

# EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF PART TIME LECTURERS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

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**Abstract:** The study sought to examine the relationship between employee involvement and employee performance of part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya. The study adopted descriptive survey research design to collect data from a sample of 60 part time lecturers from four public universities in the western region of Kenya. The study used structured questionnaires to gather information from the respondents. The sampling technique used was stratified sampling and simple random sampling. It was analyzed descriptively using percentages, mean and standard deviation and also inferentially using regression and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation test. Employee involvement was found to be strongly positively correlated to employee performance ( $r=0.665$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Employee involvement accounted for 44.2 % of the total variance in employee performance of part time lecturers in public universities. Thus the study found that employee involvement had a great influence on employee performance. The study recommends that public universities should adopt employee involvement programs to drive performance, growth and competitiveness on the regional and also the global market.

**Keywords:** Employee involvement, Employee performance, Part time lecturer.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to increase an organization's effectiveness, employee involvement is a key factor that organizations should emphasize on. Employee involvement has been related to diverse management concepts and also behaviors such as management styles, job satisfaction, employee empowerment, total quality management and job performance (Mahfuzjudeh, 2011). Employee involvement is the process concerned with participation and empowerment of employees so as to use their inputs in order to achieve higher individual and organizational performance. Involvement refers to the employee participation in decision making and problem solving and increased autonomy in work processes (Sofijanov & ZabijakinChatleska, 2013). Indeed, it has been established that employee involvement results to job satisfaction, having positive moods and to commitment to their employers and also their careers (Carson et al., 1995; Cohen, 1995).

Due to change in environmental dynamics the Higher education in the world over has undergone rapid transformation. Higher education has grown tremendously in Kenya because of the transformation in spite of the challenges experienced (Mathooko, 2013). University education has enormously expanded in the past ten years whereby campuses have been set up all over the country (Joint Board, 2009). This expansion has resulted to recruitment of part-time lecturers on semester basis (CUE, 2014).

Associate faculty play an essential role in teaching at higher educational institutions. According to Alston (2010) public and private universities contract part time lecturers to cut costs in academic environment. It has been reported that part-time lecturers were probably as many and may even be more than the full time staff (Bryson, 1998; Mageto, 2001 & Mwiria, 2007). Surprisingly, most of the part time lecturers in private universities are normally drawn from public

universities and vice versa. Dobbins (2011) reiterated that unlike permanent lecturers' adjunct faculty felt they were less respected and more isolated. Higher learning institutions make use of the part-time lecturers so as to reduce labour cost (Alston, 2010). In corroboration Allen - Collinson and Hockey (1998) alluded that Part-time lecturers had become a highly used cost cutting strategy in the academic environment. This is due to the reduction government funding more so in relation to public universities and also the increasing size and diversity of student enrollment (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2008).

According to Morrison (2008) adjunct faculty have little or even no formal role in the shared governance systems and this may be due to institutional, faculty and personal barriers. A key reason for not involving adjunct faculty in the governance is the exclusion by the university policies which does not allow adjunct employees to vote, at senate meetings. This highlights and legitimizes the class distinctions between the permanent lecturers and adjuncts. As a result adjunct faculty become less informed of opportunities for influencing or pioneering departmental programs. Additionally exclusion from governance may also be through social pressure especially from the ladder faculty who perceive senate as a symbol of deriving their status. As a result this perception holds that the governance activities be reserved for "permanent" faculty only thereby entrenching status discrimination within the institutions (Birnbaum, 1989). However, Brand (2002) explains how the "us-versus-them mentality" promotes distinction in the faculty appointment types, thus accentuating the social-isolation of the adjunct faculty.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem:**

Dobbins (2011) reiterated that unlike their full-time counterparts' adjunct faculty felt they were less respected and more isolated. It was established that even though the part time lecturers had the similar or even more work load as compared to their full time colleagues, they did not enjoy equal status with their full time counterparts (Lumasia & Kiprono, 2015). Generally the adjunct faculty have little or even no formal role in the shared governance systems. Morrison (2008) reiterated that exclusion by the university policy constituted one of the foremost reasons for not involving adjuncts in governance.

Previous studies have been conducted for instance Okhato and Wanyoike (2015) carried out a study on effect of part-time lecturers on effective utilization of resources by public Universities in Nakuru County. Although the study focused on part time lecturers it did not touch on employee involvement. Dodi (2015) carried out a study on effect of employee participation in decision-making in state-owned enterprise in Indonesia. The study was carried out in Indonesia and was limited to employee participation in decision making. Kyule, Kangu, Wambua, Mutinda and Kamau (2014) undertook a study on Strategizing on cost: Effect of part time lecturers on university education in Kenya, it did not touch on employee involvement. MahfuzJudeh (2011) undertook a study to determine the level of employee involvement and extent of teamwork effectiveness among employees working in the Jordanian glass and ceramic industries listed in Amman Stock Exchange in Jordan, the study employee involvement and teamwork effectiveness and was carried out in Jordan, Wanaina, Iravo and Waititu (2014) carried out a study on effect of employee participation in decision making on the organizational commitment amongst academic staff in the private and public universities in Kenya. This study focused on all academic staff and the dependent variable was organizational commitment. Sofijanovska and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) carried out a study on employee involvement and organizational performance: Evidence from the manufacturing sector in Republic of Macedonia.

The above studies differ from the present study in context and focus. There's a dearth of research into employee involvement with relation to part time lecturers. The studies done previously have not specifically covered the relationship between employee involvement and employee performance amongst part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya therefore, providing a gap hence necessitating this research.

### **1.2 Objective of the study:**

The study purposed to establish the relationship between employee involvement and employee performance amongst part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya.

### **1.3 Hypotheses of the study:**

H<sub>0</sub> There is no significant relation between employee involvement and employee performance amongst part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Theoretical Review:

#### 2.1.1 Resource Based view:

This research is anchored on Resource Based view. RBV proponents argue that valuable, rare, inimitable and non-substitutable resources can be a source of superior performance and may result to achievement of the firm's sustained competitive advantage. An organization requires physical, financial and human resources for it to function effectively and efficiently. According to Kute and Upadhyay (2014) in this globalization era, human resource as a strategic resource enhances sustainable competitive advantage. Employees are valuable resources and by involving them they are likely to work towards achieving the organizations goals. High involvement management programs contribute to the well-being of employees (Wood & de Menezes, 2011).

### 2.2 Conceptual Framework:

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a conceptual framework is a diagrammatic presentation of the relationship between dependent and independent variables. The conceptual frame work was developed to establish the relationship between employee involvement and performance of part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya.

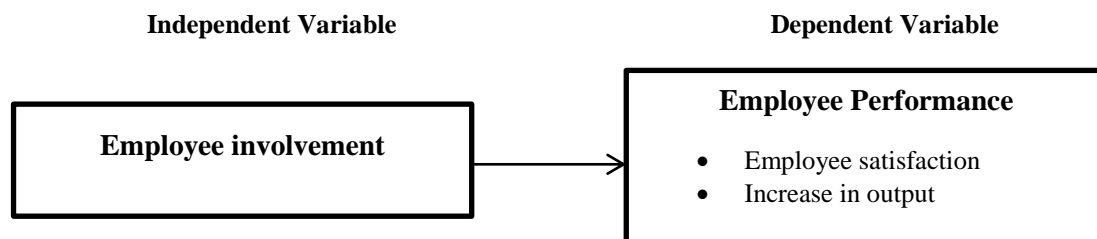


Figure 1: Relationship between employee involvement and employee performance

Source: Authors 2017

### 2.3 Conceptual Review:

#### 2.3.1 Employee involvement:

Lawler studies confirmed that there would be benefits enjoyed by planning and implementing employee involvement programs. Human resources activities like performance appraisals and compensation systems require to be linked to the employee involvement initiatives in order to achieve effectiveness (Lawler, 1971; Mohrman *et al.*, 1989). An organization needs to develop a cross-functional relationship and to exploit employees total potential through their involvement in problem solving and decision making (Mullins, 2005). Siqueira (2008) alluded that respect, attention and caring for employees well-being were essential aspects of involving them.

Employee participation has been considered an essential element for implementing new management strategies successfully and also for determining the extent of job satisfaction (Harmon *et al.*, 2003; Zainnudin & Isa, 2011). In order to increase workers satisfaction, their participation had been established as the management solution (Cotton, Vollrath *et al.*, 1988).

Cohen (1999) argued that employee involvement was an antecedent of organizational commitment. Employees with high involvement level whose jobs act as the center of their life are expected to work much harder than those with low involvement level. Thus theorists hypothesized that employees having a high level of involvement will work towards achieving the organizations objectives and they are not likely to turnover (Kahn, 1990; Lawler, 1986).

Generally, the degree of involvement may vary depending on the task, section and also from the department to corporate level. Also the subject matter dealt with varies from strategic, operational to task-related decisions (Wimalasiri & Kouzmin, 2000).

Managers observed that the employees who were highly involved in job assignments were more efficient as compared to those who did not indulge themselves in the tasks assigned to them (Brown, 1996 & Diefendorff *et al.*, 2002). Job involvement thus has an effect on performance. But Some researchers argue that job involvement improves performance to a little extent (Cron 1984; Dubinsky & Hartley, 1986; Brown & Leigh, 1996). In order to improve job satisfaction amongst employees, firms should allow them to participate in decision making (Black & Gregersen, 1997; Kim 2002; Han, Chiang & Chang, 2011).

### **2.3.2 Employee performance:**

A major area of concern is the definition and limitations of the term 'performance' as used in evaluation. Currently, performance measures are greatly determined by a firm's financial performance and productivity, normally within highly managerialist perspective (Guest, 1997). This approach has limitations in that it neglects employees' role and contribution in the achievement of organizational performance and also fails to take into account how employees' perceive HR practices (Guest, 1999).

Rath and Conchie (2009) stated that employee performance was linked to how well an employee achieved his or her goals and objectives. Employee Performance is the ability to achieve the set objectives within the required timelines and parameters (Yusuf, Mohammed & Kazeem, 2014). Having regards to employee performance Sundi (2013) proposed five primary criteria that could be used to measure performance, namely; work quantity, work quality, work independence, timeliness and individual relationships.

Many researchers focused on the relationship linking job performance and satisfaction in the area of Organizational Psychology and found out that the employees' performance depended on employees' satisfaction (Yahaya *et al.*, 2012). This indicated that great employee performance can be achieved by a high level of job satisfaction (Insan *et al.*, 2013). Yahaya *et al.* (2012) concluded that for the employees to remain motivated as well as to boost their job satisfaction, the employers should provide a good environment.

### **2.4 Empirical Review:**

Noah (2008) reiterated that involvement of employees in decision making created a sense of belonging and a cohesive environment in which the management and workers willingly strived to achieve a healthy industrial relations. Employee involvement enables employees to understand the importance of creativity and to be committed to change their behavior while working to new and improved ways (Singh, 2009; Kingir & Mesci 2010).

Bhatti *et al.* (2007) conducted a study regarding oil company's which revealed that, employee participation was an essential determinant of job satisfaction components and that it would positively affect employees job satisfaction, commitment and also employee productivity.

According to Bhatti and Nawab (2011) employee participation embodies task-related practices, that aim at maximizing employees' sense of involvement in their work, and human resource management practices that aim at maximizing employees' commitment to the wider organization Elele and Fields (2010) noted that often employees are more knowledgeable on their work than their seniors or supervisors. Thus decisions that are made by consulting employees has more information. Consequently Employees involved in decision making are better equipped for implementation of such decisions.

Having regards to employee participation, a study by Shadur *et al.* (1999) and Cadwallader *et al.* (2010) established that there were diverse factors not limited to good communication and well organized teamwork that influenced the relationship between employees' participation in decision-making with organizational climate.

Dodi (2015) conducted a research on effect of employee participation in decision making on employee motivation. Mail survey was used as a data collection method. Findings revealed a positive relation between employee participation in decision-making and their motivation. Further results indicated that, employees became more acquainted with decision making if they were frequently involved in discussions relating to recent issues. This result conformed with other studies (Phillips, 1989; Wang & Noe, 2010).

High involvement management programs contribute to the well-being of employees (Wood & de Menezes, 2011). Wanaina, Iravo and Waititu (2014) found that employee participation in decision making significantly influenced university academic staffs' organizational commitment in Kenya. Dietz, Wilkinson and Redman (2010) had a discussion on involvement policy and its practices by justifying employees' participation in making decisions, solving problems and also greater integration amongst them.

Agyemen (2012) conducted a study on the effects of employee involvement practices on decision-making process. The results showed that there was a weak relationship between employee involvement and decision making. The study recommended management to demonstrate high commitment level to employee involvement in decision-making and trust among management and staff which could be achieved through fair, impartial and effective communication. Moreover it was recommended that management's ability to encourage and accept employee's views could also be achieved through the organization of management training programmes.

Sofijanovska and Zabijakin-Chatleska (2013) conducted a study on employee involvement and organizational performance in the manufacturing sector of Macedonia. The findings revealed that both employee involvement dimensions of employee participation and empowerment and self-managed teams were significantly intercorrelated which corresponded with the theoretical postulates, thus concluding that one dimension reinforced the other.

MahfuzJudeh (2011) carried out a study to determine the level of employee involvement and extent of teamwork effectiveness amongst employees in Jordan. The findings of the study revealed a significant effect of employee involvement on teamwork effectiveness.

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employed descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was drawn from four public universities in the Western region which comprised of 200 adjunct lecturers in the business department. The sample size of the adjunct lecturers was determined on the basis of 30% which was 60 adjunct lecturers. The sample size of employees was determined by use of Kombo and Tromp (2006) recommendation that a sample size of 10% to 30% is representative enough for the study population. The sampling technique used was stratified whereby the universities were divided into four strata. Moreover simple random sampling technique was used to select the part time lecturers in the business department of each of the universities. This study used primary data. Close ended questionnaires were used to collect data since it is straightforward and less time consuming for both the researcher and the respondents. A pilot study was conducted whereby the questionnaire items were subjected to Cronbach Alpha coefficient test. According to Cooper and Schilder (2011) researchers should apply thumb rule of 10% of the sample size in order to calculate the number of respondents to be used for pilot study. Data collected was organized, processed and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 21. Data was analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics such as Frequency, Percentage, mean and standard deviation and also by use of inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation and regression analysis. The simple regression model below was used;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Whereby Y =Employee performance

$\beta_0$  =Constant

$\beta_1$  = Coefficient of determination

$X_1$  = Employee involvement

$\epsilon$  =Error term

### 4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Response rate:

Out of the 60 questionnaires administered 50 were filled and returned representing a response rate of 83.33% .A response rate of 60% is adequate to permit data analysis (Bell, 2005). Further as asserted by Bebbie (2004) a response rate of above 70% is good.

#### 4.2 Reliability:

The Cronbach Alpha for the scale as shown on Table (1) was 0.742, therefore meeting the criterion of 0.70 as proposed by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.742	9

#### 4.3 Descriptive statistics results:

The study sought to examine the relationship between employee involvement and employee performance amongst part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya. This was on a five (5) point Likert scale (where 1= strongly disagree 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly agree).

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics**

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Deviation
Curriculum development is done by full time lecturers only				30(60%)	20(40%)	4.40	.49487
We lack representations in academic committees		10(20%)		20(40%)	20(40%)	4.00	1.10657
I am satisfied with my level of involvement in decision making in matters affecting the university		30(60%)		10(20%)	10(20%)	3.00	1.27775
I set exams for the courses i teach		6(12%)		18(36%)	26(52%)	4.28	.96975
I prepare the course outlines for the courses i teach				20(40%)	30(60%)	4.60	.49487
The university responds to suggestions made by part time lecturers		18(36%)	20(40%)	12(24%)		2.88	.77301
I am invited to take part in departmental meetings		35(70%)	8(16%)	7(14%)		2.44	.73290
I feel more satisfied when im involved in the universities activities				40(80%)	10(20%)	4.20	.40406
My involvement in the university's activities increases my output				30(60%)	20(40%)	4.40	.49487
Valid N (listwise)	50						

According to the study findings in Table 2, 60% agreed and 40% strongly agreed that curriculum development is done by full time lecturers only, 40% agreed and 40% strongly agreed to the statement that we lack representations in academic committees. 60% disagreed to the statement that i am satisfied with my level of involvement in decision making in matters affecting the university. This meant that majority were not satisfied with their level of involvement in decision making. Majority were in agreement with the statement that i set exams for the courses i teach (52% strongly agreed and 36% agreed), majority agreed that they prepared the course outlines for the courses they taught, 36% disagreed an 40% were neither agreed nor disagreed on the statement that the university responds to suggestions made by part time lecturers, majority (70%) disagreed that i am invited to take part in departmental meetings. Majority agreed that i feel more satisfied when i am involved in the universities activities 80% agreed and 20% strongly agreed and on the statement that employee involvement increases my output majority were in agreement. The findings concur with those of Bhatti and Qureshi (2007) who found that employee involvement increased productivity and job satisfaction.

**4.4 Inferential statistics results:**

**4.4.1 Correlation results:**

**Table 3: Correlations**

		Employee involvement	Employee performance
Employee involvement	Pearson Correlation	1	.665**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	50	50
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.665**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	50	50

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

Pearson’s correlation analysis was used to assess the relationship between the variables. Table 3 shows that employee involvement is strongly positively correlated with employee performance which is also significant at 99 % confidence level (r=0.665; p<0.01). The findings of this study are in agreement with those of Sofijanov and ZabijakinChatleska (2013) who found employee involvement to be positively related to perceived organizational performance.

4.4.2 Regression results:

Table 4: Model Summary

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	.665 <sup>a</sup>	.442	.430	.30505	.442	37.969	1	48	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), employee involvement									

The regression results show that 44.2% of the employee performance can be explained by employee involvement (R squared = 0.442) while the remaining 54.8 % can be attributed to other factors which are not studied, because they are outside the scope of the study.

Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.533	1	3.533	37.969	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	4.467	48	.093		
	Total	8.000	49			
a. Dependent Variable: employee performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), employee involvement						

P=0.000 which implies that the model is feasible at 99% confidence level. This implies that the regression model is significant and can be used to assess the association between the dependent and independent variable.

Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.888	.394		4.794	.000
	Employee involvement	.660	.107	.665	6.162	.000
a. Dependent Variable: employee performance						

Regression model for the independent variable as;  $Y=1.888+0.660X$ . The regression results in Table 6 shows that if all the other factors are zero, the effect of part time lecturers' employee involvement on employee performance will be 1.888. A unit increase in employee involvement will lead to 0.660 increase in employee performance in the same direction. Thus it's positively related and also significant at 99% confidence level.

The regression results were used to test the hypotheses. the null hypothesis of the study was rejected at 0.01 significant level,  $P(0.000) < 0.01$  and the study affirmed the alternative hypothesis that there's a positive and significant relationship between employee involvement and employee performance regarding part time lecturer's in public universities in Kenya.

The results concur with those of Agyeman (2012) who found that employee involvement had a significant effect on both the employee and the organization. Dodi (2015) reported positive findings in his presentation regarding the relationship between employee participation in decision-making and their motivation. Further, Wanaina, Iravo and Waititu (2014) found that employee participation in decision making significantly influence university academic staffs' organizational commitment in Kenya.

5. CONCLUSION

The study realized a statistically positive and significant relationship between employee involvement and employee performance amongst part time lecturer's in public universities Kenya. From the regression results 44.2% of employee performance can be explained by employee involvement (R squared = 0.442). From the findings, the study rejects the null hypotheses that there is no relation between employee involvement and employee performance amongst part time lecturers in public universities in Kenya. The current study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the key role of employee involvement in enhancing employee performance with regards to part time lecturers in public universities.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Universities should adopt employee involvement programs to enhance their performance, growth and competitiveness on the regional and also global market. Further, for attainment of high employee involvement, universities should avail information to all its employees, encourage them and also give them an opportunity to make remarkable contributions.

Universities should encourage the introduction of a perfect participation program amongst their part time lecturers and other employees, specifically in regards to decision-making process so as to increase their awareness and to motivate them.

## **7. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

Only four universities within western region in Kenya were covered in the study. These findings may not be universally applicable to other universities in other regions thus this study should be replicated in other universities. This study was limited to the business departments of the universities, a further research should be done which considers part time lecturers in all the departments in the universities. More over research should be conducted in other sectors in order to validate the findings of this study as this research only dealt with universities. Further, future researchers should concern themselves with other human resource constructs like training, working conditions and rewards. Future research could explore the role of management in encouraging employee involvement.

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