EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION OF THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE EMPOWERMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF STATE FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATIONS

In memory of my loving daughter, Elaine
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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out to help management in the Ministry of State for Public Service understands the manner in which it can enhance and facilitate employee empowerment in the ministry. The study sought to establish the extent of and factors that influence employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service. Employee empowerment has been necessitated by the unprecedented changes taking place in the economic environment requiring managers to be flexible in the way they manage in order to facilitate speedy decision making. Ministry of State for Public Service was chosen as the context of the study as it is the one mandated to provide policy guideline in Human Resource Management and Development in the public service and could be instrumental in the implementation of employee empowerment in the public sector.

The study involved 66 respondents from the ministry drawn from all cadres of staff. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire comprising of both closed and open-ended questions administered through self-administered basis. The data was analyzed using factor analysis by use of SPSS software. Descriptive statistics in form of means, std. deviations and percentages are used. The findings of the study revealed that the management in the Ministry of State for Public Service supports and is committed to employee empowerment and individual perceptions are positive towards empowerment. The ministry’s structure, culture and communication channels are all seen to be conducive and supportive to employee empowerment. However some discrepancies in the manner in which employee empowerment is employed exist across different demographic groups and management has been advised to investigate the cause and seek for remedy.

In general the study has been a success and will go a long way in shedding light on how to improve employee empowerment both in public and private sectors. It will also provide insight for further studies on the topic in the future.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Changes taking place in the economic environment are changing the way firms are managed. Organizations today must grapple with revolutionary trends: accelerating product and technological change, globalized competition, deregulation, demographic changes and trends towards a service society and the information age (Price, 2007). These trends have changed the playing field on which firms must compete. In particular they have dramatically increased the degree of competition in virtually all industries while forcing firms to cope with unprecedented product innovation and technological change.

In the companies that have responded to these challenges new modes of managing have emerged. In particular a lot of emphasis has been given to the management of human resource. This follows the realization that human resource is unique in that, it is valuable, rare, and imperfectly imitable and has no substitute (Khatri, 2000). It gives an organization competitive advantage. Managers appreciate the importance of empowering employees by giving them skills and authority to make decisions that affect them at operational level. This enables them to respond quickly to customers' needs while availing adequate time to managers to concentrate on more critical issues. It also results to increased job satisfaction, loyalty, commitment and trust amongst employees and managers and ultimately to increased productivity and efficiency.
The process of empowerment is a complicated one and must be managed skillfully in order for it to succeed. Certain conditions exist that may facilitate or inhibit successful implementation of the programme. Such conditions may be attitudinal, structural or may be as a result of lack of the requisite skills and knowledge ideal for empowerment (Nikodym et al., 1994). It is only through mutual trust, understanding and cooperation between managers and employees that the programme of empowerment can be effective.

1.1.1: Employees’ Perceptions

Perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of the environment by organizing and interpreting sensory information. All perception involves signals in the nervous system which in turn resort from physical stimulation of the sense organs. It is the process which organisms interpret and organize sensation to produce a meaningful experience of the world. Thus perception in humans describes the process whereby sensory stimulation is translated into organized experience. Perceptual process is not directly observable except to the perceiver himself whose percepts are given directly in experience. Perception is not the passive receipt of these signals but can be shaped by learning, memory and expectations.

Perception depends on complex functions of the nervous system but subjectively seems mostly effortless because this processing happens outside conscious awareness. Employee perceptions therefore refer to the process through which employees attain awareness and understanding of the organization environment. These perceptions could
be shaped by learning, experiences, and employee expectations. It involves the values and beliefs that employees attach to specific aspects of the organization. Employee perceptions to empowerment refers to values and beliefs that employees attach to empowerment and which may have resulted from learning experiences or individual expectations.

1.1.2: The Concept of Employee Empowerment

Employee empowerment is a complicated concept with different meanings to different people and contexts. Various authors have come up with different definitions. 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. Du Gay and Salaman (1992:625) state that the concept of empowerment is to make meaning for people by encouraging them to believe that they have control over their own lives, that no matter what position they may hold within an organization their contribution is vital, not only to the success of the company, but also to the enterprise of their own lives.

The process of empowerment entails providing employees with the skills and authority to make decisions that would traditionally be made by managers (Gomez et al., 2010). Claydon and Doyle (1996:3) point out that empowerment connects with organizational learning. Thus more open communication, shared problem solving geared towards continuous improvements and a willingness to explore existing organizational
arrangements to critical scrutiny imply more democratic, less authoritarian and bureaucratic work relations (Claydon and Doyle, 1996:4).

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.

1.1.3: Factors Influencing the Extent of Employee Empowerment

Certain factors and conditions exist that affect the effectiveness of employee empowerment programme. If these conditions are not managed skillfully attempts to implement the programme may fail (Nikodym et al. 1994). Empowerment like quality management programmes is a culture change initiative. Values, attitudes and employee expectations have an impact on the empowerment programme (Beardwell & Holden, 1997; Nikodym et al. 1994). Empowerment practices are dependent on cultural environment on which they are introduced. Leadership/management style highly affect the programme, so does the organizational structure. Environment under which the
programme is introduced also affect the effectiveness of the programme. What can suit well in a mechanistic environment may not be appropriate under an organic environment (Quinn & Spreitzer 1997).

The size, type and sector of the organization also influence the level and nature of empowerment programme. What may work in a small firm may not be appropriate for a large bureaucratic organization. What may work in a democratic organizational culture will probably be unsuccessful in a more authoritarian one (Wilkinson, 1989). It is important for managers to understand these conditions and manage them skillfully for the programme to be successful. Managers must be willing to concede some of their authority to front line employees and provide proper feedback to show that employees are really listened to and not in a lip service fashion. Action must be taken which reinforce the view amongst the work force that their contributions are well received (Beardwell and Holden, 1997)

1.1.4: Ministry of State for Public Service (MSPS)

The MSPS is under the office of the Prime Minister. The circular on organization of government of May 2008 mandated the MSPS to provide strategic leadership and guidance to the public service on human resource management and development. The Ministry’s core functions are: to formulate human resource management and development policies, rules and regulations in the public service on organization structures, ministerial functions, staffing levels, development and review of schemes of service as well as career guidelines. It is also responsible for training and capacity
building in the public service. It initiates and coordinates human resource management reforms in the public service and reviews harmonize and update terms and conditions of service for the public service. It provides guidelines and monitor payroll and human resource records in the public service (MSPS, strategic plan, 2008 – 2012).

The ministry top leadership organ constitute of the Minister, Assistant Minister, Permanent Secretary and a number of directors who are in charge of various departments and units in the Ministry. The current organizational structure of the ministry comprises of Human Resource Management (HRM), Human Resource Development (HRD), Management Consultancy Services (MCS), Central Services Unit (CSU), Permanent Public Service Remuneration Review Board, Government Training Institutes (Mombasa, Matuga, Embu & Baringo) and Kenya Institute of Administration (KIA) is also under the Ministry but is semi-autonomous, and Kenya Development Learning Center (KDLC) (MSPS, strategic plan, 2008-2012)

1.2 Research Problem

Human resources is one of the most critical capital to any organization be it labour intensive or capital intensive. Human resource is valuable, rare, and imperfectly imitable and has no substitute unlike other resources such as technology and products which can be copied (Khatri, 2000: 338). It therefore enables an organization to gain competitive advantage. The physical resources such as land, machinery and finance require competent human resources for them to be employed efficiently and effectively. Thus development and success of any organization requires involvement of all its employees as they pursue
organizational objectives. Empowerment increases individuals’ discretion over how they do their work. It also provides additional opportunities for group problem solving on operational issues. It is a form of delegation that enables work decisions to be taken as near as possible to the operating units and their customers (G. A. Cole, 2002).

The Ministry of State for Public Service like any other government institution is characterized by lengthy bureaucratic procedures and processes aimed and ensuring that government resources are managed in a transparent and accountable manner. However the Ministry has not been spared from the changes taking place in the economic environment such as technological and demographic changes, globalization and increased accessibility to information among other changes. These and the increased desire by employees to be involved in the decision making process imply that the government and the Ministry of state for public service in particular has to change the manner in which it manages its affairs. It is therefore upon the Ministry to come up with various mechanisms for empowering its employees without compromising on transparency and accountability.

Various studies have been done on employee empowerment in the recent past. For instance, Odongo (2006) did a study on employee empowerment programs among international NGO’s in the Public Health Sector in Kenya. The study intended to identify the employee empowerment programs adopted by international NGO’s in the public health sector and secondly to determine the factors that influence the adoption of empowerment programs in the sector. Another study by Gumato (2003) did a survey of managers’ attitudes towards employee empowerment and job satisfaction of employees in

From the above it is evident that there is no study conducted on empowerment with respect to the Ministry of State for Public Service. Furthermore none of the studies stated above have tried to establish the factors that influence the extent of employee empowerment programme. Given the existing gap in literature and the underlying importance of employee contribution to the overall performance of firms, the proposed study aims at filling in this gap. It is in this context that this study seeks to establish the extent of employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service and the factors influencing employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service. The study therefore seeks to answer the following question: What is the extent of employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service and what are the factors influencing employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service?
1.3 **Objectives of the Study**

The study seeks to:

i. Establish the employees perception of employee empowerment practices in the Ministry of State for Public Service

ii. Establish the employee perception of the factors influencing employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service

1.4 **Importance of the Study**

The study will provide information that will enable the Ministry of state for public service to establish the extent to which the empowerment programme in the ministry has been applied and determine the factors that influence the empowerment programme thus help in coming up with appropriate interventions. The study will also enable employees understand their role in the programme and how they stand to gain from its success.

The study provides very useful information to other public and private organizations that can be used as the basis for introduction or improvement of employee empowerment programmes in the organizations. The study can also provide useful information that can be used by academicians in enriching their knowledge on the topic and can form a basis for further study and/or future reference.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employee Empowerment

The concept of employee empowerment has been a focus for research and practice for many years. It has taken many different forms, evolving through employee involvement and participative decision-making concepts into the contemporary empowerment perspective, (Tsala, 2008). Employee empowerment is a vague and an all-encompassing term. It describes a management attitude or philosophy towards the work force which can be translated into a wide range of HRM policies. Empowerment, like quality management programmes, is strongly associated with culture change initiatives, delayering and restructuring, and often involves devolving power and responsibilities to teams at workplace or customer level (Arkin, 1995). It can thus have varied meanings in differing organizational contexts.

Empowerment is a method of delegation which enables work decisions to be made as near as possible to the operating units and their customers—both internal and external (G.A Cole, 2002). Bowen and Lawler (1992) define employee empowerment as sharing with front line employees four organizational ingredients: the information about the organization’s performance; knowledge that enables the employees to understand and contribute to organizational performance; rewards based on organization’s performance and power to make decisions that influence organizational direction and performance. They suggested that empowerment exists when organizations implement practices that
distribute power, information, knowledge and rewards throughout the organization (Bowen & Lawler, 1995: 73)

According to Stahl (1995), empowerment requires an organization to create a culture where people have the knowledge, skills, authority and desire to decide, act and take responsibility for results of their actions and for their contribution to the success of the company. Conger and Kanungo (1988) suggested that empowerment is a process of enhancing a feeling of self-efficacy among organization’s members through the identification of the conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal and informal practices and techniques of providing efficacy information (Conger & Kanungo, 1988: 474). They indicated that managers and supervisors have to undertake a new role of removing conditions that foster powerlessness and providing feedback about performance. In other words they should act as mentors or facilitators.

Quinn and Spreitzer (1997) have observed that empowerment can be defined from two distinct perspectives. In the mechanistic approach managers and researchers believed that empowerment was about delegating decision making within a set of clear boundaries. That is delegate responsibility and hold people accountable for results. In the organic approach to empowerment researchers and managers believed that empowerment was about risk taking, growth and change. This requires understanding the needs of employees, model empowered behavior for the employees, build teams to encourage cooperative behavior, encourage intelligent risk taking and trust people to perform. They however felt that the different approaches cannot be looked in isolation and a combination of the two is needed. They suggested that empowerment must be defined in
terms of fundamental beliefs and personal orientations. Thus empowered people must have a sense of self-determination, meaning, competence and a sense of impact (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997: 40).

Thomas and Velthouse (1990) suggested that to empower means to give power to. Power however has several meanings...authority, so that to empower can mean authorization or capacity. Power also means energy, thus to empower can also mean to energize. This latter meaning best captures the present motivational usage of the term. They assert that empowerment has become a non-traditional form of motivation. Change has forced a search for alternative forms of management that encourage commitment, risk taking and innovation. This new paradigm of management that emphasis internalized commitment to the task itself thus boosting motivation can better be referred to as empowerment (Thomas and Velhouse, 1990:667).

Others in the field define empowerment in terms of its dynamic interactions. Vogt and Murrell (1990) viewed empowerment as an act of developing and increasing power by working with others. Therefore until power is shared and employees perceive that power is shared empowerment is not possible. The dynamic relationship of the manager with employees is considered very crucial in empowerment. Honold (1997) and Johnson (1994) argued that the leader is responsible for creating a common goal which they communicate and share.
There are other researchers who take a more skeptical view and see empowerment as a management control tool essential for achievement of maximum organizational potential. Rose (2001:5) defines power as the extent to which one party to a relationship can compel the other party to do something he would not have otherwise done voluntarily. Another skeptical viewpoint see the delayering of organizational structure as aimed at adding further burden of responsibility to employees without increasing pay levels or status of workers (Hyman and Mason, 1995:387). Hales and Klidas (1998) asserted that empowerment entails some additional employee choice at the margins of their jobs rather than any substantial increase in employee voice. However despite such cynical viewpoint many researchers still belief empowerment does exist in many organizations and results to increased job satisfaction and improved performance while increasing employee commitment to the organization.

According to Beardwell and Holden (1997), employee empowerment is part and parcel of overall culture change which involves delayering, creation of flatter organization structure, improvements in communications and devolvement of authority to the operational units and customer level. To empower employees is to gain their commitment to the organizational goals and to enable them to take responsibility for their roles and functions within the organization (Beardwell and Holden, 1997). Gomez et al (2010) observed that empowerment can encourage employees to be creative and to take risks which are key components that can give an organization competitive advantage.
2.2 Employee Empowerment Programmes

2.2.1 Upward Problem Solving Participation

Upward problem solving mechanisms are generally designed for the purpose of capturing ideas and solving production problems (Marchington et al., 1992). They are in the form of suggestion schemes, problem solving groups such as quality circles and attitude surveys. Task-based participation, team working and self-management can also be considered here (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005). Suggestion schemes work on the principle that employees' submit their suggestions, say in a suggestion box, the suggestion is reviewed by a manager and a decision to accept or reject it is made. If accepted the employee generally receives a financial reward. A study carried out in United Kingdom between 1998 and 2004 indicated that around 30% of organizations reported the use of suggestion schemes.

According to Butler and Glover, upward problem solving mechanisms also include problem solving groups. Problem solving groups are generally small in nature and people meet on a voluntary basis. The purpose of problem solving groups is to identify quality or work related problems and to produce a solution to such problems. Unlike suggestion schemes there are no financial rewards for ideas generated by problem solving groups. Study carried out in UK showed an increase in usage of problem solving groups by organizations from 35% to 49% in 1998 (Millward et al., 2000). Task-based participation, another form of upward solving mechanisms, can occur both horizontally and vertically. The former means that employee can engage in a wider variety of tasks. Vertical participation means that employees may be trained to undertake tasks at a higher skill
level or they may be given managerial or supervisory responsibilities (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2005). Team working implies that employees are no longer restricted to strict job demarcation. It emphasizes functional flexibility and multi-skilling.

2.2.2 Downward Participation Informational Participation

Downward participation means top-down communication from management to employees. This is usually in form of company Newspapers, meetings, team briefings and the use of intranet (Marchington et al., 1992). Others include notice boards, Newsletters, emails and employee surveys. Holden (2004) explains that team briefing systems are normally used to cascade managerial messages down the organization. They are essentially top-down forms of communication, but employees are given a chance to ask questions or even lodge comments, queries or concern.

Butler and Glover observed that Newsletters remain widely used especially in the public sector. Holden (2004) notes that Newsletters though welcomed forms of communication has limitations in that management retain editorial control making them unsuitable forum for employees to air their grievances. Butler and Glover observed that the use of intranets and email will increase in years to come as more companies make use of them. Employee surveys were said to be popular in the public sector. In a nutshell studies have shown that many companies have infrastructure for downward communication, however whether these mechanisms are perceived as effective by employees is a matter of question (Glover, 2001).
2.2.3 Financial Empowerment

Financial participation means that employees have a financial stake in the company. It aims at enhancing the employee motivation and commitment to the organization by linking the performance of the organization to that of the employee (Holden, 2004). Marchington et al., (1992:13) suggests that schemes such as profit-sharing, employee share ownership and organization-wide bonus arrangements are some of financial rewards used in the empowerment process. While some researchers/authors have considered financial rewards as key to empowerment others have come up with contradicting findings.

Gennard and Judge (2005) observe that it is difficult to create a clear identifiable link between effort and reward. Some individuals may feel that their efforts are not adequately reflected in the profit that they share. Also the gap between the day the activities are carried out and the reward is given make it difficult for employees to relate the reward to the efforts. Profit-related pay works on the basis that a proportion of employees pay is linked to the overall profits of the company. In practice profit –related pay can be difficult to calculate particularly if the jobs are of an intermittent nature.

Burke (1986) argues that intrinsic reward provided by way of informal, spontaneous and immediate praise upon exemplary behavior is likely to be more effective than extrinsic rewards provided by formal incentive systems, promotions and the like. Klidas et al. (2004) in their research, Managing Employee Empowerment in luxury Hotels in Europe, pointed out that management should align the reward system to the empowerment
process by instituting rewards for excellence in customer care, for example “employee of
the year award”.

2.2.4 Representative Participation

Representative participation refers to mechanisms for indirect participation such as work
councils, trade unions, consultative committees and co-determination. They aim at
increasing the influence of employees’ vis-à-vis the employer rather than being
concerned with technical issues of corporate efficiency. Representative participation is
fundamentally power-oriented. It is typically about joint decision making (Blyton and
Turnbull, 2004:59). Representative participation is likely to give employees access to a
relatively higher order range of decisions. It is therefore viewed as a political process
contributing to a high level decision making as opposed to the social-technical nature of
employee involvement which restrict tangible employee influence to narrow production
issues.

Representative participation unlike the other forms of empowerment is based on the
principle of pluralism while the others tend to be unitarist in nature. Trade unions are an
important mechanism for representative participation and terms such as social partnership
and partnerships are widely used (Ackers and Payne, 1998; Guest and Peccei, 2001;
Martinez and Stuart, 2002). Traditionally the relationship between employers and
employees was characterized by mistrust and hostility. However recent findings by Cully
et al (1999) noted that an active and strong trade union presence requires high
commitment management practices. The study indicated positive links between high performance and trade union representation.

There exist three levels of consultation according to Butler and Glover: high, middle and low levels. They asserted that it is only in high level consultations that management takes workers views seriously and is likely to modify plans accordingly. The other levels of consultation are viewed as “pseudo participation” where representatives have a chance to voice their views but these may not necessarily be adopted by the management. Martinez and Stuart (2002) observed that there is often a gap between the rhetoric of partnership and the experiences of trade unionists on the ground. Suff and Williams (2004) concluded that the reality of market relations and the balance of power in the employment relationships imply that genuine mutuality is likely to be unobtainable in practice.

2.3 Benefits of Employee Empowerment

The benefits of employee empowerment can be looked at from individual and organizational perspective. Walton (1985) advocates that managerial policies of mutuality—where employers and employees share goals and agree on the means to achieve them rather than direct control will elicit employee commitment which in turn will generate both better economic performance and greater human development. Nikodym et al., (1994) observed that studies done over the years have produced mixed results as to the effectiveness of empowerment programmes to job satisfaction and performance. They indicated that variables such as role conflict and ambiguity, expectancy perception, stress,
goal setting and task characteristics may affect the effectiveness of empowerment. However some researchers have concluded that participation has a moderately positive effect on job satisfaction and productivity.

Miller and Monge reported a positive correlation between participation and job satisfaction in studies conducted in organizational settings that incorporated measures of multiple issue participation. Nikodym et al., (1994) reported that some studies have found that participation in work decisions generates a more positive attitude towards supervisors and the company. They further reported that though results of some studies are mixed there seem to be positive trend towards job satisfaction when consultative participation is used. Informal participation arising from interpersonal relationships is reported to be positively related to job satisfaction, motivation and commitment. Likewise employee ownership has been found to have a positive relationship with organizational performance (Nikodym et al., 1994).

Smith and Brannick also felt that participation causes greater job satisfaction because employees feel more valued and trusted by management and because they gain a better understanding of management difficulties by dealing with some of the same problems. Schuler suggest that increased participation in decision making reduces role conflict and ambiguity. Since role conflict and ambiguity affect emotional strain then one way of reducing job strain has been participation in decision making.
Beardwell and Holden (1997) indicated that employee empowerment changes the managers' mindset and leaves them with more time to engage in broad-based thinking, visioning and nurturing. They suggest that upward problem solving forms of communication are most associated with new managerial initiatives and clearly aimed at increasing employee motivation and influence. They also aim to boost employee morale, loyalty and commitment with a view to increasing service and efficiency. Employee empowerment programmes are also said to facilitate acceptance of changes in work practices, functional flexibility and new technology as well as engendering an atmosphere conducive to co-operation and team building (Shipper and Manz, 1992).

2.4 Factors That Influence Employee Empowerment

Various factors and conditions exist that affect the effectiveness of employee empowerment programme and unless these conditions are managed skillfully, an attempt at empowerment may fail (Nikodym et al. (1994). One set of conditions is made up of psychological state of employees which focuses upon how employees perceive empowerment. The other looks at empowerment from an organizational perspective.

2.4.1 Psychological Dimension (Individual Perspective)

Psychological dimension emphasizes employee perceptions and experiences of empowerment. Through such an approach, the emphasis is upon perceptions and belief of powers, competence, control and self-efficacy (Psoinos and Smithson, 2002). Conger
and Kanungo (1988) asserted that empowerment involves a motivational concept of self-efficacy. In support of individual empowerment, Wilson (1996) pointed out that recently researchers and employers recognize that individual change is a prerequisite for organizational change. He stated that “to create change we must change individually to enable us to become partners in solving the complex issues facing us”.

Similarly, Lee and Koh (2001) asserted that for empowerment to be said to exist employees must find meaning in their work role; they must have a sense of competence which is an individual’s belief in his /her capability to perform task activities skillfully. An employee must have a sense of self-determination (choice), referring to the autonomy in the initiation and continuation of work behaviours and processes and the last dimension is impact which refers to the perception of the degree to which an individual can influence certain outcomes at work. They suggested that the higher the individual scores in each of the above elements, the greater the sense of empowerment.

In addition to employees’ beliefs and perceptions on empowerment, employee empowerment is equally affected by the level of skills and knowledge amongst the employees. Employees must have the necessary knowledge and skills that would enable them to handle their increased authority and responsibility effectively and exercise good judgment. Employees require technical and professional skills to use their increased authority responsibly and offer quality services (Lewis, 1995). With such skills employees will be able to develop good judgment initiative, and creativity (Lovelock,
and will be able to respond to customers’ needs swiftly and with courtesy (Carlson, 1987)

2.4.2 Organizational Perspective

It has been suggested that, to empower successfully, it is necessary to examine the role of managers as they have considerable influence upon the psychological sense of empowerment held by employees. Johnson (1994) considered that it is necessary for managers to delegate some power and authority to front line employees. Walton (1985) advocates that managerial policies of mutuality where employers and employees share goals and agree on the means to achieve them rather than direct control will elicit employee commitment which in turn will generate better economic performance and greater human development. Thus empowerment is possible only when the power is shared and employees see it as being shared. This implies that managers are required to relinquish some of their authority in order to allow the employees the latitude to make decisions and assume greater responsibility (Carlzon, 1987).

Managers have to give employees guidance on how to use their increased authority and support them in performing their new roles successfully (Randolph, 1995). They should encourage employees to use their decision making authority and to trust in their own abilities, commitment and judgment (Goldsmith et al. 1997). Arnold et al. (2002) suggested that participative decision making, leading by example, coaching, informing and interacting positively with the team could be effective empowering managerial
practices. Mistakes should be perceived of as learning opportunities (Randolph, 1995) and managers should seize the opportunity to provide additional guidance and coaching (Carlzon, 1987).

Managers must be instrumental in team development by concentrating on strategies that encourage self-management and group decision autonomy. In a rapidly changing environment, replacing the traditional hierarchical structures with self-managed teams is critical when members have the technical skills necessary and have access to current information (Nikodym et al., 1994). Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1979) maintain that work structures such as teams foster opportunities to learn and grow, provide access to information, support, resources, empower employees and result in increased work satisfaction and effectiveness.

Group decisions must be implemented as this reinforces the view amongst the work force that their contributions are well received (Beardwell & Holden, 1997). Such practices enhance the psychological state of employees. In order to demonstrate support and provide positive reinforcement managers should recognize and praise employees who have demonstrated exemplary performance during service delivery (Brymer, 1991; Psinos and Smithson, 2002).

2.4.3 Access to Relevant Strategic Information

Access to information is a key to long term empowerment and independence. Sharing information with everyone gives them a clear picture of the company and its current situation. Also information sharing helps to build the trust between employees and
management (Randolph et al., 1996). Lawler (1986) suggested that managers must give employees access to relevant strategic information about the organization's performance. There is also the necessity to provide proper feedback mechanisms which clearly indicate that the workforce is being listened to and not purely in a lip-service fashion. By opening communication through sharing information opens up the feedback about what is holding them back from being empowered. Ginnodo (1997:12) laments that communication and information are the lifeblood of empowerment. People without information cannot act responsibly (Randolph et al., 1996: 34).

Randolph et al. (1996) and Caudron (1995) indicated that giving employees' information about the business, investing in new skills training, setting goals for employees and giving them ongoing feedback on how they were meeting those goals resulted in increased job satisfaction and trust in management. This was due to the power of sharing information. Sharing information about goals and effective communication about the organization's plans, successes and failures (Byham, 1997: 27) may seem commonplace but its importance cannot be undervalued.

Spreitzer (1995) supports the notion that information about the mission is an important antecedent of empowerment because it helps to create a sense of meaning and purpose and it enhances an individual's ability to make and influence decisions that are appropriately aligned with the organization's goals and mission. To make employee empowerment work, managers not only need to give them information about their own work, but also information about the business and demonstrate how their work fits in. Everyone wants to feel they do something of value. Managers must help employees
understand that their work is directly aligned with strategic goals and individual accountability is maintained all the way along the line to senior managers, customers and stockholders (Ettore, 1997) and that they are considered partners in the business, all with an eye to the bottom line implications. Empowered employees will only understand these bottom line implications if organization information is shared with them (Fox, 1998)

2.4.4 Empowerment Culture

Managers have to develop and maintain an organizational culture that is supportive to empowerment. Empowerment culture (Gandz, 1990) is a set of shared values, attitudes and beliefs about the way things should be done, the standards of behavior that are appropriate and the ethics of organizational actions. Such values compel and propel behavior which will lead to empowerment (Gandz, 1990:75). Empowerment requires trust and openness among members of the organization. An organization characterized by a culture of mistrust and suspicion among its members find it difficult to empower its members. Empowerment culture encourages functional flexibility and creativity, supports innovations and encourages investment in technology and training (Johnson, 1993; Shipper and Manz, 1992).

The aspects of job context are manifestations of culture. Job context is much broader and is the reason an organization needs that job done and includes how it fits into the overall organizational mission, goals and objectives and the organizational setting within which that job is done. Organizational structure, reward systems, mission, goals, objectives
make up the job context (Ford and Fottler, 1995). Culture affects most of the aspects of an organization: its strategy, structure, processes, reward and control systems and its daily routines (Schein, 1985: 244). An organization seeking to implement empowerment is likely to examine all the above aspects that constitute culture and align them with empowerment process (Fox, 1998). A clear policy that guides the empowerment strategy must be put in place. An organization implementing empowerment should foster a participative culture that values employees. Such an organization should create a culture where people have the knowledge, skills, authority and desire to decide, act and take responsibility for results of their actions and for their contribution to the success of the company (Stahl, 1995).

2.4.5 Organizational Structure

The structural design of an organization helps people pull together activities that promote effective strategy implementation. The structure of an organization should be consistent with the strategy being implemented. Organizations should be structured in such a way that they can respond to changes taking place in the environment and pursue any appropriate opportunities spotted (Lorsch, 1967). The organizational structure is designed to show how work is to be carried out in business units and functional departments. Empowerment is associated with flatter structure with few layers of management. Thus there is little direct supervision of employees (Stahl, 1995). It involves devolution of power to the lowest levels of the organizational hierarchy where front line employees are given powers and authority to make certain decisions. Such structure emphasizes formation of cross-functional teams and boost interdepartmental communication. It put less emphasizes on chain of command to have decisions made (Price, 2007).
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Research Design

This is a survey study design. A survey is an efficient method of collecting data from a broad spectrum of individuals and social settings. The design was selected because of its versatility and ability to lead to a large sample (Ross, 1990)

3.1 Population of the Study

The target population of this study was composed of all employees of the Ministry of State for Public Service. There were a total of 660 employees as listed in the payroll (June 2011). The employees were distributed throughout the ministry’s six units and four GTI’s. The employees were categorized into four cadres namely senior and lower management, technical and support staff.

The staff of the ministry is of diverse technical and professional skills thus making it quite appropriate for the study. The respondents were drawn from all the units/and GTIs and covered all the four cadres of staff.

3.2 Sampling

A sample constituting 10% of the target population was used. This gave a total of 66 respondents drawn from all cadres of staff (senior management, lower management, technical staff and support staff) in the Ministry. A sample size of 10% was considered
ideal for descriptive studies (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). This was to ensure that the sample was representative of the target population while taking care of time and cost constraints. A stratified sampling technique was used where the target population was sub-divided into strata of the different cadres of staff in the ministry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cadres of staff</th>
<th>Strata size</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Management J/G P and above</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Management J/G L-N</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Staff J/G H-K</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff J/G G and below</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>660</strong></td>
<td><strong>66</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Sample for the study

### 3.3 Data Collection

Primary data was used to obtain information necessary for achievement of the objectives of the study. The data was obtained through a structured questionnaire, comprising of open-ended and closed questions. The questionnaire was divided into three sections, 1, 2 and 3. Section 1 was designed to obtain general information on person and organizational profile. Section 2 consisted of questions on employee empowerment practices and section 3 consisted of questions on factors influencing employee empowerment programme. The questionnaire was administered through “drop and pick later basis”.

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3.4 Data Analysis

Before analysis, the data collected was checked for completeness and consistency. Descriptive statistics such as means, std. deviations and percentages are used to analyze the data. The results are presented in form of tables where appropriate. Factor analysis by use of SPSS has been used in the analysis.

Factor analysis is a general term for several computational techniques. All these techniques reduce to a manageable number many variables that are related and have overlapping measurement characteristics. The predictor-criterion relationship that was found in the dependence situation is replaced by a matrix of inter-correlations among several variables, none of which is seen as being dependent on another.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

During data collection, a total of 66 questionnaires were given out to respective respondents. Out of these 59 or 89.4% of the total questionnaires given out were filled and returned. 7 questionnaires or 10.6% of the total questionnaires were never returned even after several follow up visits were made. Out of the 59 questionnaires returned, 2 were considered spoilt as most of the relevant information sought was not given leaving a total of 57 questionnaires or 86.4% of the total for analysis. This response rate is considered adequate to enable the researcher achieve the objectives of the study as it is above 50%. A response rate of above 50% is considered adequate.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of respondents

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

Majority of respondents were female but on average there was an even distribution across gender as shown by table 4.2.1 below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2.1: Gender of Respondents
The above analysis shows that the population is fairly evenly distributed with regard to gender. This will enable the researcher make conclusions on whether gender has any influence on employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service and ensure fair representation based on gender.

4.2.2: Department under Which Respondents Work

The analysis shows that respondents were fairly evenly distributed across all departments as indicated by table 4.2.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central services Unit</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management Consultancy Services</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Training Institutes</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPSRRB</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2.2: Department under Which Respondents Work

This ensures that all the departments were represented and also enables the researcher make judgment as to whether departmental groupings have any impact on employee empowerment.
4.2.3: Respondents Employment Position in the Ministry

The questionnaires were distributed proportionately to the number of employees in each cadre of employment as indicated by table 4.2.3 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cadres of Staff</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Management</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Support staff</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subordinate staff</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2.3: Respondents Employment Position in the Ministry

A response rate of above 50% was registered for each cadre of staff and was considered adequate to help the researcher arrive at conclusive results as to the influence the position of employment has on employee empowerment.

4.2.4 Age Bracket of the Respondents

Majority of respondents fall in the age bracket of 41 to 50 years, followed by those in the age bracket of 31 to 40 years as shown by table 4.2.4 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 to 30 years</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 to 40 years</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 to 50 years</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 50 years</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2.4: Age Bracket of the Respondents

This implies that majority of employees in the ministry have a wide range of experience, are more likely to appreciate the importance of the study and be objective and serious while providing the required information.

4.2.5: Number of Years Worked in the Current Position

The analysis shows that majority of respondents have worked in their current position for between 2 to 5 years as indicated by table 4.2.5 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Years in current position</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 5 years</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2.5: Number of Years Worked in the Current Position
This means that majority have mastered the operations of their department and understood all aspects of the job hence the ability of the respondents to answer most of the questions objectively. This will enable the researcher make judgment as to whether employee empowerment practices do vary with years of experience.

### 4.2.6: Education Level of Respondents

Majority of the respondents had attained at least college level of education as shown by table 4.2.6 below. This implies that they were likely to understand and answer the questions objectively and thus enable the researcher make judgment as to the influence employees’ level of education may have on employee empowerment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2.6: Education Level of Respondents

### 4.3: Employee Empowerment Practices

#### 4.3.1: Policy Guideline

Majority of the respondents agreed that there is policy guideline on employee empowerment in the ministry. This shows management commitment to enhancing and supporting employee empowerment.
4.3.2: Methods of Communication Used By the Ministry

The analysis as indicated by table 4.3.2 below shows that various forms of communication are widely used in the ministry, with circulars and memos being the most used forms of communication, followed by the Newsletters, and meetings and letters in that order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods of communication</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circulars and Memos</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal briefings (meetings)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly bulletins</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Magazines</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>committees</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters, Emails, verbal etc</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3.2: Methods of Communication Used By the Ministry

The presence of well established channels of communication is evident that downward and upward problem solving forms of participation do exist in the ministry as well as representative participation in the form of committees.

4.3.3: Employee Perception of Empowerment Practices

The analysis shows that different forms of participation are employed in the ministry as shown by table 4.3.3 below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand all aspects of my job particularly in relation to the overall goal of the ministry</td>
<td>4.5263</td>
<td>.73449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I perform my job without being pressured or coerced by my supervisor</td>
<td>4.5965</td>
<td>.72849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I work efficiently with very minimal supervision</td>
<td>4.8070</td>
<td>.39815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor delegates both authority and responsibility to me</td>
<td>3.7018</td>
<td>1.38828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regularly make certain decisions without seeking approval from my supervisor</td>
<td>3.5000</td>
<td>1.36182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my work</td>
<td>3.2500</td>
<td>1.44285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am always accountable for the results of my actions / decisions</td>
<td>4.6786</td>
<td>.74118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am always informed about what is going on in the ministry</td>
<td>3.5439</td>
<td>1.35053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always participate in the goal setting process</td>
<td>3.3684</td>
<td>1.45935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always discuss my progress with my supervisor</td>
<td>4.1228</td>
<td>1.15062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive feedback on my performance timely and conveniently</td>
<td>3.8421</td>
<td>1.36001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor encourages team working</td>
<td>4.3929</td>
<td>1.00324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I interact freely and in a friendly manner with my supervisor and co-workers</td>
<td>4.2632</td>
<td>1.14215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are established channels of communication that facilitates co-operation, understanding and co-ordination</td>
<td>4.1579</td>
<td>1.08215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My problems/ issues are sufficiently addressed through these channels</td>
<td>3.8246</td>
<td>1.15144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggestion / complaint boxes are in use in my ministry / department</td>
<td>3.2281</td>
<td>1.65850</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My suggestions are always considered | 2.8772 | 1.33724
I do other activities beside my core role | 3.9825 | 1.10988
I voluntarily participate in problem solving groups with my colleagues | 3.6140 | 1.31956
My department/employer administers attitude surveys periodically | 3.1053 | 1.48425

Table 4.3.3: Employee Perception of Empowerment Practices

Upward problem solving does exist as the respondents indicated that they are always accountable for the results of their actions/decisions recording a mean score of 4.6; that their supervisors delegate both responsibilities and authority with a mean score of 3.7 and that they receive regular feedback on their performance with a mean score of 3.8. They also asserted that they do perform other activities beside their core role recording a mean score of 3.9 and that they work efficiently with very minimal supervision recording a mean score of 4.8. These high mean scores recorded are evidence that task-based participation is employed in the ministry with both horizontal and vertical participation emphasized as Marchington and Wilkinson (2005) stated that upward problem solving participation takes the form of task participation, team working and problem solving groups.

Team working and problem solving groups are other forms of upward problem solving participation employed in the ministry with mean scores of 4.3 and 3.6 recorded respectively. Self-management participation also exists as respondents indicated that they perform their jobs without being pressured by their supervisors recording a mean score of
4.5. These are evidence of existence of upward problem solving participation in the ministry. However the ministry does not give much emphasize to suggestion schemes as only very few respondents agreed that suggestion boxes are employed in their departments and that their suggestions are considered during decision making recording low mean scores of 3.2 and 2.8 respectively.

The analysis also confirms the presence of downward participation. The respondents indicated that there are established channels of communication that enhances understanding, co-operation and co-ordination recording a mean score of 4.1. The presence of team working as indicated by a mean score of 4.3 imply that team briefing sessions could be applied as Holden (2004) asserted that team briefing are used to cascade managerial messages down the organization. The presence of well established channels of communication in form of Newsletters, magazines, circulars, committees and others as indicated by table 4.4.2 are evidence that downward participation is employed in the ministry as Marchington et al.,( 1992) asserts that they facilitate communication from management to employees.

The existence of committees as shown by table 4.4.2 is a proof that representative participation is employed in the ministry as Blyton and Turnbull, (2004) assert that representative participation refers to mechanisms for indirect participation and is in the form of work councils, consultative committees and trade unions among other forms. It contributes to high level decision making as opposed to the social-technical nature of employee involvement which restrict employees influence to narrow production issues.
Financial participation is however not given much emphasizes as indicated by the poor response shown on table 4.4.3. The small tokens given at year end are nothing to mention about. It is important to note that employees do not have to participate in all forms of participation to be said to be empowered.

4.4: Employee Perception of Factors Influencing Empowerment

The analysis shows that the frameworks that support employee empowerment exist in the ministry with most statements recording high mean scores of between 3.5 and 4.4 as shown by table 4.4.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I understand the vision, mission and the overall goal of the ministry</td>
<td>4.6316</td>
<td>.69774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reporting structure put in place facilitates speedy decision making</td>
<td>3.8596</td>
<td>1.12502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have control over those aspects of my job for which i am accountable</td>
<td>3.9825</td>
<td>1.17247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive a lot of guidance and support from my supervisor</td>
<td>4.3393</td>
<td>.93957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor commends me whenever i take initiative in my job</td>
<td>3.8947</td>
<td>1.35863</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contributions are always considered when changes are being implemented in the department/ministry</td>
<td>3.2456</td>
<td>1.37945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor encourages and supports me to develop creative and innovative ideas</td>
<td>4.0000</td>
<td>1.32288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My organization has a well established modern information and communication technology (ICT)</td>
<td>4.0702</td>
<td>1.17807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have access to online information through websites, internet, intranet, e-journal and e-books</td>
<td>4.4035</td>
<td>1.03267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regularly attend training to update my skills and acquire new ones</td>
<td>3.7193</td>
<td>1.30595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the necessary skills required to perform my job effectively and efficiently</td>
<td>4.4035</td>
<td>.90356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always have sufficient resources to do my job</td>
<td>3.5439</td>
<td>1.31026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I receive adequate information that I require to do my job effectively</td>
<td>3.8772</td>
<td>1.19628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information is always up to date, timely and conveniently delivered</td>
<td>3.5263</td>
<td>1.25506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My co-workers are very supportive, helpful and friendly</td>
<td>4.1228</td>
<td>.92717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a policy guideline that allow flexibility in the way I do my job</td>
<td>3.7018</td>
<td>1.16443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contributions have a very big impact on the success of the ministry</td>
<td>4.4211</td>
<td>.82261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4.1: Factors Influencing Employee Empowerment

Individuals perceptions and beliefs are seen to be supportive of employee empowerment as respondents agreed that they understand the vision, mission and the overall goal of the ministry recording a mean score of 4.6; that they have control over those aspects of the job they are accountable for recording a mean score of 3.9 and that they have the necessary skills required to perform their jobs well with a mean score of 4.4 being recorded. The respondents also agreed that their contributions have a lot of impact on the success of the ministry recording a mean score of 4.4. This corresponds to assertions made by Lee and Kol (2001) that for employee empowerment to be said to exist employees must find meaning in their work; must have a sense of competence and self-
determination and must have a sense of impact which is the degree to which an individual can influence certain outcomes at work.

Management is also seen to be supportive to employee empowerment. Majority of the respondents agree that a policy guideline on employee empowerment exists. They also agreed that they receive a lot of guidance and support from their supervisors with a mean score of 4.3 being recorded as Randolph (1995) stated that managers have to give employees guidance on how to use their increased authority and support them in performing their new roles successfully. The respondents also agreed that their supervisors delegate both responsibilities and authority to them recording a mean score of 3.7 thus corresponding with Carlzon (1987) assertion that managers are required to relinquish some of their authority and allow employees the latitude to make decisions and assume greater responsibility.

The respondents also stated that their supervisors encourage team working with a mean score of 4.3 being recorded. This corresponds to the assertion made by Nikodym at al., (1994) that managers must be instrumental in team development by concentrating on strategies that encourage self-management and group decision making. All these are indicators of management commitment to employee empowerment and its willingness to support the employees in their endeavor to develop.

Accessibility to relevant strategic information is also seen to enhance employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service as Lawler (1986) suggested that
managers must give employees access to relevant strategic information about the organizations performance and Randolph et al., (1996) asserted that sharing information helps build trust between management and employees. Well established channels of communication exist in the ministry with Circulars and memos leading in popularity followed by Newsletters and meetings in that order as Spreitzer (1995) suggested that employee empowerment can only work if managers give employees information about the business and demonstrate how their work fits in.

Empowerment culture is another factor that influence the degree of employee empowerment in an organization as Gandz (1990) states that empowerment requires trust and openness among members of the organization. The analysis shows that the ministry’s culture is favourable and indeed facilitates employee empowerment. The respondents agree that their supervisors encourage and support them to develop creative and innovative ideas with a mean score of 4.0; that they receive a lot of guidance from supervisors and co-workers with a mean score of 4.3; that there are well established network of modern, information and communication technology with a mean score of 4.0 and that respondents have access to online information with a mean score of 4.4 are all supportive of existence of an empowerment culture. All these are in agreement to Shipper and Manz (1992) suggestions that empowerment culture encourages functional flexibility and creativity; supports innovations and encourages investment in technology and training.
The ministry's structure is also seen to be supportive of employee empowerment in that the respondents agreed that they make certain decisions without seeking approval from their supervisors, recording a mean score of 3.5; that supervisors delegate both responsibilities and authority with a mean score of 3.7 and that the reporting structure put in place actually facilitates speedy decision making recording a mean score of 3.8. These observations correspond with the views of Stahl (1995) who asserted that empowerment is associated with flatter structure with employees at the lower levels of the organizational hierarchy given power and authority to make certain decisions and there is little direct supervision of employees.

It is important to note that high std. deviations recorded are indicators of divergence of views in some statements. This is not unusual as some empowerment practices vary from one demographic group to another. For instance while employees at senior levels may have autonomy in how they do their jobs those in lower levels or those performing certain jobs may not enjoy the same freedom hence a std. deviation of 1.4 which is on the higher side. Also the nature of the job done by an employee determines whether innovation is required or not. Jobs of a routine nature require low creativity while those of a technical nature requires high innovations and creativity hence the wide divergence of views as indicated by the high std. deviation of 1.3.
4.4.2: Response on Extra Compensation for Extra Work done

Majority of the respondents, 80.7% were of the opinion that no such compensation is ever given. Only 19.3% indicated that compensation on extra work is given as shown by table 4.4.2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra compensation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>80.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4.2: Response on Whether Extra Compensation is given for Extra Work Done

Even they were of the opinion that, the compensation given in form of gifts and tokens at year end is not anything to mention about. This is an indication that though the ministry is committed to employee empowerment, financial empowerment has not been given much emphasize and this does not augur well with employees. Holden (2004) suggests that financial incentives that link organization performance with employee performance should be given so as to enhance employee motivation and commitment to the organization.
4.5: Response on the Extent to which the Respondents Consider Employee Empowerment in the Ministry a Success

Overall the research findings show that some degree of employee empowerment exists in the Ministry of State for Public Service with responses ranging from to a very great extent to a small extent as shown by table 4.5.1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent of Empowerment</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To a very great extent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a moderate Extent</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To a small extent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing System</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>57</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5.1: Response on the Extent to Which the Respondents Consider Employee Empowerment in the Ministry a Success

Majority of the respondents as shown by table 4.5.1 believe that employee empowerment is employed at least to a moderate extent while only a few felt that employee empowerment is only employed to a small extent. This divergence of views may be attributed to different demographic characteristics as Lewis (1994) stated that empowerment is affected by the levels of skills and knowledge among employees. Employees with lower level of education and lacking in experience may not enjoy the same privileges of empowerment as enjoyed by employees with wide range of experience and higher level of education hence the divergence of views.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The research findings aim at achieving the objectives of the study. The objectives of the study are to establish the extent of employee empowerment and factors that influence employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service. The study establishes that there was a fair representation of the population across gender and department and only one department recorded low representation. With respect to age majority are in the age brackets of 41-50 and 31-40 years implying that they have a wide range of experience and exposure and more likely to appreciate the importance of the study. Most of them have been in their current position for more than 2 years and have attained at least college level of education which further emphasizes their wide experience and that they are well informed.

With regard to employee empowerment practices three forms of participation are employed in the ministry with an exception of financial participation as no extra compensation is given for extra work done. Upward problem solving participation exists through task participation; team working and problem solving groups do exist. However suggestion schemes have not been given much attention and only very few respondents agree that they are employed. Downward participation is also employed as supported by the presence of well established channels of communication in forms of Newsletters,
circulars, magazines and others as well as representative participation as indicated by the strong support of existence of committees by respondents.

The findings confirm that there are well established frameworks within which employee empowerment is built. From an individual perspective, employees’ perceptions, beliefs and experiences show that individual empowerment exists as employees have a very strong sense of competence, self-determination, control and a sense of impact. From an organizational perspective management support and commitment is evident from the fact that a policy guideline on employee empowerment exists and supervisors are willing to delegate responsibilities and authority to their subordinates.

A supportive empowerment culture is also evident in the ministry. The respondents agree that the relationship with their supervisors is characterized by friendliness, understanding, trust and openness and that the well established channels of communication enhance cooperation and co-ordination. The existence of modern information and communication technology is evident of management commitment to investing in technology thus encouraging creativity and innovation and encouraging employees to improve their skills and knowledge by accessing online information through websites, internets and intranets.

The ministry’s structure is supportive of employee empowerment in that the respondents agreed that they make certain decisions without seeking approval from their supervisors; that supervisors delegate both responsibilities and authority and that the reporting structure put in place actually facilitates speedy decision making. The management also
encourages team working and individuals have control of their work implying that there is little direct supervision.

The ministry according to respondents has well established channels of communication in form of newsletters, circulars, weekly bulletin, magazines and meetings among many others. All these ensure that employees have access to relevant strategic information that enables them to perform their jobs effectively and receive adequate feedback on their performance. All the above are the frameworks that support employee empowerment in the ministry.

It is important to note that employees do not have to be enjoying all the privileges associated with employee empowerment for them to be said to be empowered. So long as they are exposed to a substantial number of them then they are empowered. This is because the manner in which a job is done greatly depends on the skill levels of the employees. This however does not mean that the management cannot narrow the gap by providing employees with relevant skills.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the management of the Ministry of State for Public Service is committed and supports employee empowerment and has put in place measures that facilitate employee empowerment. The ministry's structure, culture and established channels of communication are very supportive to employee empowerment. Also
management support and guidance and employee perceptions are quite favourable for employee empowerment in the ministry. However there is a wide discrepancy in the manner these components are employed as indicated by high std. deviations. This means that some practices are made available to employee in some demographic characteristics but not to others.

Another conclusion arrived at is that downward, upward problem solving and representative participation are practiced in the ministry. However financial participation is lacking as no compensation is given for extra work done or exceeding targets. In summary the management in the Ministry of State for Public Service is committed to enhancing and supporting employee empowerment and has put in place measures to support this notion. The factors that influence employee empowerment are employed in the ministry although it appears that some discrepancies in the manner in which they are employed exist.

5.3 Recommendations

The recommendations given are meant for policy makers in the Ministry of State for Public Service and other ministries, parastatals and other private organizations. They are also meant for employees in the ministry and other organizations as well as researchers who would wish to carry out a research on the topic in the future. The research findings show that the management in the Ministry of state for Public Service is committed to encouraging and supporting employee empowerment in the ministry. This is evident from the high ranking registered in most statements.
However, the high std. deviations recorded in most statements show that some measures are not employed evenly throughout the organization or across different demographic characteristics of employees. The management must investigate the reasons behind such discrepancies and put in place measures to narrow this gap. Also notable is the absence of financial incentives to enhance employee empowerment. From the findings it is obvious that no extra compensation is given to employees for extra work done or exceeding targets. The management should put in place systems to ensure that employees are compensated for their extra efforts.

This study only focused on establishing the factors that influence employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service. Further studies could be extended to other ministries, parastatals and even private organizations in order to establish the consistency in findings and if not to establish the causes of the discrepancies. In addition the research sought to establish the factors that influence employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service. Since employee empowerment is not an end by itself, another study could be done to establish the effectiveness of employee empowerment in the ministry or other organizations.

Another recommendation derived from the findings is that employees must be made to understand their role in employee empowerment programme. Employee empowerment starts with employees as individuals knowing and appreciating that their contributions in making employee empowerment a success is vital. Employees must have a sense of self-determination, competence, control and must find a meaning in their work role for
employee empowerment to succeed. They must take initiative to empower themselves through training, seeking mentoring services and accepting responsibilities and control of their work. This would go a long way in reducing the amount of discrepancies registered by the high std. deviations. In summary a high level of employee empowerment is employed in the Ministry of State for Public Service but regular review and improvement are recommended so that the gains made could not be lost.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

The study on employee perception on factors that influence employee empowerment in the Ministry of State for Public Service was relatively a success. However certain limitations need to be highlighted. The study was constrained by time and cost constraints. As such some questionnaires were never collected as respondents took so much time before filling them. However the number of questionnaires not returned was negligible as compared to those that were fully filled and returned. The researcher was not able to establish the outcomes of employee empowerment based on different demographic characteristics hence generalizing the findings. Since employee empowerment is not an end in itself it is important to determine the outcomes of empowerment for it to be considered a success. This is an area that requires further research in future.
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APPENDIX 1: Questionnaire

Please give answer in the spaces provided and tick ( ) the box that matches your response to the questions where applicable

SECTION 1: PERSON AND ORGANISATION PROFILE

1. Gender? (tick as appropriate)
   (a) Female ( ) (b) Male ( )

2. Which unit/department do you work under? .................................................................

3. What is your designation /position in your organization? ................................

4. What is your age bracket? (tick as appropriate)
   (a) Under 20 years ( )
   (b) 21-30 years ( )
   (c) 31-40 years ( )
   (d) 41-50 years ( )
   (e) Over 50 years ( )

5. How many years have you been working in your current position? (tick as appropriate)
   (a) Less than 2 years ( )
   (b) 2-5 years ( )
   (c) 6-10 years ( )
   (d) Over 10 years ( )
6. What is your education background

(a) Primary level ( )
(b) Secondary level ( )
(c) College level ( )
(d) University level ( )
(e) Others, specify .................................................................

7. Does the ministry have a vision and mission statement?

Yes ( ) No ( )

8. Is there a policy guideline on employee empowerment/ involvement in the ministry?

Yes ( ) No ( )

9. Which are the methods of communication used by the ministry?

Circulars and memos ( )
Verbal briefings (meetings) ( )
Weekly bulletins
Ministry magazines ( )
All of the above ( )
None of the above (explain) ( )

10. How effective are the methods of communication used by your organization?

To a very great extent ( )
To a great extent ( )
To a moderate extent ( )
To a small extent ( )
Not at all ( )
## SECTION 2: EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT PRACTICES

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree to some extent</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree to some extent</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand all aspects of my job particularly in relation to the overall goal of the ministry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I perform my job without being pressured/or coerced by my supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I work efficiently with very minimal supervision</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. My supervisor delegates both authority and responsibilities to me</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I regularly make certain decisions without seeking approval from my supervisor</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. I have significant autonomy/ freedom in determining how I do my job</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I am always accountable for the results of my work</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>actions/decisions</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I am always informed about what is going on in the ministry</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. I always participate in the goal setting process</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I always discuss my progress with my supervisor</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I receive proper feedback on my performance timely and conveniently</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. My supervisor encourages team working</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I interact freely and in a friendly manner with my supervisor and co-workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. There are established channels of communication that facilitates co-operation, understanding and co-ordination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My problems/issues are sufficiently addressed through these channels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Suggestion/complaint boxes are in use in my ministry/department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My suggestions are always considered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18. I do other activities beside my core role</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>19. I voluntarily participate in problem solving groups with my colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20. My department/employer administers attitude surveys periodically</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 3: FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMES

State the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements in the table below. Use the key provided below and tick appropriately inside the box.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree to some extent</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree to some extent</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I understand the vision, mission and the overall goal of the ministry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The reporting structure put in place facilitates speedy decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have control over those aspects of my job for which I am accountable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I receive a lot of support and guidance from my supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My supervisor commends me whenever I take initiative in my job</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My contributions are always considered when changes are being implemented in the department/ ministry</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>My supervisor encourages and supports me to develop creative and innovative ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>My organization has a well established modern Information and Communication technology (ICT) network</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>I have access to online information through websites, internet, intranet, e-journals and e-books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I regularly attend training to update my skills and acquire new ones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>I have the necessary skills required to perform my job effectively and efficiently</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>I always have sufficient resources to do my job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>I receive adequate information that I require to do my job effectively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>The information is always up to date, timely and conveniently delivered</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>My co-workers are very supportive, helpful and friendly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>There is a policy guideline that allow flexibility in the way I do my job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>My contributions have a very big impact on the success of the ministry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. Which are the channels of communication used to disseminate information in your ministry?

(a) Meetings ( )
(b) Committees ( )
(c) Notice boards ( )
(d) Newsletters ( )
(e) Direct communication (verbal/written) with your employer ( )
(f) All of the above ( )
(g) Others, explain........................................................................................................

19. Do you consider these channels convenient and adequate?

Yes ( )  No ( )

20. If no, explain -----------------------------------------------

21. Do you receive extra compensation (pay) for consistently exceeding the set targets?

Yes ( )  No ( )
22. If yes, what forms of compensation do you receive?

(a) Bonus ( )
(b) A certain per cent of basic salary ( )
(c) Promotion ( )
(d) All of the above ( )
(e) Others (specify) ( )

23. Do you consider these forms of compensation fair and adequate?

Yes ( ) No ( )

24. If no give suggestions

25. In your own opinion, to what extent do you consider the employee empowerment/ involvement programme in your ministry a success?

(a) To a very great extent ( )
(b) To a great extent ( )
(c) To a moderate extent ( )
(d) To a small extent ( )
(e) Not at all ( )

Thank You for Your Time and Co-Operation