

**EFFECTS OF CAREER STAGNATION ON PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC
SERVICE: A CASE OF MURANG'A COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has never been submitted to Murang’a University of Technology or any other university for the award of Masters of Public Administration degree or any other degree.

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DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to my lovely children; Ashley, Laura and Tyron for their understanding for many times I did not accompany them for their day out.

ABSTRACT

Devolution is generally defined as a process of transfer of political, administrative and fiscal management powers between central government and lower levels of government, primarily operating at city and region levels (Potter, 2001). The essence of devolution is to bring services closer to the citizens. Performance of the County Government s depends on the kind of workforce they have. Performance can be affected by many factors, career stagnation being one of them. Indeed, scholars have noted that it is inevitable for employees to react to career plateau with bad performance and loss of motivation and commitment. This comes from believes that, upward movement is the benchmark to measuring performance and therefore in the absence of this, the employees become demotivated (Jang and Tak, 2008; Burke and Mikkelsen, 2006; Tremblay and Rogers, 2004). The literature reviewed has provided information on effects of career stagnation on performance elsewhere in the world by giving a global view. It is therefore recognized that this area of study still remains largely un-explored, shown by the fact that literature on career plateau in Kenya is lacking, yet the subject has a global attention evidenced by a wide array of scholars who have written on it. The research has not been conducted in Murang'a either. It is against this background that the study sought to establish the effects of career stagnation on performance in Murang'a County Government. The overall objective of the study was to establish the effects of employee career stagnation on performance in the civil service, a case study of Murang'a County Government. Specific objectives were: Establish the effects of employee career stagnation on job performance in Murang'a County Government , establish the relationship between work related stress and job performance in Murang'a County Government , establish effect of motivation on job performance in Murang'a County Government , establish the relationship between individual skills and abilities and job performance in Murang'a County Government , establish the relationship between lack of an innovative climate and job performance in Murang'a County Government. The study was guided by three theories: - the attributory theory, Donald Super's career model theory and the three factor model theory. The study adopted a survey research design. Descriptive analysis involved the use of frequencies in their absolute and relative forms (percentage). Inferential analysis was done to find out if there is any relationship between dependent and the independent variables of the study .The target population was 354 employees. The research adopted stratified random sampling design and the sample size was 178. The response rate 84% hence reliability and validity of the study.

The R value of the study was 0.964 and R^2 value of 0.926. This indicates that skills and abilities to perform, motivation, an innovative climate, work stress all influences career stagnation in Murang'a County government by 92.9%. The study findings suggest there is a positive correlation between all components of career plateau with a significance of 0.875 for lack of skills and abilities, 0.860 for lack of an innovative climate, 0.855 for lack of motivation and last but not least 0.659 for work related stress levels. The study concludes that the general performance of County Government has been affected by lack of necessary skills, work related stress, lack of innovative climate and lack organizational career orientation among staff members. The study recommends training of employees to equip them with necessary skills, create an innovative climate, ensure career orientation is done to all employees and work related stress in kept to the minimum. The research may be of

significance to human resource practitioners within and outside Murang'a County in managing career stagnation.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

HRM – Human Resource Management

CP – Career Plateau

SPSS - Statistical Program for Social Sciences

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Employees: A person in the service of another under contract of hire, express or implied, oral or written where the employer has the right or power to control and direct the employee in the material detail on how the work is to be performed (Arthur, 1995).

Job Satisfaction: The attitudes and feelings people have about their job. It is the degree to which an employee has positive emotions towards the job role.

Organization: Refers to a social arrangement which pursues collective goals, controls its own performances and has boundary separating it from its environment (Harrison, 2005).

Career Plateau/Stagnation: Career plateau is defined as the point in a career where the likelihood of additional hierarchical promotion or Lateral move is very low

Job Performance: Job performance is the work related activities expected of an employee and how well those activities were executed

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, scope and limitations of the study, definition of key terms and the conceptual framework.

1.1 Background of the study

1.1.1 Definition of the Career Plateau Concept

Researchers in the human resources based on the classical definition of career plateau by Ference, Stoner, and Warren (1977) (Chao, 1990; Leibowitz, Kaye, Farren, 1992; Savery, 1990). Career plateau is defined as the point in a career where the likelihood of additional hierarchical promotion is very low. However, Schein (1971) had defined that career movement within an organization can be vertical, radical, or circumferential. Vertical movement can be either upward or downward. The success can be measured by the attainment of particular hierarchical levels. Personal development can be measured by a horizontal crossing of functional borders or by changing the content of any work by acquiring qualifications. In other words, this better definition of career plateau is defined as the point at which future career mobility including both upward and lateral moves (Nachbagauer&Riedl, 2002). Ference et al. (1977) set a model of managerial career that describes the state of someone career based on current performance and likelihood of future promotion. The four principal career states in the model are learners or comers, stars, solid citizens, deadwood. Learners or comers describe individuals that have high potential for advancement but presently perform below standards. Obvious examples are trainees who are still learning their new jobs and are not yet integrated into the organization's culture.

Stars are persons presently do outstanding work and are viewed as having for continued advancement. They are on the high potential, fast track career paths. They are readily identifiable group in organizations and receive the most attention in development programs and managerial discussion. Solid citizens presents performance is rated satisfactory to outstanding but they are seen as having little chance for future advancement. These individuals are probably the largest group in most organizations. Deadwood has little potential for advancement and their performance has fallen to an unsatisfactory level. These people have become problems whether for reasons of motivation, ability, or personal difficulty. Career plateau can be both subjective and objective. The subjective aspects are linked self-perception. When people perceive that they have reached a plateau, their careers are sometimes affected that their conviction becomes self-fulfilling. However, not every employee who might appear to plateauing, aren't necessarily unhappy or inferior. This condition is good in adult's development of organizations. In other words, plateau 5 career could represent a period of stability where employees master work skill, pursue special family or personal interest. Lemire, Saba, and Gagnon (1999) argue that the subjective evaluation of career development should constitute the key plateau element because it emphasizes the perception, assessment and reaction of individuals to their present work situation. Meanwhile, the objective side of career plateau refers to the fact that they can be observed, even analyzed. Human resource types might be observable measurement like future prospect for promotion, length of time in present position, or length of time between promotions (Temblay, Alain, Jean-Marie, 1995; Chau, 1998). Career plateau is conceived of as an organizational phenomenon reflecting a longterm interaction between an individual and his or her work place. This model consists of horizontal facets define the type of variable to be considered (1) independent input variable (contextual determinants) including individual and organizational variables and (2) dependent variables of career plateau including individual and

organizational variables. A review of some recent writings on organizational career plateau (Appelbaum&Finestone, 1994; Chao, 1990; Lee 2003; Nachbagauer&Riedl, 2002; Savery, 1990) makes it clear that the knowledge available to us is as dispersed as it is deficient (1) most research has centered on professional or managerial career; (2) no systematic research has been done on the interaction between individual level and organizational level determinants and their effects on organizational career plateau.

1.1.2 Job Performance

Job performance is the work related activities expected of an employee and how well those activities were executed. Performance as discussed by Ference et al. (1977) refers to the in-roles behavior which is assessed on the basis of the requirements of the job. Theories of Career Management indicate that plateaued employees as ‘dead wood’ and non-plateaued employees as ‘star’. ‘Dead wood’ shows the low level of job performance and ‘star’ as possesses high level of performance. Carnazza et al. (1981) and Near 1983) found plateaued employees show lower job performance than non-plateaued employees. They also reported that CP was negatively related to job performance. Intention to quit was found as one of the consequences of the career plateau traps. A model of intention to quit by Steers and Mowday (1981) stated that Job Performance indicates a relationship with work attitudes, hence the intention to quit. Orpen (1986) and Allen et al. (1998) reported the significant and negative relationship between job performance and intention to quit. Job involvement shows an individual competency to achieve higher job performance in the work place (Elloy&Terpening, 1992).

1.1.3 Effects of career plateau on performance

Career plateau is the immobility in career in organization which relates to the movement up the hierarchy as the only source of career success (Choy and Savery, 1998). The reason may be because many employees think that promotions and upward hierarchical movements as the primary indicators of success at work. Lee (2003) argues that employees who experience career immobility would think that their employers deny their careers. They lose their morale when they continue to work in the same job over a long period of time. Career plateau is also connected with a number of negative work outcomes such a lack of job satisfaction, job commitment, increase the level of turnover intention, and creating creativity inertia. This has a direct impact on the overall organizational performance. According to Nachbagauer and Riedl (2002), there is negative influence between perception of career plateau and organization performance. Organization performance is operationalized as high turnover of employees and high absence rate. When career plateau exists; individual have the feeling that they cannot plan or influence their career. Therefore, individuals become aware of their situation. Employees choose another alternative such as try to quit from working in the organization or absent from performing a job. This can be warning signal and clearly seen at organization level.

1.1.4 The relationship between work related stress and job performance

Stress is a prevalent problem in organization life and it can influence career development. Both individuals and organizations have been aware of the threats posed by excessive stress on employees. Individuals who experience high levels of perceived stress often report poor physical health, depression, and insufficient job satisfaction (Tweed *et al*, 2004). For organizations, reduced productivity, high turnover, frequent tardiness and absenteeism are common of

consequences of workplace stressors (Elfering *et al.*, 2005). There are career development obstacles including personal ambitions, unfair promotion system, and limited promotion which can put individuals under pressure because they think that they are unable to move forward in their career and that they are unfairly treated consequently, individuals are depressed (Elfering *et al.* 2005). The feeling of depression is due to the unfulfilling needs of individual expectation of having a good career.

1.1.5 Effect of motivation on job performance

Intrinsic motivation is the drive to do something for the sake of if not anything else. The intrinsic motivation for doing a job is the drive to perform the job well for the sake of the job. Individuals in organization setting having intrinsic motivation are described as workers who perform a job just to obtain achievement no matter the reward or pay. Individuals will have satisfaction by performing well.

1.1.6 Relationship between individual skills and abilities and job performance

Individual having skill and abilities means, that individual has an individual's level of proficiency at performing a particular task and has a more general enduring capability that an individual possesses (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, Wright, 2008). If workers lack the ability and skill to perform job task, they will not perform well. Therefore, if they are positioned or assigned a number of new tasks that can enhance their career, they will refuse to do it because they do not have any capacity to perform. This situation can create situation where individual will be in stagnant condition and won't get any promotion in a better job position.

1.1.7 Relationship between lack of an innovative climate and job performance

Study at both organizational and subunit level has offered empirical support for climate's effects on innovation (Amabile&Gryskiewicz, 1989). Innovation here means a process involving both the generation and implementation of ideas. This behavior in organization includes 1) searches out new technologies, processes, techniques, or product ideas; 2) generates creative ideas; 3) promotes and champion ideas to others; 4) investigates and secures funds needed to implement new ideas; 5) develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994). This behavior can be developed through building organization innovative climate. At the individual level climate represents signals individuals receive concerning organizational expectations for behavior and potential outcomes of behavior, Innovative climate is characterized as follows. First, there is a qualified relationship between leader and subordinate. Overtime, some leader-subordinate relationship is developed from interactions that are formal and impersonal to mature interactions characterized by trust, mutual liking, and respect. Related to innovative climate, subordinates are allowed greater autonomy and decision latitude. Second, there is a work group that supports an individual in ways that allow innovation to emerge, offering, for example, cooperation and collaboration, the individual is more likely to see the organization as a whole as being supportive of innovation.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Devolution is generally defined as a process of transfer of political, administrative and fiscal management powers between central government and lower levels of government, primarily operating at city and region levels (Potter, 2001). The essence of devolution is to bring services closer to the citizens. Performance of the County Government s depends on the kind of workforce they have. Performance can be affected by many factors, career stagnation being one

of them. Indeed, scholars have noted that it is inevitable for employees to react to career plateau with bad performance and loss of motivation and commitment. This comes from believes that, upward movement is the benchmark to measuring performance and therefore in the absence of this, the employees become demotivated (Jang and Tak, 2008; Burke and Mikkelsen, 2006; Tremblay and Rogers, 2004). The literature reviewed has provided information on effects of career stagnation on performance elsewhere in the world by giving a global view. It is therefore recognized that this area of study still remains largely un-explored, shown by the fact that literature on career plateau in Kenya is lacking, yet the subject has a global attention evidenced by a wide array of scholars who have written on it. The research has not been conducted in Murang'a either. It is against this background that the study sought to establish the effects of career stagnation on performance in Murang'a County Government . The overall objective of the study was to establish the effects of employee career stagnation on performance in the civil service, a case study of Murang'a County Government. Specific objectives were: To establish the effects of employee career stagnation on job performance in Murang'a County Government , to establish the relationship between work related stress and job performance in Murang'a County Government , to establish effect of motivation on job performance in Murang'a County Government , to establish the relationship between individual skills and abilities and job performance in Murang'a County Government , to establish the relationship between lack of an innovative climate and job performance in Murang'a County Government .

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of the study was to establish the effects of career stagnation on performance in the civil service: A case of Murang'a County Government.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:-

- i. To establish the effects of employee career stagnation on job performance in Murang'a County Government.
- ii. To establish the relationship between work related stress and job performance in Murang'a County Government.
- iii. To establish effect of motivation on job performance in Murang'a County Government.
- iv. To establish the relationship between individual skills and abilities and job performance in Murang'a County Government.
- v. To establish the relationship between lack of an innovative climate and job performance in Murang'a County Government

1.3.3. Research questions

- i. Does a relationship exist between employee career stagnation and job performance in Murang'a County Government?
- ii. What is the relationship between work related stress and job performance in Murang'a County Government?
- iii. Is there a relationship between motivation and job performance in Murang'a County Government?
- iv. Does a relationship exist between individual skills and abilities and job performance in Murang'a County Government?
- v. What is the relationship between lack of an innovative climate and job performance in Murang'a County Government?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study will be significant to the following stakeholders: -

1.4.1 The research scholars

The knowledge generated from this study shall contribute to the body of knowledge by provoking debate among researchers and scholars to come up with best interventions to manage career stagnation in organizations. It shall also provide substantial literature for further research.

The study shall extend on the literature on career stagnation in Kenya.

1.4.2 Human Resource practitioners

Specifically, the human resource practitioners shall gain insight on the causes and effects of career stagnation hence are able to prevent it from happening by taking necessary precautions and also know how to deal with it.

The study shall assist in policy formulation especially on training and development, staff promotions and rewards management.

1.4.3 The government

The research will save the government cost of carrying out research on career stagnation through task forces etc because the information will be readily available at no cost.

1.4.4 Murang'a County Government

The research will improve performance in Murang'a County Government if the career stagnation is fully addressed as per the research recommendations.

1.5 Scope and limitations of the study

1.5.1 Scope of the study

The case study was conducted at Murang'a County Government headquarters, located in Murang'a town, about 85 Kilometers North West of the capital city, Nairobi. Secondly, it was confined to employees working in Murang'a County head office only.

1.5.2 Limitations of the study

The case study was limited to one County Government though there are forty seven counties in Kenya. Hence the inferences made from the research might be challenged. However the research findings could be used as a basis for further research in the field.

Availability of respondents was expected to be a challenge to the study. This is attributed to the fact that most of the top management may take long to fill the questionnaires because they have very busy schedules. They are important in this research because they are the policy makers and implementers. This may highly challenge the data collection exercise owing to the stringent programs that they operate limiting their availability. The researcher overcame the challenge by way of liaising with the County Government administration and made prior arrangements thus ensuring their availability.

Career stagnation is a worldwide phenomenon. However, the study only focused on Murang'a County Government employees. This is occasioned by the fact that the time and financial resources are limited.

1.6 Assumptions of the study

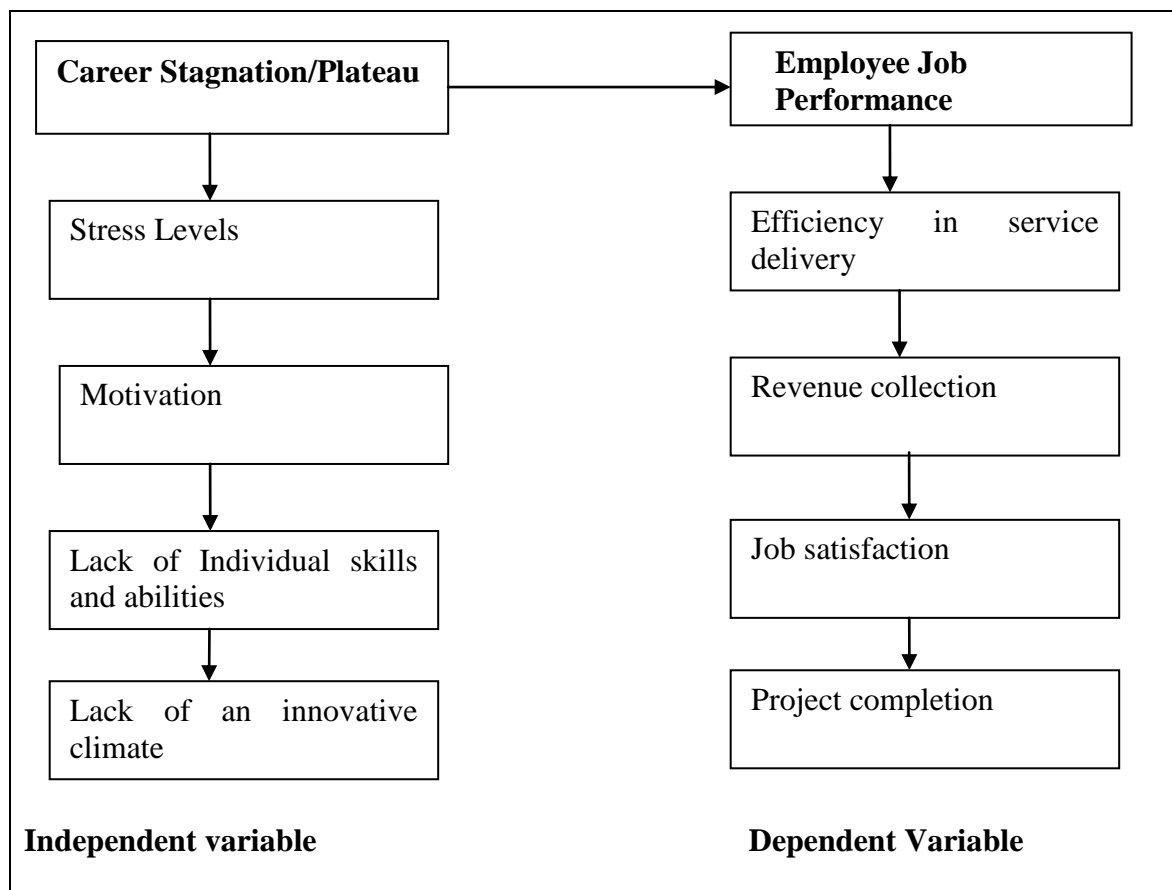
The respondents would co-operate and provide reliable answers. The expressions given by the interviewees would be a true reflection of their opinion as to the effects of career stagnation. The variables that the study evaluated would be measurable and quantifiable. The findings of the

study are pertinent to the field of Public administration. Assessment of effects of career stagnation among civil servants, specifically in Murang'a County Government had not been undertaken before. The research findings will encourage formulation of Human Resource policies especially on recruitment and training. Lastly, the research recommendations will be taken in to account to manage stagnation in Murang'a County and any other organization/County that is experiencing Career plateau. The study also assumes that career stagnation affects organization's performance.

1.7 Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a written or visual presentation that, explains either graphically, or in narrative form, the main things to be studied: the key factors, concepts or variables and the presumed relationship among them Miles and Huberman (1994). (Bodgan, 2007) defined conceptual framework as a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of enquiry and used to structure a subsequent presentation. The independent variable is career stagnation measured by stress levels, motivation, individual skills and abilities, and organizational career orientation. The dependent variable is Performance, measured by efficiency in service delivery, revenue collection, employee job satisfaction and project completion. The independent variable; career stagnation was expected to influence performance which is the dependent variable. It is on the basis of this interaction that the research questions were formulated and answered satisfactorily.

Fig 1: Effects of career stagnation on Performance



Source: self-conceptualization (2017)

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a review of the available theoretical and empirical literature, critique of the existing literature relevant to the study, summary of the literature review and the research gaps.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Theoretical literature is the theories which guided the study. The study was guided by three theories: - attribution theory, super's career development theory and three factor model.

2.1.1 Attribution Theory

The attribution theory was introduced by Fritz (1958) and aimed at evaluating how individuals identify the behavior of themselves as well as of their colleagues Heider, (2013). Attribution theory describes how individuals assume casual explanations. *Heider (1958)* argued that people are motivated by two primary needs. The need to form a coherent view of the world and the need to gain control over the environment. He also indicated that individuals were like amateur scientists who took the role of understanding each other's behaviour through collecting information until they came up with a reasonable explanation Malle (2008).

Attribution theorists highlighted that people's perception of accomplishments or their casual attributions, rather than actual outcomes, have an impact on subsequent accomplishment strivings as well as being key motivators. According to Weiner (1985), the three casual dimension of attribution include; stability, the locus of causality and controllability (Weiner, 2010). Locus of causality was derived from the works of Heider (1958) and defined whether casual conditions were either internal or else external on the persons. As a result the reason for organizational plateauing is external while on the other hand, personal choices are internal. The

stability causal dimension looks at whether there was a difference on causes over time or there was none. In an illustration Weiner (1958) categorized ability as a stable internal cause while effort was described as an unstable, internal cause. Through attributing a result towards a stable cause like an individual's ability, there exists a stronger impact on expectations for future successes when compared to attributing a result to an unstable cause, for example effort. This is due to the fact that effort might be inconsistent as well as at times interdependent on others' efforts. Hence, in the scenario that an outcome of an event is perceived to be more stable, there is a greater expectancy that it shall recur. On the other hand, controllability describes factor that one can control such as effort as well as efficacy when related with causes that one does not have control over such as actions as well as luck (Weiner, 2010).

Employees that consider their plateaued status to be impacted by external or organisational factors that include external locus of causality, the attribution theory theorizes that self-protective mechanisms shall inspire plateaued employees to look for job alternatives and shall also be less likely to continue working for the firm (Malle, 2008). On the other hand, employees that choose to be plateaued, there is an expectation that their subsequent work attitudes as well as behaviours were positively impacted and they shall certainly continue to work in the company. According to Hakim (2006), individuals shall make decisions not to follow further responsibilities consistent with their work-lifestyle choices. This theory brings out the causes of career stagnation which could be internal or external. Organizational plateauing is external while on the other hand, personal choices are internal. When addressing effects of career stagnation, it's also good to look at what has caused the stagnation.

2.1.2 Super's Career Development Theory

Donald E. Super's (1994) career development theory is termed to be among the most widely known life-span opinion of career development Savickas (1995). Development theories possess knowledge on the changes that individuals face as they mature while also emphasize on a lifespan approach towards career choice as well as adaptation. In Super's theory, the environmental, personal and situational determinants play a role in shaping and employees career growth and also Burke(2006) approach to career stagnation as they capture a wide range of aspects that affect both the employee and the organization.

Importantly, in Super's career development theory the subjects are in the establishment stage where for them the career development obligation advance and progress that skills as well as expertise so as to get ready for a horizontal or vertical movement in their careers Savickas (1995). As a result of the fact that the task contend plateau become the major dimension that predicts the outcome variable is reasonable. This alludes that the firm has an obligation of offering more on job training opportunities for employees being in the establishment stage of career development.

2.1.3 The three factor model

This model thought that the determinants of hierarchical plateau could be divided into three broad categories: individual, familial and organizational factors. The first are linked to the specific situations of the individuals themselves: age, tenure, and focus of control, education level, a lack of skills or ambition et.al. The second set of factors includes family satisfaction, family scale, family load, the spouse's type of work et.al. The third set of factors involves structural

characteristics and career path -staff or line position. Tremblay and Roger empirically validated the three-factor casual model Tremblay, Roger (1993).

2.1.4 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.4.1 Lack of employee individual skill and abilities

One major source of stress leading to career plateau is the nature of interpersonal relationships on the job. Some jobs require a great deal of interactions with others. Over time, people can become burned out by the hassles and frictions of daily due interactions episodes. (dohrenwendet.al.1985; Lazarus et.al, 1975) This is exacerbated when the client the employees are interacting with are in distress themselves. Individual employees possess some level of proficiency at performing a particular task and have a more general enduring capability. Lack of individual skill and abilities may cause career plateau. Individual having skill and abilities means, the individual has an individual's level of proficiency at performing a particular task and has a more general enduring capability that an individual possesses (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, Wright, 2008). This is in such a way that skill and ability are characteristics about people that are observable only when individuals are carrying out a task, duty, and responsibility. Employees who lack the ability and skill to perform a job task shall not perform well and therefore, if they are positioned or assigned a number of new tasks that can enhance their career they might refuse and even become absent because they do not have the capacity to perform hence fear to fail. This can create a situation where individual would stagnate and would not get any promotion to a higher job position because they score below set targets.

2.1.4.2 Lack of motivation

A sound revenue system for local governments is an essential pre-condition for the success of fiscal decentralization (Bird 2010; Martinez-Vázquez and Smoke 2010a; Olowu and

Wunsch2003). Motivated employees in a work setting are described as workers who perform a job just to obtain achievement irrespective of the reward. These individuals achieve satisfaction by performing well and usually have the ultimate goal of their career as psychological success, the feeling of pride and personal accomplishment that comes from achieving one's most important goals in life. Armstrong (2006) defines a motive as the reason for doing something hence motivation is described as goal-directed behavior and as being concerned with the factors that influence people to behave in certain way such as the direction, effort and persistence of a person in trying to do something. He adds that motivating other people is about getting them to move in the direction you want them to go in order to achieve a result while motivating self is about setting the direction independently and then taking a course of action which shall ensure that you get there. Well-motivated people are those with clearly defined goals who take action that they expect shall achieve those goals. Such people may be self-motivated, and as long as this means they are going in the right direction to achieve what they are there to achieve. Most people, however, need to be motivated to a greater or lesser degree. The organization as a whole can provide the context within which high levels of motivation can be achieved by providing incentives and rewards, satisfying work, and opportunities for learning and growth.

2.1.4.3 Lack organization innovative climate

Organizations that encourage innovation end up with great project, motivated staff and there is usually no room for stagnation. Innovation is that process which involves the generation and implementation of ideas. In an organization this shall include looking out for new technologies, processes, techniques, or product ideas; generating and encouraging new creative ideas; promoting and championing ideas to others; investigating and securing funds needed to implement new ideas and lastly developing adequate plans and schedules for the implementation

of new ideas. These behaviors can be developed through building Organization innovative climate. At the individual level climate signals that individuals receive concerning organizational expectations for behavior and potential outcomes of behavior (Amabile&Gryskiewicz, 1989).

Organizations therefore need to build organizational climate in order to reduce the probability of career stagnation. Organizations create the climate where individuals can show innovative behavior continuously. By setting this climate, individuals shall try to create new ideas anytime for their career and the more they are innovative, the more they shall gain rewards hence remain motivated. An innovative climate is characterized by the presence of a good working relationship between leader and subordinate where subordinates are allowed greater autonomy and decision making opportunities. In addition, there can be a work group that supports an individual in ways that allow innovation to emerge, offering, for example, cooperation and collaboration, the individual is more likely to see the organization as being supportive of innovation.

2.1.4.4 Increased stress levels

Stress is a prevalent problem in organization life and it can influence career development. Both individuals and organizations have been aware of the threats posed by excessive stress on employees. Individuals who experience high levels of perceived stress often report poor physical health, depression, and insufficient job satisfaction (Tweed *et al*, 2004). For organizations, reduced productivity, high turnover, frequent tardiness and absenteeism are common of consequences of workplace stressors (Elfering*et al.*, 2005). There are career development obstacles including personal ambitions, unfair promotion system, and limited promotion which

can put individuals under pressure because they think that they are unable to move forward in their career and that they are unfairly treated consequently, individuals are depressed (Elfering *et al.* 2005). The feeling of depression is due to the unfulfilling needs of individual expectation of having a good career.

Further, a growing number of people refuse promotion opportunities primarily because of the impact of stress the change would have on their spouse's career and on their family. They therefore choose to remain in their familiar jobs with known outcomes rather than change to the unknown. Gattiker&Larwood (2010) proponents of "familial factor" concept and argue that familiarity in one's job influences vertical career mobility and can act as a constraint or become obstacle to mobility. Temblay and Roger (2013) add that familial factor can predict career plateau in an employee in that family shall determine the career of a spouse. For instance, a spouse may not wish to live separately and may refuse to be assigned to another place and also may prefer to remain in the same job position therefore facing imminent career stagnation. The relationship in a family context and career attempts to show that work life and life outside of work are inseparable entities and can cause stress to an employee. Frone and Rice (2007) suggest that a satisfactory family life facilitates career achievement whereas unsatisfactory family life increases role conflict and stress hence career plateau.

2.2 Empirical Literature

Empirical literature involves what other researchers have done, what they have not done and how the current study fills the identified gap.

A study by Dr. Shon Miles, Keller, Dr. Jean Gordon, Dr. Christine Storlie (2013) sought to examine what relationship exists between job satisfaction and the perceived career plateau among full-time employees from television media organizations across the United States. The linear regression analysis of the quantitative study involved the use of a Likert-type survey

approach to obtain job satisfaction and career plateau scores of full-time television media employees. The Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1997) and the Career Plateau Survey (CPS; Milliman, 1992) instruments were administered to capture data electronically through the Survey Methods tool. Full-time employees from television media organizations across the United States participated in the study. The employees consisted of assistants, coordinators, supervisors, managers, and directors. The quantitative study employed linear regression analysis to examine what relationship exists between any of the subcategories of the JSS (Spector, 1997) and the CPS (Milliman, 1992). The two surveys provided respondents the ability to answer questions regarding their level of job satisfaction and perceived career plateau as well as answer questions of demographics such as age, gender, geographic region, tenure, and education level. Hypothesis 1 indicated that a significant positive relationship exists between job satisfaction and internal (job content) career plateau, yet less than 30% of the variability in the internal (job content) career plateau score was explained by the job satisfaction score. Also, for Hypothesis 2, a significant positive relationship exists between the variables with approximately 48% of the variability in the internal (job content) career plateau score explained by the two job satisfaction subscale scores (nature of work and promotion). In addition, for Hypothesis 3, a significant positive relationship exists between the job satisfaction scores and external (hierarchy) career plateau scores, but overall job satisfaction explained only 14.7% of the variability in the external (hierarchy) career plateau score. For Hypothesis 4, there was a significant positive relationship with approximately 17.5% of the variability in the external (hierarchy) career plateau score explained by the contingent rewards job satisfaction subscale scores. For Hypothesis 5, there was a significant positive relationship with only 8.7% of the variability in the job satisfaction score explained by the gender of the participants. For Hypothesis 6, two significant positive relationships exist with only 7.6% of the variability in the internal (job content) career plateau

score and 6.2% of the variability in the external (hierarchy) career plateau score explained by the gender of the participants. In addition, all of the assumptions associated with linear regression were assessed for all the hypotheses tested, and none of the assumptions were violated. Lastly, power analyses were conducted for each hypothesis to determine if the power was adequate to detect a significant effect and to protect against a Type II error. The power was adequate for Hypotheses 1 through 4, but not for Hypotheses 5 and 6.

A study by Samuel O. SALAMI (2010) examined the relation of career plateauing to job satisfaction, to organizational commitment, and turnover intentions and the moderating effects of mentoring on the relationships between career plateauing and the three dependent variables. Data were collected from 280 government employees in Nigeria who were more than 30 years old and came from a wide variety of organizations. Results of this study showed that career plateauing was negatively correlated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment and positively correlated with turnover intentions. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses indicated that mentoring played significant moderating role on the relationships between career plateauing and job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Based on the findings, the implications, limitations of this study and direction for future research were discussed. A few limitations of this study were mentioned. Firstly, this study is cross-sectional in nature and as such it is not possible to infer causality. A longitudinal study design in future research would allow cause-and-effect relationship to be established and would allow us to examine changes in the study variables across time. A second limitation is that the present study used government employees because of the prevalence of plateau in government agencies. Future research could include employees in the private sectors to confirm the generalizability of the findings in the private organizations. Despite these limitations, this study has provided evidence that relationships exist

between career plateauing and work attitudes and that mentoring others serves as a significant moderator of the relationships.

GolBaharSamiei and AddelSalavati(2015) conducted a study to identify the effects of career plateauing on knowledge management in insurance companies in Sanandaj city. The population of the study consists of all employees in insurance companies in Sanandaj city involving 741 people. Using Cochran formula and by means of stratified random sampling method, the sample size, including 290 people, was selected. Method: This study was a quantitative research in terms of the strategic and applied research in terms of objectives. This study was a descriptive-correlational research in terms of implementation and it was particularly based on the structural equation modeling. Milliman Career Plateau Survey (1992) and Darroch (2005) knowledge management questionnaire were used to assess the career plateauing questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha method was used to estimate the reliability of the questionnaires and validity was assessed by using formal validity for the two variables calculating 0.902 and 0.920 respectively. Results: Final Results of the analysis showed a significant inverse correlation between career plateauing, and its levels (content, structure and life plateauing), with knowledge management in insurance companies in Sanandaj city. The results also showed that content plateauing has the greatest effect on knowledge management.

ShakilaDevi.A.R, RabiyaatulBasariya.S (2017) conducted a study on Career Plateau of Employees and its Causes. The conclusion was although many pessimistic sentiments have been associated with career plateaus; plateaued employees appreciate a few optimistic experiences. Most important, some research suggests that given the flattened organizational structures common to many organizations, experiencing a career plateau may not be as humiliating or stressful as it once was. In fact, the plateau event may not be a distinctive situation but rather the norm for many employees' career development. From this perspective, plateaus may be more

common and acceptable feature in one's career than was previously thought. Plateaued employees are expected to contribute less of themselves in the job and more in non-work activities. According to compensatory theory, disappointments in one sphere of life tend in some way to be made up for in another sphere. Therefore, plateaued employees psychologically tend to distance themselves from work by becoming more involved in non-work issues. Employees become involved in these non-work activities in order to perform well in another realm and maintain their morale and dignity. Similarly, plateaued employees may assign more time to their families, leisure interests, and community activities.

SaminKhabazYazdiha, Dr. MohamadTaghiImani (2015) conducted a study to investigate the factors affecting occupational stagnation of social security of West region of Tehran. The descriptive way of research is survey. The population of this research for the field of research is all managers and employees of three branches in West of Tehran, which is composed of 224 personnel. To determine the number of sample of the population, Cochran formula (for finite population) were used, and the number of sample 149 persons was estimated. After determining the number of samples, sampling is a simple random. In this study for collecting data two methods of library studies and questionnaires were used to test the hypothesis. The data were analyzed through the Software SPSS and AMOS. The correlation test was used to bivariate analysis; also the structural equations for multivariate analysis and indirect and direct relationships between the dependent and independent variables have been used. Results of the first question showed a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and career plateau of managers. Results of the second question showed that there is a significant negative relationship between extrinsic motivation and career plateau of managers.

2.3 Research Gap

Literature reviewed provided information on the types of plateaus, causes and effects of career stagnation and how they are experienced elsewhere in the world by giving a global view. Literature on effects of career stagnation in Kenya is not sufficient, yet the subject has a global attention evidenced by a wide array of scholars who have written on it. A research on career stagnation has not been conducted in Murang'a County before either. From the Kenyan scenario, what are the effects of career stagnation on performance and whether it has improved or worsened with devolution? This study therefore attempted to fill this gap.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discussed the research design that the study adopted, the target population, sampling design, data collection, data analysis methods and research ethics.

3.1 Study design

The study adopted the survey research design. This research design is described as a method of sociological investigation that adopts question based or even statistical surveys so as to collect information on how a populace thinks and acts. This study used survey research design since; which provides a high level of general capability in representing a large population, method is cost effective because the main cost is the production of the survey questionnaires or interviews; and because of the high representativeness brought about by the survey method, it is often easier to find statistically significant results than other data gathering methods. It is also a convenient way of collecting data since the instruments can be faxed, emailed, hand delivered etc.

3.2 Study area

The study was conducted in Murang'a County Government, which is in the former central Province of Kenya.

3.3 Target population

A target population is the entire group of a populace from where a sample might be drawn. It includes all the individuals that the researcher has identified and is interested in generalizing the findings Mugenda, &Mugenda (2012). The target population was the permanent employees of the Murang'a County Government who have worked for over four years in the civil service or defunct local authorities. The target population consisted of top level management, middle level

management, lower level management and the support staff at County headquarters.

Table 3.1 Target population

Category	population	Ratio	Sample size
Top level management	23	0.5	12
Middle level management	41	0.5	21
Lower level management	110	0.5	55
Support staff	180	0.5	90
Total	354	0.5	178

Source: Author (2017)

3.4 Sampling frame

A sample design is made up of two elements, a sampling method and an estimator. A sampling method refers to the rules and procedures by which some elements of the population are included in the sample while the estimator is the estimation process for calculating sample statistics. The study used stratified random sampling technique to select samples that were representative of the entire population. A stratified sampling is a probability sampling technique wherein the researcher divides the entire population into different subgroups or strata, then randomly selects the final subjects proportionally from the different strata. This method minimized bias and ensure no segment of the population was overrepresented or underrepresented. For the purpose of this study, the sample size was considered at four levels of analysis: top level management, middle level management, lower level management and support staff. The sample size of this study therefore comprised of a total of one hundred and seventy

eight (178) respondents. The margin of error was 5% and the confidence level 95%

Table 3.2 Sample Size

Population category	Target	Percentage ratio	Sample size
Top level management	23	0.5	12
Middle level management	41	0.5	21
Lower level management	110	0.5	55
Support staff	180	0.5	90
Total	354	0.5	178

Source: Author (2017)

3.5 Data sources

This study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through questionnaires and interviews while secondary data was obtained from written materials including books, journals and other official documents.

3.5.1 Data collection instruments

This study adopted quantitative approach to data collection and used both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was obtained using the quantitative approach which was used for both the closed and open ended questions.

3.5.1.1 Questionnaires

This is a tool used for collecting information about a subject of study. It is usually made up of questions which carry instructions and spaces for answers. The questionnaire must have a clear purpose which is in line with the objectives of the study Mugenda, &Mugenda (2012). This

research adopted both closed and open ended type questionnaires. Secondary data was obtained from journals, books and human resource management literature.

3.6 Validity and reliability of data collection instruments

In every research paper it is important to show how the research was designed and conducted. This brings out the element being studied and therefore being identified accurately. It is important to therefore be vigilant on the problems likely to be faced in a research so that errors are minimized. What is very important was to gain more validity than reliability since the study must accomplish its measure Mugenda, &Mugenda, (2012).

3.6.1 Reliability

Reliability is the stability and worthiness of a research method. It is determined by the ability of the measurement instrument to resist random errors and how the findings can be reproduced. The researcher conducted a pilot study with employees in the different categories from within the County, with an aim of enhancing the reliability of the research instrument. This pre-testing aimed at gauging the clarity and relevance of the instrument items so that those items found to be inadequate for measuring variables were either be discarded or modified to improve the quality of the research instruments. It ensured that the instrument have captured all the required data. The procedure for extracting an estimate of reliability was obtained from the administration. Reliability is termed high when the measurement tools produce the same results if another researcher uses the same steps.

3.6.2 Validity

Cooper (2006), states that validity is the degree to which a test measures what it purports to measure. Pajares (2007) adds that all assessments of validity are subjective opinions based on the judgment of the researcher. The researcher ensured validity by giving the questionnaires and interview schedules to two professionals or experts in research for assessment as recommended

by Mugenda (2003). This was done to check whether the instruments were correctly constructed, have the right content and whether the instruments accurately represent the variables under study in line with the study objectives.

3.7 Data analysis

Data analysis involves categorizing, manipulating and summarizing of data in order to obtain answers to research questions. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) it entails the description and application of the techniques intended for use in analyzing data. The study employed descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and percentages in computing the desired statistical measures from quantitative data. The data collected was edited and coded thematically and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to guide the statistical software package SPSS to generate descriptive and inferential statistics while secondary data was subjected to content analysis Pajares (2007). The data collected was presented using tables to summarize the data for ease of understanding.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics refer to norms of behavior that guide moral choices about the researcher's behavior and his relationship with the others. According to Punch (2011), empirical research in education carries ethical issues which the researcher must identify and show how they shall be dealt with. Some of the ethical concerns that were considered in this study include: respecting the respondents, voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality, analysis of data and reporting of findings. To ensure respect to respondents, questions that could cause embarrassment and raise uncomfortable feelings were excluded. Respondents were not required to fill in their names so as to maintain their right to privacy. Moreover, any information that could reveal names, telephone numbers, address and other identifying features was restricted.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis, discussions and conclusions in relation to the objectives of the study. The primary data was collected by use questionnaires. Questionnaires were administered to a sample of 178 people in Murang'a County for data collection. The data was organized into two parts. The first part presented the response rate of the study and the demographic information of the respondents. The second part presented data on effects of career stagnation on organizational performance. The analysis was done through descriptive statistics and findings presented in the form of tables and percentages. Content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data.

4.1 Response rate

No distributed to respondents	No returned	Valid	Invalid	Response rate%
178	158	150	8	84

Source: Field Data (2017)

178 questionnaires were issued to the respondents and out of these 150 questionnaires were filled correctly and returned. 20 questionnaires were not returned while 8 of them were spoiled. This was 84 percent which the researcher felt was enough representation.

4.2 Demographic Data of respondents

The study sought demographic data of the respondents including the gender, and age.

4.2.1 Gender of respondents

The study attempted to establish the gender of the those who were involved in the study.

Table 4.1 Gender distribution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	90	60	60	60
	FEMALE	60	40	40	100.0
	Total	150	100	100.0	
Missing	System	0	0.0		
Total		150	100.0		

Source: Field Data (2017)

The female population consisted of 40% of the entire respondents who returned their questionnaires while the male percentage was 60%. The information in the table indicates that both female and male were appropriately represented in the study.

4.2.2 Age of respondents

Table 4.2: Age distribution of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18-35	90	60	60	60
36-45	40	26.7	26.7	26.7
46-60	20	13.3	13.3	100.0
Total	150	100	100.0	
Total	150	100.0		

Source: Field data (2017)

From the above table, people aged between 18-35 years comprised of 60 % of the respondents, those aged between 36-45 years were 26.7 %. Respondents aged 46-60 years represented 13.3 % of the total respondents which is attributed to the fact that majority of members under this age bracket occupy senior positions in the department and others have exited the employment.

4.2.3 Education level of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
PRIMARY	10	6.7	6.7	6.7
SECONDARY	40	26.7	26.7	33.4
DIPLOMA	50	33.3	33.3	66.7
DEGREE	40	26.7	26.7	93.4
MASTERS	9	6	6	99.4
PhD	1	0.6	0.6	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	
System	0	0		
Total	150	100.0		

Source: Field data (2017)

From the study, respondents with education qualification of primary education comprised 6.7 % of the total respondents; secondary education comprised 26.7 %, diploma comprised 33.3 %, degree were 26.7 % masters were 6% while PhD level of education were of 0.6 %.

4.2.4 Level of Employment of respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Top management	20	13.3	13.4	13.4
Middle level	40	26.7	33.3	46.7
Lower level	30	20.0	53.3	100
Support Staff	60	40.0		
Total	150	100.0	100.0	
Total	150	100.0		

Source: Field data (2017)

The table above shows that 13.3% of the employees are in top management level, 26.7% are in middle level management, lower level management 20%, and lastly the support staff at 40%.

4.2.5 Work experience of respondents

The study required data on the work experience of the respondents as shown in the table below;

Table 4.5: Work experience

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-5	60	40	40	40
5-10	50	33.3	33.3	73.3
10-15	30	20	20	93.3
ABOVE 15	10	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	150	100.0	100.0	
Total	150	100.0		

Source: field data (2017)

The above table shows that 40 % of the respondents had worked for not more than two year, 33.3% had worked between five-ten years, and 20% of the respondents have worked for between ten-fifteen years while 6.7% had worked for more than fifteen years.

4.3 Inferential Statistics on Skills, Motivation, Innovation, Stress on Stagnation

Table 4.6 Correlations of factors affecting performance

		Lack of skills	Lack of motivation	Lack of innovation	Increased stress	Career stagnation
Lack of skills	Pearson Correlation	1	.793**	.900**	.793**	.859**
	Sig.(2 tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Lack of motivation	Pearson Correlation	.793**	1	.924**	.862**	.902**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Lack of innovation	Pearson Correlation	.900**	.924**	1	.897**	.908**
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Increased Stress	Pearson Correlation	.793**	.862**	.897**	1	.871**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150	150	150
Career stagnation	Pearson Correlation	.859**	.902**	.908**	.871**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150	150	150

Source: Field data (2017)

Correlation among the independent variables is illustrated by the matrix in table 4.6. Correlation is often used to explore the relationship among a group of variables (Pallant, 2010) in turn helping in testing for multi-collinearity. That the correlation values are not close to 1 or -1 is an indication that the factors are sufficiently different measures of separate variables (Farndale, Hope-Hailey and Kelliher, 2010). It is also an indication that the variables are not multi-collinear. Absence of multi-collinearity allows the study to utilize all the independent variables.

Table 4.6 shows that the lowest correlation in this study was between lack of skills and career stagnation ($r=0.567$, $p<0.00$). The highest correlation was between increased stress level and career stagnation ($r=0.871$, $p<0.00$). A correlation of above 0.871 is a strong indication that the variables may be measuring the same thing (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). The fact that only one variable was close to 0.90 was a clear indication that the factors were sufficiently different measures of separate variables, and consequently, this study utilized all the variables.

From table 4.6 the combined correlation of four independent variables namely lack of skills, lack of motivation, lack of innovative climate, increased stress level and the dependent variable career stagnation were computed to determine the strength and direction of the associations between variables. The findings in table 4.6 showed that all independent variables had strong positive relationship with the dependent variable. Lack of skills $r = 0.567$, lack of motivation $r = 0.752$, lack of innovative climate $r = 0.479$, and increased stress level $r = 0.853$. The performed test of significance, each independent variable yielded p-value of 0.000 at the level of significance 0.05 two tailed. Therefore there is strong positive correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variables. Therefore the study concluded, that from the independent variables investigated in the study, increased stress level has the highest correlation to career stagnation, followed by lack of motivation, followed by lack of skills, and lack of innovation being the last in that order. From the table above the study concluded that all the four independent variable are equally significant as all had significance level of 0.000, meaning they are all very significant and each influences career stagnation.

4.3.1 Lack of skills and career stagnation

The correlation between lack of skills and career stagnation is 0.567 meaning there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. When employees lack skills, they are more

likely to stay in some position for longer period of time than the skilled one which will be promoted to senior/ higher positions in the organizational job hierarchy. This is in line with study carried out by Noe and other who established that employees possess some level of proficiency at performing a particular task and have a more general enduring capability. However, the employees who lack skill and abilities thereby cause them to plateau (Noe *et al* 2008). The study went further to reveal that skills and ability are characteristics that are observable only when people carrying out a task, duty, and responsibility. That Employees who lack the ability and skill to perform a job task would not perform well and therefore, if they are assigned new tasks that can enhance their career they might refuse and even become absent because they do not have the capacity to perform hence fear to fail. This creates a situation where employees become stagnated.

4.3.2. Lack of motivation and career stagnation

From the findings there is a strong positive correlation of 0.752 between lack of motivation and career stagnation. The finding was congruent with that of Bardwick (2010) who established that career stagnation is not necessarily connected with hierarchical positions but tasks and responsibilities. That when work content dimension is low, meaning it focuses on low skill variety and specialization. It further revealed that the consequence is lower job satisfaction, low motivation and high absenteeism. This condition can occur because there is no challenging job to do, Individuals who perform their job repetitively and monotonously. The absence of new, challenging and varied tasks without possibilities of improvement or learning can create work career stagnation (Nachbagauer&Niedl, 2012).

4.3.3. Lack of organizational innovative climate

From the findings, there is a positive correlation of 0.479 between lack of organizational innovative climate and career stagnation. The outcome of the study indicates that if there is lack of organizational innovative climate to motivate employees, career stagnation will occur. This was in line with Slocum *et al* (2010) argues that careers develop in different ways depending on the industry and the strategy adopted by the firm. That organizational innovative climate affects the internal structure, processes, goals, and the roles of various functional departments in the firm. Therefore, there has to be integrative linkage between business strategy and human resource management practice and participate in strategy formulation and implementation processes.

4.3.4. Increased stress level

From the table there is a correlation of 0.853 means a strong positive relationship exist between the two variables. The finding indicates that any increase in stress level will lead to career stagnation. The finding was in line with that of Tweed which established that Stress is a prevalent problem in organization life and it can influence career development. That both individuals and organizations should be aware of the threats posed by excessive stress on employees. That Individuals who experience high levels of perceived stress often report poor physical health, depression, and insufficient job satisfaction that leads to career stagnation (Tweed *et al*, 2004).

4.4 Regression on independent and dependent variables

Regression refers to the analysis of estimating the relationships among variables statistically. It involves analyzing several variables to establish the relationship between a dependent and

independent variables when the dependent variable changes when any of the independent variables is varied, while the other are held constant.

Multiple regressions were done since the study had more than one independent variable to find out whether the independent variables together predict a given dependent variable (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2010) i.e. stress levels, motivation, innovative climate, individual skills, all influence performance in the Murang'a County Government.

4.5 Effects of Skills, Motivation, Innovation and Stress on career stagnation

Model	R	R Squared	Adjusted R Squared	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.964 ^a	.929	.926	.306	.929	324.995	5	124	.000

Source: Field data (2017)

The R Squared regression can range from 0.000 to 1.000, with 1.000 showing a perfect fit that indicates that each point is on the line (Carver, 2009). From the above table coefficient correlation R value is the correlation of determination, R^2 is the coefficient of determination and the standard error of estimate is 0.926. R value of 0.964 is a good estimate ratio of the career stagnation by the independent variables i.e. skills, motivation, innovation, and stress. The study findings revealed that the positive relationship between the selected dependent variables and the independent variables as depicted by coefficient of determination (R) of 0.964., and Correlation Coefficient (R- Square) of 0.929 (career stagnation is explained by skills, motivation,

innovation, and stress while the other 0.071 is presented by other unexplained variables. This implies that the independent variables are good estimators of career stagnation in Murang'a County Government. This indicates that skills, motivation, innovation, and stress influences career stagnation in Murang'a County Government by 92.9%.

4.5.1 Lack of skills and career stagnation

Table 4.8 Model Summary of lack of skills and career stagnation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	f1	f2	Sig. Change
1	.936 ^a	.875	.875	.399	.875	900.112		128	.000

Source: field data (2017)

From the above table R squared is 0.875 implying 87.5% change in the employee skills affects career advancement. Skills specify the firm's performance and decision-making processes. Institutions find it necessary to assist employees acquire more skills due to influences from the external environment. Individual employees possess some level of proficiency at performing a particular task and have a more general enduring capability. The study established that employees lacking individual skills and abilities makes their career stagnated (Noeet al 2008). This is in such a way that skill and ability are characteristics about people that are observable only when individuals are carrying out a task, duty, and responsibility. Employees who lack the ability and skill to perform a job task shall not perform well and therefore, if they are positioned

or assigned a number of new tasks that can enhance their career they might refuse and even become absent because they do not have the capacity to perform hence fear to fail. This can create a situation where individual was in stagnated situation and could not get any promotion to a higher job position.

4.5.2 Lack of motivation and career stagnation

4.9 Model Summary of lack of motivation and career stagnation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
1	.925 ^a	.856	.855	.429	.856	763.222	1	128	.000

Source: Field data (2017)

From the above table R squared is 0.855 implying that 85.5% change in motivation affects career advancement and the relationship between the two variables is very strong indicated by sig. F calculate 0.000. Meaning it is very significant. Therefore from the above findings, lack of motivation significantly influences career advancement within the institution as indicated by (Noeet *al* 2008) that individual employees possess some level of proficiency at performing a particular task and have a more general enduring capability. This can create a situation where individual is in stagnant condition and cannot get any promotion to a higher job position.

4.5.3 Innovative climate and career stagnation

4.11 Model Summary of innovative climate and career stagnation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.927 ^a	.860	.859	.424

Source: Field data (2017)

From the above table, R squared is 0.86 implying that 86% change in the innovative climate leads to career advancement. Innovation here means a process involving both the generation and implementation of ideas. This behavior in organization includes 1) searches out new technologies, processes, techniques, or product ideas; 2) generates creative ideas; 3) promotes and champion ideas to others; 4) investigates and secures funds needed to implement new ideas; 5) develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994). This behavior can be developed through building organization innovative climate. At individual level, innovative climate represents signals individuals receive concerning organizational expectations for behavior and potential outcomes of the behavior.

4.5.4 Stress level and career stagnation

4.12 Model Summary of stress level and career stagnation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.689 ^a	.680	.659	.424

Source: Field data (2017)

From the above table, R squared is 0.659 implying that 65.9% change in work related stress levels affects career advancement. The finding is in agreement with that of Tweed *et al* who established that Stress is a prevalent problem in organization life and it can influence career development. Both individuals and organizations have been aware of the threats posed by excessive stress on employees. Individuals who experience high levels of perceived stress often report poor physical health, depression, and insufficient job satisfaction (Tweed *et al*, 2004). For organizations, reduced productivity, high turnover, frequent tardiness and absenteeism are common of consequences of workplace stressors (Elfering *et al.*, 2005). There are career development obstacles including personal ambitions, unfair promotion system, and limited promotion which can put individuals under pressure because they think that they are unable to move forward in their career and that they are unfairly treated consequently, individuals are depressed (Elfering *et al.* 2005). The feeling of depression is due to the unfulfilling needs of individual expectation of having a good career.

Further, a growing number of people refuse promotion opportunities primarily because of the impact and stress of change would have on their spouse's career and on their family. They therefore choose to remain in their familiar jobs with known outcomes rather than change to the unknown. Gattiker&Larwood (2013) proponents of "familial factor" concept and argue that familiarity in one's job influences vertical career mobility and can act as a constraint or become obstacle to mobility. Temblay and Roger (2010) add that familial factor can predict career plateau in an employee in that family shall determine the career of a spouse. For instance, a spouse may not wish to live separately and may refuse to be assigned to another place and also may prefer to remain in the same job position therefore facing imminent career stagnation. The relationship in a family context and career attempts to show that work life and life outside of work are inseparable entities and can cause stress to an employee. Frone and Rice (2012)

suggest that a satisfactory family life facilitates career achievement whereas unsatisfactory family life increases role conflict and stress hence career plateau.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary and the discussions of findings, conclusions and recommendations as well as suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of Findings

For the employee to advance in the career ladder there must be various measures to be in place which include acquisition of required skills, motivational climate, career orientation, innovative climate, and less stress. The outcome of the study indicated that career stagnation has been majorly contributed by lack of required skills and ability, motivational climate, lack of an innovative climate and increased stress levels

5.1.1 Effects of Lack of Skills and Abilities on career stagnation

Owing to the finding there was a strong positive relationship (Correlation of 0.567) between career stagnation and lack of skills based on the indicators used. There was the need to ensure that the employee skills within the organization conform to requirements. Skilled employees are confident and ready to face new challenges. Their performance is high and promotional chances enhance especially where performance is a key indicator. These skills will enable the implementation of the required career advancement, to achieve the desired career development. Effective skills enhance stability of institution needs to successfully deliver career advancement effectively as well as maintaining its competitive edge. Therefore the organizations and employees must ensure acquisition of necessary skills to enable career advancement as argued by Noel *et al*, (2012).

5.1.2 Effect of lack of motivation and career stagnation

The findings indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between lack of motivation and career stagnation. Employee motivation significantly influences career advancement within the institution as indicated by Lemire *et al* (2015). Lack of motivation leads to career stagnation while motivation enhance career advancement. Organizations should encourage motivational climate in order to achieve career advancement to their employees.

5.1.3 Effects of lack of innovation climate

From the findings there was a correlation of 0.479 meaning a positive relationship exist between innovative climate and career stagnation in the Murang'a in Murang'a County Government. The County has not invested in looking out for new technologies, processes, techniques, or product ideas; generating and encouraging new creative ideas; promoting and championing ideas to others; investigating and securing funds needed to implement new ideas and lastly developing adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas. Without adequate innovative climate, the implementation of career advancement is not possible. The indicator used shows that innovative climate plays a key role in the career advancement.

5.1.4 Effects of Stress levels on Career Stagnation

From the findings there was a correlation of 0.853 meaning a positive relationship exist between increased stress and career stagnation in the Murang'a in Murang'a County Government . A stressed employee cannot be productive. They always seek reasons to be absent from work, they lack necessary concentration required for optimum performance. When an employee's career has stagnated, they feel stressed and frustrated. High stress levels can also make them reluctact to

learn or even go for opportunities hence stagnation. Basing on the indicator used, increased stress plays a key role in the career stagnation which affects performance.

5.2 Conclusions

Employees expect to develop in their career ladder from time of recruitment up to time of retirement. This has not been the case for some employees, especially in Murang'a County Government; there are quite a number of employees who have stagnated in one post for many years. It was established that career stagnation in Murang'a County Government is due to the following: some of the employees have stagnated because of lack of necessary skills to enable them tackle more challenging tasks, the structure is yet to be streamlined and therefore employees from the defunct local authority cannot be promoted since some positions do not exist in the new establishment, also there is an issue of motivation where the management has not encouraged employees to utilize available opportunities for advancement, lastly but not least there is increased stress level as employees are overworked and the working environment is not conducive leading to career stagnation. Due to stagnation, the efficiency in service delivery to citizens has been affected. The revenue collection is quite low due to demotivation. The revenue collectors have been on casual employment for years. They have never been trained since they got engaged. There is very little job satisfaction due to lack of skills and abilities. The delivery of County projects has been affected greatly and timelines are never met due to lack of skills, lack of innovative climate and work related stress.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the analysis, the study wishes to make the following recommendations to improve performance;

- i. The employees should be encouraged and supported to acquire more skills in order to enhance their chances of being promoted. Well balance training programmes should be prepared and implemented effectively.
- ii. The employer should set motivational climate by being approachable, embracing participative decision making, introduce various non-monetary and monetary rewards, provide career development talks so as the employees are well equipped with necessary requirements.
- iii. Internal recruitment should be encouraged to give growth opportunities to many of the employees who have stagnated because their positions do not exist in the new establishment if they have the necessary qualifications. The County can consider reviewing the terms of service for casual employees.
- iv. Innovative ideas should be encouraged and supported in order to come up with great projects which can transform the lives of the citizens of Murang'a County. Management should set aside a reasonable amount of money to facilitate/support innovation.
- v. Employees should be assigned reasonable work to avoid stressing them up with so many tasks. They should be guided and counseled on the way to minimize stress at work place so that they concentrate on core mandate which will lead to career development, advancement and better performance. A counseling office is necessary to counsel on both work related and personal issues affecting employees.

5.4 Suggestions for further studies

The research did not exhaust all the models that contribute to career stagnation. Further research can be done on the causes of career stagnation in Murang'a County. It is also suggested that a study is carried out on effects of career stagnation on performance in the private sector as well for comparison purposes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER TO THE RESPONDENTS

BancyWawiraNgondi

Embu

P.O 1938-60100

12th May 2016

To:

The Respondent

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Research on Effects of Career Stagnation on Performance in the Civil Service: A Case Study of Murang'a County Government

I am a student of Murang'a University College pursuing a Degree of Master of Public Administration. As part of the course, I am required to carry out a research project on "Research on effects of career stagnation on performance in civil service: A case of Murang'a County Government"

This letter was to request you to fill in the enclosed questionnaire. I wish to appreciate your cooperation in advance and looking forward for your positive response.

Thank you

Yours Faithfully

BancyWawiraNgondi

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear respondent,

As one of the key respondent identified, you are requested to fill in the enclosed questionnaire, which is part of the study done in Murang'aCounty Government. The purpose of this study was to establish the effects of career stagnation on performance in civil service: a case study of Murang'aCounty Government". Kindly provide true and honest opinion by responding to the questions attached. All the information was treated with utmost confidentiality. The information provided was used for the purpose of this study only.

Instructions

Please tick the appropriate option in the form or give your comments and opinions as requested.

Your cooperation and response was highly appreciated.

Section A: Background information

1. What is your gender

- Male
- Female

2. Age bracket

- 18-25 years
- 26-35 years
- 36-45 years
- 46-55 years
- 56 and above.

3. Highest level of education

- PHD
- Master's Degree
- Bachelor's Degree
- Higher Diploma/Diploma
- Secondary Education
- Primary Education

4. Level of employment

- Top management
- Middle management
- Lower management
- Support staff

5. Number of years served in current position

- 0-2 years
- 2-5 years
- 5-15 years
- 15-25 years
- 25 and above

6. Number of years you have worked for the organization before and after devolution

- Less than 3 years
- 3-10 years
- 10-20
- 20-30 years
- 30 and above years

7. What are the terms of employment

- Casual/Temporary
- Contract
- Permanent and pensionable

Section B: General questions on career stagnation

8. Please indicate by ticking [✓] the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements using the scale provided.

Strongly disagree -1, Disagree – 2, Not sure – 3, Agree – 4, Strongly Agree – 5

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Promotion is automatic after 3 years in one position					
2	You are required to have professional qualifications before you are promoted to the next level					
3	You are likely to be assigned more responsibilities in your current position					
4	You are currently at the top of the structure and may require re-designation to enable further promotions					
5	Does your position exist in the current establishment?					
6	Are employees treated equally when it comes to promotion?					
7	The County Public Service Board promotes from within instead of outsourcing employees					
8	Change of structure affected your career progression					

Section C: Questions relating to Effects of Career stagnation and performance

9. Please indicate by ticking [✓] the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements using the scale provided.

Strongly disagree -1, Disagree – 2, Not sure – 3, Agree – 4, Strongly Agree – 5

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Career stagnation/plateau has an impact on job performance					
2	Work related stress affects efficiency in service delivery					
3	Intrinsic motivation has an effect on our output especially in revenue collection					
4	Lack of individual skills and abilities affects the level of satisfaction we derive from the job					
5	Lack of an innovative climate affects delivery of projects					

Kindly give your own opinion on whether career stagnation affects performance and whether it has happened in your area of operation and in which way

.....

Section D: Questions relating to effects of career stagnation on performance

To what extent does career stagnation affect your:-

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Level of Job performance					
2	The level of job satisfaction					
3	The desire to quit from employment					
4	The level of commitment at work					
5	Efficiency in service delivery					
6	Effectiveness in completing tasks					

Please suggest other effects of employee career plateau that are not captured in the above, and is affecting performance or even the quality of service delivery in Murang'a County Government

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.....

.....

Section E: how can career stagnation be managed to improve performance?

How favorable would the concepts below help in managing career stagnation in your work place. Please tick the appropriate box where:

Strongly unfavorable-1, Unfavorable-2, Undecided -3, Favorable-4, strongly favorable-5

	1	2	3	4	5
Management style					
Recruitment and selection					
Clear career paths					
Staff training and development					
Performance appraisals					
Succession planning					
Financial planning and budgeting					

Please suggest other ways that you feel can go a long way in managing employee career plateau and improving performance.....

.....

.....

Thank you for taking your time to fill in this questionnaire.