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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the influence of organizational structure on employee job satisfaction and commitment in the civil service in Kenya. Three components of organizational structure were examined, namely; centralization, formalization and span of control. The study used a cross-sectional survey design. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from a target population of one hundred and sixty employees in senior, technical and middle level management. The results of the study indicated that organizational structure significantly influenced employee job satisfaction and commitment in the civil service in Kenya. This study validated findings from previous studies that established a significant link between organizational structure and employee job satisfaction and commitment. The study recommended that top policy makers in the civil service should review and implement the current organizational structure designs to enhance employee job satisfaction and commitment for improved service delivery.

Key words: Organizational Structure, Job Satisfaction, Employee Commitment, Civil Service in Kenya

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INTRODUCTION

A review of literature classifies organizational structure into centralization, formalization, hierarchy of authority and departmentalization. Centralization is the degree to which decision-making authority is concentrated at higher levels of an organization (Muduenyi, Oke, Fadeyi & Ajagba, 2015). Centralization is two-fold; hierarchy of authority and participation in decision making. A hierarchical structure indicates the number of levels an organization structure has from the lowest level to the highest level (Ibrahim, 2014). Communication is largely a top down process and the decision-making points are clearly stipulated. Such an arrangement may exhibit efficiency in service delivery since decision making levels and work procedures are provided (Marx, 2016). This notwithstanding, a centralized organization structure design plays a key role in making employees feel that they are not only recognized but also appreciated. This aspect leads to enhanced employee job satisfaction and commitment.

A formalized structure indicates the extent to which job tasks are defined by formal regulations and procedures. Employees have well defined duties and responsibilities, career guidelines, duties and responsibilities. The rules, procedures, work standards and norms serves as a means for defining the routine behavior, to the extent employees have limited autonomy in decision making (Olajide, 2015). Employee behavior is predictable and consistent since they refer to work manuals and procedures to solve work problems. Research has demonstrated that a formalized organizational structure has positive influence on employee attitude and behavior (Maduenyi *et al*, 2015). Employee job satisfaction and commitment is also influenced by the organizations span of control (Ibrahim, 2014). A span of control determines the hierarchical order in an organization

and the number of managers required at any given time Krasman (2014). The appropriate number a manager can effectively manage is not constant since it depends on the nature of work in context.

The objective of this Study was to assess the influence of organizational structure on employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the Civil Service in Kenya.

The hypothesis of the Study was; there is no significant influence of Organizational structure on employee job satisfaction and commitment in the Civil Service in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Past research indicates that organizational structure can affect employee attitude and behavior; organizational citizen behavior, enhanced job satisfaction and commitment (Tran & Tian, 2013). A study by Krasman, (2014) examined the effect of organizational structure on employee trust among full time workers in selected industries in Canada. The study results found out that a formalized and standardized organizational structures were positively related to employee trust. Centralized organizational structure (hierarchy of authority) was negatively related to employee trust, while the span of control and decision making were not significantly related to employee trust. Another study by Ibrahim (2014) explored the impact of organizational structure on employee commitment in public and private sector firms in Jordan. The study results revealed that all structure dimensions significantly influenced organizational commitment in both sectors. The study findings further showed that formalized organizational structure demonstrated the highest correlation with organizational commitment in private sector firms, while a centralized structure did not significantly influence organizational commitment.

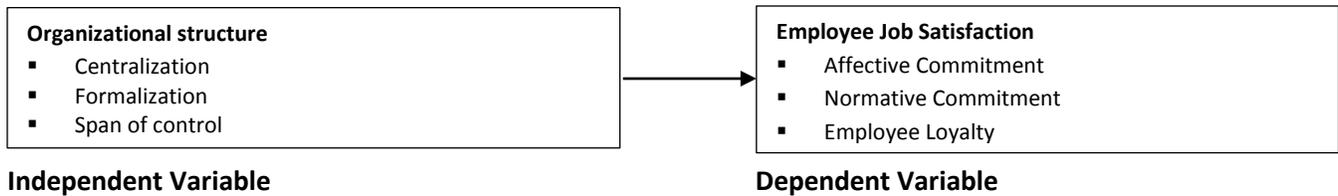


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The positivism philosophical design was found appropriate and therefore adopted by this study because it is based on measurable facts and objectivity (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). As described by Creswell (2014), the positivism tradition is underpinned by empirical knowledge, based on findings of collected data. The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey design, both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). The qualitative approach method was used to give in-depth information from government ministries and State Departments on the influence of organizational structure on job satisfaction and commitment.

The quantitative approach method was used to describe the variables and to measure the hypothesized relationship between the independent variable (organizational structure) and the dependent variable (employee job satisfaction and commitment). The study used quantitative survey method to quantify the hypothesised relationship between the research variables. This involved a standardized questionnaire with the aim of establishing relationships between variables (Creswell, 2014).

Primary data was collected using a structured self-administered survey questionnaire. A standardized questionnaire was designed in such a way that all the study variables were covered. The survey questions linked directly to research objectives and provided necessary data for hypothesis testing. The researcher used the drop and pick method to distribute questionnaires to heads or deputies of human

resource management in ministries and state departments, with sufficient copies to share out with the rest of the respondents. A self-administered questionnaire was preferred due to the literacy levels of the respondents and was found convenient to administer. Each questionnaire was accompanied by an introduction letter addressed to the respondents.

A pilot study was undertaken to test the reliability and validity of the research instruments. A pilot study is essential as it enables identification of elements that are unclear and sensitive and are bound to introduce bias and errors (Kumar, 2011). Following the pre-test, the research instrument was adjusted appropriately to enhance validity and reliability of the instrument. The pilot study covered nineteen (19) members of the senior and middle level cadres in state departments, representing 5% of the target population, (Kothari, 2007). This was in line with the recommendation of documented research which recommends that the number of pilot study should comprise of between 1% and 10% of the target population (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

The Quantitative data generated from the survey was first cleaned to look for missing details or characteristics. Simple linear regression model and multiple regression models were used to test the nature and magnitude of relationships between independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y) to determine the 'best fit' in the hypothesized statements. Quantitative data was analysed using SPSS Statistical tools and this provided meaningful distribution of scores, using statistical measures of mean, standard deviation, central tendencies, dispersion and distribution (Kothari 2007). Data in form of reports, publications and other

documentations from state departments was presented in tables, charts, graphs and narrative statements.

RESULTS

The study found out that organizational structure had a significant influence on employee job satisfaction and commitment in the civil service in Kenya. The observation was based on the findings of the descriptive statistics; that decisions were made at the top management level, that there were clear lines of authority and responsibility and that state departments had a formal structure. Employees obeyed the laid down rules and regulations in job performance. There was trust at high level among employees, employees had clear levels of responsibility and accountability, there was less time taken to talk to top management and that the chain of command slows down decision making. The implication was that there was a significant and positive relationship between organizational structure and employee job satisfaction and commitment in the civil service in Kenya.

CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of this study was that there was a significant influence of organizational structure and employee job satisfaction and commitment in the civil service in Kenya. The hypothesis tested indicated that there was no significant influence of organizational structure on employee job satisfaction and commitment in the Civil Service in Kenya. In conclusion, the null hypotheses (H_0) of the study stated above was rejected and instead adopted the alternative hypotheses (H_a) which showed that there was a significant influence in the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended to top management of the civil service to review the current organization structures to reflect formalized structures that guide employee duty performance. This is based on the finding that employees attain higher levels of job satisfaction and commitment in situations where rules and regulations are well documented. The study recommended a review and implementation of the highly centralized structures that is identical to the civil service to facilitate easy flow of communication. This recommendation was supported by Herzberg's two factor theory which states that in any work environment there are motivators and hygiene factors. The motivators or satisfiers create a sense of intrinsic feelings and satisfaction in an employee. The motivating factors include achievement, work itself, responsibility, recognition, advancement and growth. The hygiene factors, on the other minimize feelings of dissatisfaction in employees; working conditions, supervision, organizational policies, job security, remunerations and relations with colleagues. A well-designed organizational structure will therefore enhance employee job satisfaction and commitment among public servants.

Areas for further Study

This study examined the influence of organizational structure on employee job satisfaction and commitment in the civil service in Kenya. The analysis indicated that organizational structure had a significant influence on employee job satisfaction and commitment. Future studies should examine the influence of organizational culture on employee job satisfaction and commitment in the public service. Further research should also be carried out to establish the influence of employee placement within the organizational structure on employee job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

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