

**ANALYSIS OF TEAM BUILDING EFFECTIVENESS AS A PERFORMANCE
STRATEGY IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY IN KENYA.**

BY

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DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this study to my family, and especially Dad, whose motivation towards hard work has always strengthened me to strive for the very best in every sphere of life. May this work be another source of inspiration for my future children and the generations thereof.

ABSTRACT

For many years, team building has been used by organizations to enhance the moral of employees in different fields. Proponents of this strategy argued that it is ideal in addressing interpersonal problem in the workplace while offering employees opportunity to acquire vital skills to help them cope and improve productivity. Whereas the concept has yielded some positive impact, the problem is that most organizations tend to deploy team building only when there are challenges affecting the productivity of employees. The same practice has also been observed in the telecommunications where employees are expected to produce results even when economic times are hard, competition is high and customer demands are prolific. As a result, team building is often considered an ideal strategy for developing high performing teams with desirable interpersonal skills, team resilience and better understanding of organizational goals. Whereas there is little literature on the reasons why telecommunications firms adopt team building, there is also no clear measure as to whether the implementation of team building in telecommunications industry improves employee performance. Besides, it is not clear whether the observed varied success of telecommunication firms like Safaricom can be attributed to the improved performance of their employees as a result of tem building. Guided by Belbin's Team Role Theory of Performance, the main purpose of this study was to analyse effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry. Specific objectives were to: Assess need for team building as a performance strategy; ascertain effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy; and investigate cost-effective ways of enhancing the effectiveness of team building in the telecommunications industry in Kenya. The study was conducted in Nairobi using Safaricom Limited as a case. Descriptive research design was used to collect quantitative and qualitative data from a target population of 1,553 Safaricom employees including sales marketing and sales people, retail supervisors and HR managers involved in operational activities. Quota sampling technique was utilized to draw a sample of 310 participants in order to collect quantitative data using structured questionnaires. Qualitative data was collected from 15 key informant interviewees and focused group discussions. After the actual study, a total of 287 data sets were validated and accepted for statistical analysis. The data was analysed using frequency distribution and Pearson's correlation techniques to draw relevant conclusions from the findings. Results of this study established that team building is still a popular performance strategy as noted by about 75% of participants. In particular, organizational goals and conditions of the work environment had positive influence on the need and choice for team building as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry. It was found to be ideal in providing skills that help employees become responsible team players, resilient and with better abilities to meet sales targets. About 56.4% ascertained that indeed team building is an effective performance strategy. The study further established that team building had positive influence on improved performance of employees in telecommunications industry. However, the study recommends that in order for team building to be more cost-effective, it should be designed as a regular program with specific objectives and measurable outcome. Such outcome should be evident, substantial and long-lived. It is also a recommendation of this study that further research should be taken on the challenges affecting the effectiveness of team building, and comparative studies should also be done across different industries to establish where team building is most effective and relevant.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
|-------------|---|------------------------------------------------|
| CEO | - | Chief Executive Officer |
| ERG | - | Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) Theory |
| FGDs | - | Focused Group Discussions |
| HR | - | Human Resource |
| JDs | - | Job Descriptions |
| KIIs | - | Key Informant Interviews |
| KNBS | - | Kenya National Bureau of Statistics |
| SPSS | - | SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences |

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Effectiveness | - The extent to which a given undertaking meets the desired objectives. |
| Employee Performance | - Output of a worker in the assigned duty designed to meet the set organizational objective. |
| Organizational Goals | - A set of measurable targets an organization aspires to attain within a given timeframe. |
| Organizational Performance | - The overall output of an organization based on its objectives. |
| Performance Strategy | - Human resource program designed to help improve the productivity of workers. |
| Productivity | - Level of measurable units of work outcome as per task objectives. |
| Team Building | - Theoretical and experiential activities used to help a group or team develop interpersonal skills, creativity and improved work capabilities. |
| Team Development | - Realignment of employees in small units through which they can work together collaboratively and with enhanced efficiency. |

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

In this age of rapid technological advancements and increased competition, organizations recognize the importance of teamwork more than ever before. According to Sundstrom *et al.* (1990), teamwork improves manpower utilization and reserves greater potential of enhancing the performance of individuals. Team ideologies improve employee confidence, skills and interactive competencies. The overall result is that, organizations achieve better productivity levels and higher job retention among the workforce (Salas *et al.*, 2008).

Whereas an organization might deploy a number of performance strategies to enhance the productivity of its workforce, studies suggest that team building is one of the most promising approaches in the modern world (Dyer *et al.*, 2007). Team building increases employee morale, promotes team confidence, and inculcates a common understanding of organizational goals. If utilized amicably, the practice can help develop a cohesive and proactive workforce with better mean performance, and increased productivity (Fapohunda, 2013).

Team building seems to be an easy, albeit pricey way, of dealing with inherent issues in the organization. In fact, numerous studies (Dyer *et al.*, 2007; Fapohunda, 2013) support this idea by stating that team building activities do help employees pool their resources together, communicate better and focus their collective efforts towards achieving the set goals and with better problem solving skills. When explored proactively and with a result-oriented focus, effective teambuilding can translate into increased productivity at work, hence improved performance among employees as ascertained by Locke and Latham (2002).

Considering the fact that team building is a good platform to start the journey of team development, it creates the atmosphere of self-realization among the taskforce. According to Ravio *et al.* (2010), the performance of a team trickles down to individual capabilities and more so when each member understands their potential as vital components of the team. It follows therefore that the strength of a team is determined by personal commitment as well as their appreciation of the bigger picture. Scholars suggest that if well utilized, team building increases organizational performance by 42%, help reduce workplaces conflicts by 69% and promote team

cohesion by 77% (Fapohunda, 2013; Salas *et al.*, 2008; Lee, 2014). Nonetheless, long-term approach deployed is the core determinant of optimal success in any team building plan.

In Kenya, the giant Safaricom has in the recent past tried to foster a team approach among its task force. Despite the fact that its overall profit growth has not been quite steady in the last five years dating back to 2011, the company is exploring various ways of making its task force more cohesive, strategic and customer friendly as observed by the group's CEO in its 2014 annual report (Safaricom, 2015). Team building and team training workshops are among the options already instituted by Safaricom. The company pointed out in the report that the much celebrated success of the firm is owed to its network of collaborative workforce across the country.

That notwithstanding, some studies contend that team building activities are not always successful in achieving set objectives. About 57% of such events are normally organized when there are issues in the workplace that needs to be addressed especially those affecting performance (Gottlieb, 2005). Instead of tackling the root of the problem, these activities simply tend to focus on outward behaviour with a view to restore calm and tolerance within the workplace. While this may seem to address the present challenges for a while, they will nevertheless keep on cropping up unless the root of the problem is dealt with. As such, Gottlieb (2005) argued that contemporary team building practices are reactive to problems rather than proactive towards long-term solutions that can avert potential workplace rifts.

On the other hand, it appears that modern approaches of team building have shifted the focus from performance improvement strategy to tension defusing concept (Salas et al, 2008; Kumari & Selvi, 2015). Instead of being an effective means of developing enduring performance capabilities within the organization, team building events have become an enjoyable day out for employees. Participants take it as such and most organizations do not have any structural follow-up systems to evaluate the impact of such team building events on the performance of the team. With these in mind, it is imperative to investigate the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy for organizations.

In order to examine the study topic herein, Safaricom Limited will be used as an ideal case in the Kenyan context. The company was incorporated in 1993 in Kenya under the Companies Act as a private limited liability company. In 2002, it was converted into a public company with limited

liability, with the government being the majority shareholder, the rest owned by Vodafone. From its humble beginnings, Safaricom has since grown in leaps and bounds to become the biggest telecommunication company in East and Central Africa. The company currently boasts of over 25.1 million subscribers, providing over 200,000 touch points for its customers and offering over 100 different products under its portfolio (Safaricom Ltd., 2016).

This giant in the telecommunications industry provides a wealth of services, ranging from voice and data to financial services and enterprise solution to its subscribers, small businesses, and government using different platforms. Today, Safaricom is Kenya's number one mobile service provider, with far more customers than its closest competitor, Airtel. Additionally, the company employs over 3000 people throughout the country, with the majority of them located in Nairobi actively benchmarking the success story of the firm (Safaricom Ltd., 2016). Above all, it is one of the vibrant telecommunication companies in Kenya that is known to have adopted team building as a performance strategy for its vast majority of employees involved in sales, marketing, human resource management and departmental supervisions. A study conducted by Lee (2014) on strategic approaches to employee productivity and performance revealed that team building remains an integral component of enhancing the productivity of employees. While Safaricom had embraced the strategy, the problem is that it has not developed clear matrix of measuring the influence of team building on the performance output of their employees.

1.2 Statement of Problem

The need for teamwork has spread rapidly arising from the belief that the development of strong and effective production and managerial teams will lead to higher performance, increased job satisfaction and profitability. Despite the perceived potentials in team building, very little research has been taken in the developing world to establish the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy, especially in the telecommunications industry. According to the findings of Wigginton (2016) on telecommunication industry outlook, a number of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa including Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia and Nigeria are championing the paths of global innovation. The study established that their rapid economic proliferation is largely driven by unique innovations in their telecommunications industry with particular focus on the regional positioning of Safaricom Limited. The problem is that, organizational leaders are tempted to set goals on the basis of reducing costs and increasing profit margin in keeping with

the market trends. Such goals impose undue pressure on employees to meet profitability targets which unfortunately is used as a performance gauge. Not only does this practice create a volatile work environment, but also it kills the spirit of teamwork leaving individuals to focus on personal job objectives to appease the boss. From a different perspective, there is little industry-specific documented evidence that team building is a viable strategy for individual-based work focus. Nevertheless, it is argued that team building can enhance task force cohesion, collective responsibility, increased team output, commitment to the overall goals and team achievements. It may also enhance better understating of team potentials, improved problem solving skills, reduced mean performance time and leadership attributes. As such, this study sought to analyse the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objective of this study was to determine the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the Telecommunications industry in Kenya. The specific objectives were to:

- i. Assess need for team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.
- ii. Ascertain effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.
- iii. Investigate cost-effective ways of enhancing the effectiveness of team building in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

In order to achieve the aforesaid research objectives, this study endeavoured to address the following research questions:

- i. What is the need for teambuilding as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry?
- ii. Is team building effective as a performance strategy in the telecommunication industry?
- iii. Which cost-effective measures can enhance the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry in Kenya?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The telecommunications industry in Kenya is wide in nature and scope as it touches the lives and interests of various stakeholders in one way or another with regard to the process of sharing information, knowledge and business prospects of the economy. However, this study covered a cross-section of telecommunications industry stakeholders located within the administrative metropolis of Nairobi due to limited financial resources, shortage of personnel and limited time scope. Particularly, the study focused on Safaricom Limited because it is the leading industry player in East and Central Africa with the biggest telecommunication market share in Kenya. In addition, the study involved salespeople, marketers and customer care service representatives having worked in Safaricom for at least one year. Consequently, this study concentrated on examining the need for team building as a moderate variable in regard to work environment and organizational goals to determine its influence on employee performance.

1.6 Justification of the Study

Telecommunications industry in Kenya is characterised by fast growth, increasing competition and high customer demand for better services in terms of customer care and provision of quality products. On the other hand, telecommunications industry employs a wide range of employees with varied mix of academic qualifications and work experience. The bulk of that workforce comprise sales and marketing people majority of which lacks any background in sales, marketing or business administration. Thus, many employers including Safaricom Ltd believe that exposing these workers to team-oriented work life would help them acquire and share vital skills for desired performance. Team building is therefore seen as appropriate approach toward enhancing the capabilities of many employees in telecommunication industry in Kenya. As such, this study provides in-depth understanding of the importance and effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry. Specifically, the findings of this study add to the body of knowledge relating to the dynamics of team building strategy and to what extent it enhances the workforce performance in telecommunications industry in Kenya. Insights gained from this study also offer valuable knowledge on the benefits of team building and how industry stakeholders can sustainably improve its effectiveness.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

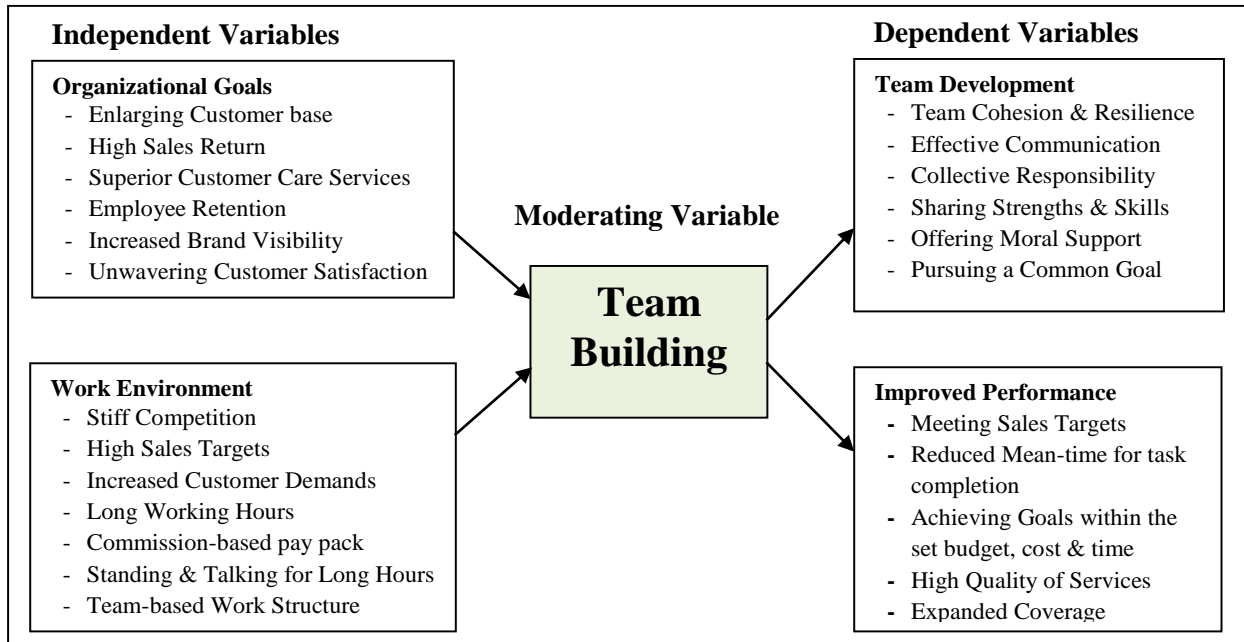


Figure 1.1: *Conceptual Framework of Team Building and its impact on Employee Performance.*
[Adopted from Wan Sulaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012)]

Independent Variables – Organizational goals and work environment will always prevail irrespective of one’s performance. While employees may contribute to the existing conditions of the workplace, these factors directly and indirectly impact on performance. In any case, favourable work environment and supportive organizational goals are precursors of desirable performance as stated by Shuffler *et al.* (2011). They remain independent variable to team development and improved performance.

According to Halebian and Finkelstein (1993), the development of teams and enhancement of workforce performance will depend of the prevailing conditions of the work environment and the set organizational goals. With that in mind, organizational leaders often aspire to align their teams with the company goals through training and other performance improvement strategies including team building. Thus, team building becomes an intermediate platform through which to help an organization develop effective teams with greater performance potential (Lee, 2014).

Dependent Variables – Team development and improved performance are the key dependent variables in this framework. According to Locke and Latham (2002), teams are developed through training, experiential exposure as well as shared organizational ethos. First, individual

members need to understand the essence of team theory and their importance as pillars of the team. Consequently, teambuilding promotes one's understanding of their roles as members of the larger system, the company. It helps the workforce develop valuable capabilities to enhance their performance towards the overall achievement of both personal and organizational goals. Particularly, the strategy helps participants to develop problem solving skills, team cohesion and how to achieve set targets within the prevailing conditions. Put together, these abilities and experiences directly influence the level of job satisfaction and overall workforce performance as affirmed by Shuffler *et al.* (2011).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a succinct review of existing literature on team building and its dynamics as a performance strategy. Particularly, the chapter looks into scholarly works and their findings as to how team building strategy can influence employee performance. In light of that, the review also examined various theories relevant to the concept of team building and how their ideals can positively influence the effectiveness of team building. It is from the findings of these theoretical and empirical literature review that the study established key research gaps substantiating the importance of this study.

2.1. Theoretical Review

The concept of team building rides on a number of theories that all endeavour to enhance the performance of a given workforce. In most cases, organizations resolve to team building as an ideal strategy of increasing the level of motivation and team spirit towards a collective effort to achieve desired organizational goals. As such, the following theories and concepts can help refine the synergy that underpins the effectiveness of team building.

2.1.1. Theory X and Theory Y

This theory was put forward by McGregor way back in 1960s. He observed that specific strategies can help significantly improve the relationship between managers and employees. This would happen if the assumptions that had developed about how people behaved at work were changed from Theory X view to a Theory Y view. Basically, one perspective is negative and the other is positive. It follows therefore that organizations often strive, by mean of appropriate strategies such as teambuilding, to influence the behaviour and attitude of their workforce towards a positive status that is desirable for improved productivity (Locke & Latham, 2002).

Theory X proposes that improved productivity could result from breaking jobs down into small units of work and assigning workers a small range of clearly defined tasks. This can be done through departmental approach in small groups or teams. According to Dyer and Dyer (2007), typical employees do not like to work and would often look for ways to evade work as much as possible. In addition, not every employee wants to take responsibility for the work, thus overburdening those who take such responsibilities. This makes it important for management to devise some course of action that would result in balancing efforts from all members of the task

force concerned. Such may include motivational and supervising strategies to help employees accomplish their tasks effectively within the constraints of budget, time and logistical resources. As noted by Sundstrom, De Meuse and Futrell (1990), theory X assumes that human actions are dictated by low-level needs.

Theory Y on the contrary is based on the predominant theory of management suggesting that there can be no trust between management and employee unless it is built and nurtured through appropriate strategies (Locke & Latham, 2002). If attained effectively, such opportunities can transform the attitude of employees positively towards work and also help build some level of trust. Proponents of theory Y assume that human actions are often driven by high-level-needs ingrained in organizational goals. Accordingly, theory Y suggests that employees' behaviour can be influenced so as to perceive attainment of organizational goals as a natural outcome of collective responsibility, hard work and commitment (Sanborn & Huszczo, 2007). It is such ideals are part of the central objectives of teambuilding concept deployed as a performance strategy.

In practice, the X and Y theory can influence how employee motivating factors are regarded within different organizations and the type of approaches they would deploy to influence employee behaviour and productivity. In their study on team building in sports, Ravio *et al.* (2010) established that teams that are well motivated socially and economically tend to consort more effort and dedication to attain better performance in their sporting endeavours. While theory X relates to extrinsic incentives such as pay in order to motivate people to execute their jobs better, theory Y focuses on work environment in which employees may discern intrinsic rewards in their job. Such may include team resilience, appreciation, recognition, promotions and trust among employees as well as within the vertical hierarchy of management. Locke and Latham (2002) argued that team development needs to be supported by some components of motivation as mentioned hitherto. Thus, the relevance of the X and Y theory can positively influence the effectiveness of team building in telecommunications industry.

2.1.2. Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) Theory

The second theory applicable in the concept of team building is the Existence, Relatedness and Growth Theory presented by Alderfer CP in 1969. To some extent, this theory is a simplified extension of the Maslow theory of needs. Existence theory touches on the material and

psychological needs of individual employees all of which matters most to employees even more than organizational needs as noted by Fapohunda (2013). If these needs such as security, safety, and good health are not met, employees cannot concentrate on pursuing organizational goals.

Relatedness needs on the other hand are those motivation employees receive both from the management and fellow work-mates in support of maintaining interpersonal relationships (Lee, 2014). Some of these include cordial communication, trust, appreciation, recognition, care as well as emotional support in times of need. While such may seem a bit personal, they all contribute to the social well-being and cohesion of a workforce. It is such attributes of relatedness that keeps the team united for a common purpose, both within and outside their work environment as reiterated by Halebian and Finkelstein (1993).

Growth needs however relate to intrinsic aspirations for personal career development. More often than not, growth needs in the theory of ERG focuses on aspects of personal creativity and productivity. Organizations would therefore try to always initiate various programs and strategies that can build on the capabilities of employees to perform better and more proactively as stated by Locke and Latham (2002). When considered by organizations, amalgamation of the ERG theory can positively enhance the effectiveness of team building as argued by Lee (2014).

2.1.3. Tuckman's Team Theory

This theory was developed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. For many years, the team theory of Tuckman has been applied by various organizations and scenarios to build their teams especially in the corporate world (Salas *et al.*, 2008). Team theory was founded on four main stages including forming, storming, norming, and performing.

Team theory is considered the fundamental origin of team building (Ravio *et al.*, 2010). It forms the basic pillar of organizational success especially when performance is based on teamwork and cohesive productivity. Tuckman's Team theory helps in refining organizational goals and objectives in a detailed manner that each member can internalize. Besides, proponents of the Team theory argue that the aim of team building is to create a united workforce with a common understanding of the objectives of the task at hand. It also enables managers to address existing interpersonal relation changes within the team while fostering behavioural change toward team resilience (Lee, 2014).

Another important aspect of team theory is that; it strives to create among employees a positive attitude towards work. It helps employees to appreciate the spirit of working together and supporting one another to meet the desired organizational goals. According to Ravio *et al.*, (2010), team theory also allows organizations and employees to appreciate the diversity that exist among teams and learn embraces it as a form of strength rather than weakness. As such, beneficent of team theory as applied in team building are more likely to develop respect for each other, work together cohesively, focus of organizational goals while still appreciating personal achievements. Ultimately, studies suggest that these values increase the overall performance of employees especially when developed through team building (Salas *et al.*, 2008).

2.1.4. Team Role Theory of Performance

Team Role Theory was developed and presented by Meredith Belbin in 1981 as noted by Locke and Latham (2002). Belbin observed that for organizations to achieve their goals effectively, they needed to realign their performance strategies with the different capabilities of the workforce. In light of that, Belbin (2015) observed that some organizations are quite prescriptive when building teams and will use team role theories to nurture what they believe is the best performing team for a particular project.

Belbin believes that human beings possess a pattern of behaviour that characterizes one person's behaviour in relationship to another in facilitating the progress of a team. A collective interaction of such behaviours determines the overall performance of any given team. It is on the basis of that understanding Belbin defined team role as the tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way (Belbin, 2015).

To influence employee performance, Belbin refined the team role theory and broke it down to nine classic attributes. Under this theory Belbin argued that teams can work even with missing roles, but to work at their best, high performing teams need some kind of leader. Belbin (2015) referred to such leader as Coordinator who will balance tasks and people, and Shaper who will be responsible for driving projects through to completion. On the other hand, effective team performance requires some level of support and communication. Belbin referred to people who communicate and support others as Team Workers, Resource Investigators.

In addition to these, a project can never be complete if not actually executed. In this category, a team needs various kinds of doers who will undertake the actual performance of the task by translating the written objectives into reality. Such doers are described by Belbin's role theory as Implementer, Completer-Finisher and Monitor-Evaluators. To be more effective, leaders and doers need the support and input of creative thinkers called idea persons or Plan-Innovators. It is also important to recognize that different projects have their set of technicalities which would require some level of specialized direction. Therefore, to give organizations some depth of expertise, teams need Expert-Specialists, which is the ninth component of Belbin's role theory of performance.

According to Shuffler, DiazGranados and Salas (2011), team building can help organizations identify the abilities of their employees in relation to these nine attributes of team role theory. Furthermore, placing each member of the team in the category they suit best enhances their performance and a given task or project can be accomplished with great efficiency even with limited resources. It is therefore imperative to bear in mind that the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy can only be realized when these theories are ingrained in the objectives of team building programs.

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1. The Need for Team Building

Conducting a study on effective team building in the workplace, Fapohunda (2013) defined team building as a collective term used to express diverse activities which are used by different organizations to deal with any interpersonal problems within different groups therein. In her study, Fapohunda argued that team building is a useful strategy that can help employees develop practical problem solving skills and acquire key competencies that can enhance their productivity within the team. While team building may focus on interpersonal relationships, it also inculcates the spirit of teamwork, collective responsibility and commitment to the team. In that light, Fapohunda (2013) reiterated that organizations that aspires to have high performing employees ought to consider team building as a reliable performance strategy. She concluded that team building and team training, if well planned, can greatly improve the productivity and efficiency of employees.

Team building is a concept that is widely used the world over in diverse industries. According to a study conducted by Klein *et al.* (2009), team building can be applied to groups such as sports teams, school classes, military units or flight crews. In their study, these scholars observed that business organizations are increasingly adopting the concept of team building to help improve the productivity of their teams. More so, organizations that deal in services as well those that provide a wide range of end-user products are become quite accustomed to the idea of team building. In reality, such organizations base their success on the sales volumes much of which depends on the level of their employees' commitment. As a result, Klein *et al.* (2009) observed that those organizations that support teamwork among employees seemed to record higher sales than those that rely on individual employee's efforts. The study also revealed that such high performing organizations have adopted team building as a regular program for their sales teams.

On the other hand, a study conducted by Salas, Priest and DeRouin (2004) ascertained that team building still remains one of the most widely used group development activities in organizations. These scholars observed that well developed team building strategy was effective in developing team competencies, nurturing desirable interpersonal relations and promoting the spirit of collective responsibility in the execution of tasks. Employees learn to work with each other while appreciating the strengths of their colleagues and complementing their weakness in a manner that makes the team ore cohesive and productive. Such teams were seen to be more efficient in performing their duties, meeting targets and achieving organizational goals with minimal supervision. They often relied on team leadership rather than managerial supervision. It is in that regard Salas, Priest and DeRouin (2004) concluded that team building should be an integral component in the performance strategies deployed by contemporary business organizations.

Prior to these, a meta-analysis carried by Macy and Izumi (1993) revealed that team building goes beyond relief of tension and solving organizational problems that impact employee performance. In that study, Macy and Izumi (1993) noted that team building is a predetermined and well-thought approach endeared to identify various unique abilities of employees and helping them learn how best their abilities can contribute to the overall success of the team. Thus, team building can be used purely to develop interpersonal competencies rather than to solve problems. For that reason, the study of Macy and Izumi (1993) concluded that the need for team building should be more of proactive than reactive. It should be embraced by organizations

to help employees work better as teams as opposed to using team building just as a platform of relieving workplace tensions.

Ravio *et al.* (2010) also conducted another on the need for team building in sports. The study examined how effective the program has been in the sports industry and the reasons why club managers consider the strategy an essential tool in developing competitive sporting teams. In their investigation, Ravio *et al.* (2010) observed that team building helps coaches and players identify the best realignment that would make the team more effective in delivering the desired win. The experiential aspect of team building is key in identifying the best combinations of players since team members get to know which other players understand their style of playing. In addition, team building provides an equal ground for leadership development from which the team can naturally get to pick the players with superior leadership competencies to become their captain. This makes the team more cooperative, united and committed both to the team and to their captain. From that study, Ravio *et al.* (2010) concluded that team building is one of the best and non-coercive strategies of developing productive, cooperative and committed workforce in sports and business alike.

From a different perspective, Wan Sulaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) carried out a study on human resources practices that make team building a reliable tool for enhancing employee performance. The study established that despite the fact that majority of business organizations undertake team building to help solve workplace issues, it is actually more helpful when taken as a tool for promoting team efficiency, collaboration and productivity. Moreover, these scholars ascertained that result-oriented organizations that successfully utilize team building proactively have also succeeded in developing high-performing teams. The study specifically observed that salespeople who work together seemed to realize more sales on average as compared to their counterparts who work as lone rangers.

Based on the findings of these studies, it is worth noting that the basis for such review was to establish whether there was need for having team building programs as a component of performance strategies for employees. Comparatively, the study of Fapohunda (2013) seems to conform with the findings of Klein *et al.* (2009) and Ravio *et al.* (2010). In their investigation, these studies ascertained that team building is an integral aspect of human resource management. Not only does it keep the workforce productive, but also helps employees learn to pursue a

common goal, embrace diversity and offer mutual support to one another. In Particular, the findings of Fapohunda (2013) reaffirmed the propositions of Klein *et al.* (2009) that team building is a form of intrinsic strategy. It nurtures the spirit of teamwork and brings unparalleled level of commitment among employees. Unfortunately, not many organizational have embraced team building with a view to tap its influence on improving employee performance. Fapohunda (2013) argued that majority of organizations often resort to team building as a neutral ground for solving workplace tensions and internal conflicts without which the strategy is only deployed for fun and to break workplace monotonies.

In terms of specific relevance to this study, the study of Fapohunda (2013) as well as that of Ravio *et al.* (2010) and Wan Salaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) all examined some aspects on effectiveness of team building. Fapohunda explored the matter from a human resource perspective while considering the fact that team building should be developed as a program with specific result-oriented objectives rather than a one-off event. This approach by Fapohunda gives the study a humanistic perspective in the sense that effectiveness of team building can only be a result of long-term investment on human behaviour to adopt a certain desired change. However, her work was not as industry specific as that of Ravio *et al.* (2010). Wan Salaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) on the contrary looked at the impact of team building on human resources. To some extent, their study offers a glimpse on the need for proper planning and having specific performance-based objectives for any team building to be effective. Otherwise, the strategy can be a waste of time and cost especially when employees are just subjected to it without sharing with them the goals and objectives of such programs.

Despite the critical viewpoints and findings of these six studies, there is still no clear line between the effectiveness of a one-time team building event as compared to when it is rolled out as a long-term program. Another study gap relates to the fact that these studies do no offer insights as to the relevance of team building in service-oriented industries and particularly in telecommunications industry. For instance, Ravio *et al.* (2010) looked at sports, and by nature, sporting requires collaboration and teamwork among players to secure an organized win. This is contrary to what happens in the business world where personal commitment, experience, knowledge and networking play the greatest role in building competitive edge against stiff competition. As such, it still remains confounding as to whether it is the mastery of these

attributes or the effect of team building that makes some organisations like Safaricom perform better than others. With this in mind, such knowledge gap is worth investigating to establish the need for team building as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry.

2.2.2. Effectiveness of Team Building as a Performance Strategy

Numerous studies suggest that team building activities are a vital precursor to improved performance in the organization. A study conducted by Salas *et al.* (2008), aimed at ascertaining whether team building and team training actually improve employee performance. Accordingly, a meta-analysis conducted by these researchers established that a well-planned team building exercise based on specific performance objectives helped improve employee productivity. They noted that employees involved in team building and team training became more open and creative, more willing to take risks and are in a better position to seek out help when needed. These effects of team building translated into cohesive teamwork, better interaction between team members, improved communication and enhanced customer service quality. This study however did not consider the impact of motivations such as good working environment, lucrative pay package and supportive HR systems on employee commitment and productivity.

Another study conducted by Lock and Latham (2002) in the UK sought to establish the impact of goal setting and task motivation in organizations on employee performance. This study took the form of systematic literature review of journals and publications over a period of 35 years. It was established that team building remained a common strategy for goal setting and task motivation deployed by a large majority of high performing organizations. These scholars also reiterated that team structures developed through team building programs are long-lived. Such structures tend to promote a higher sense of collective responsibility, increased productivity and improved team resilience. Employees were found to have better understanding of their roles and put more effort to accomplish their tasks with improved level of efficiency. To that end, Lock and Latham (2002) concluded that team building is an effective strategy for enhancing task motivation for purposes of improving employee performance in proactive organizations. Despite the findings, the study failed to establish whether team building on its own can articulate roles and task motivations without clear JDs (Job Descriptions) and necessary trainings.

From a different point of view, Shuffler *et al.* (2011) looked at team development interventions. The general aim of their study was to establish the impact of team building in fostering team development for improved organizational performance. As such, they ascertained that while team building is effective, goal setting and role clarification have the most impact as they influence cognitive, affective, process and performance outcomes. This means that team building can assist teams that have problems with matters of disintegration and lack of trust as well as those that have a lack of clarification when it comes to individual roles. They also have an impact on motivation while helping reduce conflicts within the team while assisting individuals to set goals. In that light, their study concurred with the findings of Lock and Latham (2002).

Wan Sulaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) also conducted a study to establish the effectiveness of team building as deployed by manufacturing companies in Asia. In their study, they argued that effective team building should result in a more cohesive workforce and improved communication between teams and across the management hierarchy. Besides, they noted that effective team building ought to cultivate a united team with reduced incidences of in-fighting and better mean-time completion of tasks. With these in mind, the study affirmed that team building indeed can be effective in achieving such organizational goals. In their conclusion, Wan Sulaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) observed that effective team building also yields trust and dependability between employees and management alike.

Concerning the effectiveness of team building programs, Ravio *et al.* (2010) conducted a study in sports industry across Europe to establish whether such programs improve team performance. In their research, these scholars observed that team building as deployed in sports industry improve interpersonal relations and create an inspired team. Such teams were seen to positively embrace their diversity, strengths and weakness. They also portrayed substantial willingness to offer support for each other for better achievement of the desired organizational goals. In their study however, Ravio *et al.* (2010), argued that effectiveness of team building can only be measured on the basis of its long-term impact. Such would include measuring the level of team cohesion, productivity and how well the team can rely on its members to achieve the set goals within the constraints of cost, time and resources.

In a study conducted by Fapohunda (2013), to determine ways of promoting effective team building in the workplace, the findings suggested that team building in its entirety supports the

spirit of collective responsibility among employees. It was also established that while team building is a common practice among contemporary organizations, it requires clear objectives and a participative approach between employees and the management. Nevertheless, Fapohunda (2013) observed that through team building, organizations can increase employee morale, promote team confidence and inculcate a common understanding of organizational goals. On the other hand, the study revealed that team building, if well planned and delivered can help develop a cohesive and proactive workforce with better mean performance and increased productivity. Fapohunda therefore concluded that team building can only be effective as a performance strategy if it is based on clear objectives and oriented towards increasing workforce performance as opposed to seeking it as a platform for conflict resolution.

Apart from these, Dyer *et al.* (2007) organizational performance cannot be fully realized if the internal conflicts are not well addressed in a manner that seek to keep the team together. As such, these authors observed that team building is an ideal strategy for exploring such conflicts and dealing with them by helping employees devise solutions that best work for the team. In that way, team building help employees pool their resources together, communicate better and focus their collective efforts towards achieving the set goals and with better problem solving skills. When explored proactively and with a result-oriented focus, effective teambuilding can translate into increased productivity at work, hence improved performance among employees. This assertion agrees with the findings of Locke and Latham (2002).

Lee (2014) also undertook a study to investigate different strategic approaches organizations use to drive productivity. Accordingly, the study ascertained that team building is still one of the most common strategy considered to be effective in promoting better workforce performance. This study confirmed the findings of Salas *et al.* (2008) and that of Fapohunda (2013). Together, these three studies ascertained that team building increases organizational performance by 42% (Lee, 2014), help reduce workplaces conflicts by 69% and promote team cohesion by 77% respectively. It is worth noting though that Lee (2014) argued out the fact that effectiveness of team building largely depends on personal commitment. Otherwise, even the best planned team building programs can be less effectives if they lack the desired level of personal commitment. For that reason, a number of employees have often considered team building as just another

avenue of spending human resource budget with little impact on team development of increased performance.

Not everyone agrees with the assertion that team building works however. In a recent study conducted by the Telegraph (2012) for instance, the authors argue that team building events do not actually aid employees in how they work. The study which was carried out in the United Kingdom stated that employees felt that team building activities are a waste of time and can be embarrassing to all people involved. Those with a negative perception of the activities preferred a more supportive atmosphere at work, being able to communicate better with each other and being given tools for flexible working, rather than wasting money on team building activities that will ultimately have little or no impact.

While the majority of the employees surveyed (66%) had engaged in different forms of team building activities, about (54%) of these felt that additional team building activities would not help them work better with their colleagues (Telegraph, 2012). In light of that, the study concluded that while team building activities can be valuable to employees, better team work can be achieved when organizations get the basics right first. This means that employers need to focus on how their employees work on a daily basis and strive to give them the tools they require to do their best. Additionally, employees wanted to be able to work smart, meaning that employers needed to make customer, colleagues and necessary information more accessible when needed.

In terms of addressing underlying problems that negatively impact team performance, Gottlieb (2005) conducted a study on the impact on team building with respect to conflict resolution. She examined a number of organizations and particularly focused on whether team building actually works. Unfortunately, the study established that while conflict can impact organizational performance, they cannot be fully addressed in one instance of team building. The reason being, most organizations deploy team building as a one-time event rather than a continuous program with long term goals. Besides, the study revealed that some organizations only consider team building when productivity is down and then it is forgotten altogether when productivity begins to show some positive improvements. Eventually, Gottlieb (2005) concluded that the problem with such sporadic team building events is that they only tackle immediate needs rather than creating an opportunity for sustainable improved employee performance. In her conclusion, Gottlieb

noted that team building may not work at all if an organization lacks leadership, direction, employee performance policy, clear vision and values that ought to guide employee engagement.

Briggs (2011) reiterates the ideas forwarded by Gottlieb by stating that there are instances when team building just does not work. While his focus was on improving productivity during a recession, Briggs nevertheless argued that during tough financial periods, companies may have the idea that team building activities would help increase productivity in order to survive the harsh economic environment. This however just glosses over the issues being experienced and is a waste of funds that can be put to better use. As such, Briggs (2011) ascertained that team building is more effective when focused on internal setbacks that affect employee performance. The scholar also argued that team building cannot be effective if utilized to counter the effects of external forces such as recession and global economic depression. Briggs noted that under such circumstances, organizational performance may still remain low despite active implementation of team building programs.

Looking at the findings of these studies, it is apparent that team building can be effective but only if it takes into account long-term objective relating to employee commitment, productivity and appreciation of organizational goals. Despite all that, these studies are not specific on how to measure such effectiveness of team building. While some organisations might consider the program effective when employees report less of complaints, others may only deem it effective when there is some increase in revenue performance. Nevertheless, such outcomes could result from some other factors such as improved work conditions, open communication, better pay and technological innovations but not team building. Even in the absence of team building, these factors can still foster improved employee performance yet without them employee performance might not significantly improve despite regular team building programs. To that end, it is needful to investigate further the underlying factors to the effectiveness of team building more so as a performance strategy adopted by business organizations.

2.2.3. Cost-effective ways of Improving Effectiveness of Team Building

Team building activities need to be focused in order to achieve any level of success (Salas *et al*, 2005). In order to do this, the authors suggest that any team building activity requires clear objectives and individual and team goals. They emphasized the importance of this approach,

because without clear goals, participants will end up dealing with issues that will simply waste time and resources without any success. In their recommendations, these researchers postulated that all team members need to be involved in action planning so as to find ways to explain success or failure and to determine the methods by which the agreed goals can be achieved. This, the authors add, will strengthen motivation and increase a sense of ownership in the activities undertaken. It is notable to mention that this proposition put forward by Salas *et al.* (2005) supports the arguments of Cole and Scott (2000) which emphasized that these two factors will heighten skills and positive attitude of employees even as they strive to fulfil individual roles. A common research gap in these two sets of studies is that, they failed to recognize that team building alone cannot achieve much without proper training and professional experience.

Team roles have also been seen as an essential aspect to improve the effectiveness of team building. According to Belbin (2015), observed behavioural aspects within teams shows that team behaviours fall into clear and discernible patterns that reflect both the contributions made by an individual as well as the weaknesses that manifest under pressure. In his 'Team Role Model', Belbin described the nine major clusters of behaviour that characterize individual and collective team work. He categorized them as the plant, the resource investigator, the shaper, the monitor evaluator, the team worker, the implementer, the completer finisher and the specialist. Belbin's model is perceived as a useful tool for higher team building processes as it aids an experienced facilitator to identify the patterns that exist within any team and thus underpin their strengths and weaknesses. Once clearly understood, these patterns would enable a team to manage its weaknesses and better leverage its strengths, particularly when existing biases creep in under real world organizational pressures. In light of that, Kumari and Selvi (2015) also supported the use of Belbin's model to help enhance the effectiveness of performance-oriented team building.

From a different perspective, Wan Sulaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) suggested that it is quite essential to break down team roles into task-oriented roles, relationship-oriented roles and self-oriented roles. These scholars noted that task-oriented roles increase professionalism and intellectualism by allowing employees to exchange ideas among themselves. On the other hand, relationship-oriented roles would allow all members to consort different ideas leading to positive actions and desirable team behaviours among all employees involved. Likewise, self-oriented

roles nurture among employees a great sense of positive attitude towards their work while giving them a clear understanding about their responsibilities. If well embraced, this approach would refine the focus of team building and inculcate a dedicated collective interest towards better attainment of organizational targets within the constraints of time, cost and human resources.

Furthermore, team building needs to place an emphasis on proactive problem solving activities as recommended by Ravio *et al* (2010). These would enable individual members to identify major issues they may be having within the team and gives them the opportunity to work together to find sustainable solutions to such problems. Accordingly, Ravio *et al* (2010) accentuated the fact that this approach can increase critical thinking within the group and members learn how to work together to address emerging workplace challenges. They also develop creative ways of dealing with emerging problems that could otherwise impair their desired performance. Taken into consideration, proactive components of team building are vital in making employees more committed to the team and to organizational goals. Even with regular team building, Ravio *et al* (2010) cautioned that factors such as office politics, competition for promotion or battles for supremacy are still detrimental to effective team performance.

Blundel (2004) also concurred that personality differences and background experiences can cause rifts while working as a group. Such may culminate in communication breakdowns, perceived personal vendetta and tension among team members. In particular, tensions strain relationships and can create a volatile work environment. When these issues remain unresolved, they affect customer services, interpersonal relations, individual commitment and team morale. If not addressed amicably, such strife can lead to poor performance among the affected employee. Thus, Blundel (2004) observed that team building can be more effective when it is designed to address the needs for peaceful coexistence, improved communications and team resilience. All these are complementary in enhancing team performance as supported by the findings of Lee (2014). Notably, this study by Blundel did not however recognize the fact that even with well-planned team building, lack of managerial support can still undermine team performance.

Another important element of improving the effectiveness of team building revolves around the creation of mutual trust and open communication within the team. Sanborn and Huszczo (2007) ascertained that while the effectiveness of team building activities would vary with different circumstances, team can be effective when there is a sense of steadfastness among members.

Teams that most benefit from team building activities are those where members are already reliant on each other, knowledgeable and experienced. These authors observed that crafting a leadership system that supports individual team members and the team in general is critical in making team building more effective as a strategy of improving employee performance. This ideology is in line with the arguments put forth by Locke and Latham (2002) regarding the need for clear goal setting, development of supportive leadership and consistent task motivation.

2.3. Summary of Research Gaps

To begin with, team building alone with limited managerial support, proper training and professional experience cannot yield much even when it is well-planned and taken regularly. On the other hand, team building requires clear objectives that are result-oriented and well aligned with organizational goals. This is where most organizations go wrong. More often than not, many organizations initiate team building only when there are serious workplace tensions after which the program is abandoned. In that manner, such organizations do not see team building as a strategy that can enhance the productivity and performance of employees. Another important research gap relates to the negative influence of factors such as office politics, competition for promotion and battles for supremacy. These are bound to emerge in a typical workplace and are normally overlooked when evaluating the effectiveness of team building. Nonetheless, they are still detrimental to effective team performance and should therefore be examined further to determine the extent to which they undermine the desired impact of team building in regard to productivity of employees. In culmination, there still is no clear standard of measuring the effectiveness of team building. Some organizations look at it in terms of reduction in the prevalence of workplace problems while other consider team building to be effective when the workforce become more cohesive, collaborative and efficient in achieving the set goals. It is for these reasons and gaps that this study endeavoured to analyse the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section provides the general approach of establishing how the researcher conducted the proposed study. It describes the plan that guided formal collection of data, sorting the data and analysing it to draw a conclusion. This section therefore outlines the methodology used in this research to analyse the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the Telecommunications industry in Kenya.

3.1. Research Design

Saunders *et al* (2012) described research design as an outline of the planned research progress. It comprises the structure of data collection, classification, collation, measurements, analysis and presentation. Ideally, research design remains the core supportive technique of working out a research dilemma to simplify the compilation and organization of data, and to give details for irregular associations through the use of appropriate methods. As such, this study used descriptive research design composed of quantitative survey questionnaires and qualitative key informant interviews and focused group discussions. Together, this descriptive design was ideal for assessing the need for team building in telecommunications industry as well as its effectiveness. It was also anticipated that this design would generate insights in regard to cost-effective ways stakeholders can use to improved effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry.

The reason for choosing descriptive research design is that it allowed the blending of qualitative and quantitative data in analysing the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry. Through quantitative approach, researcher was able to generate numerical data that could be quantified and measured statistically. Qualitative method on the other hand brought about in-depth explanations on observable trends in team building and how it influences organizational performance. Thus, the use of descriptive research design was complementary in the sense that it created a holistic approach of working out the research questions from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives (Mehl & Conner, 2012).

3.2. Study Area

This study was conducted within Nairobi City County. Nairobi is the administrative capital city of Kenya and the region's IT hub located at 1°17' 0"S, 36°49' 0"E. Deemed as the yardstick of technological development in Africa, it is only paralleled by South Africa. In terms of demography, the current population of Nairobi was estimated at 3,138,369 as 2009 (KNBS, 2013). Moreover, Nairobi is a host of several firms actively involved in the telecommunications industry. Among the giants are Airtel Kenya, Safaricom, Telkom Kenya, Liquid Telecom, Orange, Kenya Data, Joworld and many more including the Communications Authority of Kenya. Nairobi therefore provided an ideal area for studying the topic of team building effectiveness as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.

In this case, the study focused on Safaricom Limited as a case study. As at December 2016, the company had about 3,106 employees, majority of which were located within the Nairobi Region (Safaricom, 2016). In addition to being one of the largest telecommunication drivers in Kenya, Safaricom has for many years deployed the concept of team building as a strategy for enhancing employee performance. It thus provided an ideal case for examining the effectiveness of team building in telecommunication industry in Kenya.

3.3. Target Population

The target population for this study was 1553 employees comprising of 500 salespeople, 500 marketing executives, 400 customer care personnel, 53 human resource administrators and 100 supervisors from Safaricom Limited. The desired characteristics of the study participants included active role in organizational performance and administrative involvement in the operational and daily workforce activities within Safaricom. Besides, this study targeted stakeholders with knowledge and experience of team building as a performance strategy and particularly those personalities with first-hand knowledge in workforce development and performance appraisal. With 3,106 employees, Safaricom Limited was an ideal case having the desired characteristics within the study area.

3.4 Sampling Frame

According to the KNBS (2013), telecommunications industry provides employment to more than 1.7million Kenyans across the nations working in various sectors of the industry. In Nairobi

alone, over 1.15million are working in the telecommunications industry as sales and marketers, distributors, customer care, supervisors and managers among others. Safaricom being one of the industry players had about 3,106 members of the workforce. In this case, 50% of that workforce was the target population for this study. The researcher determined the target population sample size for this study using the Andrew Fischer’s formula summarized by Rohilla (2010) as under:

$$n = \frac{z^2pqD}{d^2}$$

Where: **n** = the desired sample (when population is greater than 10,000).

z = normal standard deviation usually at 1.96 corresponding to 95% confidence interval,

p = the proportion of the target population having the desired characteristics. In this study, 0.5 was used as the mean proportion (i.e. 50% representative sample of the target population; salespeople, marketers and operational staff of Safaricom).

q = 1.0 – p

d = the degree of accuracy desired, usually 0.05

D = design effect = 1

| |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thus; $n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times (1.0 - 0.5)1}{0.05^2} = \mathbf{384.16}$ |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Since the target population was less than 10,000 i.e. 1,553 employees of Safaricom, the formula was further refined as;

$$n = \frac{n}{[1+(n/N)]}$$

Where; n = sample size when target population is less than 10,000

N = target population (i.e. 1,553)

| |
|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Thus; $n = \frac{384.16}{[1+(384.16/1553)]} = 307.98$ |
|-------------------------------------------------------|

Thus, **n = 308**

With this approach, the minimum sample size required for this study was **308 respondents**, but for purposes of statistical convenience the study incorporated a total of 310 respondents. During the actual data collection exercise, copies of the final questionnaire were issued to 310

participants recruited through quota sampling technique from 31 Safaricom retail stores within Nairobi. The method ensured that participants with the desired characteristics were incorporated in the study sample. The sample comprised employees of Safaricom who worked as sales people, marketers, customer care personnel and supervisor and human resource managers.

For qualitative data, convenient sampling method was used to select key informant interviewees within Nairobi which included 2 senior level managers from the Ministry of Labour and 2 representatives from Ministry of Communication, Information and Technology. Another set of key informants comprised 3 senior project managers from Safaricom, 2 executive administrators of Safaricom Employee Performance Appraisal Team, 4 Safaricom Customer Care managers, and 2 Safaricom HR Executives. This gave a total sample of 15 key informant interviewees.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Sources of Data

In this study, data was obtained from three sources. These included secondary data from the review of literature from peer reviewed journals, books and industry publications. Primary data was obtained from quantitative survey participants while the third source comprised qualitative key informant interviews and focused group discussions. Information from these sources were incorporated in the analysis and discussion of the study findings.

3.5.2 Data Collection Procedures

First and foremost, the researcher conducted a pilot study which involved a convenient sample of 20 participants randomly sampled from 5 retail stores of Safaricom within the study area. The reason for this pilot study was to assess whether content of the questionnaire was relevant and comprehensive. Besides, the pilot was useful in ascertaining whether the format of the data collection tool was constructive and easy to use for the intended purpose of assessing the effectiveness of team building in the telecommunications industry.

In the actual study, relevant data for was collected in two ways. The first approach involved collection of quantitative data by means of researcher-administered questionnaires. The participants were recruited voluntarily, coded and then guided through the survey process during

which they were informed of the purpose and goal of this research project. Subsequently, data was collected systematically across 31 retail stores and outlets of Safaricom located in Nairobi.

The second approach involved collection of qualitative data through key informant interviews and focused group discussions facilitated by the researcher in keeping with the study objectives. In particular, the interviews were scheduled concurrently at the end of each day during the survey period to the convenience of interviewees. Lastly, the planned focused group discussions were held with 5 departmental heads, 5 team leaders and a 10 non-managerial respondents selected through a convenience method. These yielded a total of 3 different sessions of focused group discussions. Relevant insights from these interviews and discussions were recorded thematically, grouped as per the study objectives and incorporated in Chapter Five of this report.

3.5.3 Instrument for Data Collection

This study used structured questionnaires to collect quantitative data and semi-structured key informant interview guide for collection of qualitative data. An array of first thought questions were developed and tailored on the basis of the findings from literature review to assess the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the Telecommunications industry in Kenya. The researcher further refined these questions in accordance with the research objectives and thereafter grouped them into sections deemed appropriate for systematic coverage of all objectives (*See Appendix 2*). These questions sought descriptive responses from participants based on the options provided (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

As a matter of necessity, the researcher subjected the questionnaire to a pilot test to ensure that all the questions were relevant, precise and easy to understand. In addition, the pilot exercise guided the researcher in allocating reasonable time for the completion of each questionnaire. It is worth noting that the pilot test helped reveal some areas of difficult understanding and assisted the researcher to develop a set of refined and well-articulated questions that captured all the study objectives as per the intended interpretations.

3.5.4 Reliability Test

Rohilla (2010) defined the reliability of data collection instruments as the extent of measure as to whether a similar study conducted by another researcher would yield the same results. To test the reliability of these instruments the researcher used a test-retest technique by conducting two pilot

studies of the project within a lapse of one week with the same data collection instruments. Results of these two tests were compared to determine if the instrument would yield reliable findings. The researcher anticipated that comparative results of the two will yield some degree of positive correlation to establish the reliability of the instruments in assessing the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy. As shown in Table 3.1 below, the test-retest pilot yielded a correlation of $r = 0.853$, translating to acceptable reliability of 85.3%.

Table 3.1: Reliability correlation for test-retest pilot studies

| | | Test Pilot | Retest Pilot |
|--------------|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Test Pilot | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.853 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | | 0.016 |
| | N | 20 | 20 |
| Retest Pilot | Pearson Correlation | 0.853 | 1 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.016 | |
| | N | 20 | 20 |

Source: Researcher

3.5.5 Validity Test

Validity in research refers to the relevance of research data and methods in addressing the desired objectives (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). To test for the validity of the chosen data collection instruments, researcher first ascertained that all questions administered to survey participants came from a large pool of existing literature content relevant to team building as a performance strategy. Criterion validity was also evaluated through Cronbach coefficient to determine whether the survey questions would actually generate data of what the study was trying to measure, in this case: the effectiveness of team building. The pilot showed a Cronbach alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.82$, being a positive predictive correlation that the questions thereof would yield data of consistent validity.

In so doing, the process enabled the researcher to check if the previous episodes of team building had resulted in the desired improvement in employee and organizational performances. For instance, if a given sales team at Safaricom that participated in team building recorded better sales performance as compared to those that did not take part in team building. If such predictive measure turned out to be true, findings of this study would then be deemed as valid.

3.6. Data Analysis Technique

Quantitative data obtained from the field survey were sorted first and thereafter organized and verified through the criteria of relevance and appropriateness of responses as per the intended interpretations (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012). Similarly, qualitative data from KIIs and FGDs were organized and grouped on the basis of analogy and similarity of ideas for exploratory analysis (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2007). Acceptable data sets that passed the verification test were then subjected to statistical and exploratory analysis. Findings from these two approaches were incorporated in the discussion to help draw meaningful conclusions in line with study objectives.

The researcher utilized SPSS version 16.0 to analyse the data with specific reference to statistical techniques of frequency distribution and Pearson's Correlation. These techniques were used to determine whether there was positive or negative relationship between the study variables and how strong and significant were such relationship. Precisely, these analyses sought to establish the extent to which team building enhances employee and organizational performance in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.

3.7. Data Presentation

Analysed quantitative data was summarized and organized thematically in line with the study objectives. Results were then presented clearly in tables, charts and graphs. The researcher deemed such approach to data presentation as ideal for easy and useful interpretation of results. It is worth noting also that explanatory discussion has incorporated both qualitative and quantitative findings. It is from these findings the study draws relevant conclusions and recommendations in line with the set objectives.

3.8 Research Ethics

As required in social studies involving human subjects, the researcher considered the following ethical concern. The researcher formally obtained necessary permission from the University to proceed with the research project. In the same manner, clearance from the County Government of Nairobi and Safaricom were sort accordingly in support of the researcher's intention to conduct the study. All procedural steps of data collection, processing and analysis were observed as guided by the research supervisor to help guarantee the quality of this study.

Above all, the researcher specifically ensured that respondents were recruited voluntarily and with informed consent. Besides, respect for confidentiality as well as anonymity of research participants were well observed. Researcher also clarified the purpose of this study to all respondents and assured them that their input and study findings will not be used subjectively in any way as to cause them or their organizations any harm whatsoever.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results as obtained from quantitative survey that sought to analyse the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the Telecommunications industry in Kenya. A total of 310 respondents took part in the survey as anticipated thus representing 100% response rate. The data was then organized, sorted and verified for relevance and interpretation accuracy. From that process, 23 questionnaires did not meet the verification criteria and were therefore rejected by the researcher leaving a total of 287 accepted data sets. These were then subjected to statistical analysis and results presented in tables, graphs and charts in accordance with the study objectives for easy interpretation and drawing of relevant conclusions.

4.1. Results

Participants in this survey comprised telecommunications employees working as customer care executives, sales and marketing people as well as operations personnel which included HR managers and retail supervisors. Accordingly, the study revealed that majority of employees in Kenya's telecommunications industry work as sales and marketing (72%) people with only a meagre (7%) running the operational roles of HR and supervision. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of their area of speciality.

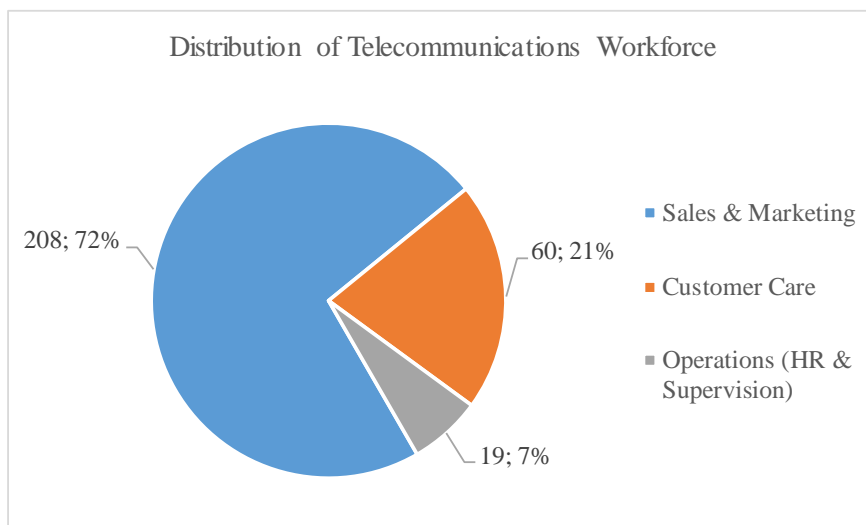


Figure 4.1: Distribution of study respondents by area of speciality

The study also established the work structure in the telecommunications industry is often team-based as ascertained by 83.3% of the respondents as illustrated in Figure 4.2 below. Only 16.7% reported to have individualized work structure. These were mainly administrative staff.

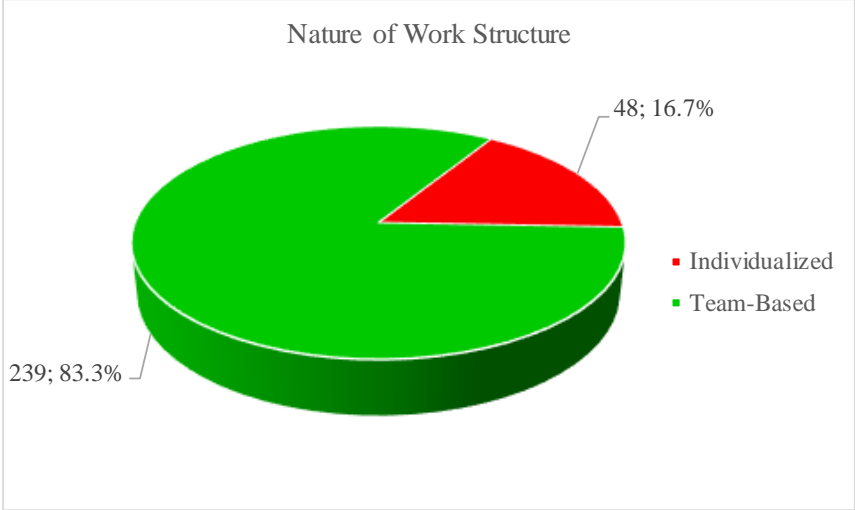


Figure 4.2: Nature of work structure

In addition to this, 259 respondents (90.24%) confirmed that indeed their employer has specific strategies designed to help improve their performance or inspire higher productivity at work as shown in Figure 4.3. Only 9.76% noted that there seemed to be no specific strategy put in place. Further analysis indicated that most of these respondents (9.76%) comprised employees who had worked in telecommunications industry for less than 1 year.

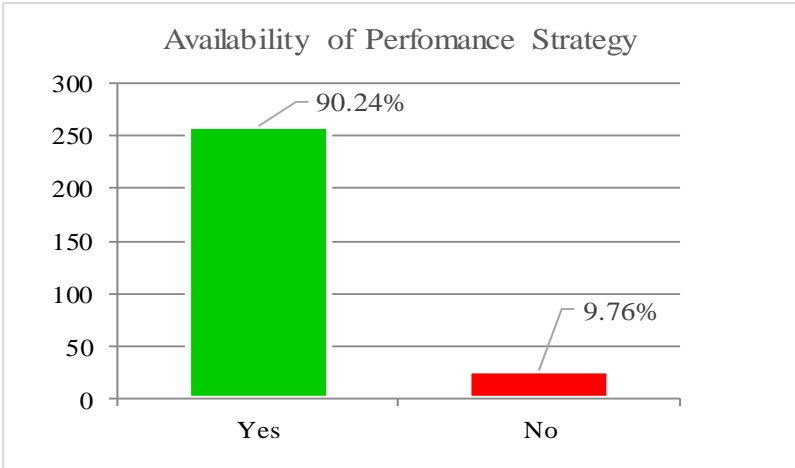


Figure 4.3: Availability of Strategies to improve employees' performance

Among the most prevalent strategies noted by study respondents included recognition, team building, monetary rewards, team training and promotion. Table 4.1 below shows that monetary rewards, training and team building are among most preferred strategies.

Table 4.1: Employees’ preferred performance strategies

| Strategy | Tally | Percentage |
|-------------------|-------|------------|
| Monetary Rewards | 264 | 91.99% |
| Training | 227 | 79.09% |
| Team Building | 218 | 75.96% |
| Promotion | 201 | 70.03% |
| Recognition | 149 | 51.92% |
| Job Rotation | 88 | 30.66% |
| Exchange Programs | 63 | 21.95% |

Source: Researcher

4.1.1. The Need for Team Building in Telecommunications Industry

Examining the need for team building, the study ascertained that about 67.6% of all respondents had at least participated in some team building program as illustrated in Figure 4.4. It was established also that majority of those who had never taken part in such program were fairly new employees mainly sales people with less than 1 year in the telecommunications industry.

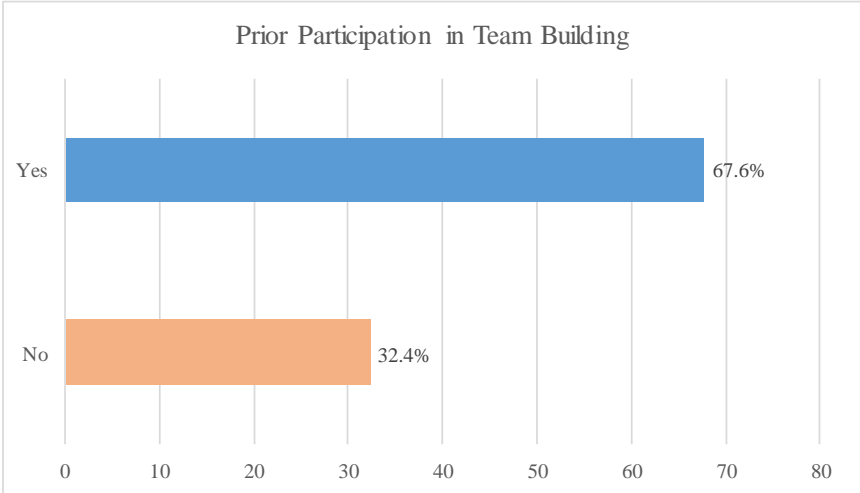


Figure 4.4: Prior participation in team building

When asked whether they feel employees in telecommunication industry require some sort of team building program, 70% responded affirmatively in support as depicted in Figure 4.5. Nonetheless, about 30% maintained that the strategy is not really a necessity.

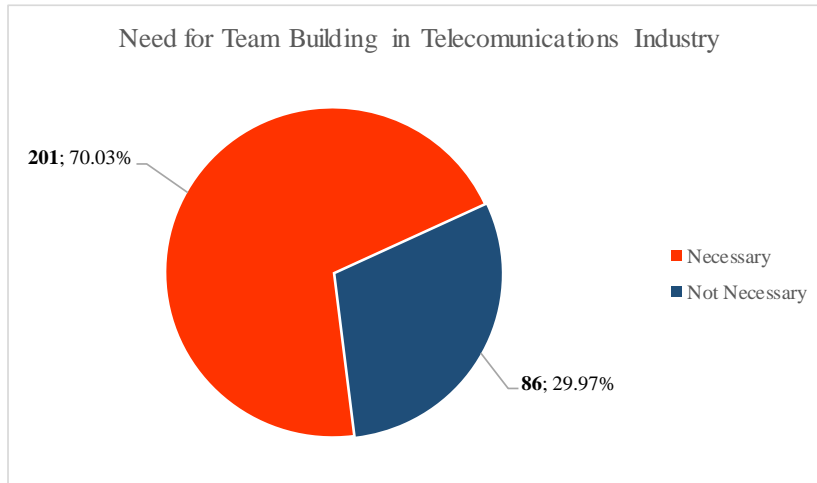


Figure 4.5: Need for team building in telecommunications industry

The study established that a large proportion of respondents about 86.41% consider the strategy as a tool for enhancing team spirit. Other important reasons ascertained by employees included improving skills development and boosting employees' morale. While the strategy was also seen as a way of sustaining team cohesion, an estimated 51.57% of employees also observed that it is an ideal approach toward improving interpersonal relations as shown in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Employees' perceived reasons for team building

| Perceived Reason for Team Building | Tally | Percentage | Rank |
|------------------------------------|-------|------------|------|
| Enhancing Team Spirit | 248 | 86.41% | 1 |
| Team Cohesion | 206 | 71.78% | 2 |
| Skills Development | 187 | 65.16% | 3 |
| Easing Workplace Tensions | 162 | 56.45% | 4 |
| Improving Interpersonal Relations | 148 | 51.57% | 5 |
| Boosting Employees' Morale | 133 | 46.34% | 6 |
| Fun | 84 | 29.27% | 7 |
| Breaking Monotony | 61 | 21.25% | 8 |

Source: Researcher

From a different perspective, respondents confirmed that their telecommunications employer tend to advocate for team building for a number of specific needs as illustrated in Figure 4.6

below. Specifically, the study established that the need to develop team abilities and improve employee competencies tops the priority for employers' advocacy for this strategy as ascertained by 73% and 63% of respondents respectively.

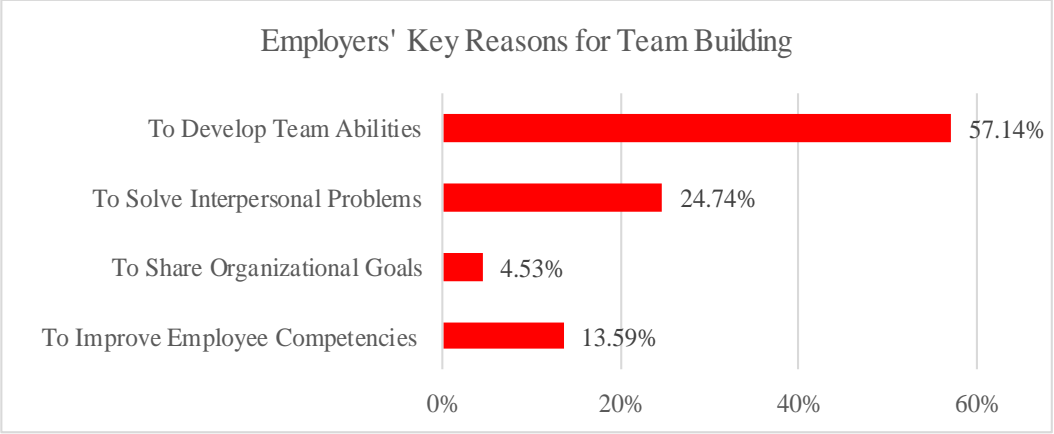


Figure 4.6: Employers' need for team building

4.1.2. Effectiveness of Team Building as a Performance Strategy

To establish the effectiveness of team building, the study first investigated whether its beneficent deemed it relevant for better productivity. In that light, 67.2% affirmed that team building was indeed relevant as opposed to 21.3% that held a contrary opinion as shown in Figure 4.7.

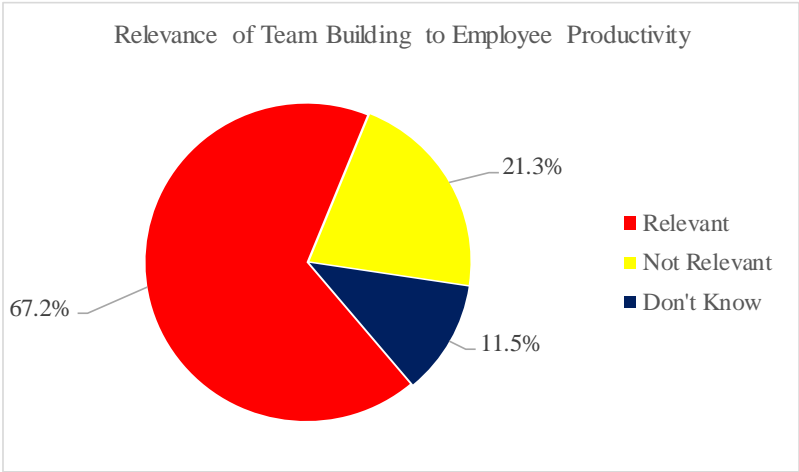


Figure 4.7: Employees' perception as to the relevance of team building

Further investigation (See *Questionnaire No. 17*) established that team building impacts the performance of employees in the telecommunications industry in many ways as depicted in

Figure 4.8 below. Particularly, about 65.5% mentioned that the strategy has helped develop desirable team resilience while another 53% were able to meet their sales target better as a result of skills learn in team building. Some became better team players and others developed better problem solving and time management skills.

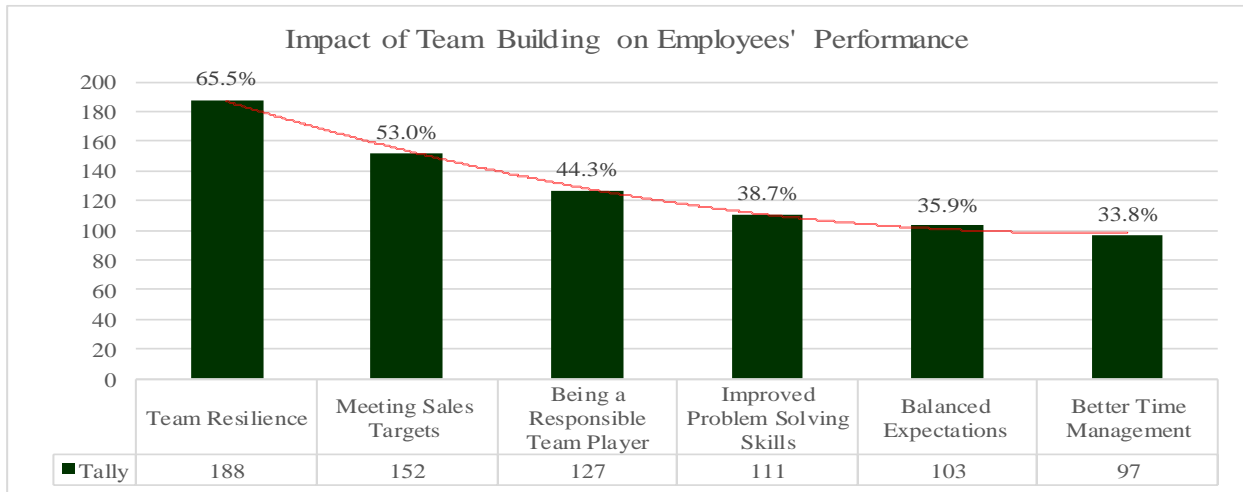


Figure 4.8: Impact of team building on employees' performance

From those who had at least taken part in team building activities within the industry as earlier established in Figure 4.4, about 75.3% ascertained that their level of productivity had improved as illustrated in Figure 4.9 below. On the other hand, 19.6% did not observed any change while 5.2% actually registered less productivity following their participation in team building.

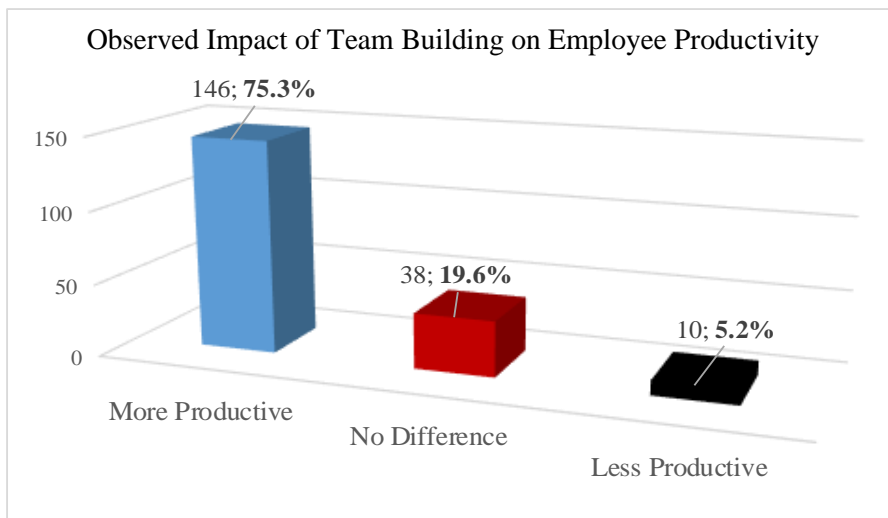


Figure 4.9: Observed effect of team building on employee productivity

Despite the fact that not all employees in the telecommunications industry have experienced team building, as estimated 64.8% agreed that the strategy helped improve their individual skills and competencies for the job as noted in Figure 4.10.

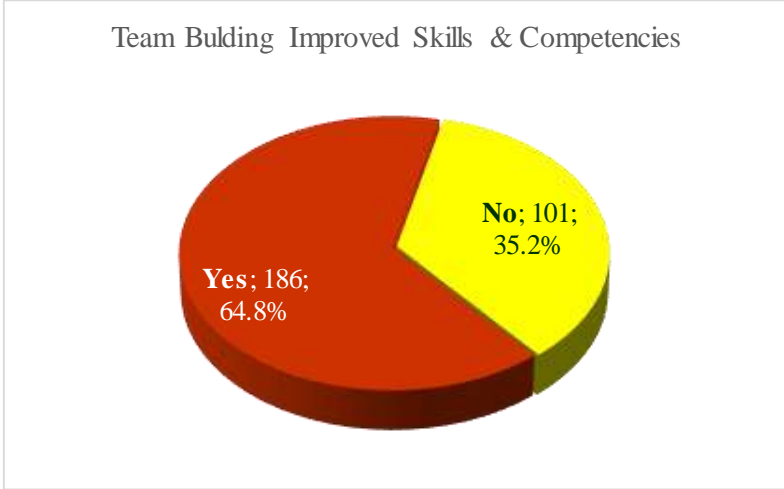


Figure 4.10: Proportion of employees with improved competencies from team building

Owing to the demanding work life associated with telecommunications industry especially those relating to customer care services, marketing and sales; Figure 4.11 shows that a large proportion of employees about 64.1% usually work under pressure to meet targets and beat deadlines. On further analysis, the most affected category of such employees comprised sales and marketing people; and to some extent, supervisors who represent about 9% of the affected workforce.

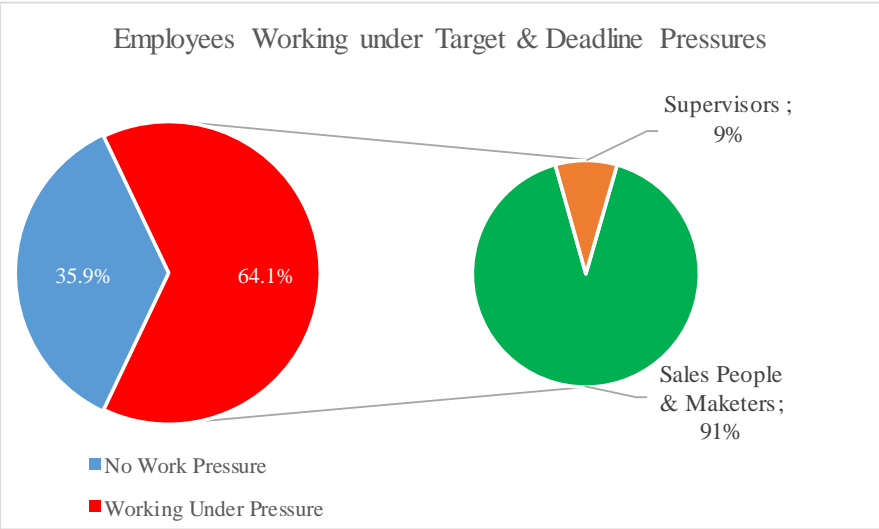


Figure 4.11: Employees facing undue pressure to meet targets & beat deadlines

The study also revealed that team-structured mode of employee management is quite preferred by majority of telecommunication employees. As illustrated in Figure 4.12, about 56.4% of the respondents ascertained that they are more productive and efficient when working under this kind of arrangement. Much of that success is attributed to a regular team building program.

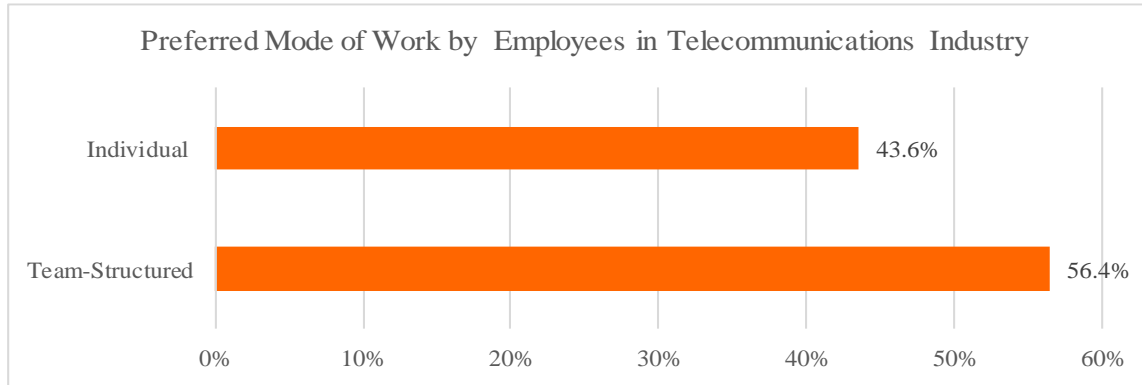


Figure 4.12: Preferred mode of work by employees in Telecommunications industry

Besides the fact that many employees in telecommunications industry do prefer team-structured mode of work, the study established that team building is effective in enhancing the ability of employees towards to achieve the desired career goals. Out of the 287 respondents, only 194 were involved in team-structured mode of work. A greater majority of these, about 83.51% (*Strongly Agree + Agree*) ascertained that skills learnt through team building had greatly enhanced their ability to achieve both organizational and individual career objectives as shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Team building enhances employees' ability for better performance

| Scale | Tally | Percentage |
|-------------------|-------|------------|
| Strongly Agree | 15 | 7.73% |
| Agree | 147 | 75.77% |
| Disagree | 32 | 16.49% |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0.00% |
| | 194 | 100.00% |

Source: Researcher

Generally, the study revealed that team building is to a considerable extent an effective strategy for the enhancement of employees' performance in telecommunications industry as noted 56.4% of study respondents. Figure 4.13 below also shows that about 19.2% of employees were not sure

whether this strategy was actually effective while 24.4% do not believe that team building is ideal or effective in the context of telecommunications industry in Kenya.

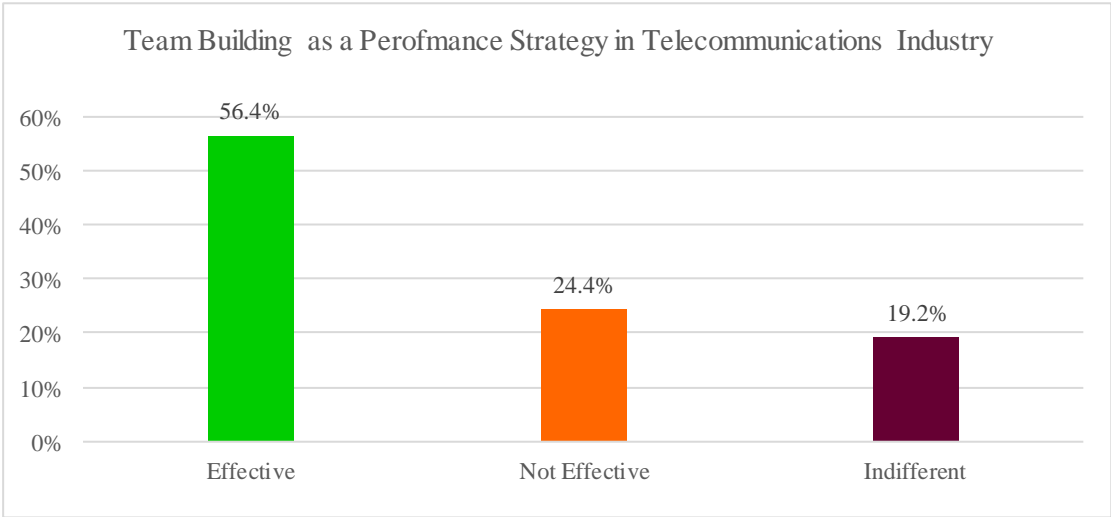


Figure 4.13: Employees’ belief on the effectiveness of team building strategy

With specific reference to the effectiveness of team building, about 86.1% of study participants observed that team building can be helpful in developing highly productive and cohesive teams. Moreover, 77.4% noted that the strategy is instrumental towards improving performance of employees especially in departments where the mode of work is usually team-structured. As illustrated in Figure 4.14, about 60% of respondents also affirmed that team building enables new employees get a practical exposition and understanding of specific organizational goals. It was noted further by 69.3% that participation in such program helps employees learn to cope better with varied conditions of the work environment.

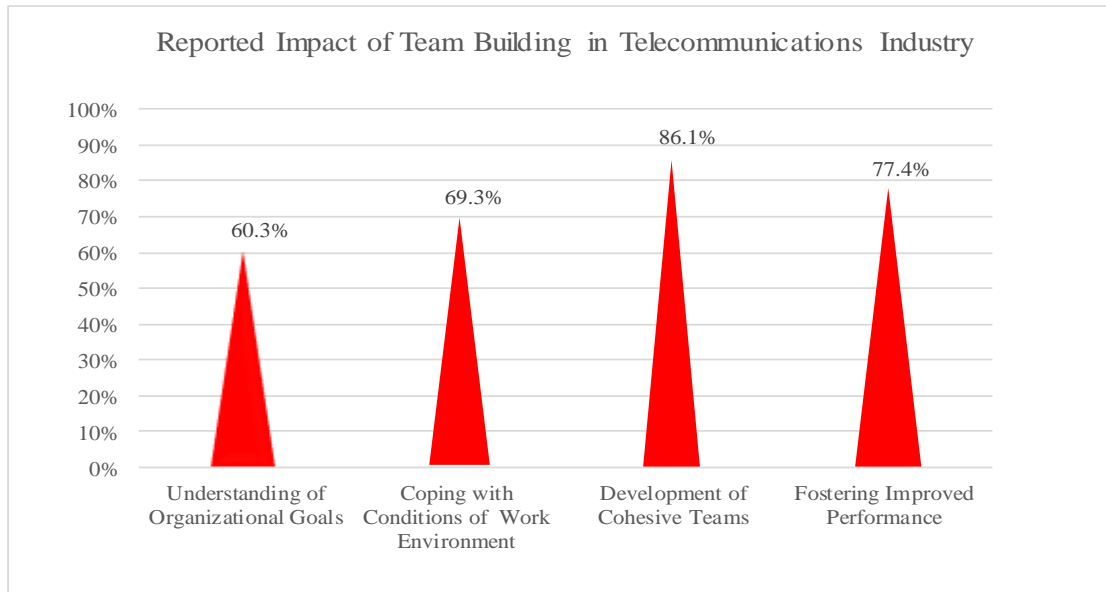


Figure 4.14: Employees’ belief on the effectiveness of team building strategy.

4.1.3. Cost-effective ways of Improving Effectiveness of Team Building

Having established through review of literature that the potential of team building has not been fully realized as a strategy for enhancing the performance of employees, the study revealed that even in telecommunications industry, there is still need to improve its effectiveness. As shown in Table 4.4, this study established team building should be designed as a regular program for employees and its objectives be well articulated as ascertained respectively by 72% and 85.1% of respondents. In addition, about two-thirds (66.7%) of study participants noted that employers should involve professional and seasoned coaches to facilitate team building. Apart from these, there is need to improve the internal work environment to make it supportive and complimentary for enhanced effectiveness of team building.

Table 4.4: Suggested ways of improving effectiveness of team building

| Ways of Improving Effectiveness of Team Building | Tally | Percentage |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Articulate the Objectives of Team Building | 233 | 81.18% |
| Align Job Training & Team Building Objectives | 207 | 72.13% |
| Design Team Building as a Regular Program | 180 | 62.72% |
| Involve Professional Coaches | 119 | 41.46% |
| Improve Internal Work Environment | 83 | 28.92% |

The study also revealed that team building alone is not sufficient in helping employees attaining the highest level of desired productivity. As established thereof, offering monetary reward for committed and hardworking employees was among the most mentioned complementary way of improving the effectiveness of team building as stated by 47.4% of study respondents. Besides, a notable proportion of about 39.6% also considered promotion and recognition as relevant alternatives that can make employees strive for improved performance as shown in Figure 4.15. At least 13% of telecommunication employees also felt that regular appraisal is crucial in ascertaining the effectiveness of team building.

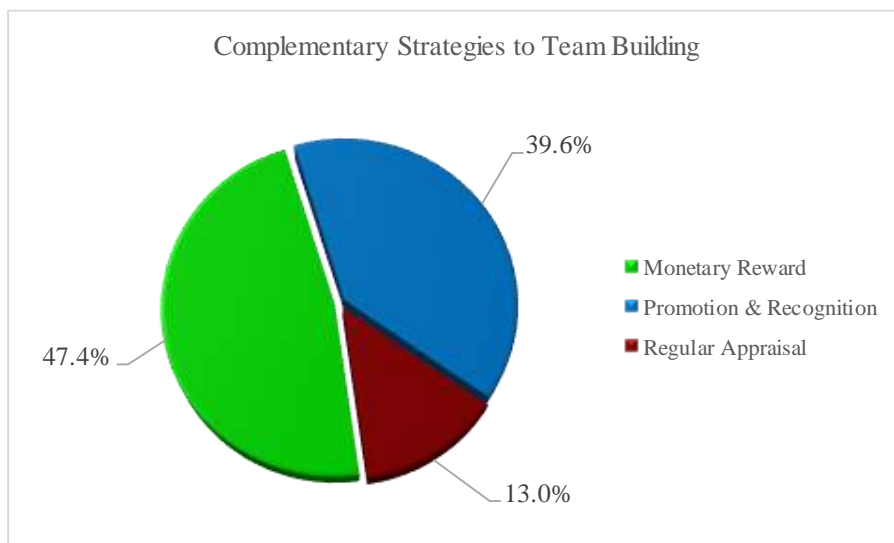


Figure 4.15: Complementary strategies to team building

4.2. Pearson's Correlation

Rohilla (2010) stated that correlation is significant at 95% confidence interval when $r = 0.05$. In addition, it is worth noting that Pearson's correlation is measured between -1 and +1 denoting perfect negative correlation and perfect positive correlation respectively. Positive correlation suggests that the independent variables have positive influence on the dependent variable for which team building strategy is adopted. The reverse is indicative of negative influence, hence negative correlation. As such, the level of significance would be determined by how strong the correlation is, at $r > 0.05$, C.I = 95%. It is from that view point the following section presents respective correlations of the study findings.

Table 4.5. Organizational goals and need for team building

| | | Organizational Goals | Need for Team Building |
|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Organizational Goals | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.229 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | | 0.075 |
| | N | 287 | 287 |
| Need for Team Building | Pearson Correlation | 0.229 | 1 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.075 | |
| | N | 287 | 287 |

For 2-tailed, correlation is significant at 0.05 level which corresponds to 95% Confidence Interval (C.I)

Table 4.5 above shows that there was weak correlation between organizational goals and the need for team building, $r=0.229$. However, the nature of organizational goals would still have some positive influence on the need for team building as a performance strategy for employees in the telecommunications industry.

Table 4.6. Work environment and need for team building

| | | Conditions of Work Environment | Need for Team Building |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Conditions of Work Environment | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.681 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | | 0.305 |
| | N | 287 | 287 |
| Need for Team Building | Pearson Correlation | 0.681 | 1 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.305 | |
| | N | 287 | 287 |

As shown in Table 4.6 above, the study established a strong positive correlation between prevailing conditions of work environment and the need for team building. It follows that unsupportive work environment could undermine the abilities of employees to achieve set target or meet the desired organizational goals. For that reason, demanding work environment as seen in telecommunications industry had positive influence on the need for team building, $r=0.681$.

Table 4.7. Team building and team development

| | | Team Building | Team Development |
|------------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Team Building | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.574 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | | 0.393 |
| | N | 287 | 287 |
| Team Development | Pearson Correlation | 0.574 | 1 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.393 | |
| | N | 287 | 287 |

A strong positive correlation between team building and team development was also established as shown in Table 4.7. With $r=0.574$, team building had positive influence on team development among employees in telecommunications industry.

Table 4.8. Team building and improved performance

| | | Team Building | Improved Performance |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Team Building | Pearson Correlation | 1 | 0.426 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | | 0.093 |
| | N | 287 | 287 |
| Improved Performance | Pearson Correlation | 0.426 | 1 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | 0.093 | |
| | N | 287 | 287 |

Team building positively influences performance of employees in the telecommunications industry, with $r=0.426$ as indicated in Table 4.8 above. This is indicative that involving employees in team building could result in some increase in employee productivity hence an improvement in their performance.

4.3. Discussion

4.3.1. The Need for Team Building in Telecommunications Industry

The nature of telecommunications industry is complex in terms of the array of merchandise and services offered thereof. Most companies rely on the sales of both goods and services while other tend to focus on specialty areas in the world of information technology as noted by Lee (2014). As a result, they normally have a wide mix of employees serving in different departments such as sales, marketing, operations and management. In Kenya, the bulk is mainly composed of sales

and marketing people representing an estimated 72% of the telecommunications workforce as established by this study.

Owing to the fact that global economic trends keeps changing with advancements in technology and innovation, telecommunication companies across the sphere also strive to remain at par with such dynamics. With new telecommunication products and services streaming into the market continually, new entrants have equally found the industry quite lucrative. Thus, competition has become even more stringent in recent times necessitating the need for industry players to develop and maintain highly productive labour force as affirmed by Kumari and Selvi (2015).

Depending on the size of the company, most giant firms in Kenya's telecommunications industry have diversified in order to meet the varied consumer demand and to maintain a profitable edge. In so doing, a lot more often such companies keep hiring new employees and subjecting them to programs that would enhance their key competencies. The aim is to have an army of employees who can deliver results while seeing to it that each worker is not unwarrantedly overworked in keeping with the prevailing labour laws. The situation has seen local firms deploy even people with unrelated academic backgrounds and thereafter training them on the job at hand especially in departments such as sales and customer care service.

According to Shuffler, DiazGranados and Salas (2011), these departments forms the critical link between consumers and the service provider. To that end, they are perpetually sensitive and require a lot of staff dedication to win and keep the customer satisfied with quality of products and services offered. It is that very nature that has rendered telecommunications industry in Kenya both a big employer and a stressful workplace as reiterated by industry's key informants. The effect is that many employees at times lose morale while another finds it hard to cope with the demanding work life. In worst cases, a number of employees have even resolved to quitting the job altogether as observed by Wigginton (2016).

To address the challenge, telecommunication companies adopted different strategies including team building to enhance the productivity and performance of their workforce. The practice has also seen most employers organizing their employees in a team-structured mode of work as established in this study. Particularly, team building has become quite relevant as an ideal strategy for enhancing team spirit, boosting employees' morale as well as helping the team

remain cohesive and productive. That notwithstanding, the adoption of this strategy also revolved around the need to promote skills development such as effective communication skills and how to deal with all walks of people that make up telecommunications target market.

Another vital reason underlying the preference for team building among telecommunications employers comprises the need to develop team abilities, address interpersonal relation challenges and share organizational goals. In most cases, employers believe that exposing employees to team building would enable them learn new skills and competencies for better performance. Also, about 70% of the study participants shared similar sentiments holding the opinion that skills acquired thereof would help them learn to work better with one another, share ideas and offer mutual support to fellow team members towards attaining the desired goals. Such beliefs were echoed by Dyer and Dyer (2007) stating that team building can help improve the performance of employees, especially in a highly diversified work environment.

In culmination, it appears that organizational goals including aspirations for sustainable growth and profitability as well as the desire to develop a reliably productive workforce have propelled the choice for team building. Also, prevailing conditions of the work environment marked with constant pressure on employees to meet sales targets, increase customer base and keep abreast with market trends have played a key role towards the adoption of this particular strategy. It is therefore in order to state that organizational goals and conditions of the work environment have had positively influenced the need for adoption of team building as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry.

4.3.2. Effectiveness of Team Building as a Performance Strategy

In measuring the effectiveness of team building, it was imperative to consider a number of factors. The most important included organizational goals, work environment and work structure as well as the parameters of what constitutes employee performance in telecommunications industry. Taken into account, the effectiveness of team building therefore related to the extent to which it met the desired objectives as reiterated by Fapohunda (2013).

Based on the fundamental factors identified above, such objectives as established in this study revolved around the need to improve employee productivity. Specifically, telecommunication companies in Kenya often endeavoured to expand their market share by introducing an array of

products and services while striving to keep a competitive edge in the dynamic marketplace. It is envisioned by these companies that team building would enable their workforce to acquire valuable skills and competencies to help them cope with the demanding work life thereof. As noted by Belbin (2015), such skills are deemed to enhance team cohesion, reduce interpersonal relation problems and increase team resilience. On the other hand, team building is normally intended to help employees work better in teams and know how to maximize the benefits of diversity while complementing the strengths and weaknesses of each other for greater good of the organization.

As far as attainment of these objectives are concerned, the study established that employees that had taken part in team building program had good understanding of organizational goals unlike their newly contracted counterparts. About 60.3% observed that team building has been helpful in enabling them understand and internalize existing organizational goals. It is important to bear in mind that employee performance is often measured in accordance with the set goals an organization would like them to achieve within a given timeframe, cost and logistics. Consequently, lack or poor understanding of such goals can greatly jeopardise the ability of employees to meet their performance obligations as observed by Lee (2014). However, when employees have clear in-depth understanding of organizational goals, they tend to focus energy in the right direction and realigning their commitment with the desired goals. Thus, employees will spend more time pursuing what is relevant to organizational success.

The second aspect to the effectiveness of team building relates to coping with the prevailing conditions of the work environment as argued by Kumari and Selvi (2015). More often than not, telecommunication industry is characterized by stiff competition and constant changes in technological innovation. As a result, employees are normally expected to work tirelessly to meet the increasing consumer demands, keep a steady flow of revenue from sales and still remain ahead of competitors in terms of creativity and customer satisfaction.

To meet such expectations, majority of telecommunication employees work extra hours while their pay does not rise with any meaningful margin. In most cases, they rely on commission to make ends meet. Otherwise, the wages thereof are not commensurate to the amount of work and pressure employees handle every day in a typical telecommunications industry as noted by about 64.1% of the study respondents. That reality concurs with the findings of Wigginton (2016) in his analysis of the telecommunications industry outlook.

In order to cope with such demanding expectations and remain productive, telecommunications employees find some essence in working as teams. Team-structured work life is gaining reliable popularity since it helps employees share ideas and consolidate their efforts to attain a common goal. In addition to that, team building bridges the gaps of varied experience thus allowing new employees to learn from their senior colleagues while knowing how to balance between work and individual goals. The overall effect is that, employees become united, resilient and creative to meet the set targets without bowing out to operational pressures in the work environment as echoed by Locke and Latham (2002).

Apart from gaining better understanding of organizational goals and coping well with conditions of the work environment, it was also important to investigate whether undertaking team building in the telecommunications industry was effective in developing high performing teams. From the findings of this study, employees who had participated in the program exhibited a liking for team-based approach to work. It emerged that such employees had better appreciation of shared beliefs and a united approach to work as ascertained by Shuffler, DiazGranados and Salas (2011) in their study of team building as the science of team development in organizations.

While 56.4% of respondents asserted that team building was an effective performance strategy, 84.1% noted that it was the key ingredient in the development of cohesive teams. It follows therefore that team building is effective in organizational efforts towards team development as noted by Ravio *et al* (2010) in their study of team building effectiveness in sports. Also, this study established that team building had positive influence on team development.

Looking at the effectiveness of team building in light of improving performance of employees, this study took a number of viewpoints. The study examined the impact of team building on skills and competencies, ability to meet targets, mean time for task completion as well as the overall productivity of individual employees. Comparatively, key informants in this study noted that employees with team building experience were generally more productive in terms of having improved record of meeting sales targets and completing tasks within reduced timeframe and cost. That finding affirmed the arguments of Dyer and Dyer (2007) with respect to team building as a proven strategy to improved performance in the workplace.

Also, the study established that employees that worked as a team had a greater sense of job satisfaction and were more likely to remain with the organizations for long compared to their colleagues who preferred individualized work structure. For instance, majority of those who qualified for promotion to positions of supervisors and HR managers in telecommunications industry could trace their success to the tenets of team building and concerted effort to work. Most of these leaders are well experienced and believed in shared strengths among employees. In their study, Wan Sulaiman, Mahbob and Abu Hassan (2012) agreed that team building is even more relevant for improving employee performance in an industry where much success depends on the firm's ability to keep abreast with stiff competition and complex consumer demands. The same is typically true of Kenya's telecommunications industry as noted by Safaricom Ltd (2015).

Notwithstanding the relevance of team building to improved performance, it appears that a lot more is required of employees to be productive. Such included but certainly not limited to applicable academic qualifications, hands-on experience as well as passion for the job. In addition to these, Salas *et al* (2008) argued that the need for supportive administration also influences the performance of employees irrespective of the performance strategy adopted by the organization. Thus, team building was found to be only a complementary factor to improved performance in telecommunications industry, hence the positive influence established by this study. In the absence of individual experience, relevant academics and good administrative support, team building alone might not yield much in terms of improving employee performance as revealed by certain findings of the Telegraph (2012).

Contrary to common perception that team building strategy would always contribute to enhanced performance, this study established that some employees actually recorded a reduction in their level of productivity. This was a rather surprising finding owing to the fact that a bulk of existing literature has mostly focused on the positive impacts of team building. From sessions of focused group discussions, it emerged that some activities in experiential team building appears to expose the weaknesses of employees especially those that are introverts and prefer working as loners.

As they reflect on the activities undertaken thereof, such employees tend to focus on the finer details like unwelcome jokes or comments made against them by team-mates or facilitators. In the end, they feel that the exercise infringed their private space and personality. Such employees withdraw eventually, and return home more disillusioned than inspired. The impact is more or

less psychological and can stay with them for weeks if not months as argued by Blundel (2004), hence a negative toll on employees' level of productivity.

Bearing in mind that about 5.2% of telecommunication employees showed a downward trend in productivity following their participation in team building, it became apparent that team building may not always yield positive results. Besides, 24.4% of participants noted that the strategy was not effective in influencing positive effect on employee performance. In a study conducted by Briggs (2011) on why team building does not work in recession, the scholar observed that some organizations do not take time to explain to employees why the strategy was adopted and what objectives it sought to achieve. That study of Briggs reiterated that at times employees feel the program is imposed on them as a means of defusing workplace tension or internal conflicts as opposed to using it positively with clear objectives of improving skills and competencies.

Moreover, a number of business organizations lacked specific parameters of evaluating the relevance of common team building activities to local needs of the workforce. As a result, such firms just go with what external facilitators deem fit for the team rather than developing a tailor-made program for different groups in the workplace. It is for such reasons that a section of employees in the telecommunication felt that team building was neither relevant nor effective as a performance strategy. Again, this opinion concurs with the findings of the Telegraph (2012). Nevertheless, the positive attributes and long-term impact of team building on improving the productivity of employee skills remain tangible and in line with the proposition of Fapohunda (2013) that the strategy can be quite effective if well-articulated and properly implemented.

4.3.3. Cost-Effective Ways of Improving the Effectiveness of Team Building

Despite the fact that team building has been used for decades as a common strategy towards the improvement of workforce performance, its potential has never been fully realized as observed by Gottlieb (2005) and Briggs (2011). First and foremost, the objectives of team building should be precise and clearly defined in relation to organizational goals and job training objectives. When employees are made to understanding the reasons for which their employer desires that they participate in the team building exercise, they are likely embrace the program with a positive mind as opposed to considering the idea a waste of time or just but a moment of fun. It is also good to explain the desired objectives the program endeavours to achieve. This will help

employees know what is expected of them by the end of their participation in team building as noted by Fapohunda (2013) in her study of relevant interventions for effective team building.

Another way of enhancing the effectiveness of team building is by making it a regular program for all employees as defined by various needs of their areas of speciality. According to a study conducted by Klein *et al* (2009) on the social functions of episodic memory, it was established that irregular or periodic programs sticks in the memory of learners only for a time. If not repeated, the brain is likely to wipe it out over time hence the need for recurrent episodes of the lesson. However, when lessons are taught regularly, learners are likely to acquire the new skill quickly and such skills will remain active in their memory for long. This was found to be true in regard to how children are taught using play songs or how dogs are trained with the bell (Locke & Latham, 2002; Klein, 2009). In the same manner, about 62.72% of study respondents observed that team building would be more effective as a performance strategy when designed as a regular program. The idea is to have a platform of refreshing skills learnt in previous activities while making the new episodes of team building focus on specific areas that still need improvements.

This study also noted that a number of organizations try to cut costs by engaging internal staff as facilitators of team building. Participants often see these facilitators as either peers or people with subjective knowledge of their abilities, character and weaknesses as noted by Fapohunda (2013). As a result, participants of such team building programs may not take the exercise with the desired seriousness. Similarly, Blundel (2004) observed that concerned employees could have the feeling that internal facilitators are likely to note certain weaknesses which could be used to deny the employee opportunities such as promotion. It is on these grounds of subjective interaction that about 41.5% of study respondents propositioned the use of external facilitators with professional experience in team building and team development.

Lastly, it is imperative to create conducive ambience in the workplace. Employees should feel free and comfortable as they pursue various lines of duty. Even with the best approach to team building, lack of supportive work environment often undermines the interest, moral and psychological abilities of employees to perform optimally. In a meta-analysis study conducted by Cole and Scott (2000) on the theory of employee performance, they concluded that the first step to getting the best out of employees revolves around the provision of good working environment. These scholars noted that high performing organizations are also known to have some of the best

policies on work relations including matters safety, good pay, reasonable working hours, overtime wages, leave, health insurance and ergonomics.

With such factors in place, employees will always feel appreciated and that their immediate needs are taken care of by the employer. They would therefore work hard to keep the job, enjoy the benefits of working for such companies and try their best to rise up the corporate ladders. Team building thus become a well acceptable platform through which employees would learn new skills to help them meet both personal career objectives and organizational goals. The end result is manifested in improved productivity as accentuated by Lee (2014) in his study on the strategic approaches towards improving employee performance.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides a summary of the study findings, conclusion and recommendations with regard to the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the telecommunications industry. In addition, the chapter highlights some areas that needs further research for expansive exploration of the applicability of team building strategy. Limitations to this study have also been outlined herein.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Results of this study established that although a large majority of employees prefer monetary rewards, team building is still a popular performance strategy deployed by employers including those in the telecommunications industry. In terms of the need for team building, telecommunications industry employs a wide range of staff especially as sales and marketing people majority of who do not have academic background ins sales, marketing or business. They require proper orientation and continued support to internalize organizational goals and learn to cope with the high demanding work life associated with sales and marketing tasks. Team building was therefore found to help them acquire and share skills that are pertinent the optimum performance of their duties. As such, the study ascertained that organizational goals and conditions of the work environment positively influence the need and choice for team building as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry. The strategy was found to be ideal in providing essential skills that help employees become resilient and responsible team players with better abilities to meet sales targets.

In addition to these, it was noted that team building is a practically useful approach towards the development of high performing teams. In telecommunications industry, team building appeared to be effective in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application of skills to get the job done well within the constraints of time, cost and related logistics. As such, the study determined that team building has positive influence on team development which in turn contributes to the overall productivity of a team. Lastly, the study ascertained that complementing the strategy with supportive administrative and HR policies is cost-effective and can improve the effectiveness of team building in influencing upward performance of employees in telecommunication industry.

5.2. Conclusions

Based on the findings, this study ascertains that organizational goals and conditions of the work environment positively influence the need for team building in telecommunications industry. The strategy is often adopted by employers as a levelled platform for sharing key organizational goals. This is more so applicable in the case of organizations that advocate for team-based work structures especially in industries that employ staff with varied academic qualifications and work experience. As such, team building remains an essential strategy of helping such a mix of workforce gain in-depth understanding and practical exposition of the desired objectives and organizational goals.

In Kenya, the strategy is gaining popularity due to rising competition in telecommunications industry and the need to keep a profitable flow of revenue amidst global economic downturns. Employees are expected to work hard as a united team towards attaining the set organizational goals including sales targets, optimum customer satisfaction and to stay ahead with technological innovations that are shaping the local industry. Efforts to achieve such goals among others have made Kenya's telecommunications industry both competitive and vibrant as equally noted by Safaricom (2015). Ultimately, these concerns have created a work environment with significant pressure on human resources to deliver tangible results. Team building was therefore found to provide essential life skills inherent in team spirit and resilience which are necessary in helping employees cope with such demanding conditions in the work environment.

On the other hand, team building has been effective in enhancing team development. Whereas organizations adopt team building for many reasons, this study observed that the strength of high performing teams lies in their ability to remain cohesive and inspired for a common purpose. In telecommunications industry, this strategy has been effective in creating a cohesive workforce; one that embraces diversity and various abilities of team members to help achieve the set goals.

The study also ascertains that team building is instrumental in uplifting the morale of teams especially when the company is undergoing hard times financially or administratively. In the case of a large pool of fresh employees, the strategy is vital in orienting such employees into a team-structured mode of work. It helps employees learn to work together and to provide moral support to each other so as to remain optimally productive and responsible for the overall success

of the organization. To that end, this study resolved that indeed team building has positive influence on team development in the telecommunications industry.

In terms of improving employee performance, this study observed and concluded that a lot more entails the process of establishing a sustainable level of employee performance. Despite the fact that team building plays a pivotal role to that effect, it may not achieve much without certain key improvements in the HR policies. Such include but not limited to provision of good working environment, worthy pay, effective communication and reliable support from the management.

Employees also need some level of inspiration and support from their immediate supervisors to keep abreast with the tenets of shared responsibility in light of team performance. Nevertheless, team building is still helpful in inculcating abilities like good time management and organization skills which are helpful in planning, prioritizing and executing tasks objectively and efficiently. It is on such grounds this study asserts that team building contributes to positive influence on improved performance of employees in telecommunications industry.

Put together, it is apparent that team building plays an essential role towards the creation of high performing organizations. Employees involved in team building have a preference to team-structured mode of work. To some extent, such employees are more productive as compared to their colleague who prefer individualized approach to work and had no experience of team building. These observations suggest that team building is relatively effective as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry. However, business organizations can realize even better performance from employees if they augment team building with other employee' preferred strategies such as monetary reward, bonuses, recognition and promotion for exemplary work.

5.3. Recommendations

In regard to the need for team building in telecommunications industry, this study recommends that employers should provide clear objectives and define the parameters of measurable its impact on telecommunication employees. Particularly, such objectives ought to be precise, attainable and relevant to towards improving the productivity of all employees involved. By so doing, telecommunications employees would find a better understanding for the need for team building and therefore embrace it as an essential component in their career endeavours.

The second recommendation relates to the effectiveness of team building in telecommunications industry. To help enhance the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy, the study recommends that team building should be designed as a regular program and implemented by experienced external professionals. The topics and activities of such programs should be properly aligned with specific needs of different cadres of employees in telecommunications industry. They should also focus on the explicit goals such employees are expected to meet within a given timeframe, cost and logistics. That way, employees and facilitators alike will be able to focus their interest, energy and resources on what would add value to the overall productivity and better performance of the team. The outcome should be evident, substantial and long-lived. It is only then that team building would be deemed to have been effective as a performance strategy in telecommunications industry as affirmed by Fapohunda (2013).

Having established that team building alone is not enough to make employees more productive and high performing, the study recommends that the entire administration and HR department in telecommunications industry should be more involved in providing necessary support and inspiration to the teams. Most importantly, the management should provide a conducive work environment and supportive HR policies to care for the needs of telecommunications employees; financial, physical and even psychological well-being. In addition, exemplary performance should be well rewarded and shared by all team members involved. As a result, teams will strive to meet their obligations, targets and the desired organizational goals knowing that the employer too appreciates every effort in equal measure. Thus, inculcating a system that honours the ultimate dignity of work as opposed to the ordinary culture of demanding too much from employees but not learning to share the benefits of their labour. If taken in consideration, these proposals could make team building an acceptable, effective and sustainable performance strategy in the telecommunications industry.

5.4. Limitations of the Study

Whereas the study was conducted smoothly for the better part, it was particularly faced with a few limitations. Obtaining clearance from Safaricom was quite a long administrative process that required a lot of patience. That ate into the project timeline causing a delay in data collection owing to the fact that the study targeted a wide range of Safaricom retail stores around Nairobi. The other limitation was revolving around the tight schedule of target population. Majority

comprised sales and marketing people whose are typically busy for the better part of the day. To some extent, getting them to squeeze a bit of time to participate in the study was challenging. The researcher was therefore forced to collected the data very early in the morning and late in the evening when customer traffic was down. Lastly, junior employees that had only participated in team building once were not able to distinguish whether their level of performance was a result of the team building program or it was purely an outcome of their fresh academic knowhow. To address this limitation, senior employees were involved in focused group discussions and key informant interviews to provide in-depth understanding of the topic and provide clarification of such grey areas of knowledge.

5.5 Areas of Further Research

Based on the findings of literature review and revelations of this study, much has been focused on reasons for team building and how it impacts the performance of its participants. There is very little information in regard to the challenges affecting the implementation of this strategy and more so across different industries. For that reason, this study advises that further research should be taken on the challenges affecting the implement of team building as a common performance strategy. Besides, a comparative study should be done to analyse the effectiveness of team building across different industries so as to establish the sectors in which the strategy is most relevant and appropriate.

On the other hand, this study established that different employees have varied perceptions of team building and its relevance as a performance strategy. As such, it will be good to undertake some studies on the attitude of employees on need, significance and impact team building in relation to their career objectives. Such studies will help unravel the underlying factors as to why should not rely on team building alone as the main strategy for promoting the abilities of the workforce towards better performance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Mary Muthoni Gicheru,
Maseno University,
KISUMU.

To:

The Human Resources Manager,
Safaricom Limited,
NAIROBI.

Dear sir/ Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A SHORT SURVEY WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATION

I am a postgraduate student at Maseno University, undertaking a Master’s degree in Business Administration. Currently, I am working on my thesis and therefore seek your permission to interview members of your staff to help gain in-depth understanding of the research topic. The purpose of this study is, ‘*to analyse the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy in the Telecommunications industry: A case study of Safaricom Limited*’. For that purpose, I would like to administer questionnaires to 310 participants from your organization in keeping with the ethical considerations of informed consent, respect and utmost confidentiality.

I chose Safaricom Ltd as a leader in the Telecommunications industry and, more so, that its success in East and Central Africa is unparalleled. It is my hope that the results gathered from this study will increase the body of knowledge on the effectiveness of team building, especially in the Telecommunications industry. Besides, the findings would help industry stakeholders make informed decisions regarding the design and development of team building programs for their employees.

Your permission and cooperation shall be highly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Mary Muthoni Gicheru.

Appendix 2: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Part 1: Instructions

1. Kindly do not write your name or identification whatsoever on this questionnaire
2. Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible to the best of your knowledge.
3. Once you are done, return the questionnaire to the researcher.

Part 2: Survey Questions

1. How long have you worked in the Telecommunications industry?

- > 1 yr.
- 1-2 yrs.
-
-

2-5 yrs.

>5 yrs.

2. What is your area of specialty?

Customer Care

Sales

Operations

3. Generally, do you have proper understanding of your job description?

Yes No

4. As an employee of this institution, do you know your organizational goals?

Yes No

5. As an employee in this telecommunications company, do you have personal objectives you want to achieve?

Yes No

6. How is the mode of your work life structured in this organization?

Individualized Team-based

7. In terms of qualification, what is your academic background?

Sales & Marketing

Business Administration

Human Resource

Others

8. Do you feel your academic background and industry skills are related to your current job?

Yes No

9. From your observation and experience, does your employer have specific strategies to help improve employee performance?

Yes No

10. In your employment career, have you ever participated in any team building exercise?

Yes No

11. Generally, what is your understanding of team building?

12. Based on your understanding or experience, what is the purpose of team building as applied to your industry? (*Tick the most important **FOUR***)

- Fun Day
- Skills Development
- Team Cohesion
- Improve Interpersonal Relations
- To break Monotony
- Enhance Team Spirit
- To boost Morale
- To Ease Workplace Tension

13. Do you agree that employees in your department require some team building program?

Yes No

14. How frequent does your employer sent various groups for team building?

- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Annually
- As Need Arise

15. Why does your employer advocate for team building?

- To Improve Employee Competencies
- To Share Organizational Goals
- To Solve Interpersonal Problems
- To Develop Team Abilities

16. Is this program really important for your productivity as an employee?

-
-
-

Important

Not Important

Don't Know

17. In what ways does team building program impact your performance as an employee?

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

18. Do you agree that team building helps improve your competencies for the job?

Yes No

19. At the beginning of your team building session, do facilitators share its objectives with participants?

Yes No

20. At the end of the team building exercise, do you normally have some time to reflect on the milestones achieved?

Yes No

21. Kindly list three ways team building has helped you as an employee?

i. _____

ii. _____

iii. _____

22. In a scale of **1-4 score**, to what extent do you agree that team building helps you achieve personal career objectives within the Telecommunications industry?

4 = Strongly Agree

3 = Agree

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

23. Briefly explain *why you agree or disagreed in Qs 22* above.

24. How often do you manage to meet your set operational targets within a given timeframe?

Always Occasionally Hardly

25. Do you normally feel undue pressure to beat deadlines and achieve individual targets?

Yes No

26. Do you believe that team-structure would help improve your performance towards achieving both personal and organizational goals in the Telecommunications industry?

Yes No

27. From team building experience, how would you rate your personal or team productivity?

More Productive

No Difference

Less Productive

28. With the current state of affairs, do you think team building is an effective performance strategy in your organization?

Yes No Not Sure

29. What observation positive change would you attribute to the influence of team building in your organization? (*Tick the most important THREE*)

Understanding Organizational Goals

Coping with Conditions of Work Environment

Development of Cohesive Teams

Fostering Improved Performance

30. How can stakeholders in the Telecommunications industry enhance the effectiveness of team building as a performance strategy? (*Choose most appropriate THREE*)

Articulate Team Building Objectives

Involves Professional Coaches

Increase Frequency of Teambuilding Events

Synchronize Training & Teambuilding Objectives

Improve Internal Work Environment

31. Given a managerial opportunity, which alternative performance strategies would you propose for the Telecommunications industry to supplement team building? (*Name at least two*)

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

32. From experience, do conditions of the work environment create the need for team building?

Yes No

33. It is true that nature of organizational goals could have contributed to the need for team building in your organizations?

Yes No

34. Do you believe that team building positively contributes to team development?

Yes No

35. Does effecting team building positively influence to improved employee performance?

Yes No

END – THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME & PARTICIPATION

Appendix 3: RESEARCH PLAN

| Activity | Mar | April | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Developing Research Concept | | | | | | | |
| Research Proposal | | | | | | | |
| Data Collection | | | | | | | |
| Data Verification, Analysis & Presentation | | | | | | | |
| Thesis Report Writing & Submission | | | | | | | |

Appendix 4: BUDGET

| Budget Item | Units | Rate (Kshs) | Amount |
|------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Data Collection Assistance | 2people x 10days | 1,500.00 | 30,000.00 |
| Travelling Expenses | 2people x 10days | 300.00 | 6,000.00 |
| Questionnaire Print & Photocopy | 350 copies | 10.00 | 3,500.00 |
| Data Sorting & Verification | 2people x 3days | 1,000.00 | 6,000.00 |
| Data Entry & Analysis (Outsourced) | 1 professional | 15,000.00 | 15,000.00 |
| Thesis Printing - Draft | 2 copies | 400.00 | 800.00 |
| Thesis Printing - Fine Copy | 6 copies | 400.00 | 2,400.00 |
| Hardcover Binding & Foiling | 6 copies | 650.00 | 3,900.00 |
| Miscellaneous Expenses | - | | 7,000.00 |
| TOTAL | | | 74,600.00 |