

GENDER AND WORK-PRODUCTIVITY OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN SELECTED PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN KAMPALA CITY, UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

The study under review, delved into the influence of gender on staff or employee productivity in selected private universities in Kampala City, Uganda. In determining whether male or female perform significantly different, the null hypothesis of no significant difference in terms of performance between male and female was tested. The study employed a descriptive and comparative survey design. The data on gender were analysed using frequency counts and percentages, while on the difference, t-test was used. The assumption was that the level of work productivity among men and female staff doesn't significantly differ. In reaction to this assumption student's t-test was employed to prove or disapprove the hypothesis. The findings revealed that work productivity doesn't significantly differ among employees apart from punctuality as a sub element of work productivity. It was established that there is a slight difference in work productivity between male and female. It was properly established that male (mean 3.18) are more punctual than female (mean 3.00) ($t=2.579$) ($Sig = 0.010$) however this difference is too insignificant to pose a significant difference between the two categories (male and female). It was also revealed that the level of work productivity in general is so much dominant among male (3.04). Integration theory by Mary Parker Follet (1868 – 1933) anchored on the findings. The study recommended that employers should consider employees ability to work and the way the expected energies of the same are utilized to realize expected results since gender has almost nothing to do with ones productivity.

KEYWORDS: Gender, Work-Productivity, Academic Staff, Selected Universities, Performance, Significance

INTRODUCTION

The fact that universities in Kampala city are over equipped with manpower to realize significant output is a truism, even though they continue to attract a diminishing return in productivity. Universities in Kampala city seem caught up in a trap of confusion as most cannot predict their fate (Gregory B.k 2001). Employee productivity is in shambles yet man power on ground seems convincing. This is what formed part of the focus of a recent study, which sought to investigate whether gender has any influence on employee productivity.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Jason M. Lindo, Nicholas J. Sanders and Philip Oreopoulos (2008), made a study on gender differences in response to performance and educational incentives while analyzing the previous studies. Previous studies had established that women are more responsive to positive incentives than men. Women respond to advising and scholarship programs while men do not (Angrist, Lang, and oreopolous 2007); tuition reductions impact college completion rates for women more than men (Dynarski 2005); and the effects of high school achievement awards appear limited to women (Angrist and Lavy 2002). However, because all of these papers focus on policies providing positive incentives, little is known about gender differences in response to negative incentives.

A regression discontinuity design to examine students' responses to negative incentives brought on by being placed on academic probation. Consistent with a model of introducing performance standards in which agents respond differently based on ability, it was established that being placed on probation at the end of the first year discourages some students from returning to school while improving their performance of those who return. Contrary to the predictions of the model when ability is known, it is found that heterogeneous discouragement effects result in high ability students having a greater overall dropout rate near the cutoff than lower ability students. The result can be explained by extending the model to allow for the performance standard to also affect self confidence (ability expectations). Researchers also consider effects by gender and find that being placed on probation more than doubles the probability that men dropout but has no such discouragement effect for women.

Changquan Jian and Timothy Hardie (2000), made a study on nationality, cultural values and the relative importance of task performance and organizational citizenship behavior in performance evaluation decisions. The study examined managers evaluations of overall job performance related to cultural orientations and nationality. Good citizenry enhance the common social welfare of a work unit, whereas task performance emphasizes core activities associated with task completion. Using data collected from both Chinese and Canadian respondents, the study found collectivism related positively with good citizenry, which is beneficial to other citizens and organizations. Chinese respondents, as compared with their Canadian counterparts, gave more importance to good citizenship behavior, thinking that it would be beneficial to everyone. The behavioral differences between the nationalities remained strong even after controlling for differences in collectivism and power distance. A seemingly related study was conducted on the influence of culture and performance by (Hofstede, 1980; Oyserman, Coon, and Kimmelmier, 2002). The study observed that many modern organizations operate in a global context, and even domestic businesses face intensive competition from abroad. To function efficiently and smoothly in the era of globalization, it is important, more than ever before, to understand national and cultural differences in employees' beliefs, values and their behaviors. Indeed, extensive research has established that person's self-concept, cognition, well-being, relationships with others and their behaviors are culturally bonded. At the same time, organizations are emphasizing increasingly on team structure, customer services, streamlined workforce, individual initiative and accountability. The scholarly interest in organizational citizenship behavior echoes this movement in organizational focus (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, and Paine 2000).

NULL HYPOTHESIS

- There was no significant difference in the level of work productivity between male and female academic staff.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey design specifically the descriptive comparative. Descriptive in the sense that, it described the characteristics of the respondents in terms of their profile, and work productivity. Survey in the sense that data was collected from a wide range of respondents. Comparative in the sense that it compared results obtained from all categories under study.

FINDINGS

Table 1A: Profile of Respondents (University, Age, Gender, Marital Status, and Religion) N=323

| Categories | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| University | | |
| KIU | 102 | 31 |
| UCU | 87 | 27 |

| Table 1A: Contd., | | |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Cavendish | 42 | 13 |
| Ndejje | 92 | 28 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Age | | |
| 20-39(Early Adulthood) | 268 | 87 |
| 40-59(Middle Adulthood) | 38 | 12 |
| 60 and above(Late Adulthood) | 2 | 1 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 231 | 72 |
| Female | 90 | 2 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 243 | 78 |
| Single | 68 | 22 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Religion | | |
| Catholic | 169 | 53 |
| Muslim | 80 | 25 |
| Protestant | 21 | 7 |
| Saved | 49 | 15 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |

Table 1 B: Profile of Respondents (Nationality, Highest Education Qualification, Present Position in the University, Number of Years in Present Position) N = 323

| Nationality | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| Ugandan | 237 | 77 |
| Sudanese | 26 | 7 |
| Kenyan | 47 | 15 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Highest Education Qualification | | |
| Degree | 46 | 14 |
| Masters | 211 | 66 |
| PHD | 63 | 20 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Present Position in the University | | |
| Teaching assistant | 27 | 8 |
| Ass.lecturer | 26 | 8 |
| Lecturer | 163 | 51 |
| Senior lecturer | 25 | 8 |
| H.O.D | 60 | 19 |
| Officer | 9 | 3 |
| Director | 3 | 1 |
| Others | 8 | 3 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |
| Number of years in present position | | |
| Below 5 years | 183 | 59 |
| 5-9 years | 87 | 28 |
| 10 and above | 40 | 13 |
| Total | 323 | 100 |

Source: Primary Data, 2012

According to tables 1A and 1B, there are two categories that's sectarian which is represented by 55% and non sectarian by 45%. This suggested that more than half were in religious based universities. This is in line with Omar's (2008) observation that if two or more similar organizations, religious based and non religious based doing similar type of work, in most cases religious based will attract more workers on grounds that people have trust in them. Besides religious

based will dominate the non religious ones on grounds that religion has doctrines which make workers define themselves as part and parcel of the system and owners of the organizations. Omar (2008) observed that religion drives peoples' behavior and actions in a more productive direction; it is not possible to separate religion from productivity and growth.

Tables 1A and 1B further reveal that the study had respondents between the ages of 20-39, being the majority who constituted 87% followed by 40-59 who constituted 12% and lastly 60 and above who had a percentage of 1. To a certain degree this is in line with Ponder. V. (2000), whose study established a relationship between age and performance. He observed that the average age of people in the workforce is getting higher, with increasing numbers of middle- aged and less old workers employed in many different jobs. However, Johnston and Parker (2000) established that it is important to know whether job performance is higher or lower for older workers in comparison with younger workers. Most reviews of empirical research on this issue have concluded that although individual studies differ, averaging across available studies reveals virtually no relationship between age and work performance. The fact that there is no observable relationship it is interesting to many people because it is known that age related declines can occur in important mental and physical abilities. If abilities that are important for performing work do decline with age, but job performance is not lower for older workers, this seems paradoxical (Cascio, Rhodes, 2000).

Salthouse and Maurer (2001) who exactly carried out a similar study though in a different environment, failed to establish a relationship. While considering this issue, it is important to realize that two different but related questions are asked about the job performance-age relationship. First, one could ask whether, at the same point in time, younger workers in a given job perform differently than older workers in the same job. This type of question is answered through cross-sectional research in which people of different ages are compared against each other. However, a second question that can be asked is whether workers who are twenty five old today will perform better or worse after thirty five years in a particular job. That is, would performance in that job increase or decrease over time for the same people? There is therefore no great deal of data on whether there are differences across age groups in the performance of various jobs, and cumulative research shows that there are essentially no differences in observed performance as a function of worker age.

With reference to table 1A, majority of the respondents, 231 or 72% are male as compared to 90 or 2% who are female. It is observed that lecturing and other related academic activities are done mostly by men in all selected universities under study. Jason M. Lindo, Nicholas J. Sanders and Philip Oreopoulos (2008), made a study on gender differences in response to performance and educational incentives while analyzing the previous studies. Previous studies had established that women are more responsive to positive incentives than men. Women respond to advising and scholarship programs while men do not (Angrist, Lang, and oreopolous 2007); tuition reductions impact college completion rates for women more than men (Dynarski 2005); and the effects of high school achievement awards appear limited to women (Angrist and Lavy 2002). However, because all of these papers focus on policies providing positive incentives, little is known about gender differences in response to negative incentives.

As to marital status, married respondents are, 243 or 78% are the majority as opposed to single who constitute 68 or 22%, it is established that academic activities are mainly done by married people who range between 20 and 59 years of age as per the study. More than half of the total respondents 169 or 53% belong to the Roman Catholic religion, while the remaining respondents belong to other doctrines that are Muslims 80 or 25%, Protestants 21 or 7%, saved 49 or 15%. This variation was due to the fact that, Catholics and Anglicans are the majority on grounds that the selected sectarian universities are of the same foundation.

The study was dominated by Ugandans, 237 or 77%, followed by Kenyans 47 or 15% and Sudanese 26 or 8%

respectively. This variation was due to the fact that the study was done on Ugandan universities which give priority to their citizens in case of any vacancy, (New Vision August, 2011). The study further shows that masters holders, 211 or 66% dominated the study, followed by PhD holders, 63 or 20 % and lastly degree holders, 46 or 14% respectively. This variation was due to the fact that National Council for Higher Education set minimum standards for one to become a lecturer (National Council Report 2004) and discourages degree holders from being part of the academic staff as their competencies are questionable in academic world. This is in line with Pinto Mwema (2002) observation, who established that university teaching activities in East Africa are mostly done by masters' holders. This observation was made on Makerere University, Daresalam University and Kenyatta University. This is in conflict with expected standards world over where university teaching staff are expected to have doctorates and reputable publications.

The study still brings out the fact that the highest percentage of respondents by present position in the universities is 51% being lecturers. Heads of department 19%, assistant lecturer 8%, Teaching Assistant 8%, officers 3% Respondents below 5 years in the present position or teaching experience are the majority as opposed to those between 5-9 and 10 and above. This was due to the fact that below 5 years of teaching experience were fresh graduates most of whom perceive lecturing a paying and noble activity in a community, as one researcher observed that lecturing at the university level is dominated by younger stars who perceive it noble, paying, and corporate, (Mugalasi 1990). However 10 years and above are the less majority due to the fact that most lecturers after realizing that even teaching at the university level is an equivalent as at primary, they dissent the activity in favor of other paying ones, (Mondin 2000). It is again observed by Musoke (2002), that teaching profession at all levels within the confinements of the university is left for young people within the range of 25 and 40. It is further supported by Ponder. V. (2000), that the average age of people in the workforce is getting higher, with increasing numbers of middle- aged and less old workers employed in many different jobs.

T-Test of Difference in the Level of Work Productivity between Male and Female Academic Staff

The study further sought to establish a significant difference in the level of work productivity between male and female academic staff. The researcher hypothesized that the level of work productivity does not significantly differ between male and female academic staff. To determine this objective and to test the pre-set null hypothesis the computed mean indices in table 2 were compared.

Table 2: T-Test of Difference in the Level of Work Productivity between Male and Female Academic Staff N = 323

| Category | Gender | Mean | T-Value | Sig | Interpretation | Decision on Ho |
|----------------------------|--------|------|---------|-------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Punctuality | Male | 3.18 | 2.579 | 0.010 | Significant difference | Rejected |
| | Female | 3 | | | | |
| Consultancy | Male | 3.01 | 1.461 | 0.145 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 2.90 | | | | |
| Supervision | Male | 3.00 | -1.903 | 0.058 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 3.14 | | | | |
| Evaluation | Male | 3.02 | -.043 | 0.966 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 3.03 | | | | |
| Teaching | Male | 3.04 | -.598 | 0.551 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 3.08 | | | | |
| Researching | Male | 2.91 | 1.894 | 0.059 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 2.76 | | | | |
| Task completion | Male | 3.15 | -.103 | 0.918 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 3.15 | | | | |
| Level of Work Productivity | Male | 3.04 | .559 | 0.576 | No significant difference | Accepted |
| | Female | 3.01 | | | | |

The assumption was that the level of work productivity among men and female doesn't significant differ. In reaction to this assumption a t-test was employed to prove or disapprove the hypothesis as seen in table 2.

As indicted in table 2 the level of work productivity doesn't significantly differ apart from punctuality as a sub element of work productivity. It was established that there is a slight difference in work productivity between male and female. It was observed that male (mean 3.18) are more punctual than female (mean 3.00) ($t=2.579$) (Sig = 0.010) however this difference is too insignificant to pose a significant difference between the two categories (male and female).

It is also revealed in table 2 that the level of work productivity in general is so much dominant among male (3.04). This is in conflict with Nathan's (2000) observation, who claimed that female by nature are consistent committed and their ratio of work productivity is greater than men whose desire for concentration at work is often less.

However, Ndwula (2002), disapprove Nathans work, Ndwula observed that men are more vigilant and their mind sets are geared towards achieving results no matter the cost involved. It's the opposite of female managers who always achieve results on soft grounds if at all. His study consisted of men and female managers whose performance was judged basing on the output and the way expected energies of the two categories are utilized to realize expected results.

CONCLUSIONS

Evidently established is the fact that productivity doesn't significantly differ between male and female academic staff. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was accepted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that employers should consider employees ability to work and the way the expected energies of the same are utilized to realize expected results since gender has almost nothing to do with ones productivity. The difference established on the aspect of punctuality is also negligible in the sense that it can't pose a significant difference in the level of employee productivity between male and female academic staff.

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