



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHEME OF SERVICE AND JOB SATISFACTION: A STUDY OF DEFUNCT LOCAL AUTHORITIES' EMPLOYEES INTEGRATED INTO THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT OF KERICHO, KENYA

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Abstract

Prior to implementation of devolution in 2013, Kenya had two levels of government, namely the national government and the local government. The latter comprised local authorities such as the municipal councils. The aim of this research was to ascertain the effect of scheme of service as a strategy of integration criteria on job satisfaction levels among employees of defunct local governments who were absorbed into the County Government of Kericho in Kenya. The study utilised descriptive survey design. It appropriated a mixed research methods whereby quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Out of the target population of 402, a sample of 200 were selected. Only 140 respondents finally took part in the study by filing and returning the questionnaires. Additionally, four key informant interviews were held. The study employed stratified sampling to recruit the participants while purposive sampling was used to select four key interviewees. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics and Correlation and multiple regression were used to test the hypothesis. From the study, it emerged that 64.3% of employees were satisfied with the scheme of service while 35.7% were dissatisfied. The Pearson moment correlation results showed that there was a significant association between scheme of service and job satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, meaning that scheme of service affects job satisfaction. It was recommended that the County Government needs to conduct performance appraisals among its employees within an interval of one year.

Keywords: Scheme, Service, Job Satisfaction, Defunct Local Authorities, Employees, County Government, Kericho, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

After the promulgation of the new constitution in 2010, the Kenya government instituted measures to ensure its proper implementation. The implementation timelines were defined in articles 185 (2) and 197 (2) and reinforced in schedule 4 of the constitution. These provisions defined the distribution of functions between the national and county governments (Government of Kenya [GOK], 2010). The Transitional Authority (TA), was mandated to carry out an audit of the existing human resources of the government and local authorities as outlined in the Transitional to Devolved Government Act, 2012 section 7 (i). Additionally, the same Act, in section 7 (m), mandates the TA to advice on the effective and efficient deployment of the human resource to either level of government. The TA conducted a human resource audit in 2013 and issued guidelines for deployment of the human resources to serve in either national or county governments.

It has been observed that how employees are integrated into an organization affects how they will be able to contribute to the organizational objectives and goals. Batt and Valcour (2003) point out that employers should provide conducive workplace culture that is transmitted formally by the policies and values that supports integration of all workers.

Devolution in Kenya

In Kenya, prior to the implementation of the new constitution in 2010, which created 47 county governments in 2013, there was a local government system of decentralization which was established during the colonial times. This governance structure had three elements, namely Municipalities (City and large towns), Town councils (small towns) and County council-rural authorities (World Bank, 2012). In 2013, when the implementation of the constitution was rolled out, there were one hundred and seventy-five (175) local authorities whose decentralized authority was derived from the Local Government Act, Cap 263 of 1963. This Act defined the administrative and legal powers, functions and responsibilities and in addition identified the revenue sources to finance the delegated functions (TA, 2013; World Bank, 2012).

Though this form of decentralization of governance in Kenya had been in existence since colonial period, there was still inequality in distribution of the resources in the country. Many Kenyans felt that post-independence Kenya was still highly characterized by centralization of political and economic powers. In addition, it was also felt that delivery of important services was still top-down resulting in uneven and unfair distribution of resources and corresponding poor access to social services (World Bank, 2012). This situation led to many Kenyans agitating for more decentralized system of governance. The government, at the time of agitations for decentralization in the late 1990s, tried to tone down people's demands by creating different

legislations to address these spatial inequalities. Among these legislations were: Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) created through LATF Act No. 8 of 1998; The Road Maintenance Levy Fund (RMF) created by the Kenya Roads Act, 2007; The Rural Electrification Fund, created through the Energy Act of 2006, and Constituency Development Fund (CDF) created through CDF Act of 2003 (World Bank, 2012). Despite all these efforts to address inherent inequalities in resource distribution, citizens continued to demand for more local autonomy culminating in a new constitution.

Upon promulgation of the new constitution in 2010, plans were put in place for its implementation which commenced in 2013 after general elections. Transition to Devolved Government Act of 2012 tasked the TA with ensuring there was effective and efficient deployment of human resource (TA, 2013). All employees working in their respective local authorities within a given county at that time of implementation of devolved system of governance were integrated into that particular county's government. These included employees of ministries that had their functions devolved like Agriculture, Health, Water and Culture, among others. These employees from the devolved ministries, those who worked in the local authorities, together with those who were newly employed by the new county governments were integrated and were to provide services under the devolved unit (TA, 2013; World Bank, 2012).

In Kenya, before the promulgation of the 2010 constitution, the legal systems of the decentralization that existed on the human resource management mandated that the hiring and termination of employees' services of lower cadre were the responsibilities of local government. On the other hand, that of hiring and termination of services for senior staff serving at local government fell in the hands of the Public Service Commission. Moreover, the terms and conditions of service for the local government employees were different from those of central government employees.

Terms and conditions of service are rights and obligations of the employees. These rights and obligations include entitlements to a salary, house allowance, transport, leave, terminal benefits conducive work environment, welfare and wellness of employees (GOK, 2016). Others include special duty allowance, hardship allowance, acting allowance, daily subsistence allowance, transfer allowance and entertainment allowances, among others (GOK, 2016; GOK, 2018).

The Kenya government has detailed the structured conditions and schemes of service for its human capital (GOK, 2006). The conditions and schemes of service in the public sector in the country have been known to be well structured with all the benefits of employees spelt out in the code of regulations manual. However, in most cases, the implementation of these structures

has been a challenge. Other government agencies like universities and parastatals have clear conditions of service, outlining procedures of appointment, deployment, staff appraisal and promotions. They also outline remuneration and allowances structures, staff development policies and other personal benefits, including leave entitlement (UON, 2006).

Physical Facilities in the Workplace

Physical workplace features such as the overall building design, layout and appearance affect the satisfaction levels of employees. For instance, it has been observed by many studies that building and working facilities have an association with workers' performance (Asigele, 2012). Similarly, temperatures, humidity, ventilation, lighting hours of working, shifts, cleanliness of the workplace, adequate tools and equipment also affect job fulfilment (Robbins, 2003). Robbins further points out that working conditions influence job satisfaction as employees' desire comfortable physical work environment and, in turn, these employees will render effort that will lead to heightened levels of job satisfaction.

Work Environment

Work environment involves all aspects that act in the body and the mind of an employee (Jain & Kaur, 2014). The work environment has been known to have positive or negative effects on psychology and welfare of an organization. The GOK (2016) specifies the group of employees in Kenya's public service that should benefit from hardship allowances because of the work environment in which they operate. Such areas are commonly known as arid and semi-arid lands of Kenya where transport and communication services are still a challenge.

Organizations with highly demanding workplaces tend to make employees suffer from stress. In such difficult work environments, employees develop negative attitudes and reduce employees' commitment to the organization. Conversely, good working environments have been known to increase employee commitment. The environment in which employees operate affects the level of job satisfaction among the employees. Many studies indicate that organizational obstacles such as inadequate equipment, lack of work-related resources, cramped work spaces and unsafe work environments have effects on the level job satisfaction of the employees in an organization (GOK, 2016). In the same way, an overseer's management approach influences employee conduct (SHRM, 2012).

Ellickson and Logsdon (2001) point that managers need to develop work environments that continually foster mutual trust with employees through better communication and employees' empowerment. Participatory leadership has been found to promote workers' job fulfilment (Kim, 2002). This approach brings together leaders and followers through an

information processing, decision-making and problem solving. It has been established through research that managers who share decision-making power with employees will enhance performance and satisfaction (Kim, 2002). The most effective leadership styles that foster healthy employee relationships are those that create conducive environment for innovation, encourage subordinates to find new and more effective approaches to achieving tasks needed for successful change (Fernandez, 2008).

Workers' dispositions and sense of fulfilment evolve from their contacts with colleagues in their workplace (Naumann, 1993). The quality of the work group relationship determines the level at which co-workers are competent, helpful, friendly and personally interested with the worker (Lambert, 1991). This includes the existence of open communication and trust among all members of an organization. Therefore, job satisfaction is also a function of the social relationships and interactions among workers.

The manner in which a job is designed has substantial impact on the attitudes, beliefs and feelings of the employees. Durst and DeSantis (1997) observe that workers desire and enjoy responsibilities that enable them to exploit their capabilities fully. Studies have disclosed that routine and non-challenging jobs result in employees' dissatisfaction and normally lead to increased absenteeism and turn over (Hackman & Lawler, 1971). Lawler and Hall assert that jobs that allow employees the greater control, a chance to be creative and do the works that are appropriate to their abilities are more satisfying than jobs that are low in these characteristics. It has been noted that job design and the way employees are deployed can directly influence the level of job satisfaction levels of employees.

The nature of personal treatment that employees receive at the workplace also affects their satisfaction levels. This treatment includes organizational pay policies. Organizations can promote workers' perceptions of just compensation by inducting overseers to be open and honest when relaying information about remuneration (Brown, 2009). Employee work satisfaction is positively linked to subsequent facets affected by appraisals or any other measurement of work, such pay as promotion, supervision, work environment, benefits, training and work itself and co-workers (Blau, 1999).

Statement of the Problem

Kenya gained political independence from colonialism in 1963. Since then, political leaders have held two divergent views about devolution. One view offers potential for the country to redress perceived ethnic and political biases by giving local communities control over resources, including human resources and decisions about service delivery. The second view holds that devolution could undermine national unity by fragmenting state powers or by decentralizing

corruption leaving the citizens worse, or worse still local leaders and elites could capture resources to the detriment of the majority of the newly established devolved units (World Bank, 2012). When devolution was rolled out, there were indeed fears that the counties might fail to put in place systems to integrate human, among other, resources for effective service delivery.

Following implementation of the new constitution in 2013, the human resource audit conducted by the TA noted that some of the staff in the counties were not deployed or integrated well. The most affected were those who had served under the defunct local authorities. Some of these employees were not integrated according to the skills, work experience and relevant qualifications they possessed, but on the basis of favouritism or political affiliations (TA, 2013). It was further observed that the work environment of some of these employees were not conducive. Some of the officers did not have the requisite space, basic office resources, tools and equipment to enable them undertake their duties. As a result, the audit revealed that most of the integrated employees were demotivated and their service delivery to the public was low. There seems to be no evidence as to whether or not corrective measures were undertaken to rectify this problem. Therefore, the study examined the effects of scheme of service on job satisfaction of the employees of defunct local authorities taking a case of the County Government of Kericho, Kenya.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Kericho County Government, one of the 47 counties in Kenya. This study site was chosen purposively. According to the 2009 Kenya Housing and Population Census, the county had a population of 758,339 (CRA, 2013). Kericho County is known for its large tea industry. Its tea is among the best in the world largely due to its good quality and flavour. Subsistence farming is also practiced in the county. A large part of the Mau forest, considered Kenya's biggest water catchment towers area, lies in the County. The forest gives rise to some of the major rivers among them the EwasoNg'iro River, Sondu River, Mara River and Njoro River.

Kericho County lies between longitude 35° 02' and 35° 40' East and between the equator and latitude 0 23' South. The County is bordered by the UasinGishu County to the north, Baringo County to the northeast, Nandi to the northwest, Nakuru County to the east and Bomet County to the south. It is bordered to the South West by Nyamira and Homa Bay Counties and to the West by Kisumu County. The County covers a total of 2,479 km². The County is composed of six sub-counties, namely Kipkelion East, Kipkelion West, Kericho West/Belgut, Kericho East, Sigowet/Soin and Bureti.

The target population for the research was 402 employees who were integrated to Kericho County government from the six (6) defunct local authorities that existed in Kericho by then, namely Kericho municipal council, Bureti county council, county council of Kipsigis, Town council of Litein, Town council of Londiani and Town council of Kipkelion. The study used stratified random sampling to divide the population into subgroup. In this study the population was stratified according to the gender then the selection of the sample was done using simple randomly sampling. The instruments for data collection used in the study were questionnaire, interview schedule and document analysis. Among the relevant documents that the researcher reviewed include Transitional Authority reports and other available reports with information on deployment of employees. A total of two hundred (200) respondents were sampled and only one hundred and forty (140) employees' filled questionnaires administered by the researcher, coded and analysed. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analysed thematically and triangulated with the results from the survey.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to determine the effects of terms and conditions of service on job satisfaction level of employees of defunct local authorities. Descriptive statistics were obtained, followed by testing of hypothesis and finally the predictive component of terms and conditions of service on job satisfaction was established. Table 1 below shows the descriptive statistics on the schemes of service.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Schemes of Service

Conditions and scheme of service	1		2		3		4		5		Mean	Std dev
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
Satisfied with distribution of working hours	9	6.4	6	4.3	16	11.4	79	56.4	30	21.4	3.82	1.03
Satisfied with my salary	24	17.1	39	27.9	12	8.6	42	30.0	23	16.4	3.01	1.39
Satisfied with present rate of salary increment	36	25.7	31	22.1	22	15.7	38	27.1	13	9.3	2.72	1.35
Satisfied house allowance and other allowances	21	15.0	28	20.0	25	17.9	47	33.6	19	13.6	3.11	1.29
Affected by scheme of service in delivery of quality service	19	13.6	18	12.9	42	30.0	42	30.0	19	13.6	3.17	1.22

Key: 1 = Very low extent, 2=Low extent, 3=Undecided, 4=Large extent, 5 = Very large extent

Table 1 shows that 9(6.4%) of the respondents were satisfied with the distribution of working hours to a very low extent, 6(4.3%) to a low extent while 16(11.4%) were undecided, 79(56.4%) were satisfied to a large extent while 30(21.4%) were satisfied to a very large extent. The mean score of this item was 3.82 with a standard deviation of 1.03. The mean was greater than the average mean score of 2.5 hence indicated that more than a half of the respondents were satisfied with the distribution of working hours.

On salary satisfaction, 24(17.1%) were satisfied to a very low extent, 39(27.9%) to a low extent while 12(8.6%) were undecided, 42(30.0%) were satisfied to a large extent and 23(16.4%) were satisfied to a very large extent. The mean score was 3.01 with a standard deviation of 1.39, hence most of the respondents were satisfied with their salaries.

On the rate of salary increment, 36(25.7%) were satisfied to a very low extent, 31(22.1%) to a low extent while 22(15.7%) were undecided, 38(27.1%) were satisfied to a large extent while 13(9.3%) were satisfied to a very large extent. The mean score was 2.72 with a standard deviation of 1.35. This means that more than a just slightly more than half of the respondents were satisfied with the current the rate of salary increment.

In regard to house allowance and other allowances, 21(15.0%) were satisfied to a very low extent, 28(20.0%) to a low extent while 25(17.9%) were undecided, 47(33.6%) were satisfied to a large extent while 19(13.6%) were satisfied to a very large extent. The mean score was 3.11 with a standard deviation of 1.29 meaning that more than a half of the respondents were satisfied with their house allowance and other allowances.

On whether they were affected by scheme of service in delivery of quality service, 19(13.6%) were affected to a very low extent, 18(12.9%) to a low extent while 42(30.0%) were undecided, 42(30.0%) were also affected to a large extent and 19(13.6%) were affected to a very large extent. The mean score was 3.17 with a standard deviation of 1.22, indicating that most of the respondents were affected by the scheme of service in their delivery of quality services.

The minority who were dissatisfied with the scheme of service voiced out that: *There are no clear policies on integration of employees. This is because the employees of defunct local authorities were deployed without following any policies or procedure but it was based on the perceptions on their capabilities and performance* (Personal Communication, KII 4).

In regard to job disciplinary measures taken against employees 11(7.9%) of the respondents were satisfied to a very low extent, 31(22.1%) to a low extent while 26(18.6%) were undecided, 53(37.9%) were satisfied to a large extent while 19(13.6%) were satisfied to a very large extent. The mean score of this item was 3.27 with a standard deviation of 1.18. The

mean was greater than the average mean score of 2.5 meaning that more than a half of the respondents were satisfied with the disciplinary process.

In general, 36% of the respondents were dissatisfied with their work as a result of schemes of service in place while 64% were satisfied with their work. The results were as shown Figure 1 below.

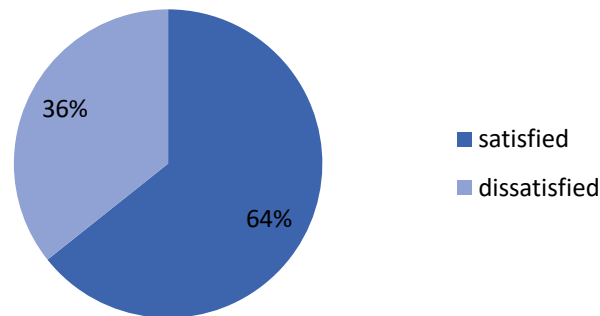


Figure 1: Schemes of service and job satisfaction

Hypothesis Test Results

To find out whether terms of service had any significant effect on job satisfaction, the following null hypothesis was put forward:

H₀₃: There is no significant effect of schemes of service on job satisfaction of employees of defunct local authorities.

The test was conducted using Pearson product moment correlation and the results were as presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Scheme of Service and Job Satisfaction Correlations

	Scheme of service	Job Satisfaction
	Pearson Correlation	1
Scheme of service		.493**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)., n=140

Table 2 shows that there was a significant positive relationship between scheme of service and job satisfaction ($r=.493$, $P=0.000$). The null hypothesis was thus rejected, and it was concluded that scheme of service influenced job satisfaction. The positive relationship implied that favourable schemes of service are likely to result in high level of job satisfaction.

Simple Regression Analysis

Simple regression analysis was carried out to determine the predictive power of alignment of qualifications on job satisfaction. The results were as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Simple Regression of scheme of service on Job satisfaction

Model	Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.365	10.320 .000
	Scheme of Service	.525	7.245 .000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Table 1 indicates that scheme of service is a significant predictor of job satisfaction among the workers of Kericho County ($B = 0.525$, $p=0.000$). It resulted in the Equation (i) $Jobsatisfaction(JS) = 1.365 + 0.525(Schemeofservice)$Equation (i).

This means that from a constant value of 1.365, a unit change in qualifications alignment will result in increase in job satisfaction by 0.525 times. A satisfied staff in any organization is an asset that can drive the mandate and objectives of the institution. The county government was to prioritize the engagement of human resource personnel to ensure success of devolution and carrying out its mandate to the satisfaction of the citizens (World Bank, 2012). During the transition to the devolved system of government in 2013, all employees who were working in various local authorities were integrated alongside those from the devolved departments of national government and those who were recruited during the early stage of devolution and they were to work together as a team to drive the agenda of county government in their respective counties and this process was declared success in Kericho county despite few challenges (TA, 2013).

Scheme of service was tested and the results indicated that more than a half of the respondents were satisfied. This is in line with the guideline by Kenyan government on the procedure to adhere as far as scheme of service is concerned. GOK (2006) indicates and outline scheme of service which all should adhere to and it include; procedures of placement, staff appraisal, promotions, remuneration, allowances and other staff benefits including staff entitlement.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER STUDIES

The study found no significant effect of schemes of service on job satisfaction of employees of defunct local authorities. Therefore, it was concluded that scheme of service affects job

satisfaction. In light of the findings, it is recommended that the county government should conduct performance appraisals among its employees within an interval of one year and those who are due for promotion should be promoted accordingly as some employees have voiced out concerned that they have not been appraised nor promoted since 2013 and this has led to dissatisfaction. This study revealed that there are employees who have who have not been appraised and promoted past the required period.

This study investigated only the satisfaction of integrated employees deployed to serve in the County Government from defunct local authorities who previously served in six local authorities that existed in Kericho by then. Comparative study could be conducted on job satisfaction among employees working for national and county government to establish the satisfaction among these employees. This is because the findings from such kind of study will provide a broad pointer to the factors that need to address among the employees of the two level of government to achieve high level of job satisfaction among government employees.

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