

Emerging conditions of labour in the cut flower industry in Kenya

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Abstract

The topic on emerging conditions of labour in the cut flower industry has attracted the interest of a few scholars. This study attempted to establish the emerging patterns of labour on the employees' profile, working conditions and their remuneration. To achieve this goal the study focused on Kenyan cut flower industry. This study endeavors to measure the patterns of the employees' profile, working conditions and workers remuneration. Comparative survey of 358 workers was conducted in three Kenyan cut flower regions in Kenya, namely, Naivasha, Thika and Nanyuki. The study was largely quantitative. The results were presented using descriptive and bivariate statistics to analyze socio-demographic characteristics of workers in the industry. This study established that overtime, there has been change on the level of education, acquisition of technical and professional skills, and terms of employment in the cut flower industry. The workers level of education is higher than in previous years. Workers in the industry have either technical or professional skills though not relevant in the industry as one of the requirements. Their working conditions are at least better with majority earning higher wages than the agricultural legislated monthly minimum wage in Kenya. However, their earned wage is not adequate for decent living. They thus form part of the working poor.

Key words: workers; typical characteristics; workers' welfare; emerging trends; socio-demographic characteristics; working conditions; remuneration

Overview

Cut flower farming in Kenya can be traced back to the 1950s, when the colonial white settlers began engaging in horticulture (Swaynerton, 1954). Three reasons explain why the industry was dominated by the colonialists. First, African farmers lacked the capacity and capital for horticulture production. Second, Africans viewed the farming of cut flowers as geared towards a product to be consumed exclusively by the colonialists. Thirdly, it was part of modernization; a culture which was new to the Africans. Consequently, as the white settlers continued to produce cut flowers, the policies guiding the production were formulated in their favour. Indeed, these policies were biased to favour the European farmers who happened to be the owners of capital (Colony & Protectorate of Kenya, 1962). The employees working in the white settlers' cut flower farms were mainly the unskilled Africans, especially at the lower manual levels. They worked under the agricultural policies made by the colonialists who had special interest in the industry. The working environment of labour therefore could have been influenced by the interests of the white settlers at the expense of the Africans.

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In 2011, the cut flower industry in Kenya had 60,000 workers employed as casuals, semi-permanent and on permanent bases (Valerie, 2011). These workers spread across 160 cut flower farms distributed in 16 regions in Kenya (KFC, 2012). These regions are Naivasha, Nanyuki, Nairobi, Thika, Kiambu, Athi River, Kitale, Nakuru, Kericho, Nyandarua, Trans-Nzoia, Uasin Gishu, Machakos, Murang'a, Meru Central and Embu (KFC, 2015). Majority of cut growing regions in Kenya specialize in roses, although there are other varieties of cut flower like carnations, statice, cutfoliage, carthamus, solidaster/solidago, chrysanthemums, arabicum, rudbeckia, gypsophila, molucella, lilies, trelizia, erynngium and tuberoses.

The emerging patterns of workers' profile in the cut flower industry have been taking a new dimension. The industry predominantly uses women labour force. This is confirmed in the recent studies in the cut flower industry which have established that the main source of labour are women (Dolan, 2005; Risgaard, 2014). In addition, according to a reports by Mlynska, et al. (2015), Riddselius (2011) and Dolan *et. al.* (2003) the workforce in the Kenyan cut flower industry consists of between 65 and 75 percent being female. The high number of female workers in the cut flower farms is attributed to two factors. First, expertise and dexterity of women in handling cut flowers. Secondly, the perceived docility of women that allow their manipulation by the employers through low wages and poor working conditions (Barrientos *et. al.*, 2005 and KHRC, 2012).

Cut flower industry has been endowed with youthful labour as reported in the previous studies. Studies by KHRC (2012) and Staelens *et. al.* (2014) in Kenya cut flower industry have established that workers in cut flower industry predominantly fall within age-limit of 20-25 years old, with the mean age around 24.1 years. This is attributed to migration of young people to different parts of the country (Kenya) in search of formal employment. This is common among young people especially after completing their primary and secondary education. Further, Odhong' and Omollo (2014) reported that 60 percent of workers are within the age bracket 20-30 years. Thus, the industry has been accommodative to youthful workers.

The level of education of workers is an important demographic attributes in the cut flower industry. Previous studies, for example Bolo (2006), Opondo (2002) and Kirigia *et. al.* (2016) show low levels of education among cut flower workers. However, Mano *et. al.* (2010) have noted that although the industry had created employment for low educated cadre, it had started to attract workers with higher level of education. According to a study done by Gitonga (2013), over 60 percent of workers had attained only primary education whereas 19 percent and 18 percent had secondary and college level of education, respectively. The trend can be attributed to rising level of unemployment which leads to competition of the available employment opportunities. Thus, this study endeavors to establish whether or not there is a change on workers' level of education in the cut flower industry.

Past studies have reported lack of either professional or technical skills among workers in the cut flower industry in Kenya. According to a report by Bolo (2006), majority of workers in the cut flower industry in Kenya offered unskilled labour power. Past studies by Beyene (2014) and Perry (2012) show that the industry highly attracts unskilled labour that rarely possesses technical skills. In the past, few workers possessed either technical or professional skills in the industry. The current article has attempted to measure the skills statuses and competencies of workers in the industry.

While the workers in the cut flower industry are generally youthful, majority (53%) were found to be married (Omosa *et. Al.*, 2006). However, in a report by Potjer *et. al.* (2015), over 55 percent of workers were single. Thus, this study examines the marital status of workers in the cut flower industry to establish whether or not there is any significant change over time.

Cut flower farms in the industry use labour force from employees who were recruited on the basis of seasonal contracts or on permanent terms. Previous studies by Riddselius (2011) and Opondo (2002) indicate that the cut flower industry in Kenya is to a large extent characterized by seasonal and casual labour. In support, a report by Barrientos (2014), majority of the workforce in the industry are on temporary terms of employment. Thus, workers in the cut flower industry have been working on contractual/seasonal basis. The current study endeavours to establish whether or not the terms of engagement of workers have changed over time.

According to a report by Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) (2005), the cut flower industry has been accused of overworking workers beyond the mandatory eight hours per day. Employees are required to work for 45 hours per five-day week, which is eight hours from Monday to Friday and five hours on Saturday (RoK, 2012b). Yet, Riddselius study (2011) carried out in Kenya, observes that workers in the cut flower industry were engaged even for more than ten hours per day. Accordingly, our study endeavor to establish whether or not workers in the cut flower industry are engaged in the farm within the legislated eight hours per day as per the Constitution of Kenya (2010).

Scholars like English (2007), and Dolan *et. al.* (2003), continue to criticize the industry for unfair working environment for labour, where the wages of workers and working conditions have been noted to be low and stagnant. It is unclear whether or not this anomaly of not compensating workers proportionally for the hours worked, is inherent in the cut flower industry or in agricultural sector as a whole in Kenya. However, Riisgaard and Gibbon (2014) found in their study that there had been significant improvements in working conditions and labour relations (holiday, maternity leave, sick leave, pensions, and insurance). Therefore, this study endeavored to establish whether or not there has been improvement in the current working condition in the cut flower.

Wage is an important attribute in understanding workers welfare. According to Chapter Four on the Bill of Rights, Article 41 (2a), in the Constitution of Kenya (2010), a worker is entitled to fair remuneration (RoK, 2013). However, there have been claims made regarding the workers in the cut flower industry that their wages are low (Freeman *et al.*, 2007; Dolan *et. al.*, 2003; Smith *et. al.* 2004). Currently, most of the “workers in the cut flower farms in Kenya earn between *KES 5257 (US \$58.19) and KES 5485 (US \$60.94) per month*” (Leipold & Morgante, 2013:15). In 2015, the legislated minimum wages for the unskilled labour in cut flower industry which fall under agricultural sector was *KES 5436.90 (US \$60.41) per month* (RoK, 2015). This was slightly above the global poverty line of US \$ 1.90 per day in 2015. It is important to note that Kenya’s population living under US \$ 1.90 a day had in 2005 increased from 33.6% to 39.9% in 2014 (World Bank, 2016:2). Therefore, the wages for workers in cut flower industry is above that paid to their fellow workers in agricultural sector by almost US \$6 per month. Therefore, this study examines whether or not workers in the cut flower industry earn wages comparable to the legislated wages in the agricultural sector by the government of Kenya. More importantly, the study attempts to establish whether or not wages paid to cut flower workers in Kenya sustain a decent living at family/household level.

Methodology

For this article, our research employed comparative survey research design which measured the cut flower workers’ profile, working condition and remuneration characteristics in the study area. Singleton *et. al.* (1988:239) posit that survey research is done in a scenario where a large number of respondents are chosen through probability procedures. More specifically, comparative survey research design is important when measuring the variations of two or more groups in one variable. According to Bryman (2008:401), comparative survey design is useful when the study is out to

examine particular issues or phenomena in two or more geographical locations with an intention of comparing manifestations in different socio-cultural settings using the same research instruments.

This study was done in Kenya which has a population of 38.6 million and where majority are young people aged 15 and 30 years (RoK, 2015a). Three cut flower regions namely, Naivasha, Thika and Nanyuki were purposely selected. Naivasha is the hub of cut flower industry in Kenya. Thika region was selected to control geographical diversity. Finally, Nanyuki region was selected due to its rural socio-economic characteristics. The cut flower farms in the three regions were selected based on the regions' socio-economic characteristics. Further, from the three selected regions, a total of thirteen cut flower growing farms were selected as follows: Naivasha (7), Thika (4) and Nanyuki region (2). Proportionate sampling was used to select a total of 358 workers from the three selected cut flower regions. The workers were sampled from the three regions as follow: Naivasha (196 workers); Thika (108 workers) and Nanyuki (54 workers).

In this study, two options were adopted to collect the data from the sampled workers. In the first option, simple random sampling method was used to sample workers for interview in one farm which allowed the research team to access workers in the farm. In the second option, the study employed snowball sampling method to select workers in twelve cut flower farms. This occurred in the farms where the management of the farms denied the research team direct access to the farm or where workers felt threatened to being interviewed within or near their places of work. In the second option, the employees were identified by the research team as they moved out of the gate of their respective cut flower farms. After being interviewed, such respondents helped the research team to locate other workers from their place of residence where interviews would be conducted.

In the study, primary data was collected from sampled respondents using a standardized questionnaire. More specifically, the research team conducted face to face interviews using the survey questionnaire. The survey questionnaire largely obtained quantitative data that formed the basis of this paper's analysis.

Discussion

This study; done in 2015, endeavoured to measure whether or not there have been variations in socio-demographic profile of the workers in the Kenya's cut flower industry. Basically, the study focuses on the demographic profile of the 358 cut flower workers in Kenya. The study measured the variable **age** of the workers. Age can be used to establish whether or not the industry has high labour turn over or not. The concentration of high number of younger workers in an industry and low number of older workers shows a sign of high mobility of workers from one industry to another or from one farm to another. In this study, the mean age was 32.47 years. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of workers by age and gender.

Table 1: Distribution of Workers by Age and Gender

Age	Male	Female	Total
Below 18years	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.3%)
18yrs-27yrs	74 (34.9%)	48 (32.9%)	122 (34.1%)
28yrs-37yrs	80 (37.7%)	59 (40.4%)	139 (38.8%)
38yrs-47yrs	46 (21.7%)	33 (22.6%)	79 (22.1%)
48yrs-57yrs	11 (5.2%)	5 (3.4%)	16 (4.5%)
Above 58years	1 (0.5%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.3%)
Total	212 (59.2%)	146 (40.8%)	358 (100.0%)

Source: Field data (2015)

Table 1 depicts that majority of workers (73%) both male and female are within the age limits of 18-37 years. Thus, the study reveals that the industry attracts young people irrespective of their gender. According to studies by KHRC (2012) and Staelens *et. al.* (2014) on cut flower industry in Kenya, the mean age of workers was 24.1 years thus much younger than the mean age than the age found in this study.

This study further, attempted to measure the **marital status** of the respondents in the cut flower industry. This survey revealed that a majority of the workers interviewed in the farms (71.8%) were single followed by those who were married (25.98%); there was a mixed category of other (divorced, separated and widowed) that constituted 2.2%. Past studies; like Odhong' and Omolo (2014), focusing on cut flower industry in Kenya had reported that majority of workers (74.5%) are married. Contrary to the latter study, this study found that majority of workers in the cut flower industry were single. The high percentage of workers who are single could be attributed to the fact that, the industry mainly attracts young people in their early adulthood after attaining basic education.

Workers in the cut flower industry are profiled by scholars for example, Beyene (2014), as having low level of education. Thus, this study sought to measure **the level of education** of the workers. The variable was operationalized by asking the workers to state their highest level of education that they had attained. Data for this study shows that 48.9% and 36% had attained secondary and primary education, respectively. Only 10.1% of the workers did not have formal education. Therefore, a majority of the workers (85%) had primary or secondary education. The relatively high level of education could be attributed to the support by the Kenyan government on universal primary and subsidized secondary education. In 2002, the government of Kenya introduced a policy on free access to primary education by all children and in 2013, it introduced subsidized secondary education. In this regard, one of the key informants reported thus:

In cut flower industry, majority of workers are mostly primary and secondary education holders who join the industry immediately after completing school. This is necessitated by failure to acquire good grades which could help them to join institutions of higher education and poverty which denies them financial capacity to further their education.

Hence, the current trend in the industry is of the educated labour force. This study found that over time, Kenyan workers in the cut flower farms are increasingly joining the industry with higher level of education.

This study sought to establish whether or not the workers had **acquired specific skills** (either technical or professional) before joining the industry. The study found that about 155 (43.3%) workers had acquired technical skills although these skills did not necessarily relate the work they were doing. However, majority of workers (56.7%) did not have specific skills, implying that in the cut flower industry, acquisition of skills was not a prerequisite in joining the industry. Therefore, the sector was open to both unskilled and skilled labour. Nonetheless, our findings show that the industry was attracting workers who possessed technical skills. Most likely, those with technical skills joined the industry after failing to get jobs elsewhere due to high rate of unemployment. Currently, unemployment rate stands at 39.1% (UNDP: 2017).

This study also examined the **ethnic composition** among the workers in cut flower industry. Distribution of workers in an industry is most likely informed by either the dominance of the community surrounding a farm or kinship ties. Tierney (2008) in a study done in Taiwan, posits that the ethnically dominant group in the job market in an industry is informed by the ethnic composition and kinship ties in a region. Thus, majority of employees in a cut flower farm would report from the surrounding area or are sourced by their kinsmen already working in the cut flower farm. The variable on ethnic composition was used to establish whether or not workers in Kenya migrate across the country from different ethnic groups seeking jobs in the cut flower industry. This variable on ethnic composition was measured by asking the workers to state their tribe. Table 2 illustrates the ethnic composition of the workers in the three sampled regions.

Table 2: Distribution of workers by region and ethnicity

Ethnic group	Region			Total
	Nanyuki area	Naivasha	Thika	
Luhya	4 (4.2%)	63 (66.3%)	28 (29.5%)	95 (26.5%)
Kikuyu	14 (17.5%)	32 (40%)	34 (42.5%)	80 (22.3%)
Kisii	3 (6%)	30 (60%)	17 (34%)	50 (14%)
Luo	1 (2.6%)	27 (69.2%)	11 (28.2%)	39 (10.9%)
Meru	27 (81.8%)	2 (6.1%)	4 (12.1%)	33 (9.2%)
Others	5(8.2%)	42 (68.8%)	14 (23%)	61(17.1%)
Total	54 (15.1%)	196 (54.7%)	108 (30.2%)	358 (100%)

Source: Field data (2015)

The data in Table 2 reveals that majority of workers interviewed were Luhya (26.5%) followed by Kikuyu at 22.3%.⁴ In addition, the ethnic composition of workers in the industry was cross tabulated with the location of the farm to establish whether the variable on the region affected the distribution of the ethnic composition. Therefore, except for Naivasha, the largest percentage of the workers came from the surrounding community. Naivasha region is the oldest in terms of cut flower production. The workers in the farm call their kinsmen in case of an employment opportunity in the farm. Thus, the ethnic composition in the farm may have been influenced by kinship ties of the workers working in the farm.

⁴ The Kikuyus form the largest ethnic group with 21.9% while Luhyas accounts 15% of the Kenya's population (RoK, 2015a)

This article attempted to measure the variable on the employees' working conditions. The variable was measured by asking the workers to describe **the perceived working conditions in the farm**. The options were: 1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor 5. Very Poor. In this paper, 'at least better' means "excellent" and/or "good" while 'at least poor' means "poor" and/or "very poor". This variable is captured in Table 3.

Table 3: Perceived Working Conditions by the Kenyan workers

Description of the Working Conditions in the Farm	Frequency	Total
Excellent	19	19 (5.3%)
Good	158	158 (44.1%)
Fair	126	126 (35.2%)
Poor	44	44 (12.3%)
Very poor	11	11 (3.1%)
Total	358	358(100)

Source: Field data (2015)

Almost half of the workers interviewed (49.4%) described the working condition as "at least better", while 15.4% described the working condition as "at least poor". Thus, our findings concur with the reports by Morgante and Leipold (2013) and Riisgaard and Gibbon (2014) who observed that there has been significant improvement in working conditions of employees in the cut flower farms. As a result, the emerging trend of working condition in the cut flower industry in Kenya is that the working environment is perceived to be improving by the workers. Thus, we find no evidence to condemn or demonize the industry.

The study also sought to establish **the terms of employment** of workers in cut flower industry. The industry is known for its seasonality, and thus the assumption is that the permanent workers are few. The variable was measured by asking the respondents to state their current terms of employment where three options were presented, namely, permanent, on contract and seasonal (casual). According to a working paper on *Codes of conduct in the cut flower industry* (ILRF, 2003), approximately 65% of Kenyan flower workers were employed as casuals. However, this study found that a majority of workers (70%) were permanently employed, while 25% were on contract. Only 5% of workers were casuals. Our finding was almost similar with the reports by Odhong' and Omolo (2014) and Riisgaard and Gibbon (2014) who observed that majority of workers were permanent at 78% and 85%, respectively. As a result, the emerging pattern in the Kenya's cut flower industry is that there is an improvement in working conditions where more workers are being recruited on permanent basis and thus being entitled to more work benefits like pension, medical arrangement among others unlike seasonal and workers on contract.

The study further measured the **workers' duration of engagement in the farm**, which was operationalized to mean the time the respondent had been engaged to work in the cut flower farm. This variable was measured to establish whether or not high job turnover was evident in the cut flower industry as anticipated. This study found that on average, a worker had been engaged by the current employer in the cut flower industry for a period of three years, with a mode of two years. In addition, this study shows that a majority of employees (42.5%) were engaged for a period of less than two years. The workers who had worked for 3-4 years constituted 17.3% of the sample. Thus, the findings show that almost 60% of workers were engaged in the farm for less than four years.

This is an indication of high job turnover which could be explained by many factors. First, the seasonality of the industry such that the workers seek employment in the cut flower industry as the entry point to the job market, while still looking for other jobs. Second, the perceived poor reputation of the industry, associated with poor working conditions. A report by Staelens *et. al.* (2014) observes that the rate of job turnover in the cut flower industry has been high. High job turnover shows that the industry is not able to retain its workforce which it trains in the job.

The variable on the duration a worker had been engaged by the current employer was cross tabulated with the region (Naivasha, Thika or Nanyuki). According to a report by Bhatta (2010), there is a likelihood of workers migrating from rural to the urban areas in search of alternative job opportunities and better livelihood. The purpose of cross tabulation of the two variables was to find out whether or not there was variation across region. Table 4 illustrates the duration (years) which the workers were engaged by the current employer in Nanyuki, Naivasha and Thika.

Table 4: Comparison between farm location and workers' duration of engagement (yrs)

Workers' Length of engagement	Location of the farm			Total	Cumulative frequency (%)
	Nanyuki	Naivasha	Thika		
Below one year	18 (33.3%)	30 (15.3%)	12 (11.1%)	60 (16.8%)	16.8%
1-2 years	24 (44.4%)	52 (26.5%)	16 (14.8%)	92 (25.7%)	42.5%
3-4 years	7 (13.0%)	20 (10.2%)	35 (32.4%)	62 (17.3%)	59.8%
5-6 years	4 (7.4%)	34 (17.3%)	23 (21.3%)	61 (17.0%)	76.8
Above 6 years	1 (1.9%)	60 (30.6%)	22 (20.4%)	83 (23.2%)	100.0%
Total	54 (15.1%)	196(54.7%)	108 (30.2%)	358 (100%)	

Source: Field data (2015)

The data in Table 5 shows that Nanyuki had the highest turnover; (77.7%) of its workers who reported having been engaged by the current employer for up to two years. The corresponding figures for Naivasha and Thika were 42% and 26% respectively. The mean years worked by employees in the farms in the three regions was two years. In Nanyuki, majority of workers (77.7%) had been engaged by their current employers for less than two years. Nanyuki, was a typical rural setting. One of the reason which could be contributing to high job turnover in Nanyuki in comparison with other regions is therefore high rate of migration of workers to urban areas in search of better opportunities.

This study further sought to establish the **workers' monthly remuneration** in the cut flower industry in the three regions. This variable was measured to establish whether or not the workers in the cut flower industry in Kenya were fairly remunerated. Previous studies on cut flower industry in Kenya (Oxfam, 2013 and Dolan, 2005) have demonized the industry for exploitation of workers through poor wages. Worker's wage was measured by asking them to state the amount of wages paid per month in Kenya shillings. Table 5 captures the data on monthly wages for the respondents per region.

Table 5: Workers' wages and its location

Workers' wages	Location of the farm			Total
	Nanyuki	Naivasha	Thika	
Less than KShs. 5,001	0 (0.0%)	29 (14.8%)	3 (2.8%)	32 (8.9 %)
KShs. 5,001-KShs. 7,000	11 (20.4%)	41 (20.9%)	42 (38.9%)	94 (26.3%)
KShs. 7,001-9,000	32 (59.3%)	28 (14.3%)	44 (40.7%)	104 (29.1%)
KShs. 9,001-11,000	9 (16.7%)	62 (31.6%)	10 (9.3%)	81 (22.6%)
KShs. 11,001-13,000	1 (1.9%)	16 (8.2%)	4 (3.7%)	21 (5.9%)
KShs. 13,001-15,000	1 (1.9%)	16 (8.2%)	4 (3.7%)	13 (3.6%)
more than KShs. 15,000	0 (0.0%)	10 (5.1%)	3 (2.8%)	13 (3.6%)
Total	54 (15.1%)	196 (54.7%)	108 (30.2%)	358 (100.0%)
Mean minimum wage	Kshs8,360	Kshs9,049	Kshs7,904	Kshs8,600
Pearson Chi-Square=49.225	df=6		Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)=0.0001	
Likelihood Ratio=56.729	df=6		Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)=0.0001	

Source: Field data (2015)

The study found that the mean monthly wages for the 358 workers covered in the three regions was KShs.8,600 with a mode was KShs.5,000. Certainly, the mean monthly wage exceeded the minimum monthly wage of Kshs.5,436 stipulated by the government for the sector in 2015 (RoK, 2015). However, workers in Thika, despite being in the urban area had the lowest mean monthly wage of Kshs7,904 in contrast with workers in Nanyuki whose mean monthly wage of Kshs8,360. Naivasha had the highest average minimum wages of Kshs9, 049. Our findings seemingly, contrasts with many others that demonize the industry for poor remuneration of workers. However, further analysis cast doubts on the actual adequacy of the monthly wage of the cut flower workers. Study's data shows that 52% of the workers covered earned a monthly wage ranging between KShs 7,001-KShs 9,000 which is far beyond the government minimum stipulated monthly wage of KShs.5, 436. Nevertheless, 18% of the sample earned a monthly wage of less than the government minimum stipulated monthly wage of KShs.5, 436. A report by Women Working Worldwide (2013), found that the living monthly wage for a family of two children was KShs. 21,545. Accordingly, data in Table 5 shows that the overwhelming majority of workers covered qualified to be considered as working poor. Most likely, workers covered by this study lived in absolute poverty given that their mean family size was 3.57 members who lived on an average monthly wage of Kshs 8,600.

Conclusion

Unlike in the past, when Kenyan cut flower farms were dominated by female workers, our study affirms that the sector is now attracting both gender in almost equal proportions. The industry continues to attract youthful labour force, majority of whom are single. Further, the study found that increasingly the workers' level of education has increased over time. More specifically, majority of workers had acquired primary and secondary education. Further, this study established that unlike previous studies which reported that the workers in the cut flower industry were unskilled, this study established that over 43% of workers were in possessed either technical or professional skills; this was not an entry point requirement for employment in the industry. Unlike previous studies which had reported the working conditions of workers as poor, this study established that the current working conditions in the cut flower farms was perceived by workers as at least better. As a part of the working condition, the terms of employment of the workers has changed with majority of workers being employed on permanent basis. Finally, the study established that majority of workers in the cut flower industry in Kenya earned minimum wage which was higher than the government

legislated minimum wages. However, the wage was not adequate to sustain a decent living. As a result, cut flower workers in Kenya can be categorized as part of the working poor. To conclude, this study has revealed significant changes in the personal attributes of the workers who join the cut flower industry in Kenya. Most important, the study reports that workers perceive improving working conditions in the industry that has heavily been demonized for exploiting workers.

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