

Use of Job Satisfaction Initiatives in Enhancing Performance of Non-Teaching Employees in Selected Public Universities in Western Kenya

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Abstract

Deducing and appreciating levels of job satisfaction amongst non-teaching staff in public university has never been a simple task yet the non-teaching staff is amply indispensable as their job satisfaction levels may enhance performance leading to improved quality of service they offer to both the academic faculty and students at large. Further, in the 2015/2016 Financial Year, the Government of Kenya cut its funding to Public Universities by 6% causing significant constraints in budgetary allocations that negatively affected non-teaching staffing levels, growth, and development which translates to the current unending labour unrests. The investigation was steered by the Affective Event, Equity, Two Factor and Job characteristics which provided a description and analysis of how employee behaviour could be energized, directed and sustained to increase job satisfaction levels and enhance performance. The specific objective of the study was to analyze the influence of Transformational Leadership Style in enhancing the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya. Use of descriptive survey design employed on a target population of 1054 non-teaching employees. Using a stratified random sampling technique a sample size of 290 respondents selected from the target population of non-teaching staff from the public universities chosen in Western Kenya. The study used primary data with structured a questionnaire adopted as the main instrument for collecting data. Analysis of the data done by use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Application of Inferential statistics techniques such as Correlation analysis and regression analysis was to test the hypotheses of association and differences. Idealised Influence, Intellectual Stimulation and Individualized Consideration were used to measure transformational leadership style, and there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employee performance. From the results of the study, the researcher concluded that there was a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employee performance. The study recommended that Public Universities should adopt Job Satisfaction Initiatives to enhance the performance of non-teaching employees.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction Initiatives, Performance, Non-Teaching Employees

Introduction

Considered the key asset in any firm for its unique nature, was human resources and it does serve as the firm's engine in the provision of a sustainable source of energy (Ali & Wajidi, 2013). Productivity and efficiency of an employee depended upon some factors ranging from personal to organisational. Job satisfaction was one of the most critical factors which impact directly on the productivity levels of human resources.

In Pakistan, Khan, Nawaz, Aleem, and Hamed (2012) pointed out that contented employees offered the best services in return to firms that treasured them. The result was vice versa if employees were improperly handled causing unmatchable loss as noted by business leaders and scholars. Locally, Rashid and Rashid (2011) accepted that due to its importance to the mental and physical well-being of people, job satisfaction had become a subject of extensive study world over. Serife and Saner (2009) in North Cyprus concluded that apparently, it is still a subject of continuing interest.

Odembo (2013) defined Job satisfaction as the psychological state revolving around how an individual felt towards work. Interestingly in the 2015/2016 Financial Year, the Government of Kenya cut its funding of Public Universities by 6% causing significant deficits in budgetary allocations that negatively affected non-teaching staff levels, growth, and development (Nganga, 2015). A reality Public Universities have had to grapple with up to date. A non-teaching staff is amply indispensable as his/her job satisfaction levels translated to high-quality services they offer to both the academic faculty and students (Chowdhury, Alam, & Ahmed, 2014).

Such levels meant that their essential role and motivation needed to be streamlined to ensure they

consistently deliver efficient services. Staff was more productive and his/her feelings of satisfaction were enhanced when their job presents them with economic benefits, recognition, clear policies, involved them in decision making, had clear job descriptions, offered an opportunity for growth, availed fringe benefits and compensation structures explained Kuria (2011).

Job satisfaction at work can take place when people motivate themselves by seeking, finding and carrying out work that satisfied their needs. Secondly, people can be driven by the firm's management through provision of initiatives related to pay, promotions or praise. Intrinsic job satisfaction factors are said to be self-generated and influence employees to be satisfied with their jobs whereas extrinsic job satisfaction factors were what is done to or for people to satisfy them at the workplace (Gathungu & Wachira, 2013).

Shahu and Gole (2008) in their research analysed the effects of job satisfaction on employee performance. They summed up their findings that the organisation should consider work satisfaction as an essential plan which needs to be increased to improve employees' performance. It was critical understanding that employee job satisfaction defined as a function emanating from the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and when one perceived of it as an offering (Galletta, Portoghese, & Battistelli, 2011). Job satisfaction was an attitude that people have about their jobs (Al Zubi, 2010).

In South Asia Parvin and Kabir (2011) established that a variety of components could influence various levels of job satisfaction. They included pay and benefits; fairness of the promotion system; working conditions; leadership and social relationships and the job itself. It necessitated the reality that employees are the backbone of any successful organisation. To understand the critical importance of people in any organisation goes hand in hand with recognising that the human factor and the organisation are synonymous.

In Kenya today, Public Universities are currently facing daunting challenges with the digital revolution and rapid globalisation changes reshaping higher education. Globalisation has made competition over student population heightened. Now, institutions are experiencing a lasting effect from the global financial crisis, soaring enrolment numbers and students too, have increased both their demands and expectations regarding educational experience (Hallinger & Bryant, 2013).

Further, with these challenges, Public Universities have been faced with the challenging task of satisfying their employees to lower staff turnover. Universities have to use the low capitation they receive from the Government of Kenya to finance their activities and ensure the provision of attractive working conditions and competitive remuneration. Also, they have had to face the harsh reality of their employees, whom they have invested a lot through training competitive opportunities in the private sector or abroad as alternatives (Mwiria & Ngethe, 2007).

Most prosperous institutions of higher learning struggle to find out the high degree of assurance, collaboration, employee job satisfaction, communication and curiosity levels among its employees. If feedback from employees would be provided organisations would incentivised employees assigned tasks to ensure the attainment of organisational objectives while enhancing their performance at the same time (Javed *et al.* 2014). This study, therefore, sought to investigate the use of job satisfaction initiatives for improving the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Most Kenyan Public Universities were hit after their primary source of funding which was the Government of Kenya, expected them to tighten their belts following a decision by the National Treasury to cut funding by 6% in the 2015/2016 financial year, despite 28% expansion in student numbers the same year (Nganga, 2015). These led to the creation of quite unfavourable working conditions as most Universities have limited influence over their work environment affecting negatively mostly non-teaching employees. This jeopardised the loyalty of the non-teaching staff towards their employer as they were continually searching greener pastures and were increasingly engaging in moonlighting activities to supplement their earnings (Kipkebut, 2010). Various studies were undertaken in Kenya such as Odembo, 2013; Kuria, 2011; Kipkebut, 2010; Mwiria and Ngethe, 2007 entirely did not focus on job satisfaction initiatives among the non-teaching employees of Public Universities. In higher education, particularly among non-teaching employees, Use of job satisfaction initiatives in enhancing the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya has been exiguously examined, and cumulatively the studies in this area suggest there was little unity in understanding job satisfaction among the non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in western counties. To fill bridge the knowledge gap, this study established the Use of job satisfaction initiatives in enhancing the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya.

Objective of the Study

To examine the influence of transformational leadership style on the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya.

Study Hypothesis

Ho₄ There was no significant relationship between transformational leadership style and performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya.

Review of Related Literature

Both theoretical and empirical literature was reviewed in the study

Theoretical Review

The following theories guided the study: Equity, Two-factor and Job Characteristics.

Equity Theory

Ball (2014) based on the idea that employees were motivated by fairness, and if they identified inequities in input or output ratios of themselves and referent others. Equity theory has a significant proposition which was the comparison of one's inputs and outcomes to others inputs and outcomes. As a result of such a comparison, one might experience equity or inequity (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012). Employees would then seek to adjust their input to reach their perceived equity. Equity theory (Adams, 1963) draws from the exchange, dissonance, and social comparison theories in making predictions about how individuals managed their relationships with others.

He suggested that the higher an individual's perception of equity, the more motivated they would be and vice versa. Reviewed by Waster and Berscheid (1973) it showed how a person perceived fairness. Adams (1963) noted that when a person became aware of inequity, it caused a reaction in them. The approach of the theory presupposes that during a social exchange, a person identifies the amount of input gained from a relationship compared to the output, as well as how much effort another person puts forth.

Schultz & Schultz (2010) extended equity theory to include the other behavioural responses patterns to situations of equity or inequity. From the above comparison, when they perceived that outputs justly rewarded their inputs, then they were motivated, satisfied and happier. The theory was relevant and anchored on the principle that leaders should strive to seek a fair balance between the inputs that an employee gave, and the outputs received.

Finding a fair balance serves to ensure the presence of a healthy and productive relationship with the employee and the overall results translating to a happy and motivated workforce. It would be of great significance to the study as it acknowledged that various factors affected an employee's assessment and perception of the relationship they have with their employer.

Two-factor Theory

Proposed by Herzberg (1964) the theory focused on outcomes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction by putting more emphasis on the motivator-hygiene factors in the organisation. The argument further found that certain aspects of a job caused satisfaction and therefore motivation, but certain elements caused job dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors included aspects of the working environment like working conditions, interpersonal matters, organisational policies and so on (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Dugguh and Ayaga (2014) concluded that though the concept of job satisfaction was complex, using appropriate variables and mechanisms could go a long way in enhancing employee performance. They had realised that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction were products of different factors involving motivation and hygiene respectively. Herzberg, a long time ago in 1964 shared that intrinsic motivators and extrinsic motivators had an inverse relationship. He reiterated that the opposite of job satisfaction was no satisfaction at all.

This particular theory assisted the researcher in discovering which factors in the workplace could cause job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The method was more relevant as it helped the researcher narrow down on the sets of job factors to pay attention to ensure a satisfied and productive workforce, managers must pay attention. Also, the theory assisted in differentiating when to provide intrinsic motivators and when extrinsic motivators were needed.

Job Characteristics Theory

Job characteristic theory (developed by Hackman & Oldham 1976, Schermerhorn, Jr (1984), Hellriegel, Jackson & Slocum (1999) and Dugguh (2008) proposed a framework to study how particular job characteristics affected job outcomes and job satisfaction. The studies looked in depth at the various factors that did a specific job satisfying for both the organisation and the person doing the job. The researchers came up with the theory to describe the relationship between job characteristics and the responses of individuals to work or the task that was to perform.

Meaningfulness meant "the value of a work goal or purpose, judged about an individual's ideas or standards" (May *et al.*, 2004). The feeling of meaningfulness influenced by the ability to pursue higher order implicit goals

wrote Barrick, Mount, and Li (2013). Both Hackman and Oldham (1976) insisted that these five job characteristics increase positive outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction) and decreased negative ones (e.g., turnover). Keenly looking at the theory, job design affects motivation, work performance, and job satisfaction.

This particular theory offered the researcher direction in the study by assisting in specifying the conditions under which non-teaching staff could be internally motivated to perform their jobs effectively. The study also made use of the five core job dimensions that prompted three psychological states which, in turn, led to or had an effect on five work-related outcomes or results. The theory served as a framework for University Management Boards to identify how certain job characteristics affected the issues of jobs.

Empirical Review

Transformational Leadership Style and Employee Performance

Hetland et al. (2011) defined transformational leadership as a preferred style that meets followers' needs and what that motivates employees to achieve more rather than what was intended originally. Positive outcomes of transformational leadership hinge on the ability of leaders to consider the individual needs and aspirations of followers. Studies conducted by Berson and Linton (2005) support previous findings that a positive relationship exists between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction. Results of a survey conducted by Nielsen, Randall, Yarker, and Brenner (2008) reveal that transformational leadership style positively associated with better working conditions.

Transformational leaders take the role of a coach, mentor, and advisor with the aim of enhancing the personal development of followers. Such leaders make an effort to promote his/her beliefs and values through influence (Flynn, 2009). Ozaralli (2002) described Idealised influence as a process where the leader instils faith, pride, and respect among followers through inspiration. It comes into play when the leader expresses a sense of conviction and confidence when making high impact decisions in the face of threats.

Andrews (2003), said that effective leaders influence positive aspirations in people that result in high levels of satisfaction. Followers gain trust and admiration for the leader and voluntarily make sacrifices to make the vision a reality. Harper (2012) explain that Idealised influence creates an energising atmosphere that reinforces empowerment and ownership and responsibility among followers. Here empowerment is viewed as a motivator, which is explicitly supported by McClelland's theory of needs, where the attainment of power acts as a motivator to be more influential among peers.

Mester *et al.* (2003) put it that Intellectual stimulation occurs when a leader encourages creativity among followers to look for new and more efficient ways of solving problems. Much effort placed on helping followers to proactively search for new ideas when faced with challenges and going beyond expectations (Krishnan, 2005). The leader encourages followers to challenge their current problem-solving abilities and explore other avenues to stimulate deeper and innovative thinking (Zarina, 2012). Also, Naidu and Van Der Walt (2005) discussed that an active leadership style influences change and create the impetus for transformation.

Thinking abilities of followers are enhanced when the status quo is challenged, and this process generates new insights and revelations among followers thereby increasing their criteria for success. Pattersen, Warr, and West (2004) also suggest that a job satisfied employee is a productive employee. Transformational leaders can challenge outdated assumptions and traditions, thereby creating an atmosphere of creativity and innovation. Emery and Barker (2007) support the use of transformational leadership style through individual consideration by treating employees differently according to their talents and knowledge. Transformational leaders are also mindful of the intellectual ability of followers, and they encourage approaching problems from different angles, thus creating readiness for change (Cilliers, Eden, and Deventer, 2008). The job characteristics model of Oldham and Hackman also supports the claim whereby internal motivation is gained through experienced meaningfulness from task variety and task significance.

Followers are inclined to perform beyond standard requirements if they are inclined to believe that the organisation and tasks value them are seen to be meaningful. The satisfaction gained from the realisation that the need met becomes a motivator to satisfy requirements at a higher level, which is supported by Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Xirasagar (2008) claims that the leader displays behaviours intended to prevent potential problems before they arise. Although the follower may fear reprimand for non-compliance, satisfaction could be gained from knowing that tasks are over inspected to prevent potential failures proactively. Followers will also be motivated to ensure that functions are performed with diligence in order not to face reprimand. Conversely, findings from a study conducted by Hetland *et al.* (2011) revealed that leadership based on actively searching for mistakes poses a severe threat to the fulfilment of the autonomy need.

Job Satisfaction Initiatives and Employee Performance

According to Wentzel and Wigfield (2009), the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity was not established. The consensus, however, is that in the long-run job-satisfaction initiatives leads to an increase in productivity. The strongest implication of much of the research is that the two variables, job-satisfaction, and

performance, are relatively independent of each other. There seemed to be two possible reasons for this. The first is that in many jobs variations in satisfaction cannot lead to alterations in productivity. Secondly, even when correlations do appear, the associations may be spurious, since both may be associated with other factors.

In other words, job satisfaction and productivity may well have mostly separate casual paths: one set of factors (e.g. investment in technology) determines productivity, another game (for example perceived equity of rewards) produce job-satisfaction (Westover, 2010). There are however conditions under which high productivity more clearly led to high job satisfaction. One term was that the employees perceive that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards were contingent upon their productive capacity. The second condition is that the extrinsic rewards (pay for example) be distributed equitably. Inequitable distribution fails to convince the employees close correlations between hard work and rewards (Ali &Wajidi, 2013). Productivity increases as an organisation discover new ways to use fewer resources to produce its output. In a business environment, productivity improvement is essential for long-run success.

Through gains in productivity, managers can reduce costs, save scarce resources, and enhance profits. In turn, improved profits make it possible for an organisation to provide better pay, benefits, and working conditions. The result can be a higher quality of work employees, who are more likely to be motivated toward further improvements in productivity. (Wentzel & Wigfield, 2009). Under productivity, we can look at the quality and quantity produced.

Methodology

According to Gupta and Gupta (2011), the research design was the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constituted the plans for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Kothari and Garg (2014) have expressly observed that great research designs clearly show procedures and techniques. Oso and Onen (2009), referred descriptive survey design as an oriented methodology used to investigate populations by selecting samples to analyse and discover occurrences.

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. This design was appropriate since it was easier to sample a part of the population to gather data. The data then could be generalised on the entire study population on Job satisfaction initiatives and performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya. Saunders *et al.* (2009), recommended this strategy because the method allowed the researchers to collect quantitative data, which could be analysed quantitatively using inferential statistics.

The total population of this study would be 2,080 non-teaching employees from three Public Universities found in the western region of Kenya namely: Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kibabii University and Kaimosi Friends University College. For purposes of this study, the sampling frame was pulled from the three public Universities in the Western part of Kenya, namely; Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kibabii University, and Kaimosi Friends University College. The researcher used a proportionate stratified random sampling technique to identify 290 respondents for the study. The researcher utilised a Likert scale questionnaire, and primary data was collected by administering surveys to the non-teaching employees working in the three selected public universities.

Data processing started with data preparation, coding, editing and cleaning used SPSS. Descriptive and inferential statistics analysed quantitative data. Descriptive statistics included; measures of central tendency; mean, mode and the median, measure of variability; standard deviation and variance were used to show the trend of the data and develop measures that summarise the collected data. Inferential statistics were closely tied to the logic of hypothesis testing discussed; this included Pearson Correlation and multiple regression analysis. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to compute the magnitude and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. Multiple Regression models were used to measure the influence of Job Satisfaction Initiatives on the Performance of Non-Teaching Employees in selected public Universities in Western Kenya.

A total of 290 questionnaires were administered to the respondents. On return, 276 of questionnaires had been correctly filled thus a response rate of 95%. The high return rate was achieved because the researcher physically visited the institutions explained the relevance of the study, made contacts, used research assistants and made follow up calls. This rate was excellent as it exceeded the standard value of the 50% response rate prescribed for statistical analysis (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Hypothesis (H₀₄): There is no significant relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Employee Performance.

Table 1: ANOVA: Transformational Leadership Style and Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	48.656	1	48.656	193.856	.000b
	Residual	68.772	274	.251		
	Total	117.428	275			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership Style

From the ANOVA results in Table 1, the regression model statistically significantly predicted the outcome variable as indicated by $F(1, 274) = 193.856$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$; thus the model was a good fit for data used for the study.

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate
1	.644a	.414	.412	.50099

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership Style

From the model summary results in Table 2, the model (predictor variable) explained 41.2% of the sum variation in the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya as indicated by the Adjusted R Square = 0.412.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	1.104	.114			9.688	.000
Trans Leadership	.521	.037	.644		13.923	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

From the results of simple linear regression analysis in Table 3 show that Transformational Leadership Style had a statistically significant contribution in the prediction of the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya. ($B = 0.521$, $t = 13.923$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$); thus reject the null hypothesis and concluded that Transformational Leadership Style had a significant influence on the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya.

The Pearson Correlation coefficient results revealed a significantly strong positive correlation between Transformational Leadership Style and performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya ($R = 0.644 > 0.5$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Adjusted R square of 0.412 indicates that Transformational Leadership Style explains 41.2% of the variation in the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya.

Therefore, the researcher concluded at 5% significance level that Transformational Leadership Style had a significant positive influence on the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya. This finding was consistent with evidence of Mohiuddin (2017) whose analysis from literature showed that transformational leadership approach was more significant on employees execution if their duties. Similarly, the relational study found that all transformational leadership styles and their behaviours had a positive, strong correlation with employee performance (Koech & Namusonge, 2012). On the other hand, Podsakoff *et al.* (1990) divulged that transformational leadership style had a proactive influence on individual performance and organisational outcomes.

The simple regression model that the study adopted to predict the performance of non-teaching employees in selected Public Universities in Western Kenya using “Transformational Leadership Style” was as detailed below;

$$P = 1.104 + .521 \text{ TLS}$$

Where;

P = Performance of Non-Teaching Employees

TLS = Transformational Leadership Style

Conclusions

The following conclusion is made based on the study findings;

A positive association was realised as the Pearson correlation coefficient indicated a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership style and employee performance. The researcher concluded that transformational leaders strategically enhanced job satisfaction levels by imparting a clear mission, vision and values to their followers. They could inspire and motivate followers to perform unusual behaviours, increasing their performance levels.

Recommendations

With regard to the study findings and conclusion, the following recommendation is made;

It was of utmost importance that both University Councils and University management Boards make use of promotional opportunity initiatives to enhance the performance of the non-teaching staff at Public Universities. This was because many employees perceive management to be supportive in their journey towards climbing up their professional ladder and therefore there should be a preference to promote internal employees within the organisation than to hire from outside the organisation.

The study recommended the adoption of Flexible Working Hour Initiatives as they are beneficial to both the

employee and employer. These initiatives give employees the ability to control when, where, and how much time do their work and contributes to improvement in the allocation of work and life responsibilities. Thus, an employee might end up fulfilling his/her working as well as strong non-working roles efficiently.

Moreover, there was a need for the University Councils and University management Boards to review their competitive remuneration initiatives to attract the best employees in the industry and to identify areas that need improvement. The researcher recommended and supported the use of transformational leadership initiatives to enhance employee performance. It was imperative that capable and vibrant leaders lead public Universities and who motivate employees towards achieving organisational success.

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