

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CATEGORY OF UNIVERSITY AND LECTURERS' JOB SATISFACTION IN UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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**ABSTRACT:** *Lecturers' job satisfaction is considered an all-round unit of an institution's human resource strategies. The category of University (public or private) in which the lecturers belong may have an effect on their levels of job satisfaction. This paper analyses the relationship between category of university and lecturers' job satisfaction in Universities in Kenya. A mixed methods design was adopted for the study which targeted academic staff of chartered public and private universities in the Rift Valley Region of Kenya. The sampling method employed was census, and a total of eight chartered universities (six public and two private) participated in the study. The participating universities were labelled 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, in order to conceal their identities. Descriptive statistics, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and the independent-samples t-test was employed in the study. The study found out that chartered public universities' staff were more satisfied compared to those in the private universities.*

**KEYWORDS:** University category, Private universities, Public universities, Job satisfaction, Lecturers

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### INTRODUCTION

There is paucity and inconsistencies in the field of job satisfaction and its influential factors. This situation has thus made the need to establish some of the factors that contribute to job satisfaction inevitable. This paper looks at the relationship between university category and job satisfaction of lecturers. The paper aims at contribution to the knowledge base in the field of human resource management in universities and to help universities draw lessons that will help them plan adequately for the needs and motivation of their employees to enhance job satisfaction.

Kenya's university education can be traced back to the year 1922 when the then Makerere College in Uganda was started as a small Technical College which was expanded to meet the needs of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika and Zanzibar as well as Malawi and Zambia. From the 1940s to early 1950s, it was Makerere College which was offering university education in East Africa (Nyaigotti-Chacha, 2004). In 1956, the Royal Technical College was set up in Nairobi and admitted its first batch of A-level graduates for technical courses in April the same year.

On 25<sup>th</sup> June 1961, the Royal Technical College became one of the three University Colleges of East Africa (Dar es Salaam, Kampala/Makerere and Nairobi). The University College Nairobi provided educational opportunities until 1966 when it started training students exclusively for degrees of the University of East Africa and not London, as was the case earlier.

In 1970, the College became the first national University in Kenya and was renamed the University of Nairobi (Magutu, Mbeche, Nyaoga, Nyamwange, Onger & Ombati, 2010).

In 1989, the Commission for Higher Education (CHE), established through the Universities Act of 1985 (Republic of Kenya, 2006), led to the formation of Universities Rules, to regulate and supervise private universities and tertiary institutions in Kenya. Each university by then was established by an Act of Parliament. By the year 2011, twenty five private universities had been established (CHE, 2011). University education has continued to undergo a rapid expansion in Kenya, over a relatively short period of time, such that by the year 2015, as shown in Table 1, there were 66 universities (Commission for University Education, 2015).

**Table 1. Public and Private Universities in Kenya**

Type of University	Status	Number
Public Universities	Chartered	21
Public Constituent Colleges	Undergoing Process for Charter	9
Private Universities	Chartered	17
Private Universities	Operating under Letter of Interim Authority	11
Private Constituent Colleges	Undergoing Process of Charter	5
Private Registered Colleges	Under Consideration for Letter of Interim Authority	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>66</b>

*Source: Commission for University Education (2015).*

The Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 established the Commission for University Education (CUE) to replace CHE but with an expanded mandate. It was mandated to regulate both public and private universities operating in Kenya including foreign universities and student recruitment agencies (Republic of Kenya, 2012). The CUE has made great strides in ensuring the maintenance of standards, quality and relevance in all aspects of university education, training and research. It continues to mainstream quality assurance practices in university education by encouraging continuous improvement in the quality of universities and programmes (Commission for University Education, 2015).

## LITERATURE UNDERPINNING

Simatwa (2011) in his study posits that job satisfaction refers to a function which is positively related to the degree to which one's personal needs are fulfilled in the job situation. Job satisfaction thus means pleasurable emotional state of feeling that results from performance of work. Job satisfaction in Universities has become an area of concern especially given the changing personal needs of academics and lecturers. While Private and Public Universities vary in terms of how they can influence the performance of their staff, both categories have some encouraging incentives like grade based salaries and job security to ensure job satisfaction. Performance of lecturers is dependent on how much satisfaction they gain from their relative jobs. Ellickson and Logsdon (2001) found out that the sector (public or private university) in which the faculty members belong affected their job satisfaction. Factors such as

pay, job security, fringe benefits, promotion, contingent reward, relationship with co-workers and general working conditions may influence the level of job satisfaction among lecturers in universities. However, the private sector lecturers have other optimistic rewards which include; good working conditions, higher salaries and challenging work tasks among others (Simatwa, 2011).

According to Tshering and Parisa (2015) in a recent study, there has been an increasing demand for the public sectors to enhance employee satisfaction in their organisations. Although most studies have been conducted and concluded that job satisfaction is affected by monetary incentives, promotional opportunities, social relations, decision and participation strategies, there is very little documentation on how the category of universities can influence job satisfaction. Among the few existing literature is Voydanoff's (1980) study which established that, "monetary compensation is one of the most significant variables in explaining job satisfaction". In another study, Taylor and Vest (1992) on managers in the public sector, found that pay levels affect job satisfaction. The two reported that public employees who compared their salaries with those of private sector employees experienced lower levels of job satisfaction.

Offering employees fair and reasonable compensation that relates to the employee's input should be any organisation's main objective of their compensation system (Boone & Kuntz, 1992). Mentioned in the compensation category were items such as bonuses, pension schemes, medical aid schemes, paid leave and travel allowances. A significant difference in job satisfaction between Private and Public university teachers was established. Looking at the variable of contingent reward, pay, fringe benefit, promotion and working condition; the study found a significant difference in job satisfaction of public and private university lecturers. More so, the study found out that an insignificant difference between public and private university lecturers existed on the basis of supervision, communication and co-worker relationships. The study concluded that private university lecturers are more satisfied with their pay as compared to public university lecturers.

Private universities have often been observed to provide a well-equipped work environment, which includes: computers, internet facilities, digital libraries with latest books and rooms for faculties, an element that is considered a motivation to the faculties hence their job satisfaction (Ellickson & Logsdon, 2001).

Aziz, Tabassum and Farooq (2014) compared job satisfaction of public and private university teachers on selected variables in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Their findings indicated no significant difference between perception of public and private university teachers, both public and private university teachers were same regarding their job satisfaction. Devi and Suneja (2013) however, sought the difference in job satisfaction between employees in the private and public banking sectors. The results indicated no significant difference in the mean score of various aspects of job satisfaction; thus employees of both public and private sector banks portrayed similar levels of satisfaction in their organisation (Devi & Suneja, 2013).

Joshi (1998) on the other hand, found out that public and private sectors employee differ in their job satisfaction, work commitment and job involvement. With regard to learning institutions, a study indicated that if academic staff perceive lack of support for their work, they lack motivation to class room performance, and that lack of job satisfaction due to poor work conditions will push them to change institution or leave the profession (Smith, 2007). According to Smith, the teachers who were planning to leave the profession reported less

satisfaction and had a more negative attitude toward teaching as a career. Supporting this, was Khalid and Irshad's (2010) study which showed employees in the public sector organisations as being more satisfied and having a higher level of job security than their counterpart in the private sector organisations. Consequentially, the increased job security promotes greater organisational commitment. This study seeks to establish the relationship between university category and job satisfaction. To this end, a hypothesis was adopted and it stated: there is a significant difference in level of satisfaction of academic staff in public and private universities.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

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 Cross-sectional survey was used in this study. This method was deemed suitable because survey research employs various data collection methods like questionnaire, interview and document analysis which this study used. Mugenda (2008) asserts that cross-sectional survey studies help the researcher to establish whether significant associations among variables exist at some point in time. It was also appropriate because its purpose was to attempt to quantify the problem and comprehend how prevalent it was by looking for generalisable findings to a large population.

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 giving a total of six chartered public universities and three chartered private universities. The sampling method used was census, as proposed by Farwoodi, Enayati and Malekzadeh (2013) in which all the chartered universities in RVR were included. A total of eight chartered universities (six public and two private) participated in this study. The participating universities were labelled 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, in order to conceal their identities. All the universities, except the pilot university, were included in the study, with a view to attaining a high level of relevance and reliability. The study sample included deans (121) and management (16) who were purposefully selected and randomly selected lecturers (362) from both the private and public universities.

According to Kothari (2004), while deciding about the method of data collection to be used for the study, the researcher should keep in mind the type of data to be collected. This study used three research instruments to collect data: questionnaire, interview guide and document analysis guide. The collected data was then analysed using descriptive statistics in form of frequencies, percentages and means for quantitative data and the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) inferential statistics to determine whether there were any significant differences between the means of private and public university groups and staff job satisfaction levels. The independent-samples t-test (or independent t-test, for short) was used to compare the means between the variables of private or public university category and job satisfaction by testing the hypothesis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The number of deans, lecturers and management members who took part in the study were mainly from the chartered public universities with 108 (89.3%), 307 (84.8%), and 13 (81.25%) of respondents respectively. Those from the private chartered universities were a minority, 10.7%, 15.2% and 18.25% respectively as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Category of University**

Category	Deans		Lecturers		Management	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Chartered Public	108	89.3	307	84.8	13	81.25
Chartered Private	13	10.7	55	15.2	3	18.75
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>

The findings of the study established that members of the teaching staff from the private university were more satisfied compared to those in the public universities as shown in Table 3 which led to the acceptance of alternative hypothesis that predicted a significant difference in level of satisfaction of academic staff in public and private universities.

**Table 3. Means of University category**

Group Statistics						
	University	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Mean
Job satisfaction	Public	416	74.9261	10.42079	.68713	
	Private	68	77.1176	10.68760	1.29606	

The subsequent deduction was also correct since the results from the t-test confirmed that the academic staff from public universities were more satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts in the private universities as shown in Table 4. Levene's test for equality of variances revealed that it can assume the variances to be equal (sig. = 0.000). Further on, the second significance helped to conclude that there is a significant difference in the level of satisfaction of academic staff in private and public universities. This difference is statistically important ( $t(89) = 12.279$ ,  $p \leq 0.05$ ).

**Table 4. Independent sample t-test of equality of variances of university category****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
University Equal variances assumed	.503	0.012	12.279	89	0.000	6.706655	.54620	5.62126	7.79184.
University Equal variances not assumed			12.303	86.757	0.000	6.70655	.54509	5.62307	7.79003

A study by Tella, Ayeni and Popoola (2007) concluded that the academic staff of private sector universities were more satisfied with their jobs than academic staff of public sector universities. They concluded that absence of job satisfaction will become the reason for reduction in organisational commitment and less amount of job satisfaction will lead to switchover to other jobs. Due to lack of job satisfaction, sometimes employees may switch over from public to private sectors and private to public sectors. In another study with dissimilar results, Nimalathasan (2010) set out to establish the difference between academic professionals of public and private universities in Bangladesh with respect to overall job satisfaction. The findings were that academic professionals of the public universities in Bangladesh were more satisfied with their jobs than those of the private universities.

In Kenya, Private university creation is a recent development compared to the long history that public universities have. Therefore they have more numbers than private universities. In 1989, the Commission for Higher Education (CHE), established through the Universities Act of 1985 (Republic of Kenya, 2006), led to the formation of Universities Rules, to regulate and supervise private universities in Kenya. By the year 2011, twenty five private universities had been established (CHE, 2011). Indeed, university education has undergone a rapid expansion in Kenya, over a relatively short period of time, such that by the year 2013, there were twenty two chartered public universities, nine public university constituent colleges, seventeen chartered private universities, five private university constituent colleges; eleven universities with Letter of Interim Authority (LIA) and, two registered private universities (Commission for University Education, 2013).

Oketch (2003) went further and examined some of the trends, prospects as well as challenges to the emergence and establishment of private university education in Kenya. He identified and discussed five reasons for the recent blossoming of university education in Kenya, namely; demand, global trends such as the Education For All (EFA) agenda, success in secondary school participation, diminishing confidence in public universities and reduced government



monopoly. He proceeded to state that private universities promised to be symbols of successful innovation and illustrations “from which the decaying public universities can borrow a leaf” (p.28). The geographical location for the study, the Rift Valley Region of Kenya, has only three private universities, one of which was used for pilot study.

### **Implications to Research and Practice**

The study gives an insight on the university staff’s job satisfaction with respect to the category of university. The knowledge generated in this paper is useful to the policy makers in harmonising the two sectors in the education system towards providing high quality education to the country’s future workforce. It is also useful to the business ventures who have invested in education in planning and decision making.

### **CONCLUSION**

The number of deans, lecturers and members of the management who took part in the study were mainly from the chartered public universities with those from the private chartered universities being the minority. The chartered public universities staff were found to be more satisfied than their counterparts in the private universities.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The authors recommend benchmarking by public universities in private universities in order to borrow a leaf on how to raise job satisfaction levels. The study established that staff from public universities scored higher on job satisfaction than those in the private universities.

### **Future Research**

A replica research in other universities in Kenya should be done as a basis for comparison. Such a research will give insight on the issues of academic staff job satisfaction from different perspectives based on universities in other regions than the Rift Valley.

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