

**BITING THE BULLET OR STEERING CLEAR OFF ORGANISATIONAL
GROWTH: THE ESSENTIAL TENSIONS IN KNOWLEDGE CREATION
FOR ACADEMIC STAFF RETENTION POLICIES IN TWO PRIVATE
UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA**

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ABSTRACT: *Ever since Weber, a great deal of the conceptual history of organisational development may be read as a struggle between knowledge creation and the use of this knowledge for relevant policy making to resolve organisational challenges. On one hand, learning organisation creates opportunities for organisational learning to take place among individuals who work in the organisation and this makes the organisation a repository of knowledge. As Ehrenberg and Smith famously put it, ‘the knowledge and skills a worker has – which comes from education and training, including the training that experience brings – generate productive capital.’ On the other hand, there is a long holistic tradition that focuses on the complexity of the realities that the knowledge so created brings to management, in terms of making decisions for relevant policies on the basis of the knowledge created to aid organisational developmental systems. This paper takes a view that the learning organisation can therefore glean on behalf of organisations, spectacular successes in knowledge generation that are crucial for organisational growth and development in the 21st century. The paper argues that, the premises for policy making based on this repository of knowledge is quintessential conceptual frameworks for addressing problems to achieve organisational growth. Yet, organisations are still actively looking for ways out of the organisational learning-decision making tensions, often mentioning the concept ‘organisational interest’ as a way to deal with the conundrum. The paper examines the trajectories of knowledge creation in two private universities in the domain of work alienation, link these to the tensions that associate the realities of policy making to resolve the work alienation challenges of academic staff, and how the process relates to conceptions of organisational growth.*

KEY WORDS: work alienation; knowledge creation; learning organisation; organisational learning; group think; staff retention policies; bay of pigs decision model.

“Intelligent people, when assembled into an organisation, will tend toward collective stupidity” - Karl Albrecht (2003).

INTRODUCTION

The internationalisation and commodification of education in the 21st Century, especially at the tertiary level makes it urgent for universities to pursue learning as a

competitive advantage just like all organisations do. This notion portends an understanding of how learning contributes to successful innovation, which determines and supports organisations' success as will be discussed in this paper regarding the creation of knowledge from the issues that cause academic staff attrition in spite of the initial enthusiasm and motivations for these academics to pursue their careers, and the impetus for translating this knowledge into staff retention policies. Indeed, organisational learning (OL) which is a knowledge-based resource capability, has become important in the ever changing and fiercely competitive world (Edmondson, 2014; Carrillo & Gaimon, 2004), and it is classified as the process of acquiring, distributing, integrating, and creating information and knowledge among organisational members (Audia & Greve, 2021; Dixon, 1992; Huber, 1991). This is a process that involves key elements of learning such as the search for information, assimilating, developing and creating new knowledge that support knowledge productivity processes (Verdonschot, 2005). The concept suggests that organisations require competent people to learn and interpret new information (Birdthistle & Fleming, 2005; Casey, 2005), and must have capability to process information efficiently but also to create new knowledge faster than other competitors for strategic growth. In the context of this research, this then becomes an asset that can be used to contribute to the universities' innovation performance. OL is therefore argued in this paper to be one foundational source of competitive advantage and quintessential innovative efficiency required for the management of universities.

The paper stresses that organisational knowledge creation is a dynamic process that is a critical component of organisational learning (see Cheng et al., 2014; Loermans, 2002; Real et al., 2014), and contemplates consequently organisational knowledge creation theory, which takes issue with OL as a dynamic process of knowledge creation concerning tacit and explicit knowledge and relate these to the need for the universities' to use them as the platform to learn from the work alienation challenges of its academic staff and craft policies that are purposely directed at retaining them in the universities. In this sense, creating organisational knowledge may be seen as a spiral that is continuously repeated in four phases as discussed by Nonaka (1991; 1994) and Nonaka and Konno (1998). These phases are: socialization, which involves sharing tacit knowledge among individuals; externalization, that requires expressing tacit knowledge and its translation into comprehensible forms that can be understood by others; combination, which involves mixing a group's internal knowledge with knowledge from external sources and disseminating this knowledge among the members of organisations; and internalization. This is the conversion of explicit knowledge into the organisation's tacit knowledge.

These perspectives inure to human resource development (HRD) as a field of study and practice that is concerned with optimizing learning, development, and performance improvement at the individual, group, team, and organisation levels. And although predominant paradigms in HRD have included learning and performance, this paper acknowledges that both paradigms are not mutually exclusive hence, there is the need to integrate these positively to impact organisational systems. Swanson and Holton III (2001) have said that developing and promoting an organisation's learning capability is one approach that enable organisations to keep pace with the changing environment

– as in the context of this study, beating the competition that has become characteristic of tertiary education.

Per the above proposition, the paper argues that universities' need to recruit and maintain adequate academic staff suitably qualified and motivated to work effectively to achieve their remit of teaching, research and community service as reinforced by Mwadiani and Akpofu (2002), Pienaar and Bester (2008) and Rou (1992) that, the eminence of a university cannot surpass that of its academic staff. This view is underscored by Horwitz's (1991) idea that the essence of any university is in its ability to attract and retain first-class academic staff. However, Ssekamwa (1999) has long ago indicated that it is a challenge for academic institutions to retain a well-developed and motivated academic staff that is suitably qualified to work effectively due to the market rate of academic staff salaries, and the high cost of their development. The role of universities in the provision and development of manpower required for the social, economic and technological advancement of any nation necessitates this need and by their unique nature, universities are expected to be a repository of the most specialized and skilled intellectuals. They serve as storehouses of knowledge for nurturing the manpower needs of the nation and hence for satisfying the aspirations of the people for a good, progressive and humane society.

Central to realising universities' goals and objectives are the academic staff whose roles are crucial and their number, quality and effectiveness makes the difference in university education and the functioning of the wider society. However, this paper believes that it is not enough to just recruit skilled staff. Once the university captures skilled employees, it behoves on it to adopt policies that will assure employees of the return on their investment to close the back door and prevent them from walking out (see Guenole, Ferrar & Feinzig, 2017). Furthermore, employees are likely to remain with an organisation if they: believe that the organisation shows more interest and concern for them; know what is expected of them; are given a role that fits their capabilities, and; receive regular positive feedback and recognition (Samuel & Chipunza, 2013). Besides, employees feel comfortable remaining longer in positions when they are well informed on relevant issues concerning the organisation and their well-being. Pienaar and Bester (2008) have said that academic staff turnover has several disadvantages such as the costs of decreased organisational loyalty, the loss of knowledge and experience, and the increase in time and cost of training new academics. Tetey (2006) has also argued that when academics move to other organisations, their departure means that the synergies that come with a group of academics working together is diminished, and the impact and scope of knowledge production and dissemination is lessened. So, Hugo (2010) affirms that academic staff recruitment and retention is a challenge across the globe with the situation in many African countries being particularly urgent. Hugo further states that leaders of African Universities acknowledge the devastating impact of staff shortage on the goals of universities and advocates for policy intervention to stymie the incidence of inadequate human resources on the continent and to uphold and protect the quality of intellectual life in Africa.

In discussing these issues as emanated from the research data, the paper adopts organisational learning theory which has been explained previously in this paper to be concerned with how learning takes place in organisations as its analytical framework. The theory focuses on collective learning but takes into account the proposition made by Argyris (1992) that organisations do not perform the actions that produce the learning. Rather, it is individual members of the organisation who behave in ways that lead to learning, although organisations can create conditions that facilitate such learning. At this point, the paper distinguishes ‘organisational learning’ from ‘the learning organisation’ as the two are sometimes confused to be the same. Harrison (2000) has pointed out that too often it is assumed that the terms “the learning organisation” and “organisational learning” are synonymous but they are not. Easterby-Smith and Araujo (1999) have explained further that the literature on OL focuses on the ‘observation and analysis of the processes of individual and collective learning in organisations, whereas the learning organisation literature is concerned with using specific diagnostic and evaluative tools which can help to identify, promote and evaluate the quality of the learning processes inside organisations. In other words, OL is about how people learn in organisations and the learning organisation concept is about what organisations should do to facilitate the learning of their members. Thus, the concept of OL recognises that the way in which learning takes place in organisations is affected by the context of the organisation and its culture. By implication, the paper argues that OL is associated with the development of new knowledge or insights that have the potential to influence behaviour within the organisation, and has been defined by Marsick (1994) as a process of ‘coordinated systems change, with mechanisms built in for individuals and groups to access, build and use organisational memory, structure and culture to develop long-term organisational capacity.’ This learning takes place within the wide institutional context of inter-organisational relationships and “refers broadly to an organisation’s acquisition of understanding, know-how, techniques and practices of any kind and by any means” (Argyris & Schon, 1996). It is important to emphasize however that OL takes place when effective processes and systems develops *pari passu* with individual and OL such that the two parts link cohesively together.

Child (1997) developed the concept of strategic choice in OL and suggested that in making choices about their priorities, actions, structures and policies, organisations evaluate information from their internal and external environment in order to identify opportunities and problems. This encourages a learning process that proceeds towards action and outcomes through debate, negotiation and the exercise of choice. This leads to OL outcomes that contributes to the development of good policies for organisational growth and development. This is in accordance with one of the basic principles of human resource management, namely: that it is necessary to invest in people in order to develop the intellectual capital required by the organisation and thus increase its stock of knowledge and skills. Ehrenberg and Smith (1994) have argued that, human capital theory indicates the knowledge and skills a worker has – which comes from education and training, including the training that experience brings. Pettigrew and Whipp (1991) also believe that the focus of OL should be on developing organisational capability, and this means paying attention to the intricate and often unnoticed or hidden learning that takes place and influences that occurs within the organisation, where ‘hidden learning’ is acquired and developed in the normal course of work by people

acting as individuals and, importantly, in groups or ‘communities of practice’ (Wenger & Snyder, 2000). These organisational trajectories are reflected in the data for this study, and in this paper, opens up new opportunities for understanding the relationship between organisational knowledge creation and the tensions that are consequent to it, but prior to making decisions for relevant policies to resolve the challenges of organisations. In the context of this paper, these are expressed in work alienation challenges of the two private universities involved in the study and the creation of knowledge to inform policies required for staff retention.

Statement of the problem

Private universities in Ghana are confronted with a myriad of teething challenges including work alienation which leads to the attrition of highly qualified academic staff such that these universities mostly operate with inadequate staff. Varghese (2004) has found that reliance on part-time academic staff is a common feature of private universities and some even operate without any regular staff. He argues that most of the senior academic staff used for accreditation purposes are either on sabbatical or on part-time appointment because they are in full-time employment by public universities which have better conditions of service for them. Consequently, the private universities mostly end up appointing full-time academic staff who do not have Ph.D. qualifications which is the minimum degree for appointment required by the National Accreditation Board (NAB) in Ghana, and the few Ph.D. holders who are employed by these universities do not stay for long. This gloomy spectre of academic staffing in private universities seeks to compromise their remit and it provides the *raison d’etre* for these universities to learn from these experiences and develop policies to resolve this teething issue of qualified and well-endowed staff attrition.

Purpose of the study

The study sought to investigate the learning experiences of two private universities regarding the factors that influence academic staff to choose their careers and the work alienation challenges that de-motivates them to leave the job, and show the need for management to use the knowledge obtained from the learning to develop appropriate policies to retain their staff.

Research objectives

The objectives of the study are:

1. To investigate the factors that influence academic staff in the two private universities in Ghana to make their substantive career choices.
2. To find out the work alienation challenges that de-motivate academic staff to leave their jobs in the two private universities in Ghana, and ways that management can retain these essential staff.

Research questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors that influence academic staff of the two private universities to make their substantive career choices?

2. What are the work alienation challenges that de-motivate academic staff to leave their jobs in the two private universities in Ghana and what can management do to retain these essential staff?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical framework for this paper is established on two key concepts: the influences of academic staff career choices and; work alienation challenges, academic staff attrition and strategies for retention.

Influences of academic staff career choices

Kebaetse (2016) has said that the influences of career choice and consequently, recruitment and retention in academia are defined by an entire employment package which includes rewards and benefits from the job like pay and other fringe benefits, intrinsic aspects of the job like teaching and research (for academics), job security, work organisation, autonomy, progression and the working environment. This paper believes that, the more attractive the overall package, the more likely it will attract applicants and retain employees. In order to retain the best talents, policies aimed at satisfying employees' needs have to be used regardless of the size of the organisation. This behoves on the canon that, retaining skilled employees is beneficial to organisations in gaining a competitive advantage over other competitors as argued by Hong et al. (2012) in terms of producing high morale and satisfied employees who will provide better service and enhanced productivity.

Beck (2001) has then identified some determinants of employee career choice and emphasize that employees among other things prefer careers that provide them with opportunities to take initiative, and loyalty to one's professional growth. Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundila (2005) have also named certain elements that are important for decisions regarding career choice to include opportunities for: employees to contribute to the corporate vision and mission; a climate of trust; improving their skills level; developing and growing through management training, and effective leadership; articulation and frequent communication of needs; clarification of roles and responsibilities to accelerate learning and contribution; and good salaries.

Work alienation challenges, academic staff attrition and strategies for retention

The literature on staff retention emphasise remuneration, staff development, work environment, performance management, and flexible time as important areas that management has to pay attention to. In this vein, Haider et al. (2015) has showed that performance appraisal, training and development, financial and health benefits are significant factors that influence employee retention and the absence of these de-motivates employees while on the job. In addition, Azeez (2017) has also said that employee recognition for rewards and compensation, the work environment and job design are highly significant motivators.

Kundu, Mor, and Gahlawat (2020) have added another dimension to this perspective and argue that employees dissatisfaction with salaries, performance rewards, internal communication, training and development, and performance appraisal are *sene qua non* to their de-motivation levels and consequently their decision to quit the job. Garcia,

Area, and Tag (2015) have further argued that satisfaction with employment contracts affects workers intentions to retain their jobs. This depends among other things, on remuneration obtained and satisfaction with job security. Mwiria et al., (2006) have added that various factors in the work environment leads to the exodus of teaching staff in Kenyan universities. Various researchers attribute the phenomenon of work alienation to the following courses: Micheal and Crispen (2009) have attributed it to a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors such as training and development, challenging and interesting work, freedom for innovative thinking and job security; Papa (2018) pinned it to trainings, promotions and rewards policies; Coff (1997) to dissatisfied, underpaid or unmotivated staff; Strebler et al., (2006) argues that it is the result of factors like dissatisfaction with non-pecuniary elements of the work such as relations with manager, colleagues, perceptions of excessive workload, and unfair work practices and processes, increase the likelihood of leaving the sector.

Shuck et al. (2018) have consequently argued that these concerns call for good human resource policies that creates a synergy between career development opportunities, employee's motivation and the intention to stay on the job. Such policies are best achieved through OL which Chiva, Ghauri, and Alegre (2014) defines as the process through which organisations change or modify their mental models, rules, processes or knowledge, to maintain or improve their performance, and these are attained through the adaption of organisational processes as pertaining to targeted activities (see Templeton, Lewis, & Snyder, 2002). This helps organisations operating in unpredictable environments to respond to unforeseen circumstances more quickly, because OL is perceived as a management task that involves controlling and planning. Its key elements include organisational strategic creation, and internalization of knowledge, and it requires the management of information obtained from targeted activities to be used to create positive impact on performance (see Cheng et al., 2014). This shows that OL is an important organisational means for continuous improvement. Thus, due to its nature as a process of developing new perspectives, OL is a source for the development of new organisational knowledge for policy making.

METHODOLOGY

The study was done in two private universities in Ghana, namely: Abibiman and Kwaebibirim University Colleges (these are synonyms intended to conform to the ethical consideration of anonymity that is associated with this research). These two universities were used for the study because of the high rate of faculty attrition they face. This was a cross-sectional study that used the survey method to collect data (see Schutt, 2009). The study took a quantitative approach with two sets of questionnaires: one with open-ended questions and the other with closed-ended questions. The open-ended questionnaire sought to obtain data that were expressed in non-numerical terms (Amini, 2005) while the closed ended questions aimed at measuring and analysing variables with statistical procedures (Schutt, 2009), including correlational analysis that sought to establish relations between the independent variables and job retention (Schutt, 2009; Amini, 2005).

Population, sample size and sampling techniques

The population for the research was made up of the academic staff with a total population of 257 and the management of the two private universities. The convenience sampling technique was used to select 87 academic staff because the data collection was only possible if the participants were willing to be engaged in the study and hence was difficult to use probability selection methods (see Schutt, 2009). Furthermore, 3 participants from management in each of the universities (totalling 6) were selected using the purposive sampling because they have responsibility for the respective universities human resource policies and their implementation, which are core aspects of the study. Consequently, 93 respondents were used for the research in total.

Instrumentation and data collection procedure

The instruments used for the research were two survey-based questionnaires with one containing open-ended questions and the other close-ended questions. The researcher established face validity by evaluating the relevance, wording and clarity of the items in the instrument, and content validity was established by ensuring that the items on the questionnaires conformed to the study's objectives and conceptual framework. The instruments were pre-tested for reliability per the multi-item variables on questionnaire via the Cronbach's alpha coefficient reliability test at Denkyebour University (also a synonym). This yielded a result of 0.96 which was above the established 0.8 threshold as argued by Bryman (2012), and it showed that the instruments had a good internal consistency. The Table 1 below shows the results of test run on items using SPSS.

Table 1: Reliability statistics

Reliability statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No of Items
.964	.990	16

Source: Author (2021).

Data for the study was collected using questionnaires which were administered to the sampled respondents in the two universities involved in the study. These were anonymously completed. The questionnaire with the open-ended questions were served on and completed by the 6 sampled management staff, and the one with close-ended type of questions were served on and completed by the 87 sampled academic staff.

Measurements and data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used for the data analysis. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was used for analysis at three levels i.e. univariate, bivariate and multivariate. At univariate level, data analysis based on simple statistics such as frequency counts, arithmetic means, standard deviations, relative frequencies (or percentages) from frequency tables and descriptive statistics. At bivariate and multivariate level, job retention was correlated with respective terms of service using

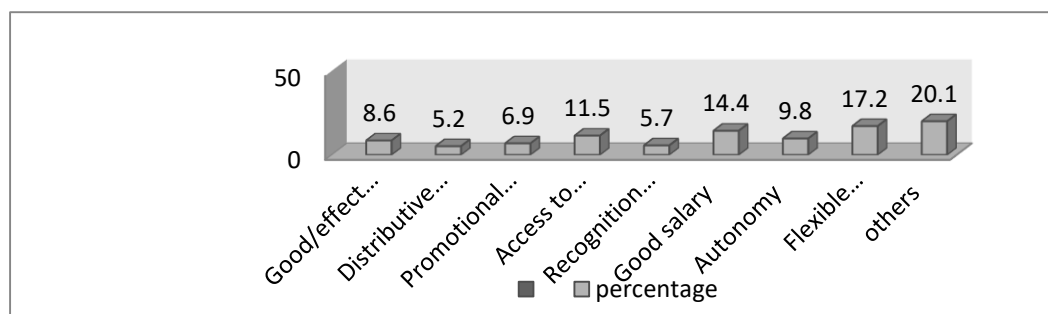
ANOVA and Pearson's methods as appropriate. Fisher's ANOVA was used to analyze the variance between variables. That is, analysis of how a numerical dependent variable varied with a categorical independent variable having many categories while Pearson's correlation analysis was used to analyze the correlation between two numerical variables or continuous variables. Data from open ended questionnaire items was grouped under broad themes and converted into percentages which were then interpreted in relation to the data obtained through the structured interviews.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data encompasses the determinants of career choice for academic staff, and work alienation challenges that de-motivates academic staff in their chosen career from the two universities. The findings were based on the research objectives and are discussed thus:

Factors that influenced academic staff to make their substantive career choice

The first objective of the study sought to investigate the factors that influenced academic staff to pursue their present career. The data is presented in Figure 1 (below):



Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Figure 1: Influences of career choice by academic staff

From Figure 1, the main reason why most of the respondents entered the academia is their passion and opportunity to teach and have time to conduct research as indicated by 20.1% of the respondents. The second most important reason why people go into teaching in private universities is the flexible working conditions (17.2%). There seem to be a belief that the three core functions of lecturers (i.e. teaching, research and community service) will provide space and extra time for lecturers to attend to other personal interests. Other important concern is the prestige attached to tertiary teaching and job security, as well as good and effective leadership. Good salary was also a major concern for the respondents as only 14.4% were motivated by good salaries. Thus, against the background that rest of the respondents (85.6%) expressed dissatisfaction with their salaries and other conditions of service, the data suggests that the respondents would not have chosen academia as their career given the levels of salaries alone. These suggest that despite their passion for the career and the flexible working conditions, the

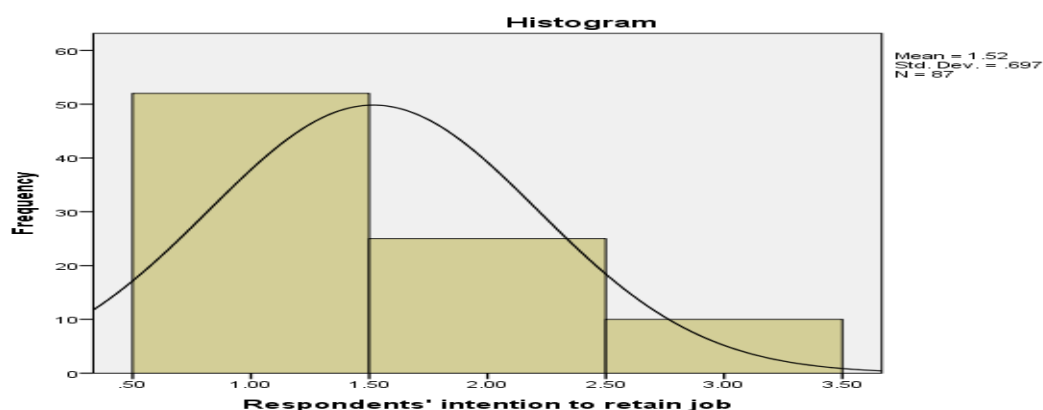
salary levels are major problems to academic staff who therefore do not have intentions to remain on the job as illustrated by Table 2:

Table 2: Respondents' intentions to retain their jobs

Statistics	Value
Mean	1.52
95%confidence interval: Upper	1.67
Lower	1.37
Median	1.00
Standard deviation	0.70
Range	2.00
Skewness	1.00

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

According to Table 2, respondents' intentions to retain their jobs were low (mean = 1.52, median = 1.00) with opinions ranging from 1.67 to 1.37 at the 95 percent confidence level. Secondly, there was similarity in respondents' opinions regarding their intentions to retain their jobs (standard deviation = 0.70) suggesting that respondents' views regarding their intentions to retain their jobs do not differ so much from one respondent to another. The difference in opinion as regards low and high intentions to retain jobs was at 2.00. This is supported by the standard deviation of 0.70. Table 2 also shows a skew, which suggests that the respondents' opinions were positively distributed (Skew = 1.00). This means that their opinions were not centrally located. Figure 2 which is a frequency histogram and curve has been generated from the data to illustrate the normal distribution of respondents' views regarding their intentions to stay on the job.



Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Figure 2: Respondents' intention to retain job curve

De-motivators of academic staff in their chosen careers

Table 3 however shows that in spite of respondents' intentions not to remain on the job are as a result of the low levels of salary and other working conditions, they were however satisfied with the various aspects of job.

Table 3: Lecturers' satisfaction with aspects of work

Variable	Categor y	Frequenc y	Percentag e	Mea n	Standar d deviation
Satisfaction with job	SS	34	39.1	2.51	1.12
	S	40	46.0		
	D	0	0.0		
	SD	0	0.0		
	UN	13	14.9		
Satisfaction with work environment	SS	15	17.2	2.26	1.08
	S	52	59.8		
	D	11	12.6		
	SD	0	0.0		
	UN	9	10.3		
Satisfaction with salary	SS	10	11.5	2.6	1.00
	S	25	28.7		
	D	43	49.4		
	SD	5	5.7		
	UN	4	4.6		
Satisfaction with other fringe benefit	SS	10	11.5	2.70	1.02
	S	25	28.7		
	D	40	46.0		
	SD	5	5.7		
	UN	7	8.0		
Satisfaction with promotion criteria	SS	7	8.0	2.6	0.72
	S	25	28.7		
	D	50	57.5		
	SD	0	0.0		
	UN	5	5.7		
Satisfaction with career progression	SS	10	11.5	2.32	1.14
	S	32	36.8		
	D	15	17.2		
	SD	13	14.9		
	UN	17	19.5		
Satisfaction with assessment/performance appraisal	SS	20	23	2.94	1.33
	S	40	46.0		
	D	12	13.8		
	SD	9	10.3		
	UN	6	6.9		

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

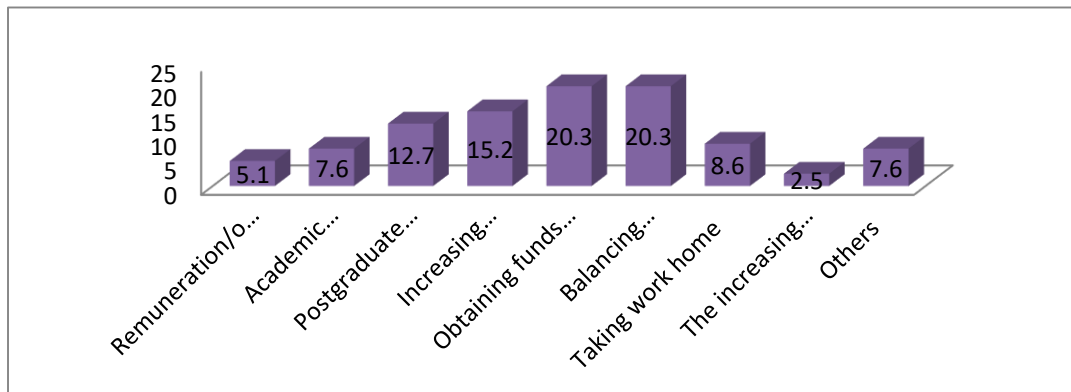
Key: SS=strongly satisfied, S=Satisfied, D= Dissatisfied, SD=strongly dissatisfied, UN=Undecided

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents are satisfied with their jobs as 39.1% of the respondents are strongly satisfied while 46% are satisfied with their jobs. Only around 14.9% were undecided and 0% dissatisfied. Job satisfaction is a person's attitude

regarding his or her job and work content. Contentment (or lack of it) arises out of the interplay of employee's positive and negative feelings toward his or her work. This is a collection of attitudes about different aspects of the job and its context. Research indicates that employees' satisfaction levels will vary depending on the facet of the job being examined (Robbins & Judge, 2011). Furthermore, Table 3 shows that respondents are also satisfied with their work environments. The work environment in this study is defined as the conditions of work. This could be the office spaces available, their relationship with co-workers and supervisors and the flexibility of the rules of engagement. Regarding this category, the data shows that 17.2% are very satisfied while 59.8% are satisfied. However, 12.6% are dissatisfied and 10.3% were undecided. This indicates an overwhelming endorsement of the nature of the environments in which lecturers in the 2 private universities in Ghana work.

Consistent with Figure 1, Table 3 further shows that respondents' level of satisfaction with their salaries is rather on the low side and hence, they are not satisfied with it. The data show that close to half of the 87 academic staff (49.4%) are dissatisfied with their salaries, while 5.7% are very dissatisfied. Only 11.5% are very satisfied with their salaries. Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011) have argued that monetary compensation is one of the most significant variables in explaining job satisfaction partly because according to Cúlibrk et al. (2018), salaries do not only assist people to attain their basic needs, but are also instrumental in satisfying the higher-level needs of people. The data further indicates that the extent of satisfaction with other job-related benefits such as a company car, health insurance and children's school fees payment policies is not encouraging. Only 11.5% are very satisfied while 46% expressed dissatisfaction with these conditions. The data point to a situation where the staff like their jobs very much but are quite unhappy about their rewards in terms of salaries and other job benefits. Secondly, the data shows that respondents are not satisfied with promotion issues in their universities. In this category, 57.7% of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction. However, 8% said that they were very satisfied and 28.7% remain satisfied with the promotion criteria. However, 5.7% are undecided. In order to adhere to good promotion practices and measure performance against set targets, goal-oriented organisations regularly conduct performance appraisal. This provides a good feedback to the employees on how well they are on track to meeting the corporate objectives of the organisation and provide a basis for promotion. Consequently, the study revealed that 46% of the respondents are satisfied with the performance appraisal processes at their respective universities. But 17.2% are dissatisfied with the rate at which these institutions recognized or give them the opportunity to grow their careers.

Figure 3 shows that the greatest challenge that the lecturers face are obtaining funds for research and balancing research with teaching. Other challenges include infrastructural inadequacies. These include inadequate office space, computers, textbooks, and internet facilities.



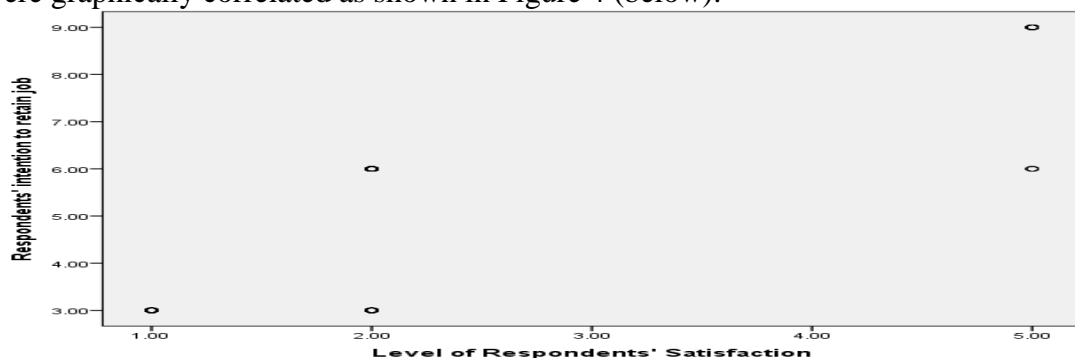
Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Figure 3: Challenges facing academic staff.

Figure 3 shows that the topmost problem facing the academic staff as revealed by the analysis was balancing research or researching to inform teaching and obtaining funds for research. Those with these views represent 20.3%. This was followed by increasing students' number (15.3%).

Employment satisfaction and job retention test

To test whether satisfaction with employment affects job retention, the two indices were graphically correlated as shown in Figure 4 (below):



Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Figure 4: Correlation between lecturers' level of satisfaction with employment and intentions to retain their jobs

The scatter/dot graph (above) suggests that there is a positive correlation between satisfaction with employment contract and intentions to retain the job. To confirm this, the two indices, job retention and satisfaction were correlated using Pearson's Linear Correlation index which was computed as shown in Table 5:

Table 5: Pearson's correlation co-efficient between job retention and respondents' level of satisfaction with employment

<i>Correlations</i>			
		Level of Respondents' Satisfaction	Respondents' intention to retain job
Level of Respondents' Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.838**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	87	87
Respondents' intention to retain job	Pearson Correlation	.838**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	87	87

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 shows Pearson's correlation coefficient results for job retention for lecturers and their level of satisfaction with $r = .838$ which is positive and has a significance value ($p = 0.000$) which is less than 0.01. This means that there is a positive correlation between the respondents' level of satisfaction and intentions to retain jobs. Thus, intentions of academic staff to stay on their jobs are positively co-related with the level of satisfaction with their employment in the selected private universities at 1 (70%) level of significance.

Reasons for entering academia and intentions to stay on the job**Table 6: ANOVA results showing how their intention to stay in the job varied with their reasons for entering academia***Multiple Comparisons*

Dependent Variable: Respondents' intention to retain job

Bonferroni test

(I) Factors that influenced Respondents' Decision	(J) Factors that influenced Respondents' Decision	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	ig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Good and Effective Leadership	Distributive Justice	.00000	.40254	1.000	-1.2176	1.2176
	Promotional Opportunities	.00000	.38188	.000	-1.1551	1.1551
	Access to Training Programs	-.75000	.33679	.431	-1.7687	.2687
	Recognition/Prestige	-3.00000*	.40254	.000	-4.2176	-1.7824
	Good salary	-4.50000*	.33679	.000	-5.5187	-3.4813
Distributive Justice	Good and Effective Leadership	.00000	.40254	1.000	-1.2176	1.2176
	Promotional Opportunities	.00000	.42219	1.000	-1.2770	1.2770
	Access to Training Programs	-.75000	.38188	.794	-1.9051	.4051
	Recognition/Prestige	-3.00000*	.44096	.000	-4.3338	-1.6662
	Good salary	-4.50000*	.38188	.000	-5.6551	-3.3449
Promotional Opportunities	Good and Effective Leadership	.00000	.38188	1.000	-1.1551	1.1551
	Distributive Justice	.00000	.42219	1.000	-1.2770	1.2770
	Access to Training Programs	-.75000	.36004	.606	-1.8390	.3390
	Recognition/Prestige	-3.00000*	.42219	.000	-4.2770	-1.7230
	Good salary	-4.50000*	.36004	.000	-5.5890	-3.4110

Access to Training Programs	Good and Effective Leadership	.75000	.33679	.431	-.2687	1.7687
	Distributive Justice	.75000	.38188	.794	-.4051	1.9051
	Promotional Opportunities	.75000	.36004	.606	-.3390	1.8390
	Recognition/Prestige	-2.25000*	.38188	.000	-3.4051	-1.0949
	Good salary	-3.75000*	.31180	.000	-4.6931	-2.8069
Recognition/Prestige	Good and Effective Leadership	3.00000*	.40254	.000	1.7824	4.2176
	Distributive Justice	3.00000*	.44096	.000	1.6662	4.3338
	Promotional Opportunities	3.00000*	.42219	.000	1.7230	4.2770
	Access to Training Programs	2.25000*	.38188	.000	1.0949	3.4051
	Good salary	-1.50000*	.38188	.003	-2.6551	-.3449
Good salary	Good and Effective Leadership	4.50000*	.33679	.000	3.4813	5.5187
	Distributive Justice	4.50000*	.38188	.000	3.3449	5.6551
	Promotional Opportunities	4.50000*	.36004	.000	3.4110	5.5890
	Access to Training Programs	3.75000*	.31180	.000	2.8069	4.6931
	Recognition/Prestige	1.50000*	.38188	.003	.3449	2.6551

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Table 6 shows that good salary, effective leadership and distributive justice has the highest mean with access to training programmes following and then recognition/prestige next. The significant difference with an asterisk (*) shows the highest means.

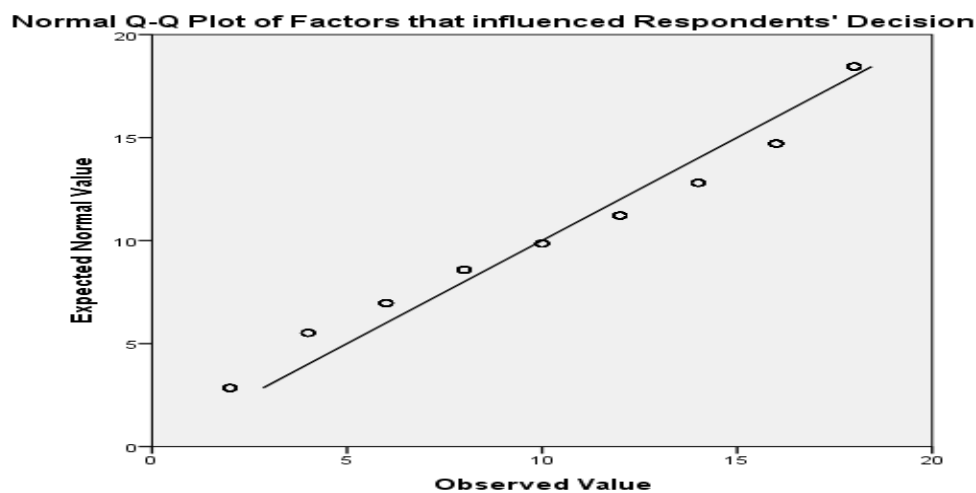
Table 7: Test of homogeneity of variances showing groups' influence on dependent variable.*Test of Homogeneity of Variances*

Respondents' intention to retain job

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
74.172	5	81	.000

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Table 7 above is a test of homogeneity of variance which shows that the value under 'sig' is less than .05, the two variances are significantly different and the groups do not have equal variance on the dependent variable. The distribution is shown with the Q-Q plot below:



Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Figure 5: Q-Q plot showing factors that influenced respondents' decision to join academia.

The straight line in the diagram shown above represents the data on respondents' decision to join academia is normally distributed. The actual data is represented by the circles plotted along the line. The circles almost fall perfectly on the line, a good indication that the data is normally distributed.

Table 8: One-Way ANOVA results showing challenges faced by respondents' with their intention to retain their job.

<i>ANOVA</i>				
Respondents' intention to retain job				
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
Between Groups	330.817	4	82.704	15.717
Within Groups	44.700	82	.545	
Total	375.517	86		

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

Table 8 shows a significant difference between the groups. With an f value of (15.717) and a significance value of (.000), this implies that there is a significance difference between their challenges and their intention to retain the job as the significance level is less than (.05). Also, their challenges do not have equal variance on retention since the sig. value (.006) is less than (.05). This is shown by the Levene's test in Table 9 below:

Table 9: Test of homogeneity of variances

Respondents' intention to retain job			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
3.917	4	82	.006

Source: Fieldwork data (2021).

DISCUSSIONS

The study revealed that the majority of respondents are satisfied with both their jobs and the working environments. However, they are not so satisfied with their salaries. This means that most of the employees still work for their institutions because of some other internal motivations. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Index was used to determine the significance of the relationship between lecturers' satisfaction with their job and their intention to retain the job. The study found out that there was a positive significant correlation between level of satisfaction and lecturers' intentions to retain their jobs. This implies that lecturers who are satisfied with their employment contracts have high intentions of retaining their jobs. This is because as satisfaction with the employment contract increases, intentions to retain the job also increase. The logic of this point is that there must first be satisfaction with the employment contract if a sustainable employment relationship between academic staff and their employers is to exist as stated in the theoretical assertions of Boyle (2000 a & b) that contracts bring about sustainable employment relationships between employers and employees. Also, ANOVA test was used to show how lecturers' intention to retain their jobs varied with their reasons for entering academia. The study showed that good salary, effective

leadership and distributive justice are the more reasons why people enter academia and has a great influence on their staying or leaving.

In terms of the challenges that de-motivates academic staff, the study revealed that the greatest challenges that lecturers face is obtaining fund for research and researching to inform teaching. Other challenges have been increasing student's number, postgraduate training and taking work home among others. An ANOVA test presented in Table 8 and the homogeneity test in Table 9 showed that there was no significant difference between the challenges faced by lecturers' and their intention to retain their job. Concerning the intention of employees to retain their job, the data show that 59.8% wanted to retain while 11.5% will quit if they had a better offer elsewhere, but as much as 28.7% were not sure. A study by Johnsrud and Rosser (2002) showed a relationship between faculty members' perceptions of their work life and retention. The data further shows that such perceptions affect morale which, in turn, has an impact on the decision to quit their careers or institutions. Furthermore, most of the respondents were not sure about whether or not their universities have a recruitment and retention policy. The respondents were however sure about the existence of retention policies and strategies but question the levels of transparency associated with these.

The study has revealed that most of the respondents derive their job satisfaction from the passion they have towards teaching. Some have also indicated that their relationship with co-workers and opportunity to interact with other people are the factors that give them satisfaction towards their work. The study again showed that even though most of the respondents do not want to leave academia, their commitment to their institutions was very low. Thus, the number of academic staff who would leave their current institution and those that are uncertain make up 40.2% of the respondents. These figures make it imperative for the universities to learn from the experiences of the staff and craft policies to reduce the work alienation challenges in order to retain their staff.

Schilling and Kluge (2009) have made a systematic analysis of tensions (or barriers) that associate such organisational learning and have suggested some practical ways of overcoming them. This paper defines these tensions as those factors that either prevent organisational learning or, at least, impede their application for policy making. It is instructive therefore at this point for management of the universities to identify and develop strategies to overcome the tensions in order to realise the benefits of OL. In this regard, it is important to emphasise OL and the learning organisation as constructs that obtains from metaphorical thinking that organisations learn like an organism. In this metaphor, knowledge about individual learning explains the hypothetical construct of OL as espoused by Maier et al. (2003) that: "If individual learning is regarded as a basis of organisational learning, learning processes studied in psychology may indicate ways to promote organisational learning". This hypothesis takes issue with Senge's (1999) view that at the heart of the learning organisation is metanoia (or a shift of mind) of all employees, especially of all managers in order to make suitable decisions to resolve challenges. This suggests that a learning organisation is a place where people are continually discovering how they create their reality to change the organisation. Thus, the rationale of becoming a learning organisation is the quest for cognitive, emotional and spiritual learning able to produce that metanoia. Senge (1999) believes

that the learning organisation is essentially an organisation that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future. For such an organisation, it is not enough merely to survive. This view leads to the very heart of this paper which is illustrated with a law espoused by Karl Albrecht (2003) that: “intelligent people, when assembled into an organisation, will tend toward collective stupidity”. This paper reinforces this view by arguing that the collective incapacity of the two universities to learn from their experiences of staff turnover has been optional to the extent that the intelligent people who occupy management positions in these two universities allow it to happen. Thus, it is optional to the extent that management become permissive and look on while their crucial staff get recruited and leave the universities in no time without crafting suitable policies to contain this phenomenon. The main reason for such attitudes emanates from the financial implications for human resource policies which makes the business thinking of management to shift steadily toward the impersonal and inhumane view of managing these academic staff. At the extreme of this view, management regards the staff simply as assets that can always be replaced.

This leads to Albrecht (2003) classification of two kinds of collective stupidity i.e., the learned kind and the designed-in kind. Learned stupidity happens in organisations where people are not authorized to think, or at least they feel this way. Designed-in stupidity happens when the organisational structure and rules make it difficult or impossible for people to think creatively, constructively, and independently. Both kinds are used in this paper to explain managements’ attitude to making policies to reduce academic staff attrition in the two universities. Furthermore, Janis (1982) has long ago studied the phenomenon of collective stupidity at the group level which he calls *Group Think*. He argues that this happens when a group falls into an artificial consensus that blocks its ability to think creatively and to analyse a certain problem in its complexity. Extending this view, Albrecht (2003) has explained that there is a natural tendency of organisations to increase its entropy per the second law of thermodynamics, which is a measure of irreversibility in natural processes, and reflects the degree of disorder in evolving closed systems. The reverse of entropy is syntropy which Albrecht (2003) defines as the coming together of people, ideas, resources, systems, and leadership in such a way as to fully capitalize on the possibilities of each. Hence, syntropy is a characteristic of intelligent organisations, i.e. organisations able to learn from both their successes, challenges and failures. Management of these universities in this regard must gather the explicit knowledge that they identify with the experiences of the dissatisfied academic staff as relevant to the staff retention domain to extend and reframe their tacit knowledge by verbalizing and documenting these experiences to create knowledge to inform policies towards retaining their critical academic staff. On this count, management is supposed to display agility (Harvey & De Meuse, 2021), ‘bite the bullet’ and work towards achieving syntropy so as to reverse the tensions inherent in their organisational knowledge creation dynamics to craft appropriate policies to retain the academic staff.

The Bay of Pigs decision framework and making sense of organisational learning:

The conclusion

The data has shown that good remuneration, pleasant co-worker relationship coupled with good working condition play an important role in achieving lecturers' job satisfaction which directly reflects in their intention to remain committed to an institution. Per the findings of this study, it is unbiased to conclude that job satisfaction has a relationship with academic staff's commitment both to their career and the institution they work for. However, this can be achieved if there is transparency in the reward system, a clear-cut pension and if the rewards or compensation meets the aspirations of the beneficiaries. These exigencies must constitute the focal point for learning in the two universities to formulate relevant policies to resolve the staff alienation challenges. In this regard, the paper draws on the idea from Gherardi and Nicolini (2003) that, OL is a metaphor that involves the concepts of learning and organisation, and argues that these make it possible to explore organisations as though they were subjects that learn, process information, and reflect on their experiences. This makes it possible for organisations to possess a stock of knowledge, skills, and expertise that can be translated into appropriate policies to smoother growth and progress. Besides, and in addition to learning organisation, OL help to explain the interactions between different organisational knowledge fields, and the relationships between these knowledge fields and the organisation's performances. Consequently, OL in the two universities must show a learning process that takes place through social interactions across both part-time and permanent academic staff, management and other organisational levels. This process will enable the two universities to cope faster and better with the tensions in the knowledge creation trajectories that seek to undermine their relevance in the rather competitive tertiary education world.

Secondly, the paper concludes that organisations learn regardless of whether they apply systematic learning approaches, but this does not suggest that the approaches lead to high effectiveness of organisational processes. Rather, inadequate learning processes are likely to result in misleading and gloomy implications such as staff alienation. Organisations therefore have to depend on systematic approaches to glean the ability for systematic learning with a view of staying relevant and competitive, and such approaches can be found in the OL discipline. This suggests that through OL, the two universities will be enabled to reflect on consequences of the academic staff and related behaviours, better understand their organisational environments, and help to improve decision making and formulate appropriate staff retention policies. This reveals OL as quintessential competitive urge – a relevant tool for performance.

Consequently, the lessons for the subject of this paper (which focuses on making relevant decisions to inform organisational policy to resolve staff alienation challenges) can best be drawn from the intriguing case study of the *Bay of Pigs* decision made by President John F. Kennedy in consultation with his cabinet and advisors in 1961. According to the narrative, Kennedy's team was split into two opposite parts, with one part supporting the United States invasion of Cuba by a group of expatriates, while the second part opposed that idea. After several debates, the part that advocated for the invasion was able to tilt Kennedy's thinking in that direction, and began to put pressure

on the opposite part. The final decision on the issue was determined predominantly by this social pressure and not on an open-minded debate. Consequently, the mission based on the social pressure determined decision failed, and the catastrophic consequence has remained associated with the Kennedy's image as a leader. This Bay of Pigs decision model is extrapolated to illustrate the tensions in the trajectories of creating knowledge to inform policy in order to resolve the academic staff alienation challenges in the two universities. The tensions here is shown in the interplay between the reality of the challenges faced by academic staff in performing their duties and the financial pressures associated with policies to resolve these challenges. The financial pressures constitute a formidable countervailing force that seems to sway managements' decisions to resolving the academic staff alienation challenges that face these two universities and may have catastrophic consequences on the relevance of the universities, their images and the images of their management on a scale that is similar to that of Kennedy in the Bay of Pigs experience. So, the paper affirms that organisational learning outcomes is a core factor in the development of organisations' resource-based capabilities as explicated by one of the basic principles of human resource management – that, it is necessary for an organisation to invest in its people in order to develop the intellectual capital required by this organisation so as to increase its stock of knowledge and skills.

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