

**EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT PRACTICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY AMONG
THE ACADEMIC STAFF IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN WESTERN KENYA**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Award of the Degree
of Masters of Science in Human Resources Management of Masinde Muliro University of
Science and Technology**

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated source and support and has not been presented elsewhere for a degree or any other award.

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my husband, my lovely babies and all my friends who have always stood by my side as I pursued this journey.

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ABSTRACT

Universities are adopting empowerment strategies to enhance academic staff competencies in spite of a myriad of challenges experienced. Academic staff are regarded as the key resource of any institution of higher learning in the achievement of its goals. Despite the empowerment strategies adopted, concerns on quality education in universities has been in the public domain. These include: low output of quality research, teaching competency, unethical practices and few innovations impacting on quality of graduates and ranking of Kenyan universities globally. In view of the foregoing, this study investigated employee empowerment practices on service delivery among the academic staff in public universities in Western Kenya. Specifically, the study established the effect of coaching, delegation of authority, employee participation and examined university factors as the moderating variable on service delivery among the academic staff in Public universities in Western Kenya. This study employed a descriptive survey research design and anchored on Kanter's theory as the main theory. Transformational leadership was also used in guiding the development of theoretical and empirical review. The study targeted 2,311 academic staff drawn from the nine (9) public universities in Western Kenya. Stratified, purposive and random sampling was used to select and apportion respondents in the public universities. The sample size of 341 respondents was determined from the target population in accordance with Yamane's formula and 17 respondents was then calculated and added to the sample size to determine an appropriate size and cater for the non-response. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used in data collection. Data analysis and interpretation was based on descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics entailed frequencies, mean, percentages and standard deviation while inferential statistics used correlations and regression (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation test, ANOVA, linear regression, hierarchical and multiple regressions). Themizing and content analysis was used to analyse interview schedules and face/content validity was explored to assess whether there was a logical link between employee empowerment and service delivery. The study findings revealed that employee empowerment practices had a significant influence on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities; coaching ($r=0.657$, $p=0.002 < 0.05$), delegation of authority ($r=0.722$, $p=0.013 < 0.05$) and employee participation ($r=0.790$, $p=0.000 < 0.05$). It was also observed that coaching accounted for 43.1% of the variability in service delivery while delegation of authority and employee participation accounted for 52.2% and 62.4% respectively. It can also be concluded that employee participation results to a higher contribution in service delivery followed by delegation of authority and then by coaching. The study recommended that public universities should prioritized coaching, entrust academic staff with authority, allow academic staff to participate in all the key academic functions and increase sensitization of academic staff on empowerment practices to enable them embrace and appreciate its importance.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU	Alupe University
CBC	Competence Based Curriculum
DPS	Directorate of Postgraduate Studies
EBK	Engineering Board of Kenya
FKE	Federation of Kenya Employers
HE	Higher Education
IUCEA	Inter-University Council for East Africa
JOOUST	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology
KAFU	Kaimosi Friends University
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KIBU	Kibabii University
LSME	London School of Management Education
MMUST	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PSSP	Private Self Sponsored Programmes
SME's	Small and Medium Enterprises
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TMUC	Tom Mboya University College
TUK	Technical University of Kenya
TVETA	Technical and Vocational Training Authority
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic Staff	These are the direct service providers of universities whose basic goals are teaching, researching, consultancy and community outreach.
Age of University	This refers to the length of time the university has been in existence.
Age of Academic Staff	This refers to the length of service of academic staff in the university.
Coaching	It is a developmental program that enhances academic staff skills and knowledge for future challenges.
Customer Satisfaction	It is a service delivery outcome that denotes the fulfilment customers of an institution derive from doing business with the university.
Delegation of Authority	It is the act of university management entrusting academic staff with roles to be executed on their behalf as a strategy for capacity building.
Employee Empowerment	According to this study this refers to human resource practices accorded to academic staff to enable them achieve the institution's objective. These are: coaching, delegation of authority, participation in critical academic decisions and processes and enhancement of competencies.
Employee Participation	This is an empowerment facet that provides academicians with an opportunity to take part in activities critical to running the university.
Leadership style	It refers to the approach undertaken by a leader of an institution in development and execution of policies with an aim of achieving service delivery in universities.
Public University	A centre of excellence that is dominated by government funding.

Quality teaching	Refers to inculcation of right attitudes, values and soft skills to students who will meet the ever changing demands of the job market.
Service Delivery	It refers to offering quality services to customers of the institution of higher learning in terms of quality teaching, enhanced customer satisfaction and high completion rates.
Student Satisfaction	A well-grounded student who is able to meet the job market demands and able to share what he learnt ten years after.
Types of Coaching	This refers to senior staff to junior staff, junior staff to senior staff and peer coaching.
University Factors	It refers to the age of university, age of staff and leadership style applied in ensuring service delivery.
Western Region	This encompassed the former Western and Nyanza Provinces. This included Busia, Bungoma, Kakamega, Vihiga, Kisumu, Siaya, Homabay, Kisii and Migori Counties.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Human resources are beneficial to an organization if maintained and utilized effectively. This has been made possible through reliable policies, loyalty reinforcement and provision of an enabling environment for employees to work flexibly in pursuit of organization's excellence (Armstrong, 2014). In an increasingly global competitive economy, the main ways by which organizations can influence their performance is by ensuring they operate effectively and efficiently (Honold, 2014). This has been achieved through having the right staff in place, in the right numbers and performing right jobs at a given time. Hence, human resources are a valuable internal asset in an organization system that ensures smooth operations and achievement of the desired results (Pfeffer, 2013; Vasishth, 2013; Voegtlin, Boehm, & Bruch, 2015).

However, having competent staff is not enough but retaining them through establishment of best practices in human resource is of great importance (Buche, 2012). Organizations that acquire, develop, utilize, recognize and maintain their employees have seen tremendous growth in the provision of sustainable quality service. This has led to a competitive pressure by organizations to source for the best employees with requisite competencies and employ empowerment strategies to enable them perform beyond the call of duty (Honold, 2014).

Universities are crucial institutions in creating, sharing quality knowledge and skills for a country. They constitute both the academic and non-academic staff who play various roles in achieving the institution's objectives. The non-academic staff are responsible for administrative and financial

management of the institution (Kimani, 2017). Academic staff are the direct service providers of students who constitute the majority percentage of clients to the public universities. They are the key resource in higher education institutions (Negash, Zewude & Megersa, 2014) and are mandated with the basic goals of teaching, researching, consultancy and community outreach activities (Buller, 2012). These goals if well supported and executed have guaranteed quality service delivery in universities.

Quality service delivery in universities is an issue that cannot be underestimated as all customers are in dire need. Quality education has been cited to be a major driver of economy recovery, competitive advantage and social progress (Vassiliou & McAleese 2012). The absence of quality service delivery in universities can lead to dissatisfaction among the key stakeholders who have high expectations and keen on quality of graduants being churned. Thus, the emphasis of the basic goals of academic staff in order to ensure quality service delivery in universities.

Universities however, have been experiencing various challenges across the globe hindering them from achieving their key objective. These challenges include; increased competition, scarce resources, government underfunding, inadequate remuneration, unethical practices, staff turnover, poor leadership management, skewed employment, weakness in financial management, marketing orientation, massification, highly regulated environment, increasing internationalization, 'brain drain and low students' enrolment (Jones, 2013; Nyangau, 2014; Munene, 2016; Idua, 2017; Jiri et al., 2018). Despite the challenges encountered all universities need to strategize and meet the demands of the job markets (Sharma, 2012).

Employee empowerment has been cited as one of the effective techniques for improving employee productivity, innovation, team work spirit, self-confidence, independent thinking and optimal use of capacities and capabilities in the organization (Elnaga & Imran, 2014). It is a management strategy that allows businesses to effectively compete, innovate and respond to customers' needs hence achieving competitive edge. Employee empowerment is a collaborative course where an environment is created to allow employees come up with solutions to various specific work-related situations (Jindal & Gupta, 2015). It is the initiative undertaken by employees to autonomously respond to challenges affecting their jobs with management support and encouragement. Employees thus undertake their jobs voluntarily without much policing. This includes feeling of self-efficacy, independency in decision making, individual responsibility and delegation (Raub & Robert, 2010; Hakan & Jamel, 2012).

The growth of employee empowerment began during the 1980s when many firms were experiencing global competition challenges. The challenges experienced made firms turn to empowerment as a strategy for solving problems such as poor customer service and low productivity (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013). Employee empowerment has been recognized worldwide by managers of all spheres as a special focus. It is a notable slogan for both the private and public sectors that are keen to reform and change. This has been evidenced in North America, the Pacific Rim and Europe (Pitts, 2005). The immense benefits of employee empowerment have compelled leaders and researchers globally to advocate for organisations empowerment (Tjosvold & Sun, 2005).

In United States of America (USA), institutions of higher learning (Community college) experienced unprecedented change and social turbulence. They resorted to employee empowerment to gain support, have competitive edge and adapt to the dynamic conditions (Carole, 2006). In Malaysia, higher education institutions experienced pressure to change in conformity to the systemic education reform initiatives brought about by globalization, technological development and knowledge-based economy (Joo & Shim, 2010), they embraced employee empowerment strategies to enhance the academic staff capabilities. In China, University faculty members were under pressure by the public to provide better service despite underfunding from the government. They resorted to psychological employee empowerment to improve education, increase researches and societal enhancement (Arnold, 2010).

In South Africa, institutions of higher learning experienced immense pressure to perform above par despite the unsteady and competitive environment they operated in. The institutions' environment was characterized by lack of requisite skills, technological innovations, increased globalization, increased workforce diversity and demanding stakeholders (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2012). They adopted empowerment strategies to achieve universities' objectives specifically service excellence, total quality management and institutions' continuous improvement (Motebele & Mbohwa, 2013). In Nigeria and Ugandan universities, academic staff faced pressure to reform from both the public and private stakeholders who had lost confidence in their graduates. The academic staff poor service delivery was revived by employee empowerment strategies which increased their motivational spirit to deliver (Okongo, 2019; Olayemi & Oyebanji, 2019).

Public universities in Kenya are adopting employee empowerment strategies to combat the challenges experienced by academic staff such as skills shortage, low morale, suppressed academic freedom, higher workloads, exclusion from decision making processes and ensure commitment of the academic staff (Ibua, 2017; Njoroge, 2018; Araigua, 2020). However, the quality of education in universities has been dwindling day in day out (Odhiambo, 2011; Itegi, 2015) impacting negatively on academic staff. For instance, there have been reports on low output of quality research by academic staff despite the clear policies and structures in place in promoting research (Nyaribo, 2014). This has majorly been attributed to academic staff who have been moonlighting in other institutions (Yego, 2016) in spite of the heavy workloads allocated in their respective institutions. In order for academic staff to conduct an effective and efficient research, they require time and must reduce their teaching load by reducing the number of hours they teach (Nyaribo, 2014).

Furthermore, the emergence of unethical practices among the academic staff is on the increase making it impossible for universities to realize its objective. For instance, academic staff have been accused of demanding money or sexual favours in exchange for passing grades, falsification of results, false authorship and wrong appropriation of grant money (Odhiambo, 2011; Neema, 2016). These unethical practices are impacting on quality teaching, researching and generation of new knowledge by the academic staff (Okongo, Onen & Okaka, 2019).

With the foregoing, there is high demand from the labour market for academic staff to churn qualified graduates with competencies and ability that satisfies employers' expectations (Osborn, 2012; Itegi, 2015; Valcke et al. 2016). For instance, IUCEA, 2014 report on employers raised

serious concerns on the quality of graduates emanating from the universities. In support of this, the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) in 2018 survey reported that there was a skills mismatch with the job market demands. The World Bank Enterprise Survey 2013 also revealed that all stakeholders were in agreement that graduates from Kenyan public universities had skills that were not matching the current labour market needs (Odhiambo, 2011; Mungai, 2015; Youth Impact Labs, 2020).

These demands compel academic staff to strike a balance between teaching, learning, part-timing research performance and community service. This is made possible in a setting that promotes transparency, trust and respect of academic staff (Cipriano, 2012). Hamburg, (2012) postulates that if academic staff are handled well, they will ensure the university's vision is cascaded down to its students. However, most universities are yet to invest in the quality of facilities and the working set up of academic staff (Odhiambo, 2011; Nyangau, 2014). The success of any public university dictates that there has to be a tendency to provide better treatment to academic staff as internal customers (Lali, 2016).

Empowerment of academic staff should therefore be a continuous process to enhance their abilities in responding to any eventuality that may arise (Ibua, 2017). This calls for a permanent institutional commitment from the top-leadership of the institutions in order to produce a skilled workforce that meets the challenges of the 21st century (OECD, 2013). Failure to empower academic staff and ensuring they are well motivated in delivering teaching in universities will lead to poor service delivery and dissatisfaction as it is already being experienced. Studies conducted by Araigua, (2020) and Njoroge, (2018) on employee empowerment do not directly address the empowerment of academic staff in the Kenyan public universities in Western Kenya. Furthermore, there are

inconsistencies cited as some studies have revealed that universities have partly adopted empowerment strategies while others showed they had not (Ibua,2017; K’obonyo, Monari and Andollo, 2012). It is against this background that the researcher carried out a study on employee empowerment practices on service delivery among the academic staff in public universities in Western Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Universities are embracing employee empowerment practices with an aim to equip academic staff with the requisite skills and abilities to ensure quality service delivery. This has been through training, coaching, recognition, authorizing decision making, enhancing responsibility, employee participation, provision of resources among many others (Ibua, 2017; Oyebanji, 2019). These empowerment initiatives have enabled academic staff to make decisions concerning their work without a lot of reliance on bureaucratic decision making that would have slowed service delivery.

However, Universities are experiencing daunting challenges such as inadequate funding, weaknesses in financial management as well as skewed employment (Koyi, 2018) hindering them from effecting empowerment strategies such as coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation which are key components in ensuring quality service delivery and achievement of institution’s objectives. This has led to public outcry on academic staff service delivery over the following concerns; low output of quality research, teaching competency, unethical practices and few innovations hence impacting on quality of graduates and ranking of Kenyan universities globally (Abagi, 2007). For instance, the IUCEA, (2014) report on employers raised serious concerns on the quality of graduates emanating from the universities. In support of the above, the

Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE) survey revealed that there was a skills mismatch with the job market demands (IUCEA, 2014; FKE, 2018).

Studies conducted by Araigua, (2020) and Njoroge, (2018) do not directly address empowerment of academic staff in the Kenyan public universities in Western Kenya. Furthermore, there are inconsistencies cited as some studies have revealed that universities have partly adopted empowerment strategies while others showed they had not. A study by Ibia, (2017) revealed that universities moderately adopted employee empowerment strategies. The study concentrated on all staff of public universities and not the key resource of the university which is the academic staff. On the contrary, a study carried out by K'obonyo, et al, (2012) showed that efforts made by the university management to empower both non-academic and academic staff were not successful. The study focused on time management tendencies of university staff. Such inconsistencies and the public discourse on quality education in public universities necessitates for harmonization.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the general objective and specific objectives below: -

1.3.1 General Objective

To investigate the effect of employee empowerment practices on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities in Western Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

Specifically, the objectives sought:

- i) To establish the effect of coaching on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;

- ii) To assess the effect of delegation of authority on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- iii) To examine the effect of employee participation on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya; and
- iv) To determine the moderating effect of university factors on the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

- Ho₁: Coaching does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- Ho₂: Delegation of authority does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- Ho₃: Employee participation does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya; and
- Ho₄: University factors do not significantly moderate the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya

1.5 Significance of the Study

Employee empowerment practices have been embraced globally by both profit and non-profit organizations as a strategy to influence service delivery. Institutions of higher learning that have embraced employee empowerment practices have seen tremendous positive results. Thus, this

study would immensely enlighten human resource practitioners in the public universities on the best practices of developing and motivating the primary service providers who are the academic staff in the achievement of service delivery.

The study would also be valuable to the government at policy making level to ensure effective service delivery in public institutions. Furthermore, the findings of the study would be beneficial to academic staff, community, researchers and other stakeholders of universities to understand the contribution of employee empowerment practices and how it may transform institutions and other organizations in countries that are still developing. Finally, the study would trigger students' interest to carry out further research on employee empowerment as it is a trend in human resource management.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study examined the influence of employee empowerment practices on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya. The study was carried out on academic staff in the nine (9) public universities (Maseno, MMUST, Kisii, JOOUST, KIBU, Rongo, KAFU, Alupe and TMU) in western Kenya (former Western and Nyanza provinces) that were established between 2001 and 2017. The choice of the study area was informed by the fact that the area had few private universities hence could not provide adequate information. More so, most public universities in this region were fairly new, received their Charter between the same period, exhibited similar characteristics in the number of programmes offered and ranked lowly in the webometrics ranking (Webometrics Ranking of World Universities, 2023). Therefore, with

government underfunding, effective human resource strategies have to be employed to enhance the capabilities of academic staff who would ensure effective service delivery.

The study employed a descriptive survey research design and investigated employee empowerment in terms of coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation. Service delivery was measured in terms of; quality teaching, student satisfaction and completion rates of students as posited by Wainaina, Iravo and Waititu, 2014; Mwangi *et al*, 2018 and Odero, Egessa and Oseno, 2020. The period (time-frame) for carrying out the research was from August, 2022 to September, 2022.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered challenges of reaching out to some of the academic staff as they had busy schedules. To overcome this challenge, the researcher made phone calls, follow ups and booked appointments with them for the distribution of questionnaires and conduction of interviews. More so, some respondents were unwilling to fill the questionnaires for the fear of the unknown. The researcher overcame this challenge by assuring the respondents that the information being collected was strictly for academic purposes hence showed them the research permit from NACOSTI. Furthermore, the researcher assured them of confidentiality and anonymity with regard to the information given. This put the respondents at ease and encouraged them to fill the questionnaires.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the literature review on employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya. It comprised of theoretical, conceptual and empirical review. The chapter also contains summary and gaps of the empirical review.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This study was guided by the main theory, Kanter's theory. Transformational leadership theory was also explored to establish the influence of employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya.

2.2.1 Kanter's Theory of Empowerment

Kanter's theory is also known as relational or structural theory of empowerment. It was developed by Kanter, 1993 as cited by Orgambidez and Borrego, (2014). Kanter's theory is one of the main theories that discuss empowerment in organizations. It hypothesizes that an employee should be allowed to come up with appropriate decisions affecting his job through use of the available opportunities to accomplish the set goals. An institution that provides its employees with developmental work-related opportunities has experienced a positive increased performance in comparison to those that do not. Kanter's theory further posits that, the growth of a leader's power is ensured by sharing with other employees.

However, this focuses on the expectations of employees for provision of the actual environment by the employer and not how they perceive the surrounding emotionally. This has been criticized

in instances where employees were given the necessary tools yet they did not act empowered (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). While there were instances where employees were not provided for but were motivated to deliver. This limitation compels the integration of both structural and psychological perspectives for a better understanding of empowerment facet (Spreitzer, 2007; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). More so, it's argued that structural empowerment did not consider the mental aspect of employees. Leaders can share or delegate power to employees but this may not inspire their state of mind to offer quality service.

The management structure for most Kenyan public universities is the Council, UMB (University Management Board) and Senate as decision making organs. The Council is mandated with the general oversight of the institution's affairs, UMB chaired by the Vice chancellor is responsible with the administration decisions and University Senate which mainly deals with academic matters and decisions. Different members of academia may be incorporated in these committees which can be cascaded down to the academic staff. Universities should allow for academic freedom where members are allowed to take part in Senate decision making. This theory helped in contextualizing delegation of authority and employee participation on service delivery.

2.2.2 Transformational Leadership Theory

According to Datche (2015), the theory was developed by Burns (1978) and advanced by Bass (1985). It is a leadership style in which leaders provide vision, encourages, inspires and motivates its followers to come up with ideas that will ensure the growth of an organization. It states that there are four characteristics of transformational leaders; intellectual stimulation, inspiration motivation, individualized consideration and idealized influence. Individualized consideration refers to a leader acting as a mentor or a coach in assisting subordinates in achieving the desired

results. The leader gives employees full attention and treats each follower individually (McCleskey, 2014).

Intellectual stimulation is whereby leaders provoke employees' opinions to enhance intelligence and rational thinking leading to creativity, innovativeness and independence while solving problems (Abasilim, 2014). Inspiration motivation compels leaders to communicate their expectations to staff and persuade them to focus on achieving the established goals (Hoffiman, Grossman & Hinton, 2011). Idealized influence leaders offer a vision and mission to employees. This instils pride and in return employees gain respect and trust from them leading to achievement of organizational desired outcomes.

Many scholars agree that transformational leadership greatly influence employee performance, trust and commitment in organizations (Datche, 2015; Rua & Araujo, 2015; Ayacko, K'Aol, Linge, 2017). However, transformational leadership theory has been criticized that it had elements that were too broad (Northouse, 2013). It assumes that leadership has more of personality traits than cultured behaviour hence prone for power abuse. The leaders may at times use their power for achievement of their personal goals thus exploiting workers. Further, Yukl, (2011) asserts that the theory does not sufficiently identify the impact of context and situational variables on effectiveness of leadership. It assumes that people follow leaders who inspire them but a person having vision and passion can actually achieve great things without having a leader who inspires.

University leaders' are expected to lead and motivate academic staff through coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation. This study utilized the component of intellectual

stimulation and individualized consideration to assess the impact of coaching and employee participation on service delivery.

2.3 Conceptual Review of Study Variables

2.3.1 Concept of Employee Empowerment

Employee empowerment is a human resource practice that provides staff in an organization with the authority to make decisions on matters concerning their roles without necessarily consulting their bosses (Kumar, 2014). It is a concept that entrusts employees with the necessary powers to make plans and judgements concerning their jobs and also authorizes them to come up with a rapid response to the customers' needs and concerns (Durai, 2010). According to Grimsley (2018), employees are considered empowered when they are afforded discretionary authority over their work tasks and responsibilities.

In order for employee empowerment to be effective, Baird and Wang, (2010) contend that top management have to relinquish some powers to the supervisory management in the organizational hierarchy. This aims at improving employees' competence and control (McCleskey, 2014). More so it assists other employees develop efficacy and determinism (Whetten & Cameron, 2011). Scholars and practitioners are in consensus that human resource is a valuable asset for the achievement of organizational success and gaining competitive advantage (Voegtlin *et. al.*, (2015). It is essential in an environment that is competitive, highly innovative, inefficient and unpredictable changes in the macro- environment (Ongori, 2009). It thus provides employees in firms across the globe with the autonomy to quickly respond to environmental uncertainties hence saving organizations time and money (Vasishth, 2013).

Employee empowerment facilitates the establishment of quality setting which may benefit organizations to produce products and services that are excellent (Kahreh, Ahmadi & Hashemi, 2011). It has been referred to as an enabler that helps people to improve their self-confidence, overcome their sense of inability and helplessness (Fong & Snape, 2014). Firms develop trust in its employees with authority hence employees become more confident while discharging their roles leading to increased service quality (Coulthard, 2014).

Employee empowerment increases the levels of employee satisfaction. When employees are tasked with greater responsibilities and involved in decision making, they become motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically making them to be productive (Isahakia, 2010). It instils a feeling in employees to be committed and devote their efforts to accomplish organization's vision (Aziz, Mahmood, Abdullah & Tajudin, 2013). This leads to reduced workload for the managers who may engage in other meaningful tasks of improving or expanding the organization.

Employee empowerment has been conceived differently by different authors. There are those like (Vorya *et al.*, 2013; Ramesh, 2014 and Maina *et al.*, 2016) who see training, career development, rewarding, autonomy, access to opportunities and access to information as being significant practices in enhancement of employee empowerment. In this study, employee empowerment will be perceived as coaching, delegation of authority, employee participation and competency development.

2.3.1.1 Coaching and Service Delivery

Coaching is a human resource development practice that is gaining popularity and acceptance as an effective strategy to develop university staff (Devine, Meyers & Houssemand, 2013). With the unprecedented increasing competition in higher education institutions, academic staff are under increased pressure not only to deliver quality teaching but also undertake collaborated research that attracts funding and publish in high impact refereed journals (Camel & Paul, 2015; Hakro & Mathew, 2020). Coaching therefore, supports the development of professionals among peers yet with different experiences and skills.

According to Alexander, Marysol, Emerson and Guillermo, (2020) coaching equips employees with tools, knowledge and opportunities for development in order to become efficient and effective. It is the sharing of skills and information between knowledgeable employees with the less skilled employees. It is considered as a process of training that may result in confidence and efficacy (Berg & Karlse, 2011). Bozer and Jones, (2018) further define coaching as a communal relationship that exists between a coachee and coach with an aim of enhancing his/her personal and professional growth.

Universities and organizations across the globe are embracing coaching to enhance work performance; as a tool for development; for training; for new insights; career progression; enhancing strong relationships resulting to synergy; improved goal setting and attainment, increased satisfaction, increased self-awareness; self-confidence; motivation and change (Theeboom, Beersma & Vianen, 2014; Gander et al, 2014; Koroleva, 2016; Sharma & Sengputa, 2017; Rekalde, Jon & Albizu, 2017). For instance, Universities in the United Kingdom (UK)

adopted coaching as a tool to address the significant changes experienced such as high students' enrolment, intensive development, progressive economisation and the computerisation process. More so, it has been embraced as a staff development programme to deal with stress among the academic staff in Europe and UK Universities (Devine, Meyers & Houssemand, 2013). It is a popular management development programme in the USA, Canada and Australia and peer coaching is too gaining popularity.

Most universities choose senior faculty/school members basing on their accumulation of wealth of wisdom to orient and coach new members of staff. This has been achieved through faculty/school gatherings and staff meetings where members congregate, discuss, share thoughts and ideas related to career growth and development (Steinbacher-Reed & Powers, 2012). Senior Faculty/School members provide professional development on educational inquiry, writing of winning research grants, effective teaching strategies, inculcation of leadership qualities, development of courses/programmes, encourage right behaviour/culture and innovative practices in teaching. This enhances both personal and professional development (Hakro & Mathew, 2020). Junior staff on the other hand introduces current methodologies in educational theory and practice. The senior staff also benefit from peer coaching programs.

Coaching is a conversational and individually based style that aims at equipping staff with finding their own solutions (Bozer, Sarros & Santora, 2013). The coach encourages the coachee to discover for himself and assists in finding the correct answers and relevant strategies in achievement of the set goals. Thus, the coach does not offer solutions but counsels or advices the coachee's ideas by provoking relevant questions, uses active listening and ensures maintenance of their focus (Costa

& Garmston, 2015; Stratford, 2015). By improving individual performance, organization performance is enhanced through quality service, labour productivity and enhanced customer's satisfaction (Jarvis, 2014).

2.3.1.2 Delegation of Authority and Service Delivery

Delegation is widely recognized as a vital element in ensuring efficiency in management (Joiner and Leveson, 2015). Shah and Kazmi, (2020) define delegation as a means of assigning responsibility, authority and sharing power with the employees in lower cadres with a view of accomplishing organization's objectives. This is in tandem with (Nwagbara, 2015) who defines delegation of authority as the shifting of power from the higher authority to lower authority with a view to act or execute roles on his behalf.

Effective delegation has provided several benefits to the educational setup. It has freed up heads and management of educational institutions through sharing of responsibilities hence leaving them with a few tasks which they can effectively handle. They therefore, deal with more challenging tasks that require their attention. This has resulted in increased management and leadership productivity (Riisgaard et.al, 2016). More so, delegation of authority enhances employees' capabilities. This enables them to attain the key objectives and have an edge through increased level of speed, ensuring customer satisfaction and those of the stakeholders.

Delegation of authority is an essential skill for the success of any institution as it gives a sense of ownership over a task that is part of a whole. Sev, (2017) postulates that when a boss assign duty to its employees, three outcomes arise. That is allocation of power, transfer of accountability, and

formation of accountability. This helps higher authority to work on other activities and helps in avoiding burnouts. This is in line with Kennedy and Keino, (2017) who asserts that when managers assign responsibilities to their subordinates, not only do they trust them, but also, they offer a platform to prove their worthiness hence skills development. This relieves them from stress.

According to the London School of Management Education (LSME), its management utilizes empowerment strategies to staff through delegation of duties, tasks and responsibilities. This has improved staff job satisfaction, built their confidence and has promoted team work. Joiner, Bakalis and Choy, (2016) contend that when top bottom management approach of management authority is relinquished to employees', superior-subordinate relations is built and nourished. More so, organizational commitment is enhanced, individual and organizational performance is increased, organizational flexibility is experienced, improvement of employees' status and recognitions and development of positive attitudes and thinking leading to superior performance at the place of work (Maryam & Imran, 2012; Wadhwa & Verghese, 2015). Organizations that have effectively delegated authority have realized higher employee competencies that have worked well to their advantage (Loumala, 2016).

There are various tasks in academia that depends on delegation in order for universities to operate effectively and efficiently. Top staff need to entrust the academic staff with their responsibilities. For instance, Deans of Schools or Chairpersons of Departments may assign academic staff to sit in various University committees regarding academic decisions. This will enhance and provide a learning opportunity for them to share the satisfaction derived from the assignment with other academic staff (Michel, Nabel & Adiel, 2011).

2.3.1.3 Employee Participation and Service Delivery

Employee participation is a process that provides staff with an opportunity of taking part and making decisions on issues affecting their jobs (Karemire, 2013). It is the involvement of employees regardless of their levels in organizational issues to achieve the desired results (Surkino and Siengthai, 2015). When management allows its employees to be part of the decisions, it creates a suitable environment for them to operate, act and leads to efficient operational of processes in line with the overall organizational objective (Dewez, 2012). Daft, Kendrick & Vershinina (2010) emphasizes that when staff are involved in the initial stages of any decision their performance improves and their job morale is enhanced.

Public universities may involve academic staff to participate in the planning of academic activities as they are the key determinants in quality education. They can utilise various platforms such as departmental meetings, faculty meetings, Senate, teaching and learning committees, research committees, communications platforms such as e-mails. This is emphasized by Suhaemi and Aedi, (2015) who contend that participation of key stakeholders is necessary for quality education regardless of the policies used if the planned activities are to be successfully accomplished. This is supported by Sukrino and Siengthai, (2015) who found out that lecturers who participated in decision making readily implemented their designed programs.

Employee participation in institution's decisions ensures quality service in universities as team work, corporation and initiatives is enhanced among the staff. It leads to professional growth and is suitable for strengthening the employee leadership relation especially when making decisions concerning the company's future (Robbins, 2014). Other benefits cited include; increased

enthusiasm, devotion, ingenuity, high morale, easier implementation of decisions, harmonious working environment, commitment and satisfaction (Sukrino & Siengthai, 2015; Abdulai & Shafiwu, 2014). Employees develop a perception that the organization values their opinion hence feel recognized and part of the team. Managers of universities should come up with structures that involve staff in all activities from the initial to implementation stage (Babafemi, 2015; Mutie & Irungu, 2014).

2.3.2 The Concept of Service Delivery in Public Universities

Service refers to the end product of all inputs incorporated in a particular job (Makanyeza, Kwandayi & Ikobe, 2013; Olayemi, 2019). It indicates the outcome the customer expects and comprises a set of elements that are either significant or insignificant (Ponsignon, Smart & Maull, 2011). There is still no consensus to what constitutes quality service delivery in universities. However, efforts have been put up to develop suitable models to help contextualize quality service in universities.

One of the models is the SERVQUAL instrument which defines service delivery to entail assurance, tangibles, empathy, accessibility, reliability, communication, affordability, responsiveness, courtesy, credibility, and competence (Global, 2013; Ghulam, Khan & Affaq, 2014; Zeithaml, 2014 & Saada, 2017). However, other authorities such as banks, hotels and hospitals see service delivery as financial aspects, employee competencies, client satisfaction, client loyalty and increased in revenue (Timmerman, 2013; Miklós, Hossam, János, József, and Judit, 2019). In this study, service delivery was contextualized in terms of quality teaching, student satisfaction and high completion rates of students. Quality teaching enhances students' satisfaction

leading to greater retention and academic achievement through high completion rates and employability. This leads to good public rankings enabling universities to enhance their prestige and attract the best students.

2.3.2.1. Quality Teaching

Quality teaching in universities is fundamental in realization of students' abilities hence a healthy society and economy. Globally, quality teaching in higher education is increasingly becoming very important to many nations (Ghulam *et al.*, 2014). Public universities are experiencing daunting challenges such as lack of resources that are key in ensuring quality teaching. They are understaffed hence the available academic staff are allocated heavy workloads and most of the time they moonlight in other institutions. They mainly rely on part-time lecturers who are not properly trained to offer quality teaching (Yego, 2016; CHE, 2010). This has exacerbated serious concerns by IUCEA, EBK and FKE who have contended that the graduates in Kenya lack skills and are unfit for the job market.

Public universities are urged to brace for change by defining the sector for the 21st Century while aligning it to the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) that has been rolled out in lower primary schools. Increasing calls for graduates who are properly grounded in their work and who are adaptive to changing economic conditions is on the increase. This puts emphasis on quality teaching that will help students develop the right attitudes, values and skills (soft skills) such as social consciousness, critical thinking, leadership, team work, adaption, problem solving and creativity (Muganda, 2019).

Quality education and student mentorship leads to successful graduates and increased student retention at the universities. Quality teaching determines the student results, increases graduate employment and leads to higher rankings of universities (Otara, 2015). However, universities are not doing much to enhance professional competencies of the academic staff. This puts more questions than answers on the service rendered in universities and the quality of graduates churned (Kasule & Neema, 2016).

2.3.2.2 Students Satisfaction

Quality service is the nexus of most institutions and its customers (Sarah et. al., 2011). Customers develop an attitude depending on how the service has been provided. This puts pressure on public universities to strategize and keep up with the demanding needs of the job markets (Sharma, 2012). The increase in demands for university to change and be accountable points to displeasure posted in the way university graduates were being prepared to tackle the day-to-day challenges.

Universities should find out what matters most to the students and staff who are the institution's bedrock, and then strive for constant development to not only meet but exceed those stakeholders' expectations. Just the same way businesses are after a satisfied customer, hospitals a healed patient, Schools should be after a well-grounded student who is willing to share what he learnt ten years later (Drucker, 2011). Universities are therefore advised to ensure the numbers of graduates they produce are directly proportionate to the skills and competencies in demand (Osborn, 2012). Employee empowerment therefore is a strategic resource that impacts positively on employee's efficiency (Abbasi, Khan and Rashi, 2011; Pelit *et al*, 2011; Timothy &Abubakar, 2013; Hanaysha & Tahir, 2016).

2.3.2.3 High Students Completion Rates

Student Completion rates refers to the successful graduates in comparison to the students enrolled. Universities performance is regarded superior when the completion rate of students is high (Mutahi & Busienei, 2015). On the other hand, low completion rates in universities become a concern for the institution, prospective employer, parents and students who entrust universities in providing a conduit to economic solutions (Bailey *et al.* 2015). Low completion rates have been majorly cited to be as a result of inadequate academic preparation, financial constraints, in-adequate information to students on choices about which program to study, the tenure of service of academic staff, heavy workload on the academic staff among many others (Goldrick, 2016; Holzer and Baum 2017).

Most universities are experiencing the above cited challenges to be a major contributor to low completion rates. Ironically, in the recent past, student completion rates have been rising every year (Tracy, 2013). This is in contrary to Derek Bok, 2017 who posits that high graduation numbers is nothing if the education attained does not impact on students' lifelong value. Kenyan universities have been accused of producing half-baked graduates who cannot match the demanding modern global needs (Odhiambo, 2011). This is supported by the IUCEA and FKE who asserts that many graduates hired are unfit for the job market. They are deficient in elementary writing, analytical thinking and problem solving. Universities that truly value good teaching will defensively make it an institutional commitment and its core priority. Academic staff are tasked with innovative teaching basing on the experience learnt from the previous teaching attempts. This can be achieved if they have a sense of control and feel their efforts are being recognized (Bradley, 2015).

2.3.3 University Factors

Service delivery has been hypothesized by factors such as organizational culture and leadership (Monari, 2013; Idua, 2017). This study examined the university factors in terms of leadership style and age of the university and academic staff in service delivery.

2.3.3.1 Leadership style

The style of leadership determines the success or failure of an institution (Saeed and Ahmad 2012). It is a social influence process whereby a leader persuades and supports staff to attain a common purpose (Attri, et. al. 2014; Ayinde, et. al. 2015; Roger 2015). The leader gives direction, executes plans and inspires people to achieve the set goals. They have a significant impact on the standard of care because they set the tone for the company's direction, priorities, ethos, and culture (Sharabi, 2013). There are several leadership styles that a leader can adopt to influence, direct, motivate and control its followers. The choice of any leadership style firmly relies on the interaction among leaders, employees and their performance (Odetayo, Ojokuku, and Sajuyigbe, 2012).

With the ever-changing educational environment, leadership in education requires certain key attributes that will encourage positive change and improve service delivery in institutions (Attri, et. al. 2014; Sart 2014). Academic staff carries out a significant responsibility for the success of institutions of higher learning (Cordeiro, 2010; Oyebanji, 2019). They are highly educated, experienced and ready to work as a team. They require a leadership style that will focus on change, transformation of individuals, systems, inspires empowerment and motivates all staff. This style promotes team work that encourages coaching to take place effectively in the university. More so, it enables heads of sections to effectively entrust their roles to other staff for their development

and in preparation for career succession. This encourages active participation among the academic staff hence their core competencies are enhanced.

Adopting a leadership style that does not inspire nor motivate academic staff can lead to poor service delivery (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015; Rasool, Arfeen, Mothi, & Aslam, 2015). University leaders therefore have to focus on a style that will engage academic staff positively, enhance their skills and capabilities and align their goals with the institution's goals for service delivery. This study explored transformational leadership style as depicted from the theoretical review.

2.3.3.2 Age of University

The age of university has been suggested to be an indicator to service delivery. The results of a study of British educational institutions showed that colleges and old (traditional) universities have the highest standards of performance. They scored 50 and 44.4%, respectively, whereas the new schools only managed 32.1% (Sharabi, 2013). Thus, universities that have been in-existence for many years have been perceived by the public to offer excellent service delivery. They have policies, structures, facilities, infrastructure (laboratories, libraries) and highly qualified staff who have been associated to quality service.

Universities that are well established utilises resources at their disposal for exploration and sourcing of research funds. They engage these resources in creating strong networks which promotes a coaching environment among the academic staff. This encourages participation in universities activities and thus enhancing academic staff competencies. This explains the reason

why after liberalization of universities in 1990s, the prestigious public universities that were only accessed through competitive admission examinations and the selection of the top most successful high school students attracted more PSSP or Module II students (Odhiambo, 2011).

Age of academic staff also act as a key indicator to service delivery in universities. Senior academic staff have been perceived by stakeholders to be knowledgeable and resourceful. This is in regard to the vast accumulation of experience gained over the years worked (Sharabi, 2013). Universities that have a good number of senior academic staff have a reliably better opportunity of offering quality service. The senior staff offers the junior staff professional advice on educational matters, guide them on writing winning research grants and provides innovative practices in teaching. This encourages a coaching environment and establishes a strong link that promotes delegation and their participation in university activities leading to staff competency.

On contrary, universities that are still developing and with young academic staff. Though, there are those who see old age as being worn out and vulnerability to diseases that contributes to low service delivery. On the other hand, young academic staff are perceived to be vibrant and energetic hence both old and young have their own unique contributions towards the success of any institution (Government of Canada, 2015).

2.4. Empirical Literature Review

This discussed the issues that the study sought to address basing on the research objectives drawing insights from previous studies done. This was done with a view to identify any research gap and any issue that would be relevant to the research.

2.4.1 Employee Coaching and Service Delivery

Coaching at the place of work significantly influences employee performance positively. In a study conducted by Kelly, (2016) study findings revealed that coaching improved the advisor / advisee relationships leading to a collaboration that was both successful and rewarding. This study was conducted in universities in Mid-Atlantic region and its results may not be used on Kenyan public Universities.

Pousa and Mathieu, (2014) did a study on coaching in two international fields, Latin America and Canada. The results revealed that coaching positively affected performance. This study was done on sales people and frontline employees in profitable international companies. Public universities in Kenya are non-profitable hence the findings may not be applicable. Alexander *et. al.*, (2020) did a study on managerial coaching on organizational performance. The results revealed that companies that adopted managerial coaching processes significantly impacted on the internal processes. The study was restricted to 117 executives of profit and private medium-sized companies in Iberoamerican countries. Its findings cannot be generalized to public universities which are non-profit institutions.

In a study conducted by Geber, (2010) on coaching for accelerated research in higher education, the findings confirmed that coaching positively influenced the careers of academic beginners. The study was conducted in Witwatersrand University and only qualitative study was employed. Its results cannot be generalized to Kenyan public universities and a mixed study ought to be explored to maximize its strength. Mwangi, et.al, (2018) did a study on coaching and employee

performance, the results showed that coaching impacted positively on employee performance. The study focused on human resource managers of 187 state corporations. A cross sectional survey design was used. The results cannot be generalizable to public universities as it focused on human resource managers who were the policy makers of any organizations unlike the academic staff.

Muriithi, (2016) and Bosibori, (2015) conducted research on the impact of coaching on employee performance at Standard Chartered Bank and Cooperative Bank respectively. They studied different constructs to determine the effects of coaching on employee performance. The studies found out that coaching environment had a significant impact on employee's performance. The studies were carried out in the banking sector creating a contextual gap. Despite the positive findings posted, coaching has also been found to negatively impact on employee performance. In a study carried out by Taruru *et al*, (2015) the results revealed that coaching reduced employee performance. This study cited inconsistencies necessitating for harmonization to clarify as to whether coaching contributes positively or negatively to an organization.

2.4.2 Delegation of Authority and Service Delivery

Delegation is very crucial in enhancing performance of an institution. Its adoption as the main leadership development practice has been cited to have a significant impact on institutional performance. This has helped in the improvement of skills and competences of employees that have eventually led to increased performance. In a study conducted by Ali, Jafar and Abbas, (2021) the results found out that there was a strong relationship among administrative organization of trainers and level of delegation of powers. The study was conducted in AL-Furat alawsat University-Iraq and descriptive survey method was used on a sample size of 129 staff. This created a contextual gap as its results cannot be generalized to Kenyan public universities.

In a study conducted by Shah and Kazmi, (2020), the results found out that delegation had a positive impact on institution's job performance. This study employed a cross sectional survey and was carried out in Sindh universities, Pakistan creating a contextual gap. In a study conducted by Kiiza and Picho, (2015), the study revealed that delegation of authority had a positive impact on staff commitment. The study was a case study. A cross sectional survey was employed. A sample size of 97 respondents was used. This sample size was not sufficient enough to make generalizations to Kenyan Public Universities.

Okongo, Onen, and Okaka's (2019) research found that empowering subordinates with more authority led to higher productivity among faculty members. The results of this study cannot be extrapolated to public universities in Kenya because it was conducted in Uganda. According to research conducted by Kagutha, Wangithi, and Kihoro (2017), delegation positively correlates with the success of Kenya's microfinance organizations. This research lacks context because it was conducted in the microfinance industry rather than the education sector.

There are instances in which employees were rarely given autonomy. Results from a study by Sang (2018) on the impact of delegation on the productivity of tea factories in the Kapsabet Region showed that such measures as employee involvement and knowledge management were only seldom used. An important background was lost because the research was conducted in a factory.

2.4.3 Employee Participation and Service Delivery

According to Maynard, Gilson, and Mathieu (2012), organizations that have adopted empowerment strategies to facilitate employee involvement in decision-making processes have

observed favorable outcomes in terms of improved employee performance and enhanced knowledge acquisition. According to the findings of a study conducted by Tchapchet, Iwu, and Allen-Ile (2014), employee empowerment has a positive influence on efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity. However, academic staff were not involved in matters affecting them, and their contributions were disregarded. The research encompassed a solitary academic department within a University of Technology, whereby a total of 12 senior professors were selected for interview. The study utilized a limited sample size and applied a qualitative methodology. Self-administered questionnaires were not utilized, hence the findings cannot be extrapolated to public universities in Kenya.

According to a study conducted by Chesoli (2018), it was shown that there is a favorable and significant relationship between employee participation and the organizational performance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The researcher exclusively utilized a quantitative survey methodology, which may not offer optimal robustness. In order to capitalize on its benefits and mitigate its limitations, it would have been advisable to employ a mixed method design. According to the findings of a study conducted by Odero and Makori (2018), it was determined that employee performance was highly influenced by employee involvement. While the research was conducted at public universities, its primary emphasis was on part-time lecturers. The study was conducted exclusively in four public institutions located in Western Kenya, hence limiting the generalizability of its findings to all public universities in Kenya.

According to the findings of a study conducted by Wainaina, Iravo, and Waititu (2014), it was determined that employee participation had a noteworthy impact on the commitment levels of

academic staff members in universities. The academic personnel at both public and private universities in Kenya were the focus of their attention. This study focused on examining the commitment of academic staff, whereas the research in question investigated the impact of employee engagement on the service delivery of academic staff.

2.4.4. Moderating Effect of University Factors on the Relationship between Employee Empowerment and Service Delivery

The impact of institutional determinants on the association between employee empowerment and organizational success has been demonstrated. Abdullha, Almadhoun, and Ling (2015) conducted a research study examining the relationship between organizational empowerment and commitment, with a focus on the mediating role of psychological empowerment. The research was carried out among secondary school educators in the three states of the Northern Peninsular region in Malaysia. The findings of the study indicated that the association between organizational empowerment and affective organizational commitment was totally mediated by psychological empowerment. The research focused on secondary school educators in Malaysia, highlighting the existence of a contextual gap.

The findings of a study conducted by Adnan, Zarrar, and Zaffar (2021) indicate that employee accountability plays a partly moderating role in the relationship between employee empowerment and compensation, leading to variations in employee job performance. The research was conducted on a sample of 200 employees working in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies located in Multan. The primary goal of the study was to examine the role of responsibility as a moderator, hence identifying a gap in the existing literature within this specific

context. In a recent study conducted by Salahat (2021), the focus was on examining the relationship between employee empowerment, knowledge management, and decision-making agility, with the mediating variable of extra-role performance. The research was carried out on a sample of 289 employees affiliated with Palestinian universities. The study's findings indicate that the relationship between employee empowerment, knowledge management, and decision-making agility is mediated by extra role performance. The research was carried out within Palestinian universities, resulting in a contextual discrepancy.

Ibua (2014) conducted a research study in Kenya to examine the impact of institutional characteristics and job-related attitudes on the association between employee empowerment and performance in public universities in Kenya. The research utilized a descriptive research design, focusing on institutional elements such as organization strategy, organization structures, organization culture, and leadership styles. The findings of the study indicated that institutional factors played a moderating role in the association between employee empowerment and the performance of public universities in Kenya. This study encompassed both non-academic and academic personnel and centered on the examination of organizational strategy, structures, culture, and leadership style. To substantiate the aforementioned findings, the present study investigated university-related variables, specifically leadership style and the age of the institution and academic staff.

2.4.5. Employee Empowerment, University Factors as a Moderator and Service Delivery

Numerous empirical research undertaken across diverse institutions and businesses have consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between employee empowerment and performance. The present study, done by Khan et al. (2020), examined the relationship between employee empowerment and employee performance at Hazara University. The results of the study indicated that empowerment, namely in the form of trust, reward, and communication, had a statistically significant positive impact on employee performance. The research was carried out in the region of Southern Asia. The findings of this study are not applicable to other Kenyan public universities, and in order to have a more comprehensive knowledge, more variables should be investigated.

Sahar (2012) investigated academics' sense of agency and their capacity for organizational learning at research universities in Malaysia. This study investigated the associations between structural empowerment (including resources, information, and support) and psychological empowerment (including meaning, competency, self-determination, and impact). The findings of the study indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between both structural and psychological empowerment and organizational learning. The research was carried out in the Asian region, and it is recommended that more variables be examined and longitudinal research be undertaken to establish the causal association between contextual factors and occupational results.

Giorgidge (2016) conducted a study on the employee empowerment and job satisfaction of university personnel from a Total Quality Management (TQM) perspective. The research employed a sample including 158 individuals who were employed as administrative and academic staff members at a specific public institution in the state of Georgia. The results of the study provided confirmation that the implementation of employee empowerment had a beneficial impact on the level of job satisfaction experienced by employees. The scope of this study was limited to a single institution, so limiting the generalizability of its findings and creating a contextual gap. In a study conducted by Meng and Sun (2019), the researchers examined the effects of psychological empowerment on work engagement within the context of university faculty members in China. A total of 162 faculty members were included in the sample size. The results were positive. The present investigation is a case study conducted in China, wherein the sample size of 162 participants may be deemed inadequate, hence potentially limiting the generalizability of the findings. The utilization of in-depth interviews may have been employed to enhance comprehension, hence resulting in the existence of a gap.

Olayemi and Oyebanji, (2019) examined the effect of faculty empowerment on student support at Nigerian universities. The research was conducted at two academic institutions and examined many dimensions of empowerment, including training, promotion, incentives, work recognition, and job security. The findings of the study demonstrated that the implementation of empowerment initiatives had a favorable effect on the provision of services within Nigerian universities. The research was carried out at two Nigerian universities. Further investigation is warranted to examine additional factors related to empowerment in order to corroborate the results. In 2013, Motebele and Mbohwa conducted a research study examining the impact of employee empowerment on the

effectiveness of universities in South Africa. The results of the study provided confirmation that social structural elements, such as self-esteem, information, knowledge, rewards, and organizational climate, have a favorable impact on empowerment within university settings. The present study was carried out in the geographical region of South Africa, and it is recommended that additional variables be investigated in order to substantiate the obtained results.

Araigua (2020) conducted a study at Technical University of Kenya (TUK) on the effects of Employee empowerment strategies on job performance. The present study examined the topics of training, delegation of authority, creativity and innovation, and teamwork. A total of 120 individuals who were not affiliated with academic positions were included in the study's sample. The results indicated that the implementation of employee empowerment initiatives had a beneficial effect on job performance. The present investigation constituted a case study that specifically examined non-academic employees within the context of public universities. It is important to note that the sample size utilized in this study was deemed insufficient, hence limiting the generalizability of the findings to a broader population. Consequently, a contextual gap exists in the applicability of these results to all public institutions.

Njoroge (2018) conducted study on the academic staff at JKUAT to ascertain whether staff commitment was impacted by empowerment. The present study investigated individuals' perceptions of support, as well as their access to information, resources, and opportunities. The findings indicated a significant correlation between employee empowerment and commitment. This study constitutes a case study, and as such, its findings should not be extrapolated to all colleges, thereby highlighting a limitation in its generalizability. The study conducted by Ibua

(2017) examined the performance of Public Universities in Kenya and found that these institutions demonstrated a modest level of adoption of empowerment strategies. The literature analysis uncovered a dearth of knowledge regarding the relationship between empowerment and performance in universities, resulting in inconclusive findings from previous studies. The present study will make a significant contribution to the existing literature by addressing the vacuum in knowledge on the impact of hiring practices on performance inside public universities, with a specific focus on academic staff.

The majority of the research studies yielded favorable outcomes. However, contradictory findings were found in a study conducted by Monari, K'obonyo, and Andollo (2013). The results of the study indicated that the university administration's attempts to improve staff performance were ineffective. While the research was conducted at a public university, it should be noted that it was a case study. The generalizability and applicability of its findings to institutions in diverse counties is limited. Furthermore, the study included all personnel, encompassing both academic and non-academic workers, and employed various measures of empowerment. The existence of a contextual gap necessitates the exploration of additional measures of empowerment in order to assess their efficacy.

Kerubo (2012) carried out research on the empowerment techniques employed by Africa Nazarene University. The study revealed that Africa Nazarene University implemented a range of employee empowerment initiatives to promote enhanced productivity, efficiency, and autonomy within its workforce. Nevertheless, the university has yet to fully facilitate the empowerment of its personnel in all areas. The present investigation was conducted within the confines of a privately-owned

educational establishment. The primary emphasis was placed on the employees, resulting in the emergence of a contextual disparity. The present study aims to focus especially on the academic personnel inside public universities.

Given the aforementioned information, research pertaining to the empowerment of employees inside public universities, particularly within the academic cadre, has yet to yield definitive conclusions. The findings presented have demonstrated both favorable and unfavorable outcomes, highlighting the need for a subsequent investigation to reconcile the observed contradictions.

2.5. Summary and Research gaps

Studies have shown that many successful universities had adopted some kind of empowerment initiatives in their workforce (Sahar, 2012; Motebele & Mbohwa, 2013; Giorgidge, 2016; Ibuya, 2017; Njoroge, 2018; Olayemi & Oyebanji, 2019; Meng & Sun, 2019; Araigua, 2020; Khan, et.al., 2020). Fernandez and Moldogaziev, (2012) contends that when organizations embrace empowerment, they promote peaceful and conducive working environment for both the management and its employees. This gave workers a platform to freely express their views hence enhancing their morale.

Studies done on employee empowerment and performance in various contexts resulted in mixed results. Whereas some have showed that employee empowerment affected performance, others held that this causality was absent Wamuyu *et al.*, 2015; Monari, *et al.*, 2012; Kerubo, 2012). Furthermore, few studies had explored institutional factors as the moderator of employee empowerment and performance (Adnan, Zarrar & Zaffer, 2021; Salahat, 2021; Abdulla,

Almadhoun & Ling, 2015 & Idua, Obonyo& Ogutu, 2016) even though, institutional factors studied were different. This necessitated for the current study where the moderating effect of university factors was explored.

Table 2 1: Research Gaps

Author (s) and Year	Focus of the Study	Sector	Methodology	Constructs	Geographic al	Knowledge gap
Khan, et al, (2020)	employee empowerment and its influence on employee performance: a case of Hazara University	Education	Survey Approach Regression Analysis	Knowledge Trust, Reward, Communication	Southern Asia	Contextual Cannot be generalized
Sahar, (2012)	Relationship between Organizational Learning among Academics in Malaysian Research Universities	Education	Quantitative Correlational Research Design	Structural (Resources, Information and Support) Psychological (meaning, competency, self- determination & Impact	Asia	Contextual Cannot be generalized
Giorgidge, (2016)	Employee Empowerment and Job Satisfaction of University Staff in a TQM Perspective	Education	Online Survey Correlation Analysis Pearson's	Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation	Georgia	Contextual
Meng & Sun, (2019)	Impact of Psychology Empowerment on Work Engagement among the University Faculty Members in China	Education	Correlation Analysis Multi-Dimensional Regression Analysis	Psychological Empowerment Work engagement	China	Contextual
Olayemi& Oyebanji, (2019)	Influence of Academic Staff Empowerment on Service Delivery in Nigerian Universities	Education	Multiple Regression Simple Random Sampling	Training Promotion Incentive Job recognition Job Security	Nigeria	Contextual gap
Motebele & Mbohwa, (2013)	Employee Empowerment to Improve Organizational Effectiveness	Education	Descriptive Analysis	Social Structural Self esteem Information Knowledge Rewards	South Africa	Contextual gap
Araigua, (2020)	Effects of Employee empowerment Strategies on Job performance at Technical University of Kenya (TUK)	Education	Descriptive Survey Research Design Stratified Random Design Simple Linear Regression	Training Team building Delegation of Authority & Creativity Innovation	Kenya	Case study its findings cannot be generalized
Njoroge (2018)	The influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment among academic staff at JKUAT	Education	Descriptive Survey Stratified random sampling	Case study Perceived support Access to information Opportunities Career Development	Nairobi, Kenya	Focused on employee commitment Case study Different constructs

Monari, K'obonyo & Andollo, (2012)	Impact of time management tendencies on the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance at University of Nairobi	Education	Proportionate stratified random sampling	Service Quality Rate of Innovation Employee satisfaction	Nairobi University, Kenya	Case study All staff Focused on different constructs
Kerubo, (2012)	Employee empowerment strategies used by Africa Nazarene university, Kenya	Education	A case study	Employee empowerment strategies used by Africa Nazarene	Nairobi	The study was done in private university
Coaching and Employee Empowerment						
Kelly, (2016)	Coaching Applications for Academic Advisors in Higher Education	Education	Descriptive Survey		United States	Contextual gap
Pousa, & Mathieu, (2014)	Influence of coaching on employee empowerment: Results from two International quantitative studies	Manufacturing	Non experimental design, purposive sampling	No constructs	Latin America and Canada	Focus on international organization and not university
Alexander et al, (2020)	Influence of managerial coaching on organisational performance	Service Education Industry Health	Quantitative survey	Managerial coaching	IberoAmerican countries	Contextual gap
Geber, (2010)	Coaching for Accelerated Research Productivity in Higher Education	Education	Qualitative Study		South Africa	Need for Mixed study
Mwangi et al (2018)	Effect of Coaching on Employee Performance in State Corporations in Kenya	State Corporation	Cross Sectional survey design Mixed methods	Coaching Performance	Nairobi	Contextual gal
Muriithi, (2016)	Effect of Coaching on employee performance in Commercial Banks: A case of Standard Chartered Bank Kenya Ltd	Banking	Descriptive survey design, systematic random sampling	Feedback provision Structured coaching plan Coaching environment	Nairobi	The focus was on the bank and not university
Bosibori, (2015)	Perceived effects of coaching on employee performance at the Cooperative Bank of Kenya	Banking	Descriptive survey design, Stratified sampling	Planning and goal setting Focus on performance Effective feedback process Support development	All Coop bank branches in Kenya	The focus was on the bank and not university
Taruru, et al, (2015)	Effects of Coaching programmes on employee performance in Business process outsourcing subsector, City Council	ICT	Quantitative research – Anova and Multi regression analysis Stratified sampling	Executive coaching Business coaching Team coaching Personal development/life coaching	Nairobi	Focus on Nairobi City Council and not university
Delegation of Authority and Employee Empowerment						
Ali, Jafar & Abbas, (2021)	Delegation of Authority and its Impact on the Development of Administrative Skills of Staff in the Students Activities Section.	Education	Survey Descriptive approach	Leadership Skills development Delegation of power	Iraq	Study focused on administrative cadre and not academics
Shah & Kazmi, (2020)	The Impact of Delegation of Authority on Job Satisfaction, Job Performance and	Education	Cross Sectional Survey design	Responsibility Authority Accountability	Sindh Province	Contextual gap

	Organizational Growth at higher educational institutions in Sindh		Simple random sampling				
Kiiza & Picho, (2015)	Delegation and Staff Commitment in the School of Finance and Banking at Kigali, Rwanda	Education	Case study Cross sectional survey Sample size 97			Rwanda	Sample size too small Contextual gap
Okongo, Onen & Okaka, (2019)	Enhancing the work performance of university academic staff by delegated decision-making approaches for good governance in Ugandan universities	Education				Uganda	
Kagutha, Wangithi & Kihoro, (2017)	Delegation practice as a factor influencing performance of Micro finance institutions in Kenya	Financial	Cross sectional survey design Stratified sampling	No constructs		Kenya	Focus was on micro finance
Sang, (2018)	Effect of delegation on performance of Tea Factories in Kapsabet Region, Kenya	Manufacturing	Descriptive Survey research design Simple stratified sampling Purposive sampling	No constructs		Kapsabet region, Kenya	Focus on tea factories
Employee Participation and Employee Empowerment							
Tchapchet, Iwu & Allen- lle, (2014)	Employee participation and productivity in a South African university. Implications for human resource management	Education	Qualitative Approach	Engagement Productivity		South Africa	Case study Small sample size Methodology Contextual
Chesoli, (2018)	Employee involvement in decision making and on performance of SME's	Financial	Quantitative Survey	No constructs		Kitale, Trans- Nzoia County Kenya	Focus on Nairobi City Council and not university
Odero & Makori, (2018)	Employee involvement and employee performance: The case of part-time lecturers in public universities	Education	Descriptive survey research design, Stratified sampling, simple random sampling	Case study		Western region, Kenya	Focus on part-time lecturers
Wainaina, Iravo & Waititu, (2014)	Effect of employee participation in decision making on academic staffs' organizational commitment in Private and Public Universities in Kenya	Education	Descriptive research design Stratified sampling	Employee direct participation		Across the country	Focus was both on private and public universities Different constructs Focuses on organizational commitment
Moderating effect of University Factors on the Relationship between employee Empowerment and Service Delivery							
Adnan, Zarrar & Zaffer, (2021)	Employee Empowerment & Compensation as a Consequence on Employee Job Performance with the moderating role of employee accountability	Health Sector	Descriptive Research Design Convenient sampling	Accountability Compensation Job Performance		Pakistan	Different constructs Contextual gap
Salahat, (2021)	Employee Empowerment, Knowledge Management & decision Making with agility: Mediating role of extra role performance	Education Sector	Survey research Design	Employee empowerment Knowledge Management Decision Making agility		Palestine	Different constructs Contextual gap
Abdulla, Almadhoun & Ling, (2015)	Organizational Empowerment & Commitment with a mediating effect of Psychological Empowerment	Education Sector	Random Sampling Multiple Regression	Meaning Competence Impact Dimension		Northern Peninsular Malaysia	Different constructs Contextual gap

Ibua, (2016)	Influence of institutional factors and job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance of Public Universities in Kenya	Education	Descriptive Design Proportionate stratified sampling and multi stage sampling Pearsons Moment Simple Regression	Research random sampling and product Linear	Involvement in decision making and Training development to information Management support	Selected public universities in Kenya	Different constructs Generalized all staff
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2.6 Conceptual Frame Work

This study was guided by the conceptual framework in figure 1.1.

Independent Variable

Employee Empowerment Practices

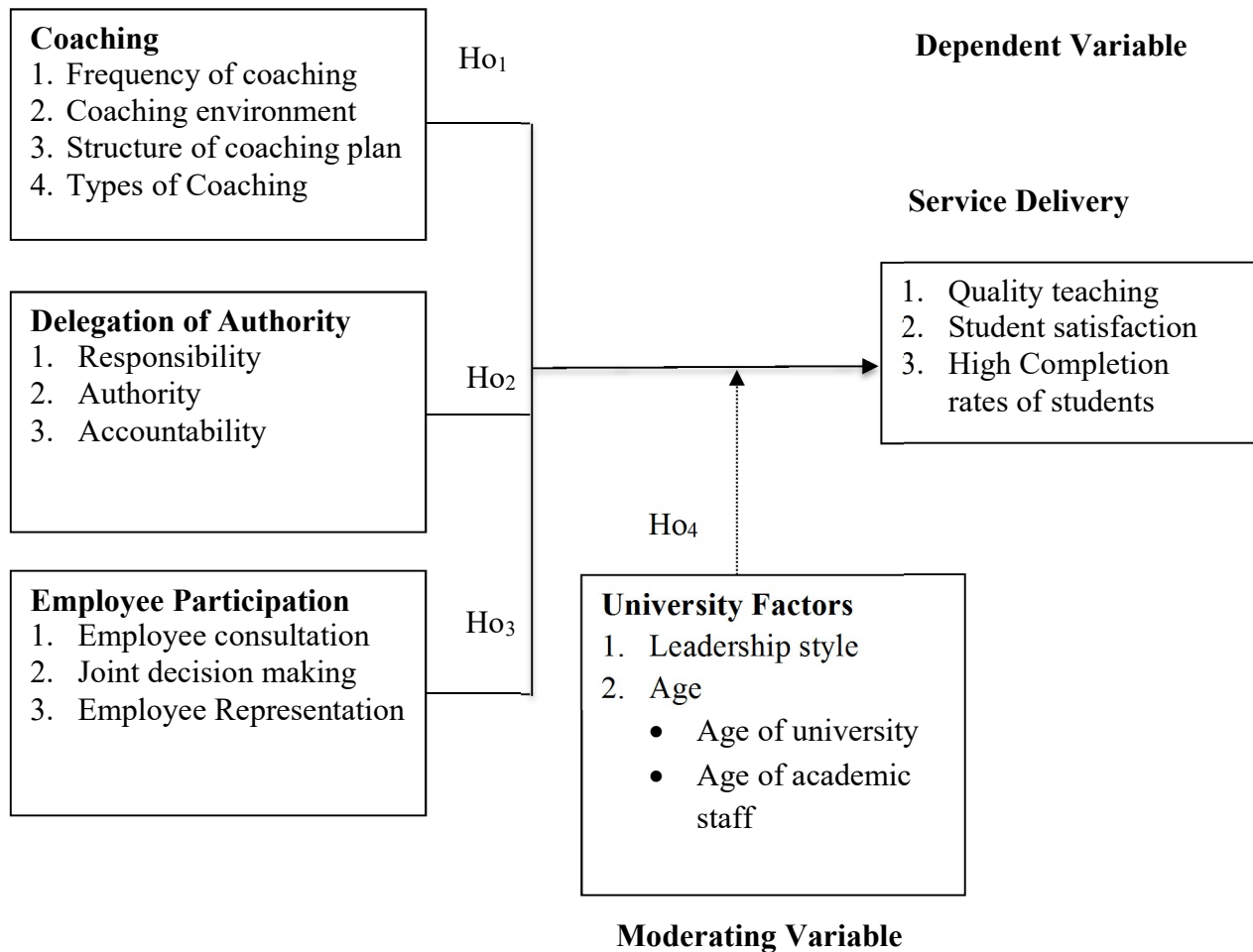


Figure 2. 1: Conceptualizing employee empowerment practices, service delivery and university factors

Source: - Researcher, (2022)

The conceptual framework of this study was developed basing on the relationship among the independent, dependent and the moderating variables. Employee empowerment practices was the independent variable while service delivery was the dependent variable. Employee empowerment practices reviewed focused on coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation. Service delivery was measured by quality teaching, student satisfaction and high completion rates of students. The relationship between employee empowerment practices and service delivery was moderated by university factors; leadership style and the age of academic staff and the university.

The researcher hypothesised that there was a relationship between employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya. Employee empowerment practices had a close association with service delivery as posited by Olayemi & Oyebanji, (2019); Araigua, (2020) and Njoroge, (2018). Coaching of academic staff had a positive impact on service delivery as pointed out by Kelly, (2016); Alexander, et al, (2020) & Mwangi, et al., (2018). Delegation of authority to academic staff had a positive relationship on service delivery in public universities as asserted by Ali, Jafar & Abbas, (2021); Shah & Kazmi, (2020) and Okongo, Onen & Okaka, (2019). Employee participation had an influence on service delivery of public universities as posited by Tchaphchet, Iwu & Allen-Ile, (2014); Odero & Makori, (2018) and Wainaina, Iravo & Waititu (2014). The researcher also hypothesised that university factors had an influence as a moderator on the relationship between employee empowerment

practices and service delivery among the Academic staff in the public universities as posited by Idua, (2014).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter primarily examines the methodologies employed by the researcher to ascertain the impact of employee empowerment on service delivery within the academic staff of public universities in Kenya. The research methodology employed in the study was outlined by Kombo and Tromp (2006). The components included in this study comprised the research design, study site, target population, sample design, data collection tools, data collection processes, piloting, validity and reliability assessment, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Study Area

Western region is bounded by latitude 0⁰¹'S and 0⁰²'N and longitudes 33⁰E and 36⁰E. The region had nine (9) public universities which included; Kibabii University (KIBU), Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), Kaimosi Friends University (KAFU), Maseno University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST), Tom Mboya University (TMU), Kisii University, Rongo University, Alupe University (AU). Most universities in this region were fairly new and ranked lowly in the webometrics both regionally

and globally (Webometrics Ranking of World Universities, 2023). Therefore, effective human resource strategies had to be employed to enhance the capabilities of academic staff for efficient and effective service delivery (Ibua, 2014).

3.3 Research Design

The research design utilized in this study was a descriptive survey, which facilitated the derivation of accurate conclusions based on the presented facts. A descriptive survey research study was conducted in order to establish certainty and delineate the variables that constituted a specific situation. Hence, the aforementioned approach emerged as the most optimal technique for gathering unprocessed data from a populace of such magnitude that direct observation was unfeasible (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Mugenda & Mugenda (2008) assert that a descriptive research design is employed to elucidate the characteristics of the population or phenomenon under investigation. The focus of this study pertains to the identification and description of the research subject, rather than delving into the underlying motivations or reasons behind it. It alludes to the subject-specific research questions, study design, and data analysis that are carried out.

3.4 Target Population

The study population consisted of a total of two thousand, three hundred and eleven (2,311) academic staff computed from the nine (9) public universities of Western region of Kenya as shown in table 3.1. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a population is an entire group of unique cases or things that share certain detectable common traits.

Table 3. 1 : The Number of Academic Staff in the Targeted Universities

#	University	Year Established	Target(P)
1	Maseno	2001	405

2	MMUST	2007	367
3	Kisii	2007	433
4	JOOUST	2009	381
5	KIBU	2011	306
6	Rongo	2012	286
7	KAFU	2015	31
8	Alupe	2015	37
9	TMU	2016	65
	Total		2311

Source: Kenya Accredited Universities CUE List, 2018 and Respective University HR Office, 2022

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

Sampling is the process by which a subset or subsets of a larger group are selected in order to draw conclusions about the larger group (Kothari, 2004). The study used stratified sampling to identify sub-groups (Schools/Faculties) in the target population. Stratified sampling divides the population into homogenous subgroups. This ensures that everyone in the population has an equal chance of taking part in the study (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

The researcher employed purposive sampling to select academic staff members who possessed the necessary information for the study. Purposive sampling is a technique employed to deliberately pick individuals who possess the necessary knowledge (Oso and Onen, 2009). Subsequently, a method of simple random sampling was employed to choose samples from the accessible population in a manner that minimized bias. This approach was deemed appropriate as it ensured that each member of the target population had an equal and independent probability of being chosen. Consequently, both male and female participants were included in the sample to mitigate the potential influence of gender bias.

3.5.1 Sample Size Determination

According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), sampling is a methodological procedure that involves the selection of a subset of individuals to serve as representatives of a broader population. The primary objective of sampling was to obtain a representative sample that would allow the researcher to gather information about the larger population. The sample size for this study was determined using Yamane's formula. The sample size for the academic staff was established using Yamane's formula (Yamane, 1967), which is commonly employed to find the appropriate sample size from a given target population.

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

n = the desired sample size

N = the total population

e = the level of statistical significance

Therefore, the sample size for academic staff was

$$N = \frac{2311}{1 + 2311(0.05^2)} = 341$$

In order to determine an appropriate sample size and cater for the non-response, the researcher applied a level of precision (sampling error) that ranges from ± 5 (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008) so that to give a true value of the population as computed below:-

$$\text{Non-response} = \frac{5}{100} \times 341 = 17$$

$$\text{Total sample size} = 341 + 17 = 358$$

The sample size for each stratum was determined using proportionate stratification approach.

Strata sample sizes was determined by the following equation: -

$$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$$

Where:

$$n_h = \frac{N_h}{N} \times n$$

n_h = Sample size for strata

N = the total population size

n = the total sample size

$$N_h = \text{population size for strata}$$

$$n_h = \frac{405}{2311} \times 358 = 63$$

Table 3. 2: Sample Size for Academic Staff

#	University	Year Established	Target(P)	Sample population
1	Maseno	2001	405	63
2	MMUST	2007	367	57
3	Kisii	2007	433	67
4	JOUST	2009	381	59
5	KIBU	2011	306	47
6	Rongo	2011	286	44
7	KAFU	2015	31	5
8	Alupe	2015	37	6
9	TMU	2016	65	10
Total			2,311	358

Source: CUE Report, 2018; Respective University's HR office, 2022

Deans/HoDs of Schools/Faculties in the nine (9) Universities were also interviewed as key informants in the study. The researcher established that there were a total of 69 Schools/Faculties across the nine universities (13 at Maseno University; 11 at MMUST; 8 at Kisii University; 8 at JOUST; 4 at KAFU; 4 at Alupe; 6 at TMU; 7 at KIBU and 6 at Rongo). Thus, the target population for Dean/HoDs of Schools stood at 69 (University Websites, 2022).

The researcher applied the recommendation by Mugenda & Mugenda, (2013) to get the sample size for Deans/HoDs of Schools in which the scholars stated that, for a population of less than 10,000, a sample size of between 10 and 30% was a good representation of the target population. In this regard, the researcher applied 10% on Deans/HoDs of Schools/Faculties in Maseno, MMUST, Kisii, JOUST, KIBU and Rongo and 30% for KAFU, ALUPE and TUM. This meant that one (1) Dean/HoD from each university was part of the sample size giving a total of nine (9) respondents.

Purposive sampling was used to determine the sample size of Registrar Academic Affairs and DVC (Academic and Student Affairs). Therefore, a total of nine (9) Registrars and nine (9) DVCs were interviewed as indicated in the table 3.3 below: -

Table 3. 3: Sample Size for Key Informants

#	University	Target (P) Schools/ Faculties	Deans/HoDs at 10% and 30%	Registrars Purposive	DVC (Academics) Purposive	Total
1	Maseno	13	1	1	1	3
2	MMUST	11	1	1	1	3
3	Kisii	8	1	1	1	3
4	JOOUST	10	1	1	1	3
5	KIBU	7	1	1	1	3
6	Rongo	6	1	1	1	3
7	KAFU	4	1	1	1	3
8	Alupe	4	1	1	1	3
9	TMU	6	1	1	1	3
Total		69	9	9	9	27

Source: Researcher, 2022

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

According to Maina (2012), research instruments are tools that are used to quantify a specific phenomenon in order to collect data from the study subject on relevant subjects. The study made use of questionnaires and prearranged interviews.

3.6.1 Structured Questionnaires

The questionnaires were administered to three hundred and fifty eight (358) academic staff of the 9 universities in Western Kenya. Questionnaires helped in the gathering of quantitative data. Structured (closed ended) questionnaires using five (5) point likert scale was adopted. The questionnaire was divided into four (4) sections: Section A contained the demographic information; Section B comprised of structured statements on employee empowerment practices

outlined in three (3) parts namely: coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation. Section C and D contained statements for university factors and Service delivery respectively.

3.6.2 Interview Schedule

The researcher conducted face to face interviews to a purposive sample of management representatives (Deans/HoDs of Schools/Faculties, Registrars and Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academics) of the nine (9) universities in the Western Kenya. The utilization of interview schedules was deemed highly advantageous due to their ability to facilitate the acquisition of superior data from a large number of participants, while also enabling a more comprehensive understanding of participant attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors (Kombo & Tromp, 2006; Kendall, 2008). The researcher used interview guides to gather qualitative data. The interview schedules were designed to cover all the study objectives.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

After the approval and acceptance of the proposal by the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies (DPS), the researcher proceeded to obtain permission from the University and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). During the data collection process, the researcher employed the drop and pick later method, with the aid of study assistants. The research assistants have a comprehensive understanding of the subject topic and had achieved a minimum grade of C+ in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE). Prior to being deployed in the field, individuals had comprehensive training on research ethics and principles to ensure they were well-prepared and knowledgeable about the expected protocols and procedures. The operationalization of study variables is depicted in Table 3.4.

Table 3. 4: Operationalization and Measurement of Study Variables

Variable	Variable Type	Indicators/Operationalization	Measurement scale	Section/Part in questionnaire
Coaching	Independent	Frequency of coaching Type of coaching Coaching environment Structure of coaching plan	Interval/Ordinal	Part 1 section B
Delegation of Authority	Independent	Responsibility Authority Accountability Assignment of Task	Interval/Ordinal	Part 2 section B
Employee Participation	Independent	Employee consultation Joint Decision Making Employee ownership Representation	Interval/Ordinal	Part 3 section B
University Factors	Moderating	Age of university Leadership style Quality teaching Customer satisfaction	Interval/Ordinal	Section C

Source: Researcher, (2022)

3.8 Piloting

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) assert that a pilot study serves to validate the accuracy and suitability of the research methods and apparatus. Prior to the commencement of the real research, it was necessary to undertake pre-testing of the questionnaires. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), it has been acknowledged that utilizing this approach can assist in enhancing the quality of questionnaires, hence mitigating the difficulties experienced during the process of data collection. This was consistent with Sampson (2012), who stated that a well-designed and executed preliminary study reduces the likelihood of committing a methodological error, including in the dissertation results.

A pilot study was carried out at Bomet University in South Rift region of Kenya. Bomet University is geographically within the boundaries where the actual study was conducted and it therefore, had

similar characteristics like those of the western region institutions. Similarly, Bomet was established in 2017 and thus it was too grappling with the same challenges as those of western region universities. The researcher administered thirty-five (35) questionnaires to respondents to ascertain whether the questionnaires were valid and reliable. The researcher modified the data collection instruments and adopted them. According to Creswell (2014) and Cooper and Schindler (2014), who advocated for a 10% pilot test sample, we followed this recommendation.

3.9 Validity and Reliability

3.9.1 Validity

Bryman and Bell (2015) say that a tool is valid if it measures what it is supposed to measure. (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008) It provides an estimate of the reliability of the data being studied in a particular dimension. Creswell (2014) and Serem and Wanyama (2013) stress the importance of accuracy and precision in scientific inquiry. The study employed face/content validity to establish reliability. This required determining if there was any rational connection between the two factors. A scale's content validity is determined whether everyone is in agreement or not and that it accurately and consistently measures the set study objectives. Thus, the instruments were analysed by the research assistants' supervisor and adopted for the data collection exercise.

3.9.2 Reliability

The reliability of a research instrument is defined as the degree to which it consistently produces the same results across multiple trials with all other factors held constant. Test-retest, equivalent form, split-half, and the Cronbach alpha coefficient of internal consistency are the four tried-and-true ways for gauging a questionnaire's trustworthiness (Ritter, 2010). Cronbach's alpha was

chosen as the measure of internal consistency because it is simple to implement, it makes use of all items in the research instrument, and it only calls for a single technique of administering the test (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). A pilot study was carried out at Bomet University in South Rift region of Kenya. Bomet University is geographically within the boundaries where the actual study was conducted and it therefore, had similar characteristics like those of the western region institutions. The three independent variables (Coaching, delegation of authority, employee participation) and the dependent variable (service delivery) were subjected to reliability test using SPSS. The alpha was computed using data obtained from the questionnaires pilot testing as

$$\alpha = \frac{\left[\frac{k}{k-1} \right]}{\left[1 - \left(\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n S_i^2}{S_x^2} \right) \right]}$$

where

k = the number of items on the test

S_i^2 = the obtained variance for item i

S_x^2 = the variance of the total test scores

Different researchers use different cut-off values for alpha which according to Tavakol and Dennick (2011) range from 0.7 – 0.95. George and Mallery (2003) made the following interpretation of the values of alpha coefficient as a rule of thumb i.e. > 0.9 – Excellent, > 0.8 – Good, > 0.7 – acceptable, > 0.6 – questionable, > 0.5 – poor and < 0.5 – Unacceptable. This interpretation was applied to this study. Using SPSS, the results for reliability were presented in Table 3.5.

Table 3. 5: Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach alpha	Cronbach alpha
Coaching	.819	

Delegation of authority	.872	
Employee participation	.918	0.8546
University factors	.806	
Service delivery	.858	

Source: Researcher’s Pilot survey, (2022)

From Table 3.5, the results shows that Cronbach's alpha is 0.8546, which indicates that the reliability test for the questionnaire was good for our scale with this specific sample.

Quantitative information gathered via interviews was compared to that obtained via questionnaires. These comparisons demonstrated that, with a few exceptions, the data was consistent. No major discrepancies between questionnaire and interview data were found, hence both sources can be trusted.

3.10 Data Analysis

During data collecting, we made sure that all of the questionnaires we received from respondents were accurate and comprehensive. The surveys were entered into SPSS version 21 and coded so that it could analyze the data. Data analysis is a process of translating data into meaningful information by comparing and contrasting, analyzing the patterns and identifying suitable statistical techniques to interpret its causality (Cooper and Schindler, 2014). Babbie, (2015) contends that data analysis ensures order, structure and meaning to large amount of data collected by researchers.

Using themes and content analysis, the qualitative data from the in-depth interviews was examined and presented correctly. An interview schedule was prepared comprising of pertinent questions for the key informants (DVCs, Registrars, and Deans/CODs). The researcher noted down the key

points on the underlying issues. Analysis, themizing, verification and writing of the report was done. This was in line with Babbie, (2015).

The researcher employed a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics in the study. The collected data was given in the form of tables. The process of descriptive analysis covered the calculation of frequencies, mean values, percentages, and standard deviation. On the other hand, inferential statistics encompassed the utilization of statistical techniques such as Pearson correlation, simple linear regression, multiple regressions, and hierarchical linear regression. Kothari and Garg (2014) assert that correlation analysis is a statistical method employed to assess the magnitude and direction of the association between variables. The purpose of its use is to investigate the interplay between several sets of variables (Pallant, 2015). Simple linear regression examined the impact of employee empowerment on service delivery, multiple regressions examined the joint influence while hierarchical regression examined the moderating effect of university factors. The regression models that was used was as follows: -

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Regression equation with moderator

$$Y_0 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 M + \beta_2 X_2 M + \beta_3 X_3 M$$

Where;

Y = Service delivery among the academic staff (Dependent variable)

B₀ = Y intercept (constant) whose influence on the model is insignificant

X₁ = Coaching

X₂ = Delegation of Authority

X₃ = Employee Participation

M = University Factors

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$, = Model coefficients which are significantly large to have significant influence on the model.

ε = is the error term.

3.10.1 Diagnostic Tests

Prior to performing linear regression analysis, diagnostic tests were conducted to assess normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.

3.10.1.1 Normality Test

Normality tests are carried out to avoid drawing inaccurate conclusions and develop incorrect models. They are tests carried out to determine whether the data is normally distributed. If the data is not normally distributed, it is further subjected to a significance level (P-Value). If applicable then means are compared using parametric tests (Garson, 2012). This was achieved using statistical methods; Shapiro–Wilk test and Kolmogorov- Smirnov Test. Shapiro -Wilk & Kolmogorov Smirnov were used to either accept or reject the Null Hypothesis as they all state that the P-Value should be above 0.05 to show the data is from a normal distributed data.

3.10.1.2 Heteroscedasticity/Homoscedasticity Test

Homoscedasticity is characterized by a uniform variance of errors across all levels of the predictor variable, whereas heteroscedasticity denotes a lack of uniformity in the variance of the dependent variable across the dataset (Xu, Xiong, Huang & Yao, 2014). Regression analysis and other statistical tests of significance are invalidated when heteroscedasticity and homoscedasticity are

not corrected, increasing the likelihood of drawing the incorrect conclusions. The present study employed the Levene statistic to examine the presence of heteroscedasticity/homoscedasticity. The Lavene statistic is a commonly used measure in statistical hypothesis testing. It indicates that if the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Conversely, if the p-value is more than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted.

3.10.1.3 Multi-collinearity Test

Multi-collinearity pertains to the presence of a robust connection among the predictor variables. As a consequence, the standard errors of the beta coefficients are elevated, hence constraining the magnitude of the R value and impeding the assessment of the significance of individual predictors within the model (Bryman & Cramer, 2014). In order to assess the presence of multicollinearity, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance level were employed. The VIF statistic is the reciprocal of the tolerance value, and as such, does not possess specific threshold values. In the event that the variance inflation factor (VIF) is between the range of 1-10, it can be concluded that there is no presence of multicollinearity. Conversely, if the VIF value is below 1 or above 10, it indicates the existence of multicollinearity.

3.10.2 Hypotheses Testing

Table 3. 6: Hypothesis Testing Framework and Analytical Model

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Test	Regression model
H ₀₁ : Coaching does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff	Simple Linear Regression (Beta0Test)	Reject0H ₀₁ 0if0β ₁ #0 SD= β ₀ + β ₁ X ₁ +e
H ₀₂ : Delegation of authority does not significantly affect academic staff service delivery	Simple Linear Regression (Beta0Test)	Reject0H ₀₂ 0if0β ₂ #0 SD= β ₀ + β ₂ X ₂ +e

H0 ₃ : Employee participation does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff	Simple Linear Regression (Beta0Test)	Reject Ho ₃ if $\beta_3 \neq 0$ SD= $\beta_0 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$
H0 ₄ : University factors do not significantly moderate the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff	Hierarchical Linear Regression (r_{xyz})	Reject Ho ₄ if $r_{xyz} \neq r_{x.z2}$ $r_{xy.z3}$ P= $\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 M + \beta_2 X_2 M + \beta_3 X_3 M + \beta_4 X_4 M + e$

Source: Researcher, 2022

3.11 Ethical Considerations

In line with Bryman, (2001) and Mugenda, (2008), the researcher ensured informed consent by giving all research participants accurate and detailed information about why the research was being carried out. The participants were shown the authorization permit from NACOSTI. An express consent was sought before undertaking audio recording and research activity. None of the participants were compelled to provide information they were unwilling to give and confidentiality of their views was guaranteed (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). All academic work and publications used in this research was acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings, interpretation, and discussion of results in accordance with the stated aims and hypotheses. Descriptive statistics have been presented for each stated objective, followed by the application of inferential statistics to assess the validity of the null hypothesis. Ultimately, the findings are subject to analysis and deliberation. The study aimed to achieve specified objectives, which were:

- i) To establish the effect of coaching on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- ii) To examine the effect of delegation of authority on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- iii) To examine the effect of employee participation on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya; and
- iv) To determine the moderating effect of university factors on the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya.

4.2 Rate of questionnaire return

A total of 358 questionnaires were distributed to participants. A total of 348 questionnaires, accounting for 97% of the total, were returned by the respondents. The tabulated data in Table 4.2 presents the summary of the return rate for the questionnaire.

Table 4. 1: Questionnaire Return Rate

Unit of observation	Data collection method	Target population	Sample size	Usable response	% effective response rate
Academic staff	Questionnaires	2311	358	348	97

Source: Researcher, (2022)

According to the findings presented in Table 4.1, the return rate of the sample size was determined to be 97%, indicating that it falls within the parameters typically associated with a large sample size (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). According to Kothari (1993), a return rate of above 60% is considered an acceptable level of return for survey studies of this nature. The data was subsequently encoded and assessed for coherence.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The study established the general information on gender, age bracket, level of education, designation and length of time worked in the University. This was sought to establish the representation of different genders, to establish age brackets for human resource planning and to get responses from different levels of intellectuals as well as evaluate the retention and staff turnover of the respondents.

4.3.1 Gender of respondents

The study aimed at establishing the gender disparities of employees in the university as shown in Table 4.2 below: -

Table 4. 2: Gender of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Male	211	61
Female	137	39
Total	348	100.0

Source: Researcher, (2022)

Table 4.2 above, illustrated that 211 (61%) were male and 137 (39%) were female. The study noted public universities in Kenya were dominated by the male gender creating a gender gap in employment.

4.3.2 Distribution of the Respondents According to their Age Bracket

This was to establish whether Kenyan public universities had adequate vibrant academic staff for human resource planning as shown in table 4.3 below:

Table 4. 3: Age Bracket of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
25- 35 years	35	10.2
36-45 years	117	33.5
46-55 years	127	36.6
56-65 years	43	12.3
66-74 years	26	7.4
Total	348	100.0

Source: Researcher, (2022)

The study findings in table 4.3 showed that majority of the respondents, 127(36.6%) fell within the age bracket of 46-55 years. However, the age bracket of 66-74 years had the least number of respondents accounting for 26 out of 348 respondents. These results were in tandem with the CUE,

(2018) which revealed that most academic staff were within the age bracket of 41 – 60. This showed that most of the universities had youthful academic staff who could be enhanced and utilized to take up responsibilities on their own hence ensuring quality service delivery.

4.3.3 Distribution of the Respondents According to the Level of Education

The study sought to establish the academic qualifications of the respondents. The summary of the findings was indicated in table 4.4.

Table 4. 4: Education Level of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
PhD	145	41.7
Masters	179	51.2
Bachelors	17	5.0
Postgraduate Diploma	7	2.1
Total	348	100.0

Source: Researcher, (2022)

The study findings in table 4.5 revealed that universities had a high number of respondents, 179 (51.2%) with Masters qualification and 145 (41.7%) of the respondents had PhD qualifications. The study noted that despite the major strides made by the respondents to attain PhDs, there was need for more encouragement for the respondents with Masters qualification to strive and acquire the PhD qualification. This was in line with the minimum CUE requirements which advocated that all the university academic staff should have PhDs.

4.3.4 Distribution of the Respondents according to their Designations

The designation of the respondents who participated in the study were summarized as indicated in table 4.5.

Table 4. 5: Designation of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Professors	15	4.3
Associate Professor	24	6.9
Senior Lecturer	106	30.5
Lecturer	168	48.3
Assistant Lecturer	21	6.0
Tutorial Fellow	9	2.6
Graduate Assistant	5	1.4
Total	348	100.0

Source: Researcher, (2022)

Results above showed that Lecturers 168 (48.3%) and Senior Lecturers 106 (30.5%) were the majority. On the other hand, the number of Associate Professors and Professors were very few at 24(6.9%) and 15(4.3%) respectively. This posed a threat in future as Professors were meant to provide academic leadership in quality teaching and research. More so, it may be an indicator as to why there was low output of quality research resulting to low rankings in webometrics in most of the Kenyan public universities.

4.3.5 Distribution of the Respondents According to Length of Service

The study established the period served by the respondents in the university system as showed below: -

Table 4. 6: Length of Service in the University System

	Frequency	Percent
0-1 year	7	2.0
1-2 years	23	6.5
2-5 years	56	16.1
6-10 years	128	36.9
Above 10 years	134	38.5
Total	348	100.0

Source: Researcher, (2022)

In table 4.6, a significant number of respondents 262 (75.4%) had served from 6 years and above, with majority 134 (38.5) falling in the category of having served above 10 years. This showed that Kenyan public universities could be categorized among the good employers in the country as characterised by the staff retention of above 10 years.

4.4. Descriptive Findings and Discussions

This part presents the descriptive findings and discussions pertaining to the aims of the study. The results are presented using measures of central tendency, such as means, and measures of variance or dispersion, such as standard deviation. The statements were assessed using a five-point Likert Scale. The present study attempted to gather the perspectives of participants about coaching, delegation of authority, and employee participation.

4.4.1 Coaching and Service Delivery

The researcher sought to establish the effect of coaching on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. A five (5) Likert Scale was used where one (1) implied the least and five (5) the highest positive response (thus, 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5 =Strongly Agree (SA) was used in the analysis of data. The results of the Likert Scale were shown in table 4.7.

Table 4. 7: Likert Scale on Coaching

Description	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Senior academic staff (Coach) offer guidance on teaching & research to junior faculty (coachee)	348	11 (3)	80 (23)	79 (22)	110 (32)	68 (20)
Senior Faculty/School members provide professional development i.e., innovative teaching strategies, writing of research winning grants, inculcation of leadership qualities (Coaching)	348	116 (33)	117 (34)	69 (20)	34 (10)	12 (3)
We hold school/faculty meetings where we discuss and exchange thoughts and ideas regarding professional growth and development	348	27 (8)	14 (4)	30 (7)	173 (50)	104 (30)
The coach provides a level of neutrality to seek multiple opinions and points	348	46 (13)	100 (30)	30 (7)	110 (32)	62 (18)
The coach inspire, creates learning opportunities and motivate in working towards the set goal	348	31 (9)	37 (11)	77 (22)	119 (34)	84 (24)
Coaching is done using different approaches	348	34 (10)	69 (20)	11 (4)	119 (34)	115 (33)
Coaching provides new insights impacting on my behaviour	348	13 (3)	80 (23)	79 (22)	110 (32)	68 (20)
There is increased academic activities as a result of coach-coachee relationship	348	36 (11)	48 (14)	71 (20)	144 (42)	49 (14)
Coaching culture has led to strong relationships in my university	348	15 (4)	45 (13)	79 (23)	163 (47)	46 (13)
Coaching has exposed me to more academic work and teaching materials	348	41 (12)	42 (12)	51 (14)	117 (34)	97 (28)
Coaching has improved my competencies providing advancement of opportunities	348	85 (25)	64 (18)	19 (6)	95 (27)	85 (24)
Coaching has enhanced my confidence levels	348	7 (2)	55 (16)	73 (21)	123 (35)	90 (26)
My university should consider enhancing coaching activities	348	79 (23)	63 (18)	8 (2)	123 (35)	74 (22)

Source: Researcher, (2022)

From table 4.7, the results showed that 52% of the respondents agreed that senior academic staff offered guidance on teaching & research to junior staff, 80% agreed they held school/faculty meetings where they discussed and exchanged thoughts and ideas regarding professional growth and development. More so, over 50% of the respondents agreed that coaching provided new insights, had increased coach-coachee relationship, improved competencies, led to strong relationships in the university and had exposed the academic staff to more academic and teaching materials. However, it was noted that a significant percentage, 233 (67%) disagreed that senior faculty/school members provided professional development such as innovative teaching strategies, writing of research winning grants, inculcation of leadership qualities.

Findings from the interviews conducted on the Deans/Registrar and Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs revealed that, Universities are embracing and encouraging coaching as an empowerment facet in ensuring service delivery and continuity of university operations as captured here below from one of the respondent:

Coaching is a critical programme as it helps in the preparation for succession planning (interview with one of the Dean's on 5th August, 2022).

These results were in agreement with Geber, (2010) and Kelly, (2016) who contend that coaching positively influenced the careers of academic beginners and improved the advisor/advisee relationships leading to a collaboration that was both successful and rewarding.

However, these findings differed from Meng & Sun, (2019) who advised universities to create a supportive environment to promote the professional development of younger and junior Faculty. Thus, from the above findings, it can be seen that coaching was a predictor of service delivery. If embraced by public universities it can instil innovative teaching skills and offer a platform for

writing and conducting quality research. More so, it may inculcate leadership qualities leading to a strong institutional culture. This may eliminate unethical practices leading to quality service in the public universities.

4.4.2 Delegation of Authority on Service Delivery

The researcher sought to establish the effect of delegation of authority on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. A five (5) Likert scale (where 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA) was used in the analysis of data. The results of the Likert Scale were shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4. 8: Likert Scale on Delegation of Authority

Description	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Academic Deans/ CODs assigns some new tasks to academic staff under them to perform	348	5 (1)	27 (8)	67 (19)	131 (38)	117 (34)
Academic Deans/ CODs transfers some authority to academic staff under them to influence work performance on delegated tasks	348	51 (15)	27 (8)	79 (23)	117 (32)	74 (22)
Academic Deans/ CODs entrusts academic staff under them with their responsibilities such as administrative roles, representation in universities committee meetings	348	103 (30)	78 (23)	40 (11)	96 (28)	31 (9)
My level of self-confidence has increased as a result of delegation of duties by my supervisor	348	76 (29)	79 (23)	38 (11)	62 (18)	93 (27)
Through delegation I feel more committed to my institution	348	27 (8)	31 (9)	63 (18)	134 (39)	93 (27)
I understand the responsibilities delegated to me	348	10 (3)	79 (22)	79 (22)	111 (31)	69 (19)
I always look forward to be called upon to discharge higher responsibilities	348	3 (1)	14 (4)	63 (17)	185 (53)	83 (23)

Source: Researcher, (2022)

The findings of the study in table 4.8 showed that 72% of the respondents agreed that the Deans/CoDs assigned them new tasks while 54% of the respondents were in agreement that Academic Deans/ CODs transferred some authority to them. The study findings also revealed that majority, 76% agreed that they always looked forward to be called upon to discharge higher responsibilities. However, 53% of the respondents agreed that the CODs/Deans did not entrust them with responsibilities such as administrative roles and representation in universities committee meetings.

Results from the interviews conducted to the CODs and the Deans of Universities revealed that they do delegate their roles and responsibilities but under close monitoring and supervision. These are some of the reasons captured from the respondents below:-

Yes, I do but despite delegating, I still have the fear of the unknown. Sometimes the staff could sabotage the university activities yet when it comes to accountability, I am the one answerable (interview on 5th August, 2022).

I cannot delegate for more than a month, I risk losing my responsibility allowance during the period I am away from the office (interview on 8th August, 2022).

These findings were in agreement with Kiiza & Picho, (2015); Okongo & Onen, (2019) and Shah & Kazmi, (2020) who contended that delegation of authority and responsibilities had a positive impact on staff and institutional performance but those in authority were not delegating it fully.

From the above findings, it is clear that for university management to inspire confidence in academic staff, they should endeavour to entrust them with their responsibilities. The notion or attitude of those in leadership being the only ones making top management decisions may be detrimental to quality service delivery. Therefore, delegation of authority in public universities was not fully executed.

4.4.3 Employee Participation on Service Delivery

The researcher sought to establish the influence of employee participation on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. A five (5) Likert scale (where 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)) was used in the analysis of data as shown below :-

Table 4. 9: Likert Scale on Employee Participation

Description	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
I participate in curriculum development in the department	348	13 (3)	80 (23)	7 (2)	180 (52)	68 (20)
I am always involved in the preparation of teaching timetables	348	36 (10)	48 (14)	71 (20)	144 (42)	49 (14)
I am involved in setting departmental targets for teaching	348	46 (14)	163 (47)	79 (23)	45 (13)	15 (4)
I am involved in carrying out research for my department	348	7 (2)	21 (6)	31 (9)	124 (36)	165 (48)
I participate in Departmental/School Committee meetings	348	69 (20)	52 (14)	14 (4)	96 (28)	117 (34)
I am always involved in the review of curricula in my School	348	53 (15)	76 (22)	26 (7)	61 (18)	131 (38)
I am consulted regarding the courses allocated to me to teach	348	7 (2)	27 (8)	52 (15)	192 (55)	70 (20)
I am consulted on some relevant academic issues in my department	348	72 (21)	52 (15)	7 (3)	136 (38)	79 (23)
The University has effective communication platforms such as e-mails, for employee participation	348	21 (6)	17 (5)	52 (15)	155 (45)	103 (30)
I am satisfied with my level of participation in decision making in matters affecting the university	348	3 (1)	14 (4)	63 (18)	185 (54)	83 (24)
Suggestions I make to improve on the planned activities are always put into consideration	348	79 (29)	45 (13)	15 (4)	163 (47)	46 (14)

Source: Researcher, (2022)

The study findings in table 4.9 showed that 72% agreed that they participated in curriculum development, 56% agreed that they were involved in the preparation of teaching timetables while

84% agreed they were involved in carrying out research in their departments. In addition, over 60% of the respondents agreed that they were consulted on courses allocated to teach, relevant academic issues and were satisfied with the level of participation in decision making as far as matters affecting the university were concerned.

However, 61% of the respondents disagreed that they were involved in the setting of departmental targets for teaching. It is therefore worth noting that Kenyan public universities were embracing employee participation as an empowerment facet to ensure quality service delivery. These results were in agreement with Tchaphchet, Iwu & Allen-Ile, (2014) and Wainaina, Iravo & Waititu (2014) who revealed that employee participation influenced efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, and commitment. However, much needs to be done as a significant percentage of the respondents disagreed that they were involved in the setting of departmental targets for teaching. Departmental targets in a university set up is a critical component in realization of quality service delivery.

These findings were in tandem with Motebele & Mbohwa, (2013) who posted results of only 35% of the respondents being in agreement that the University involved them in the university activities. When the key informants, the Deans, Registrars and the DVCs of academic affairs were interviewed on whether academic staff were involved in the university's activities, a number of them commented as captured by one of the respondent below;

Not all, as some academic staff were uncooperative or did not avail themselves when called upon to attend to some university matters. This forces HODs/Deans to make up decisions without the academic staff input depending on the urgency of the reports with a view of meeting the set deadlines.

From the above findings employee participation is a predictor of service delivery. When academic staff are involved in university activities, they feel part and parcel of the institution leading to job satisfaction. This makes it easier for the management to implement policies and decisions.

4.4.4 University Factors as the moderating effect on Employee Empowerment Practices and Service Delivery

The researcher sought to find out if university factors affected employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. A 5 scale Likert (where 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA) was used in the analysis of data. The results of the Likert were shown in table 4.10.

Table 4. 10: Descriptive Statistics for University Factors

Description	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
The age of my institution affects effective undertaking of employee empowerment programmes by my university	348	72 (20.8)	52 (14.9)	79 (22.8)	79 (22.8)	65 (18.8)
Resource allocation plays a role in determining the implementation of employee empowerment programmes such as competency development	348	3 (1.0)	14 (4.0)	63 (17.8)	185 (53.5)	83 (23.8)
Leadership style of my Vice Chancellor and other managers of the university determine the attention paid to the employee empowerment programmes such as coaching, delegation and employee participation	348	7 (2.0)	21 (5.9)	31 (8.9)	124 (35.6)	165 (47.5)
The approaches of employee empowerment adopted by the management of my institution have always depended on the leaders in position and other university factors	348	14 (4.0)	52 (14.9)	69 (19.8)	96 (27.7)	117 (33.7)
Service delivery has always been undermined by leadership style/age	348	53 (15.2)	76 (21.7)	131 (38.2)	61 (17.5)	26 (7.4)
University factors in my institution have spurred competency development programmes	348	3 (1.0)	14 (4.0)	63 (17.8)	241 (69.3)	27 (7.9)

Source: Researcher, (2022)

Table 4.10 showed that 77.3% agreed that the leadership style adopted by the university managers determined the resource allocation and attention paid to the employee empowerment programmes. 73.1% of the respondents agreed that leadership style of the University managers determined attention paid to the employee empowerment programmes. More so, 77.2% of the respondents agreed that university factors in the institution had spurred competency development programmes. Moreover, 41.6% were in agreement that the age of an institution affected effective undertaking of employee empowerment programmes. Thus, the success of Kenyan public universities depends on the leadership style of their Vice Chancellor and other managers of the university.

These findings were in line with Idua (2014) who concluded that institutional factors significantly moderated the relationship between employee empowerment and performance of academic staff. However, the age of an institution did not affect effective undertaking of employee empowerment programs. Thus, the performance of universities majorly depended on the leadership and management competencies of the managers to effectively address challenges encountered.

4.4.5 Employee Empowerment Practices and Service Delivery

The researcher sought to determine the effect of employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. A 5 scale Likert (where 1=Strongly Disagree (SD), 2=Disagree (D), 3=Undecided (U), 4=Agree (A), 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)) was used in the analysis of data. The results of the Likert were shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Likert Scale on Service Delivery

Description	N	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
My University has recorded fewer complaints from our students regarding our service delivery in the last one year	348	7 (2)	55 (16)	3 (1)	193 (56)	90 (26)
Our students appreciate the quality of teaching offered by University	348	21 (6)	17 (5)	52 (15)	155 (45)	103 (30)
The number of students who graduated from my University has risen in the last one year	348	10 (3)	79 (29)	9 (3)	181 (45)	69 (20)
Our university ranking has improved both locally and internationally in the last one year	348	63 (18)	14 (4)	3 (1)	185 (54)	83 (24)

Source: Researcher, (2022)

Based on the study findings in table 4.11, 82% agreed that the University had recorded fewer complaints from students regarding service delivery in the last one year while 75% agreed that students appreciated the quality of teaching offered by public university. More so, 65% agreed that the number of students who graduated from the University had risen in the last one year while 78% of the respondents agreed that the university ranking had improved both locally and internationally in the last one year. In view of the findings above, employee empowerment practices (coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation) lead to improved service delivery in Kenyan public universities.

These results were in agreement with Motebele & Mbohwa, (2013); Idua, (2017); Olayemi & Oyebanji, (2019) and Araigua, (2020) who contend that employee empowerment strategies impact positively on job satisfaction and performance of employees. When the DVCs were interviewed on how they monitored quality service delivery in their universities. Most of them were in agreement that they were in touch with key market industries who gave feedback on the students' progress as highlighted some of the comments from the respondents below: -

Through our academic staff, when they go out for industrial assessment during attachments, the industrial market informs us on students' performance. This has always acted as a benchmark on where to improve or act as remarked by one of the DVC (Interview on 1st August, 2022).

We are getting positive accolades from the market industries where our students go for attachments. Most industries prefer students from public universities as they seemed to be well grounded (Interview on 1st August, 2022).

Based on the study findings above, adoption of employee empowerment practices (coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation) in Kenyan public universities had resulted to fewer complaints from stakeholders, increased stakeholders' satisfaction, increased the number of students who graduated and improved the university ranking both locally and internationally in the last one year.

4.5 Basic Tests of Statistical Assumption for Academic Staff Questionnaire

Diagnostic tests were performed to check the fitness of data in meeting the basic tests of statistical.

4.5.1 Test for Normality

A normality test was conducted with a confidence level of 95%. When the p-value is below the significance level of 0.05, it indicates that the null hypothesis can be rejected, providing evidence that the data being tested does not originate from a population that follows a normal distribution. In the event that the p-value exceeds 0.05, it is deemed appropriate to accept the null hypothesis, which posits that the observed data originates from a population that follows a normal distribution. The hypothesis was tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) goodness-of-fit test and the Shapiro-Wilk (SW) test for normalcy.

H_0 : the data is not drawn from a normal distribution

H_1 : the data is drawn from a normal distribution

The findings are as shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4. 12: Normality Test

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Coaching	.162	20	.178	.952	20	.406
Delegation of authority	.207	20	.324	.912	20	.068
Employee participation	.171	20	.128	.951	20	.382
University factors	.118	20	.210*	.959	20	.523
Service delivery	.117	118	.152	.939	118	.412

Source: Researcher, (2022)

From table 4.12, results from Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) and Shapiro-Wilk (SW) suggested that the residuals were normally distributed (sig. >.05) meaning that tests of normality were significant and therefore parametric test was used. The KS results in Table 4.13 indicate that data collected on coaching (df = 20, p = 0.178), delegation of authority (df = 20, p = 0.324), employee participation (df = 20, p = 0.128), university factors (df = 20, p = 0.210) and service delivery (df = 20, p = 0.152) were normally distributed as $p - values \geq 0.05$. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis.

On the other hand, the SW results showed that the data collected on coaching (df = 20, p = 0.406), delegation of authority (df = 20, p = 0.068), employee participation (df = 20, p = 0.382), university factors (df = 20, p = 0.523) and service delivery (df = 20, p = 0.412) were normally distributed at $p - values \geq 0.05$ therefore, not statistically significant at 5% level of significance. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis as the data came from normal distribution and was normally distributed. This

means that the tests of normality were significant and therefore parametric test should be used for analysis.

4.5.2 Heteroscedasticity/ Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity refers to a condition in which the variances of errors remain constant across all levels of the predictor variable. On the other hand, heteroscedasticity denotes the absence of homoscedasticity, wherein the variances of errors exhibit variation over all observations. The presence of heteroscedasticity, if left unaddressed, can undermine the validity of statistical tests of significance, such as regression analysis, and elevate the risk of drawing incorrect inferences. The present study employed the Levene statistic to examine the null hypothesis that the variance of the explained variable is equivalent across all levels of the explanatory factors. The findings are displayed in Table 4.13.

Table 4. 13: Test for Heteroscedasticity/Homoscedasticity

	Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Coaching	2.207	1	347	.367
Delegation of authority	2.124	1	347	.251
Employee participation	1.883	1	347	.648
University factors	0.351	1	347	.454
Service delivery	0.843	1	347	.132

The Levene statistics is deemed statistically significant when the p-value is less than 0.05, indicating that the null hypothesis should be rejected. Conversely, when the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It is important to highlight the findings presented in Table 4.13, which indicate that the p-value is more than 0.05. This suggests that we may reject the null hypothesis and infer that the variances of the dependent variable remain consistent across various

levels of the explanatory variables. This finding satisfies the assumption of homogeneity of variance.

4.5.3 Multicollinearity Tests

Multicollinearity refers to the occurrence of significant correlation between or among predictor variables, which can lead to an inflation of the standard errors associated with the beta coefficients. This phenomenon can also restrict the interpretability of the coefficient of determination (R-squared) and impede the assessment of the individual importance of each predictor variable within the model. The evaluation of multicollinearity was conducted by employing the tolerance value and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The tolerance value is a numerical measure that falls within the range of 0 to 1. A tolerance number below 0.1 is indicative of a significant issue with multicollinearity. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is a statistical measure that is calculated as the reciprocal of the tolerance value. While there are no universally agreed-upon thresholds for determining the presence of multicollinearity, it is generally accepted that a VIF value ranging from 1 to 10 indicates the absence of multicollinearity. Multicollinearity is present when the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value is below 1 or exceeds 10. The findings of the Multicollinearity test are displayed in Table 4.14.

Table 4. 14: Tests for Multicollinearity

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.112	226
	Employee participation	1.009	1.023
	Coaching	2.342	3.004
	Delegation of authority	1.372	2.174
	University factors	2.168	2.165

a. Dependent variable: Service delivery

Source: Researcher, (2022)

From the regression model predicting employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities, the tolerance and VIF values for both employee participation, coaching, delegation authority and university factors were all acceptable; tolerance value $> .10$ and VIF value < 10 . This therefore implied that the assumption of multicollinearity was met.

4.5.4 Correlation Analysis

The bivariate correlation, which quantifies the relationship between two variables, was calculated for the observed data using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (r). The values of r range from 0 and ± 1 , which means that there is no correlation at all, to, which means that there is a perfect linear relationship between the two variables. Table 4.15 displays the outcomes of the correlation analysis.

Table 4. 15: Pearson Correlation Matrix of the Study Variables

		Service delivery	Delegation of authority	Employee participation	Coaching	University factors
Service delivery	Pearson Correlation	1	.722*	.790	.657	.647
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.015	.004	.036	.008
Coaching	Pearson Correlation	.657	.637**	.713	1	.554
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.005	.002		.027
Delegation of authority	Pearson Correlation	.722*	1	.543	.637**	.715
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015		.973	.005	.179
Employee participation	Pearson Correlation	.790	.543	1	.713	.663
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.015		.002	.014
University factors	Pearson Correlation	.647	.015	.663	.554	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.179	.014	.027	

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

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

Source: (Researcher, 2022)

The results above indicate that at 0.05 level of significance, coaching was a significant predictor of service delivery ($r = 0.657$, $p\text{-value} = 0.036 < 0.05$). This means that an increase in coaching leads to an increase in service delivery. However, it is worth noting that there exists a strong and statistically significant association between delegation and service delivery. This is supported by a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.722$, with a $p\text{-value}$ of 0.015, which is less than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. This suggests that the act of granting more authority to individuals leads to a corresponding improvement in the delivery of services. The findings of the study further substantiated that, with a significance level of 0.05, employee participation exhibited a substantial predictive relationship with service delivery ($r = 0.790$, $p\text{-value} = 0.004 < 0.05$). An increase in employee participation leads to an increase in service delivery. Lastly, the results showed that at 0.05 level of significance, university factors was a significant predictor of service delivery ($r = 0.647$ $p\text{-value} = 0.008 < 0.05$).

4.6 Inferential Analysis

The study sought to establish the effect of employee empowerment on service delivery among the academic staff. The researcher formulated the following hypothesis: -

H_{01} : Coaching does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities, H_{02} : Delegation of authority does not significantly affect service delivery among academic staff in the Kenyan public universities, H_{03} : Employee participation does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities and H_{04} : University factors do not significantly moderate the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. Simple linear regression and multiple regression analysis were used to estimate the

predictive effects of employee empowerment practices on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

4.6.1 H₀₁: Coaching does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities

The study sought to establish the effect of coaching on service delivery. To establish this, simple linear regression test was used. The study utilised the following null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: Coaching does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

The findings of the hypothesis test were presented below: -

Table 4. 16: Model Summary for Coaching

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.657 ^a	.431	.437	5.03507

a. Predictors: (Constant), Coaching

b. Dependent Variable: Service delivery among academic staff

ANOVA Test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4320.7741	1	4320.741	170.431	.002 ^b
	Residual	5704.176	347	25.352		
	Total	10024.916	348			

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery among academic staff

b. Predictors: (Constant), Coaching

Regression Coefficients Model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		

1	(Constant)	3.049	1.592		1.915	.057
	Coaching	.693	.053	.657	13.055	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery among academic staff

Source: Researcher, (2022)

The results in table 4.16 above shows that the R-square was 0.431 implying, variation of service delivery at 43.1% among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities was explained by coaching. At 0.05 level of significance the ANOVA test indicated that coaching was important in predicting service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities as indicated by the significance value=0.002 which was less than 0.05 level of significance ($p=0.002 < 0.05$). Thus, coaching had a significant influence on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities (t-statistic=13.055, p-value=0.002< 0.05). The null hypothesis was rejected and alternative hypothesis - coaching has a significant impact on service delivery- was accepted. Coaching increased service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities by 0.693. The regression model equation was:

$$Y = 3.049 + 0.693coaching$$

These results were in agreement with Alexander, et al., (2020) and Mwangi, et al., (2018) who contended that coaching had significantly impacted on the internal processes leading to employee performance.

4.6.2 H₀₂: Delegation of authority does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities

The study sought to establish the effect of delegation of authority on service delivery. Simple linear regression test was used. The study utilised the following null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₂: Delegation of authority does not significantly affect service delivery among academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

The findings of the hypothesis test were presented here under: -

Table 4. 17: Model Summary for Delegation of Authority

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.722 ^a	.522	.520	4.93906

a. Predictors: (Constant), delegation
b. Dependent Variable: service delivery

ANOVA test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5988.640	1	5988.640	245.493	.013 ^b
	Residual	5488.725	347	24.394		
	Total	11477.366	348			

a. Dependent Variable: service delivery
b. Predictors: (Constant), delegation

Regression Coefficients Model

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	2.024	1.562		1.296	.196
	Delegation authority	.816	.052	.722	15.668	.013

a. Dependent Variable: service delivery

Source: Researcher, (2022)

Results in table 4.17 showed that R-square was 0.522 implying that variation of 52.2% of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities was explained by delegation authority. Delegation of authority was important in predicting service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities as indicated by significance value=0.013 which was less than 0.05 level of significance ($p=0.013 < 0.05$). The study findings revealed that delegation of authority had a significant influence on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities (t -statistic=15.668, p -value=0.013< 0.05). The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis - delegation of authority has a significant influence on service delivery- was accepted. Thus, for every unit increase in delegation there was a

corresponding increase on service0 delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities by 0.816. The regression model equation is:

$$Y = 2.024 + 0.816 \textit{delegation of authority}$$

The findings above are in agreement with Ali, *et. al.*, (2021) who posited that delegation had a strong relationship among administrative organization of trainers and performance.

4.6.3 H03: Employee participation does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities

The study sought to establish the effect of employee participation on service delivery. Simple linear regression test was used. The study utilised the following null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H03: Employee participation does not significantly affect service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

The findings of the hypothesis test were presented here under: -

Table 4. 18: Model Summary of Employee Participation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.790 ^a	.624	.623	4.51782

a. Predictors: (Constant): Employee Participation

b. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

ANOVA test

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7634.207	1	7634.207	374.029	.000 ^b
	Residual	4592.410	347	20.411		
	Total	12226.617	348			

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

b. Predictors: (Constant): Employee Participation

Regression Coefficients Model

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.487	1.428		1.741	.083
Employee participation	.921	.048	.790	19.340	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Service delivery

Source: Researcher, (2022)

Results in table 4.18 showed that R-square was 0.624 implying that, variation of 62.4% of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities was explained by employee participation. Employee participation was important in predicting service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities ($p=0.000 < 0.05$). Employee participation significantly influenced service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities (t -statistic=19.340, p -value=0.000< 0.05). The null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis – employee participation had a significant impact on service delivery- was accepted. Therefore, we conclude that employee participation does affect service delivery. For every unit increase in employee participation there was a corresponding increase on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities by 0.921. The regression model equation is:

$$Y = 2.487 + 0.921 \text{employee participation}$$

The results above agree with Odero & Makori, (2018) who asserted that employee involvement significantly impacted on employee performance.

4.6.4 Employee Empowerment Practices and Service Delivery

Table 4. 19: Model Summary of Employee Empowerment and Service Delivery

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.689 ^a	.694	.673	3.5731
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Coaching, delegation and employee participation

b. Dependent Variable: service delivery

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5826.804	4	1456.701	33.122	.021 ^a
	Residual	13721.669	344	43.980		
	Total	19548.473	348			

a. Dependent Variable: service delivery

b. Predictors: (Constant), Coaching, delegation and employee participation

Regression Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	13.296	2.218		5.994	.002
	Coaching	.211	.065	.229	3.229	.017
	Delegation authority	.338	.083	.071	.943	.001
	Employee participation	.198	.102	.156	1.944	.002

a. Dependent Variable: service delivery

Source: Researcher, (2022)

The study sought to establish the effect of employee practices on service delivery. Simple linear regression test was used. The findings of the hypothesis test were presented, at 0.05 level of significance the ANOVA test indicated that in this model the independent variables namely; coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation were predictors of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities ($p=0.021 < 0.05$). From the findings in table 4.19 above; at 5% level of significance, coaching was a significant predictor of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities where ($p=0.017 < 0.05$). Delegation of authority was a significant predictor of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities where ($p=0.001 < 0.05$). Employee participation was a significant

predictor of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities where ($p=0.002 < 0.05$). Let Y be service delivery, X_1 be coaching, X_2 be delegation of authority and X_3 employee participation, using the regression coefficients in Table 4...., we have;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \text{error}$$

$$Y = 13.296 + 0.211 * X_1 + 0.338 * X_2 + 0.198 * X_3$$

From the equation above when coaching was increased by one unit service delivery would increase by 0.211, a unit increase in delegation of authority would result to 0.338 increase in service delivery and a unit increase in employee participation would result in 0.198 increase in service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. This showed that to realize service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities; coaching of staff, delegation of authority and employee participation should be ensured. These results were in agreement with Motebele & Mbohwa, (2013); Idua, (2017); Olayemi & Oyebanji, (2019) and Araigua, (2020) who contend that employee empowerment strategies impact positively on job satisfaction and performance of employees.

4.7 Regression Analysis with and without Moderating Factors

The researcher conducted regression analysis to assess whether or not university factors moderated the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities as indicated below:

4.7.1 Ho4: University factors do not significantly moderate the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities

The study sought to establish the effect of coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation and how it affects service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan Public Universities. To assess this, the following model was used: -

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The results were as shown below:

Table 4. 20: Model Summary for Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.757 ^a	.574	.570	.40665

a. Predictors: (Constant), Participation A, Delegation A, Coaching A

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	76.544	3	25.515	154.297	.000 ^b
	Residual	56.884	344	.165		
	Total	133.429	347			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery A

b. Predictors: (Constant), Participation A, Delegation A, Coaching A

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.309	.164		1.886	.060
	Coaching A	.318	.063	.256	5.043	.000
	Delegation of Authority A	.059	.026	.085	2.231	.026
	Employee Participation A	.604	.061	.513	9.870	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery A

From the model summary in table 4.20 results indicated that the value of R- square (r^2) was 0.574 meaning that coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation explains 57.4% of variance in service delivery. Similarly, the Anova table results showed that the F value = 154.297 and the P value = 0.00 meaning that the model was feasible. In relation to the coefficient table, the coaching t -value =5.043 and the P-value = 0.00 was positive and significant to service delivery. These results were in agreement with (Alexander, *et al*, 2020). From the coefficient table delegation of Authority t-value = 2.231, P- value = 0.26 was positive and significant to service delivery. The results were in agreement with Ali, et al, (2021). Finally, the results from the coefficient table indicated that employee participation t- value = 9.870, P- value = 0.00 was

positive and significant to service delivery. The results were in agreement with Odero & Makori, (2018).

4.7.2 Hierarchical Regression

The study sought to establish the effect of university factors on employee empowerment practices and service delivery. The study utilised the following null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho4: University factors do not significantly moderate the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

To assess for hierarchical regression the following model was used: -

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4M + \beta_5X_1M + \beta_6X_2M + \beta_7X_3M + \epsilon$$

The results were tabled as hereunder in table 4.21:

Table 4. 21: Model summary for Hierarchical Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.492 ^a	.242	.236	.54207	.242	36.698	3	344	.000
2	.769 ^b	.591	.583	.40022	.348	96.681	3	341	.000
3	.781 ^c	.611	.603	.39092	.020	17.422	1	340	.000
4	.788 ^d	.620	.609	.38771	.010	2.882	3	337	.036

- a. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university? Level of education, Age of the Respondent.
- b. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university? Level of education, Age of the respondents, Delegation A, Coaching A, Participation A.
- c. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university?, Level of education, Age of the respondents, Delegation A, Coaching A, Participation A, University Factors
- d. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university?, Level of education, Age of the respondents, Delegation A, Coaching A, Participation A, University Factors, DM, PM, CM

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	32.349	3	10.783	36.698	.000 ^b
	Residual	101.079	344	.294		
	Total	133.429	347			
2	Regression	78.808	6	13.135	82.000	.000 ^c
	Residual	54.621	341	.160		
	Total	133.429	347			
3	Regression	81.470	7	11.639	76.160	.000 ^d
	Residual	51.958	340	.153		
	Total	133.429	347			
4	Regression	82.770	10	8.277	55.061	.000 ^e
	Residual	50.659	337	.150		
	Total	133.429	347			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery A

b. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university? , Level of education, Age of the respondents

c. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university? , Level of education, Age of the respondents, Delegation A, Coaching A, Participation A

d. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university? , Level of education, Age of the respondents, Delegation A, Coaching A, Participation A, University Factors

e. Predictors: (Constant), How long have you worked in this university? , Level of education, Age of the respondents, Delegation A, Coaching A, Participation A, University Factors, DM, PM, CM

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.560	.162		15.794	.000
	Age of the respondents	.124	.028	.209	4.426	.000
	Level of education	-.102	.044	-.109	-2.316	.021
	How long have you worked in this university?	.252	.029	.405	8.599	.000
2	(Constant)	.362	.178		2.030	.043
	Age of the respondents	-.016	.022	-.027	-.721	.471
	Level of education	-.050	.033	-.053	-1.522	.129
	How long have you worked in this university?	.080	.024	.129	3.297	.001
	Coaching A	.261	.065	.210	4.008	.000
	Delegation A	.057	.026	.082	2.183	.030
	Participation A	.590	.062	.502	9.553	.000
3	(Constant)	.157	.181		.866	.387
	Age of the respondents	-.005	.022	-.008	-.207	.836

	Level of education	-.062	.032	-.066	-1.929	.055
	How long have you worked in this university?	.082	.024	.132	3.446	.001
	Coaching A	.192	.066	.155	2.923	.004
	Delegation A	.041	.026	.060	1.613	.108
	Participation A	.508	.064	.432	7.998	.000
	University Factors	.216	.052	.185	4.174	.000
4	(Constant)	.854	.555		1.539	.125
	Age of the respondents	-.009	.022	-.015	-.406	.685
	Level of education	-.064	.032	-.069	-2.005	.046
	How long have you worked in this university?	.079	.024	.127	3.305	.001
	Coaching A	-.768	.409	-.619	-1.880	.061
	Delegation A	-.176	.154	-.256	-1.147	.252
	Participation A	1.488	.392	1.265	3.796	.000
	University Factors	-.002	.168	-.001	-.010	.992
	CM	.275	.115	1.340	2.398	.017
	DM	.062	.044	.410	1.429	.154
	PM	-.273	.109	-1.381	-2.510	.013

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery A

The results in model 1 indicated that the r-squared (r^2) value = 0.242. This meant that the years of experience, the level of education and the age of the respondents as control variables explained 24.2% of variance in service delivery. More so, the results in model 2 where coaching, delegation of authority and employee participation were added, the r^2 -value moved to 0.591. The r^2 change value was 0.348 meaning that the independent variable explained 34.8% of variance in service delivery. Further, in model 3, when the university factors were added as a control variable, r^2 change value was 0.02. This showed that university factors explained only 2% of variance in service delivery. Similarly, in model 4 when interaction terms were added, the r^2 change value increased by 0.01. This led to the value of r^2 to be 0.062. This showed that the r^2 increased thus university factors had a positive moderating influence.

In the Anova table, the P-value for all the four models was 0.000. This showed that all the models were feasible. In the coefficient table, model 1 results indicated that the age of the respondents,

level of education and length of service (experience) were all positive and significant. Similarly, in model 2 all the independent variables were positive and significant though the age of respondents and level of education became insignificant. In addition, in model 3, the length of service (years of experience), coaching, employee participation and university factors were significant while all other variables became insignificant. Finally, in model 4, the length of service (years of experience), employee participation, interaction terms of coaching and employee participation were significant while all the rest were insignificant.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter presented a summary of the study findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research study.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This study sought to establish the effect of employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities. To actualize this, the study set out four (4) objectives:

- i) To establish the effect of coaching on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- ii) To examine the effect of delegation of authority on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya;
- iii) To examine the effect of employee participation on service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya; and
- iv) To determine the moderating effect of university factors on the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in Public Universities in Western Kenya.

The study findings revealed that for quality service delivery to be achieved, there should be an increase of empowerment practices; coaching, delegation of authority and improvement of employee participation. This was evidenced from the results whereby at 5% level of significance,

coaching ($p=0.017 < 0.05$); delegation of authority ($p=0.001 < 0.05$) and employee participation ($p=0.002 < 0.05$) was a significant predictor of service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

5.2.1 Coaching and Service delivery

Based on the first objective, the study found out that coaching had a significant influence on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities (t-statistic=13.055, p-value=0.002< 0.05).

5.2.2 Delegation of Authority and Service delivery

In regard to the second objective, the study findings indicated that delegation of authority had a significant influence on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities (t-statistic=15.668, p-value=0.013< 0.05).

5.2.3 Employee Participation and Service delivery

Based on the third objective, the study found out that employee participation had a significant influence on service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities (t-statistic=19.340, p-value=0.000< 0.05).

5.2.4 University factors as the moderating variable on the relationship between employee empowerment and Service delivery

Finally, the fourth objective study findings confirmed that whereas the main influence of employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public

universities amounted to 0.147, the main influence of university factors amounted to 0.239. Therefore, the significant interaction showed that university factors moderated the effect of employee empowerment practices and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan public universities.

5.3 Conclusion as per the Study findings

Based on the first objective, coaching was a significant predictor of service delivery. Coaching offered guidance, inspiration, provided a level of neutrality and created learning opportunities. Furthermore, coaching provided new insights, increased coach-coachee relationship, improved competencies, led to strong relationships in the university and had exposed the academic staff to more academic and teaching materials.

With regard to the second objective, delegation of authority had a significant positive influence on service delivery among the academic staff in Kenyan public universities. This made academic staff understand the responsibilities delegated to them and hence were committed to their university. Based on the third objective, employee participation had a significant effect on service delivery among the Academic staff in the Kenyan Public universities. When academic staff are allowed to participate in decision making, they become satisfied and their morale is enhanced.

Finally, from the findings of the fourth objective, university factors had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between employee empowerment and service delivery among the academic staff in the Kenyan Public universities. Leadership style adopted by the university managers determines the resource allocation and attention paid to the employee empowerment programs.

5.4 Recommendations

Arising from the results and conclusions above, the study recommends that: -

- i) Coaching as a human resource developmental practice should be prioritized in public universities to enhance quality service delivery of academic staff.
- ii) University management should entrust academic staff with responsibilities and encourage delegation of programs to flourish.
- iii) University management should allow academic staff to participate in all the key academic functions.
- iv) That universities should adopt a leadership style that supports employee empowerment programs.
- v) Finally, the study recommends that public university management should increase the level of awareness of empowerment practices to its employees to enable them embrace and appreciate its importance.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

This study was carried out in the nine (9) Kenyan public universities of the Western region. Similar research can also be done in private and public universities in other regions. In addition, empowerment practices are diverse, this study was limited to only three (3). A similar study should be explored basing on other employee empowerment practices such as job recognition, knowledge management and reward management that can enhance service delivery. Lastly, service delivery in public universities is not dependent on academic staff, a study on non-academic staff who too play a significant role should be explored.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction

Dear Respondent,

I am a Masters student of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST). I am conducting academic research on *Employee Empowerment Practices and Service Delivery among the Academic Staff in the Kenyan Public Universities* as a requirement of the qualification for the award a Master's degree in Human Resources Management. I humbly request that you take some time to complete this questionnaire.

Your opinion Sir/Madam will be of great value to the study findings that I hope may add value to human resource practitioners in public universities, government, organizations, students and researchers on the best empowerment practices that may impact on service delivery. I take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your valued response which will be used purely for academic purposes and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

Mildred Kagai Kawai
BHR/G/01/57203/2016

Appendix II: Questionnaire for Academic Staff

Name of the University:

SECTION A: Demographic information

1. Gender
 1. Male
 2. Female

2. Age bracket
 - 25 – 35 years
 - 36 – 45 years
 - 46 – 55 years
 - 56 – 65 years
 - 66-74 years

3. Level of education
 - PhD
 - Masters
 - Bachelors
 - Postgraduate Diploma

4. Designation
 - Professor
 - Associate Professor
 - Senior Lecturer
 - Lecturer
 - Assistant Lecturer
 - Tutorial Fellow
 - Graduate Assistant

5. How long have you worked in the university system?
 - 0 -1 Years
 - 1-2 Years
 - 2-5 Years
 - 6-10 Years
 - Above 10 Years

SECTION B: Employee Empowerment Practices

Part 1: Coaching

In this section please tick (✓) the most appropriate response for each of the statements in the table below with the following scores in mind. Strongly Disagree (SD=1), Disagree (D=2), Neutral (N=3), Agree (A=4), and Strongly Agreed (SA=5).

	Coaching	SA	A	N	DA	SD
6	Senior academic staff (Coach) offer guidance on teaching & research to junior faculty (coachee)					
7	Senior Faculty/School members provide professional development i.e., innovative teaching strategies, writing of research winning grants, inculcation of leadership qualities (Coaching)					
8	We hold school/faculty meetings where we discuss and exchange thoughts and ideas regarding professional growth and development					
9	The coach provides a level of neutrality to seek multiple opinions and points					
10	The coach inspire, creates learning opportunities and motivate in working towards the set goal					
11	Coaching is done using different approaches					
12	Coaching provides new insights impacting on my behaviour					
13	There is increased academic activities as a result of coach-coachee relationship					
14	Coaching culture has led to strong relationships in my university					
15	Coaching has exposed me to more academic work and teaching materials					
16	Coaching has improved my competencies providing advancement of opportunities					
17	Coaching has enhanced my confidence levels					
18	My university should consider enhancing coaching activities					

Part 2: Delegation of Authority

In this section please tick (√) the most appropriate response for each of the statements in the table below with the following scores in mind. Strongly Disagree (SD=1), Disagree (D=2), Neutral (N=3), Agree (A=4), and Strongly Agreed (SA=5).

	Delegation of Authority	SA	A	N	DA	SD
19	Academic Deans/ CODs assigns some new tasks to academic staff under them to perform					
20	Academic Deans/ CODs transfers some authority to academic staff under them to influence work performance on delegated tasks					
21	Academic Deans/ CODs entrusts academic staff under them with their responsibilities such as administrative roles, representation in universities committee meetings					
22	My level of self-confidence has increased as a result of delegation of duties by my supervisor					
23	Through delegation I feel more committed to my institution					
24	I understand the responsibilities delegated to me					
25	I always look forward to be called upon to discharge higher responsibilities					

Part 3: Employee participation

In this section please tick (√) the most appropriate response for each of the statements in the table below with the following scores in mind. Strongly Disagree (SD=1), Disagree (D=2), Neutral (N=3), Agree (A=4), and Strongly Agreed (SA=5).

Employee participation		SA	A	N	DA	SD
26	I participate in curriculum development in the department					
27	I am always involved in the preparation of teaching timetables					
28	I am involved in setting departmental targets for teaching					
29	I am involved in carrying out research for my department					
30	I participate in Departmental/ School Committee meetings					
31	I am always involved in the review of curricula in my School					
32	I am consulted regarding the courses allocated to me to teach					
33	I am consulted on some relevant academic issues in my department					
34	The University has effective communication platforms such as e-mails, for employee participation					
35	I am satisfied with my level of participation in decision making in matters affecting the university					
36	Suggestions I make to improve on the planned activities are always put into consideration					

SECTION C: University Factors

In this section please tick (✓) the most appropriate response for each of the statements in the table below with the following scores in mind. Strongly Disagree (SD=1), Disagree (D=2), Neutral (N=3), Agree (A=4), and Strongly Agreed (SA=5).

University Factors		SA	A	N	DA	SD
37	The age of my institution affects effective undertaking of employee empowerment programmes by my university					
38	Resource allocation plays a role in determining the implementation of employee empowerment programmes such as competency development					
39	Leadership style of my Vice Chancellor and other managers of the university determine the attention paid to the employee empowerment programmes such as coaching, delegation, employee participation					
40	The approaches of employee empowerment adopted by the management of my institution have always depended on the leaders in position and other university factors					
41	Service delivery has always been undermined by leadership style/age					
42	University factors in my institution have spurred competency development programmes					

SECTION D: Service Delivery

In this section please tick (✓) the most appropriate response for each of the statements in the table below with the following scores in mind. Strongly Disagree (SD=1), Disagree (D=2), Neutral (N=3), Agree (A=4), and Strongly Agreed (SA=5).

Service Delivery		SA	A	N	DA	SD
43	My University has recorded fewer complaints from our students regarding our service delivery in the last one year					
44	Our students appreciate the quality of teaching offered by University					
45	The number of students who graduated from my University has risen in the last one year					
46	Our university ranking has improved both locally and internationally in the last one year					

Appendix III: Interview Schedule

1. Staff coaching refers to senior staff offering guidance to junior staff. Comment on Staff Coaching as an empowerment programme.
2. Do you entrust academic staff in your university with your responsibilities?
3. Do you involve your academic staff in university academic activities?
4. How do you monitor quality service delivery in your university?

Appendix IV: Letter from DPS



MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

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P.O Box 190
Kakamega – 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR: 509099

25th July 2022

Mildred Kagai Kawai
BHR/G/01-57203/2016,
P.O. Box 190-50100,
KAKAMEGA.

Dear, MS. Kawai,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your Masters proposal entitled '*Employee Empowerment Practices and Service Delivery Among the Academic Staff in Kenyan Public Universities*' and appointed the following as supervisors:

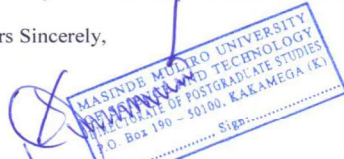
1. Prof. Robert Egezza - SOBE, MMUST
2. Dr. Eglay Tsuma - SOBE, MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Business and Economics Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Administration and Management Department. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of two years from the date of registration to complete your Master's thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours Sincerely,



Prof. Stephen O. Odebero, PhD, FIEEP
DIRECTOR, DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix V: Research Permit



Ref No: 585947

Date of Issue: 28/July/2022

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Miss.. MILDRED KAVAI KAGAI of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, has been licensed to conduct research in Bungoma, Busia, Homabay, Kakamega, Kisii, Kisumu, Siaya, Vihiga on the topic: Employee Empowerment Practices and Service Delivery Among the Academic Staff in Kenyan Public Universities for the period ending : 28/July/2023.

License No: NACOSTI/P/22/19387

585947

Applicant Identification Number

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

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