

**THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
AMONG ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A CASE OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET, KENYA.**

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**2016**

## **DECLARATION**

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree award in any other University.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to all people of goodwill in the service of humanity. This includes my Mentor and Role model Mr Ben Anyira, My Caring and prayerful mum Rose Anyira and My siblings, for always encouraging me to pursue what seems to be impossible.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>HRM:</b>   | Human Resource Management                       |
| <b>ICM:</b>   | Individual Career Management                    |
| <b>ILO:</b>   | International Labour Organization               |
| <b>IVO:</b>   | Information View of Organization                |
| <b>OCM:</b>   | Organizational Career Management                |
| <b>OP:</b>    | Organizational politics                         |
| <b>PUIBR:</b> | The public universities inspection board report |
| <b>U.O.E</b>  | University of Eldoret                           |

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Organizational politics** is defined in this proposal as “activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain one’s preferred outcome in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissent about choices” (Pfeffer, 1981, p.7)

**Career development** in this proposal implies a linear career and is based on Greenhaus (2001) proposal that the career of the 21st century is not measured by chronological age and life stages, but by continuous learning and identity changes. Thus Career development is a very broad term but this study will limit its definition to a clearly marked path of progression through the ranks of an organization.

**Patronage:** is a violation of the merit principle i.e. any form of bias or discrimination, either by individuals or groups and favoritism for friends and associates.

**Information power:** A form of power that is based on controlling the information needed by employees in order to reach an important objective.

**Gender:** Culturally and socially constructed difference between men and women

**Participatory decision- making:** an opportunity for everyone in an organization to have a chance to speak their mind, where differences of opinion are valued rather than feared.

**Non- participatory decision- making:** Decision making that relies mostly on an individual rather than a team.

## ABSTRACT

Lack of career advancement in most institutions of higher learning is an area of great interest and concern. Coupled with that, Kenyan universities have been faced with a multiplicity of challenges among them being employee and student strikes. All this have been linked to organizational politics. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to examine the influence of organizational politics on career development among administrative staff in public universities: a case of University of Eldoret (UOE) in Eldoret, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to: determine the influence of patronage on career development among administrative staff in public universities; examine the influence of Gender Perceptions on career development among administrative staff in public universities; determine the influence of Information power on career development among administrative staff in public universities and examine the influence of Management Decision Making on career development among administrative staff in public universities. A case study research design was adopted for the study. A census sampling technique was employed where the entire target population of 134 was used. However, 130 questionnaires were returned to the researcher. Questionnaires containing closed ended questions with the help of Likert scales were used. Data analysis was done using descriptive and Spearman correlation. Presentation of the findings was in form of tables and graphs. Results indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that patronage (ethnicity, tribalism, favoritism and biasness) was practiced at UOE. Similarly, most respondents agreed that information control and decision making did not favor them. The study further revealed that patronage, decision making and information control recorded a negative significant association ( $r = -.977, -.537$  and  $-.691$  respectively) with career development. Gender reported an insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ;  $r = 0.0136$ ) effect on career development. The study has recommended among other things, that institutions of higher learning should adopt flexible structure and systems to reduce the effect of organization politics on career development of their employees.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Globalization has significantly impacted the management and operations of universities across the world. This together with Neo - liberal policies have greatly affected the number of universities, student population and ultimately the quality and number of staff members in these institutions. Alston (2010) captures it well that the changing academic environment includes the massification of the education system which necessitates the casualization of academic labor as an institutional response to the need for flexibility. This phenomenon leads to the desire of many administrative staff members to climb up the ladder in their careers and achieve their career objectives. Career development of such employees is however not a linear function of the Human Resource office but rather it is affected by both internal and external factors.

One of the major determinants of employee career development is organizational politics which refers to behaviors that occur on an informal basis within an organization and involve intentional acts of influence that are designed to protect or enhance individuals' professional careers when conflicting courses of action are possible (Porter *et al.*, 1981; Drory, 1993). Organizational politics is also defined as behavior strategically designed to maximize self-interests (Ferris *et al.*, 1993). Gandz and Murray (1980) offered an extreme definition that organizational politics is a subjective state in which organizational members perceive themselves or other as intentionally seeking selfish ends in an organizational context when such ends are opposed to those of other. Mintzberg (1983) on the other hand defined organizational politics as individual or group

behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial, typically divisive, and above all in a technical sense, illegitimate-sanctioned neither by formal authority, accepted ideology, nor certified expertise. Kacmar *et al.* (1999) argued that Organizational politics involves actions by individuals, which are directed toward the goal of furthering their own self-interests without regard for the well-being of other or their organization.

Modern organizations operate in a complex and competitive environment in which the external and internal pressures force them to adopt a political model. According to Drory (1993) the political model of organizations joins the rational and organizational process models as domains by which to understand how organizations function. It provides a meaningful lens through which to view the work of the human resources professional.

Aronow (2004) argues that human resource professionals operate in complex business systems comprised of competing goals, values, and motives. The ability to effectively influence within and across the system is central to the overall successful implementation of the defined role in both Human Resource Management (HRM). In today's business world the human resource department has to fit in to the overall business/organizational strategy as well as interact horizontally with other organizational departments such as finance, marketing, production among others. This in essence leads to a struggle for resources (influence between departments as well as between individuals for self-gratification). Thus due to competing interests organizational politics come in to play and this tends to have an influence on all human resource activities and specifically employees career development.

Career development is a subset of career management and one can't understand it without first getting to know what career management is. According to Armstrong (2009) Career management

is concerned with the provision of opportunities for people to develop their abilities and their careers in order to ensure that the organization has the flow of talent it needs and to satisfy their own aspirations. It is about integrating the needs of the organization with the needs of the individual. Hirsh and Carter (2002) on the other hand argue that career management encompasses recruitment, personal development plans, lateral moves, and special assignments at home or abroad, development positions, career bridges, lateral moves and support for employees who want to develop. The ideas of a career as a journey, a construction and a role, as well as career as a process and repository of knowledge, help to clarify the concept of a career (Alston, 2010).

Recently, Wesarat *et al.* (2014) viewed career management as a combination of both organizational career management (OCM) and individual career management (ICM). They argue that it highlights the important impact of career management on personal and organizational successes. It also emphasizes on the effective career management which fosters personal career growth and sustains organizational competitive advantages. Career management is inherently a political process in which an individual strives to gain more power and authority both as an end as well as a means to higher accolades. Career development on the other hand refers to the lifelong process of managing employee's work experience within or between organizations.

According to Baer *et al.* (2008) an individual's career development is a lifetime process that encompasses the growth and change process of childhood, the formal career education at school, and the maturational processes that continue throughout a person's working adulthood and into retirement. Super (1957) identified five stages -growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline that were thought to capture individuals' work related experiences from the years of childhood to retirement. This view of a conventional and predictable career path is contested in



today's increasingly complex and diverse organizations that are influenced by varied internal and external forces including politics. Hence Jeffrey *et al.* (2008) proposed that there should be an inclusion of the influences from other life roles and responsibilities that ultimately lead to a satisfactory quality of life. Greenhaus *et al.* (2001) therefore proposes that the career of the 21st century is not measured by chronological age and life stages, but by continuous learning and identity changes. This is the view adopted by this study in trying to analyze the influence of Organizational politics on career development.

This study focuses on the vertical growth of employees in an organization as well as their enhanced capacity through education and training; this is a radical departure from the extremely broad definitions of career development offered by many scholars that encompass the overall life of an employee. Organizational politics influences all Human resource activities in different ways from recruitment to employee exit. But as much as this has been talked about in many fora's, much literature has avoided to critically analyzing the impact of organizational politics on employees career development.

Many scholars avoided this subject because it was felt that organizational politics was a negative thing and the focus for managers was on the management of organizational politics rather than a critical look at it with a view of deconstructing it in to a functional concept. Mintzberg (1985) devoted a lot of energy in the study of organizational politics, in which he felt as if the topic was largely ignored at the expense of concepts such as legitimate authority, leadership, ideology and expertise. He offered the first classical definition of politics as "individual or group behavior that is informal, ostensibly parochial typically divisive and above all in the technical sense illegitimate sanctioned neither by formal authority, accepted ideology nor certified expertise.

He further linked politics and conflict in his literacy discourse in which he introduced three basic dimensions of conflict in organizations; intensity, pervasiveness and duration (stability). Minzberg (1985) thus set in place a trend that dominated the discourse on organizational politics in which many scholars ended up likening conflicts and organizational politics. In a sense this made sense then because both are characterized by having divergent views, interests and ideologies. Fajana (1990) argued that conflict in industry includes the total range of behavior and attitudes that express opposition and divergent orientations between individual owners and managers on the one hand the workers and their organizations on the other.

This in essence means that the two concepts can be likened although there are significant differences between them. In many cases politics can be antecedent to conflicts if not handled well. Thus these two concepts are not synonyms and should be looked at as very different concepts. This analogy was later exemplified by; Martin (2001) who argued that politics in organizations had a more important functional role in the sense that it is an inevitable part of the need for individuals and groups to function in a collective context.

Politics basically implies the formulation and implementation of policies; these policies although being rational and legitimate carry with them various unwritten undertones. Organizational politics thrives mostly in institutions that are not keen enough to subscribe strictly to organizational policies. Thus the existence of organizational politics is watered by weak systems which are filled by crafty managers and employees. A lacuna created by communication weaknesses, cultural orientations and nepotism among others lead to the thriving of organizational politics. In this case every policy decision in organizations carry political undertones. This assertion is supported by Robbins (1983) who argued that all behavior in organizations is political, which then begs the question as to why some political behavior is

acceptable in organizations and not others. This led to a study by Drory and Romm (1988) in which they argued that employees perception of politics are dependent upon circumstances, thus as circumstances change so do employees perception regarding politics change.

On the other hand Drory and Vigoda-gadot (2010) argued that organizational politics is directly linked to the external cultural, historical, economic and legal environment of the organization. They give a preview of the Israel society from their collectivist culture and socialist economy to an individualistic and liberal economy in the 20<sup>th</sup> century which has a direct impact on organizational politics, such that organizations in Israel are faced with enhanced polarities and thus increased organizational politics. Thus they argue that this phenomenon is replicated in all sectors of the Israel economy.

Since independence public universities in Kenya have been viewed as centers of exercising influence by those in power. It is not surprising then that former Kenyan president (Moi) was a chancellor of all public universities and attended all the graduation ceremonies. To add to this the president was still the appointing authority of all university Vice-Chancellors which basically meant that he could exercise control on these institutions of intellectual and ideological influence.

The leadership of these institutions would then be on call to the political leadership in terms of all human resource management activities from employment, appraisal, and career management up to employee exit. These phenomena would then be internalized in to the institutions and thus organizational politics would take its rubric from the roots of national politics. The esteemed centers of excellence were then turned in to ethnic cleavages which then beg the question of professionalism in terms of human resource management. These studies are by Gakure *et al.*

(2012) which analyzed how Organizational Politics affects effectiveness of Management Development in the civil service of Kenya.

Notwithstanding the limited research in this area their findings have been disturbing. Organizational politics in the civil service has been found to be very high and as shown by Wachira *et al.* (2012), it has a great impact on management development because it affects employees Perceptions of politics, Clarity of expectations, Supervisors support, Encouragement to use knowledge gained, social relationships Opportunities for development and Distribution of finances for development.

Sifuna (1998) argues that the rapid expansion of the universities also had a far reaching effect on the quality of the teaching staff. To recruit academic staff for the public universities, the tendency has been towards relaxing the recruitment and promotion criteria. In practically all the universities, a PhD degree is no longer a requirement for tenure and publications are less important criteria for judging who should be promoted. This in essence runs across the entire cadre of university staff where standards have deteriorated thus encouraging other criteria's of employee management which tends to encourage organizational politics.

The Kenyan university sector has undergone radical transformation and continues to evolve. These changes have accompanied the general political, economic, social and legal transformation of the Kenyan society. Policy changes such as the university bill 2012 and the new constitution of Kenya in 2010 have had a profound impact on university education in Kenya. This coupled with the double intake policy has put strains on university resources and especially the human resource. These has led to calls for strikes and picketing due to poor working conditions, meager salaries and lack of a clear career plan. The public universities inspection board report (2006)

pointed out that university working conditions for both lecturers and staff were deplorable and they lacked facilities including offices and equipment's with poor remuneration. This state of affairs leads to laxity among staff members and those who are ambitious enough pursue higher education as a way of escape in to lecturing which is perceived to be a more esteemed career. Others are forced to engage in unproductive activities such as selling exams and leaking important and sensitive information to the students.

It's also important to note that a lot of attention is focused on lecturer's welfare at the expense of administrative staff yet the two work together and one cannot be successful without the other. Furthermore some administrative staff has the same qualifications as lecturers yet they work under very different terms and conditions of employment.

Organizations in the third world and specifically public organizations including universities operate in a complex web of competing goals, interests, values and motives (Rainey, 2009). Human resource management ponders with many questions on almost all their core activities which attract significant interest especially in developing countries where rates of unemployment are high. In Kenya for instance issues of recruitment, appraisal, training, development and career management attract a plethora of conflicting interests especially from the management as well as the political class.

Despite the increased research on organizational politics over the years, studies on organizational politics in an academic environment have been inadequate and limited. The limited research that has been done on organizational politics in an academic environment is predominantly in the United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada and South Africa (Budhwar & Debrah,

2013), very little research has been done in Africa. As far as we know, no similar research has been done in Kenya. Therefore, this study is aimed at filling this lacuna.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Many people especially in the higher institutions of learning have undergone various trainings and workshops in their line of profession but they have remained stagnant with little evidence of career progression. There is a level from which employees (whether clerical staff or officer cadre) find it difficult to move upwards or get promoted yet the education sector needs employees who perform their duties well. Lack of career development is a problem. However, lack of career advancement has been linked to organizational politics in most institutions of higher learning.

In the past few years universities have been faced with a multiplicity of challenges among them being employee and student strikes. Just recently the business daily (Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 2015, 20:14) reported that the vice chancellor of U.O.E was facing resistance from a section of the community which allegedly wanted the institution to be headed by “one of their own.” It was alleged that local leaders had ganged up with some youths to frustrate the vice chancellor. They want to own and localize the university,” Uasin Gishu Senator recently led a demonstration at the university to eject the Vice Chancellor on allegations of corruption and nepotism, prompting the indefinite closure of the institution. On her part the Vice Chancellor has maintained that members of staff are hired according to the university’s recruitment policy and that most of them are from the Rift Valley region, contrary to the position taken by her opponents. This state of affairs is however not new since the University of Eldoret was faced with regular strikes and closures linked to the management of the institution. Whereas Universities in Kenya are faced

with a myriad of structural challenges some of these issues are directly linked to informal networks and coalitions linked through ethnicity, political patronage, tribalism and other forms of favourism. These problems emanate from Organizational politics in which individuals take positions on the basis of their own interests. Thus to resolve this problem there is a need to identify the root causes of organizational politics and hence devise mechanisms of dealing with it.

This state of affairs not only impacts on individual career management but also on organizational career management. In the ultimate end employees are demotivated, disloyal, uncommitted and lethargic which impacts on the overall organizational performance. This project will therefore go a long way in helping streamline the management and performance of employees with an aim of enhancing organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study was to investigate the influence of organizational politics on career development among administrative staff in public universities. The specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To determine the influence of patronage on career development among administrative staff in public universities.
- ii. To examine the influence of Gender Perceptions on career development among administrative staff in public universities.
- iii. To determine the influence of information power on career development among administrative staff in public universities.

- iv. To examine the influence of Management Decision Making on career development among administrative staff in public universities.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. What is the influence of patronage on career development among administrative staff of public universities?
- ii. Does Gender Perceptions influence the career development of administrative staff of public universities?
- iii. Does Information Power have an influence on career development among administrative staff of public universities?
- iv. What is the influence of Management Decision Making on career development among administrative staff of public universities?

#### **1.5 Significance**

There is need to identify effect of various parameters of organizational politics on career development so as to address the issue of career stagnation in employees and several strikes that have been witnessed in most institutions of higher learning.

This study examines how organizational politics influence career development among administrative staff in public universities. Hence the findings are important to those concerned in the human resource department in the formulation of effective policies to address organizational politics practices.



This study is also significant to all students of management as it takes an unprecedented path in both theory and practice of management as it addresses an issue that is rarely considered as a determinant of the success of strategic decisions made by organizations. Finally, this research is of great importance to researchers and scholars as it forms a base for their future studies and a source of research information. Hence, the findings are an empirical basis for future studies in the area.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study was carried out at U.OE in Eldoret town and focused on investigating the influence of organizational politics on career development among administrative staff in public universities. The employees of U.OE formed the target population for the study. The study was conducted between February and April 2016. The University of Eldoret is one of the 22 public universities in Kenya and situated approximately 9 km along the Eldoret-Ziwa road in Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. It was founded in 1946 by the white settlers as a Large Scale Farmers Training Centre. In 1984, it was converted to a teachers' training college and renamed Moi Teachers' Training College to offer Diploma Science Teachers Training. Due to the double intake crisis, the College was taken over by Moi University as a Campus in 1990, renaming it Chepkoilel Campus. From 1990, the University made it a campus of natural, basic and applied science programmes.

In August 2010 the President, through Legal Notice No. 125 of 13 August 2010 upgraded the campus into a University College with the name Chepkoilel University College, a Constituent College of Moi University. Upon the award of Charter by the President on March 2013, the University College was renamed University of Eldoret. This represented various scenarios of organizational politics in public universities.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

It is also important to point out the difficulties that were encountered in filtering information from the top management of U.O.E because they are the ones charged with the role of career development among employees. Hence most of them felt as if the research was custom made to validate them thus interfering with the content of their response although the researcher tried to convince and assure them that this research was for academic purposes only and it was not meant to attack their managerial style.

Owing to the fact that the results of this study are limited to the U.O.E and due to the nature of this study it was difficult also to get some information from the respondents due to the sensitive nature of the subject “organizational politics” and its variables but this was dealt with by convincing them that this research was purely for academic purposes.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

The concept of career is still associated with a continuous, hierarchical model of career and often considered in a structural vacuum, despite the impact of organizational restructuring on women and men's careers. Becker contrasted the 'vertical' career, which characterizes the hierarchical model, with a 'horizontal' career, where movement is entirely at one level of the work hierarchy (Becker, 1952). It is also important to recognize that a vertical career may be downwards as well as upwards. Arnold (2013) further defined the career development as the 'particular way that an individual's career unfolds and he argues that whilst 'development' may have positive overtones, careers may develop in unwelcome ways or in ways about which the individual feels neutral.

Career development normally involves a clearly marked path of progression through the ranks of an organization. It is based on merit without regard for race, gender, age or ethnicity. Deserving cases become eligible for development. When employees get to know that each one of them has an equal chance of making it to the top, it becomes easy for them to put in their best. Graham and Mak & Sockel (2001) approved that the prospect of career development might in itself motivate employees to work hard.

Under normal circumstances, career advancement would involve the existence of alternative career paths based on the individual employees and organizational needs. Capelli and Hamori (2005) point out lack of development, for any reason, damages managers' chances of making it

to the top. Their study involving 100 executives brought out an interesting fact that the longer one stays in a job the less likely his/her chances of advancement.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

### **2.2.1 Influence of organizational politics on career management**

Pfeffer (1981) defined organizational politics as activities taken within the organizations to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation where there is uncertainty about choices. In a simpler way, Buchanan & Huczynski (2004) state that politics is about who gets what, when and how. Butcher and Clarke (2002) argue that organizational politics constitute the cornerstone for organizational democracy by allowing the expression of multiple individual and group goals, developed under the umbrella of common corporate goals. Likewise, Buchanan and Badham (1999) showed how politics can drive or facilitate organizational change. Nzuve (2007) stated that, in some institutions, managers create coalition to assist, block, protect or hinder some employees. On the other hand, some organizations for example may have to be conceptualized in the larger context of national politics.

Organizational Politics represents a unique domain of interpersonal relations, characterized by the direct or indirect (active or passive) engagement of people in influence tactics and power struggles. These activities are frequently aimed at securing or maximizing personal interests or, alternatively, avoiding negative outcomes within the organization (Ferris *et al.*, 2002). However, they may also be targeted at securing or maximizing collective interests (team, group, organizational, or social) in cases where several decisions are possible that affect different interests (Eran Vigoda-Gadot and Ilan Talmud, 2010). Indeed The Evergreen Business Group

(2006) in their discussion on accelerating career success, acknowledge that organization politics can be a real problem that can stretch from victimization, disregard for ethics, talent and manipulation by supervisors.

Organizational politics may prove to be a hindrance to career development in whatever form it takes (from nepotism, ethnicity, corruption to favoritism). Nzuve (2007) states that, in some institutions, managers create coalitions to assist, block, protect or hinder some employees. On the other hand, some organizations for example may have to be conceptualized in the larger context of national politics. Indeed, the Evergreen Business Group (2006) in their discussion on accelerating career success, acknowledge that organization politics can be a real problem that can stretch from victimization, disregard for ethics, talent and manipulation by supervisors. Mwanje (2010) points out that, systems that can be manipulated by managers in order to reward and recognize favorite employees demoralize the rest of the staff. Cartwright & Schoenberg (2006) agree and send a stark warning that organization politics, which concerns motives, power, positions and competition, if not used constructively, can impact negatively on various aspects of the workplace. Mwanje (2010) points out that, systems that can be manipulated by managers in order to reward and recognize favorite employees demoralize the rest of the staff. Cartwright & Schoenberg (2006) agreed and sent a stark warning that organization politics, which concerns motives, power, positions and competition, if not used constructively, can impact negatively on various aspects of the workplace.

### **2.2.2 Influence of patronage on career development**

Organizations are social entities that involve a struggle for resources, personal conflicts, and a variety of influence tactics executed by individuals and groups to obtain benefits and goals

indifferent ways (Molm, 1997). Organizational Politics represents a unique domain of interpersonal relations, characterized by the direct or indirect (active or passive) engagement of people in influence tactics and power struggles. These activities are frequently aimed at securing or maximizing personal interests or, alternatively, avoiding negative outcomes within the organization (Ferris *et al.*, 2002). However, they may also be targeted at securing or maximizing collective interests (team, group, organizational, or social) in cases where several decisions are possible that affect different interests (Vigoda-Gadot & Talmud, 2010)

Diversity Management is a contemporary concept that is employed in modern organizations to try and lessen the negative effects of organizational politics and specifically patronage. Carson *et al.* (2004) defined diversity as any attribute that humans are likely to tell themselves that another person is different from them. Diversity plainly means difference. Diversity has to do with recognizing that everyone is different in a variety of visible and non-visible ways (The Law Society of Scotland, 2013). According to Dessler (2011) diversity refers to the variety or multiplicity of demographic features that characterize a company's workforce, particularly in terms of race, sex, culture, national origin, handicap, age and religion. According to Waddell *et al.* (2011), diversity is differences among people in age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and capabilities/disabilities.

According to Cole & Kelly (2011), two general approaches to defining workforce diversity seem to dominate: The first, the narrow view, defines workforce diversity only as a term related to equal employment opportunity.

The narrow view typically adopts categories of race, color, religion, sex and national origin. The second argues that workforce diversity is a broader concept that includes all the ways in which people can be different.

A broader definition makes use of additional categories such as teaching, education, sexual orientation and differences in values, abilities, organizational function, tenure and personality. Taking a broader view, diversity management initiatives attempt to maximize the potential of all employees in direct benefit to the organization. Consequently, the best employees are recruited, resulting in greater profits and job security. Diversity management is a process intended to create and maintain a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of individuals are valued, so that all can reach their potential and maximize their contributions to an organization's strategic goals and objectives. In recent years increase in ethnicity has played a major role in workplace diversity management need (Wambui *et al.*, 2013). This is as a result of the multifaceted effect of patronage in the work place and its effect on Employee Outcome. This state of affairs in Kenya led to the enactment of laws to ensure that there is equal representation in the work place to enhance cohesiveness and productivity and thus reduce the negative effects of organizational politics. For instance, the Constitution obliges the state to provide for the representation of minorities and marginalized groups in governance, and to provide access to employment and special opportunities in educational and economic fields. Effective implementation of constitutional provisions is expected to diffuse the grievances of marginalized groups (Kenya, 2011). Irrespective of all these mitigation measures the work place in Kenya is still filled with a plethora of patronage networks that tend to impact on employees career management issues.

Patronage, expansively conceived as covering all forms of bias and discrimination, is pervasive in organizations and professions, including academia. Four key types of academic patronage operate through decisions made, processes used, assistance given to individuals and personal interactions. The concept patronage to refer to favoritism based on attributes not connected with merit or performance. The person favored can be a relative, friend, spouse, protégé or student, or share the same gender, ethnicity, social class, age, religion, political views or other beliefs. Most attention in academic studies is given to specific types of discrimination, especially those based on gender and ethnicity (Martin, 2006). However, whether intentional or unintentional, it is unlawful, de-motivating, lowers trust, discriminating and can lead to employee deviant behaviors such as employees disliking work, withholding of information, distrust, hatred, bitterness, rumors, jealousy and conflicts, backbiting and undue promotions to the favored employee (Byars & Rue, 2000;Arnold, 2013).

Arnold (2013) describes favoritism as the act of showing partiality toward a privileged individual or group. On the other hand Ramachander (2013) sees favoritism as occurring when the leader displays preferential treatment towards workers who they are socially connected with to the detriment of other workers and overall performance of the organization. Over time, political patronage has been used to refer to the granting of favor's, contracts and rewards beyond public positions by politicians in exchange for electoral support (Campbell 1988; Smith and Mesquita 2010). Scott (2005) defines political patronage as a mechanism for public employment in exchange for victorious partisan labor, while Hollyer describes it as the bidding for public offices by both skilled and unskilled candidates by offering political services in exchange for public posts (Hollyer, 2010). According to Martin (2006) Patronage practices vary enormously internationally. In some countries, patronage is highly entrenched, with god-professors acting as



gatekeepers into an academic career: no one without high-level personal endorsement has any chance of getting ahead. In some places, this becomes what might be called corruption, with university places available for purchase, out-groups denied access to study and excluded from academic jobs, degrees given as favor's to powerful figures, and senior academics chosen on political rather than academic grounds. In other places — Australia, for example — where student selection and staff hiring operate with more observance of merit principles and where anti-discrimination legislation is taken seriously, patronage typically takes less blatant forms. In other countries however the situation might be a little bit difficult for instance favored employees sometimes may be promoted unduly, may get advances not because of quality of work but because they are preferred by the boss, superior may discuss top official secrets with them and may overlook the mistakes made by such employees (Ramachander, 2013). This state of affairs contributes to a high turnover like for instance the literature on trust, social support, and general organizational social capital has stressed the role of weak ties and sparse social networks in determining organizational outcomes (Burt, 1992). It's observed that hardworking employees leave the organization especially when they perceive that their hard work will not be recognized, hence the organization is bound to lose quality employees because of favoritism (Caroline, 2015)

The situation is rather severe in African countries where diversity management is a very big challenge for instance Kenya is made up of different ethnic groups- official number initially set at 42 although the actual number is higher factoring in minority groups initially not recognized. Ethnicity forms the major basis of diversification in most Kenyan organizations, especially within State Corporation and indigenous companies. The political landscape often is the culprit of ethnic divisions in such organizations, where hiring is on the basis of one's ethnicity. Key casing point was during the coalition government (after 2007 elections and the chaos that

followed). The sharing trickled down to state corporations, a situation that further hampered their effectiveness since competence was greatly compromised. Many private firms have also manifested this kind of diversity, although a good number especially the multi nationals and those that have adopted professionalism as a value hire purely on merit. There are various merits and demerits of favoritism. For instance, Prendergast and Topel (1996) have argued that favoritism can lead to less productive job assignments by mismatching and imposing a higher risk on workers. In its extremes, favoritism of in-group members may even express itself in discrimination against out-group members, which has been a problem on the labor market and has been in the focus of legislators as well as researchers (Mullainathan, 2004). On the other hand, social proximity can also be beneficial for firms in terms of better job matches based on more information by the means of informal recruiting channels (Ponzo, 2010) and more successful employees due to higher peer pressure (Mohnen *et al.* (2008) or positive reciprocity (Dohmen *et al.*, 2009) among related workers. Reciprocity might also explain some of our results concerning the absence of inefficient favoritism.

The majority of literature available on organizational favoritism places emphasis on certain human resource functions where supervisory decision-making could be influenced. Hence, supervisors use subjective criteria in hiring decisions, promotional decisions, performance evaluations, and work and task assignment decisions rather than objective measures. Subjectivity opens the door to favoritism, where supervisors act on personal preferences toward subordinates to favor some subordinates over others (Prendergast & Topel, 1996). According to Dr. Sayani Basu, in the work place, favoritism can be said when someone-or perhaps a group of people-appears to be treated better than others and not necessarily for reasons related to superior work performance (Bassman and London, 1993). In Duran and Morales approach to favoritism,

preferred individuals are those who belong to the group of friends of the organization. The unfairness that characterizes favoritism is found in the fact that decision-makers consciously favor their friends at the expense of someone else who is more deserving. Showing favoritism maybe abusive in itself, especially if the out group subordinates are regularly excluded from opportunities for development, valued job assignments, pay increases, or other rewards (Bassman and London, 1993).

The biggest antecedent to patronage include scarcity of resources that is prevalent in every organization for instance Bhatnagar (1992) argues that Organizational situations that are characterized by scarcity of resources tend to attract more political activity than situations that are not so characterized. This is especially rampant where efficiency is key in attaining competitive advantage in today's increasingly dynamic economic environment. Resources are therefore great sources of patronage, in the sense that when organizational resources that employees value (e.g. pay raises, advancement opportunities) are limited, they would need to compete for such resources. One way to influence the outcomes of resource allocation decisions such that one's own interests are served is to rely on political tactics. In general, competition for scarce resources is likely to result in both real and perceived politicking. For example, researchers have found opportunity for promotion (. Ferris *et al.*, 1996; Ferris and Kacmar, 1992) and career development opportunities (Parker *et al.*, 1995) to be negatively related to perceptions of politics.

### **2.2.3 Influence of Gender Perceptions on career development**

Affirmative action has constantly been used as a tool to address the imbalance between males and females at the work place, with political aids and legal frameworks being reinforced to bring

parity. Generally, men have dominated work place more than women, mainly in positions of significance. However, according to research by Burke (2007), women are argued to have the same possibilities as men to advance up the corporate ladder, particularly if women are entering the same occupations and are similar to men in ambitions and abilities. Women are assumed to have successful careers by following the male model and by sharing child and home responsibilities with their partner. The politics of gender has dominated academic debate since time immemorial not only in the workplace but also in main stream politics. This debate was sparked from the western world in which many studies of gender and career have been undertaken. For instance Johnston (1987) projected that by the year 2000 approximately 47 percent of the workforce will be women and 61 percent of all women of working age will be employed. Several studies on the career experiences of minorities and of women managers in general have been (Stroh *et al.*, 1992; Igbaria and Wormley, 1992).

There is an increase in research supporting the view of various models of career development for women and men. For example, in a study conducted by Kirchmeyer (1998) including both objective and subjective measures of career success (income, organizational level and self-reported success), four types of career success determinants were identified (Burke *et al.*, 2009). These determinants included; human capital variables, gender roles, supportive relationships and family status variables. In her study, Kirchmeyer (1998) found support for all relationships with one exception for family status measure, which was found to have similar effects for women and men.

Types of work experience that are likely to be associated with female career development have been documented. Morrison *et al.* (1987) identified six crucial factors which contribute to a woman's career progression. These factors were; help from above, a track record of

achievement, a desire to succeed, an ability to manage subordinates, a willingness to take career risks and an ability to be tough, decisive and demanding.

A good number of women in higher education are rising in many countries, however, most occupy part-time, low-status or temporary positions and the proportion of women in most senior academic positions remains small (Mason & Goulden, 2002; Williams, 2004). There exist structural and socio-cultural barriers for women in academia as they advance their careers (Forster, 2001). Barriers that impede career motivation include; family conflicts and work structural barriers recruitment and selection policies, lack of mentors and role models, promotion policies and institutional male power (Forster, 2001). Moreover, Morley (2006) added that; exclusion of women from career development opportunities, gender-insensitive pedagogical processes, prejudice about women's academic abilities and intellectual authority, poor equality policy implementation and backlash and stigmatization in relation to affirmative action programmes are other factors that impedes women from advancing in their career line.

Another theme that runs along as a barrier to women's career advancement is sexual harassment (Morley and Lussier, 2009) where women are offered professional advantage if they grant sexual favors. Other related studies (Donaldson and Emes, 2000; Bain and Cummings, 2000; Petersen and Gravetts, 2000) also showed that women in academics suffer from sex bias and sex discrimination in their quest for career advancement.

Bruley (1999) and Ramsden (2002) stated that in the United Kingdom up to the 1950s it was the accepted culture that women upon marriage would cease to work. These restrictions on women were enforced through strong social sanctions and underpinned by the gender perceptions that

they were both produced and reproduced. They did note that these sanctions were strongly enforced by certain groups of women, particularly older women.

Wolchik (1994) noted that approximately 89.1 % of the employers in engineering industries in central and Eastern Europe indicated that they preferred men for repair and maintenance occupations whereas only 2% preferred women. He argued this gender biased preference was connected to the prevalent culture in these countries and the gender perceptions produced therein. Sziraczki and Windell (1992) noted in their Hungary and Bulgaria survey that 65% of the employers questioned preferred men for production occupations compared to 15% who preferred women. However, more compelling and substantial evidence is provided by House (1986) who noted that in Cyprus the traditional 'male' employment, 85% of employers indicated that they preferred male candidates due to their 'natural' disposition for that type of work. Conversely for a given list of traditional 'female' jobs, 89% of employers preferred female candidates due to their 'natural' disposition to that type of work. McIntosh (2010) found that in Lucknow, India, of the employers interviewed 60.2% reported that women were unsuitable or less suitable than men for sales, production, service and executive/supervisory positions. Anker (1994) and Scoble and Russel (2003) in their qualitative research indicated that the employers frequently declined to hire women because they did not have the suitable 'character' for the job. Savage (2000) observed that many of these perceptions overlapped in their effects, with perceptions reinforcing gender segregation in particular occupations. They argued that these environment restrictions defined acceptable roles for men and women. In this regard, Mernissi, (1987) noted the scale of this when observing that in many Islamic states 'purdah' effectively forbade women from interacting with men in public. In occupational terms, this resulted in many

Muslim women being strongly discouraged from employment except in establishments where customers were all women.

#### **2.2.4 Influence of Information Power on career development**

Information control, distribution and manipulation are genres of information power and in some instances it can be veiled as Expertise game. According to Cacciattolo (2013) Expertise Game is played when an employee hoards information for himself because of some hidden agenda. She argues that this experience enhanced the participant's rapport with colleagues and subordinates whilst learning informally from them. On the other side of the continuum this political game appeared to promote a sense of frustration, stress, demotivation to learn, and he also considered leaving the job. This supports Ladebo's (2006) and Vigoda-Gadot & Kapun's (2005) proposition that organizational politics are a source of stress at the place of work (Cacciattolo, 2013)

Power accrues to those who control vital information. For example, many former government or military officials have found power niches for themselves in industry as a Washington representative of a firm that does business with the government. The vital information they control is knowledge of whom to contact to shorten some of the complicated procedures in getting government contracts approved. The same applies to human resource procedures in which some employees who might be juniors might control very vital information thus influencing their career development (Cacciattolo, 2013)

Related to controlling information is controlling lines of communication, particularly access to key people. Administrative assistants and staff assistants frequently control an executive's calendar. Both insiders and outsiders must carry favor with the conduit in order to see an

important executive. Although many people attempt to contact executives directly through email, some executives delegate the responsibility of screening email messages to an assistant.

### **2.2.5 Information Control, Distribution and Manipulation**

Information is defined as processed or meaningful data about the world we work within. In this sense, any observation may be considered data and once processed and made meaningful to a recipient it is then defined to be information.

Access to information is very important for the feeling of being involved by employees within the organization. As already stated participation in decision making is very critical in reducing negative organizational politics. Information is very critical in the day to day operations of any organization and is at the center of activating and deactivating organizational politics. Organizations are entities, which process information. Decision making is largely a process of information as (Cheney *et al.*, 2004) present. This means that the organization itself can be seen as bits of information that are moving forward in organization. Gathering more information and sending it forward in an organization creates the work of information processing (Mykkänen , 2010). The flow of information makes the environment for decision making for individuals and groups. The amount of information in this flow affects how successful the decision making in the end is. Cheney et al. also point out that when individuals cannot process large amounts of information; organizations tend to gather more and more information through for example surveys and forecasting, (Mykkänen, 2010). Organizations do collect and distribute information to enhance its efficiency and in the process, this information might be distorted which may be intentional or accidental for instance, sometimes employees are asked to summarize data and report it to their supervisors. By definition, summarizing data means leaving some parts of it



out. This is one type of distortion that is intentional. Other times, organizations distort data so much as to change its meaning and value. In other instances some employees who might have firsthand access to information like secretaries might intentionally distort information which ends up fuelling organizational politics. For example a leaked departmental report might speculate promotions and reshuffles in the work place thus fuelling a lot of organizational politics. In most cases filtering is the dominant form of information manipulation. It occurs in a situation when a sender purposely manipulates information to make appear more favorable to the receiver. An example can be the situation when a manager tells his boss the information he wants to hear. In doing so, he, is filtering information that he communicates. This barrier is closely connected with status differences. If there are many levels in the organization's hierarchy, there are more opportunities for filtering. Very often employees want to please a boss, thus sometimes saying to him what they think he wants to hear and, in this way some employees distort upward communications. This can become a source of conflict.

Another predominant mode of information manipulation is Information Overloaded. Sometimes an employee receives too much information and it exceeds his processing capacity. As a result there is information overload. For instance, employees receive many e-mails, phone calls, faxes and have meetings at the same time. In this case they ignore, pass over or forget important information. The result can be the loss of information and less effective communication, which can lead to conflict situation. These conflicts can result to higher organizational politics within the organization.

The purpose of distributing information in an organization is to encourage the sharing of information. A wider distribution of information promotes more widespread and more frequent learning, makes the retrieval of relevant information more likely, and allows new insights to be

created by relating disparate items of information. When this fails to be the goal of information distribution then a lot of manipulation is realized (Mykkänen, 2010). The separation between information provider and information user should be dissolved: both ought to collaborate as partners in the dissemination and value-adding of information to help ensure that the best information is seen by the right persons in the organization. To encourage users to be active participants, it should be made easy for them to comment on, evaluate, and re-direct the information they have received (Mykkänen, 2010). In most instances employees who indulge in politics manipulate information and it is never passed on in its desired form which has various adverse effects like for instance superiors get a wrong picture of what is actually happening in the organization and a wrong person walks away with the credit in an organization where employees are indulged in politics.

The importance of information to organizations can never be over emphasized as organizations have a strong belief in information. Feldman & March (1981) find that organizations think that more information characterizes better decisions, and having more is better than an organization with less. The quality and quantity of information is considered as alternatives to a decision makers' knowledge. Seeking and using information in decisions is a value to organization and this means that using it, asking it and justifying decisions in terms of information symbolize that the organization is a good decision maker and well managed (Mykkänen, 2010).

According to Feldman & March (1981), the use of information is more important than the pieces of information. Many organizations gather too much information, which is never used in the decision making process. Too much information can even paralyze the individual or groups who are making decisions. Organizations, as well as the employees, can make effective use of only part of the information.

Eisenhardt (1989) emphasizes the importance of information distribution by underlining the significance of information in decision making, especially in strategic decision making. According to her, in fast decision making more information is used than in slow decision making. Also more alternatives are used. The speed of strategic decision making correlates with the use of real-time information (Mykkänen, 2010).

Veryard (2005) points out that sometimes the effectiveness of the decision making process is increased by the quality and quantity of information. Increased information could also reduce the effectiveness (Mykkänen , 2010)

### **2.2.6 Influence of decision making on career development**

Zeleny (2012) defined decision-making as a dynamic process. That is, a complex search for information, full of deviations, enriched by feedback from casting about in all directions, gathering and disregarding information, fueled by fluctuating uncertainty, indistinct and conflicting concepts- some sharp, some hazy; the process is an organic unity of both pre-decision and post-decision stages overlapping within the region of partial decision-making”

Decision making may be defined as the process of making choices from among alternatives (March, 2010). Management theorists come to an agreement that decision making is one of the most important if not the most important of all management activities (Drucker, 2010). It is important to note, however, that not only managers make decisions in organizations, but also employees at every level in an organization participate in decision making as well. The late management consultant explain that most discussions of decision making assume that only senior executives make decisions. This is a dangerous mistake since making sound decisions is a crucial skill at every level in the organization (Drucker, 2009).

Management theorists agree that decision making is one of the most important if not *the* most important of all management activities (Drucker, 2010). He further elaborated that, not only managers make decisions in organizations, but also employees at every level in an organization participate in decision making as well. However, some institutions today, many decisions are made by the top management while employees are left out (Bonito, 2012). Schermerhorn *et al.* (2011) listed some benefits of incorporating employees in decision making. These include; more knowledge and expertise is available to solve the problem, a greater number of alternatives are examined, the final decision is better understood and accepted by all employees, and there is more commitment among all employees to make the final decision work.

Jahansoozi (2005) believes that transparency in decision-making is required for public trust. Offering promotions and benefits are critical for organizations to have a transparent system. When organizations practice transparency in decision making, morale and loyalty increases and as a result subordinates are retained for a longer period of time.

The style of Decision Making in an organization is influenced predominantly by the culture of an organization as well as the personality of the decision makers. Salem (2011) poses a challenge to the Kuwait managers in which he raises an important question. He argues that in organizations with informal systems of coordination such as those in Kuwait organizational politics may become negative (Hammett, 2008). This could be especially true if the leader were to attempt to insist that “we do it my way”. This raises an important concern with decision making styles. Which style is effective in dealing with negative organizational politics? Decision-making occurs when supervisors are “facing multiple attributes, objectives, criteria, functions (Zeleny, 1975). Decision-making is a dynamic process: a complex search for information, full of deviations, enriched by feedback from casting about in all directions, gathering and disregarding

information, fueled by fluctuating uncertainty, indistinct and conflicting concepts- some sharp, some hazy; the process is an organic unity of both pre-decision and post-decision stages overlapping within the region of partial decision-making (Zeleny, 1975). Babak *et al.* (2013) argue that the most important management principal is decision making because a manager performs all managerial functions based on it. Witt *et al.* (2000) introduces the issue of participation in decision making as an important tool in helping employees have control over their work environment and thus react less severely to political behaviors than employees with little control or understanding(Ferris *et al.*, 1993).

According to Brian Martin (2009), Decision making also falls under patronage in the sense that the process of decision making can be biased for instance appointing insiders to a selection committee or more subtly establishing a process that will make appointment of such people to a selection committee more likely. This in effect tends to have an effect on the general perception of organizational politics as it alienates deserving employees.

Ferris *et al.* (1989) brings in an interesting observation in that employees tend to be less affected by organizational politics when they have an understanding of the goings on in the organization; that is the events at work and also feelings of control. Indeed organizational politics tends to have a negative effect mostly on employees who seem to feel like they are not in control of their destiny. Such employees would therefore fail to perceive organizational politics if they are involved in decision making as opposed to being left out. This however is a function of two antecedents that include Organizational Structure and the personal influence (Good man *et al.*, 2011).

The organizational structure looks at the support system and decentralization in the organization while the personal variables on the other hand look at individual differences like personality variables which Goodman *et al.* (2011) argue that it has been ignored. He further argues that personality differences like locus of control have been shown to be related to how individuals perceive politics. It is thus very important for organizations leadership to understand their employee's personality in relation to decision making styles as this has an effect on their perception of organization politics. Goodman *et al.* (2011) argues that individuals who believe that they have control of their own fate are termed internalizers and those who attribute things that happen around them to external forces or as due chance are called externalizers. A person's perception of the source of his /her fate has been shown to relate to how to relate to how they perceive politics in their organization.

According to Matteson *et al.* (1987) employee participation in decision making increases employee job satisfaction as it provides them with a feeling of control which makes them feel less threatened. This in essence tends to have an effect on both internalizers and externalizers since they get to feel as if they are part of the organization decision making process. Ownership of decisions has a profound effect on both the formulation and implementation process of decisions. This is because employees are less likely to oppose decisions in which they participated in formulation. This thus tends to reduce tensions that precede organizational politics and in a sense participatory decision making tends to reduce the effect of negative connotations that accompany organizational politics.

Baumgartel (1957) argues that employee performance, job satisfaction and negative attitudes towards the supervisor were higher among employees whose supervisors engaged in participatory decision making, were lowest among employees whose supervisors directed

activities with no discussion and were intermediate among employees whose supervisors took a laissez faire(subordinate decides) approach.

The decision making style adopted within an organization thus has an effect on employee satisfaction and this reduces the option of uncertainty that is fertile ground for organizational politics. This position was also supported by Karasek (1979) who argued that employees with low decision making latitude and high job demands reported more job dissatisfaction behaviors such as anxiety and depression and were absent more than workers with high decision latitude.

Decision latitude is also linked to the tenure of employees within organizations. The more employees stay in an organization the more they learn how to maneuver and influence decisions in their own way. Employees who have worked longer within an organization are more likely to have accumulated work experience that may provide a sense of competence on the job and the opportunity to exercise self-determination (Mowday, porter and steers, 1982) Such employees are more likely to have established sufficient networks of operations within which they can influence decision making. They are therefore less likely to experience uncertainty and thus perceive their work situation as less political. (Koberg *et al.*, 1999).

The decision making process is sometimes a highly technical and sophisticated process that requires well-endowed employees both with technical and political skills and thus tenure tends to have a positive impact on employee empowerment. In the same vein Koberg *et al.*, (1999) found a positive relationship among organizational tenure and perceptions of empowerment among healthcare professionals, providing some support for this perspective.

An empowered employee who is emotionally attached to an organization is more likely to be engaged in decision making. Such employees who actively engage in discussions about

important issues with their supervisors to develop consensus and resolve issues are less affected by organizational politics (Witt, 2000). He further argues that a concerted decision provides both joint ownership and understanding which may generate feelings of security and protection in a political environment.

Individuals who have stayed in an organization for long develop emotional attachment to the organization and gain a lot of experience of which they are more likely to be consulted by their colleagues and bosses to help in solving problems as a result of a rich institutional memory. This enhances their participation in decision making which in turn lessens the effect of organizational politics. Ferris *et al.* (1989) argues that “one of the simplest ways of coping in the decision environment is by making decisions the one is reasonably confident will be acceptable to others “Decision making is very critical and is likely to reduce uncertainty between the subordinates and supervisors as the subordinate will have some anticipation of the supervisors responses. For those involved in consensus participatory decision making politics might not be as salient to the development of job satisfaction as it might be to individuals engaged in less participatory decision making (Witt, 2000).

## **2.2.7 Theoretical Framework**

### **2.2.7.1 Equity theory (Adams, 1965)**

Organizational politics as already stated impacts each organization and individual employee in varying levels depending on how it's handled. Given that Organizational politics takes the form of power, authority, Favoritism, influence, justice among many other variables it mostly takes a negative turn when an employee or department feels that it has unfairly been treated. Perception of injustice tends to be a fertile breeding ground for organizational politics which if not handled



well can lead to organizational disfunction. Thus based on equity theory (Adams, 1965) and on the idea of social exchange and social reciprocity (Blau, 1964), the motivation to perform better and the development of positive employee attitudes and behaviors depend on the display of similar positive attitudes and behaviors by other members of the organization (peers, supervisors, management, and the organization as a whole). Clarity of policies and the feeling of equal and fair treatment of employees tends to reduce the lacuna for speculation. Thus Equity theory is very relevant in this study in that the more employees are treated fairly with less bias either on the basis of gender, tribe, ethnicity or other variables the less they tend to be political which in a sense impacts on the overall organizational performance.

#### **2.2.7.2 The social capital theory (Bourdieu, 1986)**

As already stated above women employees may be disadvantaged partly as a result of their weaknesses in terms of being boundary spanners. Again it has been noted that males still dominate higher positions because of the strong networks that they still hold which might be difficult for a woman to penetrate. This theory argues that employees who have stayed in an organization for long tend to have established networks and social contacts of support that help them pursue higher career goals. Given that men have previously dominated these positions they also tend to have established a strong foundation for themselves and thus they keep supporting each other at the expense of the females. Social capital theory states that actual and potential resources are imbedded in, available and derived from the network of social relationships developed by the individual (Ng & Fledman, 2011). According to this theory, individuals who have worked longer in an organization may have the necessary skills and knowledge to help them navigate the organizational setting and that these skills may enhance their potential productivity and success in the labor market (Becker, 1960). Men have thus dominated the work

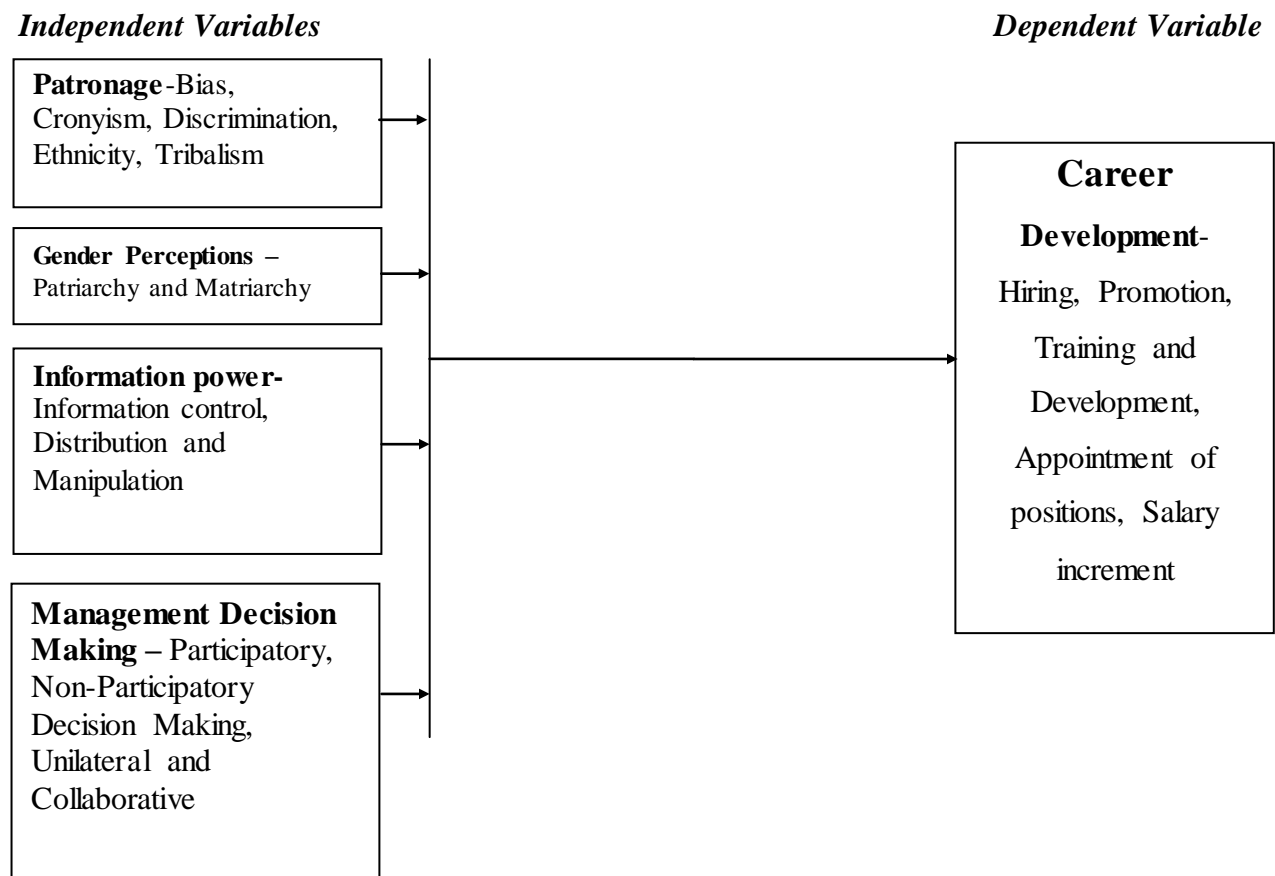
place for long and thus they keep using this as a spring board of survival and progression. Such employees also tend to develop links and bond with the organization to a point that they don't perceive high incidences of organizational politics like the rest. They tend to feel at home and get used to any incidences of injustice and unfair treatment which in the end reduces the impact of organizational politics. Networking can also work towards helping employees have a strong relationship with others which gives them the confidence and commitment towards the organization and this reduces any impact of negative organizational politics. According to this theory, such employees are more likely to have established social links or networks with colleagues both within and outside their organization and therefore may perceive the organization as supportive and less political. Again they are likely to be consulted by their colleagues pertaining to various organizational issues which tends to enhance their career prospects as well reduce the negative effects of organizational politics. Thus according to this theory the social bond and network systems established by given employees has an impact on their attachment to the organization irrespective of the prevailing climate and this affects their career advancement. Such networks and social bonds give employees some form of security which propels them to pursue their career goals as well as enhancing their political skills to the extent that they know how to go about any political situation. Furthermore such individuals are less likely to perceive organizational politics or perceive the organization as less supportive (Valle *et al.*, 2004).

### **2.2.7.3 Perception Theory (Lewin, 1936)**

Lewin's (1936) theory of perception posits that individuals may respond to what they perceive to exist rather than reality itself and react accordingly. Thus they may behave in ways to conform to what they perceive to be there. According to Lewin (1936), politics within organizations should be studied in relations to how people think rather than what is actually there. In a sense

then this means that Gender politics although having some aspects of reality might be based on people's perception in the work place. This implies that the society's perception of female and male employees might have greater influence in their judgement rather than the reality. Gender as a concept is socially constructed in that it refers to society's role expectations of the male and the female being. It must also be noted that perceptions differ from individual to another depending on factors such as age, culture, position, longevity, personality among other factors. Thus individuals within the same work place might have different perceptions on the politics of career development of both the males and females. The different perceptions in turn determine the relationship and attitude of employees towards each other with issues of patronage and decision making being perceived as just or un just thus fueling organizational politics.

### 2.2.8 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework of the study**

### **Patronage**

The concept “patronage” to refer to favoritism based on attributes not connected with merit or performance. The person favored can be a relative, friend, spouse, protégé or student, or share the same gender, ethnicity, social class, age, religion, political views or other beliefs. Most attention in academic studies is given to specific types of discrimination, especially those based on gender, tribe, cronies and ethnicity (Martin, 2006).

### **Gender Perceptions**

Theorists believe that men's greater power and status in societies underlie the differences in gender roles. Social structure theory (Eagly and Wood, 1999) postulates that the powerful roles that men hold lead to the development of related traits, such as aggressiveness and assertiveness. Likewise, women who have less access to powerful roles develop traits consistent with their subordinate roles, such as submissiveness and cooperativeness. In sum, the power differential in favor of men may explain why stereotypical male traits are more valued than stereotypical feminine traits. Thus power being a genre of politics implies that this power relations between the genders leads to different perceptions which have an impact on career development.

### **Information power**

Access to information is very important for the feeling of being involved by employees within the organization. Information is very critical in the day to day operations of any organization and is at the center of activating and deactivating organizational politics. Organizations are entities, which process information. Decision making is largely a process of information as Cheney *et al.* (2004)

## **Decision Making**

According to Martin (2009), Decision making falls under patronage in the sense that the process of decision making can be biased for instance appointing insiders to a selection committee or more subtly establishing a process that will make appointment of such people to a selection committee more likely. This in effect tends to have an effect on the general perception of organizational politics as it alienates deserving employees which in turn tends to affect their career development.

### **2.3 Critique of Existing Literature**

The focus of most studies in organizational politics has been predominantly focused on perception of organizational politics that's based on Kurt Lewin's 1890-1947 perception theory rather than real organizational politics. This includes; Vigoda (2000) argument that politics in organizations should be understood in terms of the thought processes of individuals rather than what it actually represents; Kacmar and Carlson (1997) went further and invented the Perceived Organizational Politics Scale (POPS) which measures the extent to which members in an organization view their work climate and is composed of three dimensions. These among many other scholars have focused on perceptions of organizational politics rather than real organizational politics.

### **2.4 Summary**

From the literature reviewed, organization politics exist in most organizations and more specific institutions of higher learning. Existing literature also shows that organizational politics has a positive correlation with career development. Patronage, information control, gender and the

form of decision making have been well reviewed as factors that propagate organization politics. All these factors influence career advancement of employees in the long run.

## **2.5 Research gaps**

Organizational politics has been studied for a long period but the focus has been more on the developed countries and rarely on developing countries. Very few studies have focused specifically on Africa and Kenya. Khatari, Chang & Pawn (2001) argue that in their research it was found that most of the studies conducted in the area of perceived organizational politics were conducted in the western organizational context which is more developed than the developing countries economically economic, socially, culturally as well as their work attitude, values and norms.

Another research gap exists in the public sector because most studies have focused on the private sector yet the public sector is the major employer and economic contributor especially in the developing countries. This was attested by Vigoda, (2000) who argues that very few researches in organizational politics have been done in the public sector with many focusing on the private sector organizations.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology that was used so as to meet the study's objectives. It highlights how the researcher gathered, organized, compiled and analyzed data in relation to the research problem in question. It therefore comprises of sub-sections namely: research design, target population, sampling design and procedure, data analysis methods and validity and reliability of research instruments.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The study adopted a case study research design in order to investigate the influence of organizational politics on career management among administrative staff in public universities. A case study research design was used to enable the researcher do a detailed analysis of the University of Eldoret and the major issues under investigation. A case study research design was appropriate for the study because it allows for the collection of comprehensive and detailed information as well as generalization of information generated from a sample to represent the overall target population.

### 3.3 Target Population

The target population for the study comprised of 134 permanent administrative of the University of Eldoret in Eldoret town who were drawn from different departments.

### 3.4 Sampling Design and Procedures

When sample size determination was done using the formula of Israel (1992) below, a sample size of 128 administrative staff was arrived at (Table 3.1). Since this figure was close to the entire target population (134), the researcher chose to adopt census technique where the entire target population was used to obtain the required information for the study.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where  $n$  is the optimum sample size,  $N$  the total number of administrative staff and  $e$  the probability of error (in this study 0.05 for 95% confidence level was used).



**Table 3.1 Distribution of Respondents**

| Category                  | Target population | Procedure                  | Sample Size |
|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Central services          | 10                | $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$ | 10          |
| Human Resource            | 8                 |                            | 8           |
| Management office         | 14                |                            | 13          |
| Information Systems (ICT) | 7                 |                            | 7           |
| Finance                   | 15                |                            | 12          |
| Transport                 | 8                 |                            | 8           |
| Academic Departments      | 27                |                            | 24          |
| Hostel                    | 20                |                            | 17          |
| Estate                    | 8                 |                            | 10          |
| Catering                  | 10                |                            | 10          |
| Sports                    | 7                 |                            | 7           |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>134</b>        |                            | <b>128</b>  |

### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

A structured questionnaire with the help of Likert scales was used as data collection instrument for the study. It was developed through the guidance of the study's objectives and research questions. They contained closed ended questions which were accompanied by a list of possible alternatives from which the respondents were expected to choose answers that best describe their situation. The questionnaires were administered on a drop and pick up later basis where the respondents were given 4 days to go through the questions at their own pace. This was done in order to ensure uniformity of answers and also to increase the response rate.

### **3.5.1 Validity**

According to Neuman (2005), validity is the quality attributed to proposition or measures to the degree to which they conform to established knowledge or truth. An attitude scale is considered valid, for example, to the degree to which its results conform to other measures of possession of the attitude. Validity therefore refers to the extent to which an instrument can measure what it ought to measure. It refers to the extent to which an instrument asks the right questions in terms of accuracy.

The validity of the research instrument was achieved through the expert judgment of the research supervisor who critically went through it to ensure that the questions contained were clear and precise and present the phenomena under study.

### **3.5.2 Reliability**

Reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Orodho, 2003).

Pilot test was carried out by randomly distributing about 20 questionnaires to target respondents within the different target groups in the study. This was done to determine whether data gathered from each variable has a significant effect on career development. Cronbach's Alpha was then used for testing the reliability of the questionnaire responses, using SPSS software. The Alpha test was computed on the different sections of the questionnaire. The critical point for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.7 (Table 3.2) and from the test that was carried out in the study, the

overall reliability of the questionnaire by calculating Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value at confidence level 95% was found to be 0.935 on satisfaction and 0.959 on importance. While individual item reliability range was found to be 0.803-0.816 on satisfaction and 0.843-0.853 on importance. All the values were highly appreciating due to having acceptable range (Values  $\geq 0.70$  is acceptable). Therefore the researcher confirmed that the instrument was reliable.

**Table 3.2 Cronbach's alpha values**

| <b>Cronbach's alpha</b> | <b>Internal consistency</b>     |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| $\alpha \geq 0.9$       | Excellent (High-Stakes testing) |
| $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ | Good (Low-Stakes testing)       |
| $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ | Acceptable                      |
| $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ | Poor                            |
| $\alpha < 0.5$          | Unacceptable                    |

**Source: Cronbach's (1970)**

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Quantitative data collected were edited and coded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Two types of analyses were computed. The first was descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and the second was inferential statistics (multiple correlations) where responses to patronage, gender, information control and decision making were analyzed using Spearman rank correlation to determine their association with career development. Significance was tested at both 99 and 95% confidence level.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1: Introduction

This chapter analyses the empirical data in an attempt to assess the influence of organizational politics on career management among employees working at the University of Eldoret (UOE). The interpretation of the data was carried out in relation to the objectives of the study. Tables and figures were used to present the findings. The chapter also has dealt at length with various issues that surround the assessment of organizational politics' parameters on career development. In this chapter, the study discusses the findings in terms of patronage, gender, decision making and information control in relation to other similar studies that have been done.

#### 4.2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The study set out to cover 134 respondents through self-administered questionnaires. However, the researcher received responses from 130. Gender, age, nature of responsibility, level of education and duration of employment presented the demographic characteristic of the respondents.

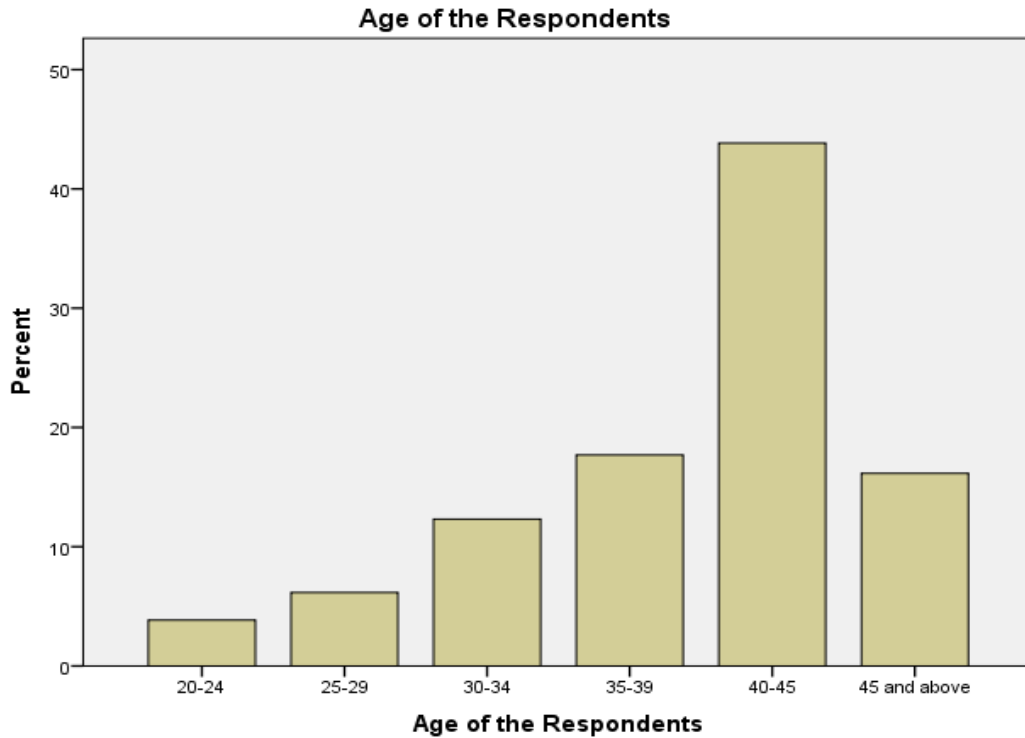
##### 4.2.1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Respondents' distribution according to gender is shown in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1: Distribution of respondents by gender**

| <b>Gender</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Valid Percent</b> | <b>Cumulative Percent</b> |
|---------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Male</b>   | 72               | 55.4           | 55.4                 | 55.4                      |
| <b>Female</b> | 58               | 44.6           | 44.6                 | 100.0                     |
| <b>Total</b>  | 130              | 100.0          | 100.0                |                           |

Table 4.1 indicated that more than 50% of the respondents were male (55.4%), female were found to form 44.6% of the respondents. Both male and female respondents had an equal chance to be represented in the study.



**Figure 4.1: Distribution of respondents by age**

The findings from Fig. 4.1 above indicated that the majority of respondents were between 40-45 years old (43.8%). This is in comparison to other categories, 35-39 years (17.7%) above 45 years (16.2%), 30-34 years (12.3%), 25-29 years (6.2%). Respondents between 20-24 years of age reported the lowest percent of 3.8.

**Table 4.2: Level of education of respondents**

| <b>Level of Education</b>     | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Higher National Diploma/ Dip. | 44               | 33.8                  |
| Bachelors                     | 56               | 43.1                  |
| Masters/PhD                   | 27               | 20.8                  |
| Others                        | 3                | 2.3                   |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>130</b>       | <b>100.0</b>          |

The results in Table 4.2 show that majority (43.1%) of the respondents held Bachelor's degree while those with "Others" were the least (2.3%). Respondents who were holders of higher national diploma or Diploma certificate were 33.8% whereas those with Masters/PhD degree were 20.8%.

**Table 4.3: Nature of responsibility of Respondents**

| <b>Position</b>          | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> |
|--------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Clerk                    | 16               | 12.3           |
| Secretary                | 37               | 28.5           |
| Administrative assistant | 30               | 27.7           |
| Senior administrative    | 36               | 23.1           |
| HoD                      | 11               | 8.5            |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>130</b>       | <b>100.0</b>   |

It was ascertained from the findings of the study that the majority of respondents were secretaries (28.5%), compared to those who work as administrative assistants (27.7%), senior administrative (23.1%), Office clerks (12.3%) and HoD's (8.5%) as shown in the Table. All categories had equal chances of representation in this study.

**Table 4.4: Distribution of respondents by duration of employment**

| <b>Duration</b>  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage (%)</b> |
|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| less than a year | 4                | 3.1                   |
| 1-3yrs           | 12               | 9.2                   |
| 4-5yrs           | 12               | 9.2                   |
| 6-10yrs          | 55               | 42.3                  |
| above 10yrs      | 47               | 36.2                  |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>130</b>       | <b>100.0</b>          |

Results in Table show that majority of respondents (42.3%) had been employed for a period of 6-10years. Those who have been in job for 10years and above were 36.2%, 4-5yrs and 1-3yrs were similar (9.2%), while those with a period less than a year recorded were the least (3.1%).

### **4.3: Career development items**

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of career development elements and their responses were summarized in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5: Importance of career developments items**

| <b>Career development items</b> | <b>SD</b>   |            | <b>D</b>      |            | <b>U</b>     |            | <b>A</b>     |             | <b>S A</b>  |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                                 | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Fre q.</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Freq.</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Freq.</b> | <b>%</b>    | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b>    |
| Promotions based on merit       | 5           | <b>3.8</b> | 7             | <b>5.3</b> | 2            | <b>1.5</b> | 100          | <b>76.9</b> | 16          | <b>12.5</b> |
| Training and development        | 2           | <b>1.5</b> | 4             | <b>3.1</b> | 1            | <b>0.8</b> | 120          | <b>92.3</b> | 3           | <b>2.3</b>  |
| Merit based hiring              | 3           | <b>2.3</b> | 7             | <b>5.3</b> | 0            | <b>0.0</b> | 90           | <b>69.2</b> | 30          | <b>23.1</b> |
| Appointment of positions        | 3           | <b>2.3</b> | 7             | <b>5.3</b> | 1            | <b>0.8</b> | 117          | <b>90.0</b> | 2           | <b>1.5</b>  |
| Salary increment based on merit | 5           | <b>3.8</b> | 3             | <b>2.3</b> | 0            | <b>0.0</b> | 97           | <b>74.6</b> | 26          | <b>20.0</b> |

**KEY: SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree**

Results on Table 4.5 clearly showed that majority of the respondents (above 50%) agreed that; promotion, training, hiring, appointment and salary increment based on merit were important components of career development. About 120 (92.3%) of the respondents agreed that training and development based on merit is important in career development with only 3.1% disagreeing. On the other hand, 90, 76.4, 74.6 and 69.2% of the respondents agreed that appointment of positions, promotions, salary increment and hiring were important elements of career development respectively, against 5.3, 5.3, 3.8 and 5.3% who disagreed on the same respectively.

#### **4.4: Influence of patronage on career development**

Respondents were asked to give their views on the much they agreed or disagreed with the influences of patronage on career development. Their views were varied as summarized in Table 4.6 below. Generally, Table 4.6 showed that, majority of the respondents agreed that patronage affected career development, while a few of them did not agree. For example, 81(62%) of the respondents strongly agreed that promotion only comes when you are connected to someone at the top management while only 1.5% strongly disagreed this. In addition, 54.6 and 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that education and training and salary scale of employees are not based on merit respectively. On the other hand, 10.8 and 8.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed on this. Results obtained from the study revealed that 51.5% of the respondents strongly agreed that their career growth was not healthy while only 6.2% of them strongly agreed that their career growth was healthy. Correlation results in Table 4.10 clearly showed that patronage elements recorded a total coefficient of correlation (r) value of -0.977 reporting a highly negative significant relationship ( $p=0.000$ ) between patronage and career development.



#### 4.6: Influence of patronage on career development

| Influence of patronage on career development                          | SD   |             | D     |             | U     |            | A     |             | S A   |             |
|---|------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|
|   | Freq | %           | Freq. | %           | Freq. | %          | Freq. | %           | Freq. | %           |
| Promotions are based on ethnic backgrounds                            | 14   | <b>10.8</b> | 9     | <b>6.9</b>  | 9     | <b>6.9</b> | 48    | <b>36.5</b> | 50    | <b>38.9</b> |
| People are Rewarded on the basis of their tribes                      | 10   | <b>7.7</b>  | 10    | <b>7.7</b>  | 8     | <b>6.2</b> | 52    | <b>40</b>   | 50    | <b>38.5</b> |
| Priority given to relatives and acquaintances of the management       | 18   | <b>13.8</b> | 12    | <b>9.2</b>  | 7     | <b>5.4</b> | 43    | <b>33.1</b> | 50    | <b>38.5</b> |
| Hard time in firing or demoting friends and acquaintance              | 11   | <b>8.5</b>  | 9     | <b>6.9</b>  | 8     | <b>6.2</b> | 49    | <b>37.7</b> | 53    | <b>40.8</b> |
| Promotion comes only when you know someone in the top management      | 17   | <b>13.1</b> | 2     | <b>1.5</b>  | 6     | <b>4.6</b> | 24    | <b>18.5</b> | 81    | <b>62.3</b> |
| Those who work hard are not adequately rewarded                       | 8    | <b>6.2</b>  | 5     | <b>3.8</b>  | 1     | <b>0.8</b> | 63    | <b>48.5</b> | 53    | <b>40.8</b> |
| Criteria for reward or promotion is not known                         | 12   | <b>9.2</b>  | 9     | <b>6.9</b>  | 1     | <b>0.8</b> | 55    | <b>42.3</b> | 53    | <b>40.8</b> |
| Policies and structures benefit a few individuals                     | 29   | <b>22.3</b> | 8     | <b>6.2</b>  | 2     | <b>1.5</b> | 35    | <b>26.9</b> | 56    | <b>43.1</b> |
| Pay rise and promotions do not follow HR policy                       | 31   | <b>23.8</b> | 4     | <b>3.1</b>  | 0     | <b>0</b>   | 54    | <b>41.5</b> | 41    | <b>31.5</b> |
| Education and training opportunities are not based on merit           | 9    | <b>6.9</b>  | 14    | <b>10.8</b> | 8     | <b>6.2</b> | 34    | <b>26.2</b> | 65    | <b>50.0</b> |
| The level of education is inversely proportional to your salary scale | 13   | <b>10</b>   | 11    | <b>8.5</b>  | 5     | <b>3.8</b> | 30    | <b>23.1</b> | 71    | <b>54.6</b> |
| Your career growth UOE is healthy.                                    | 39   | <b>30</b>   | 67    | <b>51.5</b> | 1     | <b>0.8</b> | 15    | <b>11.5</b> | 8     | <b>6.2</b>  |

#### **4.5 Influence of gender Perception on career development**

Respondents were asked to rate the influence of gender on career development and their responses varied as summarized in Table 4.7 below. Generally, respondents who agreed that gender influenced career development differed slightly from those who disagreed. For example, 61(46.9%) of the respondents agreed that employees are unfairly promoted based on gender while 60 (46.2%) of them disagreed. Approximately 57 (43.8%) agreed that duties in their department are not flexible to accommodate female employees while 56(43.1%) of them disagreed. About 57 (43.8%) of the respondents agreed that employees were unfairly rewarded and promoted based on gender while 45 (34.6%) disagreed. On the other hand, 55 (42.3%) agreed that there was unequal pay among male and female while 60 (46.2%) disagreed on this. Similarly, 59 (45.4%) of the respondents agreed that in their institution, it matters whether you are a male or female while 61 (46.9%) of them disagreed. Furthermore, Spearman correlation in Table 4.10 showed that gender had an insignificant relationship ( $p>0.05$ ;  $r=0.0136$ ) with career development.

**Table 4.7: Influence of gender Perception on career development**

| Influence of gender on career development  | SD   |     | D    |      | U    |     | A    |      | S A  |      |
|--|------|-----|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|
|  | Freq | %   | Freq | %    | Freq | %   | Freq | %    | Freq | %    |
| Employees are unfairly rewarded and promoted on the basis of gender  | 5    | 3.8 | 45   | 34.6 | 1    | 0.8 | 57   | 43.8 | 22   | 17.0 |
| Use of inappropriate language on female employees  | 7    | 5.4 | 53   | 40.7 | 0    | 0.0 | 60   | 46.2 | 10   | 7.7  |
| Balance between work and family responsibilities on women's career lives                                   | 4    | 3.1 | 50   | 38.5 | 2    | 1.5 | 58   | 44.6 | 16   | 12.3 |
| There is unequal pay among male and female employees   | 7    | 5.4 | 60   | 46.2 | 5    | 3.8 | 55   | 42.3 | 3    | 2.3  |
| Performance appraisals are fair to Male and women employees  | 3    | 2.3 | 57   | 43.8 | 0    | 0.0 | 58   | 44.6 | 12   | 9.2  |
| UOE favors one gender when it comes to mentorship  | 4    | 3.1 | 61   | 46.9 | 3    | 2.3 | 60   | 46.2 | 2    | 1.5  |
| Male employees tend to have an advantage over female employees in their career progression                 | 5    | 3.8 | 55   | 42.4 | 1    | 0.8 | 57   | 43.8 | 12   | 9.2  |
| Policies fairly favor both women and Male employees in their career progression                            | 6    | 4.6 | 54   | 41.5 | 2    | 1.5 | 60   | 46.2 | 8    | 6.2  |
| In this organization it matters whether you are male or female   | 7    | 5.4 | 61   | 46.9 | 1    | 0.8 | 59   | 45.4 | 2    | 1.5  |
| Employee duties in this department do not have flexible working schedules to accommodate female employees. | 8    | 6.2 | 56   | 43.1 | 2    | 1.5 | 57   | 43.8 | 7    | 5.4  |
| Employees are unfairly rewarded and promoted on the basis of gender  | 4    | 3.1 | 60   | 46.2 | 0    | 0.0 | 61   | 46.9 | 5    | 3.8  |

**4.6: Influence of informational Power on career development**

Respondents were requested to rate the impact of information control on career development and their views varied as summarized in Table 4.8 below

**Table 4.8: Influence of information Power on career development**

| <b>Influence of informational control on career development</b>           | <b>SD</b>    |            | <b>D</b>    |             | <b>U</b>    |            | <b>A</b>    |             | <b>S A</b>  |             |
|---|--------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|   | <b>Freq.</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b>    | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b>   | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b>    | <b>Freq</b> | <b>%</b>    |
| information control plays an important role in your career path           | 6            | <b>4.6</b> | 4           | <b>3.1</b>  | 1           | <b>0.8</b> | 106         | <b>84.6</b> | 10          | <b>7.7</b>  |
| Majority of employees manipulate information                              | 6            | <b>4.6</b> | 17          | <b>13.1</b> | 5           | <b>3.8</b> | 91          | <b>70</b>   | 11          | <b>8.5</b>  |
| Information flow influences HR policies                                   | 8            | <b>6.2</b> | 8           | <b>21.5</b> | 5           | <b>3.8</b> | 69          | <b>53.1</b> | 20          | <b>15.4</b> |
| Information flow pushes for unequal treatment of employees                | 10           | <b>7.7</b> | 12          | <b>9.2</b>  | 6           | <b>4.6</b> | 82          | <b>63.1</b> | 20          | <b>15.4</b> |
| Manipulation of information influences salary increment of few            | 9            | <b>6.9</b> | 26          | <b>20</b>   | 5           | <b>3.8</b> | 78          | <b>60</b>   | 12          | <b>9.2</b>  |
| Manipulation of information influences unfair promotion of some employees | 10           | <b>7.7</b> | 13          | <b>10</b>   | 2           | <b>1.5</b> | 90          | <b>69.2</b> | 15          | <b>11.5</b> |
| Manipulation of information leads to unfair decision making               | 6            | <b>4.6</b> | 30          | <b>23.1</b> | 3           | <b>2.3</b> | 64          | <b>49.2</b> | 27          | <b>20.8</b> |
| Only those who distribute information benefit from the institution        | 11           | <b>8.5</b> | 20          | <b>15.4</b> | 3           | <b>2.3</b> | 70          | <b>53.8</b> | 26          | <b>20</b>   |
| Job objectives and roles are not clearly communicated to employees        | 6            | <b>4.6</b> | 16          | <b>12.3</b> | 1           | <b>0.8</b> | 77          | <b>59.2</b> | 30          | <b>23.1</b> |
| Unclear what employees are expected to do to be promoted                  | 10           | <b>7.7</b> | 25          | <b>19.2</b> | 3           | <b>2.3</b> | 78          | <b>60</b>   | 14          | <b>10.8</b> |
| Unclear on what one must do to attend trainings and workshops             | 8            | <b>6.2</b> | 27          | <b>20.8</b> | 2           | <b>1.5</b> | 77          | <b>59.2</b> | 16          | <b>12.3</b> |

Most of the respondents 106 (84.6%) agreed that informational Power is significant in career development, with 4 (3.1%) disagreeing and 1(0.8%) undecided. However, most of the respondents (>50%) generally agreed that information control in their institution affected career development negatively. For example, 91(70%) agreed that information is manipulated by some

employees for their own interest, while only 17 (13.1%) of them disagreed and (5)3.8% were undecided. About 90 (69.2%) of the responded agreed that manipulation of information is done only to suit promotion of few employees while only 13(10%) disagreed with this. A similar number of respondents 77(59.2%) agreed that employees have unclear information on their roles and trainings while 16(12.3%) and 27 (20.8%) disagreed on the same respectively. Spearman rank correlation analysis indicated that information control had a negative significant association with career development ( $r=-.691$ ;  $p=0.04$ ) as show in Table 4.10.

#### **4.7 Influence of Management decision making on career development**

Respondents were asked to rank the effect of management decision making on career development in their institution. Their responses were summarized in Table 4.9 below. In general, Table 4.9 clearly indicated that, most respondents disagreed that decision making in their institution promoted career development. However, majority 76 (58.5%) of the respondents agreed that decision making is a significant factor contributing to career development while only 4(3.1%) of them disagreed on the same. Majority 77(58.5%) of the respondents disagreed that decision making was done in a transparent manner, while only 13 (10%) of them agreed. About 75 (57.7%) disagreed that decision making on promotions was done in flexible and open manner against 8 (6.2%) of them who agreed. On the other hand, 50% of the respondents disagreed that they were involved in decision making process while only 10 (7.7%) of the agreed.

**Table 4.9: Influence of Management decision making on career development**

| Influence of decision making on career development                     | SD    |      | D    |      | U    |      | A    |      | S A  |      |
|--|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|  | Freq. | %    | Freq | %    | Freq | %    | Freq | %    | Freq | %    |
| Decision making is important in career development                     | 6     | 4.6  | 4    | 3.1  | 7    | 5.4  | 37   | 28.5 | 76   | 58.5 |
| Participation in decision making                                       | 65    | 50.0 | 38   | 29.2 | 10   | 7.7  | 10   | 7.7  | 7    | 5.4  |
| Open and honest decision making  | 75    | 57.7 | 35   | 26.9 | 5    | 3.8  | 8    | 6.2  | 7    | 5.4  |
| Frequent feedback on performance                                       | 58    | 44.6 | 40   | 30.8 | 8    | 6.2  | 19   | 14.6 | 5    | 3.8  |
| Friendly environment for decision making                               | 56    | 43.1 | 36   | 27.7 | 16   | 12.3 | 12   | 9.2  | 10   | 7.7  |
| Consulted on policy issues during decision making                      | 52    | 40.0 | 32   | 24.6 | 7    | 5.4  | 26   | 20   | 13   | 10   |
| Transparency during decision making                                    | 76    | 58.5 | 24   | 18.5 | 9    | 6.9  | 13   | 10   | 8    | 6.2  |
| Strategic decision making on promotions                                | 63    | 48.5 | 28   | 21.5 | 7    | 5.4  | 23   | 17.7 | 9    | 6.9  |
| Liberty and flexible decision making on training                       | 75    | 57.7 | 22   | 16.9 | 10   | 7.7  | 18   | 13.8 | 5    | 3.8  |
| Bilateral decision making on salary increment promotions and trainings | 56    | 43.1 | 39   | 30   | 4    | 3.1  | 24   | 18.5 | 7    | 5.4  |
| Consultative decision making on appointment of positions               | 63    | 48.5 | 42   | 32.3 | 12   | 9.2  | 11   | 8.5  | 2    | 1.5  |

Results on Spearman rank correlation reported a negative significant ( $p < 0.05$ ;  $r = -.537$ ) relationship between decision making and career development (Table 4.10).

#### **4.8: Correlation results on career development and patronage, Gender Perception, Management Decision making and information Power**

Items for patronage, gender, information Power and decision making were used to compute the coefficient of correlation to generate Table 4.10 during the study. Spearman's coefficient of

correlation (r), was used to determine the relationship between organizational politics and career development as summarized in Table 4.10 since the data were in continuous form. The findings show that there was no significant relationship between gender and career development ( $r=0.0136$ ). However, there was a negative significant relationship between patronage and career development ( $r=-.977$ ); information control and career development ( $r=-.537$ ); decision making & career development ( $-.691$ ). Items for patronage, gender, information control and decision making recorded positive significant relationship amongst each other as shown in Table 4.10 below.

**Table 4.10: Correlation on career development and patronage, Gender, Management Decision making and information Power**

| Correlation on career development |  | Career development | Patronage       | Gender          | Decision making | Information Power |
|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Career development</b>         | Spearman Correlation<br>Sig.(2-tailed) | 1                  |                 |                 |                 |                   |
| <b>Patronage</b>                  | Spearman Correlation<br>Sig.(2-tailed) | -0.977**<br>0.000  | 1               |                 |                 |                   |
| <b>Gender</b>                     | Spearman Correlation<br>Sig.(2-tailed) | 0.0136<br>0.072    | 0.467*<br>0.041 | 1               |                 |                   |
| <b>Decision making</b>            | Spearman Correlation<br>Sig.(2-tailed) | - .537*<br>0.04    | .776*<br>0.002  | .681*<br>0.002  | 1               |                   |
| <b>Information Power</b>          | Spearman Correlation<br>Sig.(2-tailed) | -.691*<br>0.004    | .239*<br>0.02   | .987**<br>0.000 | .743*<br>0.001  | 1                 |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## **4.9 Discussion**

### **4.9.1 Influence of patronage on career development**

Findings from the study clearly showed that a larger percentage of employees agreed that patronage existed in their institution in terms of tribalism, nepotism, biasness and favourism. This is attributed to scarcity of resources that is prevalent in most institutions. Bhatnagar (1992) argues that Organizational situations that are characterized by scarcity of resources tend to attract more political activity than situations that are not so characterized. Another reason could be due to what George (2011) termed as diversity. He further elaborated diversity as differences among people in age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and capabilities/disabilities. The findings are similar to those reported by Nzuve (2007). The researcher reported that in some institutions, managers create coalitions“ to assist, block, protect or hinder some employees. These coalitions are based on tribal and ethnicity.

The study further revealed that patronage had a negative significant association with employee career development. This is attributed to the fact that, patronage (tribalism, favorism, ethnicity, nepotism, biasness) creates an unfair ground for employee promotion, salary increment, training and other parameters for career growth. No wonder, Evergreen Business Group (2006) in their discussion on accelerating career success, acknowledge that organization politics can be a real problem that can stretch from victimization, disregard for ethics, talent and manipulation by supervisors. Furthermore, Robbins (2010) pointed out that, those in power manipulate the system in order to reward and recognize favorite employees and in the process, they demoralize the rest of the staff who work hard but they are rewarded. Cranfield University’s School of Management



(2006) elaborated further that organization politics, which concerns motives, power, positions and competition, if not used constructively, can impact negatively on various aspects of the workplace.

#### **4.9.2 Influence of gender Perception on career development**

Majority of the respondents agreed that gender plays a vital role in career development. This is because when gender equity is embraced in any organization; employees are given equal chance of promotion, salary increment, promotion and other development parameters regardless of their gender. No wonder Burke (2007) in his study reported that an institution will experience a significant performance only when women have the same possibilities as men to advance up the corporate ladder, particularly if women are entering the same occupations and are similar to men in ambitions and abilities. Although most of the respondents agreed that gender imbalance was thriving in their institution, correlation results reported insignificant relationship between gender imbalance and career development. These findings agree with other similar studies. For example, Mason and Goulden (2002) and Williams (2004) reported that a good number of women in higher education are rising in many countries; however, most occupy part-time, low-status or temporary positions and the proportion of women in most senior academic positions remains small. Nevertheless, the findings of the study differed with other studies. For example, Morley (2006) reported an exclusion of women from career development opportunities, gender-insensitive pedagogical processes and prejudice about women's academic abilities and intellectual authority, poor equality policy implementation and backlash and stigmatization in relation to affirmative action programmes are other factors that hindered women from advancing in their career line. Furthermore, women have been reported to be hindered from career advancement through sexual harassment where women are offered professional advantage if they grant sexual favors

(Morley and Walsh, 1996; Donaldson and Emes, 2000). Studies further showed that women in institutions of higher learning suffer from sex bias and sex discrimination in their quest for career advancement (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Petersen & Gravetts, 2000). The reason for this different results is attributed to the fact that most respondents in the present study were men (>50%). Therefore, they could have probably indicated that there is gender balance at their institution since men believe that women nowadays are being given equal chance with men.

#### **4.9.3 Influence of information Power on career development**

From this study, most respondents agreed that information control plays an important role in career development. This is because employees in institutions where information flow is clear have been reported to record high performance hence development in their career path (Feldman & March (1981). Furthermore, Eisenhardt (1989) emphasized that information distribution is important especially during the strategic decision making and this could significantly leads to employee career growth. Although most employees agreed that information control affects their career development, most of them agreed that in their institution (UOE), the way information was controlled affected their career path negatively. This finding is not different from what Cheney *et al.* (2010) reported. In their study, they pointed out that when individuals are denied the chance to access information, they tend to loss morale in their work. Furthermore, Mykkänen (2010) clearly stated that, when information in an organization is manipulated by some of the employees, the system tends to favor only a few while those you are not in a position to access information will tend to remain in a static state.

#### **4.9.4 Influence of Management decision making on career development**

Majority of the respondents agreed that the decision making at their institution was not transparent and they are not involved in most cases. This finding is supported by Bonito (2012) who reported that in most learning institutions many decisions are made by the top management while employees are left out. Similar findings were reported by Karasek (1979) who argued that employees with low decision making latitude and high job demands reported more job dissatisfaction behaviors such as anxiety and depression and were absent more than workers with high decision latitude. Another study by Koberg *et al.*, (1999) found a positive relationship among organizational tenure and perceptions of empowerment among healthcare professionals, providing some support for this perspective. Furthermore, Witt (2000) reported that those employees involved in consensus participatory decision making politics were found not be as salient to the development of job satisfaction as to individuals engaged in less participatory decision making.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the findings summarized in chapter four and the recommendations that are derived herein. The procedure for treating the summary, conclusion and recommendations was based on relevant objectives

#### **5.2 Summary**

This section presents the summary of research findings. From the study, majority of the respondents were male (above 50%). Majority of the respondents were aged between 40 and 45 years. It was found that most respondents (33.8%) held higher national diploma/diploma certificate. From the findings, majority of the respondents were secretaries with 28.8%. Findings also showed that majority (above 50%) of the respondents agreed that promotion; salary increment, training, hiring and appointment of positions when done on merit grounds play a vital role in career development. However, majority of the respondents agreed that patronage, information control and decision making had a negative significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) effect on their career development. However, gender had an insignificant effect on career development ( $p > 0.05$ ).

#### **5.3 Conclusion**

The fact that the majority of respondents in main sample agreed that patronage plays a vital role in their career path highlights the relevance of organizational politics. Most of the respondents reported that favoritism, tribalism, ethnicity, biasness, and nepotism were the main parameters of

patronage that are commonly practiced in UOE. The association between patronage and career development reported a negative correlation. Therefore, this study concluded that increase in patronage (nepotism, ethnicity, tribalism, favoritism and biasness) led to a decrease in career development among administrative employees in UOE.

The study confirmed that for the majority of respondents in the main sample, there had been no gender imbalance. Men and women employees were given equal chances and treatment. There was a marked lack of gender effect on career development. The study therefore concluded that gender had no significant effect on career development probably due to the nature of the respondents used in the study.

It was revealed through the study that the majority of respondents in the main sample agreed that control of information plays a central role in their career path. However, most of them agreed that information control in their institution did not favor them. Therefore the study concluded that, although information is key to career growth, at UOE information flow affected career growth of employees negatively.

The study confirmed that most respondents agreed that decision making made is an important subset of career development. Even though, most respondents agreed that management decision making in their institution was not transparent and participatory. Therefore, the study concluded that decision making by the management at UOE had a negative significant impact on the career development of employees.

Most parameters of organizational politics (Patronage, Information control and Decision making) except gender reported a significant negative effect on the career development of administrative staff at UOE. The study therefore concluded that organizational politics had a negative significant effect on career development.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

1. The study recommends that employees should be given equal chances of development (promotion, salary increment, training, hiring and appointment of positions) regardless of tribe, ethnic background or any other form of biasness.
2. Since gender did not report a negative effect on career development, the study therefore recommends that the UOE policy used on gender treatment should be adopted in all institutions of higher learning.
3. The study recommends that information control amongst employees should be improved. Their hopes and aspirations should not be choked by manipulation of systems and information.
4. Since majority of the respondents reported negative career growth due to unfair decision making in their institution, the study therefore recommends that all employees should be incorporated in decision making.

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### **5.4.1 Suggestions for further research**

Firstly, there is need for an in depth study in the development and design of realistic, viable, positive and relevant systems that are „multi-faceted“. The despair among respondents and the implementation of policies that do not favor career growth of most employees has highlighted the need to focus attention on the nature of factors that can positively affect an individual's achievements and professional growth.

Secondly, another study should focus on how to ensure political free institutions of higher learning.

Lastly, a study should be carried out among sister institution of higher learning in the Eastern and Central African region, to assess and evaluate how issues of organizational politics affect career development

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## APPENDICIES

### Appendix I: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

My name is Francis Anyira Angogo. I am a postgraduate student from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) in the School of Human Resource Development. This questionnaire aims at collecting data for a research on: **THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL POLITICS ON CAREER DEVELOPMENT AMONG ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ELDORET, KENYA.** I have chosen you for this purpose and therefore, I request you to take few minutes out of your busy schedule to fill this questionnaire. The information I am collecting is for academic purposes only and information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

#### Section One

1. Gender of respondent      Male       Female
2. Age of Respondents:  
a) 20 -24      d) 35 – 39  
b) 25 -29      e) 40 –45  
c) 30 – 34      f) 45 +
3. Educational Attainment      a) Diploma/ HND      b) Degree  
c) Masters/ PhD      d) Others
4. Nature of responsibility      a) Administrative Assistant      b) Senior Administrative Assistant  
c) Head of Department      d) Clerk  
e) Others (Specify)
5. Duration of employment      a) Less than a year      b) 1- 3 years  
c) 4-5 years      d) 5- 10 years  
e) 10 years and beyond

## Section Two: Career Development items

This section deals with Career Development elements. Kindly rank the importance of these items i.e. (5= Very important 4= Important, 3= undecided 2= Not important, 1= Extremely not important.)

|    | Career Development items  | Importance |   |   |   |   |
|----|---------------------------|------------|---|---|---|---|
|    |                           | 5          | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 1. | Promotions based on Merit |            |   |   |   |   |
| 2. | Training and development  |            |   |   |   |   |
| 3. | Merit based Hiring        |            |   |   |   |   |
| 4. | Appointment of positions  |            |   |   |   |   |
| 5. | Salary increment          |            |   |   |   |   |

**Section Three: Patronage Items**

The following is a list of patronage items on career development. Rate them according to how best you agree with the statements. The scale of 1-5 means; 5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – undecided, 2 – disagree, 1 – strongly disagree

|    |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Promotions are based on ethnic backgrounds                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | People are Rewarded on the basis of their tribes                             |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. | Priority given to relatives and acquaintances of the management              |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4. | Hard time in firing or demoting friends and acquaintance                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5. | Promotion comes only when you know someone in the top management at UOE      |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6. | Those who work hard are not adequately rewarded at UOE                       |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7. | Criteria for reward or promotion is not known at UOE                         |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8. | AT UOE policies and structures benefit a few individuals                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9  | Pay rise and promotions do not follow HR policy at UOE                       |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10 | Education and training opportunies are not based on merit                    |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11 | The level of education is inversely proportional to your salary scale at UOE |   |   |   |   |   |
| 12 | Your career growth at UOE is healthy.  |   |   |   |   |   |

**Section Four: Gender Perception Items**

The following is a list of gender perception items on career development. Rate them according to how best you agree with the statements. The scale of 1-5 means; 5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – undecided, 2 – disagree, 1 – strongly disagree

|     |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.  | Employees are unfairly rewarded and promoted on the basis of gender at UOE                                 |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2.  | Use of inappropriate language on female employees at UOE   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3.  | There is balance between work and family responsibilities on women’s career lives at UOE                   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4.  | There is unequal pay among male and female employees at UOE  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5.  | Performance appraisals are fair to Male and women employees at UOE   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6.  | UOE favors one gender when it comes to mentorship  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7.  | Male employees tend to have an advantage over female employees in their career progression at UOE          |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8.  | Policies fairly favor both women and Male employees in their career progression at UOE                     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9.  | In this organization it matters whether you are male or female   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10. | Employee duties in this department do not have flexible working schedules to accommodate female employees. |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11. | Employees are unfairly rewarded and promoted on the basis of gender  |   |   |   |   |   |

### Section Five: Information Power

The following is a list of information control items on career development. Rate them according to how best you agree with the statements. The scale of 1-5 means; 5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – undecided, 2 – disagree, 1 – strongly disagree

|    |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Information Control is important for career development                  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 2. | Majority of employees Manipulate Information                             |   |   |   |   |   |
| 3. | Information control influences Human resource policies                   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 4. | Information control pushes for unequal treatment of employees            |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5. | Information distribution influences salary increment for some employees  |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6. | Information Manipulation has leads to unfair promotion of some employees |   |   |   |   |   |
| 7. | Information control influences unfair decision making                    |   |   |   |   |   |
| 8. | employees are not equal when it comes to Information control             |   |   |   |   |   |
| 9. | Job objectives and roles are not clearly communicated to employees       |   |   |   |   |   |
| 10 | Unclear what employees are expected to do to be promoted                 |   |   |   |   |   |
| 11 | Unclear on what one must do to attend trainings and workshops            |   |   |   |   |   |

**Section Six: Decision making items**

The following is a list of decision making items on career development. Rate them according to how best you agree with the statements. The scale of 1-5 means; 5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – undecided, 2 – disagree, 1 – strongly disagree

|     | Decision making Item  | Importance |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|------------|---|---|---|---|
|     |   | 1          | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1.  | Decision making is important in career development                              |            |   |   |   |   |
| 2.  | Participation in decision making  |            |   |   |   |   |
| 3.  | At UOE there is pen and honest decision making                                  |            |   |   |   |   |
| 4.  | At UOE there is frequent feedback on performance                                |            |   |   |   |   |
| 5.  | There is friendly environment for decision making at UOE                        |            |   |   |   |   |
| 6.  | Consulted on policy issues during decision making                               |            |   |   |   |   |
| 7.  | There is transparency during decision making at UOE                             |            |   |   |   |   |
| 8.  | There is strategic decision making on promotions at UOE                         |            |   |   |   |   |
| 9.  | There is liberal and flexible decision making on training                       |            |   |   |   |   |
| 10. | There is bilateral decision making on salary increment promotions and trainings |            |   |   |   |   |
| 11. | There is consultative decision making on appointment of positions at UOE        |            |   |   |   |   |

Appendix II: Map of the study area (Source: Google Maps, 2016)

