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Volume 3, Issue 4, Article 84

**THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF JOB-RELATED ATTITUDES ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE
EMPOWERMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

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Accepted: October 8, 2016

Abstract

The current study examined the mediating effect of job-related attitude on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance of Public Universities in Kenya. Conceptual and empirical literature was reviewed and hypotheses formulated. A positivist paradigm using descriptive research design was used. The population comprised the staff of Chartered Public Universities in Kenya 2013. Proportionate random stratified sampling and multi stage sampling was used. The literature review revealed that a number of studies have been conducted on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance. However, these studies did not examine the mediating effect of job-related attitude on the relationship. A questionnaire with Likert-type interval scale anchored on a five-point scale was used to collect primary data. Descriptive statistics were computed for organizational data and the main characteristics of the study variable. Data was presented in tables, charts and figures. Hypotheses were tested using Pearson's product moment, stepwise and multiple regression and change statistics for data analysis and tests. The results revealed that employee empowerment and job-related attitude have a positive relationship with the performance. The strength of the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance was found not to be mediated by job-related attitude. The study contributes to knowledge by empirically confirming that job-related attitudes are not mediators of the influence of employee empowerment on organizational performance contrary to previous studies.

Keywords: Employee Empowerment, Job-related Attitudes, Organization Performance

Introduction

Organizations in the rapidly changing environment need to adopt change to remain competitive. Human resources form part of the most important asset in the organization as such has to be nurtured to achieve organizational goals. The Government of Kenya (GoK) acknowledges that over the years there has been poor performance in the public sector. Some of the factors that have affected performance in public institutions include: tribalism, corruption, excessive controls, frequent political interference, nepotism, mismanagement of the human resource and other resources (GoK, 2005). This has affected the human resource. In recent years however, there have been major changes undertaken such as: introduction of performance contracting, performance ranking of public sector institutions based on agreed criteria and devolving of services. These changes have been seen as a tool aimed at improving accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in delivery of quality services, and improving efficient utilization of resources to improve overall performance. Further, the Kenya Vision 2030 strategy was crafted as a blue print to catapult Kenya into the next millennium. However, such expectations cannot be automatically realized. In response to these changes managerial approaches should embrace strategies that will foster empowering employee and stimulating employee behavior towards achievement of these goals.

Concept of Employee empowerment has been discussed as a human resource practice and empowerment as a motivating factor. From a human resource practice viewpoint, empowerment is described in terms of total human resource development and engagement. The organization has a responsibility to create conducive work environment which fosters the ability and desire of employees to act in an empowered way (Monari, 2013). At the same time remove barriers that limit

the ability of staff to act in an empowered way (Fox, 1998). As a management approach to motivation empowerment is explained just as a result of evolution in the management field and as a result of new knowledge to meet new challenges. Concurrently empowerment has been used to refer to employee involvement, employee engagement, and employee participation that was initially adopted in management theories of human relations and motivation (Hug and Hill, 2004; Wilkinson, 1998). The term continues to be used to refer to issues of giving employees more power and control. Employee empowerment describes all activities related to human capital management in the organization.

Scholars (Thomas and Velthouse, 1990; Randolph, 2000) have recognized that empowerment is evidenced by organizational members who are inspired and motivated to make meaningful contributions and who have confidence that their contributions will be recognized and valued. In Kenya for example empowerment programs have been put in place in some organizations in the private sector and in multinationals; however the practice in public sector is a challenge due to inflexibility of the system and conditions necessary to make such an approach successful. Despite introduction and implementation of performance contracting in government institutions there is still much to be done.

Empowering practices and strategies nurture favorable employee attitudes and this not only contributes to job satisfaction but also lead to organization commitment (Nick et al. 1994). In defining empowerment, Randolph (2000) refers to empowerment as a means of transferring sufficient and appropriate power to employees and making resources available to enable them succeed in their jobs. Hill and Huq (2004) contend that empowerment simply means giving employees a

voice. Several studies (Spreitzer, 1995; Argyris, 1998; Kanooni, 2005) concur that empowerment exists when a person perceives that they have freedom and authority to perform their job effectively. Consistent with empowerment theory, psychological and structural theories of empowerment, researchers agree that the core element of empowerment is giving employees latitude over certain related tasks (Wilkinson, 1998). Ghorbani et al., (2012) confirms the empowerment concept by positing that “involve everyone in everything”, and contended that lead by empowering people. Further Vogt and Murrell (1990) state that empowerment is the period of improving the decision making ability of the employees through cooperation, sharing information, training, autonomy and intellectual capacity.

Today, despite major strides in the growth of empowerment in organizations the effect still remains vague. More than 25% of organizations surveyed by Lawler et al. (2001) study reported no significant empowerment-oriented practices in their organizations (Spreitzer and Doneson, 2005). Moreover those who have introduced empowerment practices often find it difficult to build genuine employee empowerment practices (Spreitzer and Quinn, 2005). Although there have been reports of success and failure of employee empowerment there has been little rigorous research on its antecedents and its consequences (Menon, 2001). Consistent with the stream of empirical studies examining the relationship between empowerment and performance there is evidence to suggest that empowerment initiatives do not always deliver expected outcomes for organizations, management, or for individuals (Claydon and Doyle, 1996). Empowerment is an on-going process in any organization however it does not always deliver. Wilkinson (1989) argues that while there are many programs labeled as

empowerment most are designed not to give employees a very significant role in decision making; but rather to secure an enhanced employee contribution to the organization. From the foregoing discussion the debate on whether empowerment leads to improved performance is still inconclusive. Consequently, performance may be as a result of a combination of empowerment and other factors. As such there is need for further research to ascertain if indeed these factors have influence on the relationship between empowerment and performance.

Public universities in Kenya have encountered challenges in their performance such as: increase in student numbers, scarce resources, staff turnover, weak capital outlays, industrial disputes and ‘brain drain’. With increased student numbers this translates to large work-loads for the staff which leads to staff burnout and affect performance. To tackle these challenges, universities need to be strategic and to realize the importance of human resource as an important resource (asset) in order to gain competitive advantage. This is in agreement with the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory which has shifted emphasis in strategic literature away from external factors such as industry position toward internal firm resources such as human resources as a source of competitive advantage (Dunford et al., 2001). Acceptance of internal resource as a source of competitive advantage has brought legitimacy to Human Resource (HR) assertion that people are strategically important to an organizations’ success (Dunford et al., 2001). Human resource is an internal asset that creates value in the organizations’ systems to achieve desired results (Pfeffer, 2013).

The current study focused on the mediating effect of job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance of chartered public universities in Kenya.

Job-related attitudes are evaluative tendencies towards aspects of work that are based on clusters of feelings, beliefs and behavioral intentions. A number of studies in management have highlighted that employee empowerment is positively related to job satisfaction, organization commitment and performance (Wright and Kim, 2004; Kidombo, 2007; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2011). Armstrong (2006) observed that job-related attitudes as defined by job satisfaction and organization commitment has far reaching impact on organizational performance. Kidombo (2007) posits that organizations have to move from the traditional oriented approach of handling employees to commitment-oriented approach of managing people. Spreitzer et al. (1995); Yang and Choi (2009) concur that empowerment is positively correlated to job satisfaction, organizational commitment and performance.

Meyer and Allen (1991) described job satisfaction as the pleasurable feeling arising from ones' workplace. Job satisfaction is expressed as the positive emotional state that results from an employees' appraisal of their work situation. It is widely accepted that an employees' performance is closely related to the overall satisfaction of the task at hand and is therefore an invaluable concept that an organization must invest. Mullins (1999) posits that job satisfaction is associated with personal feeling of achievement, either quantitative or qualitative. Job satisfaction proponents (Meyer and Allan, 1991; Silva 2006) state that job satisfaction is affected by several variables such as: organizational factors (size, structure, leadership style, strategy, and management systems), social factors (interpersonal relationships among co-workers, culture attitude), individual factors (personality, age, qualifications, and abilities) and environmental factors (rules and regulations).

According to Saari and Judge (2004) job satisfaction is the product of the events and conditions that people experience on the job. The human resource understands the importance of the work situation as a cause of employee attitude and HR can help to influence through organizational programs employees' attitude (Saari and Judge, 2004). Previous studies reveal that some factors that enhance job satisfaction include increasing the number of skills that individuals use while performing work, enabling people to perform a job from start to finish, providing work that has a direct impact on the organization, the degree of decision making, the freedom to choose how and when work is done and increasing the amount of recognition (Weiss et al., 1996). Employees overall job satisfaction is an aggregate of what they desire and expect, and what the job offers.

Organization commitment (OC) is a set of behavioral intentions or an attitude which shows the extent to which an employee is committed to their work. Mowday et al. (1979) described organization commitment as individual's identification with, and involvement in decision making within an organization characterized by a strong belief in and acceptance of the organizations' goals and values, and a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Commitment has been examined as a determinant of job performance and organization citizenship behavior (Meyer et al. 2004). Employees who feel empowered are likely to be committed to the organization hence enhancing performance. Commitment is critical to the organization because organizations invest a lot of resources on training and development of staff hence retaining employees will lead to increased performance.

Literature reviewed on organization commitment indicate that workforce stability, low rate of

absenteeism and turnover, decreased intention to leave, and increased organizational citizenship behavior are all linked to organization commitment, and this affects performance in the organization (Steers, 1977; Mowday et al 1982; Cohen, 1993). Whilst most of organization commitment outcomes benefit the organizations, there are some benefits to the individual employees as well. A study by Begley and Czajka (1993) found that when organization commitment was low employees, felt job displeasure due to stress of the job, on the other hand when organization commitment was high they felt good about their jobs and intention to leave was low. Organization commitment is impacted on by empowerment. Empowered employees tend to perform better, work harder, efficiently and tend to stay in their jobs. Scholars (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982; Meyer and Allen, 1991; Ramlal 2004) concur that work related factors are a major determinant of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions among employees.

The Research Problem

Empowerment is critical to multi-dimensional success of the organization. This is because the human resources is one of the most reliable sources of organizational efficiency, effectiveness and performance. But though this may be true, strategies that are adopted by an institution to empower the employees can affect its performance. However, how these strategies interact with other job-related attitudes factors to influence performance is still unexplored.

Universities in Kenya are encountering challenges such as increased student numbers, rapid expansion, inadequate facilities, less number of staff, low salaries, inadequate funding, low research output among others. They have lost staff to foreign universities in what is commonly known as “brain drain” depriving the country of much needed

talent. Wosyanju et al. (2012) confirmed, for example, that Kenyatta University lost 20 lecturers in a span of just one year. Staff in these institutions have joined unions such as University Academic Staff Union (UASU) to fight for empowerment and welfare of their members. In October 2011, and September 2012, 2013 the teaching and non-teaching staff in the public universities went on strike because of delay in review of their remuneration and working conditions. The management of these challenges depends on holistic approach which should incorporate job-related attitudes, and to an extent of employee empowerment.

Previous studies (Spreitzer, 1995; Wilkinson, 1998) have tried to explain the link between employee empowerment and performance. However most of the studies have concentrated on isolated facets of empowerment. Ritzen (2011) looked at empowerment as granting formal autonomy to make decisions in the universities, but empowerment is more than autonomy. Wong et. al., (2011) in his study concluded that the four cognitions of psychological empowerment namely meaning, competence, self-determination and impact were positively related to organizational performance. While this may be true, the study did not incorporate other factors such as structures, strategies, organization commitment, culture and structural empowerment. Ngambi (2010) established that attracting and retaining skilled, knowledgeable and competent employees in tertiary educational institutions is important. For most higher education institutions have experienced challenges of low morale, skills shortage, stifled academic freedom, low salaries, high student-academic staff ratio, higher workload, and exclusion from decision-making processes (Ngambi, 2010).

While extant literature depicts advantages regarding the theoretical aspects of empowerment, there is still inconclusive evidence that empowerment achieves the benefits promised. Empowerment has been found to be positively related to performance (Spreitzer 1995; Menon 2001). At the same time empowerment has been found in some instances to have negative relationship (Hill and Hug, 2004). Researchers in employee empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995; Wilkinson, 1998; Monari, 2012) have also reported that there is still lack of concurrence on the ideal empowerment program that could empower employees. The ongoing debate on the relationship between empowerment and performance and the effect of the mediating variable of job-related attitudes on this relationship confirms the lack of satisfactory evidence to support the findings. Given the mixed research findings on the relationship between empowerment and performance there is need for further research to address this gap. Further most studies investigating aspects of the relationship have been done in different contexts, measurements, conceptualizations and methodologies. Most of the studies have been done in the western context and a few in Asia. Very few studies have been done in Kenya linking empowerment and performance. Although it is well established that a relationship exist between empowerment and performance less is known about other variables that influence the relationship. Job satisfaction and organization commitment have been found to have effect on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance. This study attempted to answer the question: What is the mediating effect of job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and performance of public Universities in Kenya.

Literature Review

Literature on employee empowerment and Job-related Attitudes was explored and hypotheses formulated

Job-Related Attitudes

Job-related attitudes are evaluative tendencies towards aspects of work based on clusters of feelings, beliefs, and behavioral intentions. An attitude refers to our opinions, beliefs, and feelings about aspects of our environment. There are two major measures of attitude at work which have the greatest potential to influence work that is job satisfaction and organization commitment. Previous studies ((Laschinger, 2009; Cohen, 2001) suggest that organization commitment has significant influence on organizational performance.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been defined in different ways by researchers. Locke (1976) defines job satisfaction as an optimistic emotional feeling that results from employees own job evaluation practiced by what is projected from the job and what was actually received. It is influenced by many factors such as working conditions, supervision, compensation, recognition and empowerment. On the hand Allen and Meyer (1990) posit that job satisfaction is a cognitive and/or affective evaluation of one's' job which can be positive or negative. Each person has a different set of goals and beliefs about their job. If an employee believes there is positive correlation between effort and performance this will result to pleasant feelings and the reward will satisfy an important need. The desire to satisfy the need will be the drive to make the effort meaningful. Hackman and Oldham (1980) job characteristics model proposes that critical psychological states such as experienced meaningfulness, feelings of responsibility, knowledge of work results influence job satisfaction.

Employee job satisfaction has been positively correlated to increased employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction, which translates to enhanced organizational performance. Researchers (Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013; Bowen and Lawler 1995) have concluded that employee empowerment and participation has a moderately positive effect on job satisfaction and productivity. Studies also from public sector reveal a positive relationship between empowerment and job satisfaction (Wright and Kim, 2004; Fernandez and Moldogaziev, 2013). Further, Miller and Monge (1986), reported a positive correlation between empowerment and job satisfaction in studies conducted in organizational settings that incorporated measures of multiple dimensions of participation. A correlation between participation and productivity was revealed when they averaged the results of field studies. Kim (2002), in studies that contrasted directive versus participative processes, found a correlation between participation and satisfaction when participants were asked to perform simple tasks. This is important because it helps support the suggestion that participation helps enrich simplified tasks. Hug and Hill (2004) concur that participation causes greater job satisfaction because employee feels more valued and trusted by management, and because the workers gains a better understanding of management difficulties by dealing with some of the same problems.

In modern day environment, job satisfaction is considered as one of the motivating factors for customer satisfaction, creation of quality and productivity. In the concept of total quality management for example it is argued that employees who possess high level satisfaction are well motivated and will be more efficient and effective. Other scholars (Robbin 2002; Armstrong, 2010) have concurred that job satisfaction leads to organization commitment and employees who are

satisfied will feel also perceive that they are empowered. Job satisfaction and intention to stay in an organization has a strong relationship which affect performance. Employees who are happy with their jobs will also be happy about their organizations hence will work harder to meet organizations needs which translates into performance.

Organization Commitment

Organizational commitment has been given considerable attention in modern research. Over the past few decades it has been conceptualized in terms of behavior and attitudes (Goulet and Frank, 2002). Commitment was defined as 'the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization' (Mowday et al., 1979). Prior research suggests that work experiences and organizational factors are antecedent to organization commitment. Researchers (Laschinger, 2009; Cohen, 2001) have posited that empowered staff are more highly committed to their organizations. Therefore management in institutions must pay more attention to the managerial behaviours of their staff and it will more likely be involved in the monitoring task.

Meyer and Allen (1990) developed a three component model on commitment that is an affective emotional attachment towards an organization which he called affective commitment; the recognition of cost associated with leaving an organization which is continuance commitment; and a moral obligation to remain with an organization which he called normative commitment. However not all forms of employee commitment are positively associated with superior performance (Meyer and Allen, 1997). An employee who has low affective and normative commitment but has high continuance commitment is unlikely to yield performance benefits. The main reason such

an employee remains with the organization is negative because the cost associated with leaving the organization is high (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

Other scholars (Silva, 1986; Wang, 2004) contend that there are more than three models of commitment as proposed by Allen and Meyer (1991). Wang (2004) proposes five general factors (normative, value, affective, active, and passive continuance) which relate to the development of employee commitment. Affinitive commitment which is an organizations interest and values are compatible with those of the employees and the employee feels appreciated Associative commitment which is organizational membership that increases employee self-esteem and status. Moral commitment is when employees perceive the organization to be on their side and the organization evokes a sense of mutual obligation in which both the organization and the employee feel a sense of responsibility to each other. Affective commitment has to do with employees deriving satisfaction from their work, and the work environment is supportive (Wang, 2004). Some researchers postulate that commitment is critical to organization successful performance, for it increases job satisfaction, decreases employee turnover and decrease intention to leave (Saif & Saleh, 2013). Committed employees work harder and add value to the organization and decrease absenteeism. In return the employees expect a conducive working environment, opportunities for development and conditions which fosters this relationship. Although various studies have been done to determine the process of commitment limited research has been carried out to assess the impact of empowerment programs on organizational commitment. Huselid (1995), in a study in United States of America found that the use of high performance work practices relating to employee skills, organization structures and employee motivation was significantly related to

low employee turnover. This is because over a long period of time organizational commitment tends to become stronger. The employee becomes attached to the organization and tends to develop positive attitudes hence no intention to leave which leads to low turnover.

Employee Empowerment, Job-Related Attitudes and Organizational Performance

Empirical studies have found that employee empowerment is positively related to a variety of work attitude and behaviours such as managerial outcomes, innovativeness, job satisfaction and organization commitment, and employee retention (Kim, 2013; Fernandes and Moldogazieva 2011; Kirkman and Rosen 1999). While most research found positive results others found inconsistent results. Kim (2013) found that empowerment does not significantly relate to organization commitment whereas Alkhatan et al (2011); Park and Rainey (2008) found that employee empowerment is positively related organization commitment. Fernandes and Moldogazieva (2011) found that empowerment practices aimed at providing employees with access to job-related knowledge and skills and granting discretion to change work process have positive impact on performance.

Although empirical and theoretical literature shows that job-related attitudes are immediate product of empowerment and antecedents of organization performance (Kim 2013), they do not mediate relationship between empowerment and performance. Other scholars allude job-related attitudes provide a mechanism through which empowerment and other mediating variables affect performance (Tutar et al. 2011; Oloko, 2008; Kidombo 2007). Job satisfaction especially has been found to have positive relationship with empowerment for it gives employees a sense of control and making work more meaningful (Bowen and Lawler 1992, 1995).

Research Methodology

The study was carried out in the twenty two chartered public universities in Kenya. The target population contained of 1,011 employees of chartered public universities in Kenya. Stratified random sampling was used to select samples from the population of the twenty two chartered public universities. To identify respondents in each university a multi-stage sampling technique was applied. Multistage sampling allows a larger number of units to be sampled at a given time.

The study used both primary and secondary data. The research mainly relied on quantitative data which was using a questionnaire. The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire with statements anchored on a Likert-type five-point scale ranging from "Not at all (1) to "to a very great extent (5)" was used to collect primary data.

Internal consistency of the research instrument was measured through Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. The study used face, content and constructs validity. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the independent variable, namely employee empowerment is .939, and job-related attitudes .925, while for organizational performance .919. All the coefficients for the instrument measured above the minimum 0.7. These Alpha coefficients compare well with those obtained from other studies (Fernandes and Moldogaziev (2011); Ming 2010; Menon 2001) in the area.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using both descriptive statistics (frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (correlation analysis, analysis of variance and regression) to analyze the data. Descriptive analysis was conducted to present main characteristics of the collected data. Inferential statistics were used to

test a number of hypothesized relations as to allow generalization of the findings to a larger population. To test the pattern of relationships between research variables as stated in the hypotheses, simple and multiple regression equations were used as required. The regression analyses provided estimate equations to predict the magnitude of the dependent variable and provide values for the predictor variables.

Research Findings

The sample response rate was 72%. According to Fowler (1984) a response rate of 72% is representative. Demographically, 40.3 per cent of the respondents were female while 59.7 male. 51.7% of respondents were non-academics and 42.5% academics. The respondents age ranged from 20-Over 50 years. Most of the staff were in the age bracket of 40-49 years. This reveals that most of the staff were young and dynamic. 32% of the respondents had worked with the institutions for between 5-10 years.

The study sought to establish the reliability of each study variable. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was used to test reliability of the instrument. The pertinent results suggested that organizational performance had Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .919. Employee empowerment scored .939 while Job-related attitudes scored .925. Different scholars have used different Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient factors cut-off points (Nunnally 1978; Hair et al., 1998). The reliability results exceeded the 0.7 level of acceptability revealing a very high degree of reliability.

Correlation analysis using Pearson's Product Moment (PPM) technique was used to establish the relationship between the main variables of the study. Table 1 summarizes the results.

Table 1: Correlations Matrix

		Employee Empowerment	Job -related Attitudes	Organizational Performance
Employee Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	520		
Job-related Attitudes	Pearson Correlation	.638**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	479	626	
Organizational Performance	Pearson Correlation	.535**	.377**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	477	567	620

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

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

Source: Primary Data (2014)

The correlation analysis with the main variables indicated positive and significant coefficients between the variables. The pertinent results from Table 1 revealed that there was significant relationship between employee empowerment and performance (r=.535, p-value<.001). Employee empowerment and

job-related attitudes relationship (r=.638, p-value<.001) was also strong. Job-related attitudes with performance (r=.377, p-value<.001). These results were all positive and statistically significant; hence supporting the fact that employee empowerment has a positive influence on organizational performance.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 2: Results for Effect of Employee Empowerment Influence on Organizational Performance

Variables	Non- Financial Performance			Financial Performance (Revenue Growth)		
	B	SE	B	B	SE	B
Constant	-224	.037		3.328	.315	
Employee Empowerment	.858	.062	.535	-2.363	-.525	-.194
	R=.535 R Square=.286 F=190.353 T=13.797			R=.193 R Squared=-.038 F=20.276 T=-4.503		

*p<0.01 *p<0.05

Source: Primary Data (2014)

The regression results showed that 28.6% of the variance in non-financial performance was explained by employee empowerment ($R^2=.286$, p-value<0.05) which was statistically significant. However the regression did not explain 71.4% of the variation in performance which was not captured in the model.

F ratio was significant ($F=190.353$, p-value<0.01). This implies that the regression of employee empowerment on non-financial performance was statically significant at p<0.0.1 level of significance. This showed that the relationship between the two variables was strong, positive and statistically significant. Equally, β coefficient indicates that employee empowerment contributes substantially to the change in the non-financial performance ($\beta=.858$, $t=13.797$, p-value<0.05). Specifically, for one unit change in employee empowerment there was a corresponding 0.858 variation in non-financial performance. The change was statistically significant. From these results, the hypothesized influence of employee empowerment on non-financial performance was confirmed.

The results above showed that employee empowerment explains variations of the relationship between employee empowerment and non-financial performance. The findings were consistent with the findings by Wilkinson (1998) which showed that empowering employees brings a lot of benefit to the organization.

The regression results for financial performance showed that 3.8% of the variation in revenue growth was explained by employee empowerment ($R^2=.038$, p-value<0.01). F ratio was significant ($F=20.276$, p<0.01). The F ratio implied that regression

model of employee empowerment on revenue growth was statistically significant at p<0.01. The t value implies that the coefficient of the model parameter is statistically significant ($\beta=-2.363$, $t=-4.503$, p-value<0.01). The β value implied that one unit change in employee empowerment was associated with -2.363 changes in revenue growth. The β value for revenue growth is affected inversely ($\beta=-2.363$), however the influence of employee empowerment on revenue growth was statistically significant. The findings were surprising and contrary to what were expected. It was difficult for the researcher to explain why employee empowerment would lead to negative revenue growth. This could probably be due to error in the methodology which could not possibly be detected.

Employee Empowerment, Job-Related Attitudes and Organizational Performance

Hypothesis 2 was tested using Stepwise regression. A composite score of Job-related attitudes was computed. The Baron and Kenny (1986) method was used to test for mediation.

Testing for mediation involved a four step model as follows:

Hypothesis 2: The influence of employee empowerment on organizational performance is mediated by job-related attitudes

Step One: Influence of Employee Empowerment on Non-Financial Performance

In this step one independent variable was regressed on the dependent variable. This was to determine whether the independent variable (employee empowerment) was a significant predictor of dependent variable (performance). The results are shown Table 3.

Table 3: Regression Results of Influence of Employee Empowerment on Non-Financial Performance

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	P Value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Step 1 (Constant)	.224	.037		6.003	.000
employee empowerment	.858	.062	.535	13.797	.000
Predictors: (Constant), Employee Empowerment Dependent Variable: Non-financial Performance					
R =.535 R ² =.286 F= 190.353 p<.001					

Step Two: Influence of Employee Empowerment on Job-Related Attitudes

The second step a regression analysis to assess the relationship between employee empowerment and Job-related Attitudes was performed. The regression analysis was to confirm if the independent variable was a significant predictor of the mediator. Model 2 presented statistical results when job-related attitudes were included in the equation. The results were presented in Table 4. The findings reveal that 40.7% (R²=.407, p<0.05) of variation in job-related attitudes is explained by employee empowerment. However, the model did not explain 59.3% of the variation in job-related attitudes, suggesting that there were other factors associated with job-related attitudes which were not captured by the model.

Table 4: Regression Results for the Effect of Employee Empowerment on Job- Related Attitudes

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	P Value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Step 2 (Constant)	.166	.024		6.989	.000
employee empowerment	.718	.040	.638	18.093	.000
Predictors: (Constant), Employee Empowerment Dependent Variable: Job-Related Attitudes					
R =.638 R ² = .407 F=327.343, p<.001					

Source: Primary Data (2014)

The regression results implied that the regression of employee empowerment on job-related attitudes is statistically significant.

Step Three Job-Related Attitudes and Non-Financial Performance

In step three, the influence of job-related attitudes on non-financial performance was tested before employee empowerment was introduced into the equation.

The results showed that job-related attitudes explains 12.1% of variation in non-financial performance ($R^2=.121$). At step 2, employee empowerment adds significantly to non-financial performance as the variation increased from .121 to .294 (R^2 change =.173, $p<.001$). The results revealed that the regression coefficients in respect to employee empowerment reduced from .858 to .509 when job-related attitudes was added to the regression equation suggesting that job-related attitude may be exerting a partial mediation effect. The overall model ($F=60.554$, $p<.001$) and individual variables are statistically significant ($\beta=.509$, $t=7.782$, $p<.001$). The result provides sufficient evidence to support the criteria for step three. Step three yielded statistically significant model with the coefficient being significant and thus the third condition was met.

Step Four Employee Empowerment, Job-Related Attitudes and Non-Financial performance

In step four, all the three variables namely: employee empowerment, job-related attitudes and non-financial performance were entered into the regression equation to test for mediation effect. The result revealed that 29.4% ($R^2=.294$) variation in non-financial performance was explained by employee empowerment and job-related attitudes. The R^2 Change=.173 $p<.001$ ($R^2 =.121$ to $R^2 = .294$ $p<0.001$). The overall model was statistically significant $F=91.288$; $p<.001$). The F ratios imply that the effect of job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and non-financial performance was statistically significant at $p\text{-value}<.001$ level of significance. The beta coefficient ($\beta=.879$, $p>0.05$) were all statistically insignificant.

In step four, the model was significant but the coefficient for Job-Related Attitudes became insignificant while that of employee empowerment remained significant. This was contrary to condition four which required that the independent variable (that is employee empowerment) should not be significant in the presence of mediating variable (that is, job-related attitudes). Thus hypothesis two was not confirmed.

The study aimed at assessing the mediation effect of job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and non-financial performance. The pertinent results are presented in Table 5.

Table5: Stepwise Regression Results for the Influence of Job-Related Attitudes on Performance and its Effect on Employee Empowerment

Regression Coefficients						
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	P-value	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Step 1: Constant	.224	.037	.535	6.003	.000	R=.535
Employee Empowerment	.858	.062		13.797	.000	R ² =.286** F=190.352
Step 2: Constant	.166	.024		6.989	.000	R=.638
Employee empowerment	.718	.040	.638	18.093	.000	R ² =.407** F=327.343
Step 3: Constant	.430	.039		10.952	.000	R=.348
Job-related Attitudes	.509	.065	.348	7.782	.000	R ² =.121** F=60.554
Step 4: Constant	.206	.041		4.995	.000	
Job-related Attitudes	.007	.076	.005	.088	.930	R=.542
Employee Empowerment	.879	.085	.539	10.361	.000	R ² =.2948** F=91.288
Model 3 Predictors: (Constant), Job- related Attitudes						**P<.05
Model 4 Predictors: (Constant), Job -related Attitudes, Employee Empowerment						
Dependent Variable: Non-financial Performance						

Source: Primary Data (2014)

The results revealed that the regression coefficients in respect to employee empowerment reduced from .858 to .509 when job-related attitudes was added to the regression equation suggesting that job-related attitude may be exerting a partial mediation effect. The overall model (F=60.554, p<.001) and individual variables are statistically significant (β =.509, t=7.782, p<.001). The result provides sufficient evidence to support the criteria for step three.

The overall model is statistically significant (F= 91.288, p<.001) and the individual variables are

statistically significant (β =.879, t=10.361, p<001). The p-value of Job-related attitudes with respect to influence of employee empowerment on non-financial performance was (p-value=.930) was therefore statistically insignificant. These results implied that there was no sufficient evidence to support the mediating effect of Job-related Attitudes

Mediating Effect of Job-related Attitudes on the Relationship between Employee Empowerment and Revenue Growth

Previous studies and theoretical reasoning anticipated a significant relationship between employee empowerment and job-related attitudes. Stepwise regression was used to test for mediating

effect as indicated above. Results were presented in Table 6.

In step one, independent variable was regressed on the dependent variable. This was to determine whether the independent variable (employee empowerment) was a significant predictor of dependent variable (revenue growth). The results are shown Table 6.

Table 6: Influence of Employee Empowerment on Revenue Growth

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	P value
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.328	.315		10.577	.000
employee empowerment	-2.363	.525	-.194	-4.503	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Empowerment					
b. Dependent Variable: Average Revenue Growth					
R=.194					
R Squared =.0380					
F = 20.276, p<.001					

Source: Primary Data (2014)

3.8% ($R^2=.038$, $p<.001$) of variation in revenue growth was explained by employee empowerment. However the model did not explain 96.2% of variation in revenue growth, suggesting that there are other factors associated with revenue growth, which were not captured in the regression model. The results indicate a statistically significant model suggesting that the regression was fit for use. The F ratios and t value were significant ($F=20.276$, $p<.001$). The coefficient for employee empowerment was also significant ($\beta = -2.363$, $p<$

$.001$) the first condition for mediation was thus met.

Step Two: Influence of Employee Empowerment and Job-Related Attitudes

The second step intended to find out the influence of Employee empowerment on Job-related Attitudes. This was to confirm that the independent variable was a significant predictor of mediator. Model 2 presented statistical results when job-related attitudes were included in the equation. Pertinent results were presented in Table 7

Table 7 Regression Results of Influence of Employee Empowerment on Job Related Attitudes

Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Step 2 (Constant)	.166	.024		6.989	.000
employee empowerment	.718	.040	.638	18.093	.000
Predictors: (Constant), Employee Empowerment					
Dependent Variable: Job-Related Attitudes					
R =.638					
R Squared= .407					
F=327.343, p<.001					

Source: Primary Data (2014)

The results indicate that the overall model was statistically significant (F=327.343, p<.001). The F value of 327.343 was statistically significant.

Testing for the influence of Job-Related Attitudes on revenue growth yielded the results presented in Table 8

Step Three: Influence of Job-related Attitude on Revenue Growth

Table 8: Regression Results for Influence of Job -related Attitudes on Revenue Growth and its Effect on Employee Empowerment
Goodness-of-Fit

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.535	.286	.285	.15767					
2	.638	.407	.406	.09938					
3	.128 ^a	.016	.014	1.36831	.016	8.537	1	513	.004
4	.198 ^b	.039	.036	1.35355	.023	12.250	1	512	.001

Overall Significance of Models (ANOVA)

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P value

Step 1: Regression	4.732	1	4.732	190.352	.000
Residual	11.809	475	.025		
Total	16.541	476			
Step 2: Regression	3.233	1	3.233	327.343	.000
Residual	4.711	477	.010		
Total	7.944	478			
Step 3: Regression	15.984	1	15.984	8.537	.004 ^a
Residual	960.481	513	1.872		
Total	976.465	514			
Step 4: Regression	38.427	2	19.213	10.487	.000 ^b
Residual	938.038	512	1.832		
Total	976.465	514			

The Individual Significance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 Constant	.224	.037	.535	6.003	.000		
Employee Empowerment	.858	.062		13.797	.000		
2 Constant	.166	.062	.636	6.989	.000		
Employee Empowerment	.718	.040		18.093	.000		
3 Constant	2.562	.226		11.354	.000		
Job-related Attitudes	-1.064	.364	-.128	-2.922	.004	1.000	1.000
4 Constant	3.341	.315		10.598	.000		
Job -related Attitudes	-.273	.425	-.033	-.642	.521	.718	1.394
Employee Empowerment	-2.126	.607	-.179	-3.500	.001	.718	1.394
Model 3 Predictors: (Constant), Job-related Attitudes							
Model 4 Predictors: (Constant), Job related Attitudes, Employee Empowerment							
Dependent Variable: Average Revenue Growth							

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 Constant	.224	.037	.535	6.003	.000		
Employee Empowerment	.858	.062		13.797	.000		
2 Constant	.166	.062	.636	6.989	.000		
Employee Empowerment	.718	.040		18.093	.000		
3 Constant	2.562	.226		11.354	.000		
Job-related Attitudes	-1.064	.364	-.128	-2.922	.004	1.000	1.000
4 Constant	3.341	.315		10.598	.000		
Job -related Attitudes	-.273	.425	-.033	-.642	.521	.718	1.394
Employee Empowerment	-2.126	.607	-.179	-3.500	.001	.718	1.394
Model 3 Predictors: (Constant), Job-related Attitudes							
Model 4 Predictors: (Constant), Job related Attitudes, Employee Empowerment							
Dependent Variable: Average Revenue Growth							

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$

Source: Primary Data (2014)

Step three yielded a statistically significant model ($R^2=.016$, $p < 0.05$). The influence of job-related attitudes was also significant ($\beta = -1.064$, $t = -2.922$, $p < 0.05$). However the relationship was negative. The third condition for mediation was met.

Step Four Employee Empowerment, Job-Related Attitudes and Financial Performance

In step four, when controlling for Job-Related Attitudes, the influence of employee empowerment on revenue growth remained statistically significant ($\beta = -2.216$, $t = -3.500$, $p < 0.05$) while the influence of job-related attitudes became insignificant ($\beta = -.273$, $t = .521$, $p > 0.05$). Specifically one unit of change in job-related attitudes was associated with -.273 unit

change in revenue growth. The betas were negative contrary to expectation; this could be due to an error in the methodology. Though the two models remained significant overall, the fourth condition in testing for mediation was not met. The findings thus did not support the hypothesis with respect to revenue growth.

Discussion

This study established that the influence of employee empowerment on both financial and non-financial performance was not mediated by job-related attitudes. Using stepwise regression analysis the study revealed that 40.7% ($R^2=.407$, $p\text{-value} < .001$) of the variation in the job-related

attitudes was explained by employee empowerment. The $F=327.353$, $t=18.093$, $\beta=.718$, $p < 0.05$ was statistically significant. Job-related attitudes explained 12.1% ($R^2=.121$, $p < 0.01$) variation in non-financial performance as explained in table above; and 3.8% ($R^2=.380$, $p < 0.01$) variation in revenue growth. As discussed earlier the hypothesis two was not supported. The results revealed there was no mediation effect.

This findings support the results of the study by Laschinger et al (1997). The said study found that empowerment had strong relationship with performance. The said study found that success to empowerment structures and control over nursing practices together accounted for 51% of organizational performance. Other results found that autonomy was significantly related to job satisfaction, organization commitment and intent to stay on the job. The findings support Kanter's (1983) contention that work empowerment is associated with employee involvement in decision making, access to information and increased performance.

The findings further corroborate the study by Kim (2013), on employee empowerment and job satisfaction in public sector. Job satisfaction arises due to employees being involved in decision making. It results from training and development to advance skills, being given challenging work and sustaining good employee relations. The study established that employee empowerment is related to a variety of work attitudes and behaviors which include job satisfaction, innovativeness, organization commitment and retention (Kim, 2013). The current study is consistent with findings obtained by Fernandes and Moldogaziev (2011). The study found positive and significant relationship between employee empowerment and job-related attitudes in public sector.

Other studies established that the extent to which management is perceived to be receptive to employees' ideas is associated with affective commitment (Allen and Meyer, 1990). The authors found that participation in decision-making strongly correlated with job satisfaction, affective commitment, and autonomy. However they further noted that although employees' contribution to decisions affecting their work improved their ability to be effective, it also added to their workload. Further literature suggest that the individuals become committed to the organization for a variety of reasons including an affective attachment to the values of the organization, a realization of the cost of leaving and a sense of obligation to the organization Meyer and Allen (1997).

Studies by Meyer and Allen (1997) confirm that there is a positive relationship between commitment and performance. Commitment is indicated by low turnover and perceived positive support of the organization. Respondents in the current study indicated that they prefer their current institutions to others and have intention to stay (mean=3.18, SD=.974). Maintenance of the relationship with the university is seen as the most important aspect to commitment. The study is in line with Meyer and Allen (1990) study that postulates that staff may stay in an organization because they like it (affective), or they feel obliged (normative conformity) or they have a good reason for the commitment (rational choice).

Findings obtained from Namasivayam and Zhao, (2007) study confirms that job satisfaction was found to be an antecedent of organization commitment and it is positively correlated to organization commitment. The authors further allude to the fact that affective commitment has a stronger direct effect on job satisfaction than normative commitment. Job satisfaction was found to account for greater variance in organization

commitment (Lambert, 2004). Overall results confirmed that employee empowerment has impact on job satisfaction and organization commitment as confirmed by the current study. However as reported earlier in the chapter the findings obtained from the current study concluded that there was no mediation effect of job-related attitudes on the influence of employee empowerment on organizational performance.

Notwithstanding the results discussed above, some authors have found that empowerment effect on organizational commitment is inconclusive. Chen and Chen (2008) and Robert et al., (2000) Humborstad (2011) conducted a study in India and Taiwan and found that some factors of empowerment correlated positively to organization commitment and others were negatively correlated. Some managers might perceive and accept empowerment to be a motivating factor of the human resource while others might find it very difficult because of their traditional norms. Empowerment can bring conflicts with traditional hierarchical and managerial rules. Humborstad (2011) contends that empowerment in the west has positive effects, but in the east in countries like China it does not seem to fit very well. The author explains these inconsistencies are due to the phenomenon of power distance.

Other empirical researchers have argued that job-related attitudes through empowerment could affect turnover intentions. Job-related attitude is a psychological response to specific organizational conditions which can lead to turnover. For example today, universities are experiencing a high turnover of staff due to rapid changes taking place. Some of the changes affecting the universities include: rapid expansion, high student enrollment, competition to name a few. For example total student enrollment in public universities in 2009 was 123,000; in 2012 the number has more than doubled. This translates

to greater workload, teaching larger classes while using limited resources. Competition from newly chartered universities and private chartered universities is another factor. The issue of migrating to other countries and other government agencies leading to brain drain is a serious challenge. Low morale evidenced by numerous strikes due to low compensation as compared to other sectors such as energy, finance, and revenue collection. Further there is little room for research due to lack in some instances of facilitation among others. These institutions have tended to use part time workers especially in academic area. As such adoption of employee empowerment is critical for it has significant relationship with job-related attitudes. Researchers (Iaffaldano and Muchinsky, 1985; Vroom, 1966) confirm job satisfaction and organizational performance relationship.

Viewed against the pertinent results, the picture is clarified. It was observed that job-related attitudes have a positive and significant impact on performance. Job satisfaction can actually be seen as a subset of employee empowerment. Job satisfaction is an indicator of organizational effectiveness and performance, and it influences organization commitment. It becomes clear that job-related attitudes are indeed part of employee empowerment especially at initial stages.

The Influence of Employee Empowerment on Performance is mediated by Job-Related Attitudes

The hypothesis stated that the influence of employee empowerment on performance is mediated by job-related attitudes. The mediating effect of job related attitude on the employee empowerment and organization performance relationship was not supported. The mediating effect was tested and it was found to be insignificant. The evidence showed that there was no mediation of job-related attitudes on the

relationship between employee empowerment and organization performance. The hypothesis was not supported. The results suggested that the job-related attitudes do not play a significant role in influencing this relationship; however there was a positive relationship between employee empowerment and job-related attitudes.

The positive and statistically significant relationship between employee empowerment and job-related attitudes and organizational performance is further supported by Kim (2013). Employees can be influenced by use of effective human resource practices including motivation in both financial and non-financial aspects of the organization. Managers should encourage employees and interact with them both on rational and emotional basis. This will lead to job satisfaction and employees will be motivated.

Some dimensions of employee empowerment were positively correlated with organization commitment. Significant predictor of job satisfaction was found to be structural empowerment. As such employees who work in institutions that provide staff development and opportunities, management support and resources, and access to information are likely to work better and have intent to stay in the universities.

In this study employee empowerment was significant predictor of job-related attitudes, thus the results showed no mediating effect by job-related attitudes on influence of employee empowerment and organizational performance. The results for financial measures yielded insignificant results as such did not meet the criteria for further investigation.

Conclusion of the Study

Job-related attitudes and empowerment were directly correlated, and the results were statistically significant. The findings obtained imply that

empowerment should lead to enhanced job-related attitudes which in turn will lead to greater performance of employees in the public universities. The results of the findings of the study revealed that the influence of employee empowerment and organization performance was not mediated by job-related attitudes contrary to other previous findings. It was found that employee empowerment mediated the relationship between job-related attitudes and organizational performance. This is a reverse of what was predicted. The employee empowerment principles of decision making, training and development, management support had the strongest impact on organizational performance. Based on the findings of the study the second hypothesis was not confirmed. Therefore there is no mediation effect of job-related attitudes on the relationship between employee empowerment and organizational performance.

Employee empowerment dimensions have varied impact on performance. To that end the emphasis of empowerment programs should be incremental. On level of importance, involvement in decision making was the most important factor. The other conclusion that can be inferred from the findings is that employee empowerment has not been entrenched in the management processes in the university. This has the effect of reducing employee motivation in higher education. Where there is job satisfaction and organization commitment the environment has to be conducive and supportive of the staff, which will lead to increased productivity and employee retention. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs will engage in their work with greater interest. The findings revealed that job-related attitudes were found not to mediate the influence of employee empowerment on organizational performance. As such further research is needed to address why this is so.

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