

Reward Systems in the Public Universities in Kenya: Implication on Retention of Teaching Staff

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Abstract

The rate at which employees quit their jobs in an organization is in many ways indicative of either misunderstandings or availability of better opportunities. Public universities in Kenya have for a long time experienced several instances of exit by qualified teaching staff. With the ever increasing demand for university education in Kenya, public universities have been destabilized due to the lack of enough qualified teaching staff. Public universities still rely on the government to reward their staff. Reliance on the government for remunerating staff has led to a situation where employees are not paid well as their counterparts in the more developed societies. Many professors have therefore decamped to other countries in search of better pay, affecting the teaching needs of Kenyan universities. The problem of academic staff retention is a global one which affects both developing and industrialized countries. This study sort to find out whether rewards offered to teaching staff by public universities affected their retention in the university. Stratified random sampling was used to sample teaching staff from three public universities who gave responses that were analyzed to give the findings. Individual university administrators from each of the three universities provided information regarding employee policies and other issues that could not be captured from the teaching staff. A sample of 153 teaching staff was selected from a population of 1000 teaching staff to give responses. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis where Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 19 was used to analyze the data. Conclusions and recommendations were made based on the analysis.

Keywords: Reward systems; Retention; Implications; Teaching staff; University

Introduction

Universities have a vital role to play in the society. A series of studies by the World Bank have established that there is a link between investments in higher education and economic development. One such study was on Staff Retention in Africa Universities: Elements of a sustainable Strategy [1]. This study was motivated by the fact that public universities were losing in significant numbers a fundamental resource in socio-economic and political development i.e. its intellectual capital. Another study, The Staff Retention and Diaspora Study commissioned by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA'S) Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE) was a follow up of the 2004 innovation study. The study focused issues of capacity erosion and strategies for staff retention in a selected number of universities. It examined the innovative ways in which these universities were trying to limit the damage caused by brain drain and staff losses [2].

Currently, academic staff retention in public universities in Kenya is still a problem. The rate at which employees quit their job in an organization is in many ways indicative of either misunderstandings or availability of better opportunities elsewhere [3]. High turnover is frequently an indicator of low morale, poor supervision, unsatisfying work and poor working conditions [4]. It may be noted that escalating labor turnover may send messages to the remaining employees that senior management does not care about the welfare and working conditions of employees [5].

Labor wastage can be a major drain on staff resources. Cowling et al. [4], observe that a more positive way of tackling labor wastage is to focus on why employees stay, rather than why they leave. As the overriding objective is to achieve high level of productivity and motivation, it is important to find out why employees

The substantial growth in the higher education sector in terms

of number of institutions and student population means that each University has to strategize for its survival in the industry. It is evident that the universities need to address the issue of staff recruitment, selection and retention seriously in order to achieve the high performance desired and long term survival [6].

A university depends for the success of its core business on its academic departments and research centers/institutes. A change in the fortune of any of them i.e. a loss in the key staff or a gain of significant new staff who wish to launch new initiatives may affect an institutions plans. Monitoring the progress of departments by retaining and recruiting key staff members including meeting their legitimate demands, giving support to applications for external funding for research or other activities, trying to meet departments voracious demands for space (Sometimes involving putting up new buildings to house new equipment or additional staff) and other resources, constitutes the major and fundamental task for the central Management of the University. Second, effective teaching and learning cannot be delivered when libraries are badly run; computer systems breakdown and teaching room facilities are inadequate. Research time will be wasted if administrative and financial systems are unreliable [7].

Given the high demand for University education in Kenya, the government and the universities have to forecast future manpower

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needs to attain their goals. Employees will always strive to move to institution where staff is rewarded well than what their current employer offers for the same job. As evidenced in strategic plans and brochures, public universities have late concentrated all their resources in catering for the student's welfare which includes construction of learning facilities forgetting the employee's needs. This study highlights the importance of rewarding employees in the success of the University policy on staff retention.

University education in Kenya is offered in public Universities, public University constituent colleges, chartered private universities, private universities with letters of Interim Authority and private universities with Certificates of Registration. All these institutions fall under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology [6]. The Ministry coordinates higher education both in public and private universities. The Universities are established through Decrees, Charters or Acts of parliament to operate with certain jurisdictions. These instruments provide universities with legal protection to pursue their major objectives, to teach, undertake research and provide service to the society [8].

The establishment and structure of public universities is basically the same. All the seven (7) public Universities were established through their institutional Act of parliament. Their constituent colleges were established in the year 2007 by a legal order under the act of the respective universities after the requisite verification of academic resources by the Commission for Higher Education (CHE). The constituent are thirteen (13) in numbers

The Situation in Public Universities in Kenya

One of the key ingredients of an organization's strength is having the right people in the right places at the right time. Manpower planning is a formal personnel management function which involves analyzing an organization's manpower needs. It attempts to ensure that an organization has the right number and kind of employees in the right places at the required time. It is also concerned with forecasting future manpower needs under changing conditions, and developing policies and systems to meet this needs [4].

The challenges that face the teaching staff include mismatch between student enrolment, infrastructure and facilities, lecture room space, offices for teaching staff, library (the national council for higher education, 2008). According to a study by Sifuna [9], the rapid expansion of university education starting from mid 1980s was never planned. Sifuna [9] continues to observe as follows: there has been no planning in university education for a considerable length of time. The last planning effort in university education was before rapid expansion stated. Since then, planning was thrown in a state of confusion. University development seems to be guided by directives from sections of the ministries of education ordinance and economic development and the chancellors of the public universities. The increasing demand for higher education is also seen to have contributed to the lack of planning.

Public universities still rely on the government to reward their staff. Reliance on the government for remunerating staff has led to a situation where employees are not paid well as their counterparts in the more developed societies. Many professors have therefore decamped to other countries in search of better pay, affecting the teaching needs of Kenyan universities.

Demand for better pay has often let to standoffs between the governments and the Universities Academic Staff Union-UASU.

Public universities in Kenya face increasing competition from other universities in the region and oversee and they appear not able to halt the brain drain [10]. To address the issue of brain drain, the government is committed to implementing measures that would ensure expansion of the absorptive capacity of the domestic labor market and retention of a critical mass of skilled personnel within the economy [11].

Statement of Research Problem

Okoth [12], states that the University is a community of various categories of workers bound together by the same vision and mission and hence geared towards achieving a common goal, that of academic excellence, research and dissemination of knowledge as well as social development. Central to the realization of the University education goals and objectives are the academic staffs whose roles are crucial.

The problem of academic staff retention is a global one which affects both developing and industrialized countries [1]. The Association of African Universities (AAU) conference of 1995 specifically and heavily censored Nigeria, Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire among other countries where high education appears to have suffered most due to underfunding and subsequent reduction of expenditure on a variety of educational inputs. In recent times, low staff retention, high level of staff turnover and brain have been identified as the main problems confronting most African Universities Kenya inclusive [1]. In a study by the World Bank "Retaining Teaching Capacity in African University" (World Bank 1995), it was estimated that some 23,000 qualified academic staff are emigrating from Africa each year in search of better working conditions in developed countries.

The Government of Kenya recognizes the retention problem and that is why a few years ago, the government appointed the universities inspection committee which made several observations the key one being the understaffing in critical disciplines that sadly have not been implemented to date [13]. The problem of universities spending huge sums of money on staff (in terms of recruitment, selection, placement, induction, training and development) only to lose them to other organizations and countries that offer better rewards cannot be understated. There is need to ensure such expenses are minimized by a positive policy on manpower retention and controlling labor turnover. Rewarding staff over and above what competitors pay would help retain staff. As it stands, Universities are faced with inadequate teaching staff and so cannot afford to lose them.

This study sought to establish the reward factors that affect retention of teaching staff in public universities and the driving factors that affect staff exit and recommend appropriate measures to ensure that Universities retain teaching staff for longer duration.

Research Objectives

General objective

The general objective of this study was to determine the effect of reward systems on retention of teaching staff in public universities in Kenya.

Specific objectives

- i. To identify factors used to attract and retain teaching staff in the University
- ii. To evaluate the factors of retention in the University
- iii. To determine the teaching staff retention trend in public universities

- iv. To determine the relationship between reward systems and teaching staff retention.

Research questions

- i. Which factors attracted and retained teaching staff in the University
- ii. Which retention factors were common in the University?
- iii. What is the staff retention trend experienced in public universities.
- iv. What is relationship between reward systems and teaching staff retention.

Scope and limitations

The study was carried out in three (3) public universities for five months from January 2015 to May, 2015. Under the inclusion-exclusion criteria, the University of Nairobi (U.o.N) was selected because of its urban setting and it is the oldest. Maseno University was selected based on its semi-urban setting and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST) was chosen on the basis of being the youngest public University having been established in the year 2007.

The study only focused on teaching staff in main campuses and not in satellite campuses and study centers. It was assumed that conditions in the main campuses were representative of those in constituent and satellite campuses. Generalization may therefore be limited to main campuses only.

Research design

This study adopted a descriptive research design since it examined a social issue that existed in public universities. Kothari [14] states that descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual or a group. The study also used co-relation design that sought to explain the relationship between reward systems and staff retention.

Sampling technique

Stratified sampling technique was used in this study. According to Kothari [14], under stratified sampling, the population is divided into several sub populations that are individually more homogenous than the total population. This approach was appropriate as the teaching staff could be easily stratified into designations such as Professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, assistant lecturers, research fellows, tutorial fellows and graduate assistants. After stratification, convenience sampling was used to select respondents who belonged to any of the stated designations. Convenience sampling involves purposive selection of the population elements for inclusion in the sample based on ease of access.

Sampling size

The sample for this study consisted of three (3) administrators who were not used in the final analysis but to gather information regarding the organizational factors that affect reward and retention in the individual universities and one hundred and fifty three (153) teaching staff from the three public universities. This constitutes 15.3% of the target population of one thousand (1000) teaching staff. According to Ary et al. and Gay, 10% to 20% of the population is considered acceptable in a descriptive research. Out of the sample size of 153 (100%), 62 (40.5%) respondents were targeted from the University of Nairobi, 54 (35.3%) from Maseno University and 37 (24.2%) from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.

The purpose of the administrators was to provide information on the policies in place regarding staff retention, reward, and records of exit interviews where such were conducted in the universities. Under the inclusion exclusion criteria, University of Nairobi was selected due to its urban setting and being the first public university in Kenya, Maseno University was selected due to its semi-urban setting and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology was selected being the youngest public university having been established in 2007.

Data collection instruments and procedure

Data was collected from respondents in the universities' main campuses as these represent as similar situation in their branches. The use of questionnaires and interviews schedules was employed. Two set of Questionnaires were used. The first set was administered to individual teaching staff and sort to collect data regarding what attracted them to the universities they work in, probable reasons that made their colleagues who have left the universities they are in to leave, ratings of the current rewards in the university and areas of improvement for retention purposes. The second set of questionnaires was administered to administrators and sort to gather information regarding the organizational factors that affect reward and retention in the individual universities. Both open and closed ended questions were used. Questionnaires provided an opportunity for respondents to answer the questions at their own time and speed [15]. Unstructured interviews were used to collect data from university administrators. This method gave the researchers an opportunity to probe the respondents and also gave the respondents an opportunity to give information on aspects that may not have been captured in the questionnaires. Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Both interviews and questionnaires were conducted by the researchers. The researchers used face to face interview method. Questionnaires were administered in the three universities using a drop and pick method.

Validity and reliability

Test-retest method was used to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments. The same instrument was administered more than once under identical conditions and the results compared. The instruments were given to a sample of 20 respondents. The responses were scored to give a set of scores T1. After two weeks, the same instruments were administered to the same sample and their responses scored to give another set of score T2. Scores were co-related using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. This gave a reliability coefficient of 0.70 which is acceptable.

Data Analysis, Presentation, Interpretation and Discussion

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in data analysis where Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 19 was used to analyze the data. Descriptive data was presented in form of tables, graphs and charts. In inferential statistics, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between reward systems and staff retention. Out of the 153 (100%) questionnaires administered to respondents, 150 (98%) were fully completed and returned and 3 (2%) were not returned by respondents due to various reasons.

Characteristics of Universities

The characteristics discussed here are gender, age, designation, CBA allowances and other benefits. It was found out that majority of the staff 99 (66%) both teaching and administrative are male. The female staff were only 51 (34%). This may be attributed to the fact that

universities source staff externally through advertisements and those are interested and qualify apply for the positions and few women apply. As such, it is therefore hard to recruit more female staff when only a few of them apply for the positions. Consequently, universities retain more male employees compared to their female counterparts given that they occupy majority of the positions in the universities. Table 1 below shows the gender distribution per university.

From the Table 1 above, the university of Nairobi had 37 (59.7%) of her staff being male and 25 (40.3%) female, Maseno University had 35 (64.8%) male staff and 19 (35.2%) female staff, while Masinde Muliro University had 25 (73.5%) male staff and only 9 (26.5%). University of Nairobi had more gender balanced staff compared to the other two universities. This can be attributed to the fact that its location in the Kenya's capital city made it to access a large pool of qualified individuals from both genders who had migrated to the urban in search of jobs. As such it was easy for the university to implement the 1/3rd gender rule in its recruitment. Being in a rural set up, Maseno university's gender parity was attributed to the fact that it was unlikely to attract a large pool of qualified employees especially women to select from as majority of these people were in urban centers where job opportunities were easy to get. Masinde Muliro University's gender parity might be attributed to its location in a small town – Kakamega, as the presence of other higher learning institutions was minimal. Most people usually look for locations where they can part time in the neighbourhood and offer consultancy services to make more money.

The results of this study indicates that a large number of the university staff 50 (33.3%) were in the age bracket of 41-50 years. Staff in the age bracket of 31-40 years comprised of 40 (26.7%). Those in the age bracket of 51-60 years were 37 (24.7%), those in age bracket 61-70 were 12 (8%) while those in the age group of 71-80 years were 5 (3.3%). The age group of 21-30 years accounted for 6 (4%). Table 2 below shows the distribution of respondents by age. The universities were more likely to retain staff in the age brackets of 41-50 years and 51-60 years because people in these age groups tended to be more stable in their careers. They were unlikely to retain those in the age bracket of 31-40 years because they were very mobile and shifted jobs as and when opportunities arose. They liked exploring and were high risk takers. The only way to retain them was for the universities to offer rewards that were better than what competitors offered.

Gender	MMUST Employees	UoN Employees	M U Employees
Male	37 (59.7%)	35 (64.8%)	25 (73.5%)
Female	25 (40.3%)	19 (35.2%)	9 (26.5%)
Total	62 (100%)	54 (100%)	34 (100%)

Source: Research Data (2015)

Table 1: Gender Distribution per University.

Age (Years)	University of Nairobi Percentage	Maseno University Percentage	MasindeMuliro University Percentage
21-30	0	11.1	11.8
31-40	4.8	20.3	26.5
41-50	27.4	31.5	41.1
51-60	41.9	22.2	8.8
61-70	19.4	9.3	5.9
71-80	6.5	5.6	5.9
Total	100	100	100

Source: Research Data (2015)

Table 2: Respondents age per University.

Results of respondents' age per university indicate that the University of Nairobi had no young staff in the age bracket 21-30 years while Maseno University had 6 (11.1%) and Masinde Muliro University had 4 (11.8%) of its employees falling in this age bracket. Staff in the age bracket of 31-40 years at the University of Nairobi were 3 (4.8%), Maseno University and Masinde Muliro had 11 (20.3%) and 9 (26.5%) respectively of employees falling into this age bracket. Those in the age bracket of 41-50 years were 17 (27.4%), 17 (31.5%) and 14 (41.1%) in the University of Nairobi, Maseno University and Masinde Muliro University respectively. Age bracket of 51-60 years were 26 (41.9%) in the University of Nairobi, 12 (22.2%) in Maseno University and 3 (8.8%) Masinde Muliro University. Those in the age bracket of 61-70 years at the University of Nairobi were 12 (19.4%), while Maseno University and Masinde Muliro had 5 (9.3%) and 2 (5.9%) respectively. Finally those in the age group of 71-80 years were 4 (6.5%) in the University of Nairobi, 3 (5.6%) in Maseno University and 2 (5.9%) in Masinde Muliro University. Table 2 below, shows respondents' age per University.

From the data, majority of employees in the University of Nairobi are aged between 41 and 70 years while majority of employees in both Maseno and Masinde Muliro Universities are aged between 31 and 60 years. This can be attributed to the fact that Universities usually engage employees who are well trained and experienced in their fields of study. These are most likely to be above 30 years old. Young aged employees (26.5%) were observed to be many in Masinde Muliro University. This may be due to the University's training policy where first degree graduates were engaged. The presence of more middle aged employees in Maseno and Masinde Muliro University may be as a result of the ease of moving upwards through promotions in these universities than at the University of Nairobi where their professors were more established.

In terms of designation, Lecturers were the majority 44 (29.3%) followed by Assistant Lecturers 34 (22.7%), Associate Professors 26 (17.3%), Senior Lecturers 21 (14%), Professors 10 (6.7%), Research Staff 9 (6%), Graduate Assistants 6 (4%). There were more Lecturers and Assistant Lecturers because majority of the employees joined universities as Assistant Lecturers and grow within the Universities to higher levels. High enrollment of students especially at undergraduate and post graduate levels may have also contributed to increase of employees in these positions.

There were few Professors since it took many years for a staff to grow to the level of a Professor. The huge load of teaching had made staff to concentrate on teaching resulting on few Research Staff in the universities. The availability of many Lecturers made it easy to retain staff in the University as Lecturers were more willing to progress in their career and fill senior positions. An appropriate reward was a sure way of retaining them in the university.

Professors were 5 (8.1%), at the University of Nairobi, 3 (5.6%) at Maseno University and 2 (5.9%) at Masinde Muliro University. Associate Professors were 14 (22.6%), 8 (14.8%) and 4 (11.8%) at the U.o.N, Maseno University and Masinde Muliro University respectively. There were 8 (12.9%) Senior Lecturers at the U.o.N, 7 (13%) at Maseno University and 6 (17.6%) at Masinde Muliro University. Lecturers were 9 (14.5%) at the U.o.N, 14 (25.9%) at Maseno and 21 (61.8%) at Masinde Muliro University with Assistant Lecturers being 9 (14.5%) at the U.o.N, 9 (16.7%) at Maseno and 16 (47.1%) at Masinde Muliro University. Graduate Assistants at the U.o.N were 1 (1.6%), at Maseno University they were 2 (3.7%) and 3 (8.8%) at Masinde Muliro University. There were no Research Assistants at Maseno University

and Masinde Muliro University while U.o.N had 9 (14.5%) of its staff being Research Assistants (Figure 1).

Employees were attracted to a University by various factors which ranged from its pay, benefits offered, the general working environment in the University, university location, etc.

Majority of the employees 61 (40.7%) were attracted by the working environment within the university. Pay and benefits attracted 30 (20%) and 34 (22.7%) of the workers respectively. The location of the University attracted 14 (9.3%) of the University teaching staff. It can be noted that most of the staff were not attracted to their current employer because of financial benefits. This might be due to the fact that these professionals and were already working and earning where they were. As such they were looking for non monetary gains some of which are hard to get from some employers.

The working environment topped the factors that contributed to attraction of staff in all the three universities at 25 (40.3%) in U.o.N, 22 (42.3%) in Maseno University and 13 (38.2%) in Masinde Muliro University. Pay attracted 13 (21%) in U.o.N, none of the respondents considered pay as a reason to go for a job in Maseno University and 9 (26.5%) acknowledge being attracted at Masinde Muliro University because of pay. Benefits offered was considered as a factor that would attract staff by 21 (33.9%) in U.o.N, 9 (16.7%) in Maseno University and 3 (8.8%) in Masinde Muliro University. The location of the University would attract only 2 (3.2%) of staff in U.o.N, 19 (35.2%) in Maseno University and 3 (8.8%) in Masinde Muliro University. In all the Universities, respondents were attracted based on the working environment followed by benefits, pay and other factors.

An analysis of factors that determined whether a staff would stay or leave a university after accepting an appointment that were considered in this study included, induction of new employees, provision of equipped office space, provision of medical services, communication with staff, training and development, promotion, pay, and benefits. This is illustrated in Table 3 below.

Findings from individual universities revealed that U.o.N conducted induction for its new employees immediately they reported on duty. Maseno University and Masinde Muliro University did not have an induction policy thus did not conduct induction immediately new employees reported. Besides work related issues current and new employees used this opportunity to socialize so as to fit in the

Factor	Excellent (%)	Very Good (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)	Total (%)
Induction	Nil	3.6	31.5	50.5	14.4	100
Provision of Equipped Office	Nil	2.7	25.2	51.4	20.7	100
Provision of Medical Services	Nil	8.2	39.1	49.1	3.6	100
Communication with Staff	Nil	3.6	37.8	45.9	12.7	100
Fairness and Consistency in Promotion	Nil	2.7	38.7	46.8	11.8	100
Training, Development and Promotion	0.9	1.8	35.1	50.5	11.7	100
Pay	0.9	3.6	35.1	53.2	7.2	100
Benefits	Nil	5.5	24.8	57.8	11.9	100

Source: Research Data (2015)

Table 3: Retention Factors in Universities.

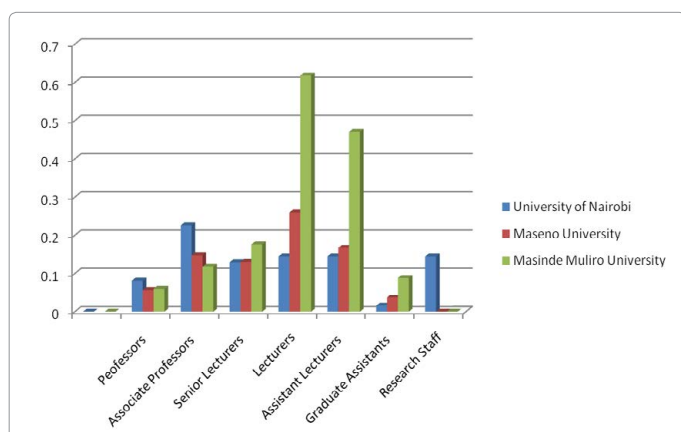
University. In the three universities, induction scored 50.5% fair and 31.5% good as per individual rating.

All universities endeavored to provide equipped offices for their employees. This space was used to prepare teaching materials, mark scripts and supervise research students. Generally, the office state of the art technology scored 51.4% fair and 25.2% good. 20.7% of respondents rated this factor as poor. 49.1% of respondents reported that medical service provision was fair, 39.1% reported that it was good and 8.2% reported that it was very good. Only 3.6% felt that it was poor. Universities had appointed doctors and hospitals that catered for the medical needs of staff and their dependants. Universities provided for full medical cover.

In terms of communication 12.7% reported that communication within the university was poor, 45.9% reported it was fair, and 37.8% reported that communication system was good while 3.6% reported that the system was very good. Universities communicated to staff through departmental heads. In rare occasions they could put notices on notice boards. Depending on the communication skills of the departmental heads, staff would find communication easier or hard. Where universities posted information on the website, staff were provided with internet facilities for accessing the information.

Data from questionnaires administered to university administrators revealed that besides the policy to sponsor their staff for training, universities also sponsored their spouses and children as a means of retaining the staff in the institution. All the universities offered partial sponsorship for further studies of staff and their dependants. In order to benefit from the new skills acquired and the cost incurred on training, the university had all staff bonded for a period of at least three years. This helped retain staff for the stipulated period. However, the universities had no mechanism in place to benefit from those whom it trained without giving study leave. It was found that when some staff reported back after successfully completing their studies, they expected to be promoted immediately. However, universities did not meet this expectation. What universities did was to award salary increment which majority of the staff found unsatisfactory. As a result members of staff resigned and moved out at the slightest opportunity. Eligibility for study leave took long at the U.o.N necessitating staff to leave the university purely for purposes of developing themselves. A staff engaged in Maseno at the same time as one engaged at the U.o.N, was capable of commencing and completing studies one at the U.o.N commenced studies.

Consistency and fairness in promotions was considered fare by 46.8% of the teaching staff and good by 38.7% of the staff. However,



Source: Research Data (2015)

Figure 1: Respondents Designation per University.

2.7% of the respondents reported that it was very good. The promotion policy for teaching staff was very clear to all the staff. The only hiccup was the staff establishment and the finances required to pay the staff which occasionally hindered promotion. Staff at MMUST enjoyed the benefit of being paid for time not worked while on study leave. Pursuing further studies at MMUST was therefore a motivation to the current staff provided they had worked for two years uninterrupted. Married staff whose spouses were interested in pursuing further studies found themselves more comfortable at the U.o.N and Maseno where they were sponsored and not at MMUST where they were not sponsored. The aged staff at Maseno was more advantaged as the number of children sponsored at university level was more (five) compared to a lesser number (two) at the U.o.N and an even lesser number (one) at MMUST.

53.2% respondents reported that pay was fair with 35.1% reporting that it was good. Pay in the university was uniform except for the entry point in a salary scale. The annual increment was also uniform for all staff in a designation. Benefits scored 57.8% fair and 24.8% good. The benefits staff enjoyed included both monetary and non monetary. When university generated income, staff received bonuses from the proceeds. Non monetary benefits included insurance cover provided by the university. Benefits differed based on other responsibilities performed by staff e.g. all staff received uniform car allowances but departmental heads received more than the rest of the staff. They were also entitled to responsibility allowances, telephone allowances and entertainment allowances.

An analysis into the movement of staff in and out of the universities within the departments in the U.o.N, had 68.6% respondents reporting that between 1-5 new employees had joined their department within one year and 78.4% of the respondents reported that between 1-5 current employees had left the department within one year. In the same category, 64.7% respondents in Maseno reporting that between 1-5 new employees had joined their department within one year and 88.2% respondents reported that between 1-5 current employees had left the department within one year. At MMUST 69% of the respondents reported that between 1-5 new employees had joined their department within one year and 59.1% of respondents reported that between 1-5 current employees had left the department within one year. The highest number of employees that either joined or left a given department was between 1-5. It was rare to find over ten employees leaving or joining a department within a period of one year though a few respondents reported its possibility at the U.o.N and MMUST. In conclusion, universities might be engaged in a continuous recruitment exercise as staff join while the same number leaves within the year. Table 4 illustrates the retention of teaching staff per university.

An analysis into the employee duration of service in the university found out that most staff stayed between 1-5 years. At the U.o.N, 42.0% stayed for between 1-5 years before moving out while in Maseno University 35.3% of staff stayed for between 1-5 years before moving out and 56.8% stayed for between 1-5 years before moving out as shown in Table 5 below. After this period staff moved out in pursuit of career progression and promotion. In most cases staff stayed as they underwent further studies which lasted for two to three years. The U.o.N had retained more staff due to their age. Behavioural research has shown that older employees tend to develop a better fit between personal needs and their jobs than younger employees which justifies their stay in the organization. Table 5 shows Staff duration of service per University.

The major reason why staff left the university was career progression

University of Nairobi			
Range of Number of Staff	Percentage of staff joining	Percentage of staff leaving	Percentage of staff being retained
Less than 1 year	13.7%	9.8%	3.9%
1-5	68.6%	78.4%	-9.8%
6-10	17.6%	9.8%	7.8%
Over 10	None	2.0%	-2.0%
Maseno University			
Less than 1 year	29.4%	11.8%	17.7%
1-5	64.7%	88.2%	-23.5%
6-10	5.9%	None	5.9%
Over 10	None	None	None
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology			
Less than 1 year	14.3%	36.4%	-22.1%
1-5	69.0%	59.1%	9.9%
6-10	14.3%	2.3%	12%
Over 10	2.4%	2.3%	0.1%

Source: Research Data (2015)

Table 4: Retention of Teaching Staff per university.

Years	University of Nairobi	Maseno University	Masinde Muliro University
Less than 1 year	4.0	11.8	11.4
1-5	42.0	35.3	56.8
6-10	34.0	35.3	27.3
Over 10	20.0	17.6	4.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Research Data (2015)

Table 5: Staff duration of service per University.

S/No	Variables	U.o.N Percentage	Maseno University Percentage	Masinde Muliro University Percentage
1	Career Progression	58.5	28.6	40.0
2	Promotion	22.0	57.1	22.9
3	Poor working Conditions	14.6	7.1	17.1
4	Others	4.9	7.2	20
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Research Data (2015)

Table 6: Reasons for exit per University.

(46.7%) followed by promotion (27.8%) then poor working conditions (Table 6).

Majority of staff 58.5% and 40.0% left the U.o.N and MMUST respectively due to career progression while majority (57.1%) left Maseno due to promotion issues. Very few staff (7.1%) left Maseno due to poor working conditions. Poor working conditions was higher (17.1%) at MMUST followed by the U.o.N at 14.6%. other factors that contributed to exit of staff recorded 4.9% at the U.o.N, 7.2% at Maseno University and 20% at MMUST.

Universities did not have a succession plan in place thus making it hard for staff to stay with them longer. Staff interested in career progression ought to be trained early so as to prepare them for senior positions. In the university, staff did not leave the service at the mandatory age of retirement but instead were engaged on contract terms.

Information from individual universities revealed that U.o.N and Maseno University did not conduct exit interviews whenever staff resigned. At MMUST staff that resigned were required to fill exit

interview forms but these are never analyzed. As a result no university had information why staff exit making them unable to correct the situation.

The relationship between reward systems and retention of teaching staff is important as it will enhance proper and appropriate decision making in a bid to retain teaching staff in a university. The Pearson Correlation coefficient between retention and monetary rewards with a correlation of 0.222 and a *p* value of 0.020 indicate that there is a significant relationship between teaching staff retention and monetary rewards. It is clear that staff would only provide services in exchange of money. As such, universities have to pay their staff competitively in order to retain the current staff and attract more (Table 7).

The Pearson Correlation of 0.199 with a *p* value of 0.038 indicates that there is a significant relationship between teaching staff retention and non monetary rewards (Table 8). Employees who are appreciated and recognized at work by their bosses are likely to stay longer in the institution than those who are not recognized. This means that employees require more for their efforts than money.

Though monetary rewards are generally significant for teaching staff retention, the individual monetary variables present a different scenario as shown in Table 9 below. Salary is not significant (*p* value of 0.781) because all university teaching staff in various designations fall in the same salary scale. The differences within the salary scale are minor thus have no effects on retention. Increased income received as a result of promotion is not significant (*p* value of 0.097) since a promotion policy is clearly stipulated in the universities.

Money received by staff as allowances and benefits is significant (*p* value of 0.041 and *p* value of 0.003) respectively for their retention in

		Retention	Monetary Rewards
Retention	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.222* .020
Monetary Rewards	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.222* .020	1

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

Table 7: Pearson Correlation coefficient between retention and monetary rewards.

		Retention	Monetary Rewards
Retention	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.199* .083
Monetary Rewards	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.199* .038	1

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

Table 8: Pearson Correlation coefficient between retention and non monetary rewards.

Monetary Variables	Retention Pearson Correlation Value Probability Value	Remarks
Salary	0.027 0.781	Not Significant
Allowances	0.197 0.041	Significant
Benefits	0.286 0.003	Significant
Promotion	0.16 0.097	Not Significant

Key if probability value is <0.05 significant

Table 9: Pearson Correlation coefficient between retention and monetary variables.

the university. Allowances received include monies given to heads of departments such as responsibility, car and entertainment allowances that other staff members are not entitled to. Benefits include free access to parking facilities, subsidized cafeteria services, loans at special rates and sports facilities. Benefits are significant given that they are not based on ones performance and as such every employee has a privilege to access them.

It was also found out that non monetary rewards were significant in retaining teaching staff. Individual breakdown of the variables indicate that physical environment which entails the location of the university and its surrounding environment and office space are not significant (*p* value of 0.702 and *p* value of 0.274) respectively for teaching staff retention. Since public universities are spread all over the country, this variable does not affect retention as one is capable of working in an environment of their choice. As long as teaching staff are supplied with teaching materials the way a university is planned does not matter to them so much because they are concerned with their students whom they meet in class. Besides teaching they go to the libraries where they carry out research. As such an office space would not be of major concern to them unless they are heading a department.

From Table 10 below, Social environment and provision of medical services are significant (*p* value of 0.030 and *p* value of 0.035) respectively for teaching staff retention in the university. The social environment consists of the interaction with others in the university. Employees need to fit within the university system they work in. where staff induction was done and good management was evident, staff tended to stay longer than where staff had conflicts with management and colleagues. Staff want to be assured of their medical care while at work. This is important as they or their dependants can fall sick. Due to its significance, all the three universities endeavored to provide the medical cover for their staff.

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to find out whether rewards offered to teaching staff by public universities affected their retention in the university. Stratified teaching staff sampled from three public universities gave responses that were analyzed to give the findings. The individual university administrators provided information regarding employee policies and other issues that could not be captured from the teaching staff. All the universities engaged new staff and lost current staff as well.

Majority of the staff recruited were people who were already in employment (90.9%) with majority coming from non university institutions (52.7%). Working environment was identified as a factor that attracted and retained majority of the workers.

Monetary Variables	Retention Pearson Correlation Value Probability Value	Remarks
Physical Environment	0.037 0.702	Not Significant
Office Space	0.106 0.274	Not Significant
Social Environment	0.208 0.030	Significant
Medical Services	0.203 0.035	Significant

Key if probability value is <0.05 significant

Table 10: Pearson Correlation coefficient between retention and non monetary variables.

The common factors of retention were on training and medical services variables. All the universities had almost similar training policies in operation. The recruitment and retention at the U.o.N was steadily increasing with retention being on the increase at 25% in 2007 and 81% in 2013 while that of MMUST presented a fluctuating scenario. At the departmental level, majority of staff reported that between 1-5 new staff joined their department with the same number of staff leaving within the same year.

The following conclusions have been made from this study:

All the universities trained their staff but were not keen on retaining them through promotion. As a result they lost staff immediately they completed their studies. 27.8% of the staff left for promotion while 46.7% left for career progression. The promotion policies were not strictly adhered to due to organizational factors such as lack of enough funds to pay promoted staff. They therefore stayed in the university for a period between 1-5 years (46.8%) then left. Incidentally, this is the same duration it took a staff to complete studies.

The study recommends the adoption of continuous review of teaching staff rewards in order to retain them. The rewards need not to be only monetary since finance is easily copied. Financial rewards should be based on economic status of the university's location. For instance, the value of cash given in Nairobi is different from the same amount given to staff in Kakamega due to the economic status of the two towns. Furthermore, universities engage staff who are already teaching and getting paid. This cadre of employees is looking for attractive non financial rewards that their current employer is not paying and which cannot be copied easily.

Communication systems were found to be ineffective in the university. This study recommends establishment of effective and efficient methods of communication to be established to ensure easy and effective communication to all stakeholders on the plans of the universities.

It is also recommended that a succession and promotion strategy be established and communicated clearly to staff so as to avoid resignation due to lack of promotion. Staff who remain working as their colleagues are on study leave should be rewarded for working hard while their colleagues are away.

Public universities do not conduct exit interviews and where they do the data is never analyzed. There is need to conduct exit interviews and analyze the data from exit interviews to find the real causes of turnover. Such interviews should be considered as a powerful tool to identify, monitor, analyze and correct trouble within the universities. Losing an employee might just be as important as getting one.

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