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Job sharing and employees' performance in selected manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya-A case of West Kenya Sugar Company Limited

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Abstract

Workers well-being has gained more prominent in today's society. Workers have faced a lot of pressure emanating from home and work thus work life balance has become a predominant issue in the workplace. Job sharing is one of the way to ensure that there is work life balance in organization for increased employees performance. This study therefore established the effect of job sharing on employeesperformance in selected manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya.This study was guided by the descriptive research survey design. The study was carried out in West Kenya Sugar Company Limited which is located in Kakamega County, Kenya. The target population for this study was drawn from a population of 2400 employees of West Kenya Sugar Company Limited out of which 220 employees were sampled for the study. 183(83.18%) response rate was obtained which is acceptable for a subsequent data analysis as 60% and above is the recommended response rate in social research. The study targeted key informants like the managers and supervisors who had good understanding of the operations of the company. Purposive sampling method was be used to select the key informants. Simple random sampling was used to select unionizable employees. This study used questionnaires and interview schedule as the primary instruments of data collection. Descriptive and inferential analysis were conducted by the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Simple linear regression model was used for inferential analysis. Analyzed data was then presented using tables. The study found out that job sharing significantly affects employee performance hence the study rejected the null hypotheses and recommends that manufacturing companies in Kakamega County should embraced job sharing as an ingredient of work life balance for better employees performance.

Keywords: *Work-life balance, Job sharing, and employees' performance*

Introduction

Background of the Study

Work life balance concepts and principles date back in 1986 by the North American Human Resource Management Institute (Beauregard & Lesley, 2009).

Work-life balance means a worker spending half his time at work and another half at home handling domestic matters. It deals with extent to which one's perceived resource allocation in terms of mental, physical, and emotional resources between the non-work and work and domains matches employees expectations (Grawitch, *et al.,* 2009). Job sharing have been introduced in the recent past by organizations for greater employees work life balance. It has also become an important part of the benefit and compensation programmes which are commonly referred to as 'family friendly (Kopelman*et al.,* 2006).

Job sharing has been defined differently by different scholars. Ronel (2006) defined it as dividing a full time job duties into two parts so that two-part time employees are engaged and paid according to the work done. This makes work attractive to employees who are interested in working for fewer hours. Mattis, (1990); Olmsted and Smith (1994) in Ronel (2006) define it as an arrangement of sharing one full-time position by two employees, with prorated benefits and salary. Job sharing was first primarily viewed as an alternative for women with young children; this mindset has been changed gradually as employers recognized job sharing as an alternative for a larger group of employees working in an organization. For example, a senior-level employee and entry-level employee may share a job as a way of phasing into retirement (Olmsted & Smith, 1996, in Avery & Diane, 2001).

Chapin (1992) in Avery and Diane (2001) have enumerated the merits of job sharing which entails: helps in balancing work and home responsibilities; leads to high productivity and job satisfaction brought by high levels of enthusiasm; make workers experience less stress and burnout; giving workers ability to learn from one another. Grensing (2005) also reported that the use of job sharing leads to increased organization performance. Some of the possible demerits entails: limited opportunities for job advancement; and fewer benefits and reduced salary. One of the main barrier to job sharing may be management résistance. Managers may form a perception that job sharing will increases the workload of managers as a result of supervising two employees instead of one employee (Avery & Diane, 2001). Olmsted and Smith (1994) in Avery and Diane (2001) highlighted some of the benefits of job sharing especially to the employer which includes: help in smooth work flow schedules especially during peak hours; one worker can cover for an absent worker thus enabling work continuity; acts as a cost savings due to reduced overtime, reduced turnover and decreased absenteeism.

Statement of the research problem

Work life balance has gained prominent as an important area of Human Resource Management and has received increasing attention from public media, researchers, government, management and employee representatives (Nord *et al*, 2002; Russell & Bowman, 2000). Studies have revealed that more work/family benefits leads to greater commitment, less intention to leave and good work life practices leads to employees performance (Lockwood, 2003; Ronel, 2006). Most of the studies that have been undertaken on work life balance and employees performance have been conducted mostly in the West with few studies conducted in Africa. There is also scanty of literature on job sharing as an ingredient of work life balance and employees performance. Therefore, the research made an attempt to contribute to the literature by exploring the effect of job sharing on employee performance in selected manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Objective of the Study

To establish the effect of job sharing on employee performance in selected manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Hypotheses of the study

H_0 There is no relationship between job sharing and employees performance in selected manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya.

Conceptual framework

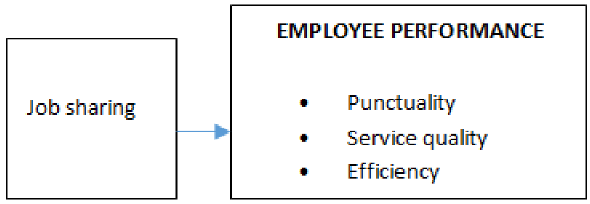

Fig 1: The conceptual framework showing the influence of job sharing on employee performance
(Source: self-conceptualization, 2016)

Literature Review

Employee Performance

According to Armstrong (2005) performance is as output measured in quantitative terms. He however cautions that it is more than this. That it is also the outcomes of activity and endeavor which can be assessed qualitatively by reference to standards of performance defined in the form of meeting the required standards.

Outcomes can also be assessed against quantified targets or goals expressed as projects or tasks to be completed satisfactorily on a continuing basis. It is a matter of not only what people achieve but of how they achieve it. He further explains that performance is about upholding the value of the organization-'living the values'. This is an aspect of behavior but it focuses on what people do to realize core values such as concern for quality, concern for people, concern for equal opportunity and operating ethically.

Stephen *et al* (2011), acknowledge the difficulty of measuring performance and productivity, particularly in professional work as the output is very often intangible. However they suggest that if one thinks in terms of concentration and focus, as well as reduced stress and related illness symptoms and lower absenteeism, one can easily imagine how satisfactory work life integration positively impacts professional employees' performance. They further noted that organization that fosters individual employees work life balance is likely to benefit from improved performance. Thompson *et al,* (2006) explained that organizations that do not foster a more balanced work-family life for employees, contribute to tensions in personal life of employees thus affecting their ability to concentrate and be productive and involve in job creation. This notion is supported by Bloom and Van Reenen (2006) who found that work life balance outcomes are significantly associated with better management, that is, well-run firms are both more productive and offer better conditions to their employees. Therefore better work life balance practices are linked to higher individual productivity.

A review of literature on this subject demonstrates that over the past three decades there has been widespread scholarly interest in the concept of work-life balance (Freeman, 2009; Moore, 2007). Friedman and Greenhaus (2000), noted that employers should be informed of the choices they make regarding work life balance to help individual employees balance between their family and work. This study of more than 800 business professionals considered values, work, family and work lives and found that "work and family, is the dominant life roles for most employed men and women in the current society which either help or hurt each other. To handle work-life balance, they emphasize that employees should learn to build networks of support both at work, home, and in the community. Premeaux*et al.,* (2007) on effects of work life practices on employees' work life conflict levels found out that work life practices affects employees' conflict levels. Beauregard *et al* (2009) study on the effect of work life balance practices on organizational performance found out that many organizations do not conduct formal monitoring and evaluation of their work-life practices, assuming that they are being used effectively.

This study specifically determined the effect of job sharing as a work life ingredient on employees performance in manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, a case study of West Kenya Sugar Company.

Research Design and Methodology

This study was guided by descriptive research survey design

The study was carried out in West Kenya Sugar Company Limited which is located in Kakamega County, Kenya. The target population for this study was drawn from a population of 2400 employees out of which 220 employees were sampled for the study as shown in Table 1. The study targeted key informants like the managers and supervisors who had good understanding of the operations of the company. Purposive sampling method was be used to select the key informants like the managers and supervisors who had good understanding of the operations of the company. Simple random sampling was used to select unionizable employees.

Table 1: Sample Distribution

Sector	Company	Group	Population Size	Sample Size (10%)
Manufacturing	West Kenya sugar company.	Top level Management	20	2
		Middle level Management	100	10
		Unionisable	2080	208
		Total	**2400**	**220**

Source: C*ompany records March (2016)*

This study used questionnaires and interview schedule as the primary instruments of data collection.

Descriptive and inferential analysis was conducted by the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Simple linear regression model was formulated for inferential analysis in the form of EP=α_0+ βJS + e. were EP=Employee performance, JS=Job Sharing, α=y intercept term, $\beta$is the Beta coefficients and e=error term. Analyzed data was then presented using tables.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Table 2: Response Rate

Category	Sampled	Responded	Percentage (%)
Top level management	2	2	100
Middle level management	10	10	100
Unionsable	208	171	82.21
Total	**220**	**183**	**83.18**

Source: Research Data (2016) (N= 183)

The returned questionnaires were 183(83.18%) of which 2(100 %) were from the top level management while 10(100%) were from the middle level management and 171(82.21%) from the Unionsable employees. 183(83.18%) response rate is acceptable for a survey as 60% and above is the recommended response rate (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This percentage implies that most of the targeted respondents responded and that the results can be analyzed and inferences made accordingly.

Descriptive analysis

Table 3: Employee responses on the effect of job sharing on employee performance

Key terms	SA	A	FA	D	SD
	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)	F (%)
Shared duties	6(3.3)	121(66.1)	0(00)	22(12)	34(18.6)
Equally well performed	50(27.3)	105(57.4)	00(0)	6(3.3)	22(12)
Work confidence	50(27.3)	99(54.1)	28(15.3)	6(3.3)	00(00)
Total	**179**	**401**	**28**	**40**	**84**

Source: Research Data (2016) (N=183)

The study sought to establish the effect of job sharing on employee performance in manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya. The findings in Table 3 revealed that majority of the employees agreed that there are duties at their work place that can be handled by their colleagues when they are not available; 127(69.41%) while 56(30.6%) disagreed to the fact. 155(84.7%) agreed that duties that were meant to be handled by them when performed by other colleagues at work, are equally performed well. Only 28(15.3%) of the employees objected to this statement. I have confidence in the ability of my colleague selected to handle my duties when am off duty was agreed to by 149(81.4%) and refuted by 6(3.3%). The respondents' responses showed that job sharing had an effect on performance of employees.

Inferential analysis

The researcher used regression model to test the study hypothesis H_0: There is no relationship between job sharing and performance of employees in manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya. In order to establish the strength and direction of the effect, job sharing index was correlated with performance of employees at 95% significance

Table 4: Regression results

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.179[a]	.032	.027	2.38905
a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Sharing				

ANOVA[b]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	34.180	1	34.180	5.989	.015[a]
	Residual	1033.065	181	5.708		
	Total	1067.246	182			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Sharing						
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance						

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	15.784	.481		32.793	.000
	Job Sharing	-.123	.050	-.179	-2.447	.015
a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance						

Source: Research Data (2016)

The regression results on table 4 showed that job sharing had a positive linear effect on employee performance (r=0.179). The results showed that 3.2% of employee performance in selected companies in Kenya can be explained by job sharing (r^2= 0.032) and the relationship followed a simple a simple regression model of the nature **EP = α+ βJS +e** where **EP** is employee performance, **α** is the constant intercept, **JS** is job sharing and **e** is the error term. The equation will be in the form of **EP = 15.784+ -0.123 JS +e**.

Since the study had a beta value of -0.123 which is not equal to 0, the study null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the study concluded that job had an effect on employee performance in manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study findings concurs with the findings of the past researchers that found out that there is a positive and significant effect of job sharing and employees performance (Thompson *et al.,* 2006, Bloom & Van Reenen, 2006; Freeman, 2009; Moore, 2007; Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Premeaux*et al.,* 2007 & Beauregard *et al.,* 2009)

Conclusion

The study found out that job sharing significantly affected employee performance hence the study rejected the null hypotheses and concluded that job sharing had an effect on employee performance in manufacturing companies in Kakamega County, A case of West Kenya Sugar Company.

Recommendations

The study recommends that manufacturing companies in Kakamega County should embraced job sharing as an ingredient of work life balance for better employees performance. Employees' performance will in the long run be translated to the company's overall performance.

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