

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE  
EMPOWERMENT: A CASE STUDY OF KENYA ELECTRICITY GENERATING  
COMPANY LTD. (KenGen)

BY  
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A MANAGEMENT PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION (MBA) UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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## DECLARATION

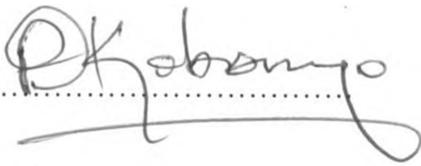
This project is my original work and has never been submitted for a degree in any other given University.

Signed.....

Date...22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008

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This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Signed.....

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## DEDICATION

To God the almighty and his mighty works  
To my husband and children for the unwavering support  
To my parents for their inspiration

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my unreserved gratitude to my supervisor Prof. P. K'Obonyo for his tireless guidance and support and insightful thoughts throughout the entire period of writing this MBA project.

My special thanks go to my Husband Josephat Oginda Sasia whose unwavering encouragement and support and tireless sacrifice in taking care of the family enabled me achieve the MBA degree.

I will not forget my loving children Carol, Sharon, Brenda and Edgar, my dear parents and my sisters and friends Scholastic, Oddah and Lydia Akaranga for their encouragement.

I will also not forget my colleagues at KenGen especially those in the Human Resources Division and Training Section in particular for their support and encouragement.

I am most grateful.

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to establish the relationship between training and employee empowerment. It was a case study of the Kenya Electricity Generating Company Ltd, (KenGen). A questionnaire was administered to 150 employees. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents company wide.

Pearson's Product Moment correlation technique was used to test the relationship between training and employee empowerment. The correlation coefficient obtained from the analysis was significant at  $r = 0.908$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . This implies a very strong relationship. The main conclusion was that KenGen stands to gain by training its employees since this increases their feeling of empowerment.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Training is one of the critical attributes in empowering staff to perform their responsibilities more effectively. In recognition of this, organizations spend an immense amount of time and money on training in order to facilitate employees' learning of job-related competencies. For instance, according to Training Magazine's ongoing industry report, US companies spend more than \$50 billion annually on formal training (Dolezalek, 2004). This is also true with the public sector, which spent huge resources on training. In Kenya for example, the Directorate of Personnel Management in the Office of the Prime Minister is responsible for managing employee training and development needs in the Civil Service. Similarly, public sector organisations in Kenya do have elaborate units specifically responsible managing the training needs and are allocated budgets annually to ensure that training is undertaken. KenGen on its part allocates an annual budget of close to Ksh 200 million for training and has a full-fledged section charged with the responsibility of running and managing the training function for the company.

In order for organisations to realise full benefits from the resources spent on staff training, it requires management to take deliberate steps in empowering employees soon after training. As a step in achieving this, management may either promote or delegate responsibilities to employees, or adopt job enlargement measures including involvement in decision-making process among others. Accordingly, investment in training activities has increased all over the world in recent years as a means of empowering and increasing productivity of employees.

The existing literature on this subject matter supports the foregoing. For example, (Cascio, 2000; Dowling & Welch, 2005, Noe et al., 2006) emphasises that as a result of the financial investments organisations make in training, it is important for them to provide evidence that training efforts are fully realized. In other words, it is important for

organizations to ensure that training leads to desired work outcomes such as increases in job performance. It is therefore imperative that both the employee 'trainee' and the employer, 'beneficiary/trainer' understand what training involves, and the expectations of both parties before and after training. A clear appreciation of the concept of employee training and its dimension is thus useful.

### **1.1.1 The Concept of Employees Training**

Training refers to a systematic process that enables people to acquire new knowledge and skills so that they can perform their jobs better than before. It provides an opportunity for an employee to acquire job related skills, knowledge and attitudes. In training, learning must take place, and this means acquisition of skills and knowledge, which will lead to a permanent change in behaviour and attitudes. It also includes activities designed to prepare employees to keep pace with the organization as it changes and grows.

A number of studies have been carried out on the subject of training as one way of empowering employees to perform their duties more effectively. For instance, Ashton, Davies, Felstead and Green, (1999) describe training as the process of teaching skills and presents employees or beneficiaries with the skills they need to perform their jobs. It consists of those activities, which are designed to improve individual performance in a currently held job or one related to it. It is thus aimed at helping employees to do their present jobs effectively, Bach and Sisson, (2000).

Similarly, Buchanan, (1994) define employee training as a planned and continuous effort by management to improve employee competence levels and organizational performance. The studies indicate that training is short-term in nature and is usually designed to permit learners to acquire knowledge and skills for their current jobs. However in order for the training offered to be useful to organisations, training and development programmes have to be designed to educate employees beyond the requirements of their current positions, and prepare them for more broad and challenging roles in the organization. In view of this, training includes in house courses, coaching, seminars, job rotation and professional

programmes. Employee training therefore aims at improving employee performance by increasing the employees' ability to perform.

KenGen for instance, has a Human Resources Division within its organisational structure with staff training as one of its core functions among others. In order to keep abreast with changes in the work environment, KenGen has continued to train its staff in all spheres. For instance, at the Kenya Power & Lighting School KenGen trains its staff in Engineering based courses and for skills in other areas of specialisation training is also offered in institutions both locally and overseas. For example, staff receive trainings at Kafue Gorge Regional Training Centre (KGRTC) in Zambia, a re-known institution for hydropower training in engineering based courses to regional power utilities (Kafue Gorge Training Prospectus, 2008).

The background information illustrates the critical role of training as a means of empowering employees so that they contribute to the growth and improved performance of the organisation. It has been demonstrated that organisations spend significant resources on employees. Thus, understanding the role of training as it pertains to empowering employees forms the main focus of this study. The form which employee empowerment occurs is discussed below.

### **1.1.2 The Concept of Employee Empowerment**

Employee empowerment in principle refers to the delegation of decision making authority down the hierarchy in an organisation and giving employees the resources, knowledge and skills necessary to use that authority effectively. Employees are therefore able to take autonomous decisions on how to deal with a particular situation and the decision taken ought to be respected by the supervisor ([www.olivermagro.com](http://www.olivermagro.com)).

A number of studies seem to support the foregoing, for instance, Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995) highlight the importance of empowerment and concludes that empowerment of service employees requires very important prerequisites including

knowledge, information, rewards and power. The literature further suggests that the ability of an employee to make the proper response during the service delivery process is largely a function of the employee's knowledge and control (Bitner *et al.*, 1990; Randolph, 1995). For example, Bitner *et al.* (1990) stress that knowledge of the service concept, the service delivery system and its operation, and the system standards enables employees to inform customers about what happened, what can be done and why their needs can or cannot be accommodated. Yip (2000) on his part argued that power, information, knowledge and rewards are very significant measures to have an effective workforce. They further assert that empowerment also leads to greater levels of satisfaction among staff, whereas empowered employees can provide faster and friendlier service to customers as well.

The foregoing seem to support the observation that undertaking relevant training may directly empower employees by impacting the relevant skills for carrying out their current jobs and therefore the management could use this as one of the criteria in further empowering them. However, it has to be noted that the basis for deciding whether or not to empower an employee goes beyond training alone. For example, if employees are trained but given limited and conditional authority and/or responsibility, the full benefits from the training may not be realised.

### **1.1.3 Training and Empowerment**

Some of the attributes of training notably acquiring relevant knowledge and skills emerge from the studies as the key prerequisites upon which management may use as a basis for - deciding whether or not to empower its employees. Once the employees are empowered they are expected to take the necessary actions without being instructed. This implies that empowerment is therefore a deliberate managerial discretion. It is debateable whether management of organisations takes cognisance of this fact. The existing literature points out that in the event management embrace this principle, it breaks down barriers and opens up communication and builds trust as well within an organisation and boosts the confidence and competence of employees (<http://www.virtual.co.nz>).

To underscore the role of training as it relates to empowering employees, for instance, the Ministry of Energy in conjunction with KenGen realised that it was important to first train and empower the local human resource that would be used to work in Geothermal plants. Furthermore, this would be the basis for ensuring sustainable development and utilization of indigenous Energy resource. Significant funds were therefore set aside for training staff upfront. This has borne fruits and now, there is a pool of trained staff in Geothermal Development, in KenGen that cannot be found anywhere else in Africa who run and maintain the only existing geothermal power plants in Africa. To ensure that staff skills are continually updated, a Geothermal Training School located in Olkaria, Naivasha has been established. Given the specialised skills acquired through this arrangement, KenGen now exports this expertise to other parts of the world.

Training therefore empowers employees and equips them to take on independent tasks and stand by their decisions for the common good of organisations as concluded by Erickson et al (2005) that employee empowerment is said to occur when the management and employers pursue goals of both personal as well as professional growth for their employees. For example the senior managers and leaders in an organisation can assist their employees in enhancing their capabilities, in turn enhancing their potential to fully utilize their capabilities for the benefit of an organisation. A brief look at how training activities at KenGen are managed follow.

#### **1.1.4 Kenya Electricity Generating Company Ltd (KenGen)**

Before 1997, generation, transmission and distribution of electricity in Kenya were the mandate of one company, The Kenya Power and Lighting Company Limited (KPLC) (Power Sub Sector Reorganization Study EDF (1996) unpublished. With the amendment of the Electric Power Act in 1997, all the generation activities were separated from transmission and distribution and entrusted with KenGen. KPLC remained with the transmission and distribution aspects of electricity. The generation aspect of the power industry has been further partially liberalised with the allowance of private sector

participation in power generation such that four independent power producers are currently operating in the country.

At present KenGen has a total workforce of 1,500 staff spread out at different power plants in the country. With its wealth of experience, established corporate base and a clear vision, KenGen intends to maintain leadership in the liberalised electric energy sub-sector in Kenya and the Eastern Africa Region (Strategic plan 2005-2010) unpublished.

The transformation of the power sub-sector including the creation of KenGen created a need for the company to examine its employee skills inventory with a view to determine whether or not it was well poised to take on the new responsibilities. This is particularly so given that KenGen generates about 80% of the total country power output from various energy sources such as hydro, geothermal, wind and thermal and therefore a significant player in the Kenyan modern economy (KenGen Annual Reports, various).

In an effort to position itself in the power industry, KenGen dreams “To be the market leader in the provision of reliable, safe, quality and competitively priced electric energy in the Eastern Africa region” and with a mission “To efficiently generate competitively priced electrical energy using the state of the art technology, skilled and motivated human resource to ensure financial success.” The underlying core values of integrity, professionalism, Team spirit and safety culture guide implementation of these strategic statements (KenGen strategic plans, various).

This background illustrates the diverse staff skills KenGen requires, for instance in geothermal exploration and development, hydro, thermal, wind, finance, and human resource, among others. The complexity of KenGen operations underscores the importance of its staff acquiring the relevant skills through continuous training and ensuring that the right staffs is empowered to carry out duties pertaining to their area of training. In response to this need a unit has been established within the Human Resources Division charged with managing this task. The unit is not only manned by staff with relevant expertise in managing the training function for the entire company but also provided with resources for the implementation of trainings.

The critical role of training as a means of empowering employees so that they contribute to the growth and improved performance of their organisations has been discussed. It has also been demonstrated that organisations spend significant resources on employee trainings. Thus understanding the role of training as it pertains to empowering employees is the main focus of this study and it is discussed below.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The background information illustrates that training activities are at the heart of organizational growth. Training is seen as a valuable tool and an investment in the organization that helps to improve profitability, reduce costs and increase employee motivation, commitment and effectiveness. It also prepares employees to respond to the prevailing global competition and technological development and change as well.

In view of this, studies have shown that organisations continue to spend enormous resources on training including KenGen. Willis (2008) affirms that firms benefit themselves from training individuals, which also raises the level of skill and experience throughout industry enabling them to compete on a global scale. On his part, Ian (1999) emphasises that training and development help stimulate creativity and innovation in organisations. Similarly, (Njeru, 2003; Mwangi, 2002; Mudhune, 2002; Macharia 2001) have carried out informative studies on how training and development impacts on various sectors of the Kenyan economy. In her studies on the relationship between training and development and job satisfaction in the hotel industry, Azegele (2000) for instance found a strong relationship between training and development and job satisfaction. Bruce (1992) who states that training is a motivator and essential to acquiring and maintaining skills necessary for optimal job satisfaction supports this. He also argues that training and development is critical to the satisfaction and performance of employees at all levels of the organization.

The various studies reviewed above show that employee training and empowerment leads to a truly nurturing environment where the employees can learn, grow, improve and

enhance their functioning or performance abilities. It also provides for creating an environment of trust, importance in the eyes of the employers, and since it enhances the capability of the respective employee; it leads to the creation of a positive work environment within the organisational set up which is necessary for the growth of the organisation.

However even though several studies have been done elsewhere on the subject of training as it relates to empowerment in organisations, the existing literature indicates that such studies are not only limited on the Kenyan scene but also focus more on the importance of training to organisations rather than its specific role as it relates to empowering employees. Organisations including KenGen have assumed for a long time that training empowers employees in the sense that it gives them abilities, skills and knowledge yet very little has been done to demonstrate the existence of this relationship. This therefore creates a knowledge gap with respect to the role of training in empowerment of employees. It is therefore prudent that the relationship between training and employee empowerment is assessed and understood.

Thus the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between Training and employee empowerment in KenGen.

### **1.3 Objective of the study**

The objective of this study is to determine the relationship between training and employee empowerment at KenGen.

### **1.4 Importance of the study**

This study will help in:

- (i) providing justification for continued and increased budgetary allocations for training;
- (ii) enhancing the existing training policies and future training programs;

- (iii) providing justification for mainstreaming and adopting training/skills acquired as one of the key criteria for use by management as a basis of empowering employees.

This study will be important to the following:

### **Government**

The Government will continue gathering valuable information in order to continue fulfilling its responsibility of employment creation towards the citizenry, enabling the country to go through industrialization.

### **The management**

The management of KenGen will find this study useful as the findings provide basic information for decision making on what further role training as an empowerment tool could be strengthened.

### **Scholars**

The study results will help to fill the existing knowledge gap on this subject matter. Therefore, the academics and scholars will find this study useful for future references when carrying out more studies in the same subject area or on the company.

### **Shareholders**

The study will provide information to shareholders regarding the quality of managers at KenGen including the decision making process which will provide insights on the expectations of the company performance.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will review the existing literature that has been carried out on the role of training in empowering employees in various organisations. In addressing this subject, the chapter will summarise the findings by various researchers/authors including existing theories or schools of thought on this subject matter.

#### **2.2 Training**

Training as defined “ is the formal and systematic modification of behaviour through learning which occurs as a result of education, instruction, development and planned experience” Armstrong, (pg 542). It also means investing in people to enable them perform duties better and empower them in order for them to make best use of their natural abilities. He further emphasises that training aims at helping the organisation achieve its purpose by adding value to employees.

##### **2.2.1 Theoretical perspectives on employee Training**

Training programs and their objectives changed in the 1980s and 1990s. Employers have to adapt to rapid technological changes, improve product and service quality and boost productivity to remain competitive. Such improvements require remedial – educational training because employees have to use critical thinking and analytical skills. Environmental changes may be conceptualized as threats or opportunities and both are associated with urgency, difficulty and high stakes (Chattopadhyay et al, 2001). They are thus likely to evoke organizational responses and consequently human resource management action. Threats involve a negative situation in which loss is likely while opportunity involves a positive situation in which gain is likely. Perceptions of threats can intensify concerns about efficiency-enhancing strategies, hence focusing on internal

organizational issues such as cost-cutting, aggressive marketing, emphasis on quality and change in organizational culture, while perceptions of opportunities are associated with a greater sense of control, which may imply initiating risky actions such as developing new products or venturing into new markets.

The implication of environmental change means that organizations have to respond by instituting a variety of strategies in order to generate sustained levels of profitability in the future. An organization faced with environmental change can establish several strategic postures with the environment. Employees must acquire team building, decision making and communication skills. They also have to acquire knowledge and skills to work with the new technology. Employee training can serve to increase commitment to the organization and perception of the organization as a good place to work. This should arise from the fact that the organization shows commitment to employees by providing opportunities for them to upgrade their skills and better themselves. Managers play a major role in ensuring that employees acquire the relevant skills for the jobs they do.

### **2.2.2 The Role of Managers and Supervisors in Training**

The success of an organization's training programmes will depend on the role of managers and supervisors besides the role of individual employees. Organizations in which managers' help employees in issues related to training have realized benefits such as: better matches between employee abilities and organizational needs, an identified pool of managerial talent, advancement from within, reinforcement and improvement of existing personnel systems and improved long range planning and forecasting.

Training programmes in organizations present a number of opportunities for managers and supervisors to become involved. Harris (1999) states that "the immediate supervisors plays an important role in the employee's work life, delegating tasks and responsibilities, setting expectations, evaluating performance, providing feedback, rewards and discipline". The supervisor and manager become involved by serving as a source of an employee's capabilities and limitations during appraisal. They also provide accurate

information about career paths and opportunities within the organization that can support the employee's career plans, facilitate and give feedback on the employees training and career progress. Leibowitz (1981) has identified four roles that managers and supervisors can play in training: coach: one who listens, clarifies and defines, appraiser: one who gives feedback, standards and responsibilities, adviser: one who generates opinions, sets goals and recommends and referral agent: consults with the employee on action plans.

Managers and supervisors are in most cases knowledgeable about the employee, his demonstrated abilities, past experience and skills. They have broad knowledge about the work environment and development activities within it, and on top of that, they are able to facilitate and advice on training options.

### **2.2.3 Benefits of Training**

The existing literature indicates that organisations spend huge resources on training in an effort to increase the productivity of its employees (Dolezalek, 2004). This implies that the benefits derived from huge financial investments on training by organisations have to be demonstrated, Cascio (2000); Dowling & Welch, 2005, Noe et al. (2006). The benefits from training cited in the existing literature include: acquisition of new knowledge and skills so that employees can perform their jobs better than before; change in behaviour and attitudes; prepares employees to keep pace with the organization as it changes and grows; improved product, and service quality and boost productivity to remain competitive; provides accurate information about career paths and opportunities within the organization that support employee's career plans; prepares employees to take on enhanced responsibilities in decision making process; and strengthens the management capability of organisations.

Victor (1995) stresses that training can provide an opportunity to empower and motivate staff. While Improved quality, increased productivity, greater flexibility and responsiveness to change, greater commitment from staff and improved morale are also cited among some of the benefits of training [http:// www.trainingandemploy.qld.gov.all](http://www.trainingandemploy.qld.gov.all).

#### **2.2.4 Barriers to Training**

The existing literature has illustrated that training is a critical investment in organisations. The benefits derived from training discussed above once realised, steer organisations to greater heights in form of increased employee productivity and leading to company profitability. This implies that the failure to provide adequate resources for training would impair the achievement of this important objective, in particular, equipping employees with up to-date skills and knowledge to face the prevailing challenges.

Furthermore, the support of management in ensuring that training for employees is one of the core responsibilities of the organisations is critical, as this would determine whether or not training programmes are prepared, fully funded and executed. Lack of interest of employees toward training could impede implementation of training. For instance, if employees consider that the type of training programmes lined up for them either do not add value to their performance of their current or enhanced responsibilities, or career progression or monetary gains, then they would not be readily willing to support such initiatives.

#### **2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Employee Empowerment**

The meaning of empowerment has been the subject of great debate and remains, at present, a poorly defined concept (Cunningham et al., 1996; Dainty et al., 2002; Psoinos and Smithson, 2002). Mondros and Wilson (1994), and Russ and Millam (1995) similarly argued that the term is rarely defined clearly and is frequently used rhetorically. One possible reason for this lack of clarity is the tendency for empowerment to be attached to management concepts, for example, business process re-engineering (BPR) and total quality management (TQM) (Dainty et al., 2002).

Furthermore, the term empowerment represents a wide variety of activities, from “sham” empowerment (Rosenthal et al., 1997) to a high level of involvement and devolution of power. Likewise, Wilkinson (1998) identified five types of empowerment: information

sharing; upward problem solving; task autonomy; attitudinal shaping; and self-management.

Nevertheless, the original meaning of empowerment has been referred to as to “authorise or give power to” (Tulloch, 1993). The use of the term “power” appears to be common throughout the definitions of empowerment; for example, Legge (1995) argued that empowerment should be seen in terms of a redistributive model whereby power equalisation is promoted for trust and collaboration. Similarly, Conger and Kanungo (1988) focused on power as the central point of empowerment. In this case, redistribution of power is perceived to have occurred when control is transferred to employees and they are given authority to make and implement their own decisions. Conger and Kanungo (1988) further make a distinction between the relational and motivational meanings of empowerment. The relational aspect examines the relationship between managers and workers both before and after empowerment. The motivational dimension on the other hand suggests what employees need to go through in order to feel motivated.

Other authors in the field define empowerment in terms of its dynamic interaction, for example Pastor (1996, p. 5) stated that: “it is part of a process or an evolution – an evolution that goes on whenever you have two or more people in a relationship, personally or professionally’. On the other hand, Lee and Koh (2001) refined this description further by looking at the nature of the subordinate and supervisor. They stated that empowerment is the combination of the psychological state of a subordinate, which is influenced by the empowering behaviours of supervisors.

While there are conflicting descriptions of empowerment, it appears that the focus of the concept is on redistribution of power between management and employee (most commonly in the form of increasing employee authority and responsibility).

It is possible to identify two key aspects of empowerment from the literature: first, the psychological dimension which focuses upon how the individual perceives empowerment; and secondly the multi-dimensional perspective which closely examines

the role of managers and leaders. The following discussion explores what other researchers say on each of these aspects of empowerment.

### *The Psychological Dimension – The Individual Perspective*

The psychological dimension of empowerment moves away from the traditional study of management practices and instead emphasises employees' perceptions and experiences of empowerment. Through such an approach, the emphasis is upon perceptions and beliefs of power, competence and control (Psoinos and Smithson, 2002). The work of Conger and Kanungo (1988) supports this view and is often used as a starting point in literature on psychological empowerment, for they observed that empowerment involves a motivational concept of self-efficacy.

This notion was further refined by, Thomas and Velthouse (1990) who developed a cognitive model of empowerment. They defined empowerment as increased intrinsic task motivation and outlined four areas, which they argued were the basis of worker empowerment: sense of impact; competence; meaningfulness; and choice. Lee and Koh (2001) outlined a similar definition of empowerment and listed four dimensions (below) as describing the psychological state of the subordinate:

*Meaningfulness*: the meaning of a value of a task goal or purpose judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards; *Competence*: competence is an individual's belief in his/her capability to perform task activities skilfully; *Self-determination (or choice)*: autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes; *Impact*: the perception of the degree to which an individual can influence certain outcomes at work.

The higher an individual "scores" in each of these elements, the greater the sense of empowerment. However, the authors are careful to point out that the behaviour of the supervisors must also be examined, for "it would not be appropriate to say that employees were empowered, if their supervisor did nothing to empower them". Thomas and Velthouse (1990) considered that six key variables influence these cognitions. They included environmental events, task assessments, global assessments, interpretative

styles, behaviours and interventions. Those who favour the psychological nature of empowerment argued that it is simply not enough to implement a change in management practices (as deemed appropriate in some empowerment literature) but it is also necessary to ensure that those practices are fully realised.

*The Multi-dimensional Perspective – The Role of Management and Leaders in Empowerment of Employees.*

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

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

It is argued that managers/leaders must focus on team empowerment as well as individual empowerment if the organisational environment relies upon cohesive teams (Dainty et al., 2002). Meanwhile, the final area in which managers/leaders play a pivotal role is training. As noted in the previous section, it is necessary that employees believe themselves to be

“capable”, and training can be a key mechanism that provides employees with this reassurance. Pastor (1996) argues that the principal training focus should be on communication development so that they can engage in this new participative and facilitative management/leadership style.

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

The potential benefits of empowerment are therefore discussed below.

### **2.3.1 Benefits of Empowerment**

The benefits of empowerment can be broadly divided into two areas: benefits for the organisation; and benefits for the individual. Much of the research into empowerment has focused on organisational benefits assuming these are the driving force behind attempts to engender empowered working (Cunningham et al., 1996).

It has been argued that empowered organisations have demonstrated improvements in various economic performance areas (Applebaum et al., 1999). However, measurement of the economic benefits of empowerment specifically may be difficult as often it is introduced as part of a broader initiative such as BPR and TQM (Psoinos and Smithson, 2002).

While the primary motive of empowerment is usually to improve the economic performance of the organisation, benefits to the individual employee have also been identified. Nykodym et al. (1994) found that employees who consider themselves empowered have reduced conflict and ambiguity in their role, as they are able to control (to a certain extent) their own environment. They suggested that this reduces emotional

strain on the employee. On a similar theme, it was reported that empowered employees have a greater sense of job satisfaction, motivation and organisational loyalty Mullins and Peacock, (1991), as they feel more involved in the achievement of the organisational goals. Despite these benefits being frequently cited, the nature and meaning of this job satisfaction and motivation have not been fully explored within the academic field.

Measurement of the employee benefits is very difficult to achieve. Unlike organisational benefits which can be measured objectively, individual benefits are much more subjective and complex. Certain factual measures, such as absence and turnover rates have been applied in this aim as to have the Investors in People awards, which can be used as an indirect indicator of the Company's commitment to the development of skills (Psoinos and Smithson, 2002). However, it is often considered that softer measures of employees' attitudes may be more appropriate than these "objective" measures, or as the respondent in one study, HR Manager, Electronics Manufacturer, Psoinos and Smithson (2002) emphasized that they did not have measures to measure the extent of empowerment but what they were after was behaviour and action.

It appears from this discussion that empowerment may benefit both the organisation and the individual (if it is applied correctly). However, most related research has focused upon the objective benefits to the organisation and not the subjective benefits to the individual. In spite of the above, there exist barriers that may hinder empowerment of staff in organisations as discussed below.

### **2.3.2 Barriers to Empowerment**

Managers are faced with many difficulties when attempting to empower employees and these may prevent a business from becoming an empowering organisation. First, there is often resistance to the change both from managers/leaders and from employees themselves. It is often assumed that employees will buy into empowerment, because of the obvious benefits. However, this is disputed by Johnson (1994) who claims that employees may resist empowerment as they fear the increased levels of responsibility and accountability. Further, employees may consider empowerment to be just empty rhetoric

and yet another management attempt to exploit them. Adler (1993) cites that empowerment is linked to downsizing and that the two activities occur simultaneously. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that employees may be reluctant and suspicious of management schemes.

Likewise, Managers/leaders may also be resistant to empowerment for this may be perceived as relinquishing power. They may view the reduction of their power as a threat Denham et al., (1997), particularly as they too fear job loss or loss of status as the organisational structures become flatter during the downsizing process. They may also vary in their inclination to introduce empowerment in spite of its being a component of organisational policy.

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

The foregoing review of the existing literature indicates that most studies have tended to focus on training and while comparatively fewer researchers have focused on training as a means of empowering employees, therefore the research on the role of training in employee empowerment will help in contributing to the existing literature on this less researched topic.

## **2.4 Training and Empowerment**

Despite increasing attention on the topic of empowerment, our understanding of the concept and its underlying process remains limited as cited by Conger and Kanungo (1998). However, numerous studies carried out on the subject of training and

empowerment reveal that a knowledgeable employee is a key factor to increased productivity in an organization Cortada, (1998). In support of this finding, Lawler et al. (1992) carried out an empirical study in 1987 and 1990 and the study results stressed the importance of knowledge and skill development and concluded that without the right skills, it was not possible for individuals to participate in the business and influence its direction. At a more basic level, it is impossible for individuals without skills to do most jobs effectively. Cook and Macaulays (1997) discussed the characteristics of an empowered organisation and what leads to an increasing popularity of empowerment. They concluded that successful empowerment could take place in a supportive framework, with management buy-in at all levels. They also state that training alone is not sufficient but may need other tools such as teambuilding, creating one right culture and reward and recognition programmes.

Similarly, Ripley and Ripley (1993 ) cite empowerment as the key to business competition and success hence issues of quality, continuous improvement and customer satisfaction become the responsibility of employees. They further highlight the fact that training from upper management down to the frontline worker is vital in keeping the momentum of empowerment going. Hyland, Sloan and Barnett (1998) report a success story in a multi-shift site manufacturing organisation which was able to train workers on the job and reaped the benefits of the training programme. An interview among the employees revealed that through training, a culture change had occurred in the organisation and employees believed that they had been empowered. On his part, Victor (1995) emphasizes the importance of training and empowerment. He further cites training as a means of empowering and motivating employees.

From the foregoing, it is evident that training is an essential aspect of improved performance, and which is crucial in overall organizational effectiveness. However, training is only part of the pie, as it will equip employees with the required tools to perform. Management delegation of decision-making will in turn provide an opportunity to the equipped employee to use them.

To understand training and empowerment better it is prudent to bring into focus their theoretical perspectives as discussed. The subject of training and empowerment can be further examined by the review of some of the theories in the existing literature. These include:

- i) Human capital theory; and
- ii) Output/ production of staff

## **2.5 Human Capital Theory**

Becker (1962) discusses the Human capital theory as it relates to training as a means of empowering employees. He draws a distinction between training in general and firm-specific skills given to employees. He further explains that no employer readily invests in training when the skills can be readily available in the market rather employers choose to invest in specific trainings, which are not transferable elsewhere.

As individuals have the discretion over the deployment of their own human capital, workers and firms will need to agree on an exchange in the labour market. This implies that how the costs and returns to training are shared between workers and firms is a central concern in the on-the-job training literature. Human capital theory has been further developed in the 1970s to explain the life-cycle pattern of earnings. This literature analyses the human capital investment decision of individuals in a competitive environment.

In the beginning of the 1990s, the new field of economics of information resulted in applications to on-the-job training. It is noted that these recent developments in the training literature focus on the strategic interaction between employers and employees. This review restricts itself to the core of private sector training theory. The reason for this focus is the scattered nature of this literature. The studies cite some common themes in the economic literature on training as:

- i. Investment efficiency;
- ii. Separation efficiency; and

### iii. Division of costs and returns

The review will therefore highlight additional insights where necessary including the ones discussed below in order to provide clarity and additional literature on this subject.

## **2.6 Output /Production of Staff**

According to Armstrong (2005) all organizations are concerned with what should be done to achieve sustainable high levels of performance through people. This means giving close attention on how individual can best be motivated through such means as incentives, rewards, leadership and training. The aim is to develop motivation processes and work environment that will help to ensure that individuals deliver results in accordance with the expectation of management. For current employees whose job performance is not satisfactory, it may be that some type of additional training is needed.

In support of the study described above, Cockburn (1983) noted that Training can only add value results if there is an opportunity for added value. Either the business is not performing effectively because people are not performing, or there is a market opportunity, which can be exploited but requires some new training or development” (Armstrong 1998) also states that training should be applicable to performance in a current or anticipated task, providing all the necessary learning. Similarly, Graham and Bennett, (2001) noted that improving employees’ ability to perform tasks required by the organization, training allows better use to be made of human resources and further gives employees a mastery over their work, leading to improved performance. Tan (1995) observed that training is designed to help employees perform their jobs effectively. While training and education of qualified staff takes years of development; the current training and development policies of business organizations are worthy of reviewing and studying.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methods that were used in this study. It gives a detailed description of research design, population, sampling strategy, and data collection tools and data analysis techniques.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design is a case study on KenGen. This is the most appropriate design because data is collected only from one given organization and hence its adoption for this study. The choice for a case study is ideal since it allows for a holistic, in-depth investigation, which helps in bringing out the details from respondents on a wide range of issues to address the subject of this nature.

#### **3.3 Data collection**

The target respondents were randomly selected from staff numbering 150 out of a total staff establishment of 1500. This represents 10 percent of the total staff at KenGen covering all cadres. Therefore a simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents.

The study used primary data. The data was collected using questionnaires containing both open and close-ended questions. The questionnaires were self administered to the selected employees using a “drop and pick” and e-mail method. The study was carried out Companywide including at KenGen’s power stations. The questionnaires were structured in three parts. Part one covered profiles of respondents; part two covered issues related to training while part three covered empowerment issues. Secondary data was sourced to complement primary data and consisted of information on annual training budget over the last 5 years and the number of staff trained annually.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

The completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency. The data in the questionnaires was entered in a Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) data editor. Being qualitative data, it was transformed by coding method to facilitate analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is a package commonly used to analyse data collected in survey and case studies. It was chosen because it is user friendly to any form of analysis depending on the nature of analysis one would like to carry out.

Descriptive statistics were used to explain respondents' characteristics in tables and simple bar graphs. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, a statistical tool was used to determine whether or not there was a relationship between training and employee empowerment.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter brings out a detailed analysis and findings of the research study which explored the relationship between training and employee empowerment. This was a case study of the Kenya Electricity Generating Company Ltd (KenGen). The study was in three parts namely; the respondents' profiles, views and feelings of respondents (staff at KenGen) on training and the extent to which such trainings meet their empowerment needs.

The questionnaire used a likert scale with 1 being 'Highly disagree', 2 being 'Disagree', 3 being 'Moderately disagree', 4 being 'Moderately agree', 5 being 'Agree', and 6 being 'Highly agree'. The completed Questionnaires were returned from respondents and edited for completeness and consistency. The data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for the study which aimed at establishing the relationships between training and employee empowerment.

The data is summarised and results presented on the relationship between Training and employee empowerment at KenGen. They are presented in tables and figures as required. The study results revealed that the majority of the respondents were males, degree holders and had served in KenGen for a period of 6-10 years. The study obtained 59.3 % of response rate.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

Data collected was from 89 (or 59 %) compared to 150 employees that were expected. Some of the profiles of the respondents are discussed below.

### 4.3 Respondent Profiles

Table 4.1 below shows that about 61% of the respondents interviewed were male while, 39.3% were females. The high percentage of male respondents reflects the current situation at KenGen where most of the employees are male.

**TABLE 4.1 Gender**

| Gender | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|--------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Male   | 54        | 60.7        | 60.7                   |
| Female | 35        | 39.3        | 100.0                  |
| Total  | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

### 4.4 Age of Respondents

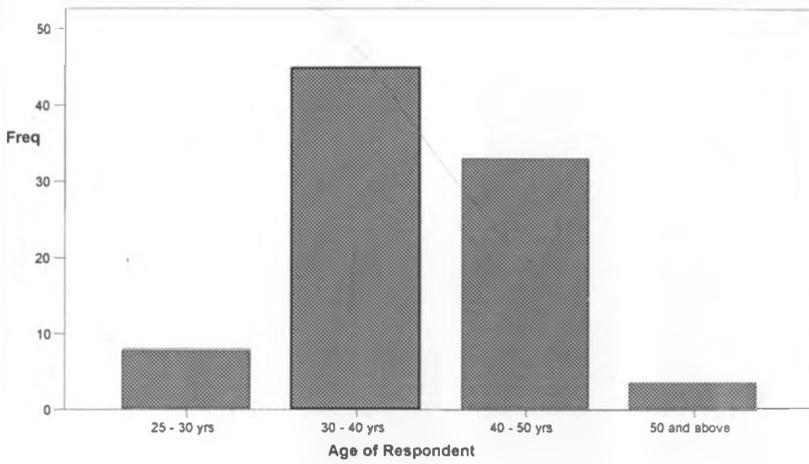
Respondents were asked to indicate the age group they belong. Table 4.2 shows the distribution of respondents by age group. Most of the respondents (about 51%) interviewed were in the age group of 30 – 40 years of age. Approximately 37% were in the age group of 40 – 50 years while 3.4% were 50 years and above. This shows that at KenGen, most staff ages range from 30 – 40 years, an age bracket, which in principle is susceptible to high staff turnover in case of dissatisfaction.

**Table 4.2 Age of Respondents**

| Age Group    | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| 25 - 30 yrs  | 8         | 9.0         | 9.0                    |
| 30 - 40 yrs  | 45        | 50.6        | 59.6                   |
| 40 - 50 yrs  | 33        | 37.1        | 96.6                   |
| 50 and above | 3         | 3.4         | 100.0                  |
| Total        | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

The graphical presentation below illustrates this.

**Figure 1: AGE OF RESPONDENT**



**Table 4.3 Level of Education**

| Education level  | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Primary level    | 1         | 1.1         | 1.1                    |
| Secondary level  | 12        | 13.5        | 14.6                   |
| College level    | 37        | 41.6        | 56.2                   |
| University level | 39        | 43.8        | 100.0                  |
| Total            | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

Table 4.3 shows that about 44% of the respondents interviewed have attained university level of education while 41.6% have college level of education. Nearly 14% have attained secondary level of education. A small percentage of 1.1% has primary level of education. The high proportion of respondents with college and university levels is an indication that KenGen employees are highly schooled. The graphical presentation is shown below.

Figure 2 : LEVEL OF EDUCATION

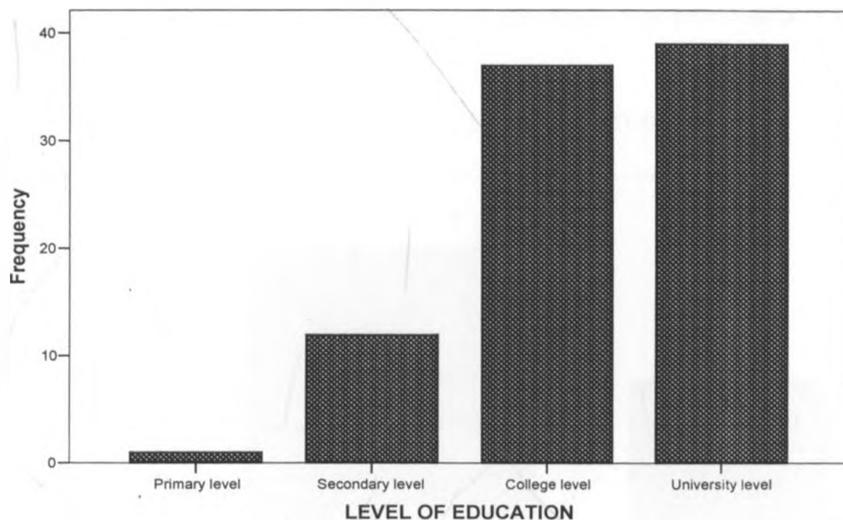


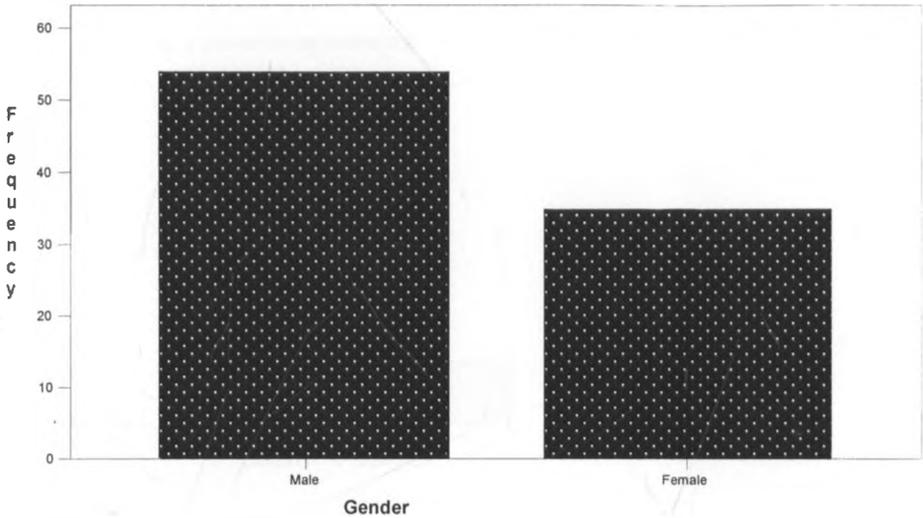
Figure 2: LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Table 4.4 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY DEPARTMENT

| Department           | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Missing              | 6         | 6.7         | 6.7                    |
| Administration       | 13        | 14.6        | 21.3                   |
| BDD                  | 1         | 1.1         | 22.5                   |
| Business development | 1         | 1.1         | 23.6                   |
| Business Management  | 1         | 1.1         | 24.7                   |
| Finance              | 9         | 10.1        | 35.9                   |
| Human resource       | 24        | 26.7        | 61.5                   |
| ICT                  | 6         | 6.7         | 68.2                   |
| Legal                | 1         | 1.1         | 69.7                   |
| Mechanical           | 2         | 2.2         | 71.9                   |
| Operations           | 10        | 11.2        | 83.1                   |
| Procurement          | 2         | 2.2         | 85.4                   |
| Projects             | 3         | 4.5         | 88.8                   |
| Regulatory           | 2         | 2.2         | 92.1                   |
| Technical services   | 4         | 4.5         | 96.6                   |
| Transport            | 3         | 3.4         | 100.0                  |
| Total                | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

Table 4.4 shows that most of the respondents were from departments that directly handle human resources issues. Such Departments include Human Resources (26.7%) and Administration (14.6%). The graphical illustration is presented below.

**Figure 3: COMPOSITION OF RESPONDENTS BY GENDER**



**Table 4.5 Length of Service**

| Length of service | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Less than 1 yr    | 1         | 1.1         | 1.1                    |
| 1 - 5 yrs         | 20        | 22.5        | 23.6                   |
| 6 - 10 yrs        | 37        | 41.6        | 65.2                   |
| 11 - 15 yrs       | 8         | 9.0         | 74.2                   |
| 16 yrs and over   | 23        | 25.8        | 100.0                  |
| Total             | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

Table 4.5 shows that about 42% of respondents interviewed have been at KenGen for a period between 6 – 10 years. Nearly 23% have been in service at KenGen for a period between 1 – 5 years. A small percentage (about 1%) has worked in KenGen for a period less than a year.

This implies that a majority of respondents are those who have worked at KenGen for a long time and therefore may have benefited from training in one way or the other. They are therefore in a better position to understand the training needs. The graphical illustration is presented below.

FIGURE 4: LENGTH OF SERVICE

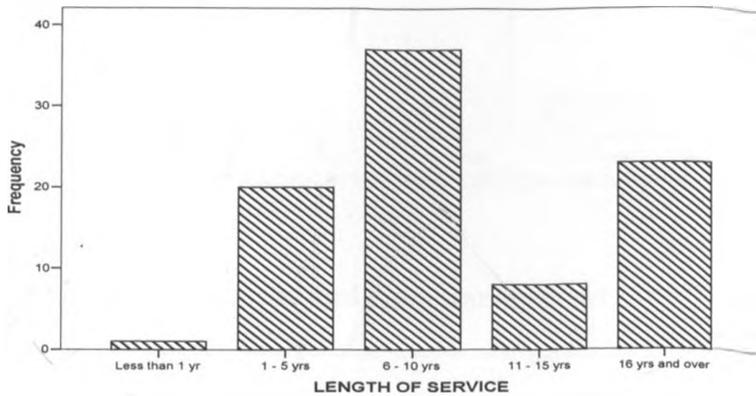


Table 4.6 Duration in Current Positions

| Duration        | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Less than 1 yr  | 6         | 6.7         | 6.7                    |
| 1 - 5 yrs       | 41        | 46.1        | 52.8                   |
| 6 - 10 yrs      | 27        | 30.3        | 83.1                   |
| 11 - 15 yrs     | 6         | 6.7         | 89.9                   |
| 16 yrs and over | 9         | 10.1        | 100.0                  |
| Total           | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

Table 4.6 shows that about 46% of the respondents have served in the current positions for a period between 1 – 5 years while 30.3% have been in their current position for a period 6 – 10 years. Nearly 7% have been for at least 11 years but not more than 15 years. This shows that there is low upward mobility as most of the respondents have stayed in their current positions for about 10 years. The graph below illustrates this further.

Figure 5: DURATION IN CURRENT SECTION JOB/DIVISION

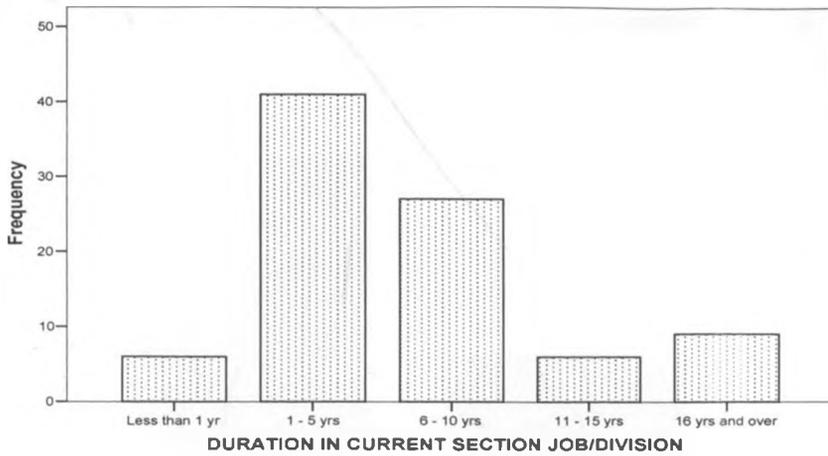
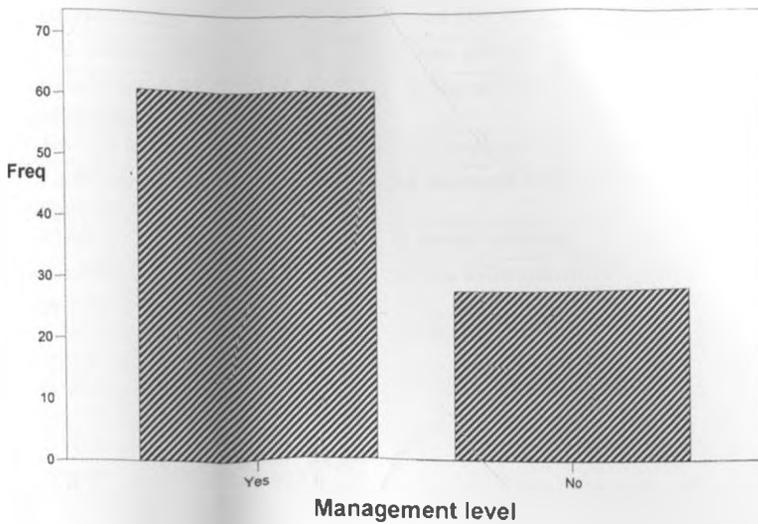


Table 4.7 Management and Non management

| Response | Frequency | Percent (%) | Cumulative Percent (%) |
|----------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Yes      | 61        | 68.5        | 68.5                   |
| No       | 28        | 31.5        | 100.0                  |
| Total    | 89        | 100.0       |                        |

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they are currently at management level or not. About 69% of them serve at management level while nearly 32% are not currently serving at management level. This implies most respondents fall in a category that is critical in the formulation and implementation of training programs at KenGen. The graph below is a further illustration.

Figure 6. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY MANAGEMENT LEVEL?



#### 4.4 Relationship between Training and Employee Empowerment

##### Introduction

Two sets of questions, one on training and the other on empowerment were administered. Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with the statements on training and empowerment attributes in the questionnaire. The rating was on a scale of 1-6 rated as follows: 1 Highly disagree; 2 Disagree; 3 Moderately disagree; 4 Moderately agree; 5 Agree; and 6 Highly agree.

An overall mean score for each of the attributes on training and empowerment was obtained. The mean scores were correlated using the Pearson product moment correlation technique. The means for every attribute (represented by a statement) are shown in Tables 4.8 and 4.9. The overall mean score is 4.27 in respect of training and 3.87 for empowerment. In terms of the 6 point scale on the questionnaire, both variables /factors fall on “moderately agree” and “moderately disagree” respectively. Results of the correlation analysis are presented in table 4.8 as shown in the table, the correlation is strong and significant ( $r= 0.908, p < 0.01$ ).

**Table 4.2.1 Information on Training and their Corresponding Means**

| <b>Information</b>   | <b>No.</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Rating</b>           |
|--|------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| My current responsibilities were assigned after attending a training programme   | 89         | 2.96        | Disagree                |
| I have received adequate training over the last two years  | 89         | 3.17        | Moderately disagree     |
| All the training programs I have attended were identified by my supervisor   | 89         | 3.27        | Moderately disagree     |
| I was held more accountable for specific duties and responsibilities delegated to me after my training                       | 89         | 3.49        | Moderately disagree     |
| At KenGen training programs are tailored to employee career development  | 89         | 3.61        | Moderately disagree     |
| The training process is well organized and structured to improve the competence of employees                                 | 89         | 3.96        | Moderately disagree     |
| The training I had so far has unlocked my natural abilities  | 89         | 4.31        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I have had so far has prepared me to handle the prevailing organizational changes at KenGen                     | 89         | 4.47        | Moderately agree        |
| The training given by my employer is relevant to what I normally do in the docket assigned to me                             | 89         | 4.49        | Moderately agree        |
| After every training programme I have been able to perform enhanced responsibilities effectively                             | 89         | 4.56        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I have had so far has prepared me for more challenging roles at KenGen  | 89         | 4.72        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I had so far has enhanced my capability to perform my current job satisfactorily                                | 89         | 4.72        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I have had so far enabled me to perform my current job better   | 89         | 4.78        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I have had so far has improved my attitude towards my job   | 89         | 4.79        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I have had so far has improved my skills and competences  | 89         | 4.80        | Moderately agree        |
| Training has enabled me solve my job related problems  | 89         | 4.83        | Moderately agree        |
| The training I had in this organization has given me confidence and skills to handle duties delegated to me by my supervisor | 89         | 4.84        | Moderately agree        |
| Training has enabled me acquire necessary skills   | 89         | 5.10        | Agree                   |
| Valid N (list wise)  | 89         |             |                         |
| <b>Overall mean</b>  | <b>89</b>  | <b>4.27</b> | <b>Moderately agree</b> |

**Table 4.9 Information on Empowerment and the Corresponding Means**

| Information  | No.       | Mean        | Rating                     |
|--|-----------|-------------|----------------------------|
| I was awarded a promotion to the next grade after training                                     | 89        | 2.04        | Disagree                   |
| I am given adequate training whenever or not there are changes in my job                       | 89        | 3.12        | Moderately disagree        |
| Part III. After every training programme I am assigned enhanced responsibilities               | 89        | 3.26        | Moderately disagree        |
| Duration of the training I attended was adequate   | 89        | 3.47        | Moderately disagree        |
| I am usually recognized for my efforts and creativity  | 89        | 3.58        | Moderately disagree        |
| I am usually recognized for my creativity and innovation                                       | 89        | 3.70        | Moderately disagree        |
| I was held responsible of specific tasks after my training                                     | 89        | 3.71        | Moderately disagree        |
| Decision making and authority are delegated down the hierarchy                                 | 89        | 3.89        | Moderately disagree        |
| I am usually encouraged to suggest new ways of doing things                                    | 89        | 3.98        | Moderately disagree        |
| After attending training, my morale boosted  | 89        | 4.43        | Moderately agree           |
| Opportunities are available for me to improve upon my knowledge and skills                     | 89        | 4.47        | Moderately agree           |
| I feel I am part of a team in my organization  | 89        | 4.54        | Moderately agree           |
| I had more knowledge and skills to help me work more efficiently after training than before    | 89        | 4.69        | Moderately agree           |
| Management needs to do more to enhance existing relationships between employees and themselves | 89        | 5.27        | Agree                      |
| Valid N (list wise)  | 89        |             |                            |
| <b>Overall Mean</b>  | <b>89</b> | <b>3.87</b> | <b>Moderately disagree</b> |

**Table 4.10 Overall means**

| Variables   | Mean   | N  |
|-------------|--------|----|
| Training    | 4.2706 | 18 |
| Empowerment | 3.8679 | 14 |

**Table 4.11 Correlations Coefficients for the link between Training and Empowerment**

| Variables   |                                 | Training | Empowerment |
|-------------|---------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Training    | Pearson Correlation coefficient | 1        | .908(**)    |
|             | Sig. (2-tailed)                 |          | .000        |
|             | N                               | 18       | 14          |
| Empowerment | Pearson Correlation coefficient | .908(**) | 1           |
|             | Sig. (2-tailed)                 | .000     |             |
|             | N                               | 14       | 14          |

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

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Discussions

The objective of this study was to determine the relationship between training and employee empowerment at KenGen. Respondents from KenGen completed the questionnaires. The data analysis revealed that majority of respondents were males aged between 30 and 40 years with University and College level education. They had served in the organization for a minimum of 10 years and were at management level.

The objective of this study was achieved by establishing a relationship between training and employee empowerment at KenGen. The relationship between training and empowerment was tested using Pearson's Product Moment correlation technique. This revealed a strong and significant relationship between the two variables ( $r= 0.908$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The results support and are consistent with the findings of several researchers, for instance, the conclusion of Bowen and Lawler (1992, 1995) that important prerequisites such as acquisition of knowledge, information, rewards and power are critical for employee empowerment. They further suggest that the ability of an employee to make proper response during the service delivery process is largely a function of the employee's knowledge and control (Bitner *et al.*, 1990; Randolph, 1995). Yip (2000) on his part argues that power, information, knowledge and rewards are very significant measures for attracting and retaining an effective workforce. They further assert that empowerment also leads to greater levels of satisfaction among staff.

Also, the results indicate and are consistent with the findings of Harris (1999) who states that immediate supervisors play important roles in the employees work life, delegating tasks and responsibilities, setting expectations, evaluating performance, providing feedback, rewards and discipline. They also provide important information about career paths.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

From the findings, we can conclude that training has a strong relationship with empowerment of employees at KenGen. This implies that organisations could use training as a tool of empowering its employees. However, the degrees of the relationship between the various training and employee empowerment attributes vary. Some attributes exhibit very strong relationship while others do not.

In particular empowerment seems to be a challenge to management at KenGen as most of the employees moderately disagreed that empowerment occurs after training, for instance, delegation of authority, recognition of creativity and innovation and promotions to the next level. There is therefore a need for management to re-look at staff empowerment with a view to strengthening it and embracing best practice.

It can also be concluded from these findings that KenGen uses training as one of the several means of empowering its employees. Nevertheless, the mixed results of the relationship at a disaggregated level indicate that KenGen could identify those attributes that emerge with strong or weak relationships and depending on its objective design relevant policy measures on training and empowerment.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

The strong relationship between training and employee empowerment at KenGen implies that KenGen should continue to allocate sufficient resources for training. The study recommends that the KenGen management focuses on the areas where the employees believe that there exist weak relationship such as delegation of responsibilities and recognition of creativity, and innovation, and promotion which turned out to be management responsibilities. This would enable the company to reap full benefits from the resources it uses on training and well tailor the training programmes in an effort to increase employee productivity and company performance.

#### **5.4 Policy Implications for KenGen**

Given the hefty training budget allocation that goes to training, there is need for the training policy to be reviewed to make it responsive to the current and future needs of the organisation.

#### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Research**

In line with best practices, there is need not only to find out the relationships between training and empowerment but also to establish the impact of training and empowerment on organisational productivity.

#### **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

The response rate was too low.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix I: Questionnaire

### Part I: Staff Profile

1. Gender

Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Age 25 – 30 30- 40 40 – 50 50 and above

3. What is the highest level of education?

Never went to school [ ] Primary [ ] Secondary [ ]

College [ ] university [ ]

4. Department

.....

5. For what duration have you worked in years

a) KenGen

Less than 1 [ ] 1 – 5 [ ] 6 – 10 [ ]

11 – 15 [ ] 16 and over [ ]

a) The current Sectiob/Division

Less than 1 [ ] 1 – 5 [ ] 6 – 10 [ ]

11 – 15 [ ] 16 and over [ ]

6. Are you on management level? Yes [ ] No [ ]

## Part II: Information on Training

Use the following rating and tick as appropriate:

- 6- Highly Agree
- 5- Agree
- 4- Moderately agree
- 3- Moderately disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 1 -Highly disagree

Please tick as appropriate.

|   | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Training has enabled me acquire necessary skills   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2. Training has enabled me solve my job related problems  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. The training process is well organized and structured to improve the competence of employees     |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4. I have received adequate training over the last two years  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5. All the training programs I have attended were identified by my supervisor                       |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6. After every training programme I have been able to perform enhanced responsibilities effectively |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7. The training given by my employer is relevant to what I normally do in the docket assigned to me |   |   |   |   |   |   |

|   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 8. The training I have had in this organization has given me confidence and skills to handle duties delegated to me by my supervisor. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9. The training I have had so far has prepared me for more challenging roles at KenGen  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10. The training I have had so far enabled me to perform my current job better  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11. The training I have had so far has improved my attitude towards my job  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12. The training I have had so far has improved my skills and competences   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13. The training I have had so far has prepared me to handle the prevailing organizational changes at KenGen                          |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14. The training I have had so far has unlocked my natural abilities  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15. The training I have had so far has enhanced my capability to perform my current job satisfactorily                                |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16. My current responsibilities were assigned after attending a training programme  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17. I was held more accountable for specific duties and responsibilities delegated to me after my training.                           |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18. At KenGen, training programs are tailored to employee career development.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Rate the following on a scale of 1 to 5 as follows: 5-Very important, 4- Important, 3- Fairly important, 2- Least important, 1 – Not important

19. My main motivation for attending every training I have attended has been:

|   | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a). to perform my duties efficiently          |   |   |   |   |   |
| b). to create a basis for my future promotion |   |   |   |   |   |
| c). to take on more responsibilities          |   |   |   |   |   |
| d). non of the above                          |   |   |   |   |   |
| e). reasons other than those stated above     |   |   |   |   |   |

20. Give any other comments which are relevant to this study

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### Part III: Information on Empowerment

Please indicate the degree to which in your view you agree with the following statements towards empowerment of employees on a scale of 6 - 1

Use the following rating and tick as appropriate:

- 6- Highly Agree
- 5- Agree
- 4- Moderately agree
- 3- Moderately disagree
- 2- Disagree
- 1 -Highly disagree

|   | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21. After every training programme I am assigned enhanced responsibilities.                     |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 22. I am usually encouraged to suggest new ways of doing things                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 23. Decision making and authority are delegated down the hierarchy                              |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 24. I had more knowledge and skills to help me work more efficiently after training than before |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 25. I feel I am part of a team in my organization   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 26. I was held responsible of specific tasks after my training                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 27. I was awarded a promotion to the next grade after training                                  |   |   |   |   |   |   |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 28. Duration of the training I attended was adequate   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29. After attending Training , my morale was boosted   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 30. I am usually recognized for my efforts & creativity  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 31. Management needs to do more to enhance existing relationships between employees and themselves |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 32. Opportunities are available for me to improve upon my knowledge and skills                     |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 33. I am usually recognized for my creativity and innovation                                       |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 34. I am given adequate training whenever or not there are changes in my job                       |  |  |  |  |  |  |

35. Give any other comments which are relevant to this study

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## Appendix 2- Introductory Letter to Respondents

Florence E. Oginda  
P.O Box 46417-00100

**NAIROBI**

25<sup>th</sup> October, 2008

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Research Data**

I am a post graduate student undertaking Masters of Business Administration (MBA) at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a Research Project on “The Relationship between Training and Employee Empowerment: A case Study of KenGen”.

You have been selected to form part of the study. The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance in filling the attached questionnaire. Be as truthful as you possibly can. The information you give will be treated in utmost confidentiality and is for purely academic purposes. In the event names have been mentioned, this will not appear in the very final report.

A copy of the report will be availed to you on request.

Kindly co-operate to make this study a success

Yours faithfully,

Florence E. Oginda (Student)

Prof. P. K’Obonyo

Lecturer /Supervisor

Department of Business Administration