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Effect of proactive personality in the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success of managerial staff in large manufacturing firms in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of the study was to examine the role of proactive personality in the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success of the managerial staff in large scale manufacturing firms in Kenya. Consequently, two hypotheses were formulated with the aim of achieving the set objective. The study was guided by positivist research paradigm and descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted, primary data was collected from managerial staff of large scale manufacturing firms in Kenya. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All the measurement items met reliability and validity tests. Hypotheses were tested using linear regression model. The findings indicated that proactive personality moderates the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success. The study supports leader member exchange (LMX) theory which advocates for organizational sponsorship for career success of employees and social cognitive career theory (SCCT) that advocates for interaction of organizational factors and personality factors in achievement of career success. The study recommends that large scale manufacturing firms should enhance their employees' career success by providing them with organizational sponsorship programs particularly; training, mentorship, supervisor support and organizational resources. The findings also provide future researchers with a useful conceptual and methodological reference that can be used in the pursuit for further studies particularly in the area of career success and as far as the moderating role of proactive personality is concerned in different contexts other than manufacturing firms.

KEY WORDS

organizational sponsorship, proactive personality, career success

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1 INTRODUCTION

The nature of jobs as well as organizations have changed, this has created challenges on how to define, describe, to estimate and to achieve career success. Jobs have been subjected to many contextual changes following organizational restructuring (Frese, 2001) the emerging new concepts on career such as boundaryless career and protean career are a pointer to the changes in roles in career management from the companies to individuals (Hall, 2004). The changes have seen a major alteration in the traditional hierarchical organizational structures. Organizations today are less structured with many becoming flatter. With these changes, the relationship between the business owners and staff has been altered. Individuals can no longer be assured of assistance from their organization for the fulfillment of their own career success. This in turn has facilitated the need for people to look for new ways of managing their careers (Sullivan & Baruch, 2009). Proactive personality is perceived to play a major role in not only defining career strategies adopted by an individual but also the possibility of an individual obtaining organizational sponsorship and succeeding in their careers (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 2006).

In the quest for career success employees are bound to face many challenges that calls for support from the organization. Even for proactive individuals, despite their ability to overcome obstacles and challenges that may hinder the achievement of their career goals, there are situations that are beyond their control such as decision on salary increment and promotion which are never left at the discretion of an individual. Consequently, organizations

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need to respond to individual initiatives to career success through provision of resource, training, mentorship, supervisor support and generally providing conducive working environment that will enhance employees' career success without which career success will still remain a challenge to most employees (Barnet & Bradley, 2007).

The focus in manufacturing sector in Kenya is based on its strategic role in the achievement of vision 2030. There is need for managerial staff in this sector to spearhead the growth and development of the sector towards the achievement of this vision. Unfortunately, the sector has not been making major contributions to the country's GDP as expected given its strong manufacturing base in the country as compared to other countries like Tanzania and Uganda (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Moon and Choi (2017) observe that employees' career success, which is a product of the effort made by both individual and organization, determines the expected outcomes of the firms in which employees are engaged in. Organizational sponsorship programs like training and development help in improving the skills and competences of the staff which is an added advantage as far as performance of the job is concerned. Furthermore, mentoring of talented individuals prepares the organization for future replacement of those in managerial positions in case of retirement or untimely exits by the staff. The staff also gains satisfaction and commitment when their career goals and plans are aligned to the goals of the organizations. Therefore, in as much as the employees need to have a direct control of their careers, organizations still need to provide necessary support aimed at enhancing the staff's career success (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005).

1.1 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORSHIP

The level of assistance provided by organizations to the employees to enable them to succeed in their careers has been described by authors in several ways: organization support (Barnet & Bradley, 2007), organization career management (Ndegua, 2016), career development practices (Kamau, 2017) and organizational sponsorship (Ng, Eby, Sorensen & Feldman, 2005). This study adopted the term organizational sponsorship in corroboration with the study by Ng. et al (2005) who used the term to define the level of special assistance organizations provide to their staff to facilitate their career success. Furthermore, the study by Ng. et al (2005) also identified the components used to describe organizational sponsorship as training and development, mentorship, supervisor support and organization resources that have been used in this study. Organizational support perspective upholds that reciprocal engagement between staff and management begins when the company provides an authentic and good working environment for employees who in return feel obligated to accomplish the set objectives of the organization (Wayne, Shore & Liden, 1997). Organizational sponsorship is perceived by the staff as an aspect of value attached to them and their contribution towards the success of the organization by the employer, this perception generates positive feelings such as self-esteem, and career satisfaction (Nayir, 2012). According to Ng. et al (2005) organizational sponsorship consist of four main components: Mentorship, training, supervisor support and organization resources.

Mentorship refers to socialization and reciprocal association that helps transforms the behavior of the people involved (Brockbank & Mc Gill, 2006). Mentoring can be categorized into two, formal and informal. Formal mentoring is carried out by a staff assigned by the firm. The association ranges from 6 months to 1 year. A contract is approved by the mentor and the mentee (Allen et al., 2006). The contract spells the schedules for the meetings. The formal mentoring programs are based on training, staff orientation, individual and career growth, it also acts as a form of sponsorship and offers the mentee exposure in the organization. The formal mentoring is defined by the organization and is more related to work aspects within the organization and takes place for an agreed period of time. On the other hand, the informal aspect is not controlled by the organization, but the mentee has his or her own discretion to choose his or her mentor who acts as a role model. The association relies on the agreement made by both parties and is marked with closeness. The mentee gains the necessary guidance and support whereas the mentor gains satisfaction from the mentoring offered and acknowledgement from the company. With informal mentorship the period is not restricted, and the relationship may last as long as it is deemed appropriate (Bozionelos, 2004).

Mentoring is observed as an association between a person who is more enlightened and a less experienced one. A mentor offers counseling, guidance and modeling (Hall, 2007). These relationships are initiated with the view of developing career functions. Mentorship can range from several activities offered to the mentee such as provision of challenging assignments, provision of exposure and visibility in the organization by participating in various activities, paying attention to the mentee's level of competence, giving the mentee adequate and proper information on what the job involves, informing the mentee of important issues affecting the company (Bozionelos, 2004). The process of mentoring is beneficial to both parties; the mentor and the mentee. Apart from facilitating the transfer of knowledge and skills to the mentee, the mentor also gains career satisfaction just like the mentee.

Training is the process of improving the capacity of the workforce by allowing them to advance their level of education, through attending seminars and workshop and through engaging in the job itself (Armstrong & Taylor,

2014). Training imparts knowledge, skills and competences to the employees thus improving their efficiencies and effectiveness in job performance. It is regarded as an investment in human capital regardless of whether the investment is as a result of the effort by the individual or by the organization. Organizations in offering training to their employees not only enhance the staff's performance on the job but also fulfill their obligation as part of the psychological contract with their employees (Lewis & Arnold, 2012). Individuals who are offered training gain feelings of appreciation from their organization and endeavor to devote their time and effort to work towards the fulfilment of the goals and strategies of the companies. Opportunities for training are a major step as far as employees' career success is concerned. The skills acquired through training prepare the individuals involved for future job openings and higher positions.

Supervisor support is the level of assistance offered to the staff by the managers or superiors on the aspects of the job and can be geared towards enhancing an individual's achievement of career success. Supervisors can provide assistance to the employees through offering them protection especially in cases of victimization arising from either management staff or the co-workers, providing appropriate feedback for job performance which motivates as well as enable the employee to improve on their performance, providing practical support whenever necessary, adopting a collaborative approach in supervision through consultation with the employee in matters pertaining to job performance, providing support to accomplish tasks or meet the set deadlines, assigning their staff more responsibilities that increases their contact with influential people in the organization as well as creating visibility of the staff in the company and potential for consideration for a higher position in the organization (Ng, et al., 2005).

Organizations can as well offer financial support and non-financial support to their staff (Ng, et al., 2005). The financial support can take different forms: For instance, scholarship, certain organization provide finances to their staff to further their education with a commitment on the part of the employees that they will have to work for the firm for agreed period of time on completion of their studies before seeking for other employment outside the organization, others still, will provide paid study leaves to the staff in order for them to pursue their studies. Basically, the main intention of providing financial support to the employees is to help them improve on their skill and knowledge and to help them prepare for future high position that may arise within the organization (Bozionelos, 2008). The non-financial aspects are non-monetary resources that can include time to further one's studies, this can be in form of study leaves, off duty during particular times of the day to attend to career related issues, flexibility on time to allow for skill development and opportunities for career growth within the organization. Apart from enabling employees to develop a more balanced work life, employees generally utilize these opportunities to advance in their career, while others derive career satisfaction from such jobs that are more flexible.

1.2 PROACTIVE PERSONALITY

The trait was introduced by Bateman and Crant (1993). It is defined by self-directed behavior and tendency to control obstacles and situational forces and the ability to define and direct one's own career. Proactive personality is a trait that distinguishes individuals based on the extent to which they control and manipulate their environments for their own good. Typically, people with proactive personalities are not constrained by obstacles and situations but instead fight and to the end enduring to bring about the necessary changes in their environment.

It generally describes the ability to create and sustain actions that can directly change the environment (Bateman and Grant, 1993). Proactive personality is a fundamental personality because it considers the possibility that people can alter their environments instead of allowing themselves to be bent by these changes. It is built on the premise that one's behavior can be controlled both from within and outside, and that circumstances are as much a consequence of people and vice versa. Consequently, there exist a reciprocal causal relationship between a person, environment, and behavior (Bandura, 2002). Therefore, people can deliberately alter their present situations to facilitate the achievement of their career objectives.

Proactive individuals usually excel in scanning the environment for opportunities and spotting these opportunities. They also develop their objectives, take necessary actions that are geared towards the achievements of the set objectives, and endure until they meet these objectives (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Consequently, proactive individuals initiate constructive change through: striving to change the normal order of things, engaging in constant search of new ways of doing things, fixing what they don't like and correcting faulty procedures within and outside their organizations. Furthermore, these individuals are more result oriented in their action.

On the contrary, people who are not proactive display the opposing behavior, such people are not able to recognize and maximize on the existing opportunities to improve on their situations. They are less motivated to put forth effort in order to realize their objectives (Sun & Zang, 2014). They demonstrate less initiative in initiating changes and depend on other people to bring the expected changes. These individuals lack control of their situation and are usually deterred by obstacle and circumstances of their environment hence they basically conform to their Situations (Yang & Chau, 2016).

1.3 CAREER SUCCESS

Career is regarded as a descriptive and evaluative term. The descriptive term refers to a person's occupational life course that is characterized by job changes, relocations, unemployment period, times of further development and promotions. Career as an evaluative term refers to upward mobility and climbing up the organizational ladder. The term career has further been defined as making sense of one's professional and occupational development (Arthur, et al., 2005). The term success, on the other hand, is used to describe progress as well as to evaluate desirable outcomes in an individual's personal and professional life. People have different ways of evaluating their own success. Therefore, from the foregoing, the term career success can be said to be subjective or objective accomplishment throughout one's work life (Judge, Higgins, Thoresen & Barrick, 1999).

Career success is conceptualized in two dimensions; objective and subjective (Gattiker & Larwood, 1986; Heslin, 2003, 2005; Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995; Ng et al., 2005). The objective dimension of career success describes the intrinsic aspect which has been defined traditionally on the basis of pay level, the number of promotions received, rank or position held by one in the organization and salary increment (Dries, Pepermans, & Carlier, 2008). The objective measures of career success are perceived to involve aspects that can be observed, measured and verified by an independent third party (Abele & Wiese, 2008; Arnold & Cohen, 2008). These measures are perceived to be beyond the control of an individual and can only be determined by the employer or the organization and other external factors (Nicholson & De Waal-Andrews, 2005).

The current trends in organizations such as flattening the organization structures, downsizing, and outsourcing some of the organizational operations have not only minimized the scope of some of the traditional objective measures such as; hierarchical progression through promotion but also increasingly made it difficult to define the objective measures of career success as a whole (Hall, 2002). Furthermore, there are marked differences on the perception of status and power, systems of taxation and general societal stratification across countries which make it difficult to define fixed indicators of objective career success and compare across different nations (Hollenbeck and McCall's, 2003). Similarly, issues have been raised regarding inadequacies of traditional measures of career success, such as pay and advancement. The fact is that there are other career outcomes apart from these which people look for in their careers. Besides, the ever-changing patterns in career has seen the emergence of other new career forms for instance boundaryless career that has totally changed peoples' perception on what should define their career success. Individuals no longer seek for career growth within a single organization but rather a life career and satisfaction that goes beyond their professional life. This sparks the need to consider both subjective with objective career attainments (Ng et al., 2005).

The subjective dimension describes the intrinsic aspect and is based on people's evaluation of their own accomplishments in their occupations (Gattiker & Larwood, 1988). Subjective career success is generally expressed in terms of job satisfaction or career satisfaction. Although some studies (Abele & Spurk, 2009; Dries et al., 2008) have considered job satisfaction as an intrinsic measure of career success, the two constructs have been argued to be distinct (Heslin, 2005). While Job satisfaction refers to contentment arising from aspects related to the work and performance of the job, it does not reflect on success, consequently, it might not be a true measure of career success. Subjective career success describes contentment covering prolonged duration. It is also characterized by wide outcomes, for example, sense of purpose and creating an equilibrium between work and life, as opposed to job satisfaction, that is more or less confined to the current job, it describes positive and pleasurable feelings that one derives from his or her own career itself (Heslin, 2005). The inconsistency in the measures of subjective career success is demonstrated in the review carried out by Arthur et al. (2005) who considered a total of thirty-one studies. From the reviewed studies, twenty studies used career satisfaction as a measure of intrinsic career success while the remaining eleven studies used job satisfaction. These findings point to the need for researchers to firmly ascertain the measures of career success.

2 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STUDY VARIABLES

2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORSHIP AND CAREER SUCCESS

Organizational sponsorship is a key factor in enhancing employees' career success since it determines the level of mentorship, supervisor support and the amount of resources that an individual is likely to gain from the organization. It is predicted that it is those employees who are able to obtain greater sponsorship from the organization that eventually obtain better career outcomes (Rosenbaum, 1984). Good approaches to career management resulting into career success require both organizations' and individuals' contributions. The adoption of proper career management tactics by organizations can lead to improved job-related skills and knowledge of employees (Power, 2010). This is likely to enhance employees' career success as well the company's competitive

advantage in the dynamic business environment. These propositions have been supported by Barnett and Bradley (2007) who asserted that the importance of organizational sponsorship for an individual's career success cannot be underestimated.

This relationship is anchored in LMX theory that proposes a positive relationship between organization sponsorship and career success (Harris & Kirkman, 2014). Ng et al. (2005) argue that individual's subjective and objective career success can be influenced by developing a positive relationship with one's supervisors. Those employees who obtain such sponsorship generally have access to resources they need for their accomplishments (Bozionelos, 2008). High quality leader member exchange has been linked to career success through higher performance ratings and higher level of delegation by one's immediate supervisor, salary progression, promotion, and career satisfaction (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman & Taylor, 2000)

The support for this relationship is evident in the literature although studies relating organizational sponsorship to career success are few with many scholars linking the variable of organizational sponsorship to different variables thus creating the need for this study, for example, Saleem and Amin (2013) focused on organizational sponsorship for career development and employee performance in Pakistan academic sector, and concluded that there was need to improve on employee performance through offering organizational sponsorship for employees' career development. However, the study was carried out in only one organization, limiting external validity and variability of the findings. Ndegua (2016) studied the effects of organization career management on employee commitment of the staff in public universities and concluded that organization career management enhances employee commitment. Whereas Kamau (2017) studied the influence of career development practices on employee retention. Although the findings were positive data was collected only from a single organization. This study is therefore intended to fill the identified gaps by testing the following hypothesis:

H1: Organizational sponsorship has a significant positive effect on employees' career success.

2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORSHIP, PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AND CAREER SUCCESS

The emerging significance of proactivity on the part of employees is in line with rising levels of employee self-job control and obligations that have made the job performance open to choice, supplementary job behaviors are necessary to increase the productivity of the firm (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Contrary to the past where organizations used to select employees on the basis of their capabilities to carry out tightly stipulated job requirements, companies today and in future are interested in hiring employees who display proactive tendencies and versatile role inclination as channel to successful performance across multitasks (Campbell, 2000). These behaviors are important to the organization although not precisely defined as part of the requirement of the job. A number of these behaviors have been related to career progression and success (Seibert & Kramer, 2001). Superiors are major reservoir of job linked information, skills, and experience (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004), forming a high-quality association with immediate boss enhances information exchange and offers a means for attaining objectives of career advancement and organizational success. Furthermore because of this extra-role behavior drawing insights from LMX perspective, it is logical to argue that a proactive individual and his or her superiors will be interested in enhancing and sustaining a high-quality exchange relationship that would result into career success of the subordinate (Lam, Huang, & Snape, 2007).

The relationship is based on social cognitive career theory that explains the interaction of environmental and individual factors towards achievement of career success (Lent and Brown, 2006). It proposes that the link between organizational sponsorship and career success is significantly moderated by proactive personality. Proactive individuals usually identify possible opportunities and pursue them, enduring until they influence their organizations positively to enhance their attainment of career goals (Seibert & Kramer, 2001). Scholars have posed varied arguments about the effect of proactive personality in the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success. Just as Campbell (2000) supports the idea that proactive individuals may gain organizational sponsorship and achieve their career success, Judge and Kammeyer-Muller (2007) propose the possibility of achievement of career success by proactive persons due to organizational sponsorship. Proactive individuals get involved in helpful extra-role behavior for instance searching for ways of improving themselves through furthering their education and training, altering the status quo of the organization to enhance better performance of the company, portraying creativity by coming up with new and better ideas that can facilitate high productivity in the organization and also adopt suitable and fruitful career management strategies necessary for their own career success (Crant, 2000). Besides Proactive people are more propelled than passive individuals to make use of environmental resources and opportunities to succeed in their career life (Fuller & Murler, 2008).

Frese and Fay (2001) observe that there are chances of proactive persons obtaining negative response from the company. The suggestion is that proactive persons may get involved in misleading conducts; this may be costly to the company both financially and non-financially. Furthermore, the proposed changes by proactive individuals

may not be reasonable or better still some of the changes although may be appropriate for the organization, the other staff may rebel against them leading to frequent turnovers if implemented and this may be regarded negatively by the organization. Similarly, it may call for more resources than the organization is prepared to provide. Grant and Ashford (2008) on the other hand, argue that proactive personality may be acceptable or unacceptable trait depending on the organization. Proactive behavior will be acceptable to the degree to which the company appreciates such creativity and innovativeness as part of its culture. Those who are proactive, based on their actions may not gain organizational sponsorship to aid in their career success particularly when their behavior do not fit the goals and objectives of the organization (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005). This inconsistency makes its necessary to examine its moderating effect on the association between organizational sponsorship and career success in the manufacturing sector.

Empirical studies reviewed have conceptualized proactive personality traits as an independent variable in the study of career success for example Erdogan and Bauer (2005) carried out a study on proactive personality and career success in the education sector. Although the results were positive, job satisfaction was used as a measure of career success, however, this study used career satisfaction as a measure of career success since from the reviewed literature the two terms had been distinguished and termed distinct, job satisfaction is perceived to measure only job related elements of satisfaction unlike career satisfaction that measures career aspects (Heslin, 2005). Yang and Chau's (2016) study that was carried out among supervisor-subordinate association from mainland China indicated positive relationship between personality and career success. Despite these findings, the study used data from one organization thus bringing in the challenge in establishing external validity in addition to allowing for generalization of the findings. The study conceptualized personality as the independent variable. Nevertheless, given the obstacles and challenges encountered in the pursuit of career success, this study proposes the need to use proactive personality as a moderator in the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success. Seilbert and Kraimer (2001) used longitudinal design in the study of the relationship between proactive personality and career success among staffs and managers of various occupations. The results were in support of the relationship. This study deviates from the previous by conceptualizing proactive personality as the moderating variable and adopting a cross-sectional design. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: The relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success is moderated by proactive personality.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive cross-sectional survey. The design was deemed appropriate since the study sought to establish relationships among variables and data was collected across a large number of organizations at one point in time (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The unit of analysis in this study was individual managers. Sampling was done in three stages: sector, firm and managerial level. In carrying out the sampling, all the twelve relevant sectors were considered. To determine the number of firms to be used in the study, the decision was made based on Stanley and Gregory's (2001) proposition that at least 10% sample of a population is appropriate when selecting sample size in cross sectional surveys. Thus, the 51 firms which is 10% of the 511 large manufacturing companies was used for this study. The selection was done randomly from each of the twelve sectors. To establish the number of managers to be used for the study, Roscoe's (1975) sample size determination procedure for unknown population was used because it was difficult to get the population of managers in large manufacturing companies. The procedure suggests that a sample larger than 30 and less than 500 is appropriate. Managers being the unit of analysis, it was important that the sample have a reasonable number of them. For this reason, it was assumed that at least five managers from each firm would be adequate given that most firms tend to have an average of five departments. This therefore given the total number of firms as 51, a total of 255 managers was considered for this study. The managers were randomly selected from the three levels of management.

Primary data was collected using five-point Likert-type semi-structured questionnaire. It comprised four sections: Section A addressed organization profile and personal background information of the respondents, section B sought information on organizational sponsorship, section C focused on proactive personality and section D was directed at career success. They comprised scales that were anchored on five points ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (to a very large extent). Organizational sponsorship items were derived from studies by Ng et al., (2005) and Barnet and Bradley (2007). Proactive personality on the other hand, utilized the items proposed by Bateman and Crant (1993). The dimensions of career success were adopted from studies by Yean and Yahya (2011), Seilbert and Kraimer (2001) and Heslin (2005). A description on how these variables were measured is described in the Tables under reliability and validity.

The questionnaire was administered through mail and through drop-and-pick-later method by the researcher and three trained research assistants. The questionnaires were accompanied by an introduction letter from the

university explaining the objectives and importance of the study. This was also backed up with a letter of authorization to conduct research obtained from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). After distribution of the questionnaires, a follow up was done through text messages, telephone calls and personal visits so as to increase the rate of response. The participation in the study through filling the questionnaires was on a voluntary basis thus some managers chose not to participate. 255 questionnaires were sent to the respondents, out of which 205 questionnaires were returned. However, 2 of the questionnaires were incomplete leaving a total of 203 usable questionnaires. The human resource managers in all the companies where the data was collected were responsible for distributing the questionnaires within their respective organizations and collecting them after they were filled. In this study the researcher and the assistants approached the human resource managers and explained to them the purpose of the study and the support required from them. Particularly, the human resource managers were requested to issue the questionnaires randomly to the managers in the three levels of management.

3.1 RELIABILITY AND CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

This research had a total of three broad constructs which included organizational sponsorship, proactive personality and career success. Each of these constructs was further subdivided into subconstructs. In total, the study had 10 subconstructs. Four were grouped under organizational sponsorship, four under proactive personality and the remaining two under career success. To evaluate construct unidimensionality, the indicators of each sub construct were subjected to reliability and validity tests.

The Cronbach's Alphas for the constructs and factor loadings for all the items of each construct in the study were assessed. Items that were found to have factor loadings below 0.4 were removed from further analysis. In addition, the reliability and internal consistency of the items representing each construct was estimated. This was done by obtaining item to total correlation scores for each item for all the constructs in the study. The measurement scale for each construct was further refined by retaining only indicators that had item to total correlation values of above 0.3 for further analysis (Hair et al., 2010).

3.1.1 Organizational Sponsorship

Organizational sponsorship had four subconstructs: training and development, mentorship, supervisor support and organizational resources. Each of the subconstructs was tested for reliability and validity.

Training was measured using three items: the organization often provides me with opportunities to participate in various seminars; the organization often provides me with opportunities to participate in workshops; during work I am trained on the aspects of the job. Table 1 shows that the Cronbach Alpha for the scale was high at 0.77. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using principal component analysis with Varimax rotation revealed that all the factor loadings were above the acceptable threshold of 0.4 (they ranged from 0.509 to 0.707). Item to total correlations scores ranged from 0.475 to 0.726, this was also high above the accepted range. Therefore, all the items under training and development were retained for further analysis since reliability and construct validity was confirmed.

Table 1: Training and development

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. The organization often provides me with opportunities to participate in various seminars	.707	.726	.543
2. The organization often provides me with opportunities to participate in workshops.	.659	.628	.663
3. During work I am trained on the aspects of the job	.509	.475	.818

Cronbach's Alpha=.770

Source: Research Data, 2018

Mentorship was measured on the basis of five items: giving of demanding tasks, offering exposure, supervisor paying attention to the mentees' level of competence, supervisor giving clear communication on the job activities and supervisor providing information on important issues of the company. Table 2 shows that the factor loadings were generally good and above the minimum acceptable value of 0.4 given the fact that they ranged from 0.446 to 0.641 and all item to total correlation values were above the required threshold of 0.3, indicating convergent validity. The Cronbach's Alpha for the scale was high at 0.784, a confirmation of high reliability of the construct.

Table 2: Mentorship

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. My supervisor assigns me challenging tasks to take charge of my enthusiasm and develop my skills	.631	.628	.721
2. My supervisor gives me exposure and visibility in the organization	.641	.625	.721
3. My supervisor pays attention to my level of competence	.489	.492	.766
4. I am given clear communication on the activities of the job from my superiors	.572	.579	.738
5. My supervisor informs me of important issues of the company	.446	.483	.769

Cronbach's Alpha=.784

Source: Research Data, 2018

Supervisor support had a total of eight indicators. Cronbach Alpha was high at 0.867. Table 3 shows that factors loadings ranged from 0.444 to 0.613. This was a good reflection on the reliability of the construct. Item to total correlation of all the elements ranged from 0.570 to 0.680. In addition, all factor loadings were above the 0.4 (the range was from 0.444 to 0.613). Thus, all the items were maintained for analysis later.

Table 3: Supervisor support

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I receive protection from my supervisor	.613	.570	.857
2. I receive helpful feedback for my job performance from my supervisor	.448	.582	.855
3. My Supervisor respects my views and ideas	.557	.609	.852
4. My supervisor provide me with practical support	.543	.647	.848
5. I am free to share my concerns with my supervisor	.556	.571	.856
6. My supervisor has a collaborative approach in supervision	.610	.717	.839
7. My supervisor assist me to accomplish tasks or meet the set deadlines	.565	.680	.844
8. I am assigned more responsibilities that increases my contact with influential people in the organization	.444	.585	.855

Cronbach's Alpha=.867

Source: Research Data, 2018

Organizational resources used three items as indicators: chance to rise up organizational ladder, financial support and non-financial support. The Cronbach Alpha for the scale was high at 0.730. All the factor loadings were above the acceptable threshold of 0.4 (they ranged from 0.492 to 0.713). Item to total correlations scores ranged from 0.496 to 0.628. Therefore, on the basis of the analyses in Table 4, all the items under organization resources were retained for further analysis since reliability and construct validity was confirmed.

Table 4: Organization resources

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. My organization offers me a chance to rise up the organization ladder	.492	.568	.712
2. My organization provides me with financial support that enables me to achieve my career success	.713	.496	.683
3. My organization provides me with non-financial resources such as time that allow me to achieve my career success	.530	.628	.761

Cronbach's Alpha=.730

Source: Research Data, 2018

3.1.2 Proactive Personality

Proactive personality was conceptualized under three subconstructs namely: identifying opportunities, initiating constructive change, resilience, and result oriented. The items under these subconstructs were all tested for reliability and validity. Two items were used to measure identifying opportunities based on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. Based on the analysis in Table 5, although the alpha coefficient was 0.615, the items loaded highly on the construct with values of 0.526 and 0.541. The item to total correlation was also above the required level of 0.3 thus the items were considered for further analysis. It was not possible to obtain the alpha if item deleted because there were only two items in this subconstruct.

Table 5: Identifying opportunities

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I spot opportunities before others can	.526	.449	-
2. I frequently search for new ways to make my work life better	.541	.449	-

Cronbach's Alpha=.615

Source: Research Data, 2018

Initiating constructive change had five indicators. Based on the finds in Table 6, the Cronbach's alpha of 0.784 was above the minimum acceptable value. In addition to this, the loading of the factors for all the items used in the sub-construct ranged from 0.472 to 0.590 whereas item to total correlation ranged from 0.433 to 0.649 thus the validity and reliability of these sub-constructs were ascertained.

Table 6: Initiating constructive change

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I always strive to change the status quo	.590	.649	.712
2. I am always searching for new ways of doing things	.472	.433	.782
3. I always fix what I don't like	.482	.561	.743
4. I always correct faulty procedures in the organization	.541	.614	.724
5. I am always a powerful force for a constructive change	.533	.541	.749

Cronbach's Alpha=.784

Source: Research Data, 2018

Resilience as a subconstruct of personality was measured based on three items. All the items used were valid and reliable as indicated in Table 7 which shows that the alpha coefficient was 0.781 and the factor loadings for all the items was above 0.6. This was in addition to item to total correlation which ranged from 0.552 and 0.654.

Table 7: Resilience

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I work out my ideas against opposition	.610	.552	.772
2. No obstacle can prevent me from my success	.785	.654	.662
3. I make things happens despites all odds	.754	.653	.664

Cronbach's Alpha=.781
Source: Research Data, 2018

The last subconstruct of proactive personality, result oriented was measured using two indicators. On the basis of the analysis in Table 8, the items used in this subcontract were all reliable and valid. This can be seen from the high alpha value of 0.792 and the factor loading of 0.496 and 0.554 in addition to item to total correlation which were above the minimum acceptable values. The two items had the same item to total correlation of 0.489. Again, it was not possible to obtain the alpha if item was deleted given that there were only two items involved.

Table 8: Result oriented

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1.I try to provide solutions to difficult problems in the organization	.554	.489	-
2. I am excited at seeing my ideas turn into reality	.496	.489	-

Cronbach's Alpha=.792
Source: Research Data, 2018

3.1.3 Career Success

Career success was operationalized as OCS and SCS. The SCS was measured using a Likert scale on career satisfaction that was based on 6 items developed by Lau and Pang (1960). The results in Table 9 show that the alpha coefficient was relatively high (0.848) thus this scale was highly reliable. The factor loading ranged from 0.347 to 0.748 while the item to total correlation was also above the limit of 0.3. They ranged from 0.437 to 0.781 hence the test for validity was met by all the indicators used. This created the necessity for including all the items in further analysis.

Table 9: Subjective career success

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I am contented with the achievement I have made in my career.	.748	.781	.791
2. I am satisfied with my progress in meeting my career goals.	.708	.752	.798
3. I am contented with my effort to reach my income goals.	.538	.607	.831
4. I am satisfied with my efforts achieve my goals for gaining new skills	.697	.728	.804
5. I feel part and parcel of the team and organization where I work	.347	.437	.855
6. I am satisfied with the help I offer to colleagues in the organization	.503	.499	.846

Cronbach's Alpha=.848
Source: Research Data, 2018

Objective career success was measured on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. Based on the analysis in Table 10, the scale was reliable given the alpha value of 0.775. The items used for measuring this subconstruct were also valid. For instance, the factor loading for all the items were between 0.525 and 0.696 which was relatively high, this was also ascertained through item to total correlation of the items which ranged from 0.497 to 0.701 that was again relatively high. Thus, all the items were retained for analysis.

Table 10: Objective career success

Statement	Factor loading	Item-Total correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Promotions received in the last 10 years in the current organization	.526	.532	.750
2. Number of promotions received before joining the current organization	.525	.497	.760
3. Gross monthly income	.696	.701	.652
4. Percentage increase in salary in the last 10 years	.649	.599	.709

Cronbach's Alpha=.775

Source: Research Data, 2018

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Out of a total of 511 firms, 51 firms participated in the study based on a sample of 255 managers from all the three levels of management. 255 questionnaires were sent to the respondents, out of which 205 questionnaires were received back, 2 were incomplete and therefore were not used in the analysis. This left a total of 203 usable questionnaires that amounted into a response rate of 79.6%. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics was used to obtain a general understanding of the information on the organization and the employees in large scale manufacturing firms in Kenya. After analysis, information was obtained about measures of central tendency and dispersion. Inferential statistics involved the use of simple linear regression analysis to examine the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success and hierarchical regression analysis was used to determine the effect of proactive personality in the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success. The descriptive analysis of the respondents' and firms' characteristics are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Demographics-related characteristics of respondents and organization

Statement	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Size of organization (No. of employees)	Less than 100	16	7.9
	100-500	98	48.2
	501-100	73	36.0
	Over 100	16	7.9
	Total	203	100.0
Gender	Male	127	62.6
	Female	76	37.4
	Total	203	100.0
Sector	Building & Construction	20	9.9
	Chemical & Allied	34	16.7
	Electrical & Electronics	10	4.9
	Food & Beverages	52	25.6
	Textiles & Apparel	10	4.9
	Wood & Furniture	9	4.4
	Motor vehicle and Accessories	9	4.4
	Paper & Board	21	10.3
	Pharmaceuticals & Medical Equip.	7	3.4
	Plastic & Rubber	10	4.9
	Timber & Furniture	9	4.4
	Leather & Footwear	12	5.9
	Total	203	100.0
	Length of time in years	Less than 5	81
5-10		84	41.4
11-15		25	12.3
Above 15		13	6.4
Total		203	100.0
Position in the firm	Supervisory level	53	26.1
	Middle level management	107	52.7
	Senior management	43	21.2
	Total	203	100.0
Length of service in current position in years	Less than 1	24	11.8
	1-3	102	50.3
	4-5	49	24.1
	More than 5	28	13.8
	Total	203	100.0

Source: Research Data (2018)

4.1 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORSHIP

Overall analysis of the respondents rating on the variable of organizational sponsorship (Table 12) based on the 4 sub-construct revealed that mentorship had the highest mean of 3.86 (SD= 0.708), this was followed by supervisor support with a mean of 3.76 (SD = 0.703), next was training and development with a mean of 3.59 (SD = 0.858) and lastly was organization resources with the least mean of 3.42 (SD = 0.881). The low mean for organization resources suggested that most of the staff do not depend on their organization to provide them with resource to advance in their career. On the other hand, mentorship was very important for the staff's career success as inferred from the high mean obtained. The grand mean for organizational sponsorship was 3.72 suggesting that the respondent received sponsorship from the organization to a high moderate extent. The results also show that the data was normally distributed as can be established through the skewness and kurtosis values that fell between -1 and +1 (Burns & Burns, 2008).

Table 12: Organizational sponsorship

Construct	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Training and Development	3.59	.858	-.397	-.432
Mentorship	3.86	.708	-.664	.634
Supervisor Support	3.76	.703	-.629	.469
Organization Resources	3.42	.881	-.384	-.443

Grand Mean= 3.72, SD=.685

Source: Research Data, 2018

Five Point-Likert Scale: 1= not at all, 2= Little extent, 3= Moderate extent, 4= Large extent and 5= very large extent

4.2 PROACTIVE PERSONALITY

The overall analysis of proactive personality (Table 13) based on the 5 sub-construct was as follows: result oriented had the highest mean of 4.13 (SD = 0.779), initiating constructive change followed with a mean of 3.98 (SD = 0.646), identifying opportunities become third with a mean of 3.84 (D = 0.757) and the least was resilience whose mean was 3.59 (SD = 0.856). The mean for all the constructs was moderately high culminating to a grand mean of 3.88. This depicted that most of the executives in production sector were to a moderate extent proactive. The results also show that the data was fairly normally distributed except for identifying opportunities and result oriented constructs.

Table 13: Proactive personality

Construct	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Identifying Opportunities	3.84	.757	-.811	1.038
Initiating Constructive Change	3.98	.646	-.779	.506
Resilience	3.59	.856	-.533	.084
Results Oriented	4.13	.779	-1.132	1.725

Grand Mean= 3.88, SD=.589

Source: Research Data, 2018

Five Point-Likert Scale: 1= not at all, 2= Little extent, 3= Moderate extent, 4= Large extent and 5= very large extent

4.3 CAREER SUCCESS

Career success was operationalized into objective and subjective aspects (Table 14). The subjective career success was measured using a five-point Likert scale on career satisfaction that was based on 6 items. Satisfaction with the help offered to colleagues, feeling part and parcel of the team and the organization, satisfaction with efforts towards meeting goals for developing new skills, satisfaction with progress towards meeting career goals, contentment with the achievement and contentment with efforts towards meeting my income goals; objective career success was measured on a scale ranging from 1 to 5 the indicators being: The number of promotions received, percentage increase in salary and the gross monthly income.

Based on the answers of the respondents, subjective career success (SCS) had the highest mean of 3.72 (SD = 0.777) while the objective career success (OCS) had the lowest mean of 2.27 (SD = 0.824). Whereas the grand mean

was moderate (3.14), it was observed that most of the respondent expressed a high moderate achievement of the SCS as opposed to the OCS which seemed to have been achieved to a minor extent. The results show that the data for SCS was normally distributed while that of the objective aspect was not.

Table 14: Career success

Construct	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Subjective career success	3.72	.777	-.458	-.267
Objective career success	2.27	.824	1.060	-.216

Grand Mean= 3.14, SD=.681
 Source: Research Data, 2018

5 TEST OF HYPOTHESES, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORSHIP AND CAREER SUCCESS

The effect of organizational sponsorship on career success was tested using simple linear regression analysis. This was done by regressing the composite index of career success on the composite index of organizational sponsorship. Based on Table 15, 32.6% of variance in career success was explained by organizational sponsorship ($R^2 = 0.329$, adjusted $R^2=0.326$, $F=98.533$, $P<0.05$). However, organizational sponsorship did not explain 67.4% of variation in career success which is attributed to some factors other than the ones considered in the study. The overall model was statistically significant indicating the model fit. The coefficient of correlation indicated a significant positive association between organizational and career success ($R=0.574$, $t=9.935$, $P<0.05$). The beta coefficient indicates that the influence of organizational sponsorship on career success is statistically significant ($\beta=0.570$, $t=9.926$, $P<0.05$). This suggests that one unit change in organizational sponsorship is associated with 0.570 change in career success. The results thus provide evidence that organizational sponsorship influences career success. The hypothesis was thus supported.

Table 15: Regression results for the effect of organizational sponsorship on career success

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
Construct	Construct	Construct	Construct	Construct		
Analysis of Variance						
Model	R	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.834	1	30.834	98.533	.000
	Residual	62.899	201	.313		
	Total	93.732	202			
Beta Coefficients						
Model	R	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	B	Std. Error	Beta	4.708	.000
		1.022	.217			
	Organizational sponsorship	.570	.057	.574	9.926	.000

- a. Dependent Variable: Career success
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational sponsorship

The result of this empirical investigation is in support of the previous studies. Barnett & Bradley (2007) studied the relationship organizational sponsorship and career success. The results of their study indicated that organizational sponsorship had a direct link with career success as observed in this study. Similarly, the study also lends support to the empirical findings with regards to organizational sponsorship that yielded positive outcomes although the variable of organizational sponsorship was directly linked to other dependent variables such as employee performance, employee commitment and job engagement. Saleem and Amin (2013) examined the relationship between organizational sponsorship and employee performance. Their findings indicate that organizational sponsorship has a significant effect on employee performance. Ndegua (2016) focused on the relationship between organizational sponsorship and employee commitment and found support for the relationship. Kamau's (2017) study which was based on the relationship between organizational sponsorship and job engagement also yielded positive finding in support of the relationship. The study hence is adding to the literature on organizational sponsorship and career success.

The results are also in line with the LMX theory which provides support for this relationship. Leader member exchange theory advocates for sponsored mobility perspective of career success thereby emphasizing on the need to enhance employees' career success through providing sponsorship for them. Its main argument is that those employees who are sponsored in the quest for career success often succeed faster than those who are not. The study therefore provides empirical backing on the propositions advanced by this theory. Besides the results obtained from this study is an emphasis on the role that quality relationship between the superior and the subordinate plays in as far as employees' career success is concerned. The feeling of career satisfaction generated in the staff is as a result of this exchange relationship.

Finally, this study provides support to the argument by Heslin (2005) that subjective career success is best measured through career satisfaction and not job satisfaction and that the two concepts (career satisfaction and job satisfaction) are distinct constructs. The positive significant findings obtained by using career satisfaction as a measures of subjective career success further provide direction that can be explored in future to resolve the controversy that was witnessed in a review of the literature carried out by Arthur et al., (2005) which indicated that nineteen of the studies used job satisfaction as a measure of subjective career success while twenty-three studies used career satisfaction. This study shows that career satisfaction is a better measure of subjective career success.

5.2 ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSORSHIP, PROACTIVE PERSONALITY AND CAREER SUCCESS

The moderating effect was evaluated using hierarchical regression model. In step one, career success was regressed on organizational sponsorship. The results in Table 16 indicate that organizational sponsorship accounted for 32.6% of variance in career success ($R^2=0.329$, adjusted $R^2=0.326$). The overall model was significant ($F=98.533$, $P<0.05$) thus justifying the use of regression model. Further, the beta coefficient was statistically significant ($\beta=0.570$, $t=9.296$, $p<0.05$). This implies that a unit change in organizational sponsorship is associated with 0.570 change in career success. The results in the first step were significant.

In the second model, the introduction of the moderator, proactive personality, significantly improves the influence of organizational sponsorship and career success. Organizational sponsorship and proactive personality explain 39.5% of variance in career success ($R^2 = 0.401$, adjusted $R^2=0.395$). The R^2 increased by 7.2% thus this was the percentage contribution of PP. The F change was statistically significant ($F=66.848$, $F\text{ change}=23.925$, $P<0.05$), implying a model fit. The beta coefficient was statistically significant ($\beta=0.293$, $t=4.891$, $P<0.05$). The results thus show positive and significant contribution of proactive personality to career success.

In the third model, the interaction term was introduced in the model. The results in Table 16 show that adjusted R^2 changed from 39.5% in step 2 to 42.4% in step 3. It was clear that the interaction term organizational sponsorship* proactive personality (OS*PP) contributed an additional 3.2% of the total variance explained in employee career success beyond the contributions of organizational sponsorship and proactive personality ($R^2=0.433$, adjusted $R^2=0.424$). Apart from the F change for the interaction term being significant ($F\text{ change} =11.362$, $P<0.05$), The general model was observed to be significant ($F=50.662$, $P<0.05$). The beta coefficient for organizational sponsorship* proactive personality (OS*PP) was also statistically significant ($\beta= 0.353$, $t=3.371$, $P<0.05$). It was therefore concluded that proactive personality moderates the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success. Therefore, the second hypothesis was supported.

Table 16: Regression results for the moderating effect of proactive personality on the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success

Model	Adjusted R ²	R Square Change	F Change	Unstandardized Beta	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
1	0.326	0.329	98.533	0.570	0.574	9.926	.000
2	0.395	0.072	23.925	0.491	0.293	5.989	.000
3	0.424	0.032	11.362	0.445	0.353	3.371	.001

- a. Dependent Variable: Career success
- b. Predictors: (Constant), organizational sponsorship
- c. Predictors: (Constant), organizational sponsorship, Proactive personality
- d. Predictors: (Constant), organizational sponsorship, Proactive personality, Interaction term

Regression results indicates that proactive personality moderates the relationships between organizational sponsorship and career success. The results provide an empirical evidence for the theoretical propositions that the dynamic working environment calls for the need for people with proactive personality who are creative, resilient and can quickly adapt to the changing environment and that organizations today are likely to value proactive individuals with extra role behavior and not those who confine themselves to traditionally rigidly defined duties. Campbell (2000) proposed that proactive personality is likely to be a positive trait amidst the dynamics witnessed in the business world. Fuller and Murler (2008) further added that proactive people are likely to experience career success than those who are non-proactive. This study hence provides an empirical support to these theoretical propositions. Furthermore, the confirmation from the empirical study that proactive personality moderates the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success, points out to direction that can further be explored in an effort to resolve the controversy evident in the literature regarding the role of proactive personality in the organization.

The findings further show that proactivity may not be in itself undesirable but is a trait that can earn individuals the necessary prospects for career success that they desire especially when used properly and this can enable them to succeed in their careers. Organizations on the other hand can benefit from such proactive individuals through nurturing their potentials for innovation and their abilities to enhance the success of the organizations especially in the modern times where there is need for organization to keep pace with changes in the work environment so as to maintain a competitive edge over their competitors.

Most importantly, the findings of this study bring to light the moderating role of proactive personality. The literature reviewed in this study paid negligible attention to the use of proactive personality as a moderator; rather they considered it as an independent variable. Among other studies, Seilbert and Kraimer (2001) studied the relationship between proactive personality and career success. Although the findings were positive, proactive personality was directly linked to career success. Yang and Chau (2016) also examined the relationship between proactive personality and obtained positive findings. In the pursuit of career success individuals are likely to encounter both individual and organizational constraints that may be a stumbling block to their career prospects. The interaction between organizational sponsorship and proactive personality can facilitate the achievement of career success amidst such constraints.

Social cognitive career theory emphasizes on the interactive nature of individual variable such as personality and environment factors such as organizational sponsorship forming a complex interaction that propels an individual to achieve the expected career related goals. This theory finds its support from the results of this study that has demonstrated that the interaction of proactive personality and organizational sponsorship contributes to career success. This means that proactive individuals are able to influence their environment positively and hence are able to gain organizational sponsorship that is necessary to facilitate their career success. In addition to this they are able to work out their career success despite the obstacles and the challenges that they may encounter.

5 CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study has established that offering organizational sponsorship leads to the staff's career success and that this relationship is moderated by proactive personality. Consequently, the study recommends that manufacturing firms should enhance their managers' career success by providing them with organizational sponsorship programs. The identified beneficial programs include training mentorship, supervisor support and financial and non-financial resources. Secondly, the study shows that proactive personality is a moderator in the study with career success as the dependent variable, something that had been ignored by the previous studies that had

conceptualized it as an independent variable. Apart from this, to a larger extent it helps to provide direction on the unresolved argument in the existing theoretical literature on whether proactive personality is a desirable or undesirable trait with respect to organizational sponsorship and career success. At the same time the study provides direction on the measures of subjective career success through successful use of career satisfaction as a measure of subjective dimension of career success.

The findings have implications for managerial practice particularly in recruitment and selection of managerial staff. Hiring firms might consider individuals with proactive personalities who can better fit and are proactive in bringing the necessary acceptable changes to the organization while at the same time being capable of achieving career success to the benefit of the organization through their commitment in their jobs. In this era where most organizations perceive career development as the responsibility of the individual staff, firms can take advantage of the situation to offer these practices to their employees not only to enhance their individual career success but also to capitalize on these practices to make their employees more competent, more loyal and committed to the organization and maintain a competitive edge over the companies within the industry.

The use of cross-sectional survey design may not measure the causal effects accurately on the observed relationships between study variables and therefore may not depict the exact association that exist between organizational sponsorship, proactive personality and career success of managers in large manufacturing companies in Kenya. Longitudinal study would have been appropriate though this was not possible because of the limited time. Further, career success was measured using perceptual data only; secondary data would have added more value by verifying the information given by the respondents. This was not possible since most organizations were reluctant to provide their secondary data. The prevailing fear was on the leakage of information to their competitors. For measuring objective CS, secondary data would have been very necessary to provide more valid results on the association among between the variables. The study was undertaken among managerial staff in manufacturing sector only. Measures of objective career success for instance; salary may differ in different sectors and professions. The variation may be in terms of the perceived prestige attached to the profession or job groups and grades. These findings hence must be used with caution because they may not be applicable to other sectors like education sector and so on.

This study used cross-sectional research design, future research should employ longitudinal research design to assess the relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success and also organizational sponsorship, proactive personality and career success. The causal relationship between organizational sponsorship and career success requires time, career success is not a one-time off experience but a life-long experience. Besides, employees have to be in an organization for a given period of time to benefit from sponsorship. In addition to this, career success was assessed using perceptual data only, Future research may benefit from using multiple sources of data and especially secondary data when measuring objective career success. The current study was carried out among managerial staff in manufacturing sector. Future studies can focus on other sectors and on other professionals. It would be interesting to find out what employees in other sectors, professions and countries perceive as career satisfaction and also what they value as far as objective career success is concerned. Furthermore, it would be important to find out whether proactive personality is considered an important trait across other professions and sectors when it comes to organizational sponsorship.

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