

An Assessment of the Relationship between Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement among Teachers in Nakuru North Sub-county

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Abstract: *In the past, organizations have been trying to motivate their employees so they can together achieve positive results, but today, organizations' have moved on from this motivational thinking to an engagement thinking whereby in addition to this motivation they can align their employees behind their objectives and strategies in order to get back employees discretionary efforts to achieve their objectives and exceptional results. The study focused on determining the relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement among teachers in Nakuru North Sub County. The study was carried out in secondary schools in Nakuru North Sub County using descriptive survey research design. Questionnaires were used to collect data and thereafter both descriptive and chi square statistics were used. It was established that indeed job satisfaction has a relationship with employee engagement.*

Keywords: Employee engagement, job satisfaction, organizational performance

1. Introduction

Organization all over the world have been forced to come up with new approaches and initiatives as to how to use and engage employees in their attainment of strategic competitive edge. Employees are the most important and fundamental resource in any organization [1] further they make a critical difference when it comes to innovation, organization performance competitiveness and thus the ultimate business success. Several attempts have been made to effect proper use of employee practices at the workplace; one of them is through coming up with strategies that offer job satisfaction to employees. Employees who are most committed perform 20% better and are 87% less likely to leave the organization [2] indicating the significance of job satisfaction to organizational performance. There are several reasons why employers might not be satisfied at their work place.

Every organization desire to meet its objectives, one of the ways in which organizations can achieve their goals is when their employees are satisfied and engaged at work place. Thus organizational human resource department strive to ensure it attracts the best talent and would prefer to keep them for long, but the question is, are such companies prepared to invest in such great talents in order to keep retention high? Companies have not yet grasped that information from lower levels can be sought on how the employees feel about the leaders, the working environment, their developments, their feelings about coming to work and whether they love their job and are willing to go an extra mile to see their companies grow which in effect will keep them a step ahead of their competitors. This paper thus seeks to examine job satisfaction and employee engagement.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Successful organizations pride in their implementation of great and successful employee engagement practices, which

have helped create an attractive environment and a community within which their employees enjoy working. An employee feels a strong relationship with his organization when engagement is effective and real. This affects their attitude towards both their colleagues and the company's clients and improve customer satisfaction and hence the organization's performance. In order for management of human capital to be effective, it is essential that management creates an environment that encourages engagement as this is likely to boost employee commitment and productivity [3] Secondary schools have guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Education that stipulates the roles and responsibilities of every teacher. However for higher performing schools, they have their own engagement practices that propel improved organization performance. Secondary schools in Nakuru North Sub-County, in their quest to ensure employee engagement, have outlined lots of programs, from employee recruitment through job and duty definition to development of a yearly survey to assess how employees feel engaged and to what extent the level of engagement affects their performance

1.2 Objective

- i. To analyse the relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement among teachers in Nakuru sub – county.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2:$

There is no significance relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement in secondary schools in Nakuru Sub – County

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study focused on secondary school teachers in Nakuru North Sub –County. There are 16 public schools in Nakuru north and 180 teachers who are employed by the Teachers Service Commission (T.S.C) there is evidence of high teacher turnover intent in the sub county which can be translated as lack of job satisfaction, this has impacted negatively on the schools performance.

2. Literature Review

Job satisfaction relates to many facets of employee engagement. Although these concepts are similar in many ways, they are not the same. It is often suggested that satisfaction can be seen as a component or consequence of employee engagement. Job satisfaction has been defined as ‘the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one’s job values [4]. This definition highlights that job satisfaction is expressed by means of complex emotional reactions. Moreover, job satisfaction seems to be impacted by the discrepancy between what an individual wants from its job and what the job is perceived to entail. The more these two converge, the higher the job satisfaction is expected to be.

Job satisfaction is a consequence of the alignment between the organization and an employee [5]. According to his model, job satisfaction results from the psychological contract of the employment relationship. The psychological contract depends on two factors. First of all, a personal factor which entails expectations of an individual about the job, personal experiences and beliefs about alternatives about the labor market. The second factor is an organizational variable that is comprised of human resource practices and organizational culture.

Employees are self-motivated and others are not [1]. The study clearly shows that people’s engagement with their work is directly what they see and experience within their company. So, you could place an individual who has always been highly engaged into their career into a new, but dysfunctional work environment. Conversely, a previously disengaged employee may become fully engaged under different circumstances.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Self-Determination Theory SDT [6] proposes two overarching forms of motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for its own sake out of enjoyment and interest. Extrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity for instrumental reasons. Although extrinsic motivation is arguably predominant in a work context, it too can take different forms. According to SDT, extrinsic motivation can reflect a desire to gain rewards or avoid punishment (external regulation), boost one’s ego or avoid feelings of guilt that is introjections, attain a valued personal goal that is identification, or express one’s sense of self that is integration. Identification and integration involve a high level

of volition and, along with intrinsic motivation, are considered forms of autonomous regulation.

External regulation and introjections involve more external influence and less authenticity and are considered forms of controlled regulation. Autonomous regulation has been demonstrated to lead to higher levels of performance, persistence, initiative, and creativity [6]. According to SDT, the key to autonomous regulation is satisfaction of basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness. There is good evidence for the universality of these needs, and research shows that lack of satisfaction leads to poorer performance and reduced physical and psychological well-being. Moreover, need satisfaction is an important mediator in the relation between environmental influences for instance job characteristics, leadership and autonomous regulation. Therefore, by identifying key mechanisms, SDT can serve as a useful guide for the development of targeted intervention strategies.

An idea that is closely linked to the concept of psychological contract is Social Exchange Theory or SET [7]. SET argues that relationships can become trusting, loyal commitments over time. This only happens if both parties play ‘fair’ in the rules of exchange regarding reciprocity. Although SET applies to relationships in general, it can also relate to the employment relationship specifically. In this way, the relationship between an employee and its employer is thought to be two-way. The employer provides resources and benefits to the employee, which makes the employee feel he ought to reciprocate.

One of the ways an employee can reciprocate is by becoming more engaged [1]. Furthermore, it is desirable for an organization to have satisfied employees. They are suggested to be more motivated and work harder than dissatisfied employees [8]. Employee engagement is quite a recent development of older theories of motivation and communication, which originated from social psychology.

2.2 Herzberg’s ‘Two Factors’

Herzberg developed Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in his two factors theory and argued that ‘positive satisfaction’ is only gained when motivators such as recognition and personal growth are met and not when hygiene factors such as salary and bonuses needs are met. However, Herzberg supports Maslow’s theory that employees become more engaged through personal growth and recognition than salary. Herzberg’s two factor theory is practical to an extent and also happens in an environment of trust and transparency where the employee’s growth and development is of keen interest to his manager. But further to my concern above, this works best for a category of employees of medium to senior managers with a mindset of career progression and has already their safety, biological and physiological needs met as this frees up their minds to think about their development needs and fulfillments.

At this level, they also feel engaged and have a greater impact on their organization. Employee engagement does not require one format to suit all as employee’s needs and levels vary

across tribes and nations. However, it is imperative that communication on employee engagement needs to be consistent in order to encourage ownership and to avoid conflicts in the design team owing to the different interpretations possible. This is because lack of clarity about what employee engagement actually is, threatens the development of engagement itself.

2.3 Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Y

Douglas McGregor, a famed management theorist, discussed the Theory X and Theory Y employee motivation model in his book, 'The Human Side of Enterprise'. He explained how these affect people's attempts to influence the behaviour of others especially how they affect managers' attitudes towards employees. According to McGregor, managers who maintain Theory Y has greater success with motivating workers and creating an environment of trust with them than those who cling to theory X. Theory X assumes that employees are lazy, avoid responsibility and uncommitted and should therefore be threatened, persuaded, rewarded, punished, controlled, directed in order to get them to work, this amounted to the 'carrot' or 'stick' approach.

The Theory Y assumes that workers seek autonomy and responsibility, they are self-motivated, possess the potential for development and the readiness to direct behaviour towards organizational goals. Theory X set of assumptions believes that people simply want to know what their benefits are while a greater sense of collective engagement is what the Theory Y assumes. The theory X manager is always on the lookout finding someone to blame when there is a problem without questioning the fundamental cause be it the system or policies or even lack of training whilst the Theory Y manager is more open to a positive view of employees and the possibility that it creates. The issue of employee engagement is the honest assessment of what mindset the manager of leader wants to project to employees and not merely one of trying to understand what the employee is thinking in his head.

McGregor suggested that the kind of assumptions a manager holds about his employees impacts greatly on the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the styles and approaches that the manager uses. I agree to this point because what you perceive someone to be is what you will eventually see in that person most of the times, and this will direct how you treat this person to either bring out the negativities in him or to bring out his best and maximize his potential and make effective use of his talents necessary for delivery on key objectives. However, some managers, and many behavioral scientists, were developing a different point of view about people and their attitudes about work, a realization that people who are committed to their jobs are self-motivated and self-regulating and want to be involved more in their work. Some of this realization was the result of the motivation theory of Abraham Maslow [9]. Therefore in comparison with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Theory X can be grouped under the lower needs where they will satisfy who needs to be directed and rewarded whilst the Theory Y can be grouped under the higher level needs to suit employees who want to

take responsibility and developments so they can reach self-actualization.

Theory X or Theory Y styles of management resonate well with most managers but not every manager believes in or uses this style. Most managers probably believe that people are a combination of both, with tendency to behave as on type. Theory X management often requires more skill of a manager because it sets high standards and expects people to meet them, theory Y however, implies a more participative management, and this requires that the manager take risks. A theory Y manager exhibits flexibility in the way he structures the job to allow his direct reports room for personal growth. The essential task of management is to arrange the organizational conditions and methods of operation so that people can achieve their own goals by directing their own efforts towards organizational objectives [10]. This is a process primarily of creating opportunities, releasing potential, removing obstacles, encouraging growth and providing guidance".

The first step in employee engagement is not to be wandering what exactly employees are thinking; rather, managers should ask themselves what exactly is in the head of their managers. This has become imperative because employees just like employers wants to know what they stand to gain, the reason why one undertakes self-improvement in the first place. This will only fit Theory X when what they stand to gain becomes conditional to what they have to offer and can be manipulative over long term use. The positive side of what one can benefit is a natural process of effective learning that is congruent with intrinsic motivation and sabotaged by overuse of extrinsic motivation.

3. Methodology

The study employed a descriptive technique and specifically a survey design to assess the relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement among teachers schools in Nakuru North Sub County. The study targeted all teaching staff of 16 secondary in the sub county these were summed up as 180 teachers employed by T.S.C. The sample size for the study was 64. Data was collected using Close ended questionnaire. Both descriptive and chi- square tests were used as statistical tools for analysis. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) assisted the researcher to carry out the analysis. Presentation was done using tables.

4. Presentation of Findings

4.1 Back Ground Information

The questionnaire return rate for the study was 89%. Majority of the respondents were between 39-45 years with 42% who were the majority being graduates, 25% had post graduate qualifications while 33% were diploma holders. M years and majority of the teachers had taught for five years and more.

4.2 Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement

The level of job satisfaction was collected in form of statements which indicated job satisfaction which were measured using a 5 scale Likert scale to get the weighted values for each statement. The weighted values were analyzed using descriptive statistics, where their means and standard

deviations were computed. Chi- square was used to check on the level of association between job satisfaction and employee engagement which further served to test on the hypotheses of the study.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev</i>
I appreciate teamwork among teachers	57	1	5	1.95	1.245
I don't find my classes overenrolled	57	1	5	3.79	1.385
I don't find myself overworking while in school	57	1	5	3.40	1.498
I get my salary in good time	57	1	5	2.25	1.313
I rank teaching as a way of life highly	57	1	5	2.49	1.416
I rank teaching as a profession highly	57	1	5	2.96	1.388
I consider my time in teaching flexible	57	1	5	2.47	1.377
I consider the terms of service in teaching acceptable	57	1	5	3.65	1.142

On job satisfaction, the study established that most teachers did not find their classes overenrolled (3.79). This was followed by the fact that they considered the terms of service in teaching acceptable (Mean 3.65) the two were to a larger extent. With also a higher mean of 3.40, teachers revealed that they did not find themselves overworking while in school. This implied that they were satisfied with their jobs. According to Guest (2004) job satisfaction is a consequence of the alignment between the organization and an employee thus one can conclude that where teachers showed they were satisfied with their jobs was as a result of the alignment of themselves and the organization. On a medium extent (2.96) teachers ranked teaching as a profession highly. Majority of the means were to a small extent: I consider my time in teaching flexible(2.47), I rank teaching as a way of life highly(2.49), I get my salary in good time(2.25) I appreciate teamwork among teachers (1.95). The standard deviations ranging towards 1.5 shows the deviations are significant and not widely dispersed from the means. From these studies, it can then be concluded that most of the standard deviations ranged between 1.142 and 1.492 hence can be termed as desirable. The closer the standard deviations are to the mean the better.

To be able to come up with a conclusion on job satisfaction and employee engagement, Chi- square statistics was performed to check the association between the two variables. It was hypothesized that $H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$; implying that there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement in secondary schools.

Table 2: Chi- Square Test for Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement

	<i>Value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</i>
Pearson Chi-Square	24.255 ^a	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	26.655	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.280	1	.597
N of Valid Cases	57		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.23.

The chi square value is 24.255. $p = .000$ which is less than 0.05 thus the hypotheses is rejected and conclusions drawn that job satisfaction has a relationship with employee engagement.

Table 3: Symmetric Measures for Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement

		<i>Value</i>	<i>Approx. Sig.</i>
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.652	.000
	Cramer's V	.652	.000
N of Valid Cases		57	

The phi and crammers V value is .652 which further indicates the relationship between job satisfaction and employee engagement is strong.

5. Summary and Conclusions of Findings

On job satisfaction, most teachers did not find their classes overenrolled in fact majority considered their terms of service in teaching acceptable. All these factors showed they were satisfied with their job. However teaching as a profession had ratings to a moderate extent. Job satisfaction has a relationship with employee engagement. As teachers are satisfied with their work then it implies that their engagement results to positive results.

Recommendations

Teachers' employer should address the issues that improve job satisfaction and enhance improved performance by teachers in the sub-county

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