

Full-Length Research Paper

Job satisfaction and its effect on academic staff performance in chartered private universities in Burundi

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of job satisfaction on academic staff performance at three chartered private universities in Burundi: The University of Ngozi, University of Lake Tanganyika, and Martin Luther King University. The investigation focused on poor academic staff performance as a result of insufficient resources and low salaries, which results in low productivity and poor outputs in teaching and supervision, research and innovation, publication, consultancy, and community outreach (Finnegan, 2014; and Hatungimana, 2015). The study was guided by three objectives such as to: examine the level of job satisfaction; evaluate the status of academic staff performance; and find out how job satisfaction affects academic staff performance in Chartered Private Universities in Burundi. The descriptive and correlational research design was employed and opted quantitative research approach. This study sought a sample of 96 respondents and consequently issued the same number of questionnaires and 87 questionnaires were returned fully answered and completed. The findings showed a positive relationship between job satisfaction and academic staff performance ($r = 0.622$, p -value = 0.000) which means that a higher job satisfaction level amongst the lecturers perhaps results in better academic staff performance.

Keywords: Satisfaction, job satisfaction, academic staff, performance, and university

INTRODUCTION

While political thinking favouring the application of market principles in higher education had a debatable issue in the 1980s, it became an operational principle guiding developments in higher education in the 1990s in Africa (Varghese, 2004b). Private higher education in Africa is one of the most dynamic and fastest growing segments of post-secondary education and the turn of 21st Century (Altbach, 1999). According to Varghese (2004b), there are numerous reasons for their emergence on a large scale: firstly, the inability of the public sector to satisfy the growing social demand for higher education has necessitated the entry of the private sector in order to expand access conditions; secondly, the changing political view of large-scale public subsidies to social sectors will reduce investment possibilities in the productive sectors and hence the overall growth potentials of the economy; thirdly, in many countries, the demand for courses and subjects of study had changed,

and public universities were thus unable to respond to the phenomenon; fourthly, in countries where the public sector is criticized for inefficiency, the private sector is increasingly promoted for its efficiency in operation. Thus, private higher education institutions can be owned by individuals, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit organizations (NPOs), and/or religious entities (James, 1989). Several reasons are advanced as explaining the emergence of a diversity of private universities owned by either individuals or organizations. Many of the private institutions of higher education are new and operate with a limited number of staff members. One of the unique features of the private institutions of higher education is that they have very few regular staff. The general trends are that of a large number of part-time lecturers and a limited number of full-time lecturers employed in private institutions of higher education. In one of the current studies of Varghese (2004b), it is found

that reliance on part-time lecturers is a common feature among private universities irrespective of their location and orientation. Interestingly, there are also instances where private institutions operate without even a single regular staff. Many private universities in Africa rely heavily on part time lecturers, and at times, some of the private universities in Africa are headed by senior professors from the public universities (Fymat and Kapalanga, 2018). In many private universities, there seems to be a positive correlation between the share of part-time lecturers and doctoral level qualified lecturers. This is mainly because many part-timers are drawn from public universities, and professors in public universities are well qualified. In Burundi, in order to enhance quality services, the Government of Burundi encouraged the private investors in education when the public university has for long grappled with shortage of lecturers due to brain drain, inadequate teaching and learning materials, and the increasing student population which resulted into Students' regular complaints (OAG, 2012). According to Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2018), Burundi remains one of the African countries having difficulty in offering job satisfaction to its academic staff. That explains why the World Economic Forum (2015) placed Burundi as one of African worst performing countries when it comes to offering better employment opportunities with a view of retaining their trained talented lecturers. Therefore, understanding the nature of job satisfaction and its prediction on work performance may be hard. Job satisfaction is a complex concept which can denote different things to different people. It is connected with motivation even if the nature of this relationship is not clear. It is often suggested that job satisfaction is necessary in order to achieve a high level of motivation and performance (Mullins, 2010). According to Robbins and Coulter (2013), job satisfaction refers to an employee's general attitude towards his or her job. It is an attitude rather than a behaviour; it's an outcome that concerns many managers because satisfied employees are more likely to show up for work, have higher levels of performance, and stay with an organization. A person's job satisfaction is a set of attitudes toward work. Job satisfaction is what most employees want from their jobs, even more than they want job security or higher pay (Sandberg, 2007). Employees who are more satisfied with their jobs are absent less; and they are more likely to stay on the job. Low job satisfaction often contributes to wildcat strikes, work slowdowns, poor product quality, employee theft, and sabotage (Lussier, 2010). Job satisfaction is on a continuum from low to high. It can refer to a single employee, a group or department, or an entire organization. Notice that the definition of job satisfaction identifies an overall attitude towards work (Sandberg, 2007). Thus, job satisfaction refers to an employee's general attitude toward his or her job. With Griffin and Lopez (2005), job satisfaction is an attitude rather than a behavior; it is an outcome that concerns

many managers because satisfied employees are more likely to show up for work, have higher levels of performance, and stay with an organization. Organizations need to address the needs of their personnel and provide them with a convenient environment in order to make them satisfied in their jobs (Ahsan et al., 2009). Such an attitude of the employer would create positive inner feelings within the employees who would in turn feel motivated in performing their jobs (Kellison and James, 2011), therefore resulting in lower staff turnover and enhanced employee productivity at work (Santhapparaj and Alan, 2005). According to Robbins and Coulter (2012), job satisfaction is also a general attitude of an employee towards his job in an organization. A person having a higher level of job satisfaction has a positive attitude towards his job whereas a person having lower level of job satisfaction has a negative attitude towards his job. Satisfied employees show less absenteeism, have higher organizational commitment levels, and depict a higher level of performance. Previous empirical studies confirmed that morality, relationship between co-workers, students, sense of community, university atmosphere, and work stress affect job satisfaction among academic staffs (Kyzyltepe, 2008). Evidence also exists providing supervision, authority, interpersonal relationships, organizational commitment, facilities, policies, income, workload and the work itself as contributing towards satisfaction of academics in their jobs (Rubaish et al., 2011). Other previous studies revealed that factors such as remuneration, duties, work environment, management, decision-making styles, and hygiene of the university affect job satisfaction of academic staff (Amazt and Idris, 2011; Mohamad, 2013). Moreover, social status, compensation, liberty of selecting teaching methods and opportunity to utilize abilities have been found to influence job satisfaction among academics' staff (Chua, 2010; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005; Toker, 2011). As from the earlier definition, job satisfaction refers to a person's general attitude toward his or her job; and with people attitude, we refer to job satisfaction. Research results indicate that satisfied employees tend to be committed to an organization, and employees who are satisfied and committed are more likely to attend work, stay with an organization, arrive at work on time, perform well, and engage in behaviours helpful to the organization (Aamodt, 2007). Thus, the findings of the study conducted by Samad (2011) found that committed and satisfied employees are normally high productive and unlikely to indicate low performance. The study suggested that organizations need to strengthen their workers' commitment towards organization in order to enhance the performance of the organization. The academic staff members are the prior asset in higher education institutions and exercise a big role in the accomplishment of the universities' goals. The production of competent academic staff requires the university to

ensure that the academic staff members are consistently motivated (Alfagira et al., 2017). Performance is simply the production of valid results. In other words, employees produce the results expected from them. Lloyd and Leslie (2004) defined performance as the degree of accomplishment of the task that makes up an employee's job. Performance of individuals has its great importance both for organizations and individual workers. With Kanfer and Ackerman (2005), many researchers believe that higher performance leads to the achievement of duties and tasks, which ultimately results in more satisfaction levels, feeling and developing self-efficacy and mastery among employees. Performing workers are encouraged, endorsed with awards and privilege through benefits and rewards. Lockett (1992) defined the performance as a multidimensional construct and the common factors that are frequently associated with organizational performance are efficiency, quality, responsiveness, cost and overall effectiveness. For Hasan (2011), performance is the level of target achievement for both the institution and the individual. Therefore, the performance of organizations can be measured by the achievement of their goals such as satisfying their customers need better than their competitors.

Moreover, Khan (2011) perceived that teaching is one of the most persuasive and dignified profession in society and lecturers are always expected to be the lifeblood of any education system. Lecturers' performance in any university is as crucial as the pillars of buildings which stand the whole of it. Lecturers are thought to be the nation builders, and they are always given a great position in educated and dignified societies, but in recent years stakeholders are complaining about the academic performance of academic staff in the universities, and people think that academic staff are less motivated and dedicated (Shaheen et al., 2013).

However, the motivation of academic staff in Burundian private universities was not yet discussed. In order to guarantee the success of the institution, Wiley (1997) recommended that managers must recognize factors that motivate their staffs despite genders and age because such understanding is crucial to improve productivity for the organization. Then, Su and Wood (2012) highlighted the good academic staff at the university are those who reflect on what they do to boost a greater awareness of themselves and their students.

They also involve students in dialogue motivated by a desire to know and understand them and their own practice better, and they are expected to be highly qualified for the position and have the expertise in the subject area which they teach as well as the necessary skills to pass on knowledge to students. Job satisfaction is an important factor about employee's performance and the predictor of work behaviour. The benefits of job satisfaction for an organization are to reduce complaints and grievance regarding workers, better turnover and

absenteeism, and reducing cost of training at termination of employees' contracts while improving punctuality and work morale of the workers (Aftab, 2012). The most important dependent variable in industrial and organizational psychology is job performance. One of the major concerns of companies has focused on improving worker productivity, which is one of the key job performance elements (Borman, 2004). According to Frye (2004), when you expect the best from your employees, they will give you their best. On the other hand, when you expect little from employees, they will give you low performance in return. Many people feel that they are not recognized or appreciated by their employers for their hard work, and in turn they feel dissatisfied. Lack of communication and feedback from employers cause employees to feel overlooked and inhibits them from performing to the best of their ability. Employee satisfaction is one of the strategies managers employ to enhance effective job performance among workers in the work place. For effective work performance to thrive in the work place, job satisfaction has to be managers' top priority. Different scholars found the relationship between job satisfaction and performance of institutions. The findings of Li-Ru (2006) showed that employee's job satisfaction has a significant positive influence on organizational performance. Ming-Hong (2006) also noted that employee's job satisfaction has a positive and significant influence on organizational performance. Qin-Nan (2009) also believes that employee satisfaction has a positively significant influence on job performance. Zi-long (2010) assessed the relationships among the hierarchy of needs, pay-level satisfaction, job satisfaction and organizational performance before reaching the conclusion that job satisfaction has a significant and positive influence on organizational performance. Content gaps however exist as the former study report aggregate organizational performance, not staff performance; this was the case in this study. According to Mawoli and Babandako (2011), poor performance of the academic staff can be affected by negatively poor working conditions which provoke the absenteeism, lower levels of effort, less effectiveness in the classroom, low morale, lower job satisfaction, and low motivation. Scholars highlighted also that good working conditions are very encouraging and boost levels of academic staff contentment on the job. The conditions of work and motivation of employees have benefited the university in the form of high academic staff performance and productivity. However, Rowland and Hall (2014) stated that different sort of fears and anxiety, for instance an unfamiliar office environment, face academic staff when they join a university, if not handled with appropriateness by the management of the university, should lead to demotivation and result in high staff turnover. However, while a trend in the reviewed studies show job satisfaction as having a positive effect on performance, methodological gaps exist as some

reviewed studies did not provide deeper insights in the relationships as they were particularly quantitative (Yue-Xia, 2009; O' Fallon and Rutherford, 2010; Qin-Nan, 2009). Knowledge gaps as well exist in the reviewed studies as some studies report job satisfaction without providing what relationship it has with academic staff performance (Ehiamentor, 2001; Subair et al., 2012). This is in addition to content gaps with limited clarity on organizational performance, not academic staff performance, as intended by the current study (Zammuto et al., 1996; Parasuraman et al., 1990; Bouranta & Chirtis, 2008; Li-Ru, 2006; Pfeffer and Veiga, 1999). Of all the gaps, contextual gaps majorly existed as none of the reviewed studies were particular to the private chartered universities in Burundi. The purpose of this study was to establish the contribution of job satisfaction on academic staff performance with a view of promoting teaching and supervision, research and innovation, publication and consultancy in Chartered Private Universities in Burundi.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed correlational research design and descriptive research design and opted a quantitative research approach.

The combined total population of 126 lecturers from University of Ngozi, University of Martin Luther King, and University of Lake Tanganyika has sample size of 96. This has been arrived at using Sloven's sample size determination formula and follows a confidence level of 95% which gives a margin of error of 5%. Out of 96 targeted lecturers' respondents using the Slovin sample, 87 responded giving a quantitative response rate of 90.6%.

This response rate was considered very good since a 60% response rate is normally expected in most studies, (Reinikka and Svensson, 1998). This study combined both primary and secondary sources of data. To collect data, survey and interview were used as techniques while

self-administered questionnaire and interview guide were used as data collection instruments. Thus, the items/questions selected for the study were deemed relevant to the study variables since all the corresponding Content Validity indices for all experts and Alpha coefficients were above 0.7.

This indicated that the research instruments were both valid and reliable. This rendered the instruments appropriate for use. In this study, data collected from the field was edited, coded, tabulated, and analyzed using statistical package for social science version 25.0 (SPSS).

The data was analyzed first at descriptive level and later at bi-variate to multivariate analysis levels. Pearson correlation and regression analysis were employed to assess the relationship and effect of the study variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics of job satisfaction

Table 1 indicates the Mean and Standard Deviation of the results show that these lecturers demonstrated average levels of commitment in the private chartered universities especially judging by the computed mean for commitment at 3.358. With job involvement, the computed mean was 3.075 thus depicting a level of agreement. Regarding the efficiency, the computed mean for efficiency is 2.9839 implying that, whereas there is agreement on more items of efficiency, the level of agreement is not high enough to move the mean past 3; thus, the general perception of efficiency across these universities is that it is still low. In addition, the Mean and Standard Deviation of the results show that all the five constructs of attitude recorded means that were higher than three (i.e., mean score), which suggests that as far as job satisfaction is concerned within the universities, the respondents were satisfied with the attitude. The standard deviations were numerically very small, suggesting that there was a very

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of job satisfaction in chartered private Universities in Burundi.

Job satisfaction Aspects	Mean	Std. Deviation
Commitment		
I care about the growth and progress of this University	3.5287	0.98641
I can easily take up a job in a different University if the work and pay are similar	2.1839	0.81453
The values and vision of this University are in line with my personal values and mission	3.8391	0.36959
I feel a strong sense of belonging to this University	3.6897	0.61588
The University environment enhances employee commitment	3.5517	0.69481
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	3.35862	0.69624
Job Involvement		
Lecturers immerse in their jobs, invest time and energy in them, and view work as a central part of their overall lives	3.2759	1.33547
Employees participate during decision making at the university	2.6322	1.28602
Employees have decision making authority, responsibility and the tempo of the work	2.8621	0.96656
Supervisors give employees respect they deserve at the workplace	3.3448	0.89997

Lecturers enjoy participation in decision making and they are willing to work long hours and attempt to be high performers	3.2644	0.95795
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	3.075	1.08919
Efficiency		
We periodically collect data from the student's community to assess the impact of the services we deliver	2.5057	0.91338
I am confident that my output reflects the time I spend in the University and is in line with my earnings	3.1034	1.16174
The academic staff fairly allocates material resources in different services and departments of the University	3.2529	0.95502
There are procedures in place to remedy the situation in case the services we deliver are perceived to be under the set standard.	3.2069	0.91674
We are able to identify quickly and accurately when services are falling below the promised standard	2.8506	1.14657
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	2.9839	1.01869
Attitude		
The University encourages positive attitudes among lecturers	4.0460	0.50366
I believe my attitude towards my students and employers can be judged as good	4.1034	0.30631
Bad lecturer attitudes are a manifestation of low satisfaction with the job	3.3793	0.83862
There is a mechanism for shaping attitudes in the University and an understanding of the attitude we should project to the world	3.5747	0.83013
A negative attitude limits a lecturer's ability to serve his employers	4.1839	0.51779
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	3.857	0.5993
Pooled Mean & Standard Deviation	3.318	0.850858

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Very High, 3.40-4.19 High, 2.60-3.39 Average, 1.80-2.59 Low, 1.00-1.79 Very Low

Source: Primary data (2019).

dispersion in lecturers' perceptions on average. In other words, lecturers did not differ much in terms of opinions on attitude. This is more evident with the computed mean for the element of attitude at 3.857.

Table 2 shows that respondents agreed with only one of the five items under perceptions of teaching and supervision as a measure of academic staff performance. The computed mean for teaching and supervision was 2.742 thereby proving that it was perceived to be very low.

Descriptive statistics of academic staff performance

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for academic staff performance in chartered private Universities in Burundi.

Academic Staff Performance	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teaching and Supervision		
The number of students I am expected to teach and supervise is reasonable	2.8851	.94531
The academic staff carry out periodic curricula reviews	2.0345	.49293
The academic staff have enough time to do good quality research	2.4138	1.00639
The academic staff supervise all the students allocated by the schools and finish within the deadline	3.5402	.72824
I believe that teaching and research achievements are considered equally by promotions committees	2.8391	1.09835
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	2.742	0.85424
Research and Innovation		
The university increases research fund and strengthen its management	1.8276	.78068
The university provides incentives for research	2.2529	1.18340
There is available staff training and development on research	2.2529	.96711
The university has established a research centre	2.5517	1.07572
The University sponsors staff to attend conferences or research forum	2.3218	1.00573
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	2.241	1.00253
Publication		
Our lecturers publish citable articles across various disciplines	3.6207	.75083
The university encourages all academic staff to engage in research and publish in journals	3.8161	.69095
The university supports lecturers in their publication interests	2.9310	.97400
There is an organized staff training in scholarly writing	2.3448	.72861
The university associates itself with the publications of its lecturers	3.0805	1.13320
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	3.158	0.85552
Consultancy		
Most of our lecturers provide consultancy services in their respective disciplines	3.3793	.96739
The University has a consultancy chamber which it earns from	2.0345	.38725
The University allows lecturers to associate its name with their private consultancy firms	3.1724	.96698
Some of our lecturers are consultants with the Government and large private firms	3.2874	.66312
I do in-house professional consulting for free especially among my students	4.3448	.54618
Average Mean and Standard Deviation	3.243	0.70618
Pooled Mean & Standard Deviation	2.8466	0.8546

Legend: 4.20-5.00 Very High, 3.40-4.19 High, 2.60-3.39 Average, 1.80-2.59 Low, 1.00-1.79 Very Low

Source: Primary data computed (2019).

On research and innovation, the computed mean for research and innovation (2.241) shows that lecturers found the level of research and innovation in these universities to be low. About publication, the computed mean for publication (3.158) shows that lecturers found the level of publication in these universities to be just average. Lastly, the Mean and Standard Deviation of the results show that four of the five constructs of consultation recorded means that were higher than three (i.e., mean score), which suggests that as far as job satisfaction is concerned within the universities, the respondents did not have many complaints in regard to consultancy. The computed mean for the element of consultancy (3.243) proves the relative level of average perception of its items.

Correlations

The results in the (Table 3) indicated the correlation

coefficient ($r = 0.622$, p value = 0.000) between job satisfaction and academic staff performance. There is particularly a positive relationship between job satisfaction and academic staff performance which is statistically significant. This finding is in line with Kingir and Mesci (2010) that employee involvement enables employees to understand the importance of creativity and to be committed to change their behaviour while working to new, improved ways. The result compares well with what Singh (2015) found when he indicated job satisfaction enhanced performance. This result for the researcher depicts the fact that a higher job satisfaction levels amongst the lecturers perhaps results in better academic staff performance. However, basing on the responses, this is not necessarily guaranteed because the data also suggested that job satisfaction could be high and academic staff performance remains low.

Table 3. Correlation results between job satisfaction and academic staff performance in chartered private Universities in Burundi

Correlations		Academic staff performance
	Pearson Correlation	0.622
Job Satisfaction	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	87

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data (2019)

Regression results

The results indicated that job satisfaction aspects namely; job commitment, job involvement, efficiency, and attitude explain 50.8% of the variation in academic staff performance in chartered private universities in Burundi (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.508$) (Table 4). This means that 49.2% of the variation was accounted for by other factors not considered under this model. The findings in the first case shows job involvement ($\beta = 0.042$, $p = 0.637$) as having an insignificant effect on academic staff performance in chartered private universities in Burundi. This result is quite different from what was earlier established by Noah (2008) that job satisfaction bred by involvement in activities and participation in decision-making was pertinent in creating of a sense of belonging and a cohesive environment and result in achievement of healthy results in organizations. This result is also different from earlier result by Bhatti and Qureshi (2007) that employee participation was an essential determinant of job satisfaction components and that it would positively affect employees job satisfaction, commitment and also employee productivity. The variation in result is possibly attributed to the fact that the activities in which

employees in private universities are involved in are not of interest to the employees. In addition, the competences of the staff members involved may not be sufficient enough to better performances. The only two aspects of job satisfaction, that's job commitment ($\beta = 0.464$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), efficiency ($\beta = 0.219$, $p = 0.009 < 0.05$), and attitude ($\beta = 0.322$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), had a statistically positive significant effect on academic staff performance in chartered private universities in Burundi. Of the statistically significant aspects of job satisfaction, job commitment ($\beta = 0.464$) had the highest significance followed by attitude ($\beta = 0.322$) and least significance with efficiency ($\beta = 0.219$).

The results compare well with what was found by Elele and Fields (2010) that employees ready to encourage others that are more knowledgeable result in better performances than their seniors or supervisors. The results are also at par with earlier results by Kingir and Mesci (2010) that committed workers were able to change their behaviour in new for improvement in several ways. This result which is agreed to by the current researcher demonstrates the cause managerial structures that create avenues for positive attitudes which culminate in commitment in universities.

Table 4. Multivariate regression results for the effect of job satisfaction on academic staff performance in chartered private Universities in Burundi.

	Standardized Coefficients	
	Beta (β)	Sig.
(Constant)	-	0.003
Job commitment	0.464	0.000
Job involvement	0.042	0.637
Efficiency	0.219	0.009
Attitude	0.322	0.000

Dependent Variable: Academic Staff Performance

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.508$

$F = 23.210$

$p = 0.000$

Source: Primary data; 2019

Conclusion

Job satisfaction was found to have a positive relationship with academic staff performance ($r = 0.622$, p value = 0.000) in the study. This implies that academic staff who are happy are more likely to perform better. Responses showed a pattern of agreement among academic staff across the various institutions where the study was conducted that satisfaction breed's better performance. Based on this evidence, it is reasonable to conclude that tasks such as teaching and supervision, research and innovation, publication, and consultancy all require reasonable input, and that the lecturer should be physically and psychologically invested in their work in order to carry them out effectively. The findings show that commitment, efficiency, and attitude as job satisfaction elements had a statistically significant positive effect on academic staff performance in chartered private universities in Burundi.

Recommendations

- (i) There is need for universities to enhance the commitment of the academic staff by creating training and development opportunities such as leadership and management support improvement, promoting accountability, and staff involvement in decision making.
- (ii) Universities should help the staff to be aware on what is expected from them and the kind of decision they can make for the betterment of the university.
- (iii) A need for the universities to rebuild conducive work environment and organizational culture of the university to make academic staff due attention in acknowledgement, compensation, and incentive packages towards their good performance.
- (iv) Universities ought to establish research, publication and consultancy bureaus.
- (v) There should be a monitoring and evaluation program on the contract of staff members and their status, and their workload.

Authors' declaration

We declare that this study is an original research by our research team and we agree to publish it in the journal.

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