

Denominationalism of Private Universities in Uganda as an Antecedent of Employee Job Satisfaction

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Abstract:-This study was carried out in 13 private universities in Uganda (six denominational universities and seven non denominational universities) to assess the difference in the job satisfaction of academic officials between denominational and non-denominational private universities. The study used a descriptive survey design which involved quantitative and qualitative approaches. Whereas quantitative data were analyzed using the t-test, qualitative data was analysed using percentage distribution. Results from 296 respondents who were chosen to participate in the study using universal and purposive sampling, revealed that there was a significant difference in the job satisfaction of academic officials between denominational and non-denominational private universities in Uganda (sig, .000). It was recommended that non denominational universities should borrow a leaf from denominational universities by making workers feel that they own the respective universities.

Key Terms: Denominationalism, private universities, job satisfaction.

I. INTRODUCTION

Though the efforts of private investment in the university education sector in Uganda are appreciable, it is claimed that private universities are facing many staff job satisfaction-related challenges (National Council for Higher Education, 2006; Muwagga- Mugagga, 2006; National Council for Higher Education, 2010). The authors however, do not clearly demonstrate a causal link between the different categories of universities and how they affect the academic officials' satisfaction with their jobs.

The current study was carried out in religious-founded (denominational) and non religious-founded (non denominational) private universities. Denominational universities are the universities started by particular religious faiths mainly to cater for and promote the interests of those respective religions. For example, the universities started by the Protestant church, Catholic church, Seventh Day Adventist church, Pentecostal churches, and the Muslim community. Non denominational universities are the universities which do not cater for or aim at serving the interests of specific religions. They aim at equally serving the interests of all people, bodies and religious faiths. Some of them are started by individuals, business partners and particular ethnic groups. They are usually profit-oriented.

Empirical historical evidence reveals the impact of poor pay to workers. For instance, the protestant church evangelical work in Uganda between 1902 and 1904 came to

a stand still over salary-related issues. During that period, the number of protestant local evangelists declined from 1,643 to 1,405 partly because of the dissatisfaction they experienced due to inadequate pay. They asked for more pay but the church failed to meet their demands. In 1905 they went on strike, some evangelists left church employment and took on secular jobs with higher wages (Tuma and Mutibwa, 1978). Similarly, in France, there were uprisings by the workers of Lyons in 1831 over their demands for increased wages. The King however used the army to suppress the uprisings which led to more discontentments of the workers. This shows that a reasonable pay for workers is dissatisfying.

Despite the fact that many related studies about pay or salary have been carried out, many of them were carried out from different contexts. For example:

Horland and Sears carried out a study in South America in 1940 to establish among other things, the relationship between money earnings and behaviour. The study found an inverse correlation between the price of cotton and the number of lynching of the black people in South America in the period 1882- 1930. As the price of cotton went down, the number of lynching of blacks went up. This was because, cotton was a very important part of the economy of south America then, so when the price of cotton went down, farmers' earnings reduced, they became frustrated and displaced their frustrations on blacks, who were the safe and available targets (Sabini, 1992). This seems to suggest that unreasonable earning or pay at the places of work can lead to employees' job dissatisfaction. This study was however carried out long ago in America, whose people's lifestyles are far different from those of Uganda, hence the current study.

Miller and Hamblin carried out a study in 1963 on the effects of task interdependence and differential rewarding on group productivity. Findings were that, under low task interdependence, differential rewarding, that is, unequal reward distribution, had little effect on group performance. However, under high task interdependence, a high level of differential rewarding induced low group productivity as well as competition among members, and a low level of differential rewarding induced high productivity and cooperation (Michener and Delamater, 1999).

A number of studies that have been carried out reveal the importance of good working conditions. For example, the Western Electric Company in 1924 initiated research on

individual productivity at the Hawthorne works of the firm's Chicago plant. The initial studies had a scientific management perspective and sought to determine how various levels of workplace illumination affected output. After failing to find a relationship between illumination and production, the researcher concluded that unforeseen psychological factors somehow interfered with the experiments. From this, emerged a series of studies by Elton Mayo and Colleagues from Harvard University, starting the year 1927. In one of the studies, researchers failed to find any direct relationship between changes in physical working conditions and output. Group atmosphere and participative supervision were singled out as the two factors having special importance. Whereas this may appear to be relevant to the current study, time lag is a big challenge. From 1924 when the research was conducted to 2011 when the current study was carried out, so many technological, scientific, social, political, and economic changes have taken place, hence the current study.

In another study, 21,126 employees were interviewed to learn what they liked or disliked about their work environment. The results showed that the same things for example work conditions and wages could be sources of satisfaction for some workers and source of dissatisfaction for others (Hersey and Blanchard, 1993). Relatedly, Shannon and Brown (2003) in their study in the USA public schools found out that classroom facilities like Ventilation, windows, colour, space and air conditioning influence students' learning.

In the context of Uganda, Ssentongo – Kafeero (2006) carried out research on the different levels of job satisfaction among different categories of academic staff at Makerere University. Qualitative data analysis indicated that the academic staff were dissatisfied by, among other factors, working conditions. Other areas in which the academic staff were dissatisfied were research opportunities and promotional prospects, salary and allowances. On a related note, Mugizi (2007)'s study revealed that better remuneration, good working environment and good administrative policies influenced staff contentment academic staff in Mbarara University of Science and Technology. These studies were however carried out in public universities, not private universities. Moreover, each study was carried out in only one university. Therefore, generalizing the findings of such studies to the academic staff in the universities in Uganda may have many loopholes, hence the current study. Mujuni–Tayari (2006)'s study found out that there was a significant relationship between salary and employees' retention in Rakai district local government. Also, Namutebi (2006)'s study found out that there was a significant relationship between the financial and non-financial rewards on the commitment of teachers in secondary schools in Wakiso district, Uganda. In addition, Sangaire (2007) studied motivation and performance of teachers in private secondary schools, a case of Central College Kawempe. One of the findings was that allowances, salary and late payment of salary have a significant effect on teachers' performance in Central College. All the fore mentioned studies have some relevance, but none of them was

on universities. This partly prompted the current study.

On a related note, Muyiggwa–Mubanda (2007) explored the relationship between a religious working environment and job satisfaction of academic and non-academic staff in Bugema University in Uganda. The findings were among others, that there was a significant relationship between working conditions and job satisfaction of staff. Though this study was carried out in a private university, the respondents of the study were not the academic officials. In addition, job satisfaction of the employees was not linked to management.

Empirical historical evidence reveals that, poor working conditions have been among the causes of workers' unrest in many countries and organizations over the years. For example, in Russia there arose a peasants and workers' revolution between 1905 and 1917. The industrialists, some of the then employers did not provide good accommodation to the workers. They built barracks for the workers with no proper ventilation, lighting and privacy. Workers were crowded into the huts and they slept in shifts because of inadequate space, hence a revolution. In Vietnam, there arose the war of liberation in 1962. The Vietnamese who lost their land to the colonialists were made to work on the farms, mines and industries where working conditions were generally very poor. The few Vietnamese nationals who worked in formal employment were overtaxed by the government. Such poor working conditions partly led to the formation of the United Front Nationalist Organization which struggled for the Vietnam independence (Ketelbey, 2002). Also, the Russian revolution of 1917-1939 was partly due to the soldiers' poor working conditions. They lived in congested camps amidst poor health facilities. Thousands of Russian soldiers had no rifles of their own until they could snatch one from a fallen/killed soldier. Thus in June 1917 the sailors aboard the battleship revolted. In September 1905 when demonstrations and strikes rocked Petrograd, the troops upon which Tsar Nicholas II dependent for his security, also revolted and refused to fire at the demonstrators. They instead fraternized with strikers.

Also, the Korean war of liberation 1910-1945 was partly due to poor working conditions of the workers. For example, many Koreans were employed on the rice farms and industries of their masters who had colonized them. The Namibia war of liberation was also partly due to the poor working conditions of labour. The natives of Namibia thus formed the Ovamboland People's Organization and South West National Union which fought for people's rights. In Ethiopia, by 1974 most of the land was owned by certain cliques of land lords. Majority of peasants did not own land, which forced many people to join informal employment sector where conditions were poor. The peasants / tenants were expected to pay 50 percent of what they produced to the landlords. This partly led to Ethiopian revolution of 1974. Other revolutions with work – related biases included the Algeria revolution of 1954, liberation war in Guinea Bissau

(1963-1974), Mozambique liberation war (1964-1975), the Zanzibar revolution of 1964 among others (Ketelbey, 2002). The above submission implies that poor working conditions for labour dissatisfy workers and can lead to disastrous effects.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The universities' councils usually formulate the general policy directions of the respective universities with regard to Extrinsic factors such as policies, job security and working environment. Whereas some universities have seemingly good policies, some times they are not properly implemented. Some times, the founders influence the implementation of the policies and other extrinsic factors in their respective universities, sometimes to their personal advantage (Ngabirano, 2003; Muwagga – Mugagga, 2006). Thus, the study was carried out to provide answer to the question, "Is there a difference in the job satisfaction of academic officials between denominational and non-denominational private universities in Uganda?"

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Sample Size

Due to the desire of getting responses from informants at once, the study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey design. The universal sampling technique was used. All the 380 academic officials in the 13 universities were included in the study. As Amin (2005) asserts, the larger the sample, the more the accuracy of the generalizability of the findings to the population. Out of the 380 questionnaires distributed, 296 usable questionnaires were returned, thus, yielding a response

rate of 77.86%.

Data Collection and analysis

Questionnaires were used because all the respondents were literate. The researcher also used oral interviews so as to supplement quantitative data to give detailed information on the items. For data analysis, the t-test was used.

Limitations of the Study

Job satisfaction is not a constant variable. As such, it can change from time to time due to various factors such as personality, future expectations, achievement, and frustrations, among others. Due to this and the fact that the study did not take a longitudinal design, the findings were interpreted with caution. The reported extents of job satisfaction were considered to be during the time the academic officials were serving in the particular positions in the respective universities under study.

Restriction to one employee group. The respondents of this study were only the universities' academic officials, whose pay, emoluments, terms of service, job security, among others, are, in most cases, better than those of many other categories of staff in the universities. They are hence more likely not to be subject to lower level needs.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the researcher believes this study has implications for future research and practices.

IV. FINDINGS

Table 1: Job Satisfaction of Academic Officials in Individual Private Universities

No	Denominational universities	Policies	Salary	Job security	Working conditions	Status	Average mean	Interpretation
1	001	2.57	3.41	2.00	4.04	4.56	3.32	Moderate
2	002	2.50	2.87	1.90	3.45	2.93	2.73	Moderate
3	003	3.27	2.62	2.80	3.34	3.30	3.07	Moderate
4	004	3.30	2.95	2.06	3.01	2.81	2.83	Moderate
5	005	2.95	2.40	2.02	2.86	2.96	2.64	Moderate
6	006	3.64	1.95	1.70	2.80	2.58	2.53	Low
Non denominational Universities								
1	007	1.78	2.00	1.20	3.45	3.02	2.29	Low
2	008	1.70	1.86	1.32	2.80	1.96	1.93	Low
3	009	2.65	2.10	1.40	2.90	2.03	2.22	Low
4	010	1.37	2.46	1.38	1.99	2.10	1.86	Low
5	011	2.56	1.86	1.30	2.47	2.16	2.07	Low
6	012	3.26	2.20	1.90	3.50	3.49	2.87	Moderate
7	013	3.40	2.36	2.00	2.63	3.30	2.74	Moderate

Source: Primary data

Table 1 reveals that five out of the six (83.33%) of the denominational universities which participated in the study, code-named for ethical reasons 001, 002, 003, 004, and 005 were moderately satisfied with the policies of their respective universities, salary, job security, working conditions and status. It was only in one denominational university code-named 006 where the academic officials experienced low extent of job satisfaction. However, academic officials from five out of the seven (71.4%) non denominational private universities under study, namely, universities code-named 007, 008, 009, 010 and 011 experienced low extent of job satisfaction. It was only in two non-denominational universities code-named 012 and 013 where the academic officials were moderately satisfied with the extrinsic facets of their jobs. Thus, the implication of these findings seem to be that although private universities try within their limited means to satisfy their employees, employees' job satisfaction is still a challenge.

Based on qualitative data from oral interviews, many respondents from denominational and non denominational universities almost equally stated that their dissatisfaction had to do with: lack of proper implementation of some policies, such as promotion to senior posts in the universities; inadequate salary; no specific policies for determining how much is to be paid to different categories of staff; Job insecurity especially in non-denominational universities; poor working conditions, for example spies are usually used to spy employees regarding what they do and say especially in non-denominational universities. This shows that naturally some

people are selfish, they put their interests first and are bad-hearted.

A relatively large number of interviewees however expressed some satisfaction with:

1. Policies: For instance religious freedom in all non-denominational universities. As for the denominational universities, satisfaction was expressed in putting emphasis on some religious-based principles such as decent clothing and appearance, morality and worship, that they help people to be responsible and lead morally upright.

2. Status. Many academic officials in both denominational and non denominational universities clearly indicated that they were relatively satisfied with their posts. The main reasons they raised were that it was a pride to hold a managerial post in a university, since a university is the highest academic institution; that by holding a managerial post one gets monthly allowances and that it builds one's experience and curriculum vitae which is an added advantage for promotion or for better jobs.

Thus, all this seems to imply that, though human beings are not easily satisfied psychologically, employees require not only relatively good and well implemented policies, relatively high salary, good working conditions, job security and status, but also the intrinsic aspects such as recognition and being made to feel that they own the institution.

Table 2 (a): Type of University and Job Satisfaction with Extrinsic Factors

	Type of University	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Satisfaction with university policies	Denominational	136	3.0260	.49566	.04250
	Non-denominational	151	2.3888	.66508	.05412
Satisfaction with salary	Denominational	136	2.7004	.43973	.03771
	Non-denominational	150	2.1159	.52105	.04254
Satisfaction with job security	Denominational	139	2.1550	.39335	.03336
	Non-denominational	155	1.5005	.39522	.03174
Satisfaction with the working conditions	Denominational	138	3.2471	.57991	.04937
	Non-denominational	151	2.8201	.57527	.04681
Satisfaction with status/position	Denominational	138	3.1890	.50487	.04298
	Non-denominational	151	2.5843	.71697	.05835
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH EXTRINSIC FACTORS	Denominational	139	2.7793	.36779	.03120
	Non-denominational	156	2.1931	.44150	.03535

Table 2 (b) : Differences in Job Satisfaction with Extrinsic Factors Between Denominational and Non denominational Universities

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Satisfaction with university policies	Equal variances assumed	9.121	285	.000	.63719
Satisfaction with salary	Equal variances assumed	10.196	284	.000	.58445
Satisfaction with job security	Equal variances assumed	14.207	292	.000	.65443
Satisfaction with the working conditions	Equal variances assumed	6.279	287	.000	.42701
Satisfaction with status/position	Equal variances assumed	8.219	287	.000	.60474
OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH EXTRINSIC FACTORS	Equal variances assumed	12.307	293	.000	.58630

Table 2 (b) reveals that, the difference between academic officials working in denominational universities and those working in non denominational universities in terms of job satisfaction was significant (sig, .000). For instance, on policies, denominational universities had a mean score of 3.03 yet the denominational universities had a mean score of 2.39. Regarding job security, the mean score in denominational universities was 2.16, yet in the non denominational universities it was 1.51. For working conditions, it was 3.25, yet in the non denominational universities it was 2.82. For status, it was 3.19 in denominational universities, yet in non denominational universities it was 2.58. It is thus shown that, on all the five extrinsic factors of job security which the current study addressed, job satisfaction was experienced more in denominational universities than in non denominational universities. This means that academic officials working in denominational universities at the time the current study was carried out, on average, perceived the extrinsic factors in their universities to be better than those in non denominational universities.

The qualitative data from structured interviews revealed that on average, academic officials in denominational universities, compared to those in non-denominational universities, were satisfied with prompt payment of salary, the care shown to a member of staff who loses a partner, child, parent or close relative as well as the academic officials working for the institutions of their denominations. Therefore, quantitative data did not differ from qualitative data in terms of indicating differences in academic officials' job satisfaction.

V. DISCUSSION

The study has un-covered that there was a significant difference in the job satisfaction of academic officials between denominational and non-denominational private universities in Uganda (sig, .000). In all the aspects of job satisfaction under study, academic officials in denominational

universities were far more satisfied than their counterparts in non-denominational universities.

However, according to qualitative data, some academic officials were moderately satisfied with religious freedom in all non denominational universities and emphasizing religious-based principles in denominational universities. The reasons advanced for deriving some satisfaction out of these was that it prevents strikes.

The finding that work conditions were better in denominational universities than in non denominational universities could be because denominational universities usually employ people of their particular religion to work with them, something which gives them psychological satisfaction (being satisfied to work for one's own religion). It is also possible that, since some of the universities under study do not have very many students, the academic officials are not over worked. This disagrees with the findings of Giramahoro (2006) about stress and performance of employees in the Ministry Health, Public Service and Education in Uganda. The findings revealed that working conditions and work load were the major causes of employee stress and work performance.

Surprisingly, out of the 13 universities under study, only Bugema University which is religious- founded (denominational) once had profit-sharing plans for her staff. However, at the time the current study was carried out, the profit- sharing plan had been suspended due to financial-related issues. The fact that the profit sharing plans were once in existence there can be attributed to the University's strong culture. Its absence in other universities could be due to the universities' inadequate resources, and the fact that some universities are profit-oriented.

The significant difference on satisfaction with salary could be due to prompt payment of salary in denominational universities, and delayed payment of salary in non-denominational universities. The delay in paying salaries in

non denominational universities can be attributed to the fact that some universities are profit-oriented. The founders want to make profits as Muwagga-Mugagga (2006) claims, and hence give inadequate and delayed salary to the academic officials. It can also be attributed to the limited financial capacity of the private universities. Many private universities depend on students for fees, yet some universities do not have many students. To make matters worse, some of the students come from financially challenging families. Because of this, they do not pay university fees promptly. Others pay it in installments, others even at times ask for dead semesters for lack of fees (Ssempeebwa, 2007). Universities that have such students can hardly have enough funds to pay high salaries to the staff. Though Mayanja (1996) claimed that higher education in Uganda was dominated by students from affluent backgrounds, which was supported by Kaheru (1995) and Wesonga, et.al (2004), they did not rule out the fact that some students come from poor families. It thus seems to be a national problem in educational institutions, that salary paid to the workers is inadequate. Many studies have come up with that conclusion, such as Namutebi (2006), Mujuni-Tayari (2006), Ssentongo-Kafeero (2006), Ouma (2007), Sangaire (2007), Acom (2007), among others.

Regarding job security, a significant difference between denominational and non-denominational universities was realized (Sig. .000, and mean, 2.55 and 2.15 respectively). This is possibly because, in Uganda, by law, any organization which employs more than ten full time employees must remit to the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) 15% of every Ugandan employee's gross salary, provided he or she is not working in the Civil Service. That money is supposed to be given to the beneficiary in form of pension when one reaches retirement age, or when one gets a pensionable job in the Civil Service, or gets an ailment which prevents him or her from being employed. That money works as a retirement plan or package for employees. However, whereas denominational universities tend to remit that money to NSSF, some non-denominational universities especially those started by businessmen tend to under-declare workers' salary and hence remit very little money to NSSF; and because of job insecurity, employees fear to complain, otherwise they can lose their jobs. Regarding medical insurance, the possible cause of moderate satisfaction is the fact that many educational institutions have clinics where students and members of staff are treated from. In some universities such as Bugema University, qualitative data revealed that one's immediate family members also get access to the medical services.

The findings of the current study on job security are similar to the findings of Sumil (1999) in a related study he carried out in the Phillipines. This similarity can be attributed to the fact that both Phillipines and Uganda are not yet developed countries, so offering such services to all workers may prove very costly to the countries and to the organizations. In both studies, however, respondents were moderately satisfied with working conditions and status. This

seems to suggest that, the educated, by virtue of their status, enjoy working in a well organized environment, and are proud of their intellectual lives. Even if the salary is not high, intellectual life gives satisfaction to the individuals. The limitation in comparing the two studies however was that, unlike the current study which was carried out in 13 out of the 29 private universities in Uganda, Sumil (1999)'s study was carried out in only one institution in the Phillipines, hence a challenge in generalizing the findings to the population (higher education institutions in the Phillipines). Despite this however, Sumil (1999)'s study provides a clue to job satisfaction in the aspects of extrinsic factors in educational institutions in the Phillipines.

Regarding job satisfaction, quantitative data revealed that there existed a significant difference in job satisfaction of academic officials between denominational and non denominational universities (Sig, 0.000). This means, the type of university one works in, whether it is denominational or non-denominational, can significantly affect the way one is satisfied with the extrinsic facets of his or her job. The difference according to qualitative data was attributed to the psychological aspect of some respondents who felt psychologically satisfied with working in the institutions of their religions, so they felt that they owned the respective universities. The current study's findings that in denominational universities where there is usually teamwork employees are more satisfied with their jobs than their counterparts in non denominational universities where teamwork is lacking. This relates to the findings of Ole and Per (2007), Acom (2007) and those of Malima -Kisesi (1998). It is also in agreement with the claims of Bard-Kuvaas and Auders-Dysvik (2010) that the relationship between perceived empowerment and satisfaction as well as work performance is negative for employees with low levels of intrinsic motivation. The relationship between perceived empowerment and affective organizational commitment is positive for employees with low levels of intrinsic motivation and insignificant for those with high levels of intrinsic motivation. It is also consistent with Kamagara (2005)'s and Mulindwa (1998)'s findings that organizational leadership style affects the satisfaction of employees in the banking sector.

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