

Staff Job Satisfaction in Kenya School of Government: A Case of Kenya School of Government Matuga- Kwale Sub County

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Abstract

The Kenya Public Service has undergone a number of reform initiatives expecting that public servants would be highly motivated and therefore more effective in service delivery, however this seems not to be the case. This study sought to establish the level of job satisfaction in Kenya Schools of Government (KSG). Specifically the study sought to identify contributory factors to job satisfaction amongst staff, determine the various forms of staff motivation and to determine the level of staff job satisfaction. The study adapted the motivator – hygiene theory and utilized survey research design. The study population was 64 members of whom 25 were sampled. Semi- structured questionnaires, interviews and document analysis were employed to collect data which was analyzed and the main findings of the study were; provision of materials and equipment, knowledge of job specification, appreciation of workers, involvement in decision making, support for creativity and new ideas, happiness while working, harmonization of institutes and individual's workers values. In addition, opportunities to learn contributed to staff job satisfaction at Matuga KSG. The staff was generally not satisfied due to pay. The findings of the study provide insight for further studies on staff job satisfaction in KSG.

Key words: Job satisfaction, Staff Motivation, staff job satisfaction

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Introduction

When Kenya attained independence in 1963, Government took up the task of providing basic needs and services in response to the needs and aspirations of her citizens. Besides its traditional role of law and order, the public service was given other roles of coordination of national development, provision of economic growth and managing industrial and commercial concerns where government had interest (Republic of Kenya, 2005). Public services in Kenya comprises of the civil service, teaching and public university services, county government authorities, the disciplined services (excluding the military), state corporations, public institutions and service commissions whose services are funded by the Government. Generally, the public service facilitates the formulation and implementation of government policies. The responsibility of providing strategic leadership and policy direction on human resource management and development in the civil service rests with the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM). The DPM performs its human resource development functions through a variety of organs including five Kenya

Schools of Government (KSG), namely Mombasa, Embu, Baringo, Nairobi and Matuga. The core function of the schools is to offer training, research and consultancy services.

The civil service is made up of a body of officials called civil servants. These officials do not earn profit, but salaries in fixed grades. The requirement of the civil service is that members shall be impartially selected, administratively competent, politically neutral and imbued with the spirit of service to the Nation (Government of Kenya, 2005). The success of Government programs therefore depends largely on civil service. This calls for their dedication and efficiency in their delivery of services.

There have been on-going reforms in the public service aimed at creating a leaner, more efficient and productive public service that facilitates national development (Republic of Kenya, 2006). However, there has been job dissatisfaction within the public service as evidenced by industrial action by doctors, teachers and Postal Corporation of Kenya staff among others in recent past. This industrial unrest has persisted over time and is still a challenge in the public service. The reform initiatives intended that public servants would be highly motivated and therefore more effective in service delivery. However, this seems not to be the case. Therefore, it is in the light of this that the study set out to establish the level of job satisfaction in government training institutes and in particular Matuga KSG.

Profile of KSG Matuga

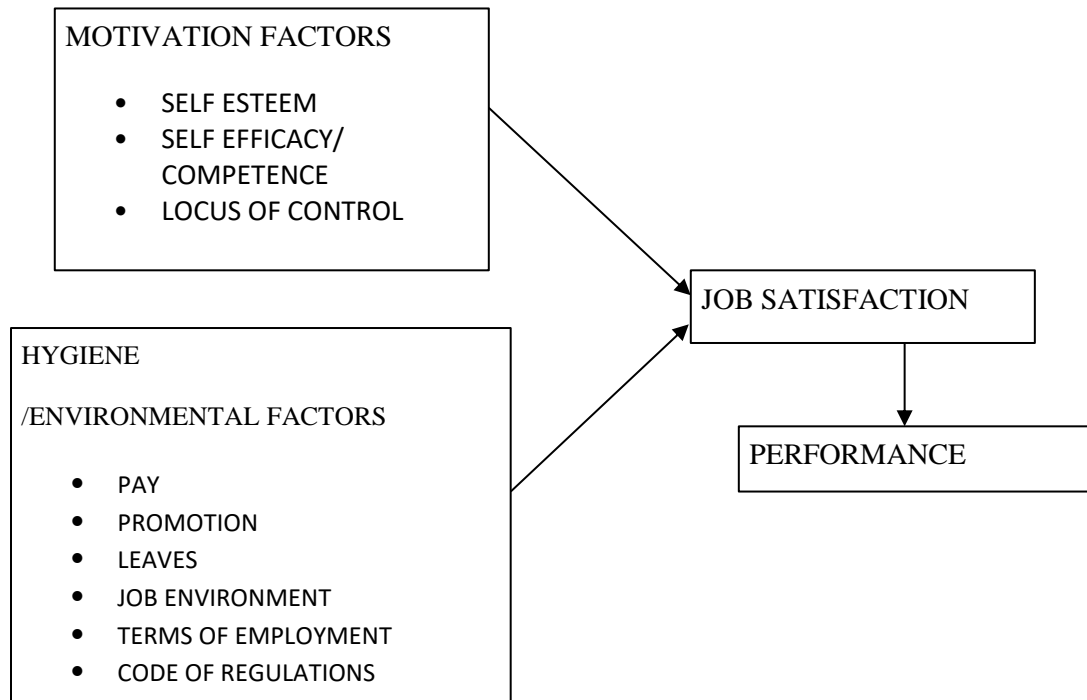
KSG Matuga previously Government Training Institute (GTI) was started in the 1950's as a community training centre, training women in cookery, knitting, tailoring and craft under the management of Kwale County Council. Later, additional courses in agriculture, pre-primary, day care, family planning, rehabilitation of malnourished children and food handling were added. In 1968, agriculture courses were moved to Embu GTI and later in 1974, the Institute was transformed into a multipurpose training institution under the Ministry of Culture and Social services. In 2003, the Institute was taken over by the DPM (Republic of Kenya, 2005). At the time of the study, KSG Matuga had a total of 64 members of staff. These included 14 teaching staff and 50 non-teaching staff.

Lawler (1973) observed that civil servants spend a great deal of their time in the work place, which eventually influences their attitudes toward their profession. In the course of their work, various attitudes are generated, positive or negative, which in turn, lead to either job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Most adults spend half of their working time, in job related activities, and the satisfaction they derive from their jobs is an important reinforcement for going to work. It is in view of this that the study sought to find out the level of staff satisfaction at KSG Matuga, Kwale County.

Ultimate job satisfaction at the work place has always been difficult to attain hence the variance in different work environments on the level of satisfaction. For instance, satisfaction in the public service varies from that in the private sector. The study focused on the public service mainly due to the perception that this is where job dissatisfaction is greatest. Staff at KSG Matuga were targeted as they represented various cadre of staff within the public service and also due to the fact that supervisors had room to manipulate and offer other forms of motivation over and above the usual schemes as a way of enhancing performance.

The study was founded on three theories: - Disposition theory, Core evaluation model and Two factor theory. The disposition theory as advanced by Jackson April in 2007 suggests that people have innate dispositions that cause them to have tendencies toward a certain level of satisfaction regardless of one's job (Brief & Weiss, 2001). It could therefore be argued that job satisfaction does not depend on status or cadre but it is more driven from within the employee, hence, just as a manager can experience satisfaction, likewise will the cleaner or the office messenger.

Core self-evaluation model states that there are four core self-evaluations that determine one's disposition towards job satisfaction (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). These are identified as self-esteem, general self-efficacy, locus of control and neuroticism. A combination of high self-esteem, high self-efficacy/competence, high locus of control of one's own life and low neuroticism lead to high job satisfaction and vice versa. The two factor theory also referred to as the motivator – hygiene theory as advanced by Fredrick Herzberg state that dissatisfaction at the work place is driven by two factors, i.e. motivation/ intrinsic factors and hygiene/ work environment factors. This theory informed the basis of the theoretical framework of this study as it best captured the arguments of the disposition theory and the core self-evaluation model.

Factors influencing staff job satisfaction

Source: Judge, Locke, & Durham(1997)

Literature review

Job satisfaction could simply be defined as how people feel about their jobs. It is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs. Job satisfaction depends on the balance between work-role inputs, such as education, working time, effort, and work-role out puts, i.e. fringe benefits, status , working conditions, intrinsic aspects of the job. If work-role outputs (pleasures) increase, relative to work-role inputs (pains) then job satisfaction increases. In an organization, workers tend to be motivated through recognition, fair treatment, participation in decision making and when they feel valued in the organization. This enhances their in-put in the organization. Employees are happy and feel appreciated, loyal and productive when recognized either through trophies, gifts, celebration of their success and encouraging a team member to speak to the management outlining how they achieved their objectives (Bennet & Graham, 1998).

The employees' voice in the organization need be recognized and that by their involvement in procedures and systems, they tend to consider the procedure as fair. Employees are also partly motivated by the need for job satisfaction, promotions, fringe benefits, security, respect of colleagues and the need to earn a living (Benet & Graham, 1998).

McGregor in theory X and Y observes that average employees, under theory X dislike work, tries to avoid responsibility, and will only be made to work by a mixture of close control and threats. In theory Y, he observes that work is a natural and welcome activity which need not be externally controlled, if the employee is adequately motivated. That employee will seek responsibility and can give valuable help in solving work problems (Bennet & Graham, 1998). They further note that involvement of employees in decision making is a practical technique of motivating them, as it makes them feel respected, trusted and therefore empowered. They also noted that employees are motivated when given opportunities to acquire new skills and their opinions are listened to.

Bennet and Graham(1998) observe that the organization's pay structure may be used as reward to encourage employees to work faster and harder. According to Sigmund's Freud, a person's motivation can be imperatively affected by his or her unconscious mind. However, Skinner argues that motivation emerges from interplay of conscious mind through stimulus and response process. They give an example of poverty stimulating people to look for jobs and when they get pay, it provides satisfaction that retains them in the job as they strive to maximize their income through expanded earnings.

Amstrong (2001) advocates that during recruitment, organization core values and expectations should be closely matched with individuals' core values and expectations, in order to ensure that the job has meaningful value to the employee during employment period. For employees to get satisfaction with their jobs, they need unconditional openness, trust and sincere communication of issues affecting their jobs. Arthur (1994) pointed out that in too many organizations, inconsistency between what is said and what is done undermines trust, generates employee cynicism and provides evidence of contradictions in management thinking, and reasons for workers dissatisfaction with their assigned tasks.

Workers self-esteem is negatively affected by being denied visibility in organizational activities i.e. being assigned tasks while advancing Organisation objectives blocks achievements of an individual's aspirations. Kelly and Lewis (1986) argue that for optimal employee contribution to an enterprise, task assignment should be in such a way that they increase self-esteem of the workers. They emphasized that self-esteem would be achieved through ensuring that the tasks assigned to workers are in line with employee aspirations, interests and goals.

Methodology

This study was carried out in Kwale Sub County. Kwale Town serves as the administrative centre. Kwale has various economic activities among them fishing, tourism, fruit farming and chalk mining. In addition, a number of commercial activities are also carried out given that Kwale is the administrative capital of the County. Training activities are also carried out at the KSG Matuga within the sub county. The major highway linking Kenya to Tanzania passes through the County making it a host to a huge number of travelers in addition to those visiting the tourist attraction sites.

Kenya has four KSG's i.e. Baringo, Embu, Mombasa and Matuga, which formed the study population. KSG Matuga was targeted with staff members at all cadres purposefully selected to ensure all strata were represented. The study sought to establish a relationship between variables through correlation, hence, a sample of 30% of the target population was considered minimum (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This agrees with Gay (1976) who asserted that the minimum number of subjects acceptable for a study depends on the type of research involved. The study adopted Stoker's sampling guidelines to determine the sample of the entire target population. The population was divided into two strata and samples of the entire stratum were selected. This was to ensure that all the strata within the study area were represented and all considerations of gender and cadre were taken into account.

Given that staff at the KSG Matuga were heterogeneous in terms of motivation and working sections, the study sought to correlate specific identified variables to job satisfaction. The staff were put into stratified groups depending on whether they were teaching or non-teaching staff. Simple random sampling was then used to pick a total of 25 (39 %) out of 64 from the different strata. This was in line with Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) where a suggestion of at least 30% was proposed for such studies.

This study followed a multiphase approach as detailed by Churchill (1991) which involved a literature search, questionnaire survey and exploratory research design and a pretest which assisted to refine the instruments before they were administered. The study thus investigated the relationships between motivation factors, hygiene/ environmental factors and job satisfaction. In so doing specific indicators such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, pay, job environment, terms of employment were correlated with job satisfaction.

One set of semi structured questionnaire was designed for the study and was administered to staff at the KSG Matuga. It sought to collect background information about the member of staff and on the extent of the respondents' agreement with given statements as pertained to their motivation and the work place environment. A structured interview guide was used while interviewing senior administrative staff, this allowed the researcher to get more insight on the motivation strategies employed at the Institute (De Vaus, 1996). As Christensen and Stoup (1986) stipulated, the study favored the use of an exploratory in depth

interview with the administrative officers. Documents on staff establishment were analyzed to get information pertinent to the study.

The data collection instruments were checked right from the design stage to determine the degree to which the instrument questions represented the universe of the characteristics to be measured to determine content validity of the instruments and the extent to which a measure appeared to measure what it aimed at measuring i.e. context validity (Gay, 1976).

The reliability of the research instruments for the study was ensured through adoption of an instrument from prior related studies (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Hence, these were pre-tested before in the prior job satisfaction survey by the Wellness Council of America (Sosa-Poza & Sosa- Poza, 2000). Additionally, the instruments were administered in a consistent fashion during data collection to enhance its reliability. The data obtained was coded and the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) was used as the tool for analyzing the data. This brought order, structure and meaning to the information that was collected.

Results

Majority of the respondents (68%) were below 40 years, 58.33% of the respondents had attained at least tertiary level of education. Only 8.33% had attained primary level of education as their highest academic qualification. The staff was stratified into teaching staff and non-teaching and responses were analyzed comparatively around these groups.

Contributory factors to job satisfaction amongst staff members

1. Hygiene/Environment Factors

These factors are identified as pay, promotion, leaves, job environment and terms of employment (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). Hygiene factors tend to generate job dissatisfaction thus are referred to as dissatisfiers. Previous studies have shown that pay affects job satisfaction among workers. 32% of the respondents agreed that they were well paid while 48 % disagreed. Of the two categories, pay dissatisfaction prominently featured among the teaching staff responses at 42.8% compared to the non-teaching at 11.1%. This was in agreement with (Sosa-Poza & Sosa-Poza, 2000) who argued that wages, fringe benefits, status and working conditions are factors that directly influence job satisfaction.

2. Materials and equipment support

The study sought to interrogate the staff level of satisfaction in relation to materials and equipment support. It was observed that 48% of the staff was in agreement that they had materials and equipment needed to do their work; however, 12% disagreed while 40% were neutral. According to the findings the teaching staff

was satisfied at 57.15% compared to the non-teaching at 44.44%. This was in line with other studies where it was found that materials and equipment contributed to satisfaction on the job (Sosa-Poza & Sosa-Poza, 2000).

3. Knowledge on work expectation

The study sought to find out whether the staff were aware of their job specification. It was noted that majority of staff in both categories agreed (92%) with the statement on job specification.

4. Recognition and appreciation at work place

To further interrogate the working environment, respondents were asked to comment on the level of appreciation. It was deduced that 57.14% of the teaching staff and 83.34% of the non-teaching staff were in agreement with the statement that they were recognized and appreciated at the work place. Hence it was established that although majority of staff agreed that they were recognized and appreciated, the satisfaction level was higher among the non-teaching staff compared to the teaching staff.

Motivation Factors

These are factors that influence internal satisfaction of employees, they are mainly inherent and include self-efficacy/ competence, self-esteem, locus of control and neuroticism (Brief, 2001). In this regard the study sought to establish the staff level of involvement in decision making, creativity, commitment and happiness at the place of work. These were to serve as indicators of satisfaction.

5. Involvement in decision making

The study disclosed that 56% of the staff acknowledged being involved in decision making, 32% were neutral, while 12% disagreed. Of those who agreed, 57.14% of the teaching staff were in this category while 55.56% of the non-teaching staff were in the category. There was general satisfaction among the staff as regards involvement in decision making.

6. Support of creativity and new ideas

From the findings, the study established that 42.86% of the teaching staff indicated that there was support for creativity and new ideas while 28.57% disagreed. On the other hand, 58.82% of the non-teaching staff were in agreement. Less than 50% of the respondents (45.83%) were satisfied with support of creativity and new ideas at the institution.

7. Co-workers commitment to doing quality work

To cross check the extent of commitment to quality work among workers as perceived by their colleagues, the study sought respondents' perceptions. The findings revealed that most teaching staff perceived that their colleagues were putting in quality work (57.14%). On the other hand, 61.11% of non-teaching staff were of the perception that their colleagues were committed to doing quality work while 16.67% perceived

otherwise. Majority (60%) of the respondents were of the perception that their colleagues were committed to doing quality work.

8. Happiness while working

The study established that 42.86% of the teaching staff felt happy as they worked, 14.28% disagreed, while 42.86% remained neutral. Comparatively, 83.33% of the non-teaching staff agreed that they were happy as they worked while 16.67% remained neutral. From the foregoing findings, most of the respondents were happy as they worked.

9. Level of staff job satisfaction

The study sought to establish the level of satisfaction per each contributory factor in order to ascertain the possible level of satisfaction in line with reviewed literature. Together with this, the study sought to determine whether staff values were in line with the Institute's values as the convergence of the two gives an indication of job satisfaction. The findings established that 68% of the respondents agreed that they had shared values with the Institute while 12% disagreed, indicating higher level of satisfaction. Further, the study sought to establish if the staff was given opportunity to learn what they wanted to learn and it was established that 52% of the staff agreed that such opportunities were allowed while 20% disagreed. 28% of the respondents were neutral. In both cases, most of the respondents were satisfied.

10. Forms of staff motivation at KSG Matuga

The research sought to establish the various forms by which the staff at KSG Matuga was motivated. An open ended question was put to the respondents and corroborated through the interview administered to the management. Both the teaching and non-teaching staff identified tours, training, leaves, financial, letters of commendation and awards as some of the available forms of motivation at the Institute. Among the non-teaching staff, the frequency was higher for financial motivation followed by tours and training respectively. The non-teaching staff did not identify recreation as a form of motivation.

On the other hand, the teaching staff identified training and letters of commendation as the forms of motivation with higher frequency. Financial motivation and leaves were rated third. Like the non-teaching, the teaching staff did not identify recreation as a form of motivation however management through interview identified recreation as a form of motivation available in the Institute. Awards were also not identified by the teaching staff although it was identified by the non-teaching staff and management through interview. It was therefore established that the Institute provided different forms of motivation.

Summary of findings

The study sought to establish the level of staff job satisfaction in Kenya Schools of Government particularly KSG Matuga. To achieve this, the study investigated hygiene and motivational variables that influence job satisfaction. The study investigated pay, staff commitment, availability of materials, opportunity to learn, values, creativity, job specification, involvement in decision making, recognition at work place and happiness. It was established that except in the area of pay, the respondents generally agreed with all the declarative statements indicating satisfaction on all the variables under investigation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study established that provision of materials and equipment, knowledge of job specification together with recognition and appreciation of workers at Matuga KSG produced satisfaction. Involvement in decision making, support for creativity and new ideas, and commitment of workers to quality work, produced similar satisfaction. Moreover, happiness while working, harmonization of Institute's and individual's workers' values, in addition to opportunities to learn contributed to staff satisfaction. It was apparent that the staff was not satisfied with pay levels despite the reforms. As an attempt to keep the staff motivated, the institute gave tours, subsidized training, leaves and offs, financial rewards, awards, and letters of commendation and recreation opportunities to staff.

The study recommends that the Government review of the staff pay to improve on job satisfaction. Further, recreation and awards should be embraced and enhanced within a wider motivation scheme for the different cadre of staff.

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