of a job (Byars and Rue 2000). Armstrong (2006) defined performance in output terms as the achievement of quantified objectives and how these objectives are achieved. High performance results from appropriate

behavior especially discretionary and the effectiveness of skills and competencies. It is not just a matter of achieving targets but how well they are achieved. Performance in a given situation can be viewed as a resulting from the interrelationships among effort abilities and role perceptions. Therefore employee performance refers to the level at which the employees are performing. It is an ongoing activity with the ultimate goal of improving both individual and corporate performance. To attain an acceptable level of performance a minimum level of proficiency must exist in each of the performance components (Byars and Rue, 2000).

To manage and improve employee's performance, managers must explore the cause of action, plans and empower workers to find solutions and use performance focused communication (Cardy et al ,2010). Improving performance is only achievable where there are effective processes of continuous development. Further, employee performance is enhanced by among other factors as job satisfaction, commitment and capability to perform. Moreover quality of work life therefore facilitates improved performance. An organization system that continually aligns its strategy, goals, objectives and internal operations with the demand of its external environment usually maximizes its performance (Cardy et al, 2010). Many organizations have developed standards to manage employee performance and their emphasis is on improvement, learning and development in order to achieve their overall business strategy and to create a high performance workforce.

1.1.4 Regional Development Authorities

The Regional Development Authorities (RDAs) are under the Ministry of Regional Development Authorities (MORDA) which was established by the Presidential circular No.3/2003 to provide policy guidance, build capacities and provide oversight management, co-ordination and development support to Regional Development Authorities (RDAs). The

Ministry is critical to wealth creation in the Kenyan economy and contributes to Kenya's rural development through its six Regional Development Authorities namely: Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority (TARDA), Kerio Valley Development Authority (KVDA), Lake Basin Development Authority (LBDA), Ewaso Ng'iro North Development Authority (ENNDA), Ewaso Ng'iro South Development Authority (ENSDA) and Coast Development Authority (CDA). The RDAs are mandated to promote integrated development within their areas of jurisdiction through implementation of integrated programmes and projects such as provision of hydropower, flood control, water supply for irrigation, domestic and industrial use as well as environmental conservation.

1.2 Research problem

Recognition of the efficient use of the human resources for business success together with advances in social democracy has given rise to employee empowerment in enhancing employee performance. Recognizing that work force has changed and today's workers are far better educated and trained, knowledgeable about their jobs, complexity of many jobs, global competitiveness where organizations must move fast and the effect of dismantling organizations hierarchies, (Robbins,2001), there is greater desire on the part of employees to play an active role in decision and activities that affect them. It may be reasonable to conclude that the long-term trend will lean towards a greater degree of employee empowerment.

In pursuit of better performance, most Organizations are putting employee empowerment programs in place which are aimed at creating a link between business objectives and individual objectives. The major dilemma that many Organizations have is how far to empower employees since many fear losing a considerable degree of power to the employees.

Organizations are at different levels of employee empowerment with very few having achieved full empowerment. Japan is cited as a good example of employee empowerment practices with the most commonly emulated empowerment techniques having the quality circles, team work in giant corporations such as Hitachi, Nissan, Honda, Mitsubishi and Toyota (Robbins and Judge, 2002). Holden's study on employee involvement in banking sector in Britain and Sweden (1996) concluded that most empowerment mechanisms do not encourage participation by workforce on strategic issues. Most of the studies on empowerment show that there is a contradiction between what employees and management want from employee empowerment initiatives and what management are prepared to allow the workforce in terms of empowerment and control. Empowering workforce means allowing them to participate in decision-making, expressing confidence in their ability to perform at high levels, designing their jobs so they have greater freedom, setting meaningfully and challenging goals, applauding outstanding performance can encourage workforce to take personal responsibility for their work.

During the review of the Performance Contracting in Regional Development Authorities, issues reported amongst others were staff dissatisfaction, low employee productivity and complains by stakeholders (local communities). It was noted that decisions took long before they could be communicated to lower cadre due to bureaucratic control systems. Further it was revealed that goal setting was done by management and role of employees was implementation which in itself presented a major challenge since the set goals were generalized instead of being specific. (Ministry of Regional Development Authorities strategic plan 2008 – 2012). This presented poor employee performance which in essence is a management challenge in the Regional Development Authorities. During the review emphasizes was that if employee were empowered to adequately participate in decision-

making that affected their jobs they would be motivated and expected to adequately perform their jobs well. Hence the research question to what extent can employee empowerment practices can enhance employee performance in the six Regional development Authorities.

A concept of empowerment has previously been researched under different dimensions. Survey on the relationship between perceived empowerment and job satisfaction in commercial banks in Nairobi by Gumato, (2003) revealed that there was strong relationship between employee empowerment and job satisfaction. Tsala, (2008) conducted a research on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance at the city council of Nairobi and found out that there was relationship between employee empowerment and performance. Lwangasi, (2008) did a survey on the relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction on the employees in non-governmental sector in Kenya which showed that there was a significant relationship between the two variables. Oginda (2008) also conducted a study on the relationship between training and employees empowerment in Kengen and the findings were that there was strong relationship between training and empowerment. From the aforementioned studies there is clear indication that most studies were done in Commercial Banks, City Council of Nairobi. Non-Governmental Organizations, and Kengen and none of this study focus on Regional Development Authorities. This study will therefore seek to determine to what extent employee empowerment practices can enhance employee performance in six Regional Authorities.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objective of this study is to determine the relationships between employee empowerment practices and employee performance.

1.4 Value of the study

The findings of the study will directly benefit the regional development authorities since the management will initiate employee empowerment programs which will ultimately result in enhancing employee performance in terms of delivery of effective and efficiency services to the huge client in their areas of jurisdiction.

The recommendations given at the end of study will assist the parent Ministry in supporting the employee empowerment programs resulting in improved service delivery; high productivity in the Regional Development Authorities and Public Sector.

The general public will benefit through improved service delivery due to a better motivated regional development authorities workforce.

Other researchers who wish to conduct further research on the relationship between employee empowerment and employee performance in Public Service will benefit from findings of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of the related literature on the subject under the study presented by various researchers, scholars, analysts and authors. The specific areas covered here are employee empowerment, employee empowerment practices, employee performance and employee performance measurement.

2.2 Employee Empowerment

The concept of employee empowerment has been a topic of study since 1940s. However it is until 1990s when empowerment trend gained significant grounds (Robbins, 2002). Currently organizations are taking an interest in increasing the role of ordinary employee in decision making through empowerment as a means of obtaining greater employee motivation and commitment to organizations objective. Today employee empowerment is one of the primary causes of quality improvement in the work place (Robbins, 2002, Hodgetts and Hegan, 2008) Empowerment is a process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think, behave, take action, control work and decision-making in autonomous way (Cardy et al, 2010) Empowerment allows employees to work independently and become initiative and creative hence bringing in innovative culture in an organization. Carter (1995) stated that empowerment should focus on removing barriers that keep employees from exercising their talents fully This is because empowered employees are a source of new ideas and innovation which increase efficiency and productivity if time, training and resources are given for the process to evolve and employees are expected to develop feeling of self-efficiency, job satisfaction, security, confidence and job meaningfulness (Hammunda et al,1997). Nixon cited by Mullins (2002) suggested that by empowering staff right though the organization

structure, every employee will have the power to be innovative and ensure performance is good.

The benefits that can be derived from empowerment include employee commitment, quality products and services, efficiency, quick responsiveness and customer satisfaction (Lynn, 1994). Empowerment can't succeed unless the management provides the training and commits the resources for employees to do a good job. Successful empowerment programs must be balanced with appropriate monitoring and control systems. Empowering employees is not a easy process and management must create empowerment environment where employees can manage their jobs, be valued for their work ideas and be able to think for themselves. This allows employees to build self-confidence and develop trusting relationship with management making employees more creative problem solvers. In empowering environment employees need to be encouraged and praised as they struggle to produce outstanding creative solutions and new approaches and the managers must collaborate with employees.

A micromanaged environment will not allow empowerment as employees will need space to solve the work related problems their own way. Empowered employees get things done while focusing on solving and preventing problem (Hodgetts and Hegan, 2008). An empowering work environment provides people with information necessary for them to perform at their best. Such environment improves quality and service because high performance is inspired at the source and allows quick action because people on the spot see problems, solutions and opportunities for innovation on which they are empowered to act (Koontz et al, 2010).

Empowering employees enables all talent knowledge to be utilized and if there is meaningful participation by employees during a change programme, then those affected are more likely to own the results, (Mullins, 2002). An empowered employee is thus given more space to use his or her talents, thereby facilitating much more decision-making closer to the point of impact. Empowerment results in changes in employees beliefs from feeling powerless to believing strongly in their own personal effectiveness. The increasing interest in employee empowerment is due in part to the rise in global competitiveness, the need to respond quickly to the demands and expectations of the customers and or better educated work force that demands greater autonomy. Empowerment takes a variety of forms, however, the success of a particular initiative will be judged by the extent to which the empowered employees feel personally (Cameron, 1994).

2.3 Employee Empowerment Practices

Brown and Lawlers, (1995) and Caudron,(1995) identified the following as empowerment practices; sharing information about goals, training, helping management learn to empower others (coaching), empowering working teams gradually, and systematic, decision-making, providing access to job related knowledge and skills, granting discretion to change work process and provision of resources needed to make improvements. Effective management requires that empowerment be sincere, based on mutual trust, accompanied by relevant information for the employees to carry out their tasks. Employee empowerment practices are;

2.3.1 Training

Training is a systematic approach to improve employees skills and performance. It is intended to foster and enhance learning amongst employees and in particularly directed at acquiring job skills. Rapid changes in technology and globalization of business have spurred

the growth of training programs (Dubrim, 2009). In order to implement employee empowerment, the employees must be competent. People cannot be empowered if they are not competent at their job. They need to understand what they are doing, why and how it fits into the wider processes of the organization (Mullins 2002). It does not make sense to empower employees to make decision or implement or initiate action if they are not properly competent. Brown and Lawler (1995) cite the importance of training in which employees are familiarized with how their jobs fit into upstream and downstream activities. Dobbs (1993) said that that technical training, decision making skills, group process skills, all are required if empowerment is to be accepted and produce results.

Employee training is based on the belief that developing talents internally is a good investment. The best competitors who embrace empowerment use training and development practices to improve the ability of the workforce to implement their business strategy since improving competence of workforce is one way that creates a competitive advantage (Schuler and Werner, 2009). The major objective of empowering employees is to make greater use of their knowledge, skills and abilities of the workforce and this can only be achieved through training. Therefore, the process of empowerment entails developing the social skills necessary to carry out tasks. Training and development programs can boost employees confidence to act in more empowered way (Covey 1999).

2.3.2 Communication

In successful empowerment, communication is a major factor. The organizations views on strategy, vision, future direction of organization and position of the competitors should be shared. This will allow the employees to know what is going on in the organization and the role individuals and groups are expected to achieve (Mullins, 2002). Increasing formal

communication with employees reduces uncertainty by lessening role ambiguity and conflict. Organisations can use effective communication as a means to shape employees perceptions (Robbins, 1993). Many organizations are finding that effective communication is the key to their overall ability to compete. This is because the frequency with which changes occur makes it necessary to continually inform employees about what is going on and why. (Hodgetts and Hegan, 2008). Communication has been described as the glue that holds organization together and it is an integral part of all managerial functions and unless managers communicate with others, they cannot accomplish their tasks. Effective communication is leaders most potent tool for inspiring workers to take responsibility for creating a better future (implementing vision) (Dubrin, 2009).

Rodrigues (1994) argues that one of the human practices for winners is the belief that frequent, honest and open communication with employees is needed to reinforce the quality and culture change. Coleman (1996) said that supervisors are expected to motivate others by communicating a clear vision of what the organization needs to accomplish or change their goals. Empowering employees means that they need information sharing to know how their company is doing, and whether their efforts make any difference. Managers should take initiative and share sensitive information about the organization, like market share, growth opportunities and competitor's strategies Employees experience more empowerment in organizations where information and other resources is easily accessible (Meshena and Glinow,2008). According to Dwivedi (2009) employees offer a resistance in the course of carrying out their duties if they have no information. Good decision depends among other things on good information or data hence employees must have free access to organizational information which must be made readily available when required (Dobbs 1993). Apparently information has been identified as a source of power and without it employee's participation

and involvement became impractical and dangerous. Moreover, decision-makers must frequently have access to information that helps them make good decision (Malone,1997).

2.3.3 Team-working

The trend today is to empower employees to form self managed teams in which workers are trained to-do all or most of the jobs in the unit, they have no immediate supervisors, and they make decisions previously made by first line managers. Self managed teams appear to be more productive, have better safety records and are more satisfying to members (Snell, 2002). The key element of the effective teamwork is commitment to common purpose and employees (teams) work hard at developing a common understanding of how they will work together to achieve their purpose. The best teams are the ones that have been given an important performance challenge by management and often come to a common understanding and appreciation of their purpose. They discuss and agree upon such thing as how tasks and roles will be allocated and how they will make decisions. The team should develop norms for examining their performance strategies and be amendable to changing when appropriate. (Snell, 2002). Empowerment encourages team working in organizations so that employees can work closely together to pursue common objectives. A team cannot be effective without being supported by the organization basic structure. One of the most important benefits of a team based approaches is improved communication and coordination within the organization. People learn how other jobs are being done and how to coordinate efforts to work together better (Holden, 1998).

The essence behind forming and empowering working teams is for the teams to share common element of people who possess a mix of skills, working together cooperatively and each team member learning a broad range of skills and switching job assignment periodically.

To foster team work, management should not micromanage the teams and managers should show respect to the team (Dubrin, 2009). Results from companies using empowerment team concept show that dynamic results occur with committed and creative team work, employee became more confident and motivated to the team process, the better and strong company in the end results (Bellign and Myers, 1998).

Other employee empowerment practices include employee participation. Empowered employees must participative in decision making since participation creates a sense of belonging and achievement and raises self-esteem. The management is encouraged to remove bureaucratic handles coming in the way of employee participation and employees should be imparted with necessary training and coaching to enable them to participate more effectively (Dobbs, 1993). Empowering people means that allowing them to participate in decision making, expressing confidence in their ability to perform at high level, designing their jobs so they have greater freedom, setting meaningful and challenging goals, applauding outstanding performance and encouraging people to take personal responsibility of their work When employees participate in the organizations goal setting they feel more valuable especially when they see the results stemming from their actions (Calder and Douglas,1997). When management creates opportunities for employees to add value to the organization, through participation employees feel recognized and contribute adequately towards the achievement of set goal.

Delegation is employee empowerment practice which Organizations must practice. A major role of delegation is transfer of responsibility as a means of increasing one's own productivity (Dubrin, 2009). Delegation of authority is an empowerment tool that can help employees develop new skills and grow as professionals. The notion underlying empowerment is that

those closest to the tasks are best placed to make the decision provided that they have the required competencies. Empowerment means that employees, managers or teams at all levels in the organization are delegated power to make decisions without asking their supervisors for permission (Koontz et al, 2010). Top management of an organization decides an overall strategy but then delegates the decisions as to how that strategy will be to various operating divisions.

By empowering employees to make decisions and complete tasks and attain target independently without constantly having to refer back to management for permission to take certain actions encourages feeling of being in control and significantly contributing to an organizations development. The aim is to empower employees who actually have to deal with problems to implement solution quickly and without referrals to supervisors and or high levels of management (Dobbs, 1993). People are more energetic and creative if they have autonomy in both how they work and what they do. Ford and Foltler (1997) posit that genuine empowerment is likely to include decision making authority over not just job content but job context as well. Allowing people and groups to make decision regarding work processes can be highly beneficial to organization. Along giving authority to employees, to make decisions on how to accomplish their tasks they also must be held accountable for their results. By making individuals accountable for their actions, they became challenged to take responsibility for thinking, for implementing ideas, and investing themselves in the organization (Crosby et al, 1997). Employees assigned this new decision making authority are closer to the work process and are usually knowledgeable enough to be able to make appropriate decisions (Fournies,1998).

2.4 Employee Performance

Employee's performance is derived from the broader performance management of the firm. Performance management refers to a process that contributes to effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve higher levels of organizational performance (Foot and Hook 2008). According to Bernandin (2007) employee performance is the record of outcomes produced on specified job functions or activities during a specified time period. Cascio (2003) argues that performance ensures that an individual employee or teams know what is expected of them, and stay focused on effective performance. Organizational performance takes many forms which may include increased productivity, increased diversity in regard to workforce mix, retention of talent, increased satisfaction both for the employee and the customer, increased quality of service among many others (Wilkin, 2006).

Managers create decent work situations that achieve two purposes. They facilitate performance and stimulate employee to strive for high performance (Bateman and Zeithami, 1993). Managers facilitate performance by providing the things employees need to do their jobs such as adequate training, the necessary tools and equipment, adequate budget, enough authority and information to perform their jobs well. Improving performance is only achievable where there are effective processes of continuous development. People either as individuals or teams put the greater effort into performance if they know and understands what is expected of them and have had an involvement in specifying those expectations (Lussier, 2009)). Many factors can prevent an employee from performing at high levels and therefore it is the duty of the managers to ensure that employees perform at the highest level given the fact that managers are responsible for results.

Many organizations use Management by Objective (MBO) as a technique to establish individual performance objectives that are tangible, measurable and verifiable. Individual's objectives are derived or cascaded from organizational goals but restricted to their own areas of responsibility. Management by objectives encompasses four main stages as goal setting, action planning, self control and periodic reviews. Managers should avoid frustrations by setting objectives to employees which they have no capacity and resource to accomplish instead they should create a climate of motivation for individuals and team members to set goals that they believe they can attain. An employee who known exactly what is expected of them and when those targets must be accomplished spends less time wondering what to do and more doing the actions that lead to success. When an employee is not performing up to potential even when acceptable standards are being met, the first step is to determine why. When ability is holding back performance training is needed, when motivation is lacking, motivational techniques is necessary such as giving praises. When people in the organization understand how their work contributes to the success of the company, morale and productivity usually improve. (Bascal, 1999). It is important that members of the organization know exactly what is expected of them and the yard stick by which their performance and results will be measured (Byars and Irwin, 2000).

2.4.1 Task Performance.

The term task performance refers to core technical behaviors and activities involved in a job. It is the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organization's technical core either directly by implementing a part of its technological process, or indirectly by providing it with needed material or services (Borman and Motowildo, 1993). Task performance contributes directly to the technical core of the organization, either by transforming organizational inputs as a step toward creating the

organization's products or through servicing and maintenance functions including distributing finished products and providing important planning, supervising and other functions (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). When employees use technical skills and knowledge to produce goods or services through the organization's core technical processes, or when they accomplish specialized tasks that support these core functions, they are engaging in task performance. Task performance is the work activities that contribute to an organization's technical core where performance is evaluated relatively to the pre-established goals or objectives. Therefore task performance is more likely to be prescribed by the formal job role outcomes.

Selecting someone for task performance should involve assessment of a candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities and then matching them to the vacancy requirements. According to Susan et al (2009) when measuring the task performance, organization can use three types of performance criteria namely personal traits, behaviors, and objective results. In organization where there is team structure task performance is considered at two levels ie individual contribution to team performance and performance of the team as a unit (Luis and David, 2010). Task performance consists of job-specific behaviors including core job responsibilities, for which the primary antecedents are likely to be ability and experience.

2.4.2 Contextual Performance

Contextual performance refers to behaviors that support the environment in which the technical core operates. Contextual performance further refers to activities that are not task or goal specific but that make individuals, teams and organizations more effective and successful. These behaviors are important for achieving organizational outcomes and particularly for supporting long-term success (Allen and Rush, 1998). Contextual

performances are activities that contribute to the social and psychological core of the organization. Examples of contextual performance include volunteering for additional work, endorsing, defending and supporting organizational objectives as well as following organizational rules and procedures even when personally inconvenient, assisting and cooperating with co-workers, spending more time and effort to fulfil your responsibilities better. It is actually a form of a voluntarily behaviour which is beyond the content of job description.(Borman and Motowidlo,1993).

Contextual performance shows employees' tendency to participate and interact with other members of the organization. According to Van Scatter & Motowidlo's (1993) model of measuring performance, contextual performance consists of two different behaviors which include: behaviors facilitating interpersonal relationships and behaviors related to job dedication. Behaviors facilitating interpersonal relationships show collaboration and helpful behaviors that facilitate colleagues' performance while Job dedication shows effort, innovation, perseverance, and individual discipline Contextual performance entails all those behaviors we perform on the job that we aren't necessarily paid to do, but they help us, our co-workers and our organization.

Motowidlo,et al (1997) suggested that contextual performance benefits organizations in several ways since contextual performance behaviors are expected to increase the effectiveness of individual workers and managers. Innovative and voluntary behaviors enhance an organization's ability to solve unanticipated problems and adapt to change .In the aggregate, these behaviors are expected to improve organizational efficiency by freeing up resources that would otherwise be needed to handle disciplinary problems, solve

communication difficulties, resolve conflicting demands, or provide closer monitoring of employee performance.

2.5 Measuring Employee Performance

Performance criteria are the dimensions against which the performance of an incumbent, a team, or a work unit is evaluated. They are performance expectations that individuals and teams strive for in order to achieve the organization strategy (Werner et al, 2009). The key performance indicators for employees are derived from the broader organizational performance dimensions. According to Bernardin (2007) employee performance is the record of outcomes produced on specified job functions or activities during a specific time period hence the need to measure employee performance based on the job characteristics or activities. In order for performance measure to be more effective, performance must be clearly defined and understood by the employees who are expected to perform well at work (Iselin et al, 2011). A valid performance measure accurately reflects all aspects of job and should provide evidence of whether or not the intended result has been achieved and the extent to which the job holder has produced the results. Regardless of how performance is measured, managers are expected to review performance results with their employees because for performance measure to be helpful and meaningful to organization employee must act on them and managers must ensure employees accept the feedback they receive and use it as basis for improving productivity in future (Werner.et al, 2009). The following are the employee performance measurement;

2.5.1 Individual Measurement

This is also known as the self-evaluation and it is the most widespread rating method where employees are asked to evaluate their own performance (Robbins, 1993). Employees are

given authority to assess their own performance as the basis for discussion and action. Self-measure increases employees satisfaction with appraising process and is effective tool for self development, personal growth and goal commitment. However self measurement often is more lenient and less accurate than what is obtained from the supervisor and other sources. This type of measurement reveals blind spots to employers thus areas of poor performance that the employee is unaware. Providing extensive performance feedback, building a culture of trust, and including some objective performance data are ways to increase accuracy and reduce leniency in self appraisal (Werner.et al, 2009).

2.5.2 Peer Measurement

Peer Measurement is a performance appraisal system in which workers at the same level in organization rate one another ((Cardy et al, 2010). Peer evaluation is one of the most reliable sources of employee performance measurement. This is because peers are close to the actions and daily interactions provide them with a comprehensive view of an employee job performance. Using peers as rater's results in a number of independent judgments since there is tendency for co-workers to offer more constructive insight to each other so that as a unit they can improve and their recommendation tend to be more specific regarding job analysis. A boss can offer a single evaluation but peers can provide multiple appraisals and an average of several ratings is often more reliable than single evaluation. Peers measurement can suffer from co-workers unwillingness to evaluate one another and from friendship based biases (Robbins, 1993)). This can be addressed first through anonymous rating and secondly to reduce biasness it is important for managers to specify exactly what the peers should evaluate Anonymous peer appraisal in teams increases interpersonal effectiveness, group cohesion, communication openness and group satisfaction. Peer rating may be in accurate if peers have limited interactions with the employee being reviewed (Werner.et al, 2009).Research has

shows that appraisal by peers is useful predictors of successful training and future performance and in team based organizations peer involvement in performance management is growing.

2.6 Employee Empowerment Practices and Employee Performance

Employee empowerment programs have been widely adopted in many organizations as a way of improving organizations performance. Empowering employees improve performance largely by finding innovative ways of correcting errors in service delivery and redesigning work processes. Bowen and Lawler, (1992) argues that an important casual pathway by which employees empowerment influences performance is through innovative behavior on the part of frontline employees, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) says that empowered employees improve performance by recovering quickly from errors in the service delivery, learning from those recoveries, generating and redesigning processes and products. Empowerment practices aimed at providing employees with access to job related knowledge and skills and granting them discretion to change work processes increase encouragement to performance.

Conger and Kenungo (1988), beliefs that as employees become more empowered, their self efficacy expectations will be enhanced, thereby increasing the amount of effort and time they dedicate to performing a task. First empowered employees have a higher expectancy in their ability to perform a task successful; they exert greater effort and persist in those efforts when faced with adversity. Secondly a sense of autonomy at work, along with feeling of having control over the outcome, also increases effort and in addition to exerting greater effort or working harder, empowered employees also seem to perform better by working smarter by seeking out new and better ways of doing things. Empowerment might be understood as a

process involving a set of management practices (sharing authority, resources, information and reward) that affect employee cognition (self-efficacy, motivation, job satisfaction) which in turn influence performance (effort, productivity) (Bowen and Lawler, 1992).

Performance management is linked to employee empowerment into two ways. First through goal setting initiative thus the more employees understand their job, and how their job contributes to overall performance the better they would be able to make decisions. Secondly empowerment implies accountability along with the freedom to make decisions. The performance management process helps to create accountability for the results and outcomes of decisions the employee makes through ongoing communication and performance review. A product of the Clinton Administration, the National Performance Review (NPR) identified employee empowerment as one of the keys to making government more efficient and effective. Frontline employees were argued to be the source of many innovative solutions to problems facing public organizations since they are closest to problems and more knowledgeable about how to solve them. Reformers realized that improved performance can come from empowering frontline employees to exercise their judgment, giving them training and resources needed to get the job done and holding them accountable for results (Gore, 1993). Therefore empowerment supports performance on account that people are given more responsibility for how they do their own job hence increasing efficiency and greater use of each individual's contributions (Dulata and Manzoni, 1999). Hence costs are reduced since fewer people are needed to supervise, monitor and coordinate organization operations

As organizations strive to be more competitive in today's challenging business environment, more of them are taking a radical look at the underlying business processes and systems which make them successful. With the right individuals, job characteristics and

organizational environment, empowerment can have a noticeable effect on motivation and performance. For example a study of bank employees concluded that empowerment improved customer service and tended to reduce conflict between subordinate and their supervisory as empowerment tends to increase personal initiative because employees identify with and assume more psychological ownership of the work. Improved performance is judged on the opportunities empowerment provides for the workers to work more effectively. Individuals are developed so that they can take a broader and more proactive orientation towards their job, be more willing to suggest new ways of doing things and to engage in meaningful team working (Mary and Robbins, 2002).

CHAPTER THREE:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design of the study, data collection and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

This was a descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey typically seeks to ascertain respondent's perspectives or experiences on a specified subject. Since the study was to seek to what extent employee empowerment practices enhances employee performance in the six regional development authorities a descriptive survey was the best research design to fulfill the objectives of the study.

3.3 Population

The target population consisted of all employees of six regional development authorities whose total population was one thousand seven hundred and thirty two (1732). The total number of staff from each regional authority was obtained from the human resources office. According to Kothari (2000) a representative sample is one which is atleast 10% of the population. The research used 10% of the sample as summarized below in the table.

Table 3.1: population

Regional Authority	Population	Sample 10%
TARDA	364	36
ENNDA	180	18
ENSDA	152	15
KVDA	595	60
CDA	136	13
LBDA	305	31
Total	1732	173

3.4 Sample design

A stratified random method was used. Stratified sampling technique is generally applied in order to obtain representative sample since the population was from six regional areas A random sample of all employees was drawn from each Regional Authority and the respondents was randomly selected Therefore the total number of respondents was one hundred and seventy three (173) employees. To ensure all levels of staff are in the study a twenty five percent (25%) of sample represented management and the rest support staff.

3.5 Data Collection

The study used the primary data collection method through a structured questionnaire administered on a “drop and pick basis”. The questionnaire used both open ended and closed ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, part one focused on demographic data part two was on employee empowerment practices data and part three was on the employee performance.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as the mean, frequencies, and percentages. Pearson product moment correlation technique was used to establish the strength and significance of the relationship between empowerment and performance. The analyst data was presented in tables, graphs, bar charts and pie charts wherever each is appropriate.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and findings of the research in line with the research objectives. The objective of the study was to determine the relationship between the employee empowerment practices and employee performance in regional development authorities.

Table 4.1 distribution of sample size and actual number of questionnaire returned. The purpose was to establish actual number of questionnaire returned from each regional development authorities.

Name of Authority	Sample size	Actual No. of questionnaire returned
TARDA	36	36
ENND	18	15
ENSDA	15	11
KVDA	60	56
CDA	13	11
LBDA	31	27
TOTAL	173	156

Out of 173 sampled respondents only 156 completed the questionnaire presenting 90.2% response rate which the research considers adequate and sufficient for purposes of data analysis and is in line with the sample size selected.

4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile considered in this research include gender, department, terms of service and the highest level of education to establish whether this will have an impact on performance .The findings are presented here below

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their gender .The purpose was to establish gender distribution in regional development authorities.

Table 4.2 distribution of respondents by gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	91	58.3
Female	65	41.7
Total	156	100

In the Table 4.2 58.3% and 41.7% of respondents were male and female respectively. This result may indicate that female are less than their male counterparts in employment but the difference is not significant.

4.2.2 Department

The respondents were asked to indicate the department they worked under. The purpose was to establish the number of employees and number of departments so that the results of study can be generalised as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 distribution of respondents by department

	Frequency	Percentage
Administration	27	17.3
Audit	4	2.6
Business Development	19	12.1
Finance	21	13.5
Human Resource	33	21.1
Monitoring and Evaluation	1	0.6
Public Relations	9	5.8
Technical Services	42	26.9
Total	156	99.9

From analysis Table 4.3 all departments were presented in the following proportionate Technical services at 26.9% .Human resources 21.1%, Administration 17.3%,Business development 12.1%, Finance 13.5%,Public relations 5.8%, audit at 2.6% and Monitoring and evaluation 0.6%. The respondents were from all departments. The analysis shows that majority of employees are from technical services department and this can be generalised for organisation as whole.

4.2.3 Terms of Service

The respondents were asked to indicate their terms of service/employment. The purpose was to ascertain whether it was easier to implement employee empowerment practices as well as rate employee performance.

Table 4.4 distribution of respondents in terms of service

	Frequency	Percentage
Permanent and Pensionable	132	84.6
Permanent without Pension	3	1.9
Probationary	6	3.8
Contract	11	7.8
Temporary/Casual	4	2.6

From the analysis in Table 4.4, 84.6% of respondents were permanent and pensionable while the rest of respondents were 1.9% permanent without pension, 3.8% probationary, 7.8% on contract and 2.6% temporary/Casual. This implies that majority of employees in the regional development authorities are permanent and pensionable. It is easier for employees to benefit from employee empowerment programs and employee performance among the permanent and pensionable employees.

4.2.4 Education Level

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of education. The purpose was first to establish the calibre of employees in regional development authorities. Secondly to find out whether it was possible to initiate employee empowerment programs since highly educated employees can easily understand empowerment programs as well as employee performance.

Table 4.5 distribution of respondents by education level

	Frequency	Percentage
Primary level	1	1
Secondary level	23	15
Diploma level	58	37
First degree	53	34
Post graduate	21	13

Majority of respondents are well educated with those holding qualification from diploma being 37%.and first degree 34%. This proportionate taken together with those who have post graduate qualification account for 84%. This implies that the regional development employees are well educated with diploma and above. Only 16% of respondents have secondary and primary level education. This is a pointer that majority of the employees had diploma and above can understand empowerment practices programs.

4.3Employee Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the statements as was listed in the questionnaire. The statements represented the employee empowerment practices. The findings are presented using a mean scale of 1-5.For purposes of interpretation a mean of $1.5 \leq 2.4$ implies disagree, $2.5 \leq 3.4$ implies neutral, $3.5 \leq 4.4$ implies agree, ≥ 4.5 implies strongly agree. A standard deviation of ≥ 1 is taken to mean no consensus on employee respondents.

4.3.1 Role of Training in Employee Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to indicate whether training enhanced their performance and that organization constantly trained employees to develop and enhance skills. The purpose was to establish the role of training in employee empowerment practice.

Table 4.6 Role of training in employees empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of training in employee empowerment practices		
Training enhances my performance and enables me to meet my set targets	4.25	1.099
Employees of your organisation are constantly trained to develop and enhance their knowledge and skills.	3.20	1.393

From the analysis in Table 4.6 respondents agreed that training enhanced their ability to perform their tasks with a mean score of 4.25 whereas they were neutral on whether organisations constantly train employees to develop and enhance their knowledge and skills with a mean of 3.20. The analysis demonstrates that employees in regional development authorities accepted training as empowerment practice enhanced their ability to perform their tasks. However they were in doubt on constant organizational training as empowerment practice to develop and enhance employees knowledge and skills. No consensus on role of training in employee empowerment practices as shown in the table where standard deviation is more than one.

4.3.2 Role of Communication in Employee Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to indicate whether managers encouraged regular communication with employees and whether necessary information was availed to employees. The purpose was to establish the role of communication in employees empowerment practices.

Table 4.7 Role of communication in employee’s empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of communication in employee empowerment practices		
Managers encourage regular communication with their employees so that employees are aware of what is taking place in the organisation.	3.46	1.215
Necessary information is readily availed to all concerned employees in good time to enable them make thoughtful decision.	3.30	1.252

From the analysis in Table 4.7 respondents were neutral when they were asked to indicate whether managers encouraged regular communication with their employees with a mean score of 3.46. On to whether there was availability of necessary information for employees to make thoughtful decision the respondents were neutral with a mean score of 3.30. From the analysis the employees of regional development authorities were not sure communication as empowerment practice was being used by manager’s to ensure there was regular communication with employees. Further employees were not confident on the availability of necessary information to employees to enable them make thoughtful decisions in regional development authorities. However there no consensus on the role of communication in

employee empowerment practices as shown in the in the table above where standard deviation is more than one.

4.3.3 Role of Team-Working in Employee Empowerment Practices.

The respondents were asked to indicate whether management encouraged team building, high degree of trust amongst employees whether it was easier to accomplish tasks individually or as a team and that employees contributed work related ideas through teams. The purpose was to establish the role of team working in employee empowerment practices.

Table 4.8 Role of team working in employee’s empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of team-working in employee empowerment practices		
The management encourages team building (working teams).	3.47	1.302
High degree of trust is highly encouraged and maintained between managers and employees and amongst employees.	3.29	1.350
It is easier to accomplishing assignment and achieves set targets through teamwork rather than working individually.	4.11	1.173
Employees are encouraged to contribute work related ideas through formal suggestions programs or quality cycles.	3.40	1.248
Team working increases ownership in decision making and enables employees fully participate in work progress.	4.01	1.52

A table 4.8 show that the respondents agreed that it was easier to accomplish assignments through team rather than working individually with a mean of 4.11. In addition, they also agreed team working increased ownership in decision making and enabled employees to

participate fully in work progress with a mean score of 4.01. Respondents were neutral when they were asked to indicate whether management encouraged team building with a mean score of 3.47. On whether high degree of trust was encouraged and maintained between managers and employees and amongst employees respondents were neutral with a mean score of 3.29. As to whether employees are encouraged to contribute work related ideas through formal suggestion programs respondents were neutral with mean score of 3.40. From the analysis employees in regional development authorities concord that team building as an empowerment practice made it easier for them to accomplish assignments through team work and in addition, employees accepted that team work improved ownership in decision making and enabled employees to participate fully in work progress. However employees were not convinced on to whether management encouraged team building as an empowerment practice. Moreover employees were not sure trust was encouraged and maintained between managers and amongst employees in regional development authorities. It should be noted that there was no consensus on the role of team building as an employee empowerment practices where standard deviation was more than one.

4.3.4 Role of Participation in Employee Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to indicate whether employees are allowed to participate in goal setting and decision making, encouraged to develop creativity and innovativeness ideas. The purpose to establish the role of employee participation in employee empowerment practices.

Table 4.9 Role of participation in employees empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of participation in employee empowerment practices		
Employees are allowed to participate in organisational goal setting	3.36	1.353
Employee are allowed to participate in decision making process	3.07	1.387
Management encourages employees to develop creativity and innovative ideas.	3.38	1.317

Table 4.9 indicates that respondents were neutral when they were asked to indicate whether employees were allowed to participate in organisational goal setting with a mean score of 3.36. On to whether management encouraged employees to develop creativity and innovative ideas respondents were not sure with a mean score of 3.38 while on whether employees are allowed to participate in decision making process respondents were neutral with a mean score of 3.07. From the above analysis employees were not certain that employee participation as an empowerment practice was encouraged in regional development authorities. Further employees were in doubt that management allowed employees to participate in organisational goal setting, participate in decision making as well as being encouraged to be creative and innovative. It should be noted there was no consensus on the role of employee participation as an employee empowerment practice as shown by the standard deviation was more than one.

4.3.5 Role of Delegation in Employee Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to indicate whether supervisors delegated authority and whether there was autonomy in decision making. The purpose was to establish the role of delegation in employee empowerment practices.

Table 4.10 Role of delegation in employees empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of delegation in employee empowerment practices		
My supervisors delegates authority to me.	3.69	1.212
There is extensive delegation individual responsibility and autonomy in making decisions.	3.11	1.361

The analysis in Table 4.10 shows that respondents were in agreement that there was delegation of authority by supervisors with a mean score of 3.69 while respondents were not sure whether there was extensive delegation, individual responsibility and autonomy in decision making with a mean score of 3.11. From the analysis employees agreed that delegation as an empowerment practice was being used in regional development authorities, however they were not sure of autonomy and individual responsibility in decision making. No consensus on the role of delegation as an empowerment practices where standard deviation was more than one.

4.3.6 Role of Decision Making in Employee Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to point out whether employees have autonomy on their work, employees accountability, employees encouraged to take action to improve service quality, and whether employees are motivated by autonomy in decision making and being assigned challenging work. The purpose was to establish the role of decision making in employee empowerment practices.

Table 4.11 Role of decision making in employees empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of decision making in employee empowerment practices		
Employees have autonomy on their areas of responsibility.	3.33	1.387
Am in control of those aspects of my job for which i am accountable.	3.62	1.252
Employees are encouraged take quick action to improve service quality or correct quality problems in their jobs.	3.44	1.271
Employees are motivated by autonomy in decision-making and being assigned challenging work.	3.22	1.311

Results from Table 4.11 indicate that the respondents agreed they were accountable of their work with a mean score of 3.62 whereas respondents were neutral on whether employees are encouraged take quick action to improve service quality or correct job related problems with a mean score of 3.44. On to whether employees have autonomy on their areas of responsibility, respondents were neutral with a mean score of 3.33 while they were not sure whether employees are motivated by autonomy in decision making and being assigned challenging work with a mean score of 3.22. From analysis employees in regional development authorities pointed out that they were accountable of their work, however they were not sure to what extent they were allowed to make decision to improve quality service or correct work related problems as well as being assigned challenging tasks. There was no consensus on the role of decision making in employee empowerment practices where standard deviation was more than one.

4.3.7 Role of Resources in Employees Empowerment Practices

The respondents were asked to point out whether adequate resources are provided to employees to undertake their duties. The purpose was to establish the role of resources in employee empowerment practices.

Table 4.12 Role of resources in employees empowerment practices

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of resources in employees empowerment practices		
Adequate resources (financial, information, tools, and equipment) are provided whenever they are required in undertaking their duties.	3.27	1.292

From Table 4.12 respondents were neutral on whether there was provision of adequate resources to employees by management whenever such resources are required with a mean score of 3.27. From the analysis employees in regional development authorities were in doubt on whether employee were provided with adequate resources to enable them undertake their duties. It should be noted that there was no consensus on provision of resources by management where standard deviation was more than one.

4.4 Employee Performance.

The respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the statements as was listed in the questionnaire. The statements represented the employee performance. The findings are presented using a mean scale of 1-5. For purposes of interpretation a mean of $1.5 \leq 2.4$ implies disagree, $2.5 \leq 3.4$ implies neutral, $3.5 \leq 4.4$ implies agree, ≥ 4.5 implies

strongly agree. A standard deviation of ≥ 1 is taken to mean no consensus on employees respondents.

4.4.1 Task Performance

The respondents were asked to indicate on the following in the table below. The purpose was to find out the role of task performance in employee performance.

Table 4.13 Role of task performance

	Mean	Std.deviation
Role of task performance in employee performance		
My company allows me to participate in evaluating my performance (Self evaluation).	3.62	1.403
I always meet my set work targets.	4.40	.817
I participate in rating other employees (peer rating).	3.30	1.496
Performance Appraisal system is in place to measure both individual and team performance.	4.04	1.141
I use my technical skills and knowledge to accomplish my tasks.	4.60	.777
I have necessary ability and experience on my job	4.56	.729
My performance is evaluated relatively to the pre-established goals and objectives.	4.17	1.071
Team performance is usually rated by taking into account individual contribution to the team performance and performance of the team as a unit.	3.83	1.191

Table 4.13 indicates that respondents strongly agreed that their skills and knowledge assisted them accomplish assignments with a mean score of 4.60. On whether respondents possessed

necessary ability and experience on their job, respondents were strongly in agreement with a mean score of 4.56. Further respondents were in agreement on whether they met their set work targets with a mean score of 4.40. Respondents agreed that employee performance is evaluated relatively to the pre-established goals and objectives with a mean score of 4.17. On whether performance appraisal system is in place to measure both individual and team performance respondents were in agreement with a mean score of 4.04. Respondents agreed that team performance is usually rated by taking into account individual and team contribution with a mean score of 3.83 and in addition respondents agreed that management allowed them to participate in self evaluation with a mean score of 3.62 but respondents were not sure whether they participation in rating other employees with a mean score of 3.30.

From analysis it can be concluded that employees in regional development authorities possessed skills and knowledge which assisted them to accomplish their assignments in addition to being given necessary ability and experience on their jobs. Further employees in regional development authorities agreed that performance is evaluated against establish goals and objectives and acknowledged that they met their set work targets. Employees also confirmed that performance appraisal was in place to measure both individual and team performance in addition to rating team performance upon consideration of individual and team contribution. Employees confirmed that they participated in self-evaluation, however they were in doubt on peer rating. It should be noted that there was consensus on the role of task performance as an employee performance as shown in the table above where standard deviation is less than one. However where standard deviation is more than one there was no consensus.

4.4.2 Contextual Performance

The respondents were asked to indicate the following in the table below. The purpose was to find out the role of contextual performance in employees performance.

Table 4.14 Role of contextual performance

	Mean	Std.Deviation
Role of contextual performance in employee performance		
I am always punctual in my duty.	4.49	.831
Sometimes i assist other employees who are experiencing difficulty with their assignment.	4.32	.923
I volunteer to take up other tasks rather than assigned work.	4.06	1.179
I always cooperate with co-workers to perform various tasks.	4.49	.799
I strictly follow organizational rules and procedures	4.46	.822
I maintain good working relationship with my fellow employees.	4.66	.677
I usually put extra effort to accomplish an assignment on time.	4.59	.726
I always support and defend my organizational objectives.	4.46	.860

Results from Table 4.14 indicates that respondents strongly agreed to have good working relationship with fellow employees at mean score of 4.66. On whether employees put extra effort to accomplish their tasks respondents were strongly agreed with a mean of 4.59. Respondents agreed that they were punctual on their duty with a mean of 4.49;also respondents agreed that they cooperated with co-workers with a mean score of 4.49. On whether respondents followed organisational rules and procedures the respondents were in agreement with mean score of 4.46 and on whether employees assisted other employees who may be experiencing difficulties with their assignments, respondents were in agreement with

a mean score of 4.32. Employees further agreed that they volunteered to take up other assignments rather than assigned work with a mean of 4.06.

It can be concluded that employees in regional development authorities had good working relationship with their fellow employees. Further employee put extra effort to accomplish their assignments within required time frame beside being punctual on their duty, in addition to cooperating with their co-workers to perform various tasks, as well as abiding to organisational rules and objectives. Employees were also in agreement that they supported and defend organisational objectives and sometimes volunteered to take up other assignments other than the assigned tasks as well as assisting other employees who are experiencing difficulties on their assignments. It noted that there was consensus on contextual performance where standard deviation is less than one. However where standard deviation is more than one there was no consensus.

4.5 The Relationship between Employee Empowerment Practices and Employee Performance

4.5.1 Pearson correlations statistics

The study used Pearson product moment correlation technique to establish the relationship between employee empowerment practices and employee performance. A regression analysis on employee performance (dependent variable) versus employee empowerment practices (independent variable) was performed. The analysis is as here under:

Table 4.15 Model summary (predictors-constant EEP)

Model	R	R.square	Adjusted R.square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
1	.587	.345	.340	.47606	.345	80.509

Table 4.16 Coefficients (Dependent variable EP)

Mode 1	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std.error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 Constant	2.859	.160		17.906	.000	2.544	3.174
EP	.401	.045	.587	8.973	.000	.313	.490

The beta is at .587 while $Y=2.859+0.401X$. The findings of the study shows significant positive relationship between the two variable. For every unit change in employee empowerment practice there is significant change on employee performance by 0.401 (Table 4.16). The study found out that atleast 34% of employee performance change can be attributed to employee empowerment practices (Table 4.15). Therefore employee empowerment practice has a significant role to play in the regional development authorities and should be encouraged.

4.6 Discussion

The findings of the study are in line with literature review that at the moment organizations are taking an interest in increasing the role of ordinary employee in decision making through

empowerment as a means of obtaining greater employee motivation and commitment to organizational objective. Cardy et al (2010) believed that empowered employees are authorized to individually take action, control work and make decision in autonomous way. Carter (1995) stated that empowerment should focus on removing barriers that keep employees from exercising their talents fully. This is because empowered employees are a source of new ideas and innovation which increase efficiency and productivity if time, training and resources are given for the process to evolve. As Nixon cited by Mullins (2002) argued that by empowering staff right through the organisation structure every employee will have the power to be innovative and ensure performance is good. A micromanaged environment will not allow empowerment as employees will need space to solve the work related problems their own.

An empowering work environment provides employees with information necessary for them to perform at their best, knowledge about how to use the information and how to do their work, power to make decision that give them control over their work and the rewards they do deserve for the contribution they make. This is in line with Dobbs (1993) who found that good decision depends among other things on good information hence employees must have free access to organisational information which must be readily available when required. Mullins (2002) argued that organisational position to its competitors should be shared with employees. This will allow the employees to know what is going on in organisation and the role individual and groups are expected to achieve.

Employee empowerment programs are meant to make employee more productive and accountable in terms of service delivery. Crosby et al (1997) argued that along giving authority to employees to make decisions they must be held accountable for their results. By

making individual accountable for their actions, they became challenged to take responsibility for thinking, implementing ideas and investing themselves in the organisation. From the study employees agreed that they were accountable of their decisions.

The study established that by empowering employees to make decisions and complete tasks and attain target independently without constantly having to refer back to management for permission to take certain actions encourages feeling of being in control and significantly contributing to an organizations development and objective. Mullins (2002) said that in order to implement employee empowerment programs employees must be competent at their job as it does not make sense to empower employees to make decision or implement or initiate action if they are not properly competent. As Schuler and Werner (2009) found the best competitors who embrace empowerment use training and development practice to improve the ability of workforce to implement their business strategy since improving competence of workforce is one way that creates a competitive advantage. Covey (1999) found that training and development programs can boost employees confidence to act in more empowered way. The study found that empowerment can't succeed unless the management provides the training and commits the resources for employees to do a good job.

The study found that empowering employees is not easy process and management must create environment where employees can manage their jobs, be valued for their work ideas and be able to think for themselves. The major dilemma that many organisations have is how far to empower employees since those who are in management fear losing a considerable degree of power to the employees. However as Robbins (2001) found empowerment is likely to improve productivity only when employees are willing to accept increased responsibilities.

On employee performance the study found that management must facilitate performance and stimulate employee to strive for high performance if organisations are to remain relevant and competitive globally. Management must facilitate performance by providing the things employees need to do their jobs such as adequate training, the necessary tools and equipment, adequate budget, enough authority and information to perform their jobs well. As Bascal (1999) found out when people in the organisation understand how their work contributes to the success of the company, morale and productivity usually improve. Byars and Irwin (2000) pointed out that it was important that members of the organisation know exactly what is expected of them and the yardstick by which their performance and results will be measured Improving performance is only achievable where there are effective processes of continuous development.

The findings of the study indicate that there was moderate support of the employee empowerment practices by employee. However from the study employees were in agreement that there was adequate delegation of authority by supervisors and in addition employees agreed that there was good working relationship amongst the employees and that most of the work targets were achieved through team work. Dubrins (2009) suggested that to foster team work, management should not micromanage teams instead managers should show respect to the team.

The finding of the study revealed that there was relationship between employee empowerment practice and employee performance for every unit change in employee empowerment practice there was significant change on employee performance This is in line with what Tsala (2008) found when she conducted a research on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance at the city council of Nairobi and found out that

there was relationship between employee empowerment and performance. The study found that employee performance was practised in regional development authorities while employee empowerment practices posed challenge to management. It is important that regional development authorities embraced employee empowerment practices as strategy to improve employee productivity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings of the study as well as conclusion gathered from the analysis of the data. The conclusion and the recommendations are guided by the objectives of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The objective of the study was to determine the relationship between employee empowerment practices and employee performance in regional development authorities. On the demographic profile of the respondents, the study found that female are less than their counterparts in employment but the difference is not significant. All departments were represented and majority of employees were found to be from technical services department and this can be generalized for organizations as a whole. Majority of employee are permanent and pensionable. On the education level majority of employees had diploma and above and could easily understand concepts of empowerment practices and were the right people for the study and only minority of employees had secondary education and below.

On employee empowerment practices, the study found that training enhanced employees ability to perform their tasks in regional development authorities. On team working employees pointed out that it was easier to accomplish assignment through teams rather than individually and that team working improved ownership in decision making. Further employees in regional development authorities were in agreement that there was delegation of authority and that employees were accountable of their work

Employees in regional development authorities doubted whether there was constant organizational training for employees to develop and enhance their knowledge and skills. On communication employees doubted whether managers encouraged regular communication with employees as well as availing necessary information for employees to make thoughtful decision. On employee's participation, employees were not sure whether management allowed employees to participate in organizational goal setting, participate in decision making as well as being encouraged to be creative and innovative. On decision making employees were not sure to what extent they had sovereignty to make decision to improve quality services or correct work related problems without referring to management.

On employee task performance, employees in regional development authorities were in agreement that skills and knowledge assisted them to accomplish their assignments, job experience was necessary, performance was evaluated against established goals and objectives, employees met their set targets, performance appraisal was used to measure both individual and team work, team performance was rated upon consideration of individual and team contribution and that employees participated in self evaluation. However employees were neutral on peer rating .On employee contextual performance employees agreed to have good working relationship in addition to putting extra effort to accomplish their assignments. Employees also agreed that they are punctual, adhered to organizational rules and objectives, and supported and defend organizational objectives as well as sometimes volunteering to take up other assignments rather than assigned tasks beside assisting other employees who may be experiencing difficulties with their assignment. On the relationship between employee empowerment practices and employee performance the study found that there was moderate relationship between the two

variables with a correlation of .587. It should be noted that employees were not always in consensus of the extent in which employee empowerment practices were being used.

5.3 Conclusion

From the findings and discussion, employee empowerment practices were found moderately embraced while employee performance practice was being used in regional development authorities. However it should be noted that employees empowerment practices to some extent determine employee performance. All the six regional development authorities had some employee empowerment practices in place. Employees were in agreement with certain employee empowerment practices which were found to be strong while others were moderate. The study established that employee empowerment can be used to articulate employee performance to improve tremendously. In essence it can be concluded that empowering employees results into beliefs of feeling powerless to believing strongly in personal effectiveness. The result is that people take more initiative and persevere in achieving their goals even in the face of obstacles.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that employee empowerment practices should be supported by management in the regional development authorities as this will enable employees to adequately perform their tasks. The management has obligation to create environment that fosters employee empowerment. There is no doubt that performance improvement is only achievable where there is effective process of continuous development. In today's global competitiveness there is a grater desire on the part of employees to play an active role in organization activities and as such every effort should be made to accommodate employees views.

The study further recommends that to improve employee performance in the regional development authorities there is needs to incorporate employee empowerment practices. Employee empowerment programs must be fully supported by both top and middle level management. Therefore management must focus on removing barriers that keep employees from exercising their talents fully and this can only be achieved by embracing on empowerment programs which will give employees autonomy in their work.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

There was a time and financial constraint in carrying out the research. The six regional development authorities operate in different areas of jurisdiction and as such to collect data was not easy. The mode of data collection was through drop and collect basis which was not only expensive but which also took long period. Most of the respondents were reluctant to participate in research and had to be really convinced by the human resource department to understand the essence of filling the questionnaire. Some of the respondents kept the questionnaire for too long and others failed to return at all while some could not fully fill the questionnaire thus delaying data analysis.

5.6 Suggestion for Future Research

Future studies should obtain a large sample to determine whether the results can be generalized as this case only used a sample of 173 respondents. On attributes of employee empowerment practices only 34% was covered meaning there is 66% uncovered and therefore there is need for further research on this topic. Further research might be necessary to study employee empowerment practices and employee performance to find out whether there are other factors that influence and enhance employee performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 (Letter of introduction)

Appendix 2 (Questionnaire)

Kimanzi Kimolo

University of Nairobi

P.O.Box 30197

Nairibi, Kenya

Dear Interviewee,

This Questionnaire is designed to gather information on the relationship between employee empowerment practices and employee performance in the Regional Development Authorities in Kenya.

The study is being carried out for the management research project as a requirement in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master in Business Administration (MBA), at the school of Business University of Nairobi.

Your answers will be treated with all the confidentiality deserved and will at no time be divulged to any other user.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated

Yours Sincerely;

KIMANZI KIMOLO

MBA STUDENT

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A; General Information

1) What is your gender?

Male { }

Female { }

2) Which department do you work under?-----

3) What is your designation /position in the department?-----

4) What is the number of years you have worked in your Organization?-----

5) What are your terms of service/employment

Permanent and pensionable { }

Permanent without pension { }

Probationary { }

Contract { }

Temporary/casual { }

6) What is your education level?

Primary level { }

Secondary level { }

Diploma level { }

First Degree { }

Post graduate level { }

Section B; Employee Empowerment Practices

The following are the employee empowerment practices that are adopted by the organisations as part of their human resources management and organisational development policies. To what extent has your Regional Development Authority (RDA) adopted each of the practices?

Use the key below to tick appropriately.

1. Strongly disagree. 2. Disagree to some extent. 3. Neither agree nor disagree.
4. Agree to some extent. 5. Strongly agree.

S/No.	Employee empowerment practices	Rating				
1	Training enhances my work performance and enables me to meet my set targets.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Managers encourages regular communication with their employees so that employees are aware of what is taking place in the Organization.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Adequate resources (financial, information, tools and equipment) are provided to employees whenever they are required in undertaking their duties.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The management encourages team building(working teams)	1	2	3	4	5
5	My supervisor delegates authority to me,	1	2	3	4	5
6	High degree of trust is highly encouraged and maintained between managers and employees and among employees.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Necessary information is readily availed to all concerned employees in good time to enable them make thoughtful decision.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Employees of your organization are constantly trained to develop and enhance their knowledge and skill.	1	2	3	4	5
9	There is extensive delegation, individual responsibility and autonomy in making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
10	It is easier to accomplished assignment and achieve set targets through team work rather than working individual.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Employees are encouraged to contribute work related ideas through formal suggestions programs or quality cycles.	1	2	3	4	5

12	Employees have autonomy on their areas of responsibility.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Employees are allowed to participate in organizational goal setting.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Employees are allowed to participate in decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Management encourages employees to develop creativity and innovative ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Am in control over those aspects of my job for which i am accountable.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Employees are encouraged to take quick action to improve service quality or to correct quality problems in their jobs.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Employees are motivated by autonomy in decision-making and being assigned challenging work.	1	2	3	4	5
19	Team working increases ownership in decision making and enables employees fully participate in work process.	1	2	3	4	5

Section C; Employee Performance

State the extent to which you agree or disagree with statement in the table. Use the key provided below;

1. Strongly disagree. 2. Disagree to some extent. 3. Neither agree nor disagree.
4. Agree to some extent. 5. Strongly agree

S/No.	Employee performance	Rating				
1	My company allows me to participate in evaluating my performance (self-evaluation).	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am always punctual in my duty.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I always meet my set work targets.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Sometimes I assist other employees who are experiencing difficulty with their assignments.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I participate in rating other employees.(peer rating)	1	2	3	4	5
6	I volunteer to take up other tasks rather than assigned work.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I always cooperate with other co-workers to perform various tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Performance appraisal system is in place to measure both individual and team performance.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I strictly follow organisational rules and procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I use my technical skills and knowledge to accomplish my tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I maintain good working relationships with my fellow employees.	1	2	3	4	5

12	I usually put extra effort to complete an assignment on time.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I always support and defend my organisational objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I have necessary ability and experience on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
15	My performance is evaluated relatively to the pre-established goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Team performance is usually rated by taking into account individual contribution to the team performance and performance of the team as a unit.	1	2	3	4	5