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Influence of work specialization on employee development: A case of Telkom Kenya Nakuru branch in Nakuru County

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

There are visible challenges with employee development at Telkom Kenya where employees remain in one position for many years with some remaining in the same position until their retirement. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this problem could be linked to the design of the organization, but no systematic study has been conducted to ascertain this claim. This study, therefore, sought to determine the influence of work specialization on employee development at Telkom Kenya Nakuru Branch. The study was guided by the Axiomatic Theory of Organizations. It made use of the correlational research design where all the 51 employees of the Telkom Kenya Nakuru Branch were involved in the census study. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from operational staffs while interview guides were used to gather qualitative data from heads of departments. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, and the multiple regression techniques while qualitative data were analyzed using the thematic content analysis technique. Results showed that work specialization (β= 0.491, p=.000) had a statistically significant and positive influence on the development of employees at TKNB. Based on the findings, the study recommends that the management at TKNB should enhance work specialization by implementing job rotation programs and promoting a match between employees' skills and their job.

Introduction

In the modern business environment, employees are a valuable form of organizational capital and vital source of competitive advantage. The quality of an organization's human resource determines its technical skills, knowledge, experience, creativity, relationship with customers and other stakeholders, and productivity (Pasban & Nojedeh, 2016). Employees are also vital determinants of the quality of service provision in all organizations. Due to the increasing importance of human capital, it has become inevitable for organizations to pay attention to the development of its employees. Employee development is a concept that entails acquisition of advanced knowledge, skills, and experiences by an employee. According to Akter (2016), employee development is a complex phenomenon that is a function of both individual and organizational factors. One of the organizational factors that have been linked to employee development is work specialization.

Work specialization, also known as division of labour, is the extent to which tasks within the organizations have been subdivided into separate jobs (Adeyoyin et al., 2015). It is one of the organization design elements and entails breaking down tasks to the lowest level and designing jobs for each segment (Lunenburg, 2012). Specialization enables employees to focus on specific task hence allowing them to build expertise and experience, therefore enhancing production efficiency. It also allows employees to concentrate on their areas of strength thus leading to greater productivity (Adeyoyin *et al.,* 2015). Breaking down the job into a simple specific process also makes it easy for new employees to learn. The flip-side of work specialization is that it reduces the employees' ability to multitask since they perform the same task throughout (Zareen, Razzaq, & Mujtaba, 2013). It also denies employees the chance to acquire a broad assortment of skills and experience as it limits them to performing few tasks. Consequently, it becomes difficult for

these employees to adapt to different functions. Specialization can also create boredom that can create job dissatisfaction as employees are constrained to a few repetitive tasks (Lunenburg, 2012). The repetitiveness of tasks could also usurp the employees' creativity and innovativeness.

The drawback of specialization have compelled modern organizations to seek alternative approaches for designing jobs such as job rotation, job enlargement, and job enrichment (Adeyoyin *et al.*, 2015). Job rotation entails allowing employees to move from one job to another within the organization. According to Zareen et al. (2013), job rotation promotes employee development by giving them the opportunity to learn different skills by assuming diverse roles and responsibilities. On the other hand, job enlargement involves giving employees more tasks to perform while job enrichment seeks to increase the number of tasks that the employee performs and the autonomy of the employee in performing the job (Adeyoyin *et al.,* 2015). Job enlargement broadens the scope of work that an employee performs while job enrichment provides an employee with the opportunity to plan and control the work leading to more meaningful learning.

Many organizations at the international level are moving toward employee-oriented organizational designs with the view of optimizing the value of their human resource. In the United States of America (USA), leading corporations have developed organizational designs that seek to place people with right skills in the right job positions, and at the right time (Lanier, 2012). In addition, these corporations emphasize on organizational designs that attract employees from diverse backgrounds in order to create a wide pool of talent and realize synergy. In Europe, D'Amato and Herzfeldt (2012) also observed that organizational designs that foster learning were an important determinant of employees' organizational commitment. It was also noted that 21st century employees were adamant to remain in the same company but an organization learning orientation acted as an incentive for employees to remain in the organization.

In Kenya, companies have been adjusting their organizational design as a strategy for improving their competitiveness and performance. According to Mutuku (2014), the business environment has become more dynamic and unpredictable making it impossible for organizations to excel while still using traditional organizational designs. Many organizations have been compelled to change their structures in order to increase their ability to adapt to the modern business environment. The need to change organizational design has not been limited to the private sector. Public sector organizations have also been actively reviewing their organizational designs mainly driven by the need to align their structures with the Constitution of Kenya 2010 as well as the desire to improve service delivery (Public Service Commission, 2015).

The Kenyan telecommunication industry has flourished in the first two decades of the 21st century. It is characterized by 3 telecommunication monsters namely, Safaricom, Airtel, and Telkom Kenya. For a better part of its history, Telkom Kenya has been rigid to change resulting to disastrous effects (Mburu, 2019). The former Telkom Kenya was founded in 1999 when the Kenya Post and Telecommunication Corporation was split into the Telkom Kenya, the Communications Commission of Kenya, and the Postal Corporation of Kenya (Rioba, 2018). In 2007, France Telkom (also known as Orange South Africa) acquired 51 percent holding in Telkom Kenya and later changed the name to Orange. In November 2012, the Kenyan government reduced its shareholding from 49 percent to 40 percent as a move to convert its shareholding loans to equity.

Orange South Africa later increased its stake to 70 percent due to failure on the part of the Kenyan government to provide its full funding of the 2012 debt. In November 2015, Helios Investment Partners bought Orange South Africa's entire stake in Telkom Kenya. Helios negotiated to retain 60 percent down from 70 percent with the remaining stake being owned by the Kenyan Government (Otera, 2018). The current Telkom Kenya is owned jointly by Helios Investment Partners and the Government of Kenya (Otera, 2018). The liberalization of the Telecommunication sector in Kenya in the year 1999 brought about a myriad of challenges to Telkom Kenya including increased competition. In response to these challenges, Telkom Kenya has undergone various organizational design changes including acquisition, retrenchment, and downsizing (Mburu, 2019). Some of the changes such as retrenchment have had an adverse effect on employee development.

In her study examining employee training and development at Telkom Kenya, Adongo (2013) found that 67% of the sampled employees felt that the organization does not provide them with adequate opportunity for professional development. In addition, 94.6% of the respondents also reported that the training offered at the organization did not prepare them to cope with new information technologies. The liberalization of telecommunication sector coupled with subsequent restructuring of Telkom Kenya also hampered the personal development of employees as marked by challenges such as delays in remittance of employee benefits (Rioba, 2018). In this organization, employees remain in one position without promotions for many years, with some staying in the same job position until retirement. Many others choose to leave the organization because of lack of growth opportunities. Lack of development opportunities has led to demoralization of staffs resulting to high rates of employee turnover.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the employee development challenges at Telkom Kenya could be linked to how jobs are designed. Quite a number of studies (Dedahanov, Rhee, & Yoon, 2017; Holagh, Noubar, Bahador, 2014; Alipoo, Ahmadi, Pouya & Mowlaie, 2017, and Rhee *et al.,* 2017) have linked how jobs are designed with employee outcomes. However, these studies have focused on other employee variables such as innovation, creativity, communication, coordination, and performance rather than employee development. Dedahanov *et al.* (2017) and Holagh *et al.* (2014) have examined how job design impacts employees' innovativeness and creativity. On the other hand, Alipoor *et al.* (2017) and Rhee *et al.* (2017) have interrogated the effect of work design on employee performance. There is a gap in evidence regarding how design of jobs specifically affects the development of employees.

The current study sought to fill this gap by assessing how work specialization influences the development of employees at Telkom Kenya Nakuru Branch. The study is organized into several sections including the literature review that examined literature related to work specialization and employee development, research methodology that details the methods and procedures used to carry out this research, results section presenting and discussion the findings of the study, and the conclusion and recommendation section.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

The study was guided by Axiomatic Theory of Organizations developed in 1965 by Jerald Hage to prescribe how to define an ideal organization (Lunenburg, 2012). The theory proposes eight variables that an organization needs to consider in its design: formalization, decentralization, specialization, adaptiveness, stratification, production, efficiency, and job satisfaction (Hage, 1965). Formalization is the level of standardization of jobs within an organization as well as the level to which the behaviour of employees is controlled by rules and regulations. Decentralization is the delegation of the decision-making power away from apex of the organization (Lunenburg, 2012). Specialization is the level of complexity in the organization determined by the number of divisions and interaction between them.

Adaptiveness is the ability to respond to changes in the organization's environment while stratification is the difference in status of employees at different levels and divisions of the organization (Kanten et al., 2015). Production is the quality and quantity of output in the organization and efficiency is the ability to produce outcomes using as little resources as possible. Job satisfaction is the level of importance that the organization assigns to its human resource. The Axiomatic theory advances seven propositions regarding the relationships between the eight variables. These propositions include: (1) lower decentralization leads to higher productivity, (2) higher formalization translates to greater efficiency, (3) little decentralization results in higher formalization, (4) greater stratification leads to higher production, (5) higher stratification causes lower job satisfaction, (6) greater stratification also minimizes adaptiveness, and (7) higher specialization increases the decentralization level (Lunenburg, 2012).

Axiomatic theory was relevant to the current study because it provided a basis for assessing employee specialization at TKNB and how it influences employee development. According to the theory, higher level of specialization increases the level of decentralization of decision-making authority, which in turn gives employees the opportunity to learn (Lunenburg, 2012). The theory also asserts that high levels of specialization creates an organistic organization that is flexible. Flexibility allows employees to move across departments and task, which gives them greater opportunity to learn (Kanten *et al.,* 2015).

Empirical Review

Employee Development

The employee development concept is concerned with the overall growth of the employees (Akter, 2016). It entails advancing the abilities, talents, and skills to enable them to take up more responsibilities and challenging tasks. Employee development is a vital ingredient of organizational development and growth. According to Hameed and Waheed (2011), more developed employees tend to have higher level of job satisfaction, greater organizational commitment, and enhanced performance resulting to the overall development of the organization. Several parameters have been used to measure employee development. In their study, Tahir, Yousafzai, Jan, and Hashim (2014) measured employee development using seven outcome parameters namely: employee enhancement, job knowledge, techniques, skills, ability, competency, and morale. On the other hand, Ojowhoh (2016) used process measures such as training, promotion, coaching and mentorship, job challenges, favourable policies, and technological changes.

The subject of employee development in Kenya was explored in the study by Cherono (2017) who examined how employee development shaped organization's performance at Unilever Tea Kenya Limited. Employee development was measured in terms of training, skills and knowledge, mentoring, participation in decision-making, and delegation of tasks and responsibilities. Results showed that employee development had a significant effect on organization's performance. The aspect of work specialization was however missing in the study by Cherono (2017), which is the focus of the current study. Mwashila (2017) also examined the influence of employee development on the performance of academic staffs in Kenyan public universities. Employee development was measured in terms of career planning, career advancement, and mentoring. Results showed that employee development had a significant influence on the performance of the academic staffs. The study by Mwashila (2017) also failed to capture the subject of work specialization and its impact on employee development. The current sought to fill this gap by examining the influence of work specialization on employee development at TKNB.

Work Specialization and Employee Development

In asessing work specialization, the study focused on how jobs at TKNB are designed in reference to concepts such as job rotation, job enrichment, and job enlargement. In their study focusing on textile companies in Kwa Zul-Natal Province in South Africa, Dhanraj and Parimasur (2014) found that job rotation was significantly and positively associated with employee skill-based flexibility, sense of job security, career advancement, problem-solving capability, and time utilization. Respondents expressed that job rotation enabled them to gain variety of skills that enabled them to work in different jobs and consequently increase their marketability in the job market resulting in a greater sense of job security. Job security also translated to increase in confidence. The

study by Sushil (2017) found that job enrichment was positively and significantly associated with competency development and job satisfaction among employees of multinational organizations in India. The study found that job enrichment enhanced competency development by entrusting challenging responsibilities to employees and giving them autonomy to direct their own work.

The Job Characteristic model by Hackman and Oldam suggest that the characteristic of the job determines employee outcomes including their development, autonomy, and meaningfulness of work (Hussein, 2018). Particularly, the model asserts that monotonous and boring jobs stifle employee motivation and development whereas challenging jobs enhances development. The model identified five job characteristics that have an impact on employee outcomes: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Park, 2017). Skill variety refers to the assortment of skills that the employee needs to apply in his or her job. A job that requires too many skills may become overwhelming while that which requires very few skills becomes boring. Task identity refers to the extent to which an employee is willing to identify and take pride in the tasks that he or she performs and the outcome of his or her job. A job that inspires pride leads to better employee outcomes (Hussein, 2018). Task significance refers to an employee's perception regarding whether his or her job tasks contribute toward something that is meaningful to society. Autonomy is the level of independence that an employee has over his job while feedback refers to communication that an employee gets regarding the performance of his or her job (Park, 2017). Greater autonomy and quality of feedback enhances employee development.

The effect of job specialization on employee outcome was empirically assessed in the study by Adeyoyin, Ajiboye, Isau, and Oluyinka (2013) that focused on staff in a Nigerian university library. Majority of the respondents expressed that job specialization enhanced their performance by making their work easier and faster. However, a sizeable proportion of the respondent reported that they were dissatisfied with job specialization because their posting did not match their training. The study by Adeyoyin *et al.* (2013) has brought the issue of job-skill matching as another determinant of how specialization affects employee outcomes. The findings suggest that specialization is likely to have negative outcome if the job to which an employee is posted does not match his or her expertise or training. The study by Adeyoyin *et al.* (2013) however used descriptive statistics and thus could not authoritatively infer the existence of a relationship between work specialization and employee outcomes. The current study uses robust inferential statistics to test this relationship.

Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables **Moderating Variable** **Dependent Variable**

Work Specialization
- Job design
- Skill-Job matching
- Job scope

- Internal Social Systems

Employee Development
- Training and mentorship
- Skill growth
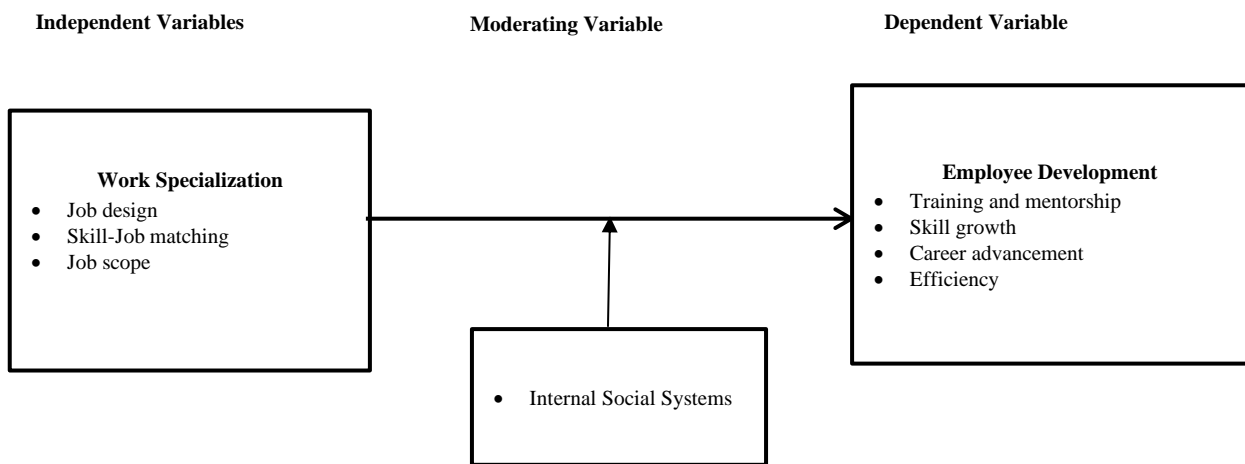- Career advancement
- Efficiency

Figure 1: Influence of Work Specialization on Employee Development

As illustrated in Figure 1, the independent variable of the study was work specialization. The study presumed that work specialization influence employee development by shaping the level of training and mentorship, skill growth, career advancement, and efficiency. The study further theorized that the relationship between work specialization and employee development is moderated by internal social systems of organizations. Internal social system refers to the arrangement and interrelationship of the various parts and individuals that form an organization (Sharma, 2018). An organization's internal social system has two major components: the corporate culture and social structure. Corporate culture refers to norms and values that are shared by employees and other members of the organization (Souza & Fenili, 2016). On the other hand, social structure is the relationship that exists among employees in terms of power, trust, and affiliation. The study posited that the internal social systems has the potential of shaping how work specialization affects employee development by shaping the employees' relationships, expectations, and behaviours.

Research and Methodology

The study made use of the correlational research design. The target population comprised all the 51 employees of TKNB comprising 5 heads of department and 46 operational employees. A census approach was used in data collection due to the small size of the

population. Questionnaires were used to gather quantitative data from the operational employees within the TKNB. Interview guides were used to collect qualitative data from heads of departments. A pilot study was conducted at the Telkom Kenya Kericho Branch to examine the validity and reliability of the data collection tools. The pilot test involved 14 employees comprising of 12 operational staff and 2 heads of department. The Kericho Branch was selected because it had similar characteristics as the Nakuru Branch.

Validity of the data collection tools was enhanced by dividing the tools into sections that correspond to each study variables so as to ensure that all variables were interrogated adequately. The researcher also relied on input provided by university research supervisors, who have in-depth expertise on the research subjects, to enhance the validity of the instruments. The researcher also used results of the pilot study to examine validity. Reliability of the data collection tools was assessed by analysing the pilot study data using the Cronbach alpha method. Results of the reliability test are presented in Table1.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Results

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Employee development	9	0.77
Work Specialization	10	0.786

Source: Pilot Data (2019)

Results in Table 1 show that all the scales had alpha values that were greater than 0.7. This implies that the scale had acceptable level of reliability and thus provided consistent measures of the variables that the study intended to measure. The instruments were thus deemed to be fit for the main study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The researcher obtained approval to conduct the study, distributed the questionnaire, and returned to pick the completed questionnaire after one week. The researcher also agreed on appropriate date and time for the interviews with the heads of department. The completed questionnaires were sorted, coded, and entered into the SPSS version 25 programme. Descriptive statistics including percentages, frequencies, and means were used to assess the existing situation within the study setting with regards to each of the study variables. Inferential statistics was used to test the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The simple regression method was used to conduct the inferential analysis. The following regression model was used to guide the analysis:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$

Where, Y= employee development at TKNB, β_0 = constant, β_1= Beta coefficients, X_1 = Work specialization, and e= error term. The qualitative data captured using interview guides was analysed using the thematic content analysis technique.

Findings

Response Rate and Respondents Background Information

Out of the 51 staffs that were targeted, 47 responded to the study by either completing a questionnaire or participating in the interview. This figure translates to a response rate of 92.2%.

Table 2: Response Rate and Respondents Background Information

Variable	Statistics
Response Rate	92.2%
Gender	Male= 57% Female = 43%
Age	Mean=37.42 years Youngest= 23 years Oldest = 54 years
Number of years worked at TKNB	Mean=11.94 years Shortest= 1 years Longest= 34 years

The majority of the respondents (57%) were males while 43% were female. The results are consistent with a report by the Nairobi Securities Exchange (2019) which revealed that the corporate world in Kenya is still dominated by men but women representation is rising steadily. The mean age of the staff was 37.42 years. The youngest employee was 23 years old while the oldest was 54 years. The results are congruent with the study by Otera (2018) which found that the majority of the staffs (64.7%) in the Kenyan telecommunication sector were in the 26-45 age brackets.

The respondents had worked at Telkom Kenya Nakuru Branch (TKNB) for an average of 11.94 years. This work duration is sufficient for the staff to learn about the design of their organizations and to encounter development opportunities offered by the organization. The employee with the shortest stay had worked at Telkom for 1 year while the one with the longest stay had worked for 34 years.

Employee Development at Telkom Kenya

The dependent variable of the study was employee development at Telkom Kenya. It was measured using four indicators namely: training and mentorship, skill growth, career advancement, and efficiency. To assess training and mentorship, respondents were asked to rate the quality of employee training at TKNB on a three-point scale. Results are presented in Figure 2.
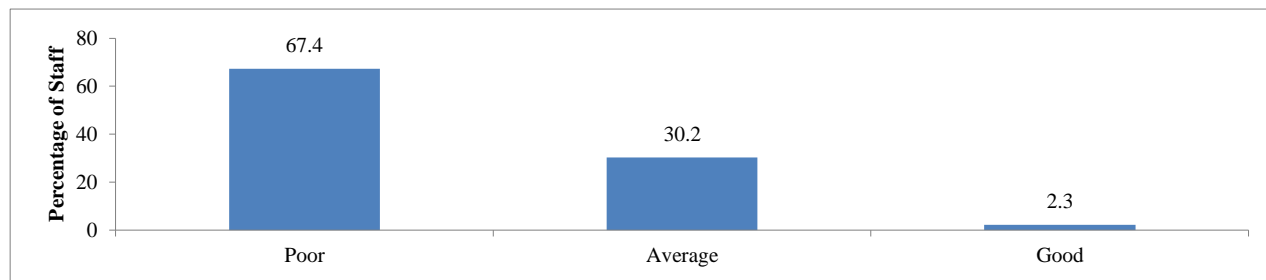

Figure 2: Staffs' view on Quality of Training at Telkom Kenya

Results shows that the majority of the staffs (67.4%) rated the quality of training at TKNB as poor. About 30.2% said it was average while 2.3% felt that there was good quality training. This finding is consistent with the study by Mburu (2019) who found that Telkom Kenya did not have a sufficient budget for employees' training, did not have enough training facilities, and lacked policies for guiding the training and development of employees. This position was reinforced by the qualitative data collected during the interview with heads of departments (HODs). HOD1 narrated that:

There has been little push to train and acquire new knowledge and skills. We do not have adequate training resources. This has affected the employees' preparedness for the dynamic market changes. (Interview, HOD1, 2020)

HOD3 added that:

Training is mainly done when a new employee joins an organization. It is usually more of an orientation programme. After that, the employee receives little additional training opportunity. (Interview, HOD3, 2020)

To further assess the advancement of skills, respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they have advanced their knowledge and skills, the experiences they have obtained for working at Telkom, and the growth they have witnessed in their careers. Results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Employees views of Growth of their Skills at TKNB

Question	Little (%)	Moderate (%)	Large (%)
To what extent have employees of the organization advance their knowledge and skills as result of working for the organization?	34.9	58.1	7.0
How would you rate the amount of the work experience that you have obtained by working for this organization?	0	90.7	9.3
How would you describe the growth that you have experienced in your career after joining this organization?	55.8	37.2	7.0

Results in Table 3 shows that 58.1% of the respondents felt that employees at TKNB have advanced their knowledge and skills to a moderate extent while 34.9% said that the skills have been advanced to a little extent. Also, the majority of the respondents (90.7%) rated the amount of work experience that they have gained at Telkom Kenya as moderate. In addition, 55.8% of the staffs described the growth that they have experience in their career after joining Telkom as little while 37.2% rated the growth as moderate. These findings suggest that on average, employees at TKNB have experienced either little or moderate growth in their skills during their stay at Telkom Kenya. These findings are reinforced by qualitative data where HOD2 narrated that:

Little training takes place after an employee joins the organization. As a result, many staffs do not have the skills needed to help the company compete in the modern business environment. (Interview, HOD2, 2020)

These findings are also consistent with the study by Mburu (2019) where it was found that employees at TKNB had gained little knowledge and skills as results of limited training and development opportunities. The issue of career advancement was examined by posing two questions to the respondents. Results are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents Views of Career Advancement at TKNB

Question	Little (%)	Moderate (%)	Large (%)
How would you describe the level of personal growth of employees working in this organization?	55.8	37.2	7.0

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What is the likelihood of an employee being promoted to higher levels after serving the organization?	61.9	32.6	5.6

Results in Table 4 show that 55.8% of the respondents rated the level of personal growth of TKNB employees as little while 37.2% rated it as moderate. Similarly, 61.9% rated the likelihood of them being promoted to higher job positions as little while 32.6% rated it as moderate. These findings suggest that the average position of the majority of the respondents is that the level of career advancement at TKNB ranges from little to moderate. These findings are congruent with the study by Otera (2018) who found that there was no predictable promotion structure at Telkom Kenya. The absence of this structure had a negative influence on employees' career advancement leading to job dissatisfaction. The efficiency indicator was evaluated using two questions. The first question required employees to rate the improvement in the level of employees' efficiency during their stay at Telkom Kenya. Results are summarized in Figure 3.
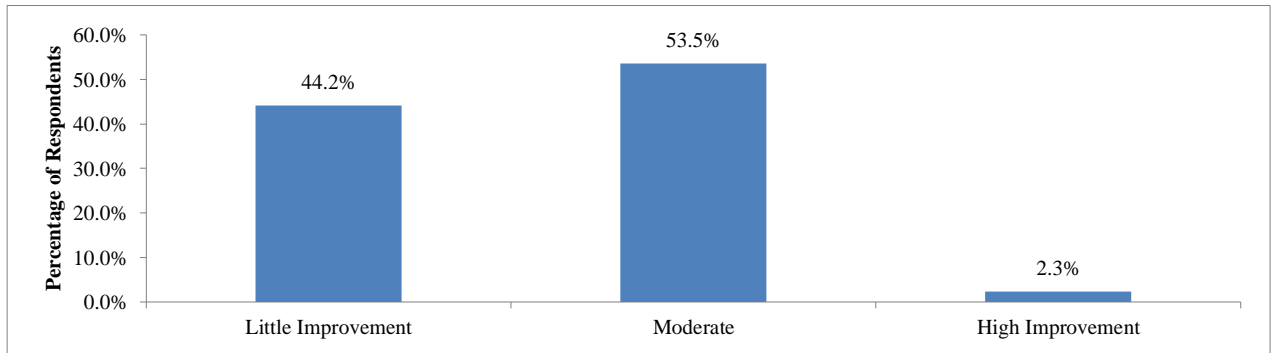

Figure 3: Respondents view of Efficiency Improvement by TKNB Employees

Figure 3 show that 53.5% of the staffs rated the level of improvement in the efficiency of TKNB employees as moderate while 44.2% rated it as little. Efficiency is a vital outcome indicator of employee development. It is expected that employees who are highly developed would be more efficient in doing their work (Akter, 2016). Present findings suggest that there is little to moderate improvement in the level of efficiency of TKNB employees, which signifies the existence of deficiencies in the development of company staffs. The second question required the respondent to rate the extent to which the quality of work performed by TKNB employees has improved over the years. Results are presented in Figure 4.
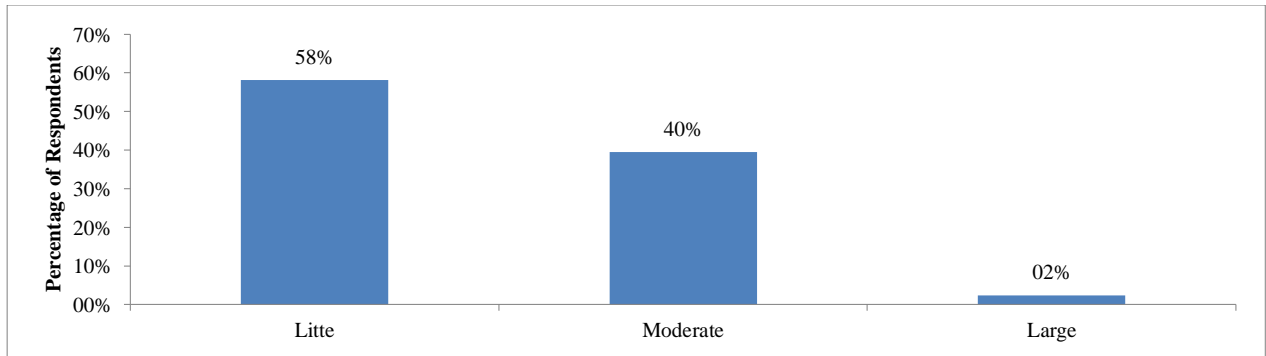

Figure 4: Respondents view on Improvement in Quality of Work

Figure 4 connotes that 58.1% of the staff felt that the quality of work of TKNB employees had improved to a little extent while 39.5% said that it had improved to a moderate extent. Literature suggests that employee development should be manifested in the quality of work that the employees perform (Akter, 2016). Consequently, present study suggests that there is a low level of employee development at TKNB because the quality of workmanship of employees has not improved notably over the years.

Work Specialization at Telkom Kenya

To assess job design, employees were asked to indicate the statement that best reflected the nature of their jobs. Results are summarized in Figure 5.
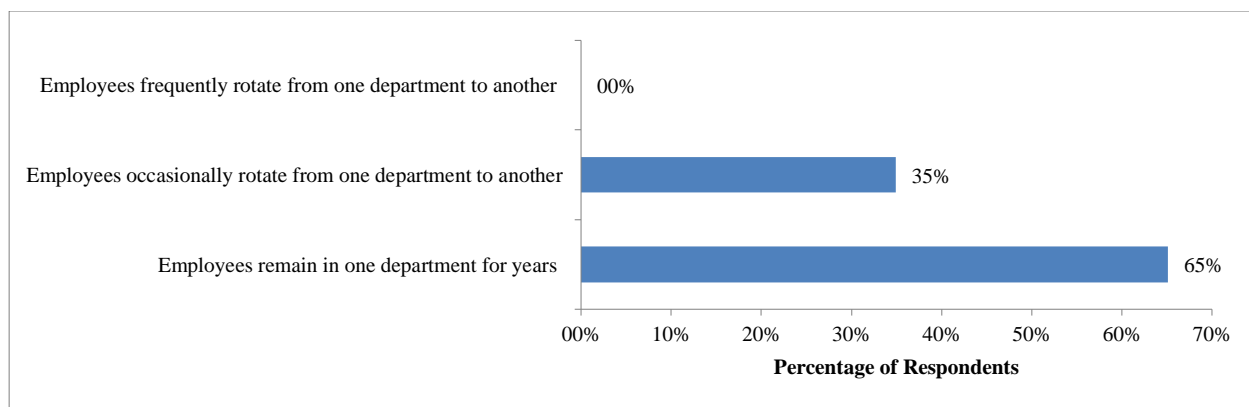
Figure 5: Respondents view of Job Rotation

This question assessed the extent to which there was job rotation at Telkom Kenya. Results in Figure 5 shows that according to the majority of the respondents (65.1%) there is no job rotation at TKNB as employees remain in one department for years. About 34.9% of the respondents reported that employees occasionally rotate from one department to another suggesting that there is some little level of job rotation at Telkom Kenya. These findings are also supported by qualitative data where majority of the interviewees hinted at the lack of job rotation at TKNB. HOD2 stated that:

Jobs in this organization are designed in the form of departments and there is no rotation from department to department. (Interview, HOD2, 2020).

HOD3 added that:

Jobs are designed according to specialization. For example, engineers perform the technical work, customer service staffs manage customer experiences, and the HR manages workers issues. (Interview, HOD4, 2020).

These findings are congruent with the study by Rioba (2018) who found that TKNB had a rigid organizational structure that emphasized on division of labour and specialization. This implies that there was little job rotation among employees. Job skill matching was assessed using three questions. Results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Respondents views on Job-Skill Matching at Telkom Kenya

Question	Little (%)	Moderate (%)	Large (%)
How would you describe the number of tasks and responsibilities associated with your job at Telkom Kenya encompass a wide range?	2.3	51.2	46.5
How would you describe the level of skills required to perform the duties and responsibilities of your job?	0	39.5	60.5
To what extent do the jobs of employees at Telkom Kenya Nakuru Branch match their skills and training?	53.5	44.2	2.3

Source: Field Data (2020)

Results in Table 5 shows that the majority of the respondents (51.2%) described the number of tasks and responsibility associated with their job as moderate while 46.5% expressed that they usually deal with a large number of tasks. The majority of the staff (60.5%) also alleged that the performance of the duties and responsibilities associated with the jobs required the application of high level skills. Meanwhile, the majority of the respondents (53.5%) rated the extent to which their job matched their skills and training as little while 44.2% said that the job matched their skills to a moderate extent. The findings highlights existence of a problem at the organization where employees are required to undertake tasks and responsibilities that require high level skills yet they have not been equipped with these skills. The findings are reinforced by qualitative data. HOD1 expressed that:

Here, jobs are grouped based on expertise and specialization. For example, we have technology-based jobs and sales jobs. We also have support jobs such as auditors and logistics…..Most employees do not have adequate skills to perform these jobs. (Interview, HOD1, 2020).

HOD3 also described that:

Jobs are designed depending on the strategic business unit. There are technology-based jobs, enterprise jobs, and support departments. (Interview, HOD3, 2020).

The finding is consistent with the study by Mburu (2019) who found that Telkom Kenya did not have training programmes for helping employees to acquire the skills needed to execute their duties and responsibilities. Job scope was also assessed using three statements. Results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: Respondents views on Job Scope

Question	Rarely (%)	Occasionally (%)	Always (%)
How often do you get the opportunity to undertake new and challenging tasks in your job position?	67.4	18.6	14.0
How often do you get the opportunity to plan your work leading to more meaningful learning?	2.3	41.9	55.8
How often do you get the opportunity to control the work that you do leading to more meaningful learning?	41.9	55.8	2.3

Source: Field Data (2020)

Table 6 shows that the majority of the staff (67.4%) felt that they rarely get the opportunity to undertake new and challenging tasks in their job positions. Another 18.6% of the staff said that they occasionally get the chance to perform new and challenging tasks in the job positions. Occasionally means that the opportunities that the employees get are not as many as they would want. The finding is congruent with the study by Rioba (2018) who reported that having been split from a public corporation, the design of Telkom Kenya largely resembles that of public institutions that emphasize strict definition of jobs that do not allow employees to deviate from the job roles. However, the majority of the employees (55.8%) reported that they always get the opportunity to plan their work leading to more meaningful learning. This finding suggests that employees at TKNB have high level of autonomy when it comes to the planning of their work. On the other hand, the majority of the respondents (55.8%) said that they occasionally get the opportunity to control the work that they do leading to more meaningful learning while 41.9% said that they rarely get such opportunities. The findings suggest that while employees at TKNB get the chance to plan their work, they have little opportunity to undertake new and challenging tasks and control their work, which is bound to affect their development.

Regression Analysis

Simple regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between work specialization and employee development. The results in Table 7 show that the model had an r-square of 0.419, which indicates that work specialization explained 41.9% of variances observed in employee development. According to Gera (2015), an R-square that is greater than 0.25 is acceptable in studies examining social phenomenon such as employee development because such phenomena are usually shaped by countless variables. It is therefore rare to find a single variable that provide a high level of explanation for changes observed in social phenomena.

Table 7: Regression Analysis Results

Variable		r	r^2	Constant	F	P
Dependent	Employee development	.647	.419	0.971	5.375*	.019
Independent	Work Specialization		Beta	Standardized Beta	t	
			.491*	.476*	4.161	.000

The F-test gave a p-value (F= 5.375, p=.019) that is less than 0.05 level of significance that was set for this study. This indicates that the relationship between work specialization and employee development is statistically significant. The beta coefficient also show that work specialization has a positive and statistically significant influence on employee development at TKNB (β= 0.491, p=.000). These findings imply that the quality of how jobs are designed at the organization, extent to which the skill of employee matches their jobs, and the scope of their jobs have a positive influence on the employees' development. Specifically, the results show that improving TKNB's score in the three specialization parameters would increase the level of employee development at the organization by 0.491 units. These results are reinforced by qualitative data. When asked to give his view regarding how work specialization impacts the development of employees, HOD1 replied that:

One is able to specialize in their specific areas and become better. They tend to develop the skill needed to perform in the specific areas and master their tasks. (Interview, HOD1, 2020).

HOD3 added that:

Specialization help employee to build-up experience in their area of specialization. It also reduces the cost of training and organizational wastage.

The findings are also consistent with the study by Adeyoyin *et al.* (2013), who found that job specialization had a positive influence on the development of library employees in a Nigerian university as it made their work easier and faster. The impact of work specialization on staff development was however hampered by the low level of job-skill match within the institution. Results from the present study also show a low level of job skill matching at TKNB, which could be contributing to the low level of employee development at the organization. Current findings also showed that there is low level of job rotation at TKNB and that job rotation is associated with the level of employee development. This is consistent with the study by Dharnraj and Parimasur (2014) where it was found that job rotation has significant influence on the career-advancement of employees of textile companies in KwaZul-Natal Province in South Africa. Respondents expressed that job rotation enabled them to gain variety of skills that help them to work in different jobs and consequently increase their marketability in the job market resulting in a greater sense of job security.

Conclusions

Findings revealed that there were some deficiencies in the way jobs at TKNB are designed marked by low level of job rotation. There is also a skill-job mismatch where employees do not have adequate training to match the demands of their jobs. Relating to job scopes, results showed that jobs at TKNB generally require application of wide range of high level skills. However, employees rarely get the opportunity to engage in new and challenging tasks. The results were supported by qualitative data, which showed that jobs at TKNB were specialized according to functions such as technology related jobs and sales related jobs. The multiple regression analysis showed that work specialization has a statistically significant and positive influence on employee development (β= 0.491, p=.000). This implies that improving the level of work specialization at TKNB would improve the level of employee development.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that work specialization has significant and positive influence on employee development at TKNB. Results suggests that improving the design of jobs, enhancing the match between employees' skills and jobs, and enriching the scope of employees' jobs would enhance the level of employee development at the organization. Accordingly, TKNB should work towards improving work specialization.

To foster development of employees, the study recommends that the management of TKNB should consider introducing job rotation programmes that give employees the opportunity to work in different departments. These programmes will help the employees to gain new experiences and skills leading to more meaningful development.

The management at TKNB should also design jobs in a way that give employees the opportunity to undertake new and challenging tasks. Employees should be given the opportunity to work on new projects rather than being confined in routine activities throughout the year. Once an employee has mastered the skills needed to execute his or her current tasks, the management should assign new responsibilities that will help this employee to grow further. They should also give employees greater control over their job so that the employees can learn how to address work-related issues on their own leading to enhanced professional development.

To address the mismatch between employees' skills and their job responsibilities, and facilitate the development of employees, the management of TKNB should invest more in training and mentorship. The organization should roll out programmes that will upgrade employees' skills on a continuous basis to make them competitive in the ever changing business environment. The organization should also develop mentorship program that will help staff to develop not only technical skills but also managerial and other human skills.

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