

Original Research Article

THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN QUALITY OF WORK LIFE AND JOB ATISFACTION AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF IN KENYAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

ABSTRACT

A range of organizational factors can influence the performance of employees and hence success of any organisation. Some of these factors include quality of work life, personality of employees and job satisfaction. The objective of this study was to investigate the influence of personality on the relationship between quality of work life and job satisfaction of academic staff in Kenyan Public Universities. The study explored the the moderating role of personality on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction. The study population comprised of academic staff of the seven public universities. A sample of 356 respondents was selected from the population using proportionate sampling based on numbers in each university and levels. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was used. Primary data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between quality of work life and job satisfaction and that personality has a moderating effect on quality of work life and job satisfaction. The study also concluded that employees who are agreeable, open and conscientious tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction. The study has made contribution to theory, policy and practice in relation to quality of work life, personality and employee job satisfaction.. The study offered further clarification into the relationship between quality of work life personality and job satisfaction.

Key words: **QWL, job satisfaction, personality**

INTRODUCTION

The competitive pressures organizations continue to face requires them to give attention to their operational effectiveness for competitive advantage. The effectiveness mainly depends on the performance of the workforce (Dailey, 2012) and this means that employees are a valuable resource in an organization and are capable of providing competitive advantage. The resource-based view maintains that human resources can meet the criteria for resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1991). For organizations to succeed and perform, there is need to address the needs of this valuable assets, hence the need

to address aspects such as quality of work life and other factors which could have an impact on employees' performance.. Individual characteristics (manifested in personality) and perceptions of the environment may influence individuals' behavior and job satisfaction (Kohler & Mathieu, 1993). Every organization would be interested satisfied employees.. However, a range of organizational and employee factors could impact on the successful achievement of this objective. Some of the employee related factors include ability, effort, motivation, attitude, personality, competence and job satisfaction. This study looked how personality affects the relationship between QWL and employee job satisfaction

Quality of work life programmes are expected to be associated job satisfaction (Bearfield 2003). But Vroom's expectancy theory states that an employee's behavior can also be affected by individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities (Bacon *et al.*, 2005). A persons personality determines how they react to the environment. Behavior is influenced by how individuals perceive and react to the environment provided by the organization (Kohler & Mathieu, 1993), which in this research can mean quality of work life environment.. Studies have shown that there is a relationship between personality and job satisfaction and that there are many different personality factors that have been correlated to job satisfaction (Ayan & kocacik, 2010;, Scheider & Dachler, 1978; Judge et al 2002). Oshagbemi (2005) studied the effects of gender on job satisfaction of UK academics and found that gender does not affect the job satisfaction of university teachers directly. Toker (2011) conducted a study on job satisfaction of academic staff in Turkey and found that job satisfaction levels of the academicians were found to be moderately high. Previous studies have not considered the role of these moderating role personality on the relationship between QWL and employee job satisfaction.. The objective of this study was to investigate the

moderating influence of personality on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction in among academic staff in Kenyan public universities.

Quality of Work Life

Quality of work life is essential for organizations to continually attract and retain employees and has become critical in the last two decades due to increasing demands of today's business environment and family structure (Akdere, 2006). Lau (2000) defines QWL as the favorable conditions and environments of a workplace that support and promote employees' satisfaction by providing them with job security and reward. QWL encompasses aspects such as working conditions, working time, mode of wages payment, health hazards and management behavior in the process of responding to needs of employees. Therefore, QWL involves some of financial and non-financial benefits as well as management behavior towards workers.. Islam and Siengthai (2009) cited some key elements of QWL to include job security, better reward system, employee benefits, employee involvement and organizational performance. QWL can also be said to be a feeling that employees have towards their jobs, colleagues and the organization (Heskett *et al.*, 1994). Thus if employees have good feelings towards their jobs, colleagues and the organization, it implies that they are happy doing their work and consequently the QWL is good.

QWL consists of opportunities for active involvement in group working arrangements or problem solving that are of mutual benefit to employees and employers (Wilcock & Wright 1991). Quality of work life is defined by Lawler (1982) as the employee perceptions of their physical and mental wellbeing at work. These perceptions can be favourable or unfavourable and encompasses working conditions, working time, mode of wages payment and health

hazard issues. Therefore, quality of work life constitutes financial and non-financial benefits and management behavior towards workers.

Quality of work life gives attention to various quality of work life factors as proposed by Walton (1975), Mishra (1996) and Ellis and Pompli (2002). In the case of Walton (1975) there are eight major conceptual categories relating to QWL namely adequate and fair compensation; safe and healthy working conditions; immediate opportunity to use and develop human capacities; opportunity for continued growth and security; social integration in the work organization; constitutionalism in the work organization; work and total life space; and social relevance of work life. Mishra (1996) model asserts that QWL is a function of income of the employees and education whereby higher income and education levels leads to high QWL. Ellis and Pompli (2002) identified poor working environments, resident aggression, workload, inability to deliver quality of care preferred, work-family balance, shift work, involvement in decision making, recognition, and relationships with supervisor/peers and opportunity to learn new skills as factors contributing to quality of working life in nurses. Other factors identified include attitude, nature of job, people, stress level, growth and development opportunities, risk involved and reward. In a similar study on teachers, Hart (1994) found that psychological distress and morale contributed equally to QWL. This study used combination of models to determine factors that constitute quality of work life.

Job Satisfaction

Successful organizations consider worker morale and job satisfaction important for performance. Job satisfaction according to Locke (1976) is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences or attitudes and feelings

people have about their work (Armstrong, 2006). Schneider and Snyder (1975) on the other hand defined job satisfaction as a personal evaluation of conditions present in the job, or outcomes that arise as a result of having a job. Further, Spector (1997) asserts that job satisfaction is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs and further states that variables related to job satisfaction include achievement, advancement, job enhancement, job enrichment and teamwork. Job satisfaction thus, has to do with an individual's perception and evaluation of his job, and this perception is influenced by the person's unique circumstances like needs, values and expectations.

Researchers have taken the taken three common approaches to explain the reasons for job satisfaction. These are job characteristics, social information processing (organizational characteristics), and dispositional (worker characteristics) (Glisson & Durick, 1988; Jex, 2002). In relation to the job characteristics approach, research has revealed that the nature of an individual's job or the characteristics of the organization that the individual works for predominantly determines job satisfaction (Jex, 2002). This is the same view adopted by Hackman and Oldham (1980) who view job characteristic is an aspect of a job that generates ideal conditions for high levels of motivation, satisfaction, and performance. The second approach views job satisfaction to be based on social information processing (organizational characteristics). Jex (2002) explains that during social information processing, employees look to coworkers to make sense of and develop attitudes about their work environment. In other words, if employees see that their co-workers are positive and satisfied then they will most likely be satisfied. Generally, the research on social information processing theory supports the idea that social environment does have an effect on employees' attitudes and behaviors and hence job satisfaction (Aamondt, 2009). The dispositional approach asserts that internal

disposition is the basis of explaining job satisfaction and some people are inclined to be satisfied or dissatisfied with their work no matter the nature of the job or the organizational environment. According to Jex (2002), some people are genetically positive in disposition, whereas others are innately negative in disposition.

Bavendam also (2000) identified six factors that cause job satisfaction; opportunity for growth, stress, leadership, increases in relative strength, work standards, fair reward and adequate authority. The level of job satisfaction is affected by intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors, the quality of supervision, social relationships with the work group and degree to which individuals succeed or fail in their work (Armstrong, 2006). Other factors according to Jennings (1998) include salary, benefits, job security, and the ability to retire within the organization.

Personality

The other variable of this study is employee personality and is defined as the individual pattern of psychological processes arising from individual characteristics such as patterns of thought, emotion, behavior, motives and feeling (Mayer, 2005). It can also be defined as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviors in various situations (Ryckman, 2004). Personality is an individual's characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior, together with the psychological mechanisms--hidden or not--behind those patterns (Funder, 2001). Personality is the entire mental organization of a human being at any stage of his development. According to Warren and Carmichael (1930), every phase of human character; intellect, temperament, skill, morality, and every attitude that has been built up in the course of

one's life is part of personality. Personality is influenced by the inherited characteristics of individuals and the environment they live and includes such dimensions as talent, intelligence, education, friendship, responsibility, and nervousness.

Different personality theorists present their own definitions of personality based on their theoretical positions. According to Ryckman (2004) the psychoanalytic define personality from a biological perspective while other theorists use the trait perspective which assumes there are dispositional factors regular and persistent in individuals. The cognitive perspective assumes that people's personality changes with individual dispositions. The existential perspective postulates the existence of an innate need that moves individuals toward realization of their potentialities if environmental conditions are right. Lastly, the social behavioristic perspective assumes that most of our behavior is learned and guided by our motives.

QWL and Job Satisfaction

Winter et al. (2000) viewed QWL for academicians as an attitudinal response to the prevailing work environment and posited five work environment domains that include role stress, job, and supervisory, structural and sectoral characteristics to directly and indirectly shape academicians' experiences, attitudes and behavior. According to Wooden and Warren (2003), research suggests that job satisfaction is closely related to QWL. Employees are more satisfied when they enjoy the environment in which they work (Berry, 1997). In addition, job satisfaction exhibits strong associations in expected directions with measures of a large number of work attributes, which include diverse aspects of work contents (as variety, task

significance and skill use), pay and other benefits, job security, promotion opportunities, recognition, work conditions, relations with coworkers and supervisors, effective communication structures in the firms, and participation in managerial decision making.

Bearfield (2003) examined QWL among Australian employees, and distinguished between causes of dissatisfaction in professionals, intermediate clerical, sales and service workers. The study different concerns might have to be addressed for different groups. He found level of job satisfaction to differ in on aspects like salary, work load, work pressure, the type of job, relations among coworkers, and other aspects r among different groups. In their study on Employee affective reactions to organizational quality efforts, Gardner and Carlopio (1996) found out that employee perceptions of their firm's quality efforts are related to employee affective reactions, with those perceiving greater organizational quality efforts exhibiting more positive affective reactions; and that perceptions of autonomy can account for the relationship between perceptions of organizational quality efforts and affective reactions. Ganguly (2010) in a study of quality of work life and job satisfaction of university employees in India concluded that quality of work life significantly contribute towards increasing satisfaction or dissatisfaction as experienced by the employees in their concerned job and depends largely on the perceived positivity or negativity of the relevant dimensions.

Personality and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction shows significant differences in terms of characteristics of like competence, being ambitious in the social area and occupation, getting angry easily, and hiding their feelings (Ayan & kocacik, 2010). In their study on teachers, the two scholars concluded that those teachers with extrovert personality characteristics have significantly higher levels of job

satisfaction as compared to teachers with introvert personality. Scheider & Dachler (1978) writing on stability of Job Descriptive Index assert that that, over time, satisfaction with a job remains usually stable, and that it was people's personality that causes satisfaction with their job, rather than other variables. Some personality factors could have more effect on job satisfaction than others. In a meta-analysis focusing on the focusing on personality and job satisfaction, Judge et al (2002) concluded that neuroticism, conscientiousness and extraversion were more strongly associated with job satisfaction. People who are high on neuroticism are more likely to be dissatisfied than others with low neuroticism while people who are conscientious are more likely to be satisfied.

Spector (1997) asserts that there are many different personality factors that have been correlated to job satisfaction, but overall, there seem to be two traits that have significant correlations; Locus of Control (LOC) and negative affectivity. LOC has been correlated with job performance as well as job satisfaction. In a study of internal auditors' job satisfaction and performance, Patten (2005) found that internal LOC employees out performed those with external LOC. Negative affectivity is correlated to job dissatisfaction because if people feel negative overall, they will be negative about their job as well (Spector, 1997).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design was a descriptive cross sectional survey. The population consisted of all academic staff in all seven public universities. There are a total of 5066 lecturers in the seven universities to be studied (Commission for University Education, 2012). A sample of 365 was chosen for the study. The study relied on primary data that was collected using a semi

structured questionnaire. Coefficient of determination (R^2) was used to measure the amount of variation between the study variables.. Since the aim of this study is to predict the relationships between a dependent variable on one or multiple independent variables using a regression equation, unstandardized regression coefficients were used. The moderating effect of personality on the relationship between quality of work life and job satisfaction was computed using the method proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). This involved testing the main effects of the independent variable (QWL) and moderator variable (Personality) on the dependent variable (Job satisfaction) and the interaction between QWL and Personality. To test the hypotheses, multiple regression analysis was conducted at 95% confidence level. Multiple regression is used to explore the predictive ability of a set of independent variables on one continuous dependent measure (variable). For each hypothesis, the goodness of fit was established to indicate how well the independent variables account for the variance in dependent variable. The overall significance was then determined to establish whether the independent variable significantly predicted the dependent variable. Since the aim of this study is to predict the relationships between a dependent variable and one or multiple independent variables using a regression equation, unstandardized regression coefficients were used.

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

Hypothesis I: QWL has a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction among Academic staff of public Universities in Kenya

The research findings indicated that QWL explained 6.6% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .066$). The overall model reveals a statistically significant relationship between QWL and job satisfaction $F(1, 306) = 21.588, p < .05$ as shown in Table 1 and 2 below.

Table 1 Test of goodness- of- fit for the effect of QWL on job satisfaction

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.257 ^a	.066	.063	.507

Table 2: Regression outcomes for the effect of QWL on job satisfaction

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	5.545	1	5.545	21.588	.000 ^b
Residual	78.593	306	.257		
Total	84.138	307			

a. Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Quality of Work life

It was found that opportunities for growth ($\beta = .197$, $t = 3.959$, $p < .05$) and work life balance ($\beta = .174$, $t = 3.779$, $p < .05$) significantly predicted job satisfaction as shown in Table 3 below. Adequate compensation ($\beta = -.072$, $t = -1.796$, $p > .05$), work environment ($\beta = -.050$, $t = -.958$, $p > .05$), job security ($\beta = .009$, $t = .339$, $p > .05$) and involvement and recognition ($\beta = -.025$, $t = -.678$, $p > .05$) are not significant predictors of job satisfaction as shown in Table 3. Their beta coefficients are not different from zero since $p > 0.05$. This analysis implies that QWL significantly predicts job satisfaction with opportunities for growth and work life balance being significantly related to job satisfaction while compensation, work environment and involvement and recognition do not significantly predict job satisfaction among academic staff in public universities. .

Table 3: Regression coefficients for the effect of QWL on job satisfaction

Model	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.916	19.434	.000
Adequate Compensation	-.072	-1.796	.074
Work environment	-.050	-.958	.339
Opportunities for growth	.197	3.959	.000
Job Security	.009	.339	.735
Work Life Balance	.174	3.779	.000
Involvement and Recognition	-.025	-.678	.498

a. Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction

Hypothesis two (H1) suggested that QWL has a statistically significant effect on job satisfaction among academic staff of public universities in Kenya. The overall model was statistically significant and indication that the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The hypothesis was therefore supported.

Hypothesis II: Personality has a significant effect on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction

The results of hierarchical regression predicting job satisfaction from QWL, personality and the interaction between QWL and Personality (QWL*PER) are shown in Table 4. The regression model produced $R^2 = .196$, $F(2, 305) = 37.230$, $p < .05$. The model reveals a statistically significant relationship between the predictor and moderator variables (QWL and personality) and the dependent variable (job satisfaction).

Table 4: Test of goodness-of-fit for the effect of QWL and personality on job satisfaction

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	.443 ^a	.196	.191	.471	.196	37.230	2	305	.000

2	.457 ^b	.208	.201	.468	.012	4.682	1	304	.031
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Personality, Quality of Work life

In step 2, both QWL and personality were entered into the regression equation simultaneously as shown in model 2. The change in variance accounted for (ΔR^2) due to the interaction effect was .012, which was statistically significant increase from step one model as shown in Table 4. Similarly, F change was 4.682 and was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). QWL, personality and the interaction term (model 2) accounted for 20.8% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2 = .208$). Table 5 shows that that overall there is a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction, QWL, personality and QWL*PER $F(3, 304) = 26.680, p < .05$.

Table 5: Regression outcomes for the effect of QWL and personality on job satisfaction

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16.510	2	8.255	37.230	.000 ^b
	Residual	67.628	305	.222		
	Total	84.138	307			
2	Regression	17.536	3	5.845	26.680	.000 ^c
	Residual	66.602	304	.219		
	Total	84.138	307			

a. Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Personality, Quality of Work life

c. Predictors: (Constant), Personality, Quality of Work life, QWL*PER

As shown in Table 6, before the inclusion of the interaction term (model 1), the regression coefficient (β) value of QWL was significant ($\beta = .150, t = 6.675, p < .05$). Regression coefficient (β) value of personality was also significant ($\beta = .435, t = 7.032, p < .05$). After the inclusion of the moderator variable (personality), the beta coefficient of QWL ($\beta = -.133$) is no

longer significant ($p>0.05$). This analysis implies that personality has moderated the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction and therefore hypothesis three was accepted.

Table 6: Regression coefficients for the effect of QWL and personality on job satisfaction

Model		β	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.664	6.675	.000
	Quality of Work life	.150	3.714	.000
	Personality	.435	7.032	.000
2	(Constant)	2.479	5.499	.000
	Quality of Work life	-.133	-.972	.332
	Personality	.215	1.800	.073
	QWL*PER	.077	2.164	.031

To establish the contribution of each of the personality subscales in the moderating effect on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction, regression coefficients were determined. Before the interaction term was entered, the regression coefficient value of openness was significant ($\beta = .175$, $t = 3.263$, $p<.05$). The regression coefficient of conscientiousness and agreeableness was also significant with conscientiousness ($\beta = .161$, $t = 3.026$, $p<.05$) and agreeableness ($\beta = .163$, $t = 4.368$, $p<.05$). Regression coefficient of extraversion and neuroticism were not statistically significant with extraversion ($\beta = -.044$, $t = 1.093$, $p>0.05$) and ($\beta = .004$, $t = .136$, $p>0.05$) respectively. After inclusion of the interaction term (model 2), the value of the regression coefficient of conscientiousness changed and it was no longer statistically significant ($\beta = .087$, $t = 1.333$, $p>0.05$). The regression coefficient of openness and agreeableness were statistically significant with openness ($\beta = .125$, $t = 2.098$, $p<0.05$) and agreeableness ($\beta = .140$, $t = 3.595$, $p<0.05$). The regression coefficient value of extraversion and neuroticism remained insignificant with the inclusion of interaction term with extraversion

($\beta = -.076$, $t = -1.746$, $p > 0.05$) and neuroticism ($\beta = -.035$, $t = -.972$, $p > 0.05$). The interaction term (QWL*PER) was statistically significant ($\beta = .077$, $t = 2.164$, $p < 0.05$) as shown in Table 7. This analysis implies that openness and agreeableness have the greatest contribution to the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction. This is confirmed further by the higher scores for openness to experience and agreeableness in the descriptive statistics

Table 7: Regression coefficients for the effect of personality on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction

Model		β	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.664	6.675	.000
	Quality of Work life	.150	3.714	.000
	Openness	.175	3.263	.001
	conscientiousness	.161	3.026	.003
	Extraversion	-.044	-1.093	.275
	Agreeableness	.163	4.368	.000
	Neuroticism	.004	.136	.892
2	(Constant)	2.479	5.499	.000
	Quality of Work life	-.133	-.972	.332
	Openness	.125	2.098	.037
	conscientiousness	.087	1.333	.184
	Extraversion	-.076	-1.746	.082
	Agreeableness	.140	3.595	.000
	Neuroticism	-.035	-.972	.332
	QWL*PER	.077	2.164	.031

Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction

Hypothesis two (H2) assessed the influence of personality on the relationship between QWL and Job satisfaction in Kenya Public Universities by suggesting that Personality has a

moderating effect on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction. Since the R^2 change was significant as well as the interaction term ($p < 0.05$) and the regression weights of QWL and personality changed upon the inclusion of the interaction term and their effect on job satisfaction was no longer statistically significant ($p > 0.05$), personality has a moderating effect on the relationship between QWL and Job satisfaction and therefore hypothesis three was accepted.

Discussion and conclusions

The first objective of the study was to determine effect of QWL on job satisfaction among academic staff of public universities in Kenya. The study confirmed that there is a positive significant relationship between these two variables and that overall, QWL has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction. This means that indeed QWL contributes to job satisfaction. Specifically, the study revealed that opportunities for growth and work life balance significantly contributed to performance while compensation, work environment, job security, and involvement and recognition did not predict job satisfaction. This supports Wooden and Bearfield (2003), in a study on QWL among Australian employees, found the level of job satisfaction to differ in different aspects of quality of work life. Similarly in their study on employee affective reactions to organizational quality efforts, Ganguly's (2010) study also revealed that QWL significantly contributed towards increasing satisfaction or dissatisfaction as experienced by the employees in their concerned job and depends largely on the perceived positivity or negativity of the relevant dimensions.

The second objective of this study addressed the influence of personality on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction. The results of hierarchical multiple regression model revealed a statistically significant relationship between QWL, personality and job satisfaction. When the interaction between QWL and Personality was introduced into the regression

equation, there was a statistically significant increase in variance. The regression weights of QWL and personality changed upon the inclusion of the interaction term and their effect on job satisfaction was no longer statistically significant. This implies that personality had a moderating effect on QWL and job satisfaction and the hypothesis was supported. The key personality sub scales which had a moderating role were agreeableness and openness. This was confirmed further by the higher scores for openness to experience and agreeableness in the descriptive statistic. These findings supported Ayan and Kocacik (2010) who concluded that personality characteristics have an impact on job satisfaction. Additionally, Scheider and Dachler (1978) writing on stability of Job Descriptive Index asserted that over time, satisfaction with a job remains usually stable, and that it was people's personality that causes satisfaction with their job, rather than other variables. The study also concluded that employees who are agreeable, open and conscientious tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction. This supports the findings by Judge et al (2002) who found that conscientiousness was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. Additionally, Furnham et al (2005) found that individuals' high in openness are more satisfied especially with their jobs.

The study examined the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between quality of work life and job satisfaction and concluded that indeed, personality moderated this relationship. Openness and agreeableness had the greatest contribution to the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between QWL and job satisfaction. This means that academic staff who are open and agreeable are likely to be more satisfied with their job and this in turn leads to improved performance. The study contributes to knowledge on the effect of personality as a moderator of the relationship between quality of work life and job satisfaction. .

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