

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INFORMATION SHARING AND EMPLOYEE  
COMMITMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A CASE OF MINISTRY OF TRADE**



**BY**

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## DECLARATION

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

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Date 23/12/2008

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## DEDICATION

*In memory of Monicah Wanza Kiandiko, especially for her lessons in doggedness.*

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Finally, I wish to thank Mike Koti and Julia for assisting in taking care of immense office workloads, once in a while, when I had to beat deadlines to submit assignments

To all of you I say Thank you and God bless you.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study aimed at determining whether or not information sharing has any relationship to employee commitment in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of trade.

The population of interest was the members of staff in this ministry and a sample was drawn from both headquarter and field station offices. A sample of 40 employees was targeted. Primary data was collected using questionnaires. The drop and pick method was used to administer the questionnaires and the response rate was 90% with 36 of the returned questionnaires being processed and passed for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used in data analysis and comparative analysis was done.

The study brought out a positive correlation between information sharing and employee commitment in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade. The respondents indicate that information sharing is exercised better at the headquarters and field stations closest to the headquarters. This is where most employee commitment has been registered. Respondents from field stations further away from the headquarters indicated discontentment with the way information was shared and were not.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry for Trade needs to streamline channels of information sharing to make them more efficient and effective.

The study has also brought out the fact that, information sharing has not been exercised as much as is needed. A study to determine to what extends information sharing influences employee commitment needs to be carried out. Such a study would compliment this study and will provide a guidance on how much emphasize should be placed on information sharing in the civil service sector of Kenya and in particular, in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade. Further, there is a great need to carry out a study to determine the factors that influence information sharing in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade, and in the wider civil service sector of Kenya. Another interesting study area would be a study on how the foregoing factors affect performance in the civil service sector of Kenya. This would be most relevant given the fact that the public service sector of Kenya has embraced performance contracting as a way of enhancing service delivery.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The deployment of information-sharing systems in large organizations can significantly impact existing policies and procedures with regard to authority and control over information. Stewart Helen, et al, (2002) notes that, without careful design, information sharing systems have the potential to disturb organizational balance along two central axes: Information control and organizational authority.

Information is a valuable organizational resource and the responsibility either to disseminate or withhold information is delegated to individuals with appropriate oversight and authority within the organization. Coulouris and Dollimore (2001:251-292)

Cremers and Stiemerling (1997:2) notes that, while there is a certain need to exert information control and organizational authority, a successful organization balances these needs against the benefits of supporting open access to information and looser lines of authority.

According to Capelli and Crocker (1996:7-22), current thinking in management places a lot of emphasis on the link between human resource practices and

competitive advantage. Distinctive human resource practices help organizations to create unique competences and determine how firms compete.

According to Bavendam (2000), the level of individual performance is a function of ability, motivation and opportunity. Higher job satisfaction is related to higher work quality and this results in higher employee commitments.

Business success in the digital era is driven by information; knowledge sharing within organizations is crucial but not easy to achieve. If knowledge is power, then what motivates a worker to give up a source of advantage? If a worker shares knowledge, can he/she trust that it will be used correctly, or that he/she will be acknowledged for his/her contribution? Why should he/she take time from his/her tasks to share information with others? In some organizations, even admitting that you need information may be perceived as risky. Understanding the different factors that motivate workers to share knowledge, and the ways that those factors interact, can help managers create an environment that results in the greatest amount of knowledge sharing, utilization and performance.

Quigley, N. et al; (2007:71-88) combine three different theories of motivation and explain how their interactions affect knowledge sharing and utilization in ways that affect performance.

Fahey and Prusak (1998:2-5) observe that, if knowledge is not something that is different from data or information, then there is nothing new or interesting in

knowledge management. Unfortunately, many years later, many still steadfastly refuse to draw the distinction between information and knowledge. It is important to make this distinction.

The major difference between information and knowledge is people. Information is available on the Web, in books, manuals, documents, and in people. But whereas information can exist separately from people, knowledge does not. Brown and Duguid (2002) observe that, knowledge entails a knower, whether a person, team, network or community. Knowledge is an extraordinary blend of judgment, insight, intuition, and inspiration created through on-going learning and reflection on practice. While information tells us what, knowledge tells us how and why.

Living by this distinction demands a fundamentally different approach to working with knowledge in today's organizations. Although many firms continue to spend millions of unrecoverable dollars on the latest technologies in a doomed-from-the-start effort to capture and warehouse knowledge, the tide is beginning to turn as the intellectual bankruptcy of the techno-centric management approach is revealed.

### **1.1.1 Information sharing**

When a young child goes to put their hand on a hot burner of a stove, a nearby adult will quickly tell the young child not to do that 'because the burner is hot'. The adult will typically further explain that the hot burner can burn and hurt the child. When a teenager goes to pick up a hot pan of food (without an oven mitt or

potholder), a nearby adult may tell the teenager that the pan is hot but provide no further explanation. The adult assumes the teenager understands the implications of picking up a hot pan without an oven mitt or potholder. However, in some collaborative situations the implications of shared information may not be clear to those receiving the information. In sum, individuals may not realize that they have specialized knowledge or skills that allows them to understand the implications of information in unique ways and/or that others may not have the time to develop that understanding. Those receiving the information may not ask about the implications of the information because they superficially understand the information. Individuals express emotions in their speech to help convey information; Scherer (2003). For example, the phrase, 'I tripped', can have different meanings based on which emotions are communicated along with the words. When said in a laughing manner the implied message is that no serious injury occurred. When said in an anxious tone of voice, the implied message is that the speaker sustained injuries.

Sharing information must be managed to ensure that, people are provided with the information that they need (not too little, not too much) when they need it. Good communication is critical if people on a job team are to all pull in the same direction — toward project success (Talja and Hansen, 2006:113-134).

### **1.1.2 Employee commitment**

According to Mowday et al; (1982), effective employee commitment is a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. While the line managers have a greater responsibility in performance and delivery of organizational goals, employee commitment is key to achieving these organizational goals; Ulrich and Lake, (1990). Commitment may be seen as a more global response to an organization; Wiener, (1982). Commitment suggests more of an attachment to the employing organization rather than to specific tasks, location where duties are performed and the environmental factors facing an organization (Mowday et al; 1982).

### **1.1.3 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of Trade**

Since independence, various ministries have executed the role of coordinating trade in Kenya. These include the Ministry of Commerce (1985-1993), the Ministry of Industrial Development and the Ministry of Trade (1998-2000), Ministry of Tourism, Trade and Industry (2000-2001), Ministry of Trade and Industry (2002-2007) and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of Trade as it is known to day. Thus this ministry has had frequent re-organizations. The reasons for these re-organizations may be either political in nature or the result of different policy

priorities that prevailed during different periods of Kenya's post-Independence history.

The ministry has continued to play an important role in economic development, irrespective of its reference or affiliation and this can be traced back to the *Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1965 on African Socialism and its application to planning in Kenya*. This paper recognized the importance of trade to national development.

Until early 2008, the mandate of this ministry was to formulate trade development policies and strategies. It was specifically responsible for; trade development policy, international trade development, consumer protection and the development of Micro and Small Enterprise, among others.

While the mandate of the ministry has not really changed, the ministry currently seeks to adopt a strategy that gives the policy direction as the country moves from the *Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (2003-2007)* to the *First Medium Term Plan (MTP 2008-2012)* in line with vision 2030. The ministry has consciously leaned towards customer service and in particular has sought to promote partnerships with the private sector. In doing so, the ministry's current strategy takes into consideration earlier ministerial policies including the *Private Sector Development Strategy (2006-2010)* and the *National Trade Policy*.



## **1.2 Problem statement.**

Studies on many parameters and their influence on commitment on the job have been carried out in relation to the public service sector in Kenya. The effects of remuneration, job satisfaction, and management practice among other factors, on performance on the job have been studied; Mududa (1983), Jean Mulwa (2002), Okoth (2003), Ng'ang'a (2004) and Njega (2006). However, no study has been done on how the sharing of information affects commitment in the civil service sector of Kenya.

The official secrets act, that governs the divulging of official information, has been blamed for the perpetual lack of free flow of information from the public sector to relevant users. Unfortunately, the public sector itself appears to have suffered more from this lack free flow of information. While the control of official information is necessary, the down side to it has been the fact that, the public service employees have been so much indoctrinated by this act that, even the flow of information from one public servant to another has been severely restricted. Despite the evident importance of information sharing towards employee commitment and the resulting performance, a detailed literature review reveals that, studies on effects of information sharing in organizations have not been carried out. With organizations increasingly adopting performance contracting and the accompanying target setting, the issue of performance has taken center stage in organizational

management and employee commitment has therefore assumed a major significance in the work place. Since the issue of information sharing has been a thorny issue in the public service sector, it is time this appropriate study is undertaken. Public service officers normally have to be vetted at different levels, implying that not many employees are authorized to handle all government information even in one department. This has led to duplication of efforts, not just among government ministries but, more unbelievably, departments in the same ministry and sometimes among divisions in the same departments.

While this has led to inefficiencies and waste of resources, the issue here is whether such restriction on information sharing does or does not hurt employee commitment. The Ministry of Trade is in the productive sector and has not performed very well according to its performance contracts in the past two years. This Ministry has been appropriately and significantly grouped in The Productive Services Sector. While the Productive Sector cluster contributed 49.5% of Kenya's GDP, The Ministry of Trade and Industry contributed 21.6% of the total GDP in year 2007; MTEF Sector hearings, March (2008).

Trade has been recognized world over as a significant economy driver. Recent work related experience and studies have shown that, trade in Kenya continues to exponentially grow as a source of income, and hence contributor to economic growth. Call centers have been set up in Kenya and the IT industry has experienced

unprecedented growth rates. With the growth in significance of the trade and services sector as a driver to the economy, trade is poised to be a major contributor to economic growth in Kenya. Upon the introduction of performance based management in the civil service of Kenya, all ministries are now ranked on the basis of performance. The time is now, to isolate any factors that may influence employee commitment and possibly performance.

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

To determine the influence that information sharing has on employee commitment.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

This study will bridge the knowledge gap between the widely held belief that information should be guarded at all costs, and the actual importance of doing so. It will particularly enable the stakeholders to do a cost benefit analysis of not sharing information. Future classification of information and vetting officers, in relation to handling particular pieces of information, will be informed and hence, relevant. This is the age of information and communication technology. Due to the wide use of computers, information will be obtained anyhow. It is therefore vital for organizations to have a proper policy on information sharing. This study will contribute towards informing such a policy. Finally, this study will contribute towards informing the application and possible review of such important pieces of legislation as the Official Secrets Act, of the laws of Kenya. Clearly, this study will address an existing knowledge gap.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Sharing of information is among the most important human resource management practices. According to Armstrong (2005) a collection of human resource practices have began to be referred to as a 'bundle' and the task of HR managers is to identify and implement such systems. According to Wood and De Menezes, (1998) there is a 'Pick and Mix' approach to the HR bundle. Scholars have identified what they refer to as HR best practices. Among these practices is information sharing and worker voice; Pfeffer J. (1998). Porter et al, (1974) content that, HRM policies and practices should be designed to maximize integration of organization commitment of employees, quality of work and flexibility. Information sharing may be considered as the first step towards knowledge sharing. Knowledge assets are defined as "stocks of knowledge from which services are expected to flow for a period of time that may be hard to specify in advance" (Boisot 1998: 3).

Keeping information flowing during a project does more than guide it to a successful completion. Sharing information engenders a collaborative environment that builds teamwork and increases people's satisfaction with their work.

Unfortunately, people sometimes attempt to amass power by keeping information to themselves. In project management, however, the opposite approach is the most effective. Sharing project information is a source of power — the power to successfully complete a project. When people collaborate to achieve goals, good communication contributes to success in several ways.

## **2.2 Overview of Information Sharing**

Keeping information flowing during a project does more than guide it to a successful completion. Sharing information engenders a collaborative environment that builds teamwork and increases people's satisfaction with their work and promotes employee commitment. Collaboration, which includes the sharing of work related information among other elements, has several benefits.

Information sharing leads to the team's improved focus on the goal. In the project world, stakeholders must define and then communicate the problem to be solved, the strategy for the solution, and what constitutes success. Team members need to know what they're supposed to do and any constraints on how they do it. If this communication is delivered effectively to the entire team, the goal and its obstacles are clearly in focus.

Sharing of work related information leads to increased productivity. Team members get more done if they can easily find the information that they need because it was

clearly outlined from the start. Good communication also prevents duplication of effort, which hurts project schedules, budgets, and team morale.

When team members have the information they need, they make fewer mistakes. When problems do arise, informed team members can quickly identify them and collaborate to fix them.

Stakeholders and team members need information to make good decisions. With project information at their disposal, people are prepared to take advantage of opportunities and to fend off threats and better decisions.

By studying information about every project that a company executes, project teams can copy the best practices while avoiding the mistakes of previous projects.

This leads to Continuous improvement

Project managers have a selfish reason for sharing information. When stakeholders and team members don't know what's going on, they're sure to ask questions — usually with a great deal of impatience, and at the worst possible moment. By distributing the information that people need to know before they need to know it, project managers can spend more time managing projects proactively. This leads to Better project management. (Bonnie, 2006).

Quigley, et al; (2007:71-88) combine three different theories of motivation and explain how their interactions affect knowledge sharing and utilization in ways that affect performance.

The study integrates several different motivational mechanisms to explain and predict knowledge sharing. It also considers the perspectives of both the knowledge sharer and the knowledge recipient, examining what motivates someone to share knowledge and what motivates the recipient to use that knowledge effectively. Scholars have suggested that, combining both perspectives resulted in a theoretical model that was more than the sum of its parts. While information sharing should be encouraged, rewarding individuals for knowledge sharing may send a mixed message. Butler, T. (2000). Group incentives that reward cooperative behavior reinforce a culture of open exchange. Companies might also consider recognizing knowledge sharing in performance appraisals, recognizing and praising those who go out of their way to actively share their knowledge with others, and consistently highlighting common goals and objectives that can link potential knowledge providers and recipients.

Although information management practices in many organizations have a long history and are evolving rapidly, knowledge management practices are somewhat less developed. For example,

Current knowledge transfer is haphazard in most instances, and there are few tools to support it and knowledge within organizations is scattered, and effective collaboration and knowledge sharing occur inconsistently.

Institutional memory is short. Very little knowledge is captured and retained for future use. As a result, the same problems are addressed repeatedly by different

individuals. In some situations, not being encumbered by history can bring fresh approaches, but in most situations, learning from past experience can be beneficial.

Drucker (1993)

According to Walton, (1985), workers are most responsive and creative when they are given broader responsibilities, encouraged to contribute and assisted to achieve satisfaction in their work. This may be achieved when there is a focus on how employees are treated, jobs designed and organizations managed. The management and employees need to be interdependent and the relationship mutually beneficial. When people are trusted, treated 'as adults' and made to feel like they own the business, they respond with total commitment Peters and Austin, (1985). This may be largely achieved through appropriate sharing of information.

When people collaborate to achieve goals, good communication contributes to success in improved focus on the goal, increased productivity, fewer errors, better decisions, continuous improvement and better project management.

Stakeholders and team members hail from different groups, functional areas, business units, and organizations and each of these groups has its own unique information needs. This renders information sharing crucial Jeff De Cagna, (2001)

The "Information Society" is generally accepted to refer to a post-industrial society where Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a central role to a nation or region's economic and/or social well-being OECD (1998). The Information Society also connotes the potential for using ICT to improve quality of life (e.g. the



reduction of poverty around the globe) and as a vital tool for economic advancement in developing countries ITU (2003). In December 2003, the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) was held in Geneva, Switzerland. One of the aims of the conference was to address the global divide that exists between developed and developing nations, and bridging the digital divide by improving access to ICT.

While the importance of ICT per se cannot be understated, researchers and policy makers are now placing increasing emphasis on the important role(s) played by knowledge, and on the transformation of 'Information Societies' into 'Knowledge Societies' Moser (2003). Similarly, the emergence of the 'Knowledge Economy has been commented on by Drucker (1995; 1999) who argues that knowledge has become the only critical factor of production. This is in sharp contrast to the "old economy" in which land, labor and capital were the vital factors of production. Thus today's economic climate is characterized by globalization, increasingly sophisticated ICT, and the coming of the Knowledge Society. Stiglitz (2003).

Echoing Peter Drucker, Nonaka (1991) argues that in a constantly changing economic environment the only certainty is that knowledge is the only source of sustainable competitive advantage. Unlike the traditional factors of production, knowledge is not subject to the laws of diminishing returns. In contrast, knowledge is subject to the law of increasing returns, whereby every unit of knowledge used

effectively will result in a marginal increase in performance; Romer (1986). It is argued that only those who exploit the opportunities offered by the knowledge economy will increase their prosperity, while those that fail to adapt will face declining economic fortunes; DTI (1998). In a global economy, institutions and nation states alike must invest heavily in the management and exploitation of their knowledge capital if the benefits of globalization are to be realized. Although commercial organizations have been active in implementing knowledge management strategies for some time now, there is an imperative for public institutions to follow suit, as there is evidence that public sector bodies are falling behind private sector enterprises in managing their knowledge resources; OECD (2001). There is, therefore, a need for e-Government initiatives in the area of knowledge management. Indeed, such initiatives are congruent with objectives of e-Government, which are to enhance citizens' access to information and services, increase transparency, and provide clear accountability by the public sector for the services they deliver ( Information Society Commission 2003).

### **2.3 Information sharing in the work place**

Knowledge management (KM) (in which information sharing is a major component) is a multi-disciplinary domain of interest that has its origins in several fields viz. philosophy, Knowledge Management Systems (KMS) facilitate the capture, storage and sharing of 'knowledge' Alavi and Leidner (1999); Garavelli, Gorgoglione and

Scozzi (2002). However, such systems have had limited success because many merely support the data and information processing in organizations, rather than the capture, sharing, transfer and management of knowledge; Sutton (2001); Hendricks (2001); Butler, (2003). It is also clear that in a high proportion of KMS development and implementation projects, critical social, cultural and motivational issues are neglected (McDermott 1999); Schultze and Boland, 2000); Huber 2001).

The appropriate use of data, information, and knowledge is fundamental to improving environmental efficiencies of production and consumption. Whether information transfer occurs within a company, between customers and suppliers, or among competitive organizations in an industry, the management of information is key to the management of environmental efforts. The rapid growth of information technology continues to provide more effective tools to support knowledge management and transfer. New information tools offer much promise, but in and of themselves are not a panacea. The effective management of environmentally related information is brought about not by making available large quantities of information, but by delivering information that is appropriate for the decision-making tasks at hand. Although many efforts to date have focused on data management, substantial opportunities exist to leverage available knowledge to address environmental performance issues. By undertaking a balanced approach that incorporates data, information, and knowledge, we can begin to more effectively support environmental decision-making objectives as well as longer-term sustainable long term goals. (Elliot 1997)

## **2.4 Employee Commitment**

While commitment encompasses a strong desire to remain a member of an organization, identification with values and goals of an organization and a readiness to exert considerable effort on organizational behalf, some HR practices like information sharing and trust for employees have a bearing towards organizational commitment; Armstrong, (2005); Salancik,(1977). The achievement of excellence is related to getting the whole hearted Commitment of the workforce to the organization. Peters and Waterman (55-70:2004). According to Walton, (1985), workers are most responsive and creative when they are given broader responsibilities, encouraged to contribute and assisted to achieve satisfaction in their work. This may be achieved when there is a focus on how employees are treated, jobs designed and organizations managed. The management and employees need to be interdependent and the relationship mutually beneficial. Commitment should be more consistent than job satisfaction over time. Although day-to-day events in the work place may affect an employee's level of job satisfaction, such transitory events should not make an employee seriously re-evaluate his/her attachment to the overall organization; Mowday et al (1982). Organizations achieve a competitive advantage through the deployment of committed employees. (Storey, 2001:167-183).

When people are trusted, treated 'as adults' and made to feel like they own the business, they respond with total commitment; Peters and Austin, (1985). This may be largely achieved through appropriate sharing of information. Despite the evident importance of information sharing towards employee commitment and the resulting performance, a detailed literature review reveals that, studies on effects of information sharing in organizations have not been carried out.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

With organizations increasingly adopting performance contracting and the accompanying target setting, the issue of performance has taken center stage in organizational management. The government of Kenya has embraced performance contracting in an attempt to enhance productivity and service delivery. Since the issue of information sharing has been a thorny issue in the public service sector, it is time this appropriate study is undertaken.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 The research design**

The study is descriptive. The study was expected to discover how information sharing affects employee commitment. In this case, a descriptive study is more relevant than other studies like causal in that, we are not interested in the extent to which information sharing affects commitment, rather, whether it really does and in what direction.

Due to the fact that, the civil service sector of Kenya employs tens of thousands of employees, and that research funds and time at the disposal of the researcher are limited, it is not possible to carryout a census. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade has been identified for the study.

#### **3.2 The study population**

The population of the study consisted of members of staff in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry for Trade. Presently, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of Trade has 650 members of staff throughout the country and in foreign missions. These range from lower cadre officers (support

staff job group "A") to the higher rank officers (Permanent Secretary Job group "V"). This study targets members of staff from job group "G" and above. This includes staff from higher clerical officers and above. A total of 547 officers are therefore targeted.

### **3.3 Sample size.**

The sampling frame was the staff lists of the ministry's members of staff in Nairobi province, Machakos, Kajiado, Thika and Kiambu districts. There are presently 214 members of staff in the study area. Statistically, a sample of 30 is sufficiently large enough and according to the Central Limit Theorem, the sample means will be distributed around the population mean approximately in a normal distribution for such a sample size. A sample size should at least be 30; Daniel and Terrell, (30:1992). Since a minimum of thirty respondents is adequate, a sample size of 40 respondents will be randomly and proportionately selected in the areas under study.

### **3.4 Data collection**

Primary data was collected by use of structured questionnaires. The same is annexed for information. The Drop & Pick method will be used to administer the questionnaires. Where and when necessary the services of a research assistant shall be appropriated. Follow ups through the telephone will also be undertaken.

### **3.5 Data analysis**

Descriptive statistics was used in data analysis. These included the mean, frequency distribution, percentages. Comparative analysis was also be used and will include standard deviations. These will clearly portray the different attributes in a way to allow comparisons and the drawing of appropriate conclusions. The statistical package SPSS will be used to analyze data as appropriate and where necessary, Microsoft Access will be used to supplement.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1: Introduction

The research objective was to establish the relationship between information sharing and employee commitment in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade. This chapter presents the analysis and findings with regard to the objective and discussion of this objective. The data was collected from a population of 40 employees from ministry of trade. Respondents were from different cadres of employment in the ministry. The findings are presented in percentages and frequency distributions, mean and standard deviations.

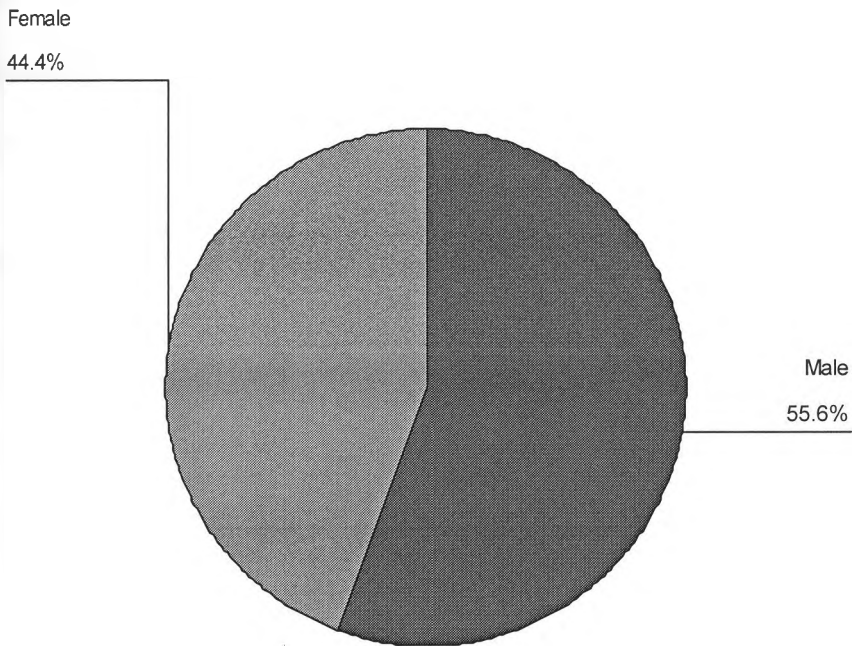
#### 4.2:0: Response rate

A total of 40 questionnaires were send out. The completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency. Of the 40 questionnaires used in the sample, only 36 were returned. The remaining 4 were not returned. The returned questionnaires therefore represented a response rate of 90%, which the study considered adequate for analysis.

#### 4.2.1: Profiles of the respondents

As shown in fig 4.2.1, the respondents were made up of 55.6% male and 44.4% female. The sample was representative considering the margin difference.

**Figure 4.2.1: respondents by gender (years)**



**4.2.2: Marital status**

From the findings, 63.9% of the respondents were married, 30.6% were single and 2.8% were widowed and separated/Divorced. Generally majority of the respondents have their families.

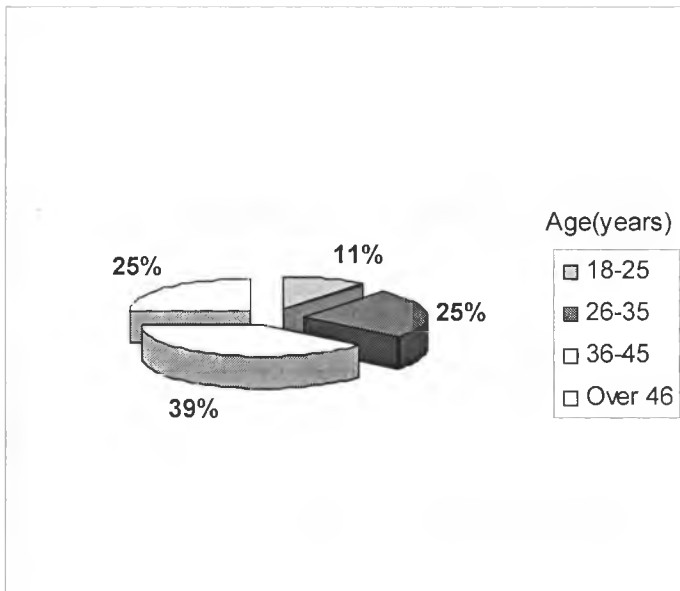
**Table 4.2.2: Marital status**

	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	30.6	30.6
Married	63.9	94.4
Widowed	2.8	97.2
Separated/Divorce	2.8	100.0
Total	100.0	

### 4.2.3: Age Bracket

The findings presented in figure 4.2.3 show that, 39% of the respondents were of ages between 36-45 years, 25% were between 26-35 years of age , 25% over 46 years each while 11% were between 18-25 years old. Majority of the employees were of ages 36-45 years (at 39%).

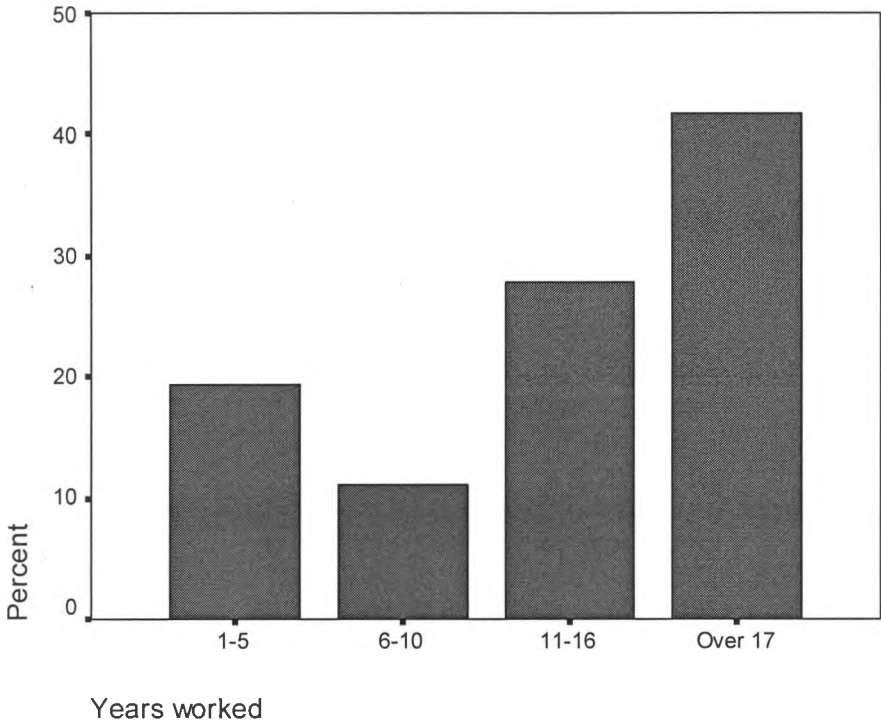
**Figure 4.2.3: Age Bracket (years)**



### 4.2.4: Length of Service with organization (years)

The results presented in figure 4.2.4 show that, the number of years of service in the current organization varies from a period of 1 year to over 17 years. 41.7% of the respondents had worked in the ministry for over 17 years which may be a sign of loyalty, 27.8% had worked for a period of 11 to 16 years, and 19.4% had worked for 1-5 years while only 11.1% had worked for between 6-10 years

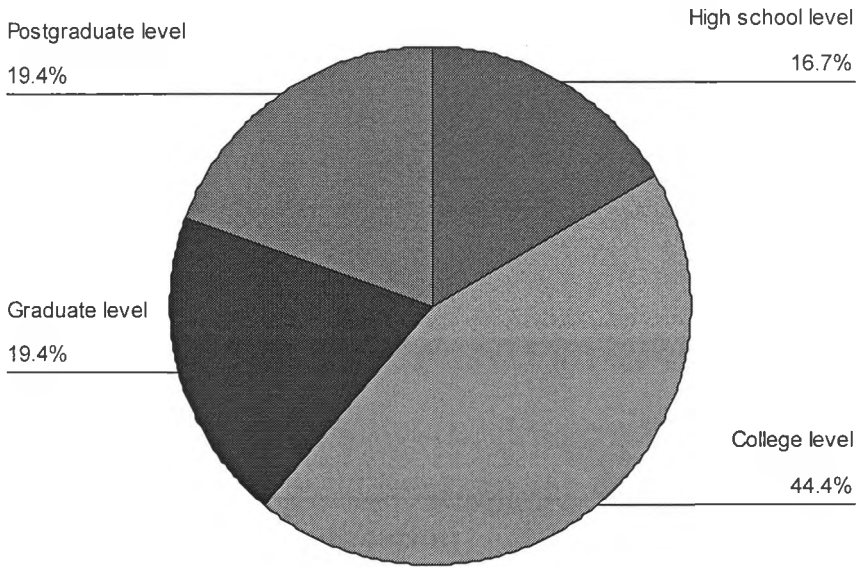
**Figure 4.2.4: Length of Service with organization (years)**



**4.2.5: Level of education**

As shown in figure 4.2.5, most of the respondents (44.4%) had middle level college education, followed by university education and postgraduate level at 19.4% each and 16.7% with secondary education. This follows a normal distribution curve.

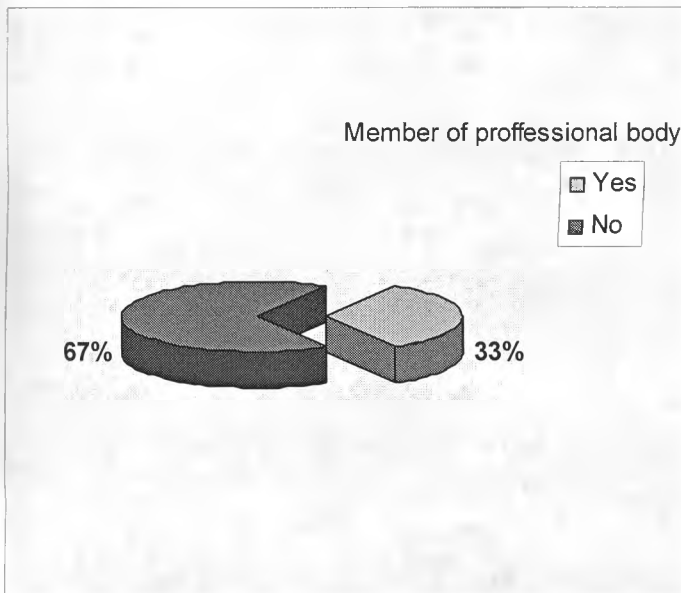
**Figure 4.2.5: Level of education**



**4.2.6: Member of professional body**

Majority of the employees (67%) were not members of any professional body while 33% were members. From the findings, it is prudent that the employees are taught the importance of joining professional bodies.

**Figure 4.2.6: Member of professional body**



### **4.3.1: Ratings on information sharing**

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the information sharing in the ministry. The range was 'strongly agree (1)' to 'strongly disagree' (5). The scores of strongly agree/strongly disagree have been taken to present a variable which had an impact to agree ( $0 \leq A.G < 2.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The scores of 'neutral' have been taken to represent a variable that had an impact to a neutral extent (N.E.)  $2.5 \leq N.E. < 3.4$  on a continuous likert scale. The score of both 'disagree/strongly disagree' have been taken to represent a variable which had an impact to disagree (D.E.) on a continuous likert scale;  $3.5 \leq L.E. < 5.0$ ). A standard deviation of  $>1.421$  implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

**Table 4.3.1: Ratings on information sharing**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Consulted when decisions are made more than 75% times	3.0833	1.42177
My seniors share information related to my job in more than 75% times	2.6389	1.22247
My juniors share information concerning their assignments in more than 75% times	2.4722	1.10805
All my juniors share information in all their assignments	2.5556	1.10698
All my juniors directly under me share information in all their assignments	2.5556	1.20581
My same level employees share more than 75% information concerning all their assignments	2.2778	.94449
My same level employees share all the information in their possession that concerns all my assignments	2.5278	1.08196
My same level employees share information that is 100% correct in their opinion	2.7222	1.13669
My juniors share information that is 100% correct in their opinion	2.7222	1.03126
My seniors share information that is 100% correct in their opinion.	2.6944	1.14191
My seniors readily avail information that I need in more than 75% of the instances it is required	2.3611	.96074
My same level employees readily avail all the information that I need readily in all instances	2.6111	1.02198
My juniors readily avail all the information that I need timely in all instances	2.5000	1.00000
My seniors provide required information timely all the times they provide it.	2.4722	1.02779
My juniors provide required information timely all the times they provide it	2.4167	.96732
My seniors provide required information timely in 75% of the times they provide it	2.3056	.92023
My same level employees provide required information timely all the times	2.5556	.96937

they provide it		
The management goes out of its way to promote information sharing	2.6667	1.19523

The findings in table 4.3.1 above show that all factors had a mean ranking between 2.27 to 3.08, that is the respondents ranked all the factors as having met the information sharing moderately. The respondents felt that same level employees share more than 75% of the information concerning all their assignments which shows that they share information for the common good to the ministry (mean of 2.2778), consultation when decisions are made more than 75% was ranked moderate which may not go down well with some employees who are expected to implement decisions arrived at without being consulted and may sabotage it. The ministry therefore should consult widely before a decision is made. (Mean of 3.0833). It is worth noting that, both the junior and senior employees provide each other with the required information whenever needed, this will enable the junior and senior employees to interact well and in the process they are able to solve issues affecting their work.). Generally, majority of the respondents agreed that they share information regarding their work.

#### **4.3.2: Employee commitment**

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the information sharing in the ministry. The range was 'strongly agree (1)' to 'strongly disagree' (5). The scores of strongly agree/strongly disagree have been taken to present a variable which



had an impact to agree ( $0 \leq A.G < 2.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The scores of 'neutral' have been taken to represent a variable that had an impact to a neutral extent (N.E.)  $2.5 \leq N.E. < 3.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The score of both 'disagree/strongly disagree' have been taken to represent a variable which had an impact to a disagree (D.E.) on a continuous likert scale;  $3.5 \leq L.E. < 5.0$ ). A standard deviation of  $> 1.3404$  implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

**Table 4.3.2: Employee commitment**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Proud to be associated with this ministry	2.3611	1.22247
Feel fulfilled to be working in this ministry	2.8333	1.36277
It is my pleasure to work in this ministry	2.5556	1.31897
I willingly put in a great deal of effort, beyond what is expected of me	1.8333	1.05560
Really care about the wellbeing of this ministry	1.9444	1.01262
My values are similar to this ministry's values	2.2500	1.05221
Willing to accept any type of assignment to keep working in this ministry	2.1389	1.33423
Proud to tell others that I work for this ministry	2.1667	1.13389
Glad that I chose to work in this ministry over all other job offers I had	2.5000	1.23056
I could just as well be working for another ministry so long as the work is similar	2.5833	1.22766
A very slight change in my present working conditions would cause me leave the ministry	3.1111	1.30445

Do not expect to gain much in sticking with this ministry	3.2778	1.23314
Find it impossible to agree with this ministry in over 25% over its policies on important matters concerning its employees	3.3056	1.03701
I continue working in this ministry due to lack of a better employer	3.3056	1.28329
I am actively involved in searching for better employer	3.4444	1.34046

The analysis on table 4.3.2 (above) shows a worrying trend whereby employees are actively involved in searching for better employer (mean 3.4444). This means that they are not fully committed in serving the current employer and these may be for reasons such as low pay compared to others and poor working conditions. The ministry should therefore try to motivate its employee's in order to concentrate on service delivery and not searching for new employer. On the other hand the respondents have been putting more effort beyond what is expected of them in helping the ministry to achieve its objectives (mean 1.8333) and therefore the ministry should be appreciating them by rewarding them or acknowledging their efforts. Generally most of the employees are committed to serving the ministry.

#### **4.4.1: Information sharing by headquarters' employees and by other field stations employees**

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the information sharing in the ministry. The range was 'strongly agree (1)' to 'strongly disagree' (5). The scores of strongly agree/strongly disagree have been taken to present a variable which had an impact to agree ( $0 \leq A.G < 2.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The scores of

'neutral' have been taken to represent a variable that had an impact to a neutral extent (N.E.)  $2.5 \leq N.E. < 3.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The score of both 'disagree/strongly disagree' have been taken to represent a variable which had an impact to a disagree (D.E.) on a continuous likert scale;  $3.5 \leq L.E. < 5.0$ ). A standard deviation of  $>1.7888$  on Nairobi Province field station, 1.1547 on Machakos field station, 1.732 on Thika/Kiambu field station and 2.863 on Headquarters station implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among the respondents.

**Table 4.4.1: Information sharing among headquarters employees and field station employees**

	Nairobi province		Machakos		Kajiado		Thika/Kiambu		Headquarters	
	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
consulted when decisions are made more than 75% times	3.200	1.7888	2.666	1.1547	4.000	1.000	4.000	1.732	2.863	1.424
by seniors share information related to my job in more than 75% times	2.8000	1.7888	2.000	1.0000	3.333	.5773	4.000	1.732	2.409	1.053
by juniors share information concerning their assignments in more than 75% time	2.000	.7071	2.000	1.0000	3.333	.5773	4.000	1.732	2.318	1.041
all my juniors share information in all their assignments	2.400	1.1401	3.000	1.0000	2.666	.5773	4.000	1.732	2.318	.994
all my juniors directly under me share information in all their assignments	2.200	1.3038	2.333	.5773	2.666	.5773	4.000	1.732	2.454	1.184
at same level	2.600	1.1401	2.000	1.0000	2.666	1.154	3.666	1.527	2.000	.690

employees share more than 75% information concerning all their assignments										
My same level employees share all the information in their possession that concerns all my assignments	2.800	1.3038	2.000	1.0000	3.000	1.732	3.666	1.527	2.318	.893
My same level employees share information that is 100% correct in their opinion	2.600	1.3038	2.333	.5773	2.333	.5773	4.000	1.000	2.681	1.170
My juniors share information that is 100% correct in their opinion	2.600	1.3416	2.333	.5773	2.000	1.000	3.666	.5773	2.772	1.109
My seniors share information that is 100% correct in their opinion	2.600	.8944	2.000	1.000	2.666	1.527	3.666	.5773	2.681	1.170
My seniors readily avail information that I need in more than 75% of the instances it is required	2.600	1.3416	2.000	1.0000	3.666	1.527	3.333	1.154	2.227	.7516
My same level employees readily avail all the information that I need readily in all instances	1.800	.8366	3.000	1.0000	3.000	1.732	3.333	1.154	2.590	.9591
My juniors readily avail all the information that I need timely in all instances	1.800	.4472	2.000	1.0000	2.000	1.000	3.333	1.154	2.545	1.010
My seniors provide required information promptly all the times they provide it	2.400	1.1401	1.666	.5773	2.333	.5773	3.666	.5773	2.545	1.056
My juniors provide required information promptly all the times they provide it	2.000	1.2247	1.666	.5773	3.000	.0000	3.667	.5773	2.363	.9021
My seniors provide required information promptly in 75% of the times they provide it	2.000	1.0000	1.666	.5773	2.333	.5773	3.333	1.154	2.318	.8937
My same level employees provide required information promptly all the times	3.000	.7071	2.000	1.0000	2.333	.5773	3.667	.5773	2.409	1.007

they provide it										
The management goes out of its way to promote information sharing	1.800	.8366	2.666	1.1547	2.667	1.154	3.667	.5773	2.409	1.279

The findings in table 4.4.1 above show that all factors on Nairobi branch had a mean ranking ranging from 1.8 to 3.2. This implies that, the respondents ranked all the factors as having met the information sharing moderately /agree. The respondents felt that the employees in the same level and the juniors working in the headquarters' share a lot of information with their colleagues in the Nairobi Provincial station (mean 1.800), and this may be partly because they know each other. On the other end, the senior employees provide information to their juniors who are working in the Machakos field station and this will therefore enable employees to complete a certain task within the stipulated period and also give a satisfactory output.

Majority of the respondents working on the Kajiado and Thika/Kiambu branches disagreed with the notion that information was being shared by the headquarters with them. This is confirmed by a larger proportion on the mean disagreeing. This may make those working in the branch demotivated since they are not getting sufficient information from the headquarters. It is therefore prudent that the headquarters shares the information evenly with all employees working in the branches so that they are aware of what is happening in the ministry and be able to carry out their duties accordingly.

The respondents working on the headquarters agreed that they share information amongst themselves the senior employees availing the information to their juniors. This shows a good working relationship among the employees. Consultation when decisions are made more than 75% times was ranked as having the highest mean 2.863. This may be interpreted to mean that there is little consultation being done and this may make the work of majority employees hard thus affecting service delivery.

#### 4.4.2 Employee commitment between the Headquarters and other field station employees

**Table 4.4.2: Employee commitment between headquarters employees and field station employees**

	Nairobi		Machakos		Kajiado		Thika/Kiambu		Headquarters	
	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev	Mean	Std. Dev
Proud to be associated with this ministry	2.600	1.673	1.666	.577	1.666	.577	3.666	1.527	2.318	1.222
Feel fulfilled to be working in this ministry	2.800	1.788	2.333	.577	2.333	.577	3.666	2.309	2.863	1.362
It is my pleasure to work in this ministry	2.800	1.483	2.000	1.000	2.666	1.154	4.000	1.732	2.555	1.318
I willingly put in a great deal of effort, beyond what is expected of me	1.600	.894	1.666	.577	2.000	1.000	3.333	2.081	1.833	1.055
Really care about the well being of this ministry	1.600	.894	1.666	.577	2.333	.577	3.333	2.081	1.944	1.012
My values are similar to this ministry's values	1.800	.836	2.333	1.527	2.666	1.154	3.666	1.527	2.090	.867
Willing to accept any type of assignment to keep working in this ministry	2.000	1.732	1.666	.577	2.000	1.000	3.333	2.081	2.090	1.306
Proud to tell others that I work for this ministry	2.000	.707	1.666	.577	2.000	1.000	3.333	2.081	2.136	1.166
Glad that I chose to	2.800	.836	2.000	.00000	2.333	1.154	3.666	1.527	2.363	1.329

work in this ministry over all other job offers I had										
I could just as well be working for another ministry so long as the work is similar	1.800	.836	2.666	1.154	4.000	1.000	3.000	1.732	2.500	1.185
A very slight change in my present working conditions would cause me leave the ministry	3.400	1.140	2.666	1.154	3.666	1.527	3.333	1.527	3.000	1.380
Do not expect to gain much in sticking with this ministry	3.400	1.140	3.000	1.000	3.333	2.081	3.333	1.527	3.272	1.241
Find it impossible to agree with this ministry in over 25% over its policies on important matters concerning its employees	3.200	.836	2.666	.577	3.000	1.000	3.666	1.154	3.409	1.140
I continue working in this ministry due to lack of a better employer	3.600	1.516	3.666	.577	3.666	1.527	2.333	1.527	3.272	1.279
I am actively involved in searching for better employer	3.400	1.516	3.333	1.154	4.000	1.000	3.667	1.527	3.363	1.432

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the information sharing with other stations. The range was 'strongly agree (1)' to 'strongly disagree' (5). The scores of strongly agree/strongly disagree have been taken to present a variable which had an impact to agree ( $0 \leq A.G < 2.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The scores of 'neutral' have been taken to represent a variable that had an impact to a neutral extent (N.E.)  $2.5 \leq N.E. < 3.4$ ) on a continuous likert scale. The score of both 'disagree/strongly disagree' have been taken to represent a variable which had an impact to disagree (D.E.) on a continuous likert scale;  $3.5 \leq L.E. < 5.0$ ). A standard deviation of  $> 1.516$  on Nairobi branch, 1.154 on Machakos branch, 1.000 on kajiado branch, 1.732 on Thika/Kiambu branch and 1.140 on Headquarters implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

The findings in table 4.4.2 above show that in Nairobi branch employees putting up more effort beyond what is expected and wellbeing of the ministry were rated the highest by the respondents (mean 1.600) which shows that they agree with it and it for common good of the ministry since they will be able to achieve its target while the respondents on the other hand disagreed that they are working in the ministry due to lack of new employer was a milestone to the ministry since the respondent were devoted to working for the ministry (mean 3.6)

Majority of the respondents on Machakos branch agreed with a high number of commitment statements and still they gave a good verdict to the ministry for not working in the ministry due to lack of a better employer( mean 3.666) but they at the same time looking for a better employer(mean 3.333).The respondents from the kajiado branch were actively involved in searching for a better employer and this may be related to lack of information sharing they had expressed earlier and the ministry should try to find the reason behind it while at the same time they agreed that they are proud to be associated with the ministry(1.666) which is a boost to the ministry's image.

The analysis above from Kiambu/Thika branches shows that they disagreed with majority of the things advanced to them which suggest a great displeasure with the ministry with majority registering displeasure with working for the ministry (4.000)



with majority of them agreeing that they are working in the ministry due to lack of a better employer (2.333) and the ministry should motivate its employees so that they can concentrate working there. Respondents agreed to a greater extent to the commitment in those employees working in the headquarters with willingly to put a great deal of effort beyond what is expected of them (mean 1.833) while finding it impossible to agree with the ministry in over 25% of its policies was disagreed with (mean 3.409).

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

The findings of the study do indeed bring out very clearly that, information sharing is important. Evidence gathered strongly suggests that, information sharing has a basis on employee commitment. Information sharing in this Ministry, in particular is vital given the foregoing findings. Information should be shared not only between members of staff in the ministry, but also with the ministry's foreign representation, other ministries and government departments and ultimately with the members of the public who form the ministry's external customers

#### **5.2 Conclusions**

Respondents at the headquarters and Nairobi Provincial indicated a believe that information sharing was done sufficiently while most of the respondents from field stations felt that information was not shared adequately and that they were consulted less on decisions being made.

At the same time, respondents from the headquarters and the Nairobi Provincial office were found to willingly put more effort beyond what is expected in their work. Most respondents from field stations, especially from Thika/Kiambu and Kajjado were recorded not to willingly put extra effort in their official duties. This

implies a higher level commitment for respondents in Nairobi Province and the headquarters than for the respondents from field stations.

It is evident that information sharing and employee commitment seems decrease as the further one moves from the headquarter office. While this may not be necessarily in terms of distance, evidently there are factors that affect communication negatively the further we move from the information source- the headquarters. This is indicative since the headquarter office is the source of the information to be shared.

While long service would ordinarily suggest employee loyalty, this study seems to disapprove this since a big percentage of long serving employees indicate they are actively looking for employment elsewhere and stay on due to lack of better employment opportunities.

From the findings, it is apparent that, despite a big percentage of employees having university and postgraduate levels of education (36.1%), they have not found it prudent to belong to their professional associations. It is prudent that the employees are taught the importance of joining professional bodies and be encouraged to join the same. This may enhance a feeling of self worth and forster employee commitment.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

There is need to improve information sharing in the ministry since the study implies a positive correlation between information sharing and employee commitment. The

ministry should design and propagate a policy on information sharing within itself and with external stakeholders.

### **5.3 Suggestions for further research**

The study has clearly brought out the fact that information sharing does indeed influence employee commitment. This therefore points out the fact that information sharing is vital for the well being of an organization. Despite this fact, the study has also brought out the fact that, information sharing has not been exercised as much as is needed. A study to determine to what extends information sharing influences employee commitment needs to be carried out. Such a study would compliment this study and will provide a guidance on how much emphasize should be placed on information sharing in the civil service sector of Kenya and in particular in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade. Further, there is a great need to carry out a study to determine the factors that influence information sharing in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister & Ministry of Trade, and in the wider civil service sector of Kenya. Another interesting study area would be a study on how the foregoing factors affect performance in the civil service sector of Kenya. This would be most relevant given the fact that the public service sector of Kenya has embraced performance contracting as a way of enhancing service delivery.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

This study was conducted under several limitations the most significant of which was perhaps lack of adequate resources. This was both in time and finances. The second limitation was the unwillingness of respondents to share their views. This was against the backdrop of several legislations barring the free sharing of information especially in the civil service of Kenya.

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Annex 1

QUESTIONNAIRE (for the respondents)

Section A – Social economic and demographic.

Name (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry \_\_\_\_\_

Gender 1\_\_\_\_ (Male) 2\_\_\_\_\_ (Female)

Marital Status 1\_\_\_\_ (Single) 2\_\_\_\_ (Married)  
3 \_\_\_\_\_ (Windowed)  
4 \_\_\_\_\_ (Separated/Divorced)

Age (Years) 1 \_\_\_\_ (18-25) 2\_\_\_\_ (26-35) 3\_\_\_\_ (36-45)  
4 \_\_ (Over 46)

Years Worked 1\_\_\_\_ (1-5) 2\_\_ (6-10) 3\_\_ (11-16) 4\_\_\_\_ Over 17

Academic 1\_\_\_\_ (High school level) 2\_\_ (college level)

Qualifications 3\_\_\_\_ (graduate level) 4\_\_\_\_ (Postgraduate level)

Are you a member of any relevant professional body?

1\_\_\_\_ (Yes) 2\_\_\_\_ (No)

## Section B – Ratings on information sharing and commitment

On a scale of 1-5 where:

- 1 = strongly agree
- 2 = Agree
- 3 = neither agree nor disagree
- 4 = Disagree
- 5 = strongly disagree

Kindly rate your reaction to the following statements by ticking in the appropriate box.

### ***Information sharing***

Statement	Scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I am consulted when decisions are made more in than 75% times.					
2. My seniors share information related to my job in more than 75% times.					
3. My juniors share information concerning their assignments in more than 75% of their assignments					
4. All my juniors share information in all their assignments.					
5. All my juniors directly under me share information on all their assignments.					
6. My same level employees share more than 75% information concerning all their assignments.					
7. My same level employees share all the information in their possession that concerns all my assignments.					
8. My same level employees share information that is 100% correct in their opinion.					
9. My juniors share information that is 100% correct in their opinion.					
10. My seniors share information that is 100% correct in their opinion.					
11. My seniors readily avail information that I need in more than 75% of the instances it is required					
12. My same level employees readily avail all the information that I need readily in all instances.					
13. My juniors readily avail all the information that I need timely in all instances.					
14. My seniors provide required information timely all the times they provide it.					
15. My juniors provide required information timely all the times					

they provide it.					
16. My seniors provide required information timely in 75% of the times they provide it.					
17. My same level employees provide required information timely all the times they provide it.					
18. The management goes out of its way to promote information sharing.					

***Employee commitment***

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. I am proud to be associated with this ministry.					
2. I feel fulfilled to be working in this ministry					
3. It is my pleasure to work in this ministry					
4. I willingly put in a great deal of effort, beyond what is expected of me, to help in this ministry.					
5. I really care about the wellbeing of this ministry.					
6. My values are similar to this ministry's values.					
7. I am willing to accept any type of assignment to keep working in this ministry.					
8. I proudly tell others that I work for this ministry.					
9. I am quite glad that I chose to work in this ministry over all other job offers I had when I joined this ministry.					
10. I could just as well be working for another ministry so long as the work is similar.					
11. A very slight change in my present working conditions would cause me to leave this ministry.					
12. I do not expect to gain much in sticking with this ministry.					
13. I find it impossible to agree with this ministry in over 25% over its policies on important matters concerning its employees.					
14. I continue working in this Ministry due to lack of a better employer.					
15. I am actively involved in searching for a better employer.					

Please make any suggestions/comments you think necessary \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you.

Annex 2

## **LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

March 27, 2008

Dear respondent,

### ***Master of Business Administration (University of Nairobi) Research project***

We thank you for agreeing to participate in this learning exercise and assure you that you have been scientifically selected.

This questionnaire has been designed and administered with the sole purpose of gathering information on information sharing, Employee commitment and Employee performance in the two Government of Kenya ministries of Agriculture and Trade & Industry that contribute greatest to the productive sector cluster.

This study is being carried out as a requirement in partial fulfillment for the award of a Masters Degree in Business Administration, at the University of Nairobi.

Your responses will be treated as strictly confidential and your name will not be mentioned in the report.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated. Once again, thank you very much.

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Kiandiko H. K  
(MBA Student)

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Mr. Stephen Nzuve  
(Supervisor)