

Influence of Technical Training on Organizational Performance of Sugar Industry in the South Nyanza Zone of Kenya

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DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v5-i9/1817 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v5-i9/1817>

Abstract

Training as an investment is a means of attracting and retaining human capital as well as getting better returns from those investments. These returns are expected to improve on performance, productivity, capacity and innovation which should result to improvement of the skill base and increasing levels of knowledge and competence of employees. Sugar companies in Kenya face rapid and stiff competition due to ever rapid changing market environments. The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of technical training on overall organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone of Kenya. This study used descriptive survey design. The population of the study was the management staffs in the respective industries which constitute 278 management staff at Sony Sugar Company Limited, 104 management staff at Transmara Sugar Company and 115 management staff of Sukari Sugar Company translating to 597 management staff. The sample size comprised of 80 management staff from Sony, 54 management staff from Transmara and 57 management staff from Sukari Sugar Kenya Limited translating to 191 respondents. This study employed stratified random sampling in which the population was first divided into three different industries namely: Sony, Transmara and Sukari Sugar Company; thereafter respondents were drawn in proportion to their original numbers in the population using simple random sampling technique. The study used questionnaires as the main data collection instruments. Quantitative data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics which include the mean, median, standard deviation and percentages as well as inferential statistics such multiple regressions. The study found out that there was a positive linear relationship between technical training and organizational performance. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that a sound training philosophy should be established to encompass technical training.

Key words: Technical Training, Organizational performance, Sugar company

Introduction

Human resource is the backbone of every organization forming the main resource of the organization. The efficiency of employees depends to a great extent, on the environment in which they work. Work environment consists of all the factors which act and depend on the body and mind of an employee. Therefore, many organizations have invested huge amount of money on its employees as the employees' level of performance is expected to contribute to the performance of the organization. Performance is a major multidimensional construct aimed to achieve results and has a strong link to strategic goals of an organization (Armstrong, 2006). Jelena (2007) argues that employee training and development does not imply only obtaining new knowledge, abilities and skills, but also the possibility to promote entrepreneurship, introduce employees to changes, encourage the changes of their attitude, introduce the employees to important business decisions and involve them actively in the process of decision making. A study of formal training provision in Canadian workplaces also found positive outcomes for firms which trained their employees. Organizations with training programmes had more favourable performance trends in a number of areas including revenues, profitability, employee relations, quality, productivity, business viability and prospects. Betcherman, Leckie and McMullen (1997) argued that the multivariate analysis sustained this link between training and firm performance. Even after controlling for other establishment characteristics, it was found that establishments with the strongest commitment to training were significantly more likely than other firms to report positive revenue and productivity trends over the previous years.

A study of several British companies found that when training sought to enhance and develop a "culture of identification" between the organization and the employee, the intention to search for another job decreased substantially (Green et al., 2000). This can also be seen when one looks at the companies in Japan. Japanese companies prefer to train employees internally in the form of on-the-job training programs. The main reason for this is that outside schooling is thought to reduce commitment. Internal on-the job training in Japan has a "commitment maximizing" logic as it promotes a greater level of socialization. This company specific socialization encourages employees to identify solely with the organization. The internal training provided in Japan is said to increase identification and boost attachment. The result is an employee who is more committed to the organization (Lincoln and Kalleberg, 1996). Mohanasundaram & Saranya (2013) in their study in cooperative sugar mills in India suggested that effective training was expected by the employees so management needs to provide effective training there who do not lack of knowledge about the work. They further proposed that the industry management should minimize the work load amongst employees and provide effective training and development program to the employees periodically. This could increase the productivity and decrease the grievance levels.

A study conducted by Parasuraman and Berry (1988) found out that with the fast changing, fierce market conditions prevalent within the service trade, improvements in terms of competitiveness and yield rates rely on effective, active, and improved service quality. Therefore, service quality directly affects customer satisfaction. The same holds true for the Sugar industry. The management in the sugar industry must focus on customer demands for consistency and meeting needs, for clear policies regarding service quality, and for up-to date service quality (Tang and Cheng, 2001). One way of achieving this could be through training of the employees who can help to improve and increase the loyalty of both customers and industry staff members. According to a study conducted by Kamal et al. (2008) found out that extensive organization training and teamwork were vital to sustained competitive advantage. In addition, there was a relationship between performance benefits from empowerment and extensive training. The rationale for an effective training on organizational performance is further strengthened by work on learning organizations (Power & Waddell, 2004). The argument is that by upgrading employees' skills and knowledge, they are in a better position to produce high-quality products and services in the most cost-effective way, adapt to change, and contribute to company competitiveness through product or process innovation. Egezza (2005) in a study of Nzoia Sugar Company observed that training needs assessment should be done comprehensively before the start of any training programme. This should be complemented by clear selection criteria would be trainees that is fair to all employees. This would enhance the morale of employees since it would remove grumbling and motivate employees to struggle to fulfil the laid down conditions. This way, the sugar industry would benefit through efficiency and enhanced productivity.

The sugar sector has faced a steady decline in its growth over the years, resulting in systematic increase in poverty among farmers. The decline has been blamed on a myriad of problems including policy failures; poor institutional framework and inadequate training of the human resource and un-competitiveness of local sugar given the high cost of production. According to Kidero (2004) there have been factors that have contributed to high cost of production of sugar in Kenya as slow maturing cane varieties, cane wastage during transportation, poor road infrastructure, marketing problems, processing inefficiency and widespread management inefficiencies in most sugar factories. Kidero (2004) further noted that the industry is characterized by poor utilization of human resources. Today an even greater challenge faces the industry.

Training has gained much appreciation in Kenya in the recent past (Directorate of Personnel Management, 2005). Employees have to undergo training and development to improve their skills and enhance their capacity to cope with the ever-changing demands of the work situation (Ghosh, 2003). This will be achieved through training, exposure and exchange programmes. There is need to adopt all forms of training to improve performance, productivity, corporate image, employee retention, employee relations and workplace accidents or complaints (Angote, 2009). Despite this, there are still several obstacles that stand on the way of establishing training as a key parameter of performance amongst other issues stated above.

These include costs and the mobility of Kenyan workforce. This makes it difficult for managers to spend huge sum of money in training employees who may end up leaving the organization upon training.

Statement of the Research Problem

Training is an integral part of developing and empowering an industry for increased productivity (Angote, 2009). Bula (2012) in her research found out there were limited chances of training in the sugar industries and this was due to shortages of finances, therefore training was confined to health, safety and management committee workers which were done on legal requirements. However, technical training does have a considerable influence on company finances as there are several potential training costs that companies may incur. These costs are related to employees' output and productivity during and upon completion of the training. In addition, once training is completed, employee productivity is expected to increase. The benefits will be to the company, due to an increase in employee output and productivity, and to the employee, as the increase in output should translate into higher wages and opportunities for career advancement (Kaufman & Hotchkiss, 2006). Therefore, sugar industries have to turn round to address the challenges and this is likely to be achieved through human resource capacity building. Although a number of researches have been done concerning training such as Kanavi (2000), Egessa (2005) and Yawson (2009) none has focused on the influence of technical training on organization performance in the sugar industry in Kenya. It is on this basis this study sought to establish the influence of technical training on organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone of Kenya.

Study Objectives

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- i. Examine the influence of investment in modern machinery and technology on organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone.
- ii. Explain the relationship between influence staff training in IT and organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone.
- iii. Determine the influence of the nature of technical training on organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone.
- iv. Establish the relationship between evaluation and organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone.

Study hypothesis

The study tested the following null hypothesis:

- . H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between technical training and organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone of Kenya.

Literature Review

Technical training encompasses training and investing in Human resource information system, HR/ corporate intranet, B2E portal and application service provider. Technology is the combination of skills and equipments that managers use in the design, production and distribution of goods and services. It is the knowledge, process, tools, methods and systems employed in the creation of goods and providing services. In the case of the sector of sugar and alcohol, the introduction of modern technologies, destined to the crop and the plantation of the sugar-cane and the environmental concerns every larger time took the agricultural mechanization to an accelerated process, causing impacts in the maintenance of this manpower, the reduction of the demand of the labour and the demand of a new profile of rural worker, with new abilities for more automated processes. This factor along with increasingly higher degree of agricultural mechanization in the harvesting and planting of sugarcane has caused a reduction in labour-intensive of rural people and a strong demand for qualified workers in agricultural and industrial occupations in the sector. Khalil (2000) argues that technology is the result of mankind's learned and acquired knowledge or technical skills regarding how to do things well. In this era of globalization, organization's survival depends so much on its technological acquisition and maintenance. Technological forces can have profound implications for organizations. Technological change can make established products obsolete, forcing organizations to find new ways of satisfying customers' needs (Catts & Lau, 2008). It is therefore incumbent on any organization to monitor technological changes, train and motivate employees to be innovative because technology covers every aspect of all organizations.

According to Wawire (2003) generation and transfer of appropriate cost reduction and productivity enhancing technologies is a key strategy towards reducing local production costs and increased agricultural productivity, to enhance Kenya's competitiveness in agriculture. Technology transfer process in KSI is undertaken by KESREF scientists through joint extension programs with millers and out-grower companies and main outlet is through farm visits, field and open days, field demonstrations, ASK shows, seminars and workshops. Wawire et al (2006) in a study on technology adoption in the Kenya Sugar Industry (KSI) in the Sony sugar zone revealed that crop establishment in the zone ranged from moderate to poor, farmers keep only two rations and that most farmers do not adopt technologies they see on the demonstration plots. This partly explains low production of sugar in the country. Another study by KESREF (2006) on sugar processing efficiency and cost reduction strategies in Kenya revealed that production technical efficiency and production costs are directly correlated. KESREF (2006) further assert that the four building blocks of competitive advantage are superior efficiency, quality, speed, flexibility and innovation and organizations increase efficiency when they reduce quantity of resources (people and raw materials) they use to produce goods and services. In competitive environment organizations should constantly strive to seek new ways of improving efficiency. According to Wawire et al (2006) sugar factory performance and technical efficiency are determined by the following parameters; capacity utilization, cane quality, time efficiency, cane throughput milling and overall performance. Capacity utilization in the KSI stands at less than 70%. This coupled with low factory technical efficiency (FTE) translates into high production costs.

Previous research by Kohli & Devaraj (2003) has shown that information technology may indeed contribute to the improvement of organizational performance. Moreover, the dimensions and extent of organizational performance depends on the type of IT, management practices, organizational structure, as well as the competitive and macro environment (Cooper & Schindler, 2005). It is important for training to encompass the aspect of technical training as it enhances organizational performance. Training in organizational procedures or practices entails induction training which a process used within an organization to welcome new employees and to prepare them for their new role. It provides an introduction to the new working environment and sets of tasks for the new employee within the organization. According to Cooper & Schindler (2005) induction training is part of an organization's knowledge management process which makes the new starter to become a useful, integrated member of the team, rather than being "thrown in to the deep end" without understanding how to do their job, or how their role fits in with the rest of the company. Induction training takes place immediately a new recruit is placed on the job. According to Robbins (2005) the role of induction training is to help new employees fit in the organization systems without any problems, make them feel at home and generate a feeling of belongingness in the organization. The sooner an employee adjusts to his new surroundings, the sooner he can contribute to the productivity of the firm (Cole, 2001). Firms need to be aware of the elements of induction training so that they can not only reduce the labour turnover but also improve on their productivity, their corporate image, longer retention rates of its employees, employee relations, motivation, and reduction of complaints or accident rates.

However, available evidence tends to show that companies either minimize on the role of induction training or ignore it altogether, preferring to leave the adjustment process entirely to the new employee. The latter approach is counter-productive as it may lead to low morale, loss of productivity, failure by the employee to work to the highest potential and this may subsequently affect organizational optimal performance. This may ultimately lead to resignation or dismissal of the new employee which may eventually force the organization to incur additional costs of recruiting another employee to replace the leaver (CIPD, 2008).

Research Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey research design to collect data from a sample of 48 management staff of the Sugar Companies in South Nyanza Zone who were selected to participate in the study. It employed stratified and simple random sampling methods to pick the respondents. Questionnaires were the main data collection tool. They contained both open ended and closed ended items that sought information on technical training and organization performance. The items of the questionnaires were subjected to Cronbach Alpha coefficient test which yielded an r-value of 0. 8873. This indicated a high reliability value of the questionnaire. The data that was collected from the respondents was then descriptively and inferentially analyzed using frequencies, percentages and Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient test.

Results and Discussions

The study targeted 48 management staff of the sugar companies and captured the respondents' demographic characteristics as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	N= 48	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	38	79.2
	Female	10	20.8
Age	26- 30 years	3	6.3
	31- 35 years	9	18.8
	36- 40 years	17	35.4
	41- 45 years	9	18.8
	Above 46 years	10	20.8
Highest academic qualification	Diploma	17	35.4
	Post Graduate Diploma	8	16.7
	Graduate	20	41.7
	Masters	3	6.3
Cadre of Management	Executive staff	6	12.5
	Superintendent	16	33.3
	Section Head	9	18.8
	Supervisor	17	35.4
Length of service in sugar company	0-5 years	24	50.0
	6- 10 years	3	6.3

	11- 15 years	2	4.2
	16- 20 years	8	16.7
	Over 20 years	11	22.9
Field of specialization	Agriculture	11	22.9
	Engineering	15	31.3
	Administration	5	10.4
	Accounting	1	2.1
	Technical	7	14.6
	Analysts	4	8.3
	Other fields	5	10.4
Any Training (s) underwent for the past five years	Yes	40	83.3
	No	8	16.7

Source: Researcher, 2014

The demographic results show that that majority 79.2 % (38) of the respondents was male while 20.8 % (10) were female. This implies that there is gender disparity in the sugar industry in Nyanza Zone. This is in line with the findings of Egessa (2005) who conducted a study in Nzoia Sugar Company. The results further show that 6.3 % (3) of the respondents were in the age bracket of 26- 30 years, 18.8 % (9) of them were in the age bracket of 31- 35 years while 35.4 % (17) were in the age bracket 36- 40 years. It is also indicated that another 18.8 % (9) of the respondents were in the age bracket of 41- 45 years with another 20.8 % (10) of the respondents were in the age bracket of above 46 years. This implies that most of the respondents were in the age bracket that enables them to undergo different types of training and development and possess more physical vigour and shoulder more work related tasks than the older ones. This is in line with the findings of Kanavi (2000) and those of Bula (2012) who noted that the age category of staff with the age of 46 years and above did not have any intention of leaving their organizations because their age brackets would not allow them secure other better places as they were approaching retirement age. However, Egessa (2005) argues that those aged 46 years and above could be attributed to job mobility where employees move to other organizations due to fewer positions up the management ladder in the organization.

The information on education level indicates that up to 35.4 % (17) of the respondents had a diploma while 16.7 % (8) of them had post graduate diploma. It was further revealed that 41.7 % (20) of the respondents were graduate degree holders while 6.3 % (3) of them had masters in the relevant fields. This implies that the majority of the respondents hand minimum level of

education that could enable them to give reliable responses concerning the influence of training on overall organizational performance of sugar industry in Kenya. The level of education plays a crucial role in the management and supervision of the sugar industry. These findings contrast the findings of Bula (2012) in that her study was conducted on the employees in general while this study focused on the management staff. They also contrast with the findings of Egessa (2005) who had found out that 8% % of the managers had post graduate diplomas and no masters degrees. This indicates that the sugar companies are going for the staff with high qualifications to meet the challenges of the sugar industry.

Concerning the cadre of management, the results reveal that 12.5 % (6) of the respondents were executive staff members while 33.3 % (16) were superintendents. It was further revealed that 18.8 % (9) of them were section heads whereas 35.4 % (17) of the respondents were supervisors. This implies that the study focused on all the respective management cadres that are crucial for training in the industry. In addition, they play a critical role in disseminating expertise and skills to the other workers in the industry. These findings concur with Egessa (2005).

Data on working experience indicates that half 50.0 % (24) of the respondents had a working experience of 0-5 years, 6.3 % (3) of them had worked for 6- 10 years while another 4.2 % (2) of them had worked for 11-15 years in the respective sugar companies. Finally, table 4.1 reveals that 16.7 % (8) of the respondents had served in the sugar company for 16- 20 years whereas 22.9 % (11) of them had served for 20 and above years. This implies that most of the respondents had work experience of more than one year and therefore were in position to give relevant and detailed information on the influence of training on overall organizational performance of sugar industry in Kenya. In addition, half of the respondents had not worked for long and therefore they needed training which could be impacted by those senior in the sugar company. The managers are also the implementers of the training in the respective sugar companies while the employees are the ones expected to enhance performance.

In addition the study sought the field of specialization of the respondents. The results indicate that up to 22.9 % (11) of the respondents were in agriculture while 31.3% (15) of them were in engineering. It was further revealed that 10.4 % (5) of the respondents were in administration while 2.1 (1) were in accounting. Further, it was revealed that 14.6 % (7) were in technical and 8.3 % (4) were analysts. Those who were in other fields (sales, public relations, HRM, etc) were 10.5 % (5). This implies that the majority of the respondents were in the fields of specialization that were important in the sugar industry. Further, the study sought from the respondents whether they had undergone any training for the past five years. This was important because the study wanted to find out the extent of which the sugar companies have invested in training of their staff. It was revealed that majority 83.3 % (40) noted that they had undergone some training for the last five with 16.7 % (8) who had not undergone any training at all. This implies that it was possible to get information concerning the influence of training on overall

organizational performance of sugar industry. This finding contradicts Bula (2012) who found out that there were limited chances of training in the sugar sector.

The study sought to establish whether the sugar company had a training policy and how it was carried out. The responses were as in Table 2:

Table 2: Information on Training in the Sugar Company

Statement		Frequency	Percent
Familiarity with Company's training policy	Yes	42	87.5
	No	6	12.5
	Total	48	100.0
Company identify need for training	Yes	40	83.3
	No	8	16.7
	Total	48	100.0
When is training offered	For new employees	12	25.0
	When new products are introduced	7	14.6
	New technology / machinery is introduced	22	45.8
	As a refresher to the old employees	2	4.2
	Change in policy, law, system & procedures	5	10.4
	Total	48	100.0
Who conduct training in the company	Head of Department	9	18.8
	Consultant	8	16.7
	Trainers of Trainees	28	58.3
	Implementers	2	4.2
	Others	1	2.1
	Total	48	100.0

Source: Researcher, 2014

The study found out that majority 87.5 % (42) of the respondents noted that they were familiar with the sugar company's training policy while 12.5 % (6) did not as shown in Table 4.2. Further, it was revealed that the majority 83.3 % (40) of the respondents confirmed that the company identifies training needs of the staff while 16.7 % (8) were of a different opinion. This implies that the sugar companies are committed to offering training in order to improve their business results. These findings are in line with those of Bula (2012) who found out that most of the sugar industries offer training to their staff. These findings are also supported by those of Oroni (2014) who recommended that the line managers should accord opportunities for training and development which will motivate them to perform effectively and efficiently.

The findings revealed that 25.0 % (12) of the respondents noted that training is offered to new employees, 14.6 % (7) of the them noted it is offered when new products are introduced while 45.8 % (22) of them noted that training is offered when new technology and/ or when new machinery are procured. Further, 4.2 % (2) noted that training is offered as a refresher course to the old employees whereas 10.4 % (5) of the respondents noted that training is offered when there is change in policy, law, systems and procedures in the sugar company. This implies that training is offered to all the staff at all levels to equip them with the ever-changing technology and also makes them have relevant skills. Once a training program is completed, worker productivity is expected to increase. The benefits will be to the company, due to an increase in worker output and productivity, and to the worker, as the increase in output should translate into higher wages and opportunities for career advancement. This is in line with Kaufman & Hotchkiss (2006) who found out that type of training offered boosts productivity.

The findings further revealed that 18.8 % (9) of the respondents noted that training in the sugar companies was conducted by the heads of department while 16.7 % (8) of them noted that it is conducted by consultants. It was further revealed from the table that more than half 58.3 % (28) noted that training is conducted by trainers of trainees whereas 6.3 % (3) of them noted that it is done by implementers. This implies that training is conducted in the sugar companies with most of it being conducted by the heads of department. Therefore, it was possible to establish the influence of training on overall organizational performance of sugar industry. These findings were supported by those of Kamal et al. (2008) who found out that extensive organization training and teamwork were vital to sustained competitive advantage.

The study further sought information on organization performance of the sugar companies by posing statements to which the respondents were expected to state the extent to which they agreed or disagreed. The findings were presented as in Table 3:

Table 3: Information on Organizational Performance of the Sugar Industry

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
There is a performance management system in place	25	52.1	17	35.4	1	2.1	2	4.2	3	6.3	48	100
There is upward trend in financial performance	12	25.0	25	52.1	4	8.3	6	12.5	1	2.1	48	100
There is aggressive marketing of outreach programs	12	25.0	21	43.8	6	12.5	4	8.3	5	10.4	48	100
The farmers are assisted to establish cane growing	19	39.6	21	43.8	4	8.3	2	4.2	2	4.2	48	100
The company has a good environment to work in	10	20.8	20	41.7	11	22.9	5	10.4	2	4.2	48	100
The grievances are effectively resolved by the management	2	4.2	25	52.1	10	20.8	5	10.4	6	12.5	48	100
There is a structured communication and feed-back mechanism	1	2.1	30	62.5	10	20.8	5	10.4	2	4.2	48	100

Source: Researcher, 2014

The study found out that majority 87.5 % (42) of the respondents were in agreement that the company has put a performance management system in place whereas 10.4 % (5) disagreed.

Only 2.1 % (1) were uncertain as shown in Table 4.6. This implies that there is great need for performance management systems in all sugar companies. Concerning the company's financial performance, majority 77.1 % (37) of the respondents agreed that the companies' financial performance was on the upward trend whereas 14.6 % (7) disagreed. Those that were uncertain were 8.3 % (4).

The findings further showed that majority 68.8 % (33) of the respondents agreed that the companies are involved in aggressive marketing outreach programs to attract more customers through diversity of the products whereas 18.8 % (9) disagreed. Only 12.5 % (6) of them were uncertain. It was also revealed that majority 83.4 % (40) of the respondents agreed that the companies are highly involved in assisting farmers to establish cane growing and pays them promptly whereas 8.3 % (4) disagreed. Another 8.3 % (4) of them were uncertain.

The findings further showed that majority 62.5 % (45) of the respondents agreed that current and potential employees consider the company as being a good environment to work in whereas 14.6 % (7) disagreed. Only 22.9 % (11) of them were uncertain. On whether grievances are effectively and timely resolved by the management, slightly more than half 56.3 % (27) of the respondents indicated that the grievances are effectively and timely resolved by the management whereas 22.9 % (11) disagreed. Those that were uncertain were 20.8 % (10). Finally, the findings showed that majority 64.6 % (31) of the respondents agreed that there was a structured communication and feed-back mechanism to resolve employees' grievances timely in the company whereas 14.6 % (7) disagreed. Only 20.8 % (10) of them were uncertain.

The study further sought the opinions of respondents on various constructs of technical training and how they influenced organization performance. The respondents were asked to comment on the extent to which they agreed with statements on the issue on a Likert scale ranging from **1-Strongly Disagree** to **5-Strongly Agree** as shown on Table 4.

Table 4: Technical Training and Organizational Performance of Sugar Industry

Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
There is invested in modern machinery and technology	23	47.9	22	45.8	1	2.1	1	2.1	1	2.1	48	100
The staff is trained in IT operation	11	22.9	25	52.1	4	8.3	7	14.6	1	2.1	48	100
Technical training is in-house or within	10	20.8	25	52.1	6	12.5	4	8.3	3	6.3	48	100
Technical training is offered externally or use of a consultant	7	14.6	22	45.8	9	18.8	6	12.5	4	8.3	48	100
The firm enhances technology transfer process	8	16.7	30	62.5	5	10.4	2	4.2	3	6.3	48	100
Evaluation is done regularly	6	12.5	21	43.8	11	22.9	9	18.8	1	2.1	48	100
There is positive influence on performance	13	27.1	21	43.8	5	10.4	5	10.4	4	8.3	48	100

Source: Researcher, 2014

Key: SD-Strongly Disagree D-Disagree U-Undecided A-Agree SA-Strongly Agree

The results on Table 2 indicate that majority 93.7 % (45) of the respondents were in agreement that the company has heavily invested in modern machinery and technology whereas 4.2 % (2) disagreed. Concerning the fact that the company has trained staff in IT operation and machinery operations, it is indicated that majority 75.0 % (36) of the respondents agreed that the company has trained staff in IT operation and machinery operations whereas 16.7 % (8)

disagreed. Those that were uncertain were 8.3 % (4). The findings further showed that majority 72.9 % (35) of the respondents agreed that technical training is offered in-house or within the company whereas 14.6 % (7) disagreed. Only 12.5 % (6) of them were uncertain.

Information on the fact that technical training is offered externally or use of a consultant showed that more than half 59.4 % (29) of the respondents agreed to that effect while 20.8 % (10) disagreed. The respondents that were uncertain constituted 18.8 % (9). This implies that is technical training has been embraced by most of the sugar companies. Concerning the technology transfer process by training through farm visits, field and open days, field demonstrations, ASK shows, seminars and workshops, it was revealed that majority 79.2 % (38) of the respondents agreed on the opinion while 10.4 % (5) disagreed. Only 10.4 % (5) of the respondents were uncertain. The findings further showed that slightly more than half 56.3 % (27) of the respondents agreed that evaluation of technical training is done regularly whereas 20.9 % (10) disagreed. Only 22.9 % (11) of them were uncertain. These findings are in line with those of Catts & Lau (2008) who assert that technological change can make established products obsolete unless evaluation is done regularly.

Finally, the findings further revealed that majority 79.2 % (38) of the respondents agreed that technical training (IT, agriculture, and practical, analytical, engineering and processing) has positively influenced organization performance in the sugar industry while 18.8 % (9) of the respondents disagreed on the issue. Only 10.4 % (5) were uncertain. This implies that technical training may have a positive influence on performance in the sugar industry if investment is done well on this type of training. However, due to high cost of technical training and transfer, most sugar companies have not embraced this type of training adequately (Wawire, 2003). Therefore, they mostly depend on external training or expatriates which in turn are not cost effective.

Hypothesis test

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Test was used to test the study hypothesis. The results of the test are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation Between Technical Training and Organizational Performance

Organizational Performance	Technical Training	
	Pearson's Correlation(r)	0.373
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.01
	N	48

Source: Research study 2014

From the findings of the tests, it can be deduced that technical training was positively correlated with organization performance ($r = 0.373$, $\alpha < 0.01$). Hence technical training had 37.3% significant positive relationship with organization performance. The study findings provided enough evidence to suggest that there was linear and positive relationship between technical training and organization performance of the sugar industry. This is in line with those of Betcherman, Leckie and McMullen (1997) found out that the multivariate analysis sustained a link between training and firm performance.

The findings further showed that technical training had coefficients of estimate which was significant basing on $\beta_2=0.0853$ (p-value= 0.0001 which is less than $\alpha=0.05$) implying that the null hypothesis should be rejected and conclude that there is significant relationship between technical training and organizational performance of sugar industry in the South Nyanza Zone of Kenya. This indicates that increase in technical training leads to an increase in organization performance of the sugar industry. The technical training is stated by the t-test value=1.45092 which indicates that the influence of technical training surpasses that of error.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study found out that there was a positive linear relationship between technical training and organizational performance. Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that technical training if enhanced in sugar companies can enable the performance of the sugar companies to improve. It can also be concluded that technical training can enable the employees to be satisfied with their job and be committed in the industry. It can be further concluded that the quality of service offered by sugar companies is an indicator of an efficient technical training of the staff and employees and this can only be achieved through an effective training programme. Finally, it can be concluded that training can enable the sugar companies to enhance sales growth and growth in market shares. This is because the sales growth and growth in market shares of sugar companies to a large extent is a measure of an efficient and effective training policy.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made: A sound training philosophy should therefore be established. It was also found out that technical training was inadequately addressed in the sugar industries. Given that these are manufacturing and processing industries, technical training should be enhanced to give the companies full benefits. The management should set aside sufficient funds for this type of training and also institutions of higher learning should intensify research in it.

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