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Assessing the Relationship between Work-Place Norms and Employee Work Outcomes among Lecturers in Public Universities: the Moderating Effect of Remuneration

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Abstract:

Work place norms have been considered among the Organizational work life programmes that can be used to enhance employee quality work life. The study sought to assess the moderating effect of remuneration on the relationship between Work life policies and Work place norms among lecturers in public universities in Kenya. The target population comprised of 6299 full time lecturers in public Universities, from which a sample of 391 lecturers was chosen by the use of the multi-stage sampling. Primary data was collected by use of a questionnaire which had a 5 scale Likert. The Correlational survey design was used. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics whereby correlation analysis and linear regression were used. The study found that Work place norms exist in public universities in Kenya and that they built positive work attitudes. However, this did not automatically lead to improved performance. It was also found that Lecturers considered their compensation as inadequate and they took additional work when they had time off work to supplement their income. Remuneration was also found to have a moderating effect on the relationship between Work place norms and Employee work outcomes. The researcher recommends that Human Resource Policies to be accompanied by controls that ensure that the intended effect is realized.

Keywords: *Correlation survey design, Remuneration, Work outcomes, Work place norms*

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Research Gap

A substantial number of employees experience an imbalance of work and family life. This is according to the Human Solutions Report (Lowe, 2007), that attributes it to the fact that dual-earner families have increased over time, so have expectations of job performance. Thus, work-life balance has become both a dream and a mission to achieve. Clark (2001) notes that the relationship synergy between work and home may be a very rare occurrence. Hill, Bahniuk, Dobos, & Rouner, (2001); Lecturers in public universities in Kenya are no exception in this.

Due to this, a number of Organizations have therefore sought to have their employees realize this balance. Duxbury and Higgins (2001) assert that the realization of work and family balance by employees are both an issue for the employer and the employee which should be enhanced from the two fronts. Lowe (2007) says that individual employee has the capability to reduce work-life conflicts through perceived control and attitudes toward work. Similarly, Redmond et al., (2006) asserts that personal fulfillment is important inside work and that satisfaction outside work may enhance employees' contribution to work.

The importance of work life balance on productivity cannot be overemphasized. An online survey that sought to determine Work -Life Balance and intention to leave the organization among Academics in Malaysian Public Higher Education Institutions on three Public Universities among 1078 lecturers found that perceived work-life balance led to job satisfaction and therefore employee retention (Noor, 2011). Similarly, a research on The business case for firm-level work-life balance policies by Yasbek (2004) in New Zealand found that Work-life balance can affect business performance through reduction of costs by improving staff retention rates, negative spill-overs from workers' lives, and minimizing stress thereby leading to productivity gains.

Among the Organizational work life programmes adopted by Public Universities in Kenya are Work place norms. These are an implied rather than stated way of doing things. They are collectively agreed-upon behaviours that prescribe the ways in which members of an organization should approach their work and interact with one another (Hammer et al, 2004). They arise from the

informal organization. Work place norms, although social in nature, they determine the manner in which the employees relate and interact with one another in work related matters. They have been found to have a positive impact on the said balance. (Md-Sidin, Sambasivan, & Ismail, 2010). They are realized in the form of social support and the Organizations culture.

Social support is a non - formal social network that gives people an opportunity to relay their emotional concerns or empathy, practical assistance, informational support or appraisal (Md-Sidin et al, 2010). It has been found that increased social support leads to increased health and well-being (Md-Sidin et al, 2010). Likewise, Lowe (2005) also underscores the importance of strong employment relationships in the achievement of work-life balance. Employees with social support create a buffering effect which helps them to cope with work-family conflict (Martins et al, 2002; Cinamon & Rich, 2010). Employers can enhance Social support by formally recognizing the importance of an employee's family by supporting other activities not directly related to career success (Boles, Johnston, & Hair, 1997). Perceived organizational support can also be used as an indicator of favorable treatment, prompting reciprocal positive actions from employees. This is evident in public universities as lecturers are supportive in social life by being allowed to belong to employee welfare schemes, and even at work where 'local arrangements' seek to provide work related support (UON staff handbook, 2006).

The nature of the Organization's culture also greatly influences Work place norms. A strong organizational culture determines employee behavior. It inspires employee decisions, provides fixed points of reference and stability and aligns employees with diverse interests around shared goals (Houston, 2005). It is worth noting that work life balance programs cannot yield expected results unless the organizational culture supports use of work-life balance programs (Porter & Ayman, 2010). Previous research has shown that having supportive work-family culture and informal support greatly help deal work-family conflict (Major & Germano, 2006).

However, it has also been found that employees may not always utilize some of the Work-life benefits provided at work (Thompson et al, 1999). Some may not be aware of the policies on offer, Pleck, 1989, cited in Thomas & Ganster, 1995), while others may fear the perception they are not committed to work when they take advantage of the policies more often (Porter & Ayman, 2010). It is worth noting that the activities people engage in during the 'free' time greatly determines if the balance will be realized or not. Research on how workers spend their non-work time when Organizational work life programmes are put in place showed that some employees spend this time with their friends and family, learning new skills, and relaxing (Bradley et al, 2008). However, others may engage in activities that do not make them realize the expected balance for example, taking up additional jobs when away from work (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). This is so among lecturers in Kenyan public universities who consider themselves underpaid.

Remuneration is a key component in employment since most employees work to earn an income. Wright & Parker (as cited by Chew & Chan, 2008) found that there is an underlying assumption that money can influence behaviour hence a fair remuneration is understood to be the cornerstone of the contractual and implied agreement between employees and employers. A number of studies have established that highly competitive wage systems promote employee commitment and thus result in the attraction and retention and commitment of a superior workforce (Becker & Huselid, 2004) Mathis and Jackson (2004) also argued that a balanced, fair and competitive compensation and reward system affect the commitment of employees. This can therefore explain the desire for lecturers in public universities to take up additional work assignments.

Insufficient remuneration has been found to push employees into taking additional jobs outside their work place. Boatengi et al (2013) found that People engage in moonlighting for various reasons, including the need to overcome financial constraints. Such could be attributed to lecturers in public universities in Kenya who take up additional jobs to supplement their income. This view is supported by Gaag, Van der, Stelcner and Vijverberg. (1989) who found that moonlighting is much more prevalent among civil servants than among wage earners in the private sector in Cote d'Ivoire. This could be attributed to the public servant's perception that their remuneration as low. The working schedule for academic staff of most Universities if not all has shifted from 08.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday to all the days of the week and all the time (Baryamureeba, 2013). It is very normal to find lecturers in class at 6.00a.m in the morning and beyond 5.00pm in the evening during normal working days in addition to teaching on Saturday and Sunday. This is highly attributed to the need to supplement their income and the flexibility in their work which give them time to moonlight. They engage in part-time work elsewhere to earn additional income as a surviving strategy. Some negative effects associated with moonlighting including potential conflicts between the demands of the worker's primary and secondary jobs and the subsequent lack of time for social life (ILO, 2004) with declining productivity effects. Ologunde et al (2013) found that having to teach in many places (moonlighting) has negative implications on the performance of Nigerian university lecturers. The quality of teaching decreases as the time available for administration and research also reduces. If employees seek alternative sources of income, this will no doubt eat into organizational time thereby affecting employee performance and organizational productivity, as is the case with lecturers in public universities in Kenya

However, some employees fail to take advantage of the programmes for fear of being viewed as less committed workers (Hewlett, 2007; Thompson, 2008). Similarly, other studies have indicated that personal characteristics such as gender, age, and parental status are also a determinant in the realization of work life balance (Bianchi et al, 2000). Not much has been done in relation to remuneration as a moderator on the effect of work place norms on organisational outcomes. In light of this, this study seeks to assess the effect of remuneration on the relationship between Work place norms and Employee work outcomes among lecturers in Public Universities in Kenya.

1.2. Objective of the study and Conceptual Framework

The study sought to determine the moderating effect of Remuneration on the relationship between Work place norms and Employee work outcomes among lecturers of public universities in Kenya.

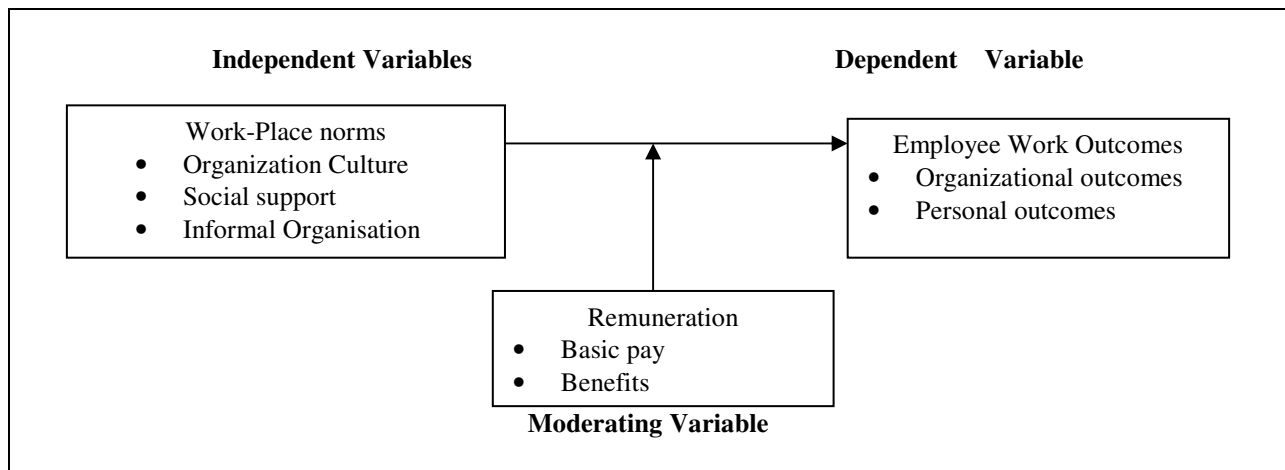


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher (2016)

2. Research Methodology

The Correlation survey design was used in this study in order to find out the relationships between variables.

2.1. Research Area and Population

This study was carried out in seven Public universities in Kenya, East Africa. The target population of this study comprised of 6299 full time lecturers drawn from five public universities in Kenya that have existed for more than eight years since those universities have established Human Resource Policies which are useful in this research.

2.2. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The multi-stage sampling technique was used in the study, where a sample of 391 lecturers which constituted of deans and departmental chairpersons (26); and full time faculty (365) was chosen.

2.3. Data Collection

Secondary data was obtained from scholarly books, publications in management journals on work life issues, and biographies that touch on the area of study. Primary data on the other hand was collected by the use of the questionnaires which had a five point Likert scale.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data was analysed using Correlation analysis and multiple regression. Multiple linear regressions were used to examine the relationship between work place norms and Employee work outcomes and to test whether remuneration moderates the relationship between Work life policies and Employee work outcome. The moderating effect of the relationships were tested using the following regression equations: -

→ Step 1: Regressing the independent variable on the dependent variable

$$EWO = \beta_0 + \beta_1 WPN + \epsilon \dots \text{(Direct relationship)} \dots \text{equation 1}$$

→ Step 2: Regressing the independent variables on the dependent variable adding the moderator

$$EWO = \beta_0 + \beta_1 WPN + R + \epsilon \dots \text{(Moderated Relationship)} \dots \text{equation 2}$$

Where:

- EWO =Employee work outcome
- WPN =Work Place norms
- R =Remuneration
- $\beta_0 + \beta_1$ = coefficients
- ϵ = error term

3. Results

A correlation analysis was carried out between to establish the relationship between Work place norms and the employee work outcomes.

		Employee Work Outcomes
Organizational Culture	Pearson Correlation	-.316**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	276
Informal Organization	Pearson Correlation	-.090**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.134
	N	276
Social Support	Pearson Correlation	-.051
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.402
	N	276

Table 1: Correlation coefficient between Work place norms and EWO

Table 1. shows all the correlation coefficients are negative. It therefore means that Work place norms do not necessarily enhance employee work outcomes, despite their provision. A regression analysis was also carried out on the same. Results show that Work place norms explain 51% of the variation in Employee work outcomes while other factors outside the model can explain 49%. According to Table 2 the model shows that $R^2 = 51\%$.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.712 ^b	.506	.503	.52500	1.727

Table 2: Model summary for Work place norms on Employee work outcomes

This implies that as much as organizational policies negatively affected employee work outcomes, they did so to a larger extent than other factors which did not were not of interest to this study.

In order to determine the moderating effect of Remuneration on relationship between Work life policies and Employee work outcomes, a regression analysis was carried out on the independent variable with the moderator. According to Table 3, Model 1 displays an $R^2 = 0.506$. This R^2 means that Organizational policies alone explains 51% of the variation in Employee work outcomes. Model 2 shows the results of the regression model after the moderating effect of Remuneration has been removed. Model 2 resulted to an R^2 of 65%.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.712 ^b	.506	.503	.52500	1.727
2	.806 ^a	.650	.961	.15636	2.020

Table 3: Model Summary for Remuneration and Work-life Policies

This shows a significant presence of moderating effect of Remuneration on the relationship between Work place norms and Employee Work outcomes among lecturers of public universities in Kenya. This explains why despite the presence of work place norms, the lecturers performance was still low contrary to the expectations that it should be high.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that Employee work outcomes are not necessarily enhanced by the availability of work place norms. This is so since despite the policies being availed to lecturers in order to enhance their attitudes towards improved performance, their work outcomes, both organizational and personal, are still dismal. It was also concluded that Remuneration moderates the relationship between work place norms and Employee Work Outcome lectures in Public Universities in Kenya.

5. Recommendations

The researcher recommends HR practitioners introduce support policies to ensure that Work place enable employees to have a balance between work and life, and realize positive work outcomes. In addition, HR practitioners should introduce performance programmes that are linked with compensation policies. This will ensure positive work outcomes will be realized since remuneration was found to inhibit the intended outcome of Work place norms.

On remuneration, it is also recommended that the salary structure of lecturers in public universities be improved by including performance based incentives. Lastly, other variables should be studied in order to establish if there are other moderators to work life policies on employee work outcomes. This will help in the adoption of relevant policy decisions.

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