

Rethinking the Role of Human Resource: Assessing Student Retention in Kenyan Public University

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Abstract:-The major dynamic of university education is to develop the people, society and the economy which are central to most National mission and visions. This study sought to investigate the determinants of Retention to public university education in Kenya. The objectives of the study were to determine the effects human resource on retention to public university education in Kenya. This study was modeled on the education production theory. The study used a case study research design. The research targeted 16 heads of departments and 1201 final students. Simple random sampling technique was used in choosing the sample size. The research instruments used to collect data were questionnaire students of University of Eldoret. Data collected was analyzed quantitatively. Inferential and descriptive statistics specifically play an important role in the presentation and interpretation of analyzed data. The study findings indicated that there was a significant relationship between human resources on Retention to education ($p=0.000$). The study concluded that rapid expansion of university education has strained the existing facilities and adversely affected the quality of learning. The number of human resources in the university determines Retention of the education. The study recommends that there is need plan well for university education e.g. admitting students based on carefully done projections since lack of this may certainly result into challenges related to quality education. The findings of the study were found to be significant and benefit in the streamlining of Retention of public university in Kenya.

Key words: Rethinking, Human Resource, Student Retention, University

I. INTRODUCTION

University education is of paramount importance for economic and social development. Institutions of university education have the main responsibility for equipping individuals with the advanced knowledge and skills required for positions of responsibilities in government, business and the professions (Becker, S. A., Cummins, M., Davis, A., Freeman, A., Hall, C. G., & Ananthanarayanan, V., 2017) These institutions produce new knowledge through research, serve as conduits for the transfer, adoption and dissemination of knowledge generated elsewhere in the world. They also support government business with advice and consulting services. In most countries, they play a very important identity of the country and offer a forum for pluralistic debate (Altbach, Rumbly and Reisberge, 2015).

The purpose of university education is to develop the people, society and the economy which are central to most national visions. In the next economically successful nations will be

those which become learned societies. They must be committed, through effective education and training, to life-long learning (Wolf, 2016). This has been achieved through the expansion of university education. This rapid expansion has led to many challenges in terms of demand and supply. This has prompted new challenges which require reforms in their management and governance styles. The rise of new stakeholders, internal factors, globalization and the rapid pace at which new developments take place are a challenge to these institutions. The response had been rather slowly, to the changing circumstances, and there is an urgent need for them to adjust in terms of demand and supply of university education (Jowi, 2013).

Globally, many of the students are admitted in the programs because of their ability to pay fees, which range from between 1,075 to 2,690 U.S. dollars per semesters. The programs have enabled most form four graduates who come from good backgrounds fast-track their university education. Most of those who afford the fees take advantage of the system even if they have been admitted to regular degree courses. They do not wait for two years, after their secondary education to join university as it normally happens.

In Africa, the state of affairs has disenfranchised a huge number of students, thus enhancing inequalities in the attainment of higher education. Many other Africans nations, inequalities have been bolstered by intensive privatization of higher education in Public universities. The programs, which are in response to continues demand for higher education in the country, have become income generating ventures for varsities as government financial support dwindles.

The last decade has seen rapid growth of the higher education sector in Kenya, enabling a good number of students who have completed their secondary education access universities. With seven public universities and about 30 private universities, most of which have sprout up in the last decade, Kenya's higher education sector has significantly widened. The country is now among nations in east Africa with the most vibrant higher education institutions despite its foremost higher learning institute, university of Nairobi, having been established years after university of Dar-es-salam in Tanzania and Makerere University in Uganda.

According to Oketch (2012) amidst rapid advancement and restructuring in the provision of higher education in Kenya, there have been some problems in the higher education sector.

The growth of public universities and the expansion of their curricula is wiping out some vocational schools, reducing options for secondary level graduates who may not be qualified for or financially able to attend universities. Teacher training colleges and Government Training Institutes (GTIs) have also suffered since they have been takeover by universities and no longer offer certificate courses. The space has been filled by commercial colleges, which have been criticized by some employers for turning out poorly equipped graduates. Despite the various reasons that have been advanced and to which this increase in the demand for higher education has been attributed, no known study has focused on the real determinants of the trend of demand and supply of university education in Kenya. Most of the reasons given stem from opinion and general views of the public as well as the media. Yet the few studies done on this subject have not particularly focused on the determinants of the trends of demand and supply of university education but rather, this comes in as an auxiliary concern. It is thus, never treated with the central focus it deserves yet it is important that such determinants are established so as to inform educational policy as well as educational planning.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Kenya's public universities admit a paltry 20,000 students each year to public university, these are those who have scored 63 points and above. This sadly is against thousands of others who score the minimum university entry marks. For instance in 2015, the joint admission Board (JAB), an institution that selects students to join public universities, considered only 24,221 leaving out 56,827 (Xinhua, 2011). The situation is expected to be stiffer for those who sat for secondary exam in 2010, since about 90,000 passed highly but not all may be able to access education in public universities. The joint admission board (JAB) which regulates university education in terms of standards has set merit, carrying capacity, catchment areas and quota for educationally disadvantaged region and genders as criteria for admission into public universities. It has been argued that rather than enhance access to university education, thousands of applicants sit for the Kenya certificate of secondary education (KCSE) examinations and less than ten percent (10%) on the average gain admission into the public universities. It becomes apparent for the researcher to investigate into human resources to establish the extent to which they are determinants of Retention to public university education in the University of Eldoret

1.2 Objective of the Study

To investigate the influence of human resource on Retention public to university education in Kenya

1.3: Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between human resources and retention to public university education in Kenya

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari 2008). The case study design method seeks to describe a unit in detail, in context and holistically. It is a way of organizing educational data and looking at the objective to be studied as a whole. In a case study, a great deal can be learned from a few examples of the phenomena under study (Kombo and Tromp, 2009). A case study of University of Eldoret allowed an in depth insight and better understanding of the determinants of Retention to public university education in Kenya.

2.1 Ethical considerations

To ensure that the study complies with the ethical issues pertaining research undertaking, a permission to conduct the research was sought from the respective authorities. A full disclosure of all the activities concerning the study was explained to the authorities and this involved the study intention which was only for learning purposes. A high level of confidentiality and privacy was observed and the findings of the study were only submitted to the university.

A letter of introduction was obtained from the University to serve as evidence of the purpose of the study. In respect for the informants and in order to protect them from abuse resulting from the data they give for the research, data was presented in such a way that it was not linked to individuals who gave it except by the researcher who might have needed to seek clarification during analysis of data.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to investigate the influence of human resources on level of Retention to education in University of Eldoret. The study findings were as shown in table 3.1.

3.1 Human resources on Retention to education

The study sought to investigate the influence of human resources on level of Retention to education in University of Eldoret. The study findings were as shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Human resources on Retention to education

Statements		SD	D	U	A	SA	Total	Mean	Std Dev
The number of human resources in the university determines Retention of the education	F	14	14	24	44	118	278	3.99	-0.971
	%	5	5	8.6	15.8	42.4	100	79.8	
The level of training of human resources influences Retention of university education	F	14	12	34	42	168	278	2.81	-0.439
	%	5	4.3	12.2	15.1	60.4	100	56.2	
The level of experience of staff in the university determine Retention of the education	F	0	12	34	42	168	278	2.97	-0.546
	%	0	4.3	12.2	15.1	60.4	100	59.4	
The level of employee competence determines the Retention of the education in the university	F	14	0	0	24	96	278	2.80	-0.167
	%	5	0	0	8.6	34.5	100	56.0	
The level of staff competency is the main determinant of Retention of the education in the university	F	0	14	24	44	118	278	2.88	-0.123
	%	0	5	8.6	15.8	42.4	100	57.6	

From the above results, the standard deviation results show that the data was within a considerable range of between -2 and +2 implying that the data proved normal univariate distribution.

The study findings indicated that 79.8% (mean=3.99) of the respondents were of the opinion that the number of human resources in the university determines Retention of the education, 56.2% (mean=2.81) were of the opinion that the level of training of human resources influences Retention of university education, 59.4% (mean=2.97) were of the opinion that the level of experience of staff in the university determine Retention of the education, 56.0% (mean=2.80) were of the opinion that the level of employee competence determines the Retention of the education in the university, 57.6% (mean=2.88) were of the opinion that The level of staff competency is the main determinant of Retention of the education in the university.

The study results revealed that majority of the respondents were of the view that the number of human resources in the university determines Retention of the education. This was supported by Onyango (2011) emphasizes that human resource is the most important resource in a school organization. He adds that teachers comprise the most important staff in the school. However, the contribution made

by other staff members such as secretaries, bursars, accounts clerk, matron, nurses, messengers and watchmen is also important. Odhiambo (2015) observes that the most important purpose of a school is to provide students with equal and enhanced opportunities for learning, and the most important resource a school has for achieving that purpose is the knowledge, skills and dedication of its teachers. Staff therefore needs to be well managed. The head of department responsibility in human resource management involves: Leading and motivating staff; delegating responsibilities effectively; and conflict management.

It is great that staffs are readily available to students at all times. We all have different timetables, some of us work part-time. University lecturers only put up on their doors a few hours they will see students and if the student can't be on campus those times, bad luck. This resembles with the findings of Scutter et al. (2011), who note that access to staff plays an important role in students feeling part of the community, in their willingness to seek assistance, and in enhancing the likelihood of their success.

3.2 Inferential Statistics

The study performed ANOVA and regression analysis to estimate the relationships between the study variables. The study results were as tabulated in table 3.2

Table 3.2: ANOVA Model

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.936 ^a	0.877	0.868	0.0868	99.676	0.000 ^b

The ANOVA model indicated the simple correlation was 0.936 which indicates a degree of correlation. The total variation in level of Retention to education was 87.7% explained by determinants (R Square = 0.877). The study results further revealed that the ANOVA model predicted level of Retention to education significantly well ($p=0.000^b$).

This indicated the statistical significance of the regression model that was run and that overall the regression model statistically significantly predicted the level of Retention to education (i.e., it was a good fit for the data).

3.3 Test of Hypothesis

In this section, the study sought to test the hypothesis. Regression analysis was used to test the association between the study variables and testing the hypotheses of the study **H₀₁**: There is no relationship between human resources and Retention to education in University of Eldoret. The study findings were as tabulated.

The study findings indicated that there was no statistical significant relationship between human resources on Retention to education ($p=0.307$). The study therefore rejected the alternate hypothesis and accepted the null hypothesis which showed that there was no relationship between human resources on Retention to education in University of Eldoret.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study has established that the number of human resources in the university determines Retention of the education. Education and development of human resources are considered one of the major strategies for positive adaptation to changing conditions and an institutional competitive advantage. The effectiveness of an institution is largely dependent on the level of knowledge and skills of its employees and higher levels of institutional knowledge leads to higher levels of adaption to the changing conditions of student Retention in these institutions. The study recommends that universities should plan prudently and admit numbers of students they can take care of by way of providing adequate facilities and human resources to address the reported unavailability of resources and wastage of university students

V. POLICY IMPLICATION

The Universities management and policy makers would find this study useful in meeting higher educational specific objectives, for instance there is need to plan for university education e.g. admitting students based on carefully done projections since lack of this may certainly result into challenges related to quality of education. There is need to

strengthen the funding modalities for university education since it appears to be the strongest factor in determining the supply of higher education in Kenya.

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