

EFFECT OF GENDER AND AGE DISPOSITION ON JOB SATISFACTION IN UNIVERSITIES IN RIFT VALLEY REGION KENYA

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ABSTRACT: *The success of any company lies in the job satisfaction of its employees. Job satisfaction in universities is believed to have varying effects on workers in different dimensions. Age and gender are among other factors that job satisfaction would be rated on. This paper therefore brings this to light by analysing the gender and age aspects and how the disposition of each would affect job satisfaction of Management, Deans and lecturers in Universities. The study focused on chartered Universities in the Rift Valley Region (RVR) of Kenya. A mixed methods design, convergent parallel mixed methods in particular, which involved both quantitative and qualitative research methods, was adopted for the study. The study targeted the management, Deans and lecturers in the chartered public and private universities in the Rift Valley Region of Kenya. The management and deans were purposively sampled while lecturers were randomly selected. The sample size therefore constituted 8 members of the management, 121 deans and 363 lecturers who participated in the study. The findings indicate that gender and age differences are significantly related to job satisfaction.*

KEYWORDS: Age Disposition, Gender Disposition, University, Job Satisfaction.

INTRODUCTION

In order for the universities to fulfil their mandate, the role of the university management and lecturers is critical. University management members are those having formal leadership roles (Mercer, 2009). Perhaps when the university management and lecturers play their roles diligently, the universities fulfil their teaching, research and community service obligations, thereby discharging their full mandate and vice versa. University management therefore operates under laid down governance structures. In discharging this mandate, it is vital that the universities show concern about their employees' well-being and thus will most often develop ways to improve job satisfaction. Job satisfaction in this case may refer to the general attitude of the staff towards their job. A highly satisfied employee often holds positive attitudes about the job, while a dissatisfied individual will hold negative attitude about the job. Employee satisfaction includes satisfaction of an employee towards his organisational atmosphere, relation with superiors and colleagues as well as social and financial status. This paper sought to establish the influence gender and age disposition have on the satisfaction of workers in the universities.

LITERATURE UNDERPINNING

Glen, Moyes, Williams and Koch (2006), in their study on the effect of age and gender upon the perceptions of accounting professionals concerning their job satisfaction and work related

attributes; had 245 accounting professionals participating in the study. A significant relationship between work related attributes of job satisfaction and, age and gender was established.

In another study, Kwangho Moon and Sung (2013) sought to demonstrate the effect of age, gender and sector on job satisfaction. The study samples drawn from the Korean public and private service indicated that there was no substantial difference in the job satisfaction of public employees of different ages, but a negative association was found in a sub sample of private employees. A gender effect on job satisfaction was further shown.

Age affects job satisfaction Burks (2015). According to Burks, it was revealed in survey findings that older workers are more satisfied with their jobs than younger workers. He attributed the higher job satisfaction among older employees to the perks that come with maintaining a long career, including higher salaries, better benefits and success in the work place.

There are however some inconsistencies in a careful analysis of the literature in terms of gender and job satisfaction. For instance, some studies have indicated women having higher job satisfaction while other studies show that men are more satisfied. In the same vein, other studies find no significant difference between male and female (Mortimer, Finch & Maruyama, 1988).

In a study by Souza-Poza (2003), it was reported that women satisfaction had declined greatly while men's job satisfaction had remained fairly constant. It is interesting to note that a number of research work involving different population substantiate this view (Lambert, Hogan, & Barton; Ma & MacMillan). The reason attributed to this was that men have better chances in terms of employment and opportunities to advance in their jobs at a more rapid pace than women.

Some researchers argue that women have an inclination to low job satisfaction because they normally hold positions at lower levels in institution thus low chances to salary and promotion which lead to low job satisfaction that men. This is also seen in the fact that women and men place varying value to different aspects of job; with women attaching value on co-worker relations and on jobs that offer them with a sense of accomplishment (Tolbert & Moen, 1998). According to Hull (1999), women don't compare themselves with all other workers but only with other women in similar work environments or with women who are at home.

Gender differences in job satisfaction have in recent years attracted attention of many researchers; while Greenhaus, Parasuraman and Wormley (1990) found no significant differences in gender, they justified this outcome explaining that the male participants had higher positions than female, who were more attached to clerical jobs. Spector (2012) however furthers that the three hypothesised that women could be happier when they have less demanding jobs because of their lower expectation.

Another study that delved on the details that could be behind the significant relationship between job satisfaction and gender, was the one conducted by Kifle and Desta (2012). In their study, it was established that men workers are more satisfied than women with the hours worked, workload and promotion opportunities. Therefore, their study concludes that males are satisfied with intrinsic dimensions of job satisfaction while women are more satisfied with extrinsic aspects of job satisfaction (Kifle and Desta 2012)

Despite there being evidence on the effect that gender and age separately have on job satisfaction; various researchers have indicated the inconsistencies. Of all the studies none has been done in the education sector. In particular, several researchers have found that women tend to be more satisfied than men while others have indicated otherwise. In an attempt to clear this confusion, some researchers have recently looked into different facets of job satisfaction and reached the conclusion that men are more satisfied with some aspects such as pay, promotions, supervision, and overall job satisfaction, while women with others, including work and co-workers (Okpara, Squillace, & Erundu, 2005; Okpara, 2006).

An interesting perspective was offered by Clark, Oswald, and Warr (1996) who proposed that age should also be examined. This paper reconciles these studies to find out what influence gender and age have on workers' job satisfaction with a specific focus on management, deans and lecturers in universities. The hypothesis; there is no significant difference in satisfaction between academic staff categorised by age and gender was formulated for the study.

METHODOLOGY

The study was undertaken among chartered universities in the Rift Valley Region of Kenya. This study used a mixed methods design, specifically convergent parallel mixed methods, which involved both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The mixed methods design is a research plan that includes at least one quantitative technique to collect numbers and one qualitative technique to collect words (Greene, Caracell, & Graham, 2008). The study targeted all the Vice Chancellors (VCs), Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs), Registrars, Deans, Head of Departments (HoDs) and lecturers in the chartered public and private universities in Rift Valley Region (RVR) of Kenya. The university management (VCs, DVCs, Registrars) are tasked with the day - to - day running of the chartered universities. They are the implementers of all the university and administrative policies. The manner in which the university management discharges its duties and responsibilities will directly affect the lecturers in the context of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction on their jobs.

On the basis of the preferred research design and in order to select a sample that represented the target population, this study used both probability and non - probability procedures. Creswell and Clark (2007) observe that these techniques use results from one method to enhance, elaborate or illustrate results from the other. There are nine chartered universities in Rift Valley Region (RVR) of Kenya (CUE, 2015). The universities were stratified into chartered public universities and chartered private universities. There are six chartered public universities and three chartered private universities. These are the universities having their main campuses in the region.

Purposive sampling was done for management because these were key participants who provided critical information that was sought in this study; 8 management staff were thus considered for the study. They are also responsible for academic staff management, hence may have some effect on job satisfaction of lecturers. The authors also adopted purposive sampling technique to select participating Deans hence 121 of them participated in the study. The Deans being the officers in charge of administrative and academic functions in their faculties/schools interact with academic staff on a day-to-day basis. Thus, they are critical stakeholders who may directly influence academic staff job satisfaction. On the other hand, systematic sampling was

employed to select participating lecturers since their list was long. Where the list of individuals is long, drawing a random sample may be laborious.

Questionnaires and interview schedule were the modes of data collection adopted for the study. The set of questionnaires were administered to the lecturers and deans while the management was interviewed. Descriptive statistics, that is, frequencies, percentages and means were used for quantitative data. Descriptive statistics covered the age and gender demographic characteristics of the participants and all response variables from closed ended questions in the questionnaire. According to Mugenda (2008), descriptive statistics gives the primary features of the data gathered on the variables as well as the impetus for carrying out further analyses on the data. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there were any significant differences between independent groups and the staff job satisfaction levels. The groups, which had a continuous response variable and at least one categorical factor, comprised of the ages of the lecturers. The independent-samples t-test (or independent t-test, for short) was used to compare the means between two unrelated groups gender parity of the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The authors sought to establish the gender and age of the deans, lecturers and management as well as the effect these dispositions had on their job satisfaction. The findings indicated that 17% of the deans were female while 83% were male. On the part of the lecturers, 32% were female while the male lecturers were 68%. The management team had 19% females while the male were 81%. The gender of respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Genders of the Management, Deans and Lecturers

	Lecturers		Dean		Management	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Male	247	68	114	83	13	81
Female	114	32	24	17	3	19
Total	361	99	138	100	16	100

The results shown in Table 1 indicate that there were more male respondents than females and established that there is a wide disparity between males and females in service at the level of Lecturer, Dean and management in universities in RVR. The level of job satisfaction between males and females was also established by testing the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the level of satisfaction between female and male academic staff. The authors aimed to get similar results from statistical analysis and therefore used the t-test to compare the arithmetic means of the variables (the two genders and their subsequent satisfaction levels in the institutions). The descriptive results showed that the male academic staff were generally more satisfied ($m = 1.00$), with their jobs than the female academic staff ($m = 1.99$). Standardised errors of both means were relatively small and therefore the authors concluded that the sample was sufficiently representative as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Means of Gender**Group Statistics**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Job	Male	345	1.00	.000	.000
Satisfaction	Female	139	1.99	.170	.014

In agreement with this finding, Hechanova (2015) observed that despite the progress made by women in the workplace, disparities still exist. The International Labour Organization (ILO), cited in Hechanova (2015) reported that although women represent over 40% of the global workforce, they comprise only 20% of management positions. Surveys show that in the largest and most powerful companies worldwide, women comprise only 3% of top positions. Katundano (2008) also found that women in academia lack moral support, mentoring and encouragement that also limit them to excel to full deanship positions and other related higher education ranks. She recommended that women should empower themselves as achievers in academia by always seeking information on promotion, research, publishing, and conference opportunities. Other challenges that Kenyan female academics face include discriminatory appointments into positions of authority, lack of opportunities for further training, sex role stereotyping, among others (Mulinge, 2001, cited in Kipkebut, 2010).

The finding also agrees with Ellison (2001) who examined the chronic shortage of women in senior management positions, 19% in this study, in the surveying profession within the United Kingdom and found that the female respondents tended to dominate the younger age ranges, showing a significant reduction in their representation in age groups over 40 years where the male respondents dominated the data set. There are theories that have been advanced to explain this phenomenon one of which is the physiological theory which focuses on differences between people and suggests that physiologically, men are more inclined to want top jobs and positions of authority in society than women (Goldberg, 1993, cited in Ellison, 2001).

The results from the t-test confirmed that the academic gender disposition impacts on the view of job satisfaction in institutions as shown in Table 3 Levene's test for equality of variances revealed that it can assume the variances to be equal (sig. = 0.000). The study therefore established that there is a significant difference in the level of satisfaction between the academic staff gender, depending on whether you are a male or a female. This difference is statistically important ($t(483) = 108.084, p \leq 0.05$). In contrast to this finding, Santhapparaj and Alam (2005) examined the relationships between pay, promotion, fringe benefits, working condition, support of research, support of teaching, gender and academic staff job satisfaction in private universities in Malaysia. The regression results showed that pay, promotion, working condition and support of research had positive and significant effect on job

satisfaction. Moreover, Mann-Whitney U test results indicated that female academic staff were more satisfied with all the facets than their male counterparts. Toker (2011) investigated the levels of job satisfaction among academics in the universities of Turkey and examined the effects of demographics on levels of satisfaction among them. Among demographic variables, gender and marital status in higher education as a whole were not significantly related to job satisfaction. However, Ellison (2001), Katundano (2008) and Tom (2007, cited in Amzat and Idris, 2012) established that female teaching staff were consistently dissatisfied with the policy and administration, supervision and the working conditions as compared to the male teaching staff.

Table 3. Levene's test for equality of variances of gender

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower Upper	
Gender	Equal variances assumed	10.105	.002	108.084	482	.000	.986	.009	1.004	.968
	Equal variances not assumed			68.500	138.0	.000	.986	.014	1.014	.957

Relative to age, the one that attained the highest percentage (26.4%), among the deans, was the middle adulthood (45 to 49) age group, made up of 32 deans. Only 1 (0.8%) dean was a senior of 70 years while the early adulthood age group (30 to 34 years) were 8 comprising 6.6%. The dominant age bracket (19.3%) for the lecturers was the early adulthood (35 to 39) age group made up of 70 lecturers. Those in early adulthood and below 30 years were 47 (12.9) and 38 (10.5%) respectively; while the seniors, those above 70 years were only 3 (0.8%). The findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Age of Respondents

Age Bracket	Deans		Lecturers		Management	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Below 30 Years	1	.8	38	10.5	-	-
30 - 34 Years	8	6.6	47	12.9	-	-
35 - 39 Years	9	7.4	70	19.3	-	-
40 - 44 Years	18	14.9	69	19.0	-	-
45 - 49 Years	32	26.4	49	13.5	1	12.5
50 - 54 Years	23	19.0	54	14.9	2	25.0
55 - 59 Years	16	13.2	13	3.6	3	37.5
60 - 64 Years	11	9.1	16	4.4	2	25.0
65 - 69 Years	2	1.7	3	.8	-	-
Above 70 Yrs	1	.8	3	.8	-	-
Total	121	100.0	363	100	8	100

Results for the age of university management respondents indicated that the middle adulthood age groups (45 - 49) and (50 - 54) was 12.5% and 25% in that order. Late adulthood age groups of (60 - 64) and (55 - 59) was at 25% and 37.5% respectively, and comprised the majority of the respondents as illustrated in Table 3. The results displayed in Table 4 show that the universities had all working age groups represented among the lecturers with the majority being early adulthood for lecturers and middle adulthood for deans, all under 50 years of age. This finding however contradicted Tettey's (2009) establishment that majority of the lecturers were over 50 years which paused a challenge of aging professoriate with no equivalent replacement at the lower levels.

The effect of age on job satisfaction of the academic staff was calculated. The mean score of the academic staff between 30-39 years of age was 4.54 while for those between 40 and 54 years was 5.06 and those between 55 and 69 was 5.22 while for those whose age was more than 70, the mean score was 5.73. A One-way Analysis of Variance was computed to determine whether these results have statistical significance on the entire sample of the academic staff. This revealed a F_{obt} of 14.47 (against an F_{crit} of 4.82, $P=0$, $\alpha=0.05$). This meant that the four means obtained were statistically different from each other with the oldest age scoring the highest on job satisfaction as shown in Table 5. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant difference in satisfaction between academic staff categorised by age was accepted. These results were similar to McInnis' (1999) regression results which indicated early career academics (between one to seven years in academia) were significantly less satisfied.

Reporting a similar finding, Stefanovska-Petkovska, Bojadziev and Stefanovska (2014) did a research on the role of participatory management in fostering job satisfaction among public administration employees from four cities in Republic of Macedonia and found that only the age of the respondents and their tenure in the department showed significant relationship with job satisfaction. This means that employees who are older and have longer tenure in the department are more satisfied compared to younger employees with shorter department tenure.

Table 5. Independent sample t-test showing age categories

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P	α
Between groups	20.59	366	5.70	14.47	0	0.05
Within groups	74.72	121				
Total	95.31					

This finding disagrees with Ssesanga and Garrett (2005) who posited that young lecturers may feel satisfied with their jobs because of the novelty of their situation. These results are also contrary to studies which found that organizational commitment and job satisfaction decreased with increase in age (Al-Enezi 2004). However, similar results of older staff being more satisfied with their jobs were reported by Mbogo (2015) on job satisfaction of distance education personnel in Kenya's Christian institutions of higher education.

Mbogo made comparisons between personnel groups aged 25-35, 34-45, 46-65 and the results of the analysis implied that older personnel of extension studies had higher job satisfaction in work itself than their younger counterparts. Unlike younger employees, older employees were found to be more committed to their universities, satisfied with their jobs and less likely to quit because of the investments they had in their universities, the experiences they had accumulated over the years and limited alternative employment opportunities due to declining expectations from their jobs (Mbogo, 2015). Hagedorn (1994) contended that older academics may be more satisfied because they have had the time to align their work situation with their competences or interests. Toker (2011) investigated the levels of job satisfaction among academics in the universities of Turkey and examined the effects of demographics on levels of satisfaction among them. Among demographic variables, age in higher education as a whole was significantly related to job satisfaction.

Changes in life and career stage can encourage career reassessment and bring into question whether one's current work and career trajectory matches career goals. Based on her earlier research on the relationship between job satisfaction and proximity to retirement Hagedorn (1994) and Hagedorn (2000) observed that the determinants of job satisfaction vary depending on whether one is in early career, mid career or late career. In this study, age was used as a proxy for career stage and the regression results showed that older career academics (those over 55 years of age) were significantly more satisfied than midcareer and early career academics.

Implication to Research and Practice

Job satisfaction in universities is vital for any institution focused in achieving its objectives. The attrition of university lecturers as a result of dissatisfaction is something that can be avoided if they are to change their gender and age based perceptions in relation to job satisfaction. The implementation of recommendations made in this paper will lead to reduced attrition of lecturers thereby improving the lecturers to students' ratio and lowering costs related to hiring new dons.

CONCLUSION

The number of females in the study was lower than males on the level of deans, lecturers and management. Male academic staff were found to be more satisfied with their jobs than the female academic staff. When it came to age, the brackets with the highest concentration were found among the deans, lecturers and management in that order. These findings imply that the older members of the academic community were entrusted with leadership positions than the younger ones. In addition, the older, the happier applied here as the study established that the 70 years and above age group scored the highest on job satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Raising the number of female members of staff in the academic management level as well as raising their level of job satisfaction is recommended.

Management should revise its recruitment policies to reflect the Kenyan constitution requirements on gender rule to raise the number of females at recruitment level and at every level of designation, and subsequently, raise their level of job satisfaction.

Raising the numbers of the younger members of staff in positions of responsibility and raising their job satisfaction levels is recommended.

Attention should be given to the younger members by entrusting them with responsibility, mentoring them and giving attention to things that give them job satisfaction so that they can be mentored and retained. This will ensure that all the efforts in recruitment and training will not be lost as the younger members of the academic staff seek jobs elsewhere.

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