

**GENDER DIFFERENCES ON PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYEE
EMPOWERMENT PRACTICES IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING IN KENYA**

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for the Award of the Degree of Master of Business Administration
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my own original work and has not been submitted previously to any other academic body.

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This Research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the supervisor.

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DEDICATION

It is with gratitude that I dedicate this project to you my children. Your smiles, presence and unwavering understanding have given me the impetus to pursue high academic standards despite numerous challenges in life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the Almighty God blessings and guidance throughout the entire duration of this course. His grace and favor for me are forever sufficient. My special gratitude goes to my supervisor, Prof. Peter K'Obonyo in a special way for his patience and guidance throughout this project. I appreciate the knowledge and skills that all my other lecturers have impacted in me through class work. I cannot forget the contributions of all other persons who contributed to the success of this course in one way or another and in particular the employees in the State Department of Planning whose input in filling in questionnaires in facilitated the successful completion of this research project. I will forever be grateful to you all. May God bless you all.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
SAGAs	Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies

ABSTRACT

Empowerment practices are managerial strategies adopted by organizations to improve productivity, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance competitive advantage. The need for empowering both genders in private and public organizations has been necessitated by increased level knowledge and understanding, increased awareness of their rights and privilege leading to demands of equal opportunities and increased customers demands. Empowerment practices helps employees to participate in decision making, break stagnant mindset to risk and try new idea; decide on how to solve a problem rather than wait for supervisors. The objective of this study was to establish the differences in gender perceptions of employee empowerment practices at the State Department of Planning. A descriptive research survey was adopted for the study. The target population of the study consisted of 698(six hundred ninety eight) staff members from all cadres within the State Department of planning . A random sample size of 72 (seventy two) representing male and female employees was drawn from staff within the headquarters. This study employed descriptive statistical data analysis to analyze the data obtained. The study concluded that the respondents had divided opinion on whether empowerment practices in their department creates a work environment which helps them to foster the ability and desire to feel and act empowered. This study therefore recommends that state department of planning should provide a good working environment and equal empowerment opportunities which helps their employees to foster the ability and feel empowered. On perception on job training, the study concludes that the respondents had a divided opinion on whether training programmes consider all genders provided by the department. This study therefore recommends that gender sensitive training programmes should be put in place to enable both genders perceive training programmes as empowering. Finally this study recommends that the State Department of planning understands gender differences in the empowerment practices and puts in place equal empowerment opportunities for all employees.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Managing employees in an organization for the common goal is not an easy thing. It is becoming increasingly clear that without altering human knowledge, skills, and behaviour, change in technology, processes, and structures is unlikely to yield long-term benefits because of the pivotal role that human resource play in organizational success (Appelbaum and Hongger, 1998). Managing business productivity has essentially become synonymous with managing change effectively. To manage change, companies must not only determine what to do and how to do it, they also need to be concerned with how employees will react to it (Cooper and Markus 1995).

However, unprecedented level of social complexity, intense competition and demand for social obligations has made Human Resource Management (HRM) to adopt more strategic approaches (Agarwal et al., 1998). Among these strategies is embracing concept of equality, by analyzing gender inequalities within the organisation. Gender empowerment has been identified as one of the critical managerial elements in the organizations success. Loutfi (2001) argues that men and women do not share equal status and women still remain disadvantaged across different cultures.

The need for empowering both genders in private and public organizations has been necessitated by increased level knowledge and understanding, increased awareness of their rights and privilege leading to demands of equal opportunities and increased customers demands (Hamed, 2010). For the organizations to maintain a competitive

advantage and build stakeholders' confidence, they need to be efficient and effective, and more responsive to customer needs. These can only be achieved through proper use of human resource since they, employees, are considered to be close to the customers, and therefore understands their problems better. Ergeneli (2007) contend that Empowerment is a fundamental element of managerial and organization success that increases when power and control shared between the supervisors and subordinates.

Employee empowerment is widely applied by most countries all over the world. In Kenya the concept was first introduced by the private sector management and later the government adopted. In 2003 the public sector reforms and institutional capacity building were initiated. The Government strategic objectives in initiating these were to have an efficient and effective public service management by reducing unnecessary bureaucratic practices. While the concept of gender was adopted through the development of the National gender policy (2000), the main aim of this policy was to ensure gender representations was anchored in all managerial decisions.

1.1.1 Perception

Perception is the process by which organisms interpret and organize sensation to produce a meaningful experience of the world (Lindsay and Norman, 1977). The perception process follows four stages: stimulation, registration, organization, and interpretation. A person's awareness and acceptance of the stimuli play an important role in the perception process. Receptiveness to the stimuli is highly selective and may be limited by a person's existing beliefs, attitude, motivation, and personality (Assael, 1995). Employees in organizations are always considering whether managements' practices are of value to them in terms of: job satisfaction, opportunity for advancement, challenging assignment

increased freedom, opinions about problems involvement in decision making, responsibility and rewards. Perception by employee can either be positive or negative.

Employee perceptions refers to the persons view of reality and as strongly influenced by among other thing individuals perceived value and need (Hodgetts and Hegggar, 2008). Values are determined by the worthiness or benefits of employees' expectations. Expectations are as a result of personal characteristics that include people's attitude, personality, motives, interests past experiences and expectations, self-esteem, intelligence and self-efficacy. Luiser (2008) notes that an employee's perception can be termed as the starting point of employees endeavour towards achievement and successful completion a particular task. This means that successful completion of tasks and acceptance of managers opinions depend on the employees' perception.

1.1.2 Gender Differences

(Tierney, 1999) defined gender as a cultural construct, the distinction in roles, behaviors, and mental and emotional characteristics between females and males developed by the society The society also describes the degrees and properties of being feminine and masculine. Therefore, in its early life stages, a child is grown up around socially constructed gender roles that are attributed to his/her of belongings. The attributes given to males and females have opposite meanings. Feminine role is recognized to be nurturing, expressive, cooperative, and sensitive to the needs of others. Masculine role, on the other hand, is being active, aggressive, dominant, and ambitious (Basow, 1992). Morley (1999) cited that perception differs between genders. He argued that the employees gender, as a physiological, cultural and social concept that has influence on how they perceive and respond to products. Consumers with different genders go through

different experiences that may affect their judgments and preferences for visual information (Yun, 2003).

This difference in expected characteristics gives rise to the different perceptions on matters among male and females. Gender differences in social life enable organizations to differentiate the products and give them opportunity to increase their profit. Consequently, marketers try to investigate possible relationships between gender identity and consumption. Palan (2001) states three major measurement types used for gender identity in behavior. These are Psychological Inventory-Femininity Scale, Sex Role Inventory and the Personal Attributes Questionnaire).

1.1.3 Employee Empowerment Practices

Empowerment in general terms is handing the power of decision and action to the employees and giving them more authority and responsibility to achieve their job and thus customer satisfaction. It means giving employees more influence and control over their jobs. Ettore (1997) defines employee empowerment as employees having autonomous decision making capabilities and acting as partners in the business, all with an eye to the bottom line. Empowerment practices are adapted by organizational management in order to foster employee empowerment (Lawer, 1995). The practices are often implemented with the hopes of overcoming worker dissatisfaction, reducing costs of absenteeism, turnover, poor quality work and sabotage (Klein, Smith-Major and Douglas, 1998).

Empowerment practices helps employees to participate in decision making, break stagnant mindset to risk and try new idea; decide on their own how to solve a problem

rather than waiting for supervisors (Lawer 1995). The goal of empowerment is for an organization to have enthusiastic, committed people who perform their work ably because they believe in it and enjoy doing it. This is in contrast to an organization that gets people to work as an act of compliance. Empowerment can encourage employees to be creative and to take risks, which are key components that can give a firm a competitive edge in a fast challenging environment (Gomez et al., 2010). Empowering employees also means that managers lose some control and must learn to accommodate a more questioning and risk taking work force (Arkin, 1995). According to Marchington and Goodman (1992), employee empowerment consists of those practices which are initiated principally by management and are designed to increase employee information about, and commitment to the organization.

1.1.4 Gender Differences and Employee Empowerment Practices

Employment policies are formulated to provide a policy framework that can boost the potential of economies to create jobs, facilitating job-creating processes and optimizing their potential for employment growth. The policies are also there to provide supportive measures for both women and men to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to fully participate in their economic lives (ILO, 1999). According to Schuler and Boender (2002) in order to address the gender discrimination faced in the world of work, as a matter of fundamental human rights and social justice there is need for the right based equity rationale. Second, there is the economic efficiency rationale, which argues that women can play a critical role as agents capable of transforming organizations and economies. The study however highlighted that employee empowerment and advancement may also be a factor of the diversity of employees and their perceptions on empowerment.

Tierney, (1999) highlighted that the expected difference in characteristics in gender give rise to the different perceptions on matters among male and females. The concept of empowerment implicitly assumes that in all societies, men control women or, to be more precise, men control at least some of the women of their social class, particularly those in their households and families.

1.1.5 State Department of Planning

Following the reorganization of the Government in 2013 the Department of planning was placed under the Ministry of Devolution and Planning. The Ministry derives its mandate from the Executive Order No. 2/2013 of May 2013 on the organization of Government of the Republic of Kenya. The Ministry's five year strategic plan covering 2013/2017– financial years is formulated from the mandate as stipulated in the Executive Order No. 2/2013 of May 2013. The Ministry's Strategic Plan (2013-2017) defines the Ministry's vision, mission, core values, functions, policy priorities, strategic objectives, structure and resource requirements all are formulated towards customer satisfaction. The functions of the State Department of Planning as formulated in the Strategic Plan (2013-2017) include Provision of leadership and coordination in preparation of National development plans, Economic policies, budgetary strategy paper, Management of population, Economic and statistical services with government, Poverty eradication programs and Provision of leadership in national monitoring and evaluation framework.

The functions of the State Department of Planning are executed through four technical directorates namely Macro planning, Sectoral planning, rural planning and Monitoring and Evaluation. The administration department provides the support services and is divided into units which are human resource, supply chain, accounts, information

communication technology (ICT) and Information Education and communication (IEC). The ministry is also supported by eight semi-autonomous government agencies (SAGAs). The ministry has a staff of 596 (five hundred ninety six) employees who are stationed at the headquarters in Nairobi. The staff is composed of various cadres namely the economists, administrators, human resource managers, accountants, finance officers, ICT officers, supply chain managers, secretaries, drivers and support staff.

1.2 Research Problem

Empowerment practices are managerial strategies adopted by organizations to improve productivity, increase customer satisfaction, and enhance competitive advantage. Well-designed empowerment practices motivate employees and increases level of job satisfaction, leading to improved organization performance through increased levels of employees' participation, competencies, and self-determination. Employees develop sense of responsibility, confidence in themselves and their work, ability to perform challenging assignment, solve work problems and provide solutions, gain autonomy towards work and become more creative with new ideas. Hence, employees become deliberately active participants when empowered and believe in the ability of empowerment to have a positive impact in their work performance.

Over the last few years the State Department of Planning has initiated and implemented various practices intended empower employees, these include; Job Training, Job design, participation in decisions concerning work, involvement of employees in strategic decisions and leadership/management styles which are supportive. However, the State Department of Planning empowerment practices are designed as gender neutral(all Similar) and assumed that all practices would empower both males and female equally,

this implies that the practices does not consider any gender differences and that employees performance has not increased uniformly as intended. Different Genders respond differently to some of these practices. The difference in gender perceptions posses a great loss to the department in terms of resources used and time wasted during implementation process of the practices. Gender that perceives disempowered tends to be unwilling to take responsibilities, perform challenging assignments, and has little self-confidence.

The Planning Department stands to benefit through implementation of gender acceptable practices, since the practices builds employee commitment, develop a sense of belonging, increase loyalty while reducing turnovers and absenteeism. Employees will consider the organization as fair and caring. Better understanding of how each gender perceives the empowerment practices would lead to higher organization performance and increased customer satisfaction. The understanding of gender perceptions would also propose solutions to tackle gender problems, and improve gender relations within the department despite their cultural differences.

Several studies have been done on employee perceptions of empowerment practices; however, the studies have not focused on perceptions of gender differences. Odongo (2006) did a study on employee empowerment programs among international NGOs in the Public Health Sector in Kenya. The findings of the study indicate that attributes of empowerment such as autonomy, recognition of their contributions, creativity and innovativeness were correlated highly with job satisfaction. Generally the study established that there is strong relationship between job satisfaction and being empowered. Gumato (2003) did a survey of managers' attitudes towards employee

empowerment and job satisfaction of employees in commercial banks in Kenya. Ndung'u (2005) did a survey of Managers perceptions towards employee empowerment in selected oil companies in Kenya. Key findings of the study was that a higher proportion of managers felt positively towards their employees using techniques of involvement and participation in decision making, training, and supporting employees creativity towards work, being allowed to exercising autonomy in dealing with customers, coaching and mentoring. Monari (2007) identified the factors that influence employee perception of empowerment with a focus on the staff of the University of Nairobi. Key findings of the study was that most employees are empowered with an overall score of 60%, recognition for achievements ,being encouraged to develop creative and innovative ideas are among the factors that influence perceptions of being empowered and Lwangasi (2008) carried out a study on the relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction with a focus on Non-Governmental organizations in Kenya. The findings of study showed a significant relationship between the two variables (attributes of empowerment and job satisfaction). In this respect involvement in decision making, autonomy, teamwork and recognition empowered employees more and contributed to job satisfaction.

All of the studies above did not asses the influence of gender differences in perceptions of employee empowerment practices. The current study therefore seeks to fill this research gap by investigating the differences in gender perceptions of employee empowerment practices in the State Department of Planning. To achieve this, the study sought to answer one research question: What are the differences in gender perceptions of employee empowerment practices in the State Department of Planning?

1.3 Research Objective

To establish the differences in gender perceptions of employee empowerment practices at the State Department of Planning.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of this study would be valuable to policy makers in the area of human resource management in their bid to ensure employee empowerment for sustained organizational performance. Policy experts on matters of human resources management would find the findings of this study valuable as it would provide literature on the formulation of policies and practices of employee empowerment.

The study would also be valuable to the managers at the State Department of Planning since it would provide real time information on the gender differences in employee perceptions of empowerment practices so as to guide development of relevant strategies to ensure higher employee empowerment levels.

For future researchers and scholars, the findings of this study would be important because they would act as a source reference material besides suggesting areas for further research whether they can research on.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter summarized the information from other researchers who have carried out studies on employee perceptions and empowerment practices. Materials were drawn from several sources which are closely related to the theme and the objectives of the study. The influencing variables included employee training programs and the influence of every variable on employees' empowerment was discussed in detail.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

This section covered the two theories that were used for this study namely: social role theory and empowerment theory. These theories explain gender differences and perceptions towards empowerment.

2.2.1 Social Role Theory

This theory explains that the behavior exhibited by men and women in the society are as a result of cultural stereotypes about gender (Eagly et al., 2000). It is generally assumed that the roles of male and female are different, this however dictates how they are supposed to act and the resulting social roles are passed to young generations. Eagly (1995) explains that social roles between men and women are dissimilar, women are supposed to execute household chores at home while men are assumed to work outside home (Peters, Kinsey and Malloy, 2004).

As a result of this sex differences in social behavior, the expectations of men and women have diverged and this has been transmitted to future generations and this may affect the

social behavior of each gender and represent sexual stereotypes in the society (Peters, Kinsey and Malloy, 2004). Eagly (1987) argued that social expectation had a significant influence on the sex differences. He explains that “sex types expectations or gender roles are the shared beliefs about the appropriate behavior that might apply to socially identified sex” for instance the behavior of men and women in the society is defined by a number of factors for example the assumed roles that a certain culture believes should be performed by a man or a woman (McLaughlin, Uggen & Blackstone, 2013). In most cases women develop traits that manifest itself as communal or expressive behavior that prevents women from any of form of aggression. These communal characteristics involve the tendency to be friendly, unselfish, and expressive (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

Social role theory explains that gender disparities are quite flexible since they are dependent on the social role of the individuals. For instance an individual may be engaged in a number of responsibilities all of which may affect the behavior of employees in the work place. Employment positions such as leadership positions for instance may supersede gender roles and reduce gender differences (Eagly, 1997).

2.2.2 Empowerment Theory

Employees’ empowerment is seen as a key ingredient for effective running of the organization. It acts as a motivating factor to enhance employees’ performance in the work place. Employees who exhibit more power than others work extra harder and demonstrate competence in their work. Kanter (1993) employees’ empowerment has also been shown to be essential to the goals and outcomes of shared governance models. Empowerment is evidenced by organizational members who are inspired and motivated

to make meaningful contributions and who have the confidence that their contributions will be recognized and valued (Kluska et al., 2004).

Kanter's (1993) theory of structural empowerment discusses organizational behavior and empowerment. In reference to this theory, empowerment is promoted in the work place whereby employees have access to information, resources, the necessary support, and the opportunity to learn and develop. Kluska et al., (2004) explains that psychological empowerment involves a feeling of competence, independence, job meaningfulness, and the ability to create an impact on the organization. Employees who enjoy power in the work place are more committed to their duties; they are also able to overcome job demands in an effective manner (Siu, Laschinger and Vingilis, 2005).

Larkin and Griffith (2007) explains that empowerment occurs when an organization adopts a participative form of leadership by involving its employees in all key decisions and providing them with an opportunity to be part of the decision making processes this is intended to enhance growth of the organization and employee development. Empowerment develops gradually as employees gain greater control over their lives and increasingly take part in decisions which affect them. Empowerment is one of the most essential tools that can be used by firms to foster self-growth and development if properly implemented (Baston, 2004).

The fundamental principles of employee empowerment are guided by concepts that support successful shared governance structures. These four concepts are namely: equity, ownership, partnership and accountability. Equity is the integration of roles to achieve common goals and willingness of each member to contribute collectively towards

achieving a common goal. On the other hand ownership involves recognition by the individual of the connection between his or her individual job performance and the success of the organization. Partnership involves development of relationships to promote mutual respect, enhanced communication, and collaboration to achieve organizational objectives (Palmier, 1998). Accountability is the willingness to invest in decision making and sharing a sense of responsibility for individual and collective outcomes. When these principles related to the concepts of empowerment are encouraged and cultivated into individual and group behaviors then the workforce is empowered to achieve organizational goals (Degner, 2005).

2.3 Gender Differences

Gender relations refer to a complex system of personal and social relations of domination and power through which women and men are socially created and maintained and through which they gain access to power and material resources or are allocated status within society (Alasdair, 2009). Gender is about men and women. Men and women are not the same: they are not equal nor will they ever be, due to physical and biological conditions. According to Jacobus (1986) even today the women's position or social status within in the society is different from that of men as shown by part of the feminist theory. The women are looked down upon as weaker sex while men are considered as savior. Similarly, Butler (1990) explains that this is one of the major reasons why women are still oppressed in some parts of the world. This means that in social situations like the past the females are still considered lower than the males when it comes to the social acceptability criteria. The Gender differences theorists also believe that gender differentiation also exhibits itself within household including how the work in the household, and family

settings where by the roles of male and female are differentiated. Gender difference perspective examines how women's status in social situations differs from men's. For example, cultural feminists look to the different values associated with womanhood and femininity as a reason why men and women experience the social world differently. Other feminist theorists believe that the different roles assigned to women and men within institutions better explain gender differences, including the sexual division of labor in the household. Women are thus seen as objects and are denied the opportunity for self-realization. Social Role Theory (Eagly 1987), suggests that men and women behave according to the stereotypically expected social roles that they occupy. These are the structured sets of beliefs about the personal attributes, behavior, roles, responsibilities and expectations in a society.

2.4 Employee Empowerment Practices

There are various empowerment practices and initiatives that managements in organizations can adapt to empower their employees. Conger and Kanungo (1988) proposed a number of managerial practices that would led to empowered employees by referring them as to heighten a sense of self efficacy in the employees. These included management practices at organizational level—design and selection of training programs which ensure requisite technical skills are provided and attitudes develop Policies and cultures that encourage self-determination, collaboration, competition, high performance standards, non-discrimination (Rotter, 1966). He also proposed leadership/supervision practices that support subordinates through, expressing confidence in their work, providing and fostering opportunities to participate in decision making, providing

autonomy in achieving tasks, setting inspirational meaningful goals (Burke, 1986). Some of these practices are discussed below:

2.4.1 Job Training

Job Training practice is among the strategies employed by most managers in the organization in support of Employee empowerment to improve employee performance and improve overall organizational performance, through improved quality and quantity of the products, acceptable standards and creating favourable employees attitudes towards work, while reducing accidents, and improving on personal development and minimizing supervision time

(Nzuve and Tsala, 2012) argues that training is one of the key elements to empowerment in an organization. The shift of organizations managerial style from bureaucratic management to empowering managements in organizations have called for change in employees attitudes and behaviours as well as ways of performing their work and set of values that guide the organizations (Appelbaum and Hongger, 1998). This change can be embraced by employees through training to enhance their knowledge, and change of attitude.

The aspect of training is considered important since it enables an employee to acquire skills, knowledge, and change attitude towards work (tasks). Fernandez and Tima (2011) see training as one of the three elements to be present in employees' empowerment to be successful, empowered employees are trained to have effective skills in problem solving communication and identify problems while performing their jobs. Cole (1997) describes training as learning activity which is directed towards acquisition

of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of a job (occupation). Training is therefore, a process to impart knowledge skills and change individuals attitudes and behavior towards work through learning experiences.

For successful training organizations adapts various kinds of training depending on the needs of organization and purpose of training;- among them are: Skills development – new skills are imparted to employee to be able to perform job. These skills enable employees to gain confidence and face new challenges; Professional and technical skills – this is aimed at updating kills in areas of specialization; and supervisory and managerial development skills – these skills are aimed at enhancing employee skills on planning, organizing, decision making techniques and communication.

2.4.2 Job Design

Job design or work design is considered by many writers an essential determinant of the extent to which an employee is empowered, since well-designed jobs provide clear defined roles and responsibilities where officers know their boundaries. Porter (1996) argues that there is power present in a job well designed where by roles and expectations must be clear and therefore enhances empowerment. Organizations design job to be intrinsically, motivate employees and make work easier and accountable. Employees value jobs that are enriched to provide challenging assignment, reduce repetitive routines and monotonous. Jobs that have essential characteristics of task identity, task significance, skills variety, are more satisfying. Enriched jobs provide autonomy and control, task identity provide opportunity for growth and task meaningfulness as a way to empower (Obeng, 2000). These jobs make the employees develop the psychological feeling that they have a personal responsibility.

Job redesigning is the process by which jobs are redesigned so that employees can have more control over the tasks they perform. Organizations which need to use employees' initiatives and abilities in problem solving needs to redesign the jobs for higher job satisfaction. Jobs are redesigned to provide a job with complex tasks (job Enlargement) and enriched characteristics have more potential to meaningful work and self-determination. Obeng (2000) contends Jobs redesigned by encompassing task identity, task significance, skill variety and autonomy and feedback are more intrinsically motivating to workers. Job enlargement: is the changing the scope of the job to include greater portion of the horizontal this includes other assignments associated with the job to make it more interesting and challenging. Job enrichment increases the depth of the job to include responsibilities that have traditionally been carried out by higher levels of the organization.

2.4.3 Employee Involvement and Participation

Employee involvement and participation is an integral part of empowerment, whereby the management creates the opportunity for employee to participate and be involved in organizations decision making. Employee involvement concerns employees being involved in decisions concerning the overall development of organization policy and strategy especially on customer interface and profit sharing. By involving employees in decision making they are intrinsically motivated which in turn gives more autonomy especially those with adequate skills. Carter (2009) and Lee Koh (2001) refer to employee involvement as involving employees in defining work objectives, specifying strategies and setting organizations targets. Buid (2010) in his research found out there were four different approaches to job involvement (Allport, 1943) suggested the first

approach emphasizing that job involvement is an attitude that characterized by active participation at work and therefore the degree to which an employee participates in his job and meetings results to prestige and autonomy over work. Through this approach the individuals seeks self expression, self actualization, self determination and develops the ability to set work pace.

In the second approach (Dubin (1956) is based on central life interest type of job involvement, whereby job involvement as the degree to which the employee perceives his job as the main source of satisfaction. In this respect the employee assumes the total work situation is an important part of his life and satisfies his needs. In the third and fourth approach Hackman (1968) and considers job involvement as central to self-esteem and is referred to as the degree to which employees perceive that his job is central to self-concept. By involving employees in the achievement of goals, employees build self-esteem and confidence. The fourth approach Vroom (1964) who defines job involvement as the degree to which employee perceives that his job performance is consistent with characteristics that are central to self-concept (ability to do work). Nooliza and Hasan (2006) found out that job involvement has a significant impact on empowerment and concludes job involvement as a management practice builds in to the employee characteristics of self-esteem, self-determination, and enhances improved job satisfaction, autonomy, and organizational trust.

The employees participations involves employee participating in running day to day activities of the organization and participating on decision concerning the improvement of business processes. Participating in decision making on work processes involves employees defining their work process, work objectives, , setting targets to be achieved.

Participation therefore implies that employees are involved in making decisions that affect them, their work and organization. Laver (1986) refers to participation as the employees influence over decisions ranging from high level strategic decisions to routine day to day decisions about how to perform their work.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) refers to participation in reference to participative leadership whereby leaders encourage employees to participation in various ways this includes suggesting solutions to a problem and listening to employees ideas during meeting.. (Burke 1986) further explains that participative management techniques are applied in quality management circles and goal setting as a means of sharing power and resources.

Employee involvement participation in the Organizations decision making and policy changes that directly affect them and their job empowers them to be more autonomous and greatly improves moral Employees develop greater commitment that results in the development of employees positive attitudes towards work.. Participation and involvement is therefore an effective form of empowerment provides employees with good working relationship and creative thinking.

2.4.4 Management Style

Management style can be referred to as the management techniques adopted by organizational managers to support or foster opportunities for empowering employees,. Management techniques include delegation, and decentralization of decisions making to the lowest level, Delegated authority and responsibility for important work related activities enable employees make decisions without direct supervisors' interventions (Jung, 2003). Hills (1991) delegating functions that were formerly a management

domain. Today the functions are delegated to employees to removes conditions of feeling sense of powerlessness and increases level of self-efficacy. Increased sense of self efficacy enables employees gain ability to make decisions relating to their work, and develop new ideas. While, delegated duties allow employees to feel that they are involved and participate in their work decisions, leading to self-determination.

It is said that leadership is the ability to influence others. This means that a leader plays an important role in recognizing contributions and efforts of the employees towards the organizations success (Psoins & Smithsons, 2002). Leadership practices which are considered as empowering include expressing confidence to subordinates on their competence and their prospects of high performance Burke (1986). This means a leader who has confidence in the subordinates tends to share the leadership vision, with the employees and gives direction and guidance. Ahearne (2005) supports the argument that empowering leadership style is the process where a leader implements conditions that enable sharing of power with employees by providing opportunity to participate in decision making over job operations.

2.5 Gender Differences and Empowerment Practices

Very little research has been published on factors gender differences in empowerment practices (Raijman, 2001). Although most studies include gender as independent variable they are not particularly designed for investigating gender differences in empowerment intentions. Routamaa (2003) cited that the gender effect is fully mediated by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Psoinos and Smithson (2002) also believe in this experiential perspective on the meaning of empowerment, whereby empowerment is viewed as a set of perceptions and beliefs. Thus, only through

examination of the employees themselves is it possible to measure the level of empowerment that may exist within an organization.

Routamaa (2003) concluded that women have attained a high position in the workplace. However, there is still a vast difference in the gender responsibilities. The study further highlighted gender responsibilities differ even at the workplace. Women have to prove their skills more efficiently on the same level with men which may result into employment discrimination. Companies are now introducing new policies which are more flexible and give everyone an equal chance for empowerment in the work place. The situations are improving due to career advancement of women, but still at a slow pace and some discrimination can be observed in some places. However, there is a possibility of further improvement in the coming years where the policies implemented will prove to be favorable for everyone in the work place (Routamaa, 2003).

Perception plays a key role in the empowerment of employees since the individuals must feel and act as being empowered. According to Greasley, Bryman, Dainty, Price, Naismith and Soetanto (2008), employee's perspectives are crucial because empowerment is not a fixed reality but rather a thing that varies in how it is experienced from individual to individual employee. The process of empowerment can be termed as a two way, whereby, for it to be effective there is win-win situation that is the individual must be willing to be empowered while the management must be willing to empower employees. Empowerment practices are developed and implemented by the management these practices need to be accepted by the employees. The empowerment practices need to ensure that the employee believe that the practices are of value to them (or will add

value to their work life). Carrion (2003) established differences in men and women concerning empowerment, Men, independently of age and time period are considered more influential to the economic and liberal areas of empowerment while women are considered more influential in inter personal areas of empowerment.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methodology that was used in the study. It included the research design, target population of the study, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive research survey was adopted for the study. Descriptive research design was appropriate for this study because it allows the respondents to give information about peoples' attitudes, opinions; habits or any of the variety of social issues (Kothari, 2004). The researcher adopted cross sectional survey design. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), a descriptive study is concerned with finding out the what, where and how of a phenomenon. Descriptive research design has been adapted since it enables the researcher to generalise the findings to a larger population

3.3 Target Population

Kothari (2004) defined population as all the items in any field of inquiry. This is made up of the target population and the accessible population since it constitutes the total number of elements that are being investigated (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The target population of the study consisted of 698 (six hundred ninety eight) staff members from all cadres within the State department of planning . The employees were targeted since they are best placed to identify the empowerment practices in the ministry as they directly affect them. These are distributed as shown in the Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Target Population

Employees cadre	Frequency
Economists	235
Human Resource officers	46
Supply chain officers	44
Accountants and finance	38
ICT officers	23
Administration officers	75
Drivers	47
Clerks	89
Secretaries	71
messengers	30
Total	698

Source staff establishment report (2013)

3.4 Sample Design

A random sample size of 72 (seventy two) representing male and female employees will be drawn from staff within the headquarters. The study used stratified random samplings. Respondents will be stratified into different strata based on department they work in. The ideal sample size for a descriptive study is 10% of the population (Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) 10% of employees were selected from each department, however, where the population of either gender is less than five the sampling will be 1 (one) as shown in the table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Sample size

Employees cadre	frequency		Sample Proportion	Sample population	
	male	female		males	females
Economists	138	97	10%	14	10
Human Resource officers	27	19	10%	3	2
Supply chain officers	27	17	10%	3	2
Accountants and Finance	20	18	10%	2	2
ICT officers	16	7	10%	2	1
Administration officers	44	31	10%	4	3
Drivers	42	5	10%	4	1
Clerks	41	48	10%	4	5
Secretaries	3	68	10%	1	6
messengers	13	17	10%	1	2
Total	371	327	10%	38	34

Source staff establishment report (2013)

3.5 Data Collection

This study collected primary data. The primary data was collected using questionnaire. The questionnaire included both open and closed ended questions. To enhance quality of data, Likert type questions were used whereby respondents were required to indicate the extent to which the statements representing variables apply to them. A five point Likert scale was used.

The structured questions were used in an effort to facilitate easier analysis while the unstructured questions were used so as to encourage the respondent to give an in-depth response without feeling held back in revealing any information. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part A collected Demographic data while part B collected data on employee perceptions of empowering practices. The questionnaire was administered to

the target respondents in person to avoid discussion among staff which may jeopardize the whole study and to ensure a high response rate.

3.6 Data Analysis

This study employed descriptive statistical data analysis to analyze the data obtained. The editing was done to ensure that the data was free from inconsistencies and incompleteness. Since the study sought to establish the perceptions of the empowerment practices between the male and female gender, the data was a cross tabulation between the empowerment practices and the gender of the respondent. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequency distribution mean and standard deviation were used in the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of the data collected from respondents on the differences in gender perceptions of employee empowerment practices at the State Department of Planning.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 72 questionnaires were administered out of which 61 were filled and returned giving a response rate of 84.7%. This response rate was made a reality after the researcher dropped the questionnaires and made personal visits and phone calls to the respondents who then completed the questionnaires as presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

	Frequency	Percent
Completed	61	84.7%
Uncompleted	11	15.3%
Total	72	100.0

Source: Author 2014

4.3 Demographic Information

4.3.1 Gender of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the gender distribution of the respondents as shown in the table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Gender of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	33	54.1
Female	28	45.9
Total	61	100.0

Source : Author, 2014

From the findings above, the males were the majority of the respondents at 54.1% while females were 45.9%.

4.3.2 Age of the Respondents

The study sought to establish the age bracket of the respondents as shown in the table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Age Bracket of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
20-30 years	6	9.8
31-40 year	25	41.0
41-50 years	16	26.2
51-60 years	14	23.0
Total	61	100.0

Source: Author, 2014

From the findings on the table 4.3, Age 20-30 years were 9.8% (6) respondents, 31-40 year were 41.0% (25), 41-50 years were 26.2% (16) and 23.0% (14) of the respondents were those between 51-60 years of age.

4.3.3 Respondents' Level of Education

The study sought to establish the level of education of the respondents as shown on table 4.4

Table 4. 4: Respondents' Level of Education

	Frequency	Percent
Certificate level	6	9.8%
Diploma level	13	21.3%
Degree level	17	27.8%
Post Graduate Diploma level	9	14.8%
Masters Level	14	23.0%
PhD level	2	3.3%
Total	61	100.0

Source : Author, 2014

From the findings on table 4.4, 9.8% (6) of the respondents had their highest level of education at certificate level, 21.3% (13) of the respondents had reached diploma level, 27.8% (17) of the respondents had reached degree level, 14.80% (9) of the respondents had reached postgraduate diploma level, 23.08% (14) of the respondents had reached masters level and 3.3% (2) respondents had reached PhD level.

4.3.4 Years Worked in the Ministry

The study sought to establish the years the respondents had worked as shown in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Year worked in the Ministry

	Frequency	Percent
1 to 5 years	9	14.8%
6 to 10 years	10	16.4%
11 to 15 years	13	21.3%
16 to 20years	14	23.0%
21 to 25years	11	18.0%
above 26 years	4	6.6%
Total	61	100.0%

Source : Author, 2014

The findings are shown in table 4.5 above. Majority of the respondents 23.0% (14) had worked for between 16 to 20 years, 21.3% (13) of the respondents had worked for between 11 to 15 years, 18.0% (11) of the respondents had worked for between 21 to 25 years, 16.4% (10) of the respondents had worked for between 6 to 10years, 14.8% (9) of the respondents had worked for between 1 to 5years and 6.6% (4) respondents had worked for over 26 years as shown in table 4.5.

4.4 Employee Perceptions on Empowerment Practices

The study further did a cross tabulation between perceptions of the empowerment practices and gender of the respondents. The findings of the respondents' gives the extent of the level of agreement on statements relating to their perception on empowerment practices, on a scale of 1-5 where 1=does not apply, 2=less extent, 3= moderate extent, 4= great extent and 5= very great extent as shown in table 4.6.

4.4.1 Perception on Empowerment Environment

Table 4.6 below gives findings of the respondents' level of agreement on statements relating to their perception on empowerment environment.

Table 4.6: Perception on Empowerment Environment

Perceptions on Empowerment Environment				
Statements	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Empowerment practices in this department creates a work environment which helps me to foster the ability and desire to feel and act empowered	M	33	3.48	1.034
	F	28	3.11	1.031
Empowerment practices in this department are effective in increasing my level of job satisfaction	M	33	3.03	1.237
	F	28	4.29	.937
Empowerment practices in this department encourages employees to be initiative and creative	M	33	3.45	1.092
	F	28	3.31	1.061
Empowering practices in this department helps to distribute power, information, knowledge and rewards downwards to the subordinates within the department	M	33	3.30	1.132
	F	28	3.50	1.202
Empowerment practices this department enables me tackle task problems and provide solutions to the problems rather than wait for approval from my supervisors	M	33	3.33	1.080
	F	28	3.50	1.106
Empowerment practices in this department consider the needs of all employees equally	M	33	3.85	.906
	F	28	2.82	1.090

Source: Author, 2014

From the findings on table 4.6 above, creating work environment that fosters the ability and desire to feel and act empowered majority of both respondents (male and female) agreed to a Moderate Extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.48,1.031) and (3.11,1.03) respectively.

When asked concerning the effectiveness of empowerment practices in increasing the level of job satisfaction majority [male) respondents agreed to less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.03, 1.237) as compared to majority of females who agreed to great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.29, 0.937).Regarding encouragement of initiatives and creativity majority of both gender (males) and female) agreed to a moderate extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.45, 1.092) and (3.31, 1.06) respectively.

The ability of empowerment environment to distribute power, information knowledge and rewards downwards to the subordinates, majority of both respondents (male and female agreed to moderate extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.30 ,1.132)and (3.50,1.202 When asked if empowerment practices considers the needs of employees equally before implementing the practices majority of male respondents agreed to great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.85,0.906) compared to majority of females who agreed to less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (2.82,1.090)

4.4.2 Perception on Job Training

The study further did a cross tabulation between Perceptions of job training and the gender of the respondents. The findings were as illustrated in the Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Perception on Job Training

Perception on Job Training				
Statements	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel I have acquired adequate skills and knowledge from training provided by the department	M	33	4.03	1.159
	F	28	4.06	1.025
Training have enabled me change my attitude towards the job I perform work	M	33	4.03	1.045
	F	28	3.61	1.197
Training has equipped me with effective skills on supervisory, communication, customer service, and leadership.	M	33	4.15	1.121
	F	28	3.96	1.071
I am competent on my job due to the training I have attended.	M	33	4.03	1.132
	F	28	4.07	1.052
Effective skills in identifying work problems and problem solving	M	33	3.06	.933
	F	28	3.18	1.090
My career has developed due to the trainings I have received	M	33	3.24	1.200
	F	28	3.07	1.215
Training programmes offered in this department consider the needs of all employees equally	M	33	3.73	.876
	F	28	2.57	.920

Source : Author, 2014

From the findings of the table above on acquisition of knowledge and skills from trainings provided by the department majority of both male and females agreed to very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.03,1.159) and(4.06,1.025) respectively.

when asked if there is change of attitude due to job trainings majority of males agreed to very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.03,1.159) and females agreed to great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.61,1.197).

Regarding competence on the job due to training attended majority of both males and females agreed to very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.03,1.132) and(4.07,1.052) respectively.

On acquiring effective skills to identify work problems and problem solving through trainings attended Majority of both Male and Female respondents indicated to a moderate extent (3.06, 1.199) respectively

Findings on career development to the trainings provided, Majority of both Male and female respondents agreed to moderate extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.24, 1.200) and (3.07, 1.215) respectively.

When asked if the department considers the needs of all employees equally when designing and implementing the training programmes, majority of male respondents agreed to great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.73,0.183) and (2.57,2.192) respectively.

4.4.3 Perceptions on Job Design

The study did a cross tabulation between Perception on job design and the gender of the respondents. The findings are illustrated as in table 4.8 below:

Table 4.8: Perception on Job Design

Perception on Job Design				
	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Roles and responsibility on my job are clear and specific	M	33	4.00	1.250
	F	28	3.46	1.374
The job I perform intrinsically motivate me because the design has made work easier to perform and interesting	M	33	4.05	0.794
	F	28	3.75	1.076
I feel competent in solving work problems and providing solutions in exceptional situations occur	m	33	3.61	1.090
	F	28	3.61	1.076
The job I perform is repetitive and monotonous	M	33	4.55	.833
	F	28	4.21	1.197
I feel empowered when performing challenging assignments	m	33	3.55	1.092
	F	28	3.46	1.232
I am responsible and accountable for the results of those tasks of my job that I have control over	M	33	3.88	1.023
	F	28	2.50	2.001
I have more freedom and latitude (autonomy) to make over my job on the standards and quality to be achieved	m	33	3.85	1.071
	F	28	2.75	1.110

Source : Author, 2014

Table 4.8 above show the findings on perception on job design from the findings, majority of both males and females agreed to a very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.00,1.250) and (3.46,1.274) respectively that roles and responsibilities of the job they perform are clear and specific

On whether job design has made the jobs they intrinsically motivating, majority of both males and females agreed to a very great extent and great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.05, 0.790) and (3.75,1.076) respectively.

Majority of both male and female respondents further agreed to a great extent that they are competent in solving work related problems and providing solutions when exceptional situations occur as shown with a mean of (3.61,1.090) and (3.61,1.076) respectively

Majority of the respondents (males and females) further agreed to a very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.45, 0.833) and (4.21, 0.197) respectively, that when performing repetitive and monotonous duties that they felt frustrated, and majority of both male and female respondents agreed to a great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.55,1.092) and (3.46,1.232) respectively, that they feel empowered when performing jobs that include challenging assignment.

When asked if they are responsible and accountable for the tasks of the job they have control over majority of male respondents agreed to a great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.88,1.023) compared to females who agreed to less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (2.50,2.001)

When asked if they have more freedom and latitude (autonomy) to make decisions over their jobs majority of male respondents agreed to a great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.85,0.1.074) compared to majority of females who agreed to less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (2.75,2.110)

4.4.4 Perception on Involvement and Participation

The study further did a cross tabulation between Perceptions on involvement and participation and the gender of the respondents. The findings are illustrated as in the table 4.9 below:

Table 4.9: Perception on Involvement and Participation

Perception on Involvement and Participation				
Statements	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am Involved in making decisions that affect my work	M	33	4.36	.822
	F	28	4.11	.956
I am Involved in making decisions concerning setting goals, objectives and performance targets for the department	M	33	2.71	.2150
	F	28	2.67	1.291
I participate in setting performance targets for the job that I perform	M	33	4.03	1.212
	F	28	4.11	1.370
I participate in decisions making concerning rewarding for performance improvement, innovation and creativity.	M	33	2.67	1.291
	F	28	2.68	1.249
I participate in making decisions concerning work processes and setting work schedules	M	33	4.00	1.225
	F	28	3.89	1.166
I have access to information that I need to make good decisions concerning my work	M	33	4.00	.791
	F	28	2.61	1.133
My self-esteem and confidence increases when I am involved in achievement of organizational goals	M	33	4.18	.950
	F	28	4.14	.970

Source : Author, 2014

From the table above, When respondents were asked if they were involved in decision making that affect their work majority of both males and female agreed to a very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.36,0.822) and(4.11,0.956)

When respondents were further asked if they were involved in making decisions concerning setting goals, objectives and targets for the department, majority of the respondents (both male and female) agreed they were involved to a less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (2.71,2.150) and(2.68,1.249) respectively.

On whether, the respondents participate in setting performance targets for the job they perform majority of both males and females agreed they participate to a very great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.03,0.989) and(4.11,0.956) respectively.

On whether, the respondents participate in decision making concerning rewarding for performance improvement, innovation and creativity majority of the both males and females agreed to a less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (2.71,2.150) and(2.68,1.249) respectively.

When asked if the level of self-esteem and confidence increased when involved achievement of organizational goals, majority of male respondents agreed to a great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (4.00,0.791) compared to the female who perceived to a less extent with a mean and standard deviation of (2.61,1.133) respectively.

4.4.5 Perception on Management/Supervisors style

The study did a cross tabulation between Perception on Management/supervisors styles of empowerment and the gender of the respondents. The findings are illustrated as in the table 4.10 below:

Table 4.10: Perception on Management/supervisors style

Perception on Management/supervisors style				
Statements	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am given the opportunity to suggest process improvements on my job	M	33	3.39	1.321
	F	28	2.93	1.184
My supervisor values my ideas, suggestions and inputs towards the success of the department	M	33	3.15	1.278
	F	28	2.96	1.201
My supervisors delegates duties and responsibilities to provide opportunities for challenging assignments	M	33	3.58	1.062
	F	28	3.43	1.103
My supervisors shares information about services provided, service delivery, process performance of organization, organizations goals and objectives and provides feedback at all levels	M	33	2.06	2.827
	F	28	2.04	2.922
My supervisors guides me through coaching and mentoring	M	33	4.21	.740
	F	28	3.11	1.166
My supervisors encourages me to be innovative and creative to improve job quality and productivity	M	33	4.52	.619
	F	28	4.25	.752
My supervisor encourages me to continuously develop my carrier	M	33	3.85	.939
	F	28	3.46	1.170
I am consulted to give ideas and opinion when change is needed	M	33	3.58	1.001
	F	28	3.21	1.101
I am capable of tackling all work related problems when assignments are delegated to me	M	33	3.27	1..801
	F	28	3.18	1.109
Higher management allows adequate and appropriate training to deal with change	M	33	3.09	1.128
	F	28	3.11	1.315

Source: Author, 2014

From the findings on table 4.10 above, majority of the respondents (male and female) agreed to a moderate extent that they are given the opportunity to suggest process improvements on their job as shown with a mean of (3.39, 2.93) and a deviation of (1.321, 1.184).

Regarding the statement as to whether the supervisor values their ideas, suggestions and inputs towards the success of the department, majority of those interviewed agreed to moderate extent as shown with a mean and standard deviation of (3.15, 1.278) and (2.96, 1.201).respectively. The respondents agreed further to a great extent that their supervisors delegates duties and responsibilities to provide opportunities for challenging assignments as shown with a mean and standard deviation of o (3.58, 1.062) and (3.43,1.103) respectively.

Asked whether their supervisors share information about services provided, service delivery, process performance of organization, organizations goals and objectives and provides with a mean and standard deviation of feedback, majority of those interviewed agreed to a less extent as shown with a mean and standard (2.06, 2.047) and a deviation of (2.04,2.922).

The respondents were further asked whether their supervisors encourages them to be innovative and creative to improve job quality and productivity, majority of them agreed to a great extent as shown with mean and standard of (4.52, 0.69) and (4.520, 0.752).respectively

When asked whether their supervisors encourages them to continuously develop their carrier, majority of those interviewed (Male and female) agreed to a great extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.85, 0.939) and (3.46, 1.170) respectively.

Further, regarding whether higher management allows adequate and appropriate training to deal with change, majority of those interviewed agreed to a moderate extent with a mean and standard deviation of (3.09,1.128) and a deviation of (3.11,1.315) respectively

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The summary of findings, discussions, conclusion and recommendations arrived at in this chapter are restricted to the mandate and objectives of this study. Suggestions for future research have also been made.

5.1 Summary

The study was designed to find out differences in gender perceptions of employee empowerment practices at the State Department of Planning. The response rate for this study was 84.7%. The study established that majority of the respondents at were males at 54.1% while females comprised 45.9%. The study also established that the age bracket of the respondents from State Department of Planning. The study also established that 41.0% (25) of the respondents were aged between 31-40 year, 26.2% (16) of the respondents were aged between 41-50 years, and 23.0% (14) of the respondents were aged between 51-60 years of age while 9.8% (6) of the respondents were aged between 20-30 years.

Regarding the respondents level of education, the study established that majority of the respondents 24.6% (15) had reached diploma level, followed by 23.0% (14) of the respondents who had reached postgraduate diploma level. 21.3% (13) of the respondents had reached degree level, 14.8% (9) of the respondents had reached masters level, the

study also established that 9.8% (6) of the respondents had their highest level of education at certificate level and 6.6% (4) of the respondents had reached PhD level.

The study found out that both males and females employees perceived that a conducive empowerment environment influence empowerment to moderate extent. The following attributes of empowerment environment were perceived empowering by majority of both males and females; creating work environment that fosters ability and desire to feel and act empowered, encouraging initiative and creativity and distribution of power, knowledge and information.

However, the study established that there was a significant gender difference in the perceptions of Empowerment environment. The following attributes of empowerment environment showed gender difference males perceived level of Job Satisfaction to less Extent while that of females perceived to a great Extent and on whether the department considered of the needs of employees equally during developing and implementation of empowerment programmes males perceived to a great Extent while the females perceived to a less Extent.

On Job training generally both males and females perceived training had provided them with adequate knowledge and skills and therefore competent in their work. However, there was a significant gender difference on the perceptions of the training especially on whether the training programmes developed and implemented by the department considering the needs of all employees. Majority male respondents perceived to a great extent compared to females who perceived to a less extent.

From the findings on perceptions of job design gender differences were not established, majority of both males and females perceived to a great extent that the jobs they perform are clear and specific, and includes challenging assignment, however , majority of both males and females respondents perceived to a very great extent that when they perform repetitive and monotonous assignments are frustrated.

On the Perceptions towards involvement and participation in decision making within the department, majority of both males and females perceived they were involved decision making concerning their work, setting performance target on their work to a very Great Extent ,and less extent involved in the setting of goals, objectives and performance targets of the department and making decisions concerning rewards. However, gender difference was noted in the level of self-esteem and confidence and involved achievement of organizational goals, male respondents perceived to a very Great Extent compared to the female who perceived to a less Extent

Perceptions on management and supervisors styles of empowering, male respondents perceived the supervisors consulted and encouraged them to a great extent while female respondents perceived to a moderate extent. However, the Gender differences was established in the perceptions of guiding through coaching and mentoring males perceived to great extent compared to females who perceived was to a less extent.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that there gender differences on the perceptions of empowerment practices in the state department of planning. However generally, both males and females

perceived that most of the empowerment practices implemented by the department are empowering and enabled them to feel and act empowered.

The study established that majority male respondents agreed to a less extent that empowerment practices in the department were effective in increasing their level of job satisfaction. The study concludes that males did not perceive empowerment environment as effective in increasing their level of job satisfaction. While females perceived the needs of each employee were not equally considered in the development of empowerment programmes and therefore they perceived this empowerment practice as unfair

Regarding perceptions on job training the study also concludes that majority of respondents both males and female agreed to a very great extent that job training they have acquired knowledge, skills and abilities, changed attitude on the job and their careers has developed from trainings provided by the department. However, the study concludes that there are gender differences in that females perceived designs of training programmes does not consider the needs of all employees equally.

On perception on job design, the study established that majority of the respondents agreed to a great extent that roles and responsibility on their job are clear and specific and that the job they perform intrinsically motivates them. The study therefore concludes that generally the job design however both respondents agreed to be frustrated by jobs which are monotonous.

Regarding perceptions on involvement and participation in decision making in the department both males and female employees perceived as empowering involvement and

participation in work decisions and setting performance while and perceived as disempowered on involvement in decision making on setting of departments goals, objectives and performance targets and rewards for performance targets, however, the study concludes gender difference was established in perceptions of self-esteem and confidence females perceived that their self-esteem and confidence did not improve when involved in achievement of organizational goals.

The study generally concludes that both genders perceived empowerment practices through involvement and participation in areas of decision making concerning job they perform and setting performance targets empowered them.

On perceptions on management and Supervisors style of empowerment , the study established that majority of both respondents agreed to a very great extent that they are given the opportunity to suggest process improvements on their job and that their supervisors share information about services provided, service delivery, process performance of organization, organizations goals and objectives and provides feedback. The study established that majority of both males and females who were interviewed agreed to moderate extent that their supervisor values their ideas suggestions and inputs towards the success of the department and that their supervisors delegates duties and responsibilities to provide opportunities for challenging assignments., The study therefore concludes that the respondents had a divided opinion on the said statements. The study concludes that there was a significant gender differences on the management and supervisor's style of empowerment females perceived that they were not empowered by supervisors through coaching and mentoring. The study therefore concludes that empowerment practices in

the department were perceived as empowering however significant gender differences were noted which needs to be addressed

5.4 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations. On perception on empowerment environment the study concludes that there was a gender difference on how the males perceived effectiveness of empowerment in increasing their level of job satisfaction. The males felt that their level of job satisfaction did not increase while females perceived empowerment programmes did not consider the needs of all employees equally. The study therefore recommends that the state department of planning should understand and consider the needs of all employees equally to enable them to perceive working environment to be conducive and empowering .

On perceptions of training the study concludes that the respondents (both genders) perceived they acquired adequate knowledge and skills, however, females perceived that the training programmes do not equally consider their needs. The study therefore recommends that effective training programmes should be put in place while considering the needs of all employees (in particular the female) equally and fairly.

On job design, the study concludes that there was gender difference, females perceive they were less accountable for the results of the task of their job that they have control over have less autonomy on their jobs . The study therefore recommends that females should be empowered enough to feel they are responsible and accountable for the results and have autonomy over their jobs.

Regarding the perceptions on involvement and participation in decision making, the study concluded that the respondents both male and females respondents are less involved in the decisions making concerning setting goals, objectives and performance targets for the department. The study recommends that the employees be involved more in decision making concerning setting goals, objectives and performance targets and decisions on rewarding for performance improvement, innovation and creativity for the department to enable them feel as partners in decision makings process of the organisation of the department. Involvement and participation therefore help to improve the employee's relations.

On perceptions on management, supervisors styles of empowerment. The study concluded that there was gender difference exhibited, females perceived that the supervisors really guides them through coaching and mentoring . The study recommends therefore that supervisors coaches all employees.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The study focused on both male and female employees since they are best placed to identify the empowerment practices in the department since they directly affect them. The respondents being busy with their work some at managerial levels, it was hard to convince them to take part in the questionnaires and some actually declined taking part in the study.

The researcher also encountered problems in eliciting information from the respondents as the information required was subject to areas of perceptions, which could not be

accurately quantified and verified objectively. The use of likert scale only gave the respondents a few options which they may not have fully agreed, while, some respondents may not have liked to be extremist in the choices and therefore remained moderate.

Given the small sample (61 respondents), the confidence and hence the result projections of the study could have been compromised, which therefore might have implied generalizing certain circumstances.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

In connection with further research, the researcher recommends the following:

That study on other dimensions of employee empowerment be carried out among other government institutions. For instance one might be interested in investigating the relationship between employee empowerment practices and employee productivity among ministries

The environment in which institutions operate is highly dynamic, the magnitude, speed, unpredictability and the impact of change are greater than ever before and organizations have to cross check their environment constantly to ensure they remain competitive. Employees' needs and expectations are also changing. Given the changes, it is recommended that a system be in place which helps us to understand employee empowerment practices.

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APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is intended to collect data on Gender differences in perceptions of employee empowerment practices.

Thank you for taking your time to fill this questionnaire. Your response to the questions will be treated with confidentiality

Please give answers in the spaces provided and tick as appropriate []

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION.

1. What is your gender (a) Male [] b). Female []
2. Indicate your job cadre (title) _____
3. Indicate your age bracket (a) 20-30 years [] (b)31-40 year []
(c) 41-50 years [] (d) 51-60 years []
4. What is your highest level of education?
Primary level [] Certificate level [] Diploma level [] Degree level []
Post Graduate Diploma level [] Masters Level [] PhD level []
Any other (Specify).....
5. How many years have you worked in this Ministry?
1 to 5 years [] 6 to 10 years [] 11 to 15 years [] 16 to 20years []
21 to 25years [] above 26 years []
6. What role do you play in the empowerment of employees
Please explain _____

SECTION B: EMPLOYEE PERCEPTIONS ON EMPOWERMENT PRACTICES

(7) The table below presents statements on empowerment practices. Please rank the extent to which you agree with each of the statements on a scale of 1-5 where 1=does not apply, 2=less extent, 3= moderate extent, 4= great extent and 5= very great extent.

	Perceptions on empowerment environment	1	2	3	4	5
7.1	Empowerment practices in this department creates a work environment which helps me to foster the ability and desire to feel and act empowered					
7.2	Empowerment practices in this department are effective in increasing my level of job satisfaction.					
7.3	Empowerment practices in this department encourages employees to be initiative and creative					
7.4	Empowering practices in this department helps to distribute power, information, knowledge and rewards downwards to the subordinates within the department					
7.5	Empowerment practices this department enables me tackle task problems and provide solutions to the problems rather than wait for approval from my supervisors					
7.6	Empowerment practices in this department consider the needs of all employees equally					
	Perceptions on job training					
7.6	I feel I have acquired adequate skills and knowledge from training provided by the department					
7.7	Training have enabled me change my attitude towards the job I perform work					
7.8	Training has equipped me with effective skills on supervisory, communication, customer service, and leadership.					
7.9	I am competent on my job due to the training I have attended.					
7.10	My career has developed due to the trainings I have received					
7.11	Training programmes offered in this department consider the needs of all employees equally					
	Perceptions on job design					
7.12	Roles and responsibility on my job are clear and specific					
7.13	The job I perform intrinsically motivate me because the design has made work easier to perform and interesting					
7.14	I feel competent in solving work problems and providing solutions in exceptional situations occur.					
7.15	The job I perform is repetitive and monotonous					

7.16	I feel empowered when performing challenging assignments					
7.17	I am responsible and accountable for the results of those tasks of my job that I have control over					
7.18	I have more freedom and latitude (autonomy) to make over my job on the standards and quality to be achieved					
	Perceptions on involvement and participation in decision making					
7.19	I am Involved in making decisions that affect my work					
7.20	I am Involved in making decisions concerning setting goals, objectives and performance targets for the department					
7.21	I participate in setting performance targets for the job that I perform					
7.22	I participate in decisions making concerning rewarding for performance improvement, innovation and creativity.					
7.23	I participate in making decisions concerning work processes and setting work schedules					
7.26	I have access to information that I need to make good decisions concerning my work					
7.24	My self esteem and confidence increases when I am involved in achievement of organizational goals					
	Perceptions on Management /supervisors					
7.25	I am given the opportunity to suggest process improvements on my job.					
7.26	My supervisor values my ideas, suggestions and inputs towards the success of the department					
7.27	My supervisors delegates duties and responsibilities to provide opportunities for challenging assignments					
7.28	My supervisors shares information about services provided, service delivery, process performance of organization, organizations goals and objectives and provides feedback at all levels					
7.29	My supervisors guides me through coaching and mentoring					
7.33	My supervisors encourages me to be innovative and creative to improve job quality and productivity					
7.31	My supervisor encourages me to continuously develop my carrier					
7.32	I am consulted to give ideas and opinion when change is needed					
7.33	I am capable of tackling all work related problems when assignments are delegated to me					
7.34	Higher management allows adequate and appropriate training to deal with change					