

## **The Relationship between Career Counseling and Employee Productivity in Sugar Firms in Kakamega County, Kenya**

**Joshua Amakanya Ombayo**

Department of Business Management  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology  
P.O Box 190-50100 Kakamega, Kenya

**Dr. Willis Otuya**

Department of Business Management  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology  
P.O Box 190-50100 Kakamega, Kenya

**Simon Mamadi Shiamwama**

(Corresponding author)

Department of Business Management Science  
Kenyatta University  
P.O Box 23-50109 Bulimbo, Kenya

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between career counselling and employee productivity, in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya. The study was anchored on the theory of Career Decision Making developed by Krumboltz, 1976. The study was guided by a conceptual framework which showed the interrelationship between and among the variables as conceptualised by the author. The study adopted a correlation research design which has the ability of establishing relationships among variables. The study was scheduled between February-December 2013. The target population comprised of 700 managers and 2320 operational level employees. A sample size of 10% was extracted from the universe of 3020 employees which gave a total of 302 employees. The employees were stratified, and then randomly picked so as to participate in the study. The tools for data collection were questionnaires for consenting employees as well as document analysis. Validity and reliability of research instruments was guaranteed by a test re-test. The data collected was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, and presented in the form of frequency distribution tables, pie charts, graphs, means, modes and percentages. Pearson's correlation coefficient was the main tool employed to test for relationships among variables. This study revealed that the more sugar firms shun away from career counseling, the more the productivity goes down. Lack of career counseling resulted into a strong negative (-0.72) correlation coefficient between career counseling and employee productivity. The author recommended that Sugar firms to incorporate career counseling as an essential ingredient in their career intervention programs.*

### **Operational Terms**

**Career counselling**-refers to a series of assistive actions aimed at remedying existing problems to restore product and service quality in occupational related arena.

**Career intervention**- it is a deliberate act of enhancing some aspects of a person's career development including influencing the career decision-making process: according to the study, all the members of the organisation must be developed without a bias of the various management levels.

**Organisational growth**- it is the expansion of business entities as a result of retention of employees-the overflowing employees can be utilised in the establishment of subsidiary entities.

**Organisational Policies**-these are rules, regulations and accepted codes of conduct regarding decision making and operation of entities.

**Operatives**-refer to employees at the lowest hierarchical level, they perform routine structured duties in an organisation.

**Employee productivity**-refers to attainment of performance targets and displaying desired behaviour on job related tasks.

**Resources control**-refers to maximum utilisation of organisational resources so as to obtain desired outcomes and organisational goals; corrective measures may be put in place in case of deviations.

**Targets and Timelines**-obtaining desired work outcomes in terms of behaviour and performance within stipulated time.

### **1.1 Background Information**

Nthangi (2007) defines `career` as an occupation. In today`s world of work however, career intervention is the continuous process of learning and development. New Zealand Qualification Authority (2012) define `career` as the wide range of occupational, family, civic and political roles which individuals will undertake through life. The author continues to define career intervention as the process used to assist clients to develop career plans. Career intervention is an issue that many people have been taking for granted-the value of this important activity in the organisation has not been established adequately by managers and stakeholders. Career is thus a journey through life-mostly from adolescence to retirement-with occupation constituting only one of its components.

Gishinga (2011) re-sounds the importance of counselling by advising that anybody who is facing a challenge for which they are not prepared on how to cope with the particular challenge needs the assistance of another person equipped in helping to pull through. Many challenges arise at the workplaces which need expertise intervention in terms of guidance, advice and relevant information for decision making; according to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology Strategic Plan (2008-2012), Kenya as a country is facing a similar dilemma. Akinyi (2012) in a research study observes that the Kenya Sugarcane Industry is a major employer and contributes to the national economy-thus measures should be taken to salvage it from collapse. The author continues to clarify that the industry saves Kenya in excess of USD 250 million (about Kshs 20 billion).

According to the Mumias Sugar website (2013), Mumias Sugar was founded through a creation of a corporation between a farmers` out-grower scheme, the government and the company in 1971. 70% of the shares were owned by the government by then. The company produces sugar and sugar products such as molasses, generation of electricity and involvement in community social responsibility. The West Kenya Company website (2013) reveals that West Kenya was incorporated in 1979 with an Open Pan Boiling System for producing Mill White Sugar. The company is located on Kakamega-Webuye road, about 14km from Kakamega town. Butali Sugar factory is an offshoot of West Kenya Company in Kakamega North. The challenges raised above were attributed to wanting career counselling remedies. Consequently, the study sought to consider career counselling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

According to Kenya Sugar Industry Strategic Plan (2010 - 2014), the sugar industry is a major contributor to the agricultural sector which is the mainstay of the economy. It supports at least 25% of Kenyan population. It accounts for 15% of the agricultural Gross Domestic Product. The industry is also a source of employment for most households in Western Kenya. The sugar industry is facing challenges including capacity underutilization, lack of factory maintenance, poor transport infrastructure, and weak corporate governance. Consequently, most factories have accumulated debts amounting to Kshs 58 billion. The Sugar Industry strategic plan (2004-2009) reveals that sugar yields declined from 73 tons per hectare to 70 tons per hectare for that period. Kegode (2005) in a research study reports that the sugar industry in Kenya is in chaos. The current state of the sugar industry where local production is below the country`s demand levels raises serious concerns. This coupled with threats from COMESA countries, after the expiry of safeguards that limit importation of sugar from COMESA market into Kenya, call for urgent measures to redress the situation. The current scenario has been attributed to corruption, mismanagement, lack of focused career counseling and use of poor agricultural techniques.

There is therefore an urgent need for strategic career counseling programs to be adopted to help current employees improve their skills to cope with environmental changes and enhance productivity in sugar firms. Previous researchers concerned themselves with factors affecting training (Egessa 2005; Rapando 2011); the two researchers found out that training is practiced in most sugar firms. The researchers did not consider career counseling. Thus important component of career counseling was not adequately addressed in previous researches. The gap triggered a study on the practice of Career counseling and Employee Productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**1.3 The Purpose of the Study**

In general the study sought to examine career counselling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**1.4 Study Objective**

The study objective was: to examine the relationship between career counseling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**1.5 Research Hypothesis**

The study proposed the following hypothesis:

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no relationship between career counseling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** Organizational factors have no moderating effect on the relationship between career counseling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya.

**1.6 Significance of the Study**

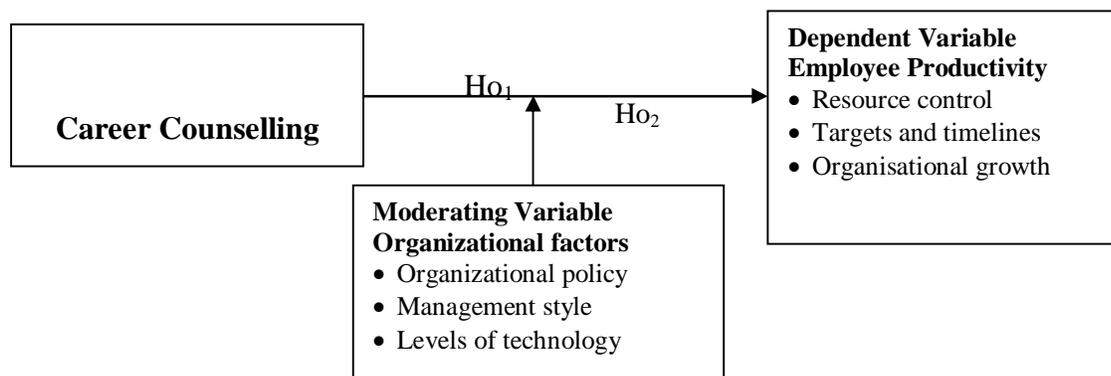
In the field of knowledge, the study would provide a basis on which other researchers may want to investigate the value of career counselling on employee productivity-the researchers may duplicate the research to prove whether career counselling may encourage employees to intensify production. Policy makers such as government agencies, non-governmental organisations and other employment agencies may use the research findings as a focal point of motivational concern. In addition, co-players in the sugar industry such as Kenya Sugar Board, Kenya Sugar Research Institute and Kenya Agricultural Research Institute may use the findings to improve performance standards in the industry.

Managers and stakeholders in sugar firms and other organisations in Kakamega County may use the research findings in decision making as far as matters concerning career counselling are concerned. Other stakeholders such as farmers, employees and customers may reap quality products, better prices and long-term benefits.

**1.7 The Scope of the Study**

The study was conducted in three sugar firms in Kakamega County-the firms were Mumias sugar, Butali sugar and West Kenya sugar. It was carried out between the months of February-December 2013. The study adopted a correlational study research design so as to establish existing relationships between the study variables. The sampling method was stratified random sampling because groups that share norms and characteristics could be studied and relationships established. This sampling technique facilitated drawing of comparisons and conclusions among different variables. This technique generally provided increased accuracy in sample estimates. The study concentrated on matters of career counselling and employee productivity. Managers and Operatives were the core informants in the research study.

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1:** Relationship between Career Counseling and Employee Productivity  
**Source:** Author, 2013

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic representation of the study's conceptual framework indicating the relationship that exists between career counselling as the independent variable, employee productivity which is the dependent variable and the components of moderating variable. **H<sub>01</sub>** was the first research null hypothesis that sought to examine the relationship between career counselling and employee productivity in relation to resource control, targets and overall organisational growth. **H<sub>02</sub>** was the second null hypothesis that sought to establish the moderating effect of organisational factors (policies, management style and technology) on employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya. In organisations, policies that favour career counselling, modern technology and participative management styles are an impetus to employee productivity (Rapando, 2011; Orwa, 2012).

## 2.1 Career Counselling

Career counselling can be viewed as a sequence of activities aimed at assisting an individual to make informed decisions about work or about work related problems. Gichinga (2011) defines counselling as a relationship in which one person helps another to understand and solve their problems-the ultimate goal is a helping relationship. Nthangi (2007) views career counselling as a personalised process that helps a person understand themselves, explore career options, and clarify and obtain desired career goals. It contributes intuitive and cognitive techniques. The counselling offers insights, guidance and support to help a person understand and manage varied career choices. A career counsellor advises people making and validating career decisions and choices. The counsellor also works with those coping with such changes as a new course, redundancy, or a new career.

Effective career counselling at the work environment may assist employees to discover themselves and take bright options. Career counselling is a two way process in which the counsellor and the counselee both contribute to make career counselling efficient and effective. Counselling hence develops a rationale to interrelate internal and external factors. The counselee discovers *themselves* and their potential thus empowering them to make informed and independent decisions. The human resource department has a key role to ascertain that employees are well adjusted at the workplace, and this can be effected by problem diagnosis. The employees exhibiting certain problems could be advised to attend counselling sessions. New employees may also exhibit certain problems needing counselling. Lufthans (2011) reveals that specific techniques of socialising new employees would include the use of mentors, role models, training programs, reward systems and career planning. He ultimately recommended the following steps for organisational socialisation: provide first challenging job, provide relevant training, provide timely and constant feedback, select good first supervisors to be in charge of socialisation, design a relaxed orientation program and place new recruits to work in groups with high morale. Managers in sugar firms in Kakamega County could be encouraged to embrace counselling as an essential program which can enhance productivity at the workplace.

Robert and Hill (2006) argue that problems related to performance are perhaps the most obvious kind to precipitate the need to visit a career counsellor. `Career` has, after all, been traditionally associated with achievement, and a career counsellor may well be seen as someone able to get the individual back on the, temporarily interrupted, path to success.

Ntangi (2007) concludes that workers, who fail to advance their career, stalling at one position, are referred to as plateaued employees. Many of them are often a liability to the organisation they work for because of diminished morale and consequent low productivity. Their levels of stress are often high and they are prone to stress related disorders. Literature reviewed reveals that many researchers concentrate on workplace and educational counselling (Nthangi, 2007; Gishinga, 2011); the two authors agree that counselling helps clients adjust well on performance. None of the authors has comments on career counselling in sugar firms. Therefore, Sugar firms` managers in Kakamega County need to set up career counselling sessions to assist their employees to adjust well at the workplace in terms of career pursuits and goals-this is a major concern of the study.

## 3.1 Research Methodology

### 3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a correlational survey research design. Correlational research involves observing the values of two or more variables and determining what relationship exists between them (Bordens & Bruce, 2008). The study collected data on performance, targets and timelines which were essentially quantitative since they were presented in the form of percentages, averages and ratios.

Qualitative data was collected on growth indicators and the measure of moderating effect of organisational factors on employee productivity in the sugar firms. In addition, surveys were used to measure associations or relationships between things and among phenomena (Polland, 2003). Despite the fact that correlational surveys are regarded as being very rigid and having a limitation of false data, a number of methods were employed to source for the required information.

### 3.3 The Study Area

The study was carried out in Kakamega County. The county has a population of 1,660,651 which is 4.15% of the population of Kenya. 52% are females and 48% males as per the 2009 population census (GoK, 2009). The average population density is 522 people per km<sup>2</sup>. The region has three sugar firms that act as income earners directly to internal employees. The region of study borders the following counties: Vihiga on the south, Trans Nzoia on the north, Busia and Bungoma on the west and Uasin Gishu and Nandi on the east. The climate is mainly tropical with variations due to altitude.

### 3.4 Study Population

The study was conducted in three sugar firms in Kakamega County. The study population comprised of 700 managers and 2320 operational level employees who sum up to 3020 the total target population. In the managers cadre, the Human Resource Managers were given prime priority since they were instrumental in matters concerning employee development, performance management and employee inventory control. The supervisors were key on reporting issues on the discipline of the operatives, skills inventory and general performance. The operatives gave information on the policies of the organisations as far as career matters are concerned.

**Table 2:** Study Population

Organisation	Target Group	Population
Mumias Sugar Company	Managers	330
	Operatives	1200
West Kenya factory	Managers	230
	Operatives	800
Butali Sugar factory	Managers	140
	Operatives	320
<b>Total</b>		<b>3020</b>

Source: HRM departments: Mumias, Butali and West Kenya companies (2013)

### 3.5 Sample Size

A sample is a subgroup of the population selected for participation in a study (Jay & Polonsky, 2010). A total of 3020 employees from the three sugar firms constituted the study's universe. Due to the uniqueness of the study in sugar firms, the researcher contents a sample size of 10% for control purposes. Thus, 10% of managers per firm constituted the first sample size. 10% of operational level employees per firm constituted the second sample size. The 10% across all management levels in the three companies summed up constituted the total sample size. According to Kombo & Tromp (2006), a sample size of 10% to 30% is representative enough for the study population. Thus  $10/100 \times 3020 = 302$  which is 10% of the target population. The procedure is illustrated in table 3.

**Table 3:** Sample Size

Organisation	Target Group	Population	Sample size	%
Mumias Sugar Company	Managers	330	33	10
	Operatives	1200	120	10
West Kenya factory	Managers	230	23	10
	Operatives	800	80	10
Butali Sugar factory	Managers	140	14	10
	Operatives	320	32	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>3020</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>10</b>

Source: HRM departments: Mumias, Butali and West Kenya companies (2013)

### **3.6 Sampling Method**

Stratified random sampling was employed whereby subjects were slotted in various strata so as to participate in the study. The technique is often thought to provide increased accuracy in sample estimates. A true random sample allows for highest level of generality from research to real life (Bordens & Bruce, 2008).

### **3.7 Data Collection Instruments**

The following instruments were used in the data collection:

#### **3.7.1 Managers Questionnaires (MQs)**

According to Rapando (2010), questionnaires are used in studies because they collect more data and they are easy to administer. The questionnaires were the primary tools administered to the managers. They consisted of three parts. Part I required them to provide some general outlook about the firm and some historical overview. Part II required them to report briefly on career counselling practices within the firm and outline some benefits if there were any. Part III sought their opinion on what could be done in the near future in terms of career counselling and suggestion for any other support programs. The managers responded to three point and two point rating scales.

#### **3.7.2 Operatives` Questionnaires (OQs)**

The operatives too filled questionnaires which sought their opinions on the adequacy and relevance of career counselling practices. Similar to the managers` questionnaire, the operatives` questionnaire also consisted of three parts. Part I concentrated on the general outlook of the firm. Part II dwelled on career counselling practices and their benefits if any within the firms. And part III sought opinions on additive futuristic programs. The operatives also responded to a three point and two point rating scales. Open ended questions were availed to facilitate in-depth probing for useful data. Closed ended questions were availed to facilitate data coding.

### **3.8 Reliability and Validity**

Reliability of a measure concerns its ability to produce similar results when repeated measurements are made under identical conditions, whereas validity is the extent to which a measure measures what you intend to measure (Bordens & Bruce, 2008). Validity is also defined by Rapando (2010) as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which is also the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data, actually explain the phenomenon under study. A pilot study was carried out on 180 employees at West Kenya sugar firm in Kakamega. Since the pilot study was carried out on the same target population but different respondents, many economic and geographical characteristics were shared, thus variations could be minimal. The figure represented about 6% of the target population and the study ascertains that the questions were valid, the words used were easily understood by the respondents and there seemed to be some convergence in terms of questions interpretation by all the respondents (Polland, 2005). Reliability was checked by computing a test-retest reliability coefficient which yielded a Correlation Coefficient of 7.0, thus it was regarded as suitable for the study.

Some aspects of validity were determined for the instruments: Face validity by assessing the items on the instrument and ensuring they appeared relevant, meaningful and appropriate to the respondent. Content validity was ascertained by the supervisors who considered the measuring techniques and advised whether it measured what it was intended to measure. Construct validity was assured by correlating the scores on one instrument with scores from another instrument a high correlation of 7.0 and above, which testified that the measuring instrument was measuring the same construct.

### **3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Mamuli (2011) defines data analysis as the process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with the goal of highlighting useful information, suggesting conclusions and reporting decision making. The study attracted both descriptive and inferential data. Data on opinions, attitudes and preferences was tabulated using descriptive statistics. Data on work outputs, performance targets and timelines was captured using inferential statistics. The Pearson`s correlation coefficient was the main tool employed for data analysis-the tool was employed to investigate existing relationships between and among the study variables. The data was then analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists. The data was presented using frequency distribution tables, pie charts, bar graphs and correlation coefficients.

**4.1 Data Presentation, Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion**

The response rate was 89.40% (270 respondents), which provided significant data for the analysis. Based on the responses, these data were analyzed and interpreted into useful information, reflective of the objectives of the study.

**4.2 Response Rate**

**Table 4 Response Rate**

Category	Sampled	Responded	Percentage (%)
Managers	70	67	95.71
Operatives	232	203	87.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>89.40</b>

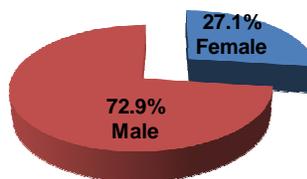
**Source:** Field Data 2013

The questionnaires sent out totalled to 302 which comprised of 70 for managers and 232 for operatives for the three sugar factories namely: West Kenya, Mumias and Butali. The returned questionnaires were 270 of which 67 were for managers and 203 for operatives. It is evident from the table above that most respondents responded which translated to a total response rate of 89.40%. The percentage accounted for 95.71% managers and 87.5% operatives.

The questions in the questionnaire sought employee’s personal information and that concerning career counselling and employee productivity. The information was collected on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 where: 5. Strongly Agree 4. Agree 3. Neutral 2. Disagree 1. Strongly Disagree

**4.3 Gender Distribution**

**4.3.1 Operatives**

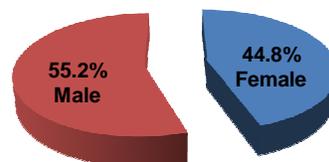


**Figure 2** Gender Distribution for operatives

**Source:** Field Data 2013

From figure 2, the sample of respondent included 55 female operatives and 148 male operatives; this revealed that 27.1% of the respondents were female, while 72.9% of the respondents were male. More males participated in the study than female. This could be interpreted that factory operatives were mainly the male gender since the nature of the tasks required masculine gender, especially operation of machines like tractors and forklifts among others.

**4.3.2 Managers**



**Figure 3:** Gender Distributions for Managers

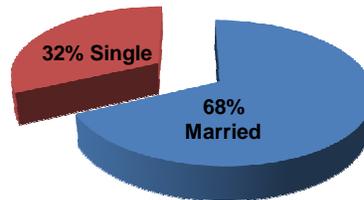
**Source :** Field Data 2013

From figure 3 above, the sample of respondent in the managerial cadre included 30 female managers and 37 male managers; this revealed that 44.8% of the respondents were female, while 55.2% of the respondents were male.

There was a close range between male and female respondents which could be interpreted that most factories had embraced the affirmative action in managerial category as enshrined in the Kenyan constitution and Employment Act (2010).

#### 4.4 Marital Status

##### 4.4.1 Operatives

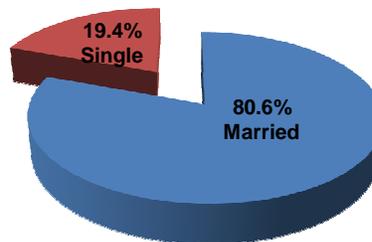


**Figure 4** Marital Statuses of Operatives

**Source :** Field Data 2013

From figure 4 the sample of respondents included 138 married operatives and 65 single operatives; this revealed that 32% of the respondents were single, while 68% of the respondents were married. This could be interpreted that the factories employed more married employees compared to single ones. Married employees had more obligations to shoulder hence it could be perceived that they were more committed to work than their single counterparts. This study saw its vision come true that successful career was inseparable with family responsibility and works of charity.

##### 4.4.2 Managers



**Figure 5** Marital Statuses of Managers

**Source:** Field Data 2013

The sample of respondent included 54 married managers and 13 single managers; this revealed that 80.6% of the respondents were married, while 19.4% of the respondents were single. This can be interpreted that managerial posts were mainly occupied by married professionals who were mature and had amassed experience and seniority; thus they had attained a real focus in terms of career orientation.

#### 4.5 Age Group of Factory Employees

**Table 5:** Age group of operatives and managers

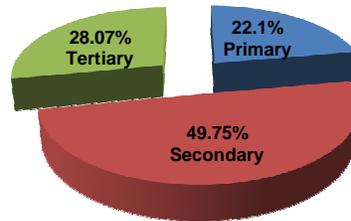
Age in years	Mid age <i>x</i>	Operators Frequency <i>f</i>	Operators <i>fx</i>	Managers Frequency <i>f</i>	Managers <i>fx</i>
20 – 30	25	83	2075	17	425
31 – 40	35.5	99	3515	35	1243
Above 41	41	21	861	15	615
<b>Total</b>		<b>Σ 203</b>	<b>Σ 6451</b>	<b>Σ 67</b>	<b>Σ 2283</b>
<b>Mean</b>			<b>31.8</b>		<b>34.1</b>

**Source:** Field Data 2013

From table 5 above, it was concluded that most of the operatives were aged between 20 and 40 years. This resulted into a mean age of 31.8 years. This justified that most factories employed young energetic staff as operatives since the activities involved were too mechanical and required individuals who were more agile. From the same table, it was also observed that most of the managers were aged between 31 and above 41 years. This resulted into a mean age of 34.1 years. It could be interpreted that managerial post called for individuals of vast experience, and those who had gained wisdom with time to enable them formulate essential factory strategies, implement and guarantee adequate control measures.

**4.6 Highest Level of Education**

**4.6.1 Operatives**

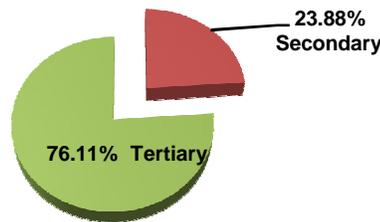


**Figure 6:** Education Levels of Operatives

**Source:** Field data 2013

The results in figure 6 reveal that majority of the operatives` respondents had secondary education (49.75%). A significant percentage 28.07% possessed post secondary education and only (22.1%) had studied up to primary school level. From figure 4.5 it could be assumed that factories did not employ people with no formal education at all. However, it was clear from the same findings that just less than 50% had attained tertiary education yet serving as operatives in the factories. These findings concur with Rapando (2011) research study.

**4.6.2 Managers**



**Figure 7:** Educational Levels of Managers

**Source:** Field data 2013

The results in figure 7 revealed that majority of the managerial respondents had tertiary education (76.11%). A significant percentage (23.88%) possessed secondary education and none of the managers (0%) possessed only primary level of education. This could be interpreted that managerial docket required a vast exeperience of both analytical and qualitative skills which could only be nurtured at the higher level of education. This attested to the reason why there were no managers in firms with only primary school certificates.

**4.7 Qualifications**

Table 6: Distribution of Qualifications

Highest level	Operatives	%	Managers	%
Certificate	75	<b>36.95</b>	6	<b>8.96</b>
Diploma	100	<b>49.26</b>	24	<b>35.82</b>
Degree	28	<b>13.79</b>	23	<b>34.33</b>
Masters	0	<b>0</b>	14	<b>20.90</b>
<b>Total</b>	203	<b>100</b>	67	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Data 2013

Table 6 shows that 49.26% of the operatives had obtained diploma qualification followed by a significant 36.95% who had obtained certificate qualification. A small percentage of 13.79% joined the flock of operatives with degree qualification. This could be interpreted as the entry grade into management cadre. At operative level no person with a master`s degree was sampled out. This could be interpreted by the researcher as a junior factory position which did not attract individuals with higher qualifications.

Management posts were seen to attract 35.82% diploma holders followed by 34.33 degree holders followed by a significant 20.90% master`s holders. This could be interpreted by a research as senior positions in the factory that attracted good remuneration that coincided with higher qualification. It may also be interpreted as a level of strategic decision making that required specialized skills to perform defined tasks. On the contrary the researcher observed that 8.96% of managers had a certificate as their highest qualification. This raised concern that could be researched on to validate recruitment criteria in management portfolios in sugar firms.

#### 4.8 Level of Management

Table 7: Management levels in the factory

Management level	Operatives	%	Managers	%
Top	0	0	34	50.75
Middle	0	0	33	49.25
Lower	203	100	0	0
Total	203	100	67	100

Source: Field Data 2013

Table 7 above shows that (100%) of operatives existed at the lower level of factory management. This could be interpreted by the researcher as the mechanical level of the factory where minimal managerial skills may be required. Managers shared the middle and top level at (49.25%) and (50.75%) respectively. This cut throat sharing could be interpreted that at management positions, employees possessed high professional skills. This is the group that is mandated with drafting the factories` strategic plans, oversee strategy implementation and strive to ensure optimum performance.

#### 4.9 Tenure of Stay in the Factory

Table 8: Duration of Stay of Employees

Duration in years	Operatives	%	Managers	%
2 – 5	125	61.58	25	37.31
5 – 10	54	26.60	21	31.34
Above 10	24	11.82	21	31.34
Total	203	100	67	100

Source: Field Data 2013

Table 8 above shows that (61.58%) of operatives had served in the companies for a period of between 2 to 5 years. However, the percentage dropped to 26.60% at 5 to 10 yrs and 11.82% above 10 years. This could be interpreted by the researcher that most operatives were employed for short term basis to minimize hidden costs which included among others statutory contributions that arose when this cadre of employee served the factory for a long period. Managers who had served between 2 to 5 years accounted for 37.31% and those who had served between 5 to 10 and above 10years were 31.34% respectively. This could be interpreted by the researcher as a crop of employees who were normally recruited on permanent and pensionable basis. This explained why there was a steady correlation between entry and sustainability of the managers. Dismissing such employees at the top cadre implied high costs. Therefore, the factories were compelled to hang on them for a long time.

4.10 Existing Career Counseling Programs

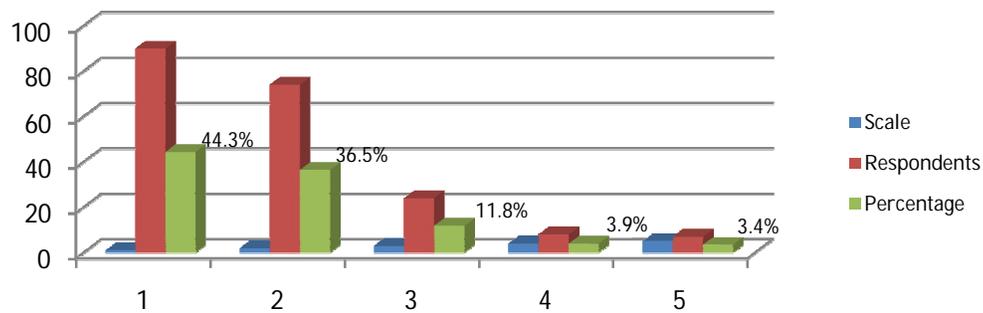


Figure 8 Career Counseling Sessions – Operatives

Source: Field data 2013

On the subject of CCS held in the organizations 44.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 36.5% disagreed, 11.8% were neutral and less than 10% of the respondents agreed. This could be interpreted by the researcher that CCS are minimally practiced in sugar firms in Kakamega County. If they were being practised as captured by the meagre 10% respondents, then they needed to be improved on as a motivational concern. According to Robert & Hill (2006) Problems related to performance are perhaps the most obvious kind to precipitate the need to visit a career counselor: He thus concurs with this study that career counseling is essential at the workplace.

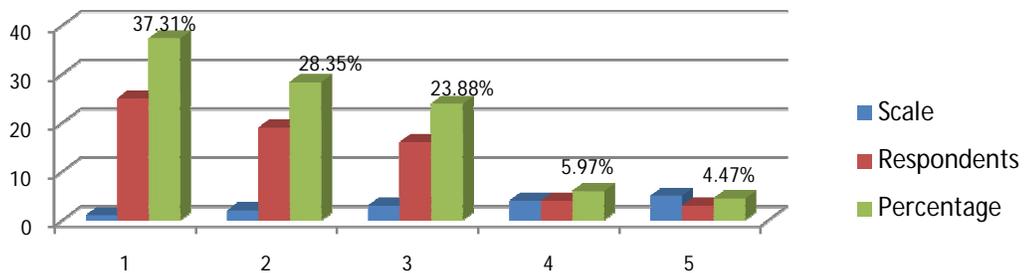


Figure 9: Managers response on career counseling sessions

Source: Field Data 2013

Figure 9 shows that 37.31% of the respondents strongly disagreed about the practice of career counselling in sugar firms, 28.35% disagreed and 23.88% of the respondents were neutral. This could be interpreted by the researcher that career counselling sessions are passively practiced in sugar firms. The paltry 10% who agreed could be out to paint a positive image of their organization.

4.11 How Career Counseling Had Assisted Operatives to Settle on Their Job

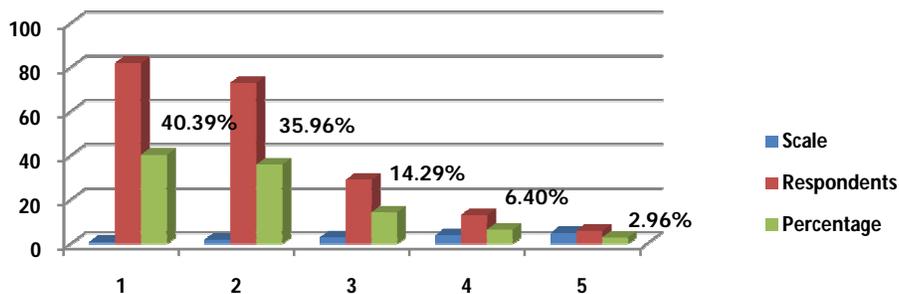
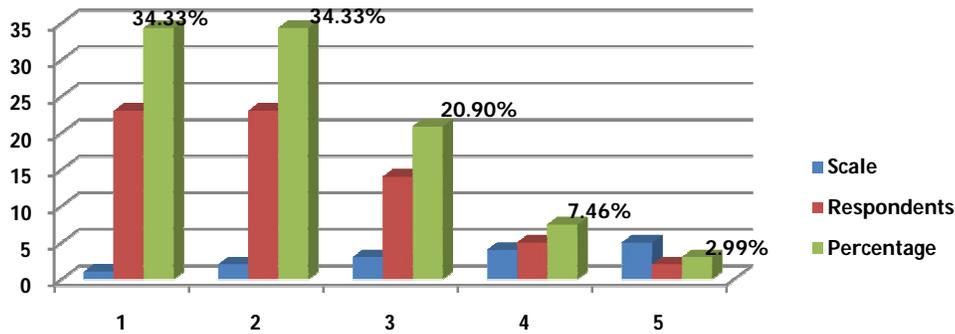


Figure 10: Operatives Response on Career Counseling on Job settlement

Source: Field Data 2013

Figure 10 above shows that 40.39% strongly disagreed while 35.96% of the respondents disagreed having been assisted by career counseling sessions to settle down on their job. Out of the 203 operatives interviewed 14.29% were neutral, while 2.96% strongly agreed to the question under research. The researcher interpreted these results to imply that majority of employees were not offered career counseling sessions. The management may be holding on the assumption that those who join its workforce had the relevant technological skills which they had to live by, or else be laid off for non performance. For the smaller percentage who might have been exposed to career counseling, it could have been compulsory for their critical role played in the factory.



**Figure 11:** Managers Response on Career Counseling on Employee Settlement

**Source:** Field Data 2013

Out of the 67 managers interviewed, figure 11 shows that 34.33% strongly disagreed while 34.33% of the respondents disagreed having witnessed career counselling having assisted their employees to settle down on their job. A smaller group of respondents 2.99% strongly agreed the impact of career counseling on settling down of employees on jobs. These results could be interpreted by the researcher to imply career counseling sessions are not mandatory for new recruits. For the few who benefit from it, possibly the management takes up the responsibility to an insignificant clique of employees whose target docket treats career counselling a prerequisite.

**4.12 Pearson’s correlation coefficient Analysis in testing of the research hypotheses**

Table: 9 Multivariate Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient

		Career Counseling	Employee Productivity	Organization Productivity	Organization Policy	Technology	Management Style
<b>Career Counseling</b>	<b>Pearson correlation</b>	1	-0.72	1	0.49	0.81	0.99
	<b>Sig. (2tailed)</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<b>N</b>	203	203	203	203	203	203
<b>Employee Productivity</b>	<b>Pearson correlation</b>	-0.72	1	-0.68	-0.48	-0.55	-0.76
	<b>Sig. (2tailed)</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<b>N</b>	203	203	203	203	203	203
<b>Organization Productivity</b>	<b>Pearson correlation</b>	1	-0.68	1	0.45	0.83	0.98
	<b>Sig. (2tailed)</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<b>N</b>	203	203	203	203	203	203
<b>Organization Policy</b>	<b>Pearson correlation</b>	0.49	-0.48	0.45	1	-0.08	0.41
	<b>Sig. (2tailed)</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.257	0.000
	<b>N</b>	203	203	203	203	203	203
<b>Technology</b>	<b>Pearson correlation</b>	0.81	-0.55	0.83	-0.08	1	0.87
	<b>Sig. (2tailed)</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.257	0.000	0.000
	<b>N</b>	203	203	203	203	203	203
<b>Management Style</b>	<b>Pearson correlation</b>	0.99	-0.76	0.98	0.41	0.87	1
	<b>Sig. (2tailed)</b>	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	<b>N</b>	203	203	203	203	203	203

In table 9  $H_{01}$  was the first research hypothesis stated as there is no relationship between career counseling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya. Pearson's correlation coefficient results revealed that there was a strong negative correlation (-0.72), which means there is a tendency for high career counseling variable scores to go with low Employee productivity variable scores (and vice versa). The researcher interpreted this to imply that the more sugar firms shun away from career counseling the more the productivity goes down. Consequently the researcher rejected the null hypothesis  $H_{01}$  and accepted the alternative.

In table 9  $H_{02}$  was the second null hypothesis stated organizational factors have no moderating effect on the relationship between career counseling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya. Pearson's correlation coefficient results revealed that there was a negative correlation for each of the organisational factors-organisational policies had -0.48, levels of technology had -0.55 and management style had -0.76 which means organisational factors have a moderating effect on the relationship between career counselling and employee productivity in sugar firms in Kakamega County, Kenya. If the management in sugar firms stick on outdated organisational factors, the productivity of the firms may be affected. As a result the researcher rejected the null hypothesis  $H_{02}$  and accepted the alternative.

### ***5.1 Summary of Findings, Conclusions And Recommendations***

The study revealed that 27.1% of the respondents were female, while 72.9% of the respondents were male. More males participated in the study than females. It also revealed that 44.8% of the respondents were female manager, while 55.2% of the respondents were male managers. It was observed that most of the operatives were aged between 20 and 40 years. This resulted into a mean age of 31.8 years. The study revealed that most of the managers were aged between 31 and above 41 years. This resulted into a mean age of 34.1 years.

It was observed that factories do not employ people with no formal education at all. However, it was clear from the same findings that less than 50% attained tertiary education and were serving as operatives in the factory. Majority of the managerial respondents had tertiary education (76.11%). A significant percentage (23.88%) possessed secondary education and none of the managers (0%) studied up to primary level.

It was seen that 49.26% of the operatives obtained diploma qualification followed by a significant 36.95% having obtained certificate qualification. A small percentage of 13.79% joined the flock of operatives with degree qualification. Management posts were seen to attract 35.82% diploma holders followed by 34.33 degree holders then a significant 20.90% were masters holders. Majority of the respondents who took part in the study had a work experience of 2-5years and 5-10 years.

The study revealed a passive approach to career counselling programs in the sugar firms. It was evident that 25% of the respondents strongly disagreed to posting results of their fullest potential followed by a substantial 45.3% who disagreed. The researcher could interpret this to imply that most of the operatives are demotivated, lack career counseling and experience general job dissatisfaction leading to under performance in their respective tasks. A majority of 42.36% of respondents strongly disagreed to the fact that sugar firms profitability had continually improved with time. This could be interpreted to imply that sugar firms were underperforming.

### ***Conclusion***

From the study it can be concluded that the more sugar firms shun away from career counseling the more the productivity goes down.

### ***Recommendations***

The study makes the following recommendation:

1. Sugar firms to incorporate career counseling as an essential ingredient in their career training schedule to increase employee productivity.
2. Participative approaches be encouraged in formulation of policies concerning leadership

## References

- Akinyi, O. G. (2012). *A Research study on Politicizing Structural Adjustment Policies in the Sugar Industry in Kenya: Effects on Pro-poor Development Outcomes*, Hague: International Institute of Social Studies.
- Bordens, K. & Bruce, A. (2005). *Research Design and Methods*, (6th edition), Sydney: McGraw Hill publishers.
- Bordens, K. & Bruce, A. (2008) *Research Design and Methods*, (7th edition), Sydney: McGraw Hill publishers.
- Brady & Spence, (2009). *Leadership and Growth*, Washington: Library of congress publications.
- Ball, D. (2008). *International Business: the Challenge of Global Completion*, London: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Butali Sugar (2013), *Report on Butali Sugar*, [www.hr@butalisugar.co.ke](http://www.hr@butalisugar.co.ke) 28:03:13
- Brick, J. (2013). *Effective Team Communication: Different Types of Management Styles*, [www.measuringmanagement.com](http://www.measuringmanagement.com) 22:04:13
- Capon, C. (2009). *Understanding the Business Environment* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), San Fransisco: Prentice Hall.
- East Africa Preview Business Management & Leadership Magazine* (2011).
- Egessa, R. K. W. (2005). *Factors Affecting Training and Development of the Sugar Industry in Kenya: A case of Nzoia Sugar Company*, Unpublished Master`s Thesis, Kenyatta University.
- Encyclopedia Inc, (2012). *Organisational Growth Article*, [www.inc.com/encyclopedia/groth.html](http://www.inc.com/encyclopedia/groth.html) 27:03:13.
- Gichinga, E. M. (2011). *Basic Counseling Skills*, Nairobi: GEM Counseling services.
- Federation of Kenya employers` Annual report and financial statement, (2010) Nairobi: Government printer.
- Government of Kenya (2007) *Kenya Vision 2030: A globally competitive and prosperous Kenya*. Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Government of Kenya (2006) *Western Province, Kenya*. Nairobi: Government printer
- Henry, A. (2011). *Understanding Strategic Management* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), London: Oxford University Press.
- Hynes, G. (2011). *Management Communication* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition), London: McGraw Hill Publisher.
- Industrial Training Magazine (2011). *A Road to Productivity*, Nairobi: Government Printer, volume 9, January – March.
- Ivancevich, J. M. (2010). *Human Resource Management* (11<sup>th</sup> edition), Sydney: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Jay, M. & Polonsky, S. (2010). *Designing and Managing a Research Project*. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), Sydney: Sage Publishers.
- Jones, G. & George, M. (2011). *Contemporary Management* (7<sup>th</sup> Edition), Texas: McGraw Publishers.
- Luthans, S. (2008). *Organisational Behavior*. London: McGraw Hill.
- Luthans, S. (2011). *Organisational Behavior* (12<sup>th</sup> Edition), London: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Kegode (2005). *A Research Study on Economic Governance and Reforms: Challenges & Wayforward for the sugar sub-sector*, Narobi: Center for Governance and Development.
- Kimuda, D. M. (2010). *Financial Accounting: Business Education Series*, Nairobi: East Africa Education Publishers.
- Kombo, K. & Tromp, A. (2006). *Thesis writing: An Introduction*. Nairobi: Pauline`s Publication.
- Krumboltz, J. D. (1991). *Career Beliefs Inventory*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Legume, H. & Hoare, C. (2004). *A Research Study on Impact of Career Intervention on Middle School Students career maturity levels, academic achievements & self-esteem*, Psychological School Counselling, 8(2) 148-155
- Mali, M. (2006). *Production Concepts and Definitions*, [mangatmushtaq@gmail.com](mailto:mangatmushtaq@gmail.com) 22:04:13
- Martocchio, J. (2011). *Primer for Human Resource Professionals*, London: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Masinde Muliro University (2011). *Journal of Science, Technology Education and Management*. Masinde Muliro University volume 4 number 182 September.
- Ministry of education science and technology, (2008-2012). *Strategic plan*, Nairobi: Government Printer.
- Mumias Sugar (Feb-May, 2012) *SUKARI Quarterly Magazine*, Mumias sugar Publication.
- Mumias Sugar, (2013) *Report on Mumias Sugar*, [www.mumias-sugar.com](http://www.mumias-sugar.com) 28:03:13
- Nathan R, and Hill L. (2011) *Career counseling* (2nd edition) Singapore: SAGE publishers..
- National Bureau of Statistics (2010). *The 2009 Kenya population and housing census Vol I & II*. Nairobi: Government Printer
- National Centre for Careers Research & Technical Education (2003). *Career Development Intervention & Academic Self-efficiency & Motivation*, University of Minnesota.

- New Zealand Qualification Authority (2012) *Definitions of Career Intervention*,  
<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/framwork/search/index>
- Noe, H & Gerhart, W. (2011). *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Washington: Irwin Publishers.
- Noe, H. & Gerhart, W. (2010). *Human Resource Management: Giving a Competitive Advantage* (7<sup>th</sup> edition), McGraw Hill Publication.
- Nthangi, A. (2007). *How to choose and advance your career: personality guide to course and career*. Nairobi: Queenex holding limited.
- Nyambegera, S. M. (2008). *Human Resource Management: A biblical perspective*. Nairobi: Uzima publishers.
- Oseno, B. (2012). *The Conceptual Framework: Comprehensive in Research Proposal, Project and Thesis*, Nairobi: Apic Publishers.
- Orwa, B. H. (2012). *A Research on Labour Turnover in sugar industry in Kenya: European Journal of Business Management*, [www.iiste.org](http://www.iiste.org) ISBN 2222-2839 Vol 4 no, 9. Nairobi: Kimathi University.
- Polland, R. J. (2005). *Essentials of Education Research and Analysis: Methods for Determining a Sample Size*.  
<http://www.surf.edu/cirt/workshops/surveys/polland.manual.surf>
- Ponyochi .K. (2010). *Minds and talents: Situations and tools for leadership and management*, Kakamega (unpublished)
- Rapando M. J. (2011). *Research Study on Assessment of Financial Return Method in evaluating training and performance in sugar farms in western province, Kenya*. Kakamega: Masinde Muliro University.
- Rapando, J. W. (2010). *An Investigation of the Training Needs for Principals of secondary schools in Kenya: A case study of Kakamega North district*, Kakamega: Masinde Muliro University..
- Shikanga M. (2009). *Research Study on the Perception of Non-Academic Staff on Training and Career Development*: Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.
- Survey Monkey (2009) *Response Rates and Surveying Techniques Tips To Enhance Survey Respondent Participation*.
- Thill, J. & Courtland, L. (2011). *Excellence in Business Communication*, Paris: Pearson Publishers.
- Ulrich C, & Allen J. (2009). *HR Transformation: Building Human Resources from the Outside In*, London: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Wachira, E. (2010). *Essential Life Skills*, Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Wanyama, K. W. (2010). *A Research Study on Effect of On-the-Job Training on Organisational Performance of Commercial Banks in Kakamega Central District*, Kakamega: Masinde Muliro University.
- Waweru E. M. (2007). *Management of Human Resource in Kenya*. Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau.
- Websense Data Security Lab (2012). *Electronic Monitoring and Surveillance Survey, Article 304*,  
[www.websense.inc](http://www.websense.inc) 03:05:13.
- West Kenya Sugar, (2013). *Report on West Kenya Sugar*, [info@wk.sugar.co.ke](mailto:info@wk.sugar.co.ke) 28:03:13
- Wheatly .M. (2008). *Organisational development at work: Conversations on the values, applications and future of OD*, Texas: McGraw Hill Publishers
- Williams M & Adams S. (2010). *Contemporary Employment Relations: A Critical Introduction*, London: Oxford University Press.