Emotional Intelligence Influence on Employee Engagement Sustainability in Kenyan Public Universities

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Emotional Intelligence Influence on Employee Engagement Sustainability in Kenyan Public Universities

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Abstract

Organizations the world over face challenges today which require reforms in the management and governance styles. Therefore the organizations continue to attempt to achieve more for less by creating and maintaining value and the key to facing these challenges is a motivated, well-trained and committed workforce. Consequently soft skills such as emotional intelligence have become relevant in leadership effectiveness and organizational success. Kenyan universities are not exempt from these challenges. Therefore, the Kenyan universities have to rethink their strategies to address the issue.

This paper analyzed whether emotional intelligence influence to employee engagement in public universities. Emotional intelligence assists on how leaders and employees meet the daily challenges that they face since emotions either lead to improved or decreased performance. Data was analyzed from a survey of four public universities. The analysis showed that that emotional intelligence has influence on employee engagement.

The researcher obtained both qualitative and quantitative data. The study was carried out in public universities in Kenya. Stratified random sampling was used and data was collected using a questionnaire. The data was modeled and then it was analyzed using multivariate techniques. The results of the findings were presented in chapter four and it was established that emotional intelligence influences employee engagement.

Introduction

Today, organizations face challenges that can be grouped into three categories namely; the sustainable challenge, the global challenge and the technology challenge. Human resource has become one of the most important resources for organizations as they rely on skilled workers to be productive, creative and innovative and to provide high-quality customer service to deal with the three challenges. However, the work is demanding and there is no guarantee of job security. Therefore how to attract and retain a committed, productive workforce in turbulent economic conditions that offer opportunity for financial success is an issue that organizations have to address through reforms Noe, *et al* (2008).

Public universities in Kenya have traditionally relied on Government funding to carry out their activities. Due to the harsh economic situations witnessed by the region over the recent past, Government support to these institutions has seen a steady decline forcing universities to operate under very tight budgets. This has led several governments to abandon their responsibility of promoting the growth and development of the higher education sector to the non-governmental organizations and private individuals Jowi (2003). The institutions of higher learning have, therefore, been forced to rethink their strategy and possibly look for extra sources of financing including establishing income-generating activities. They are caught in a fix between severe budget cuts and a flood of students in search of useful degrees resulting in overcrowding, low budgets and staff retention problems Ngome (2003). The change in funding requires employees to be fully engaged so that the organization can obtain its monies worth.

Further, public universities in Kenya face competition as they seek to offer university education to the public. The private sector is also competing for the same students and employees. According to Mwiria, *et al* (2007) by the year 2002 the number of students undertaking degree programs in private universities was 17% of the total number of the total number of university students in Kenya. Currently, there are seven public universities with various constituent colleges and campuses as compared to more that seventeen private universities. Also in the past decade public universities have lost many full time staff to private universities. High staff turnover is aggravated by the exodus of other staff to various destinations and the failure of those sent abroad for further training to return to their home institutions. Foreign universities are also offering public universities competition as they aggressively advertise their programs in Kenya with others setting up campuses locally Mwiria, *et al* (2007). hence the sustainability challenge.

One variable that has recently gained much popularity as a potential underlying attribute of effective leadership is the construct of emotional intelligence (EI) Sosik and Mererian (1999). EI is described as a set of abilities that refer in part to how effectively one deals with emotions both within oneself and others Salovey and Mayer (1990). It has been proposed that in leadership, dealing effectively with emotions may contribute to how one handles the needs of individuals, how one effectively motivates employees, and makes them feel at work Goleman (1998). Today's effective leadership skills have been described to depend, in part on the understanding of emotions and the abilities associated with EI (Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Goleman, 1998).

During this age of information and highly skilled work teams, emotional intelligence has become an important skill to possess. It has become crucial for individuals to collaborate and communicate with each other on a vast array of projects than to exercise technical skills Holt & Jones, 2005 as cited by Reeds (2005). This is because as organizations continue to attempt to achieve more for less, soft skills such as emotional intelligence have become relevant in leadership effectiveness and organizational success. How universities may achieve more for less through soft skills such as emotional intelligence influencing employee engagement is a gap that needs to be filled.

Employee engagement is also important. Tasker (2004) defines engagement as a beneficial two-way relationship where employees and employers "go the extra mile" for one another. According to Tasker, research conducted via the Personnel Today website involving 400 HR professionals, one in four organizations admitted that staff were not engaged, that the situation was worsening, and 44% said that tackling the issue of engagement was an overwhelming challenge. This is a

clear indication that the subject has not been systematically researched especially in providing an explanation for the increasing number of reports of disengagement in the workplace. According to Hochild (1983), disengaged employees uncouple themselves from work roles and withdraw cognitively and emotionally. Kahn (1990) described engagement as the harnessing of organizational members to their work role; in engagement, employees express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during the role performance. Employee engagement matters as it impacts on companies' bottom lines, both through HR related impacts such as recruitments and retention and through wider impacts on productivity, profit and achieving the aims and objectives of the organization. The overall objective of the study is to examine how emotional intelligence may be used to influence employee engagement in public universities.

Emotional Intelligence has been found to be significant in how employees daily interact with one another, in teamwork and also in transformational leadership studies. Theories on Emotional intelligence may be traced from the models of Mayer and Salovey (1990), Bar-On (1997) and Goleman (1998). The three models have theoretical and statistical similarities as they seek to understand and measure the competencies involved in the recognition and regulation of one's emotions and others. This research focuses on the model of Goleman (1998) as he applies it to workplace situations. The model has four competencies namely self awareness, social awareness, self management and relationship management.

Employee engagement theory may be traced from motivational studies. According to Luthand and Peterson (2002) work done by Kahn (1990, 1992) on personal engagement provides a convergent theory for empirically deriving employee engagement. He posits that EE is different from other employee role construct such as job involvement Lawler and Hall, (1970), commitment to organizations Mowday (1982) or intrinsic motivation Dec -(1975). Employee engagement has got two precursors namely organization citizenship behaviour Barkworth (2004) and employee commitment Allen & Meyer (1990). According to Melcrum publishing (2005) about 74% HR professionals have cited EE to be an area of concern in organizations. Meere (2005) points out three levels of engagement. Lockwood (2006) discusses the drivers of engagement. The model of Robinson *et al* (2004) provides the drivers of engagement used in this study.

Universities are facing competition and limited funding from the government and the challenge of recruiting and retaining qualified staff and having performance has resulted in performance appraisals, ISO 9000 certification and performance contracting being introduced in public universities in line with government policies and as measures to ensure that they remain competitive. The sources of competitive advantage have changed through social and technological development at various international levels.

This study would also assist managers to develop the ability to effectively control team emotions through stress tolerance by successfully solving problems. According to Goleman (1998), emotional intelligence determines our potential for learning practical skills based on its four competencies. Our emotional competencies exhibit how much of that potential is translated into on-the-job capabilities. The emotional competence is learned capability based on emotional intelligence in higher work performance.

The study focused on four public universities out of the seven in Kenya, for accessibility of the population, namely Egerton University, JKUAT, Kenyatta University and Nairobi University. The study was limited to institutions of higher learning specifically public universities although issues of emotional intelligence, transformational leadership and employee engagement traverse all

organizations. Emotions, leadership and engagement at the workplace are a sensitive topic of study in that though in Kenyan societies though some emotions are openly displayed, discussions of emotions, leadership and one's engagement in the workplace are not yet very open. Therefore this study suffers from the limitations of all self-administered questionnaires. It is with an appreciation of these limitations that these results of the study are presented.

Methods
The research design was quantitative and the designs, techniques and measures produced discreet numerical or quantifiable data. The study was a survey and the study area was four public universities namely: Nairobi University, Kenyatta University, JKUAT and Egerton University which accounts for over 50% of the Kenyan public universities. The four public universities were purposively selected to account for over 50% of public universities taking into consideration the distance. The population of study was all staff cadres in the four public universities. The sample was randomly selected four public universities.

The main research tool was a structured questionnaire, which was preferred as it would provide a relatively simple and straightforward approach to the study. Likert scale questions were used to obtain quantitative data and semi-structured questions used for qualitative data. Therefore data was collected using a questionnaire. The research instrument was pre-tested using a sample of 1.5% as per Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) that a successful pilot study would use 1% to 10% of the actual sample size. The respondents used for pretesting were similar to the sample under study using procedures similar to those of the actual study. The data was both qualitative and quantitative. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used in the analysis to execute quantitative data. Descriptive statistics such as percentages were used to analyze the qualitative data. Emotional intelligence was measured using the part B section I of the questionnaire. Respondents used a five point likert scale to respond to the questions. The first three questions (6a-c) corresponded to self awareness comprising of emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment and self confidence. Questions 6d) to i) on self management examined self control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, achievement drive and initiative. Social awareness responses were obtained from questions 6j) – k). Relationship management questions were question 6l) to p). The breakdown of emotional intelligence into four separate elements was in line with the adopted model of Goleman (1998).

Findings
The findings suggest that there is a correlation between the four domains of emotional intelligence and the drivers of employee engagement. Emotional intelligence was found to greatly influence the sustainability challenge through employee engagement.

Self-awareness and Social Awareness Domains

	Self awareness			Social awareness	
	Emotional self awareness	Accurate self assessment	Self confidence	Empathy and social orientation	Organizational awareness
Vision and direction	.213**	.272**	.251**	.164**	.160**
Career development	.014	.073	-.030	-.012	.096*
Recognition of employee contribution	.088	.143**	-.027	-.014	.157**
Line Management	.086	.121**	.019	.081	.208**
Work itself and environment	.114*	.117*	.072	.022	.214**
Organizational effectiveness and ethics	.125**	.212**	.173**	.148**	.202**
Employee involvement and autonomy	.044	.142**	.077	.100*	.182**
Work- life balance	.113*	.150**	.059	.082	.249**
Reward	-.016	.008	-.128**	.015	.111*
Information flow and internal communication	.036	.137**	.016	.004	.184**
Resources	.097*	.099*	.076	.017	.109*
Corporate image and reputation	.053	.138**	.060	.067	.119**

The effect of self awareness and social awareness was examined by calculating the correlations. It was found to be positively significant at 0.01 level of significance on the vision and direction. The 0.05 level correlation for career development was only significant for organizational awareness, self confidence, empathy and social orientation were found to be negative. Recognition of employee contribution was found to be 0.01 significant at accurate self assessment (.121) and organizational awareness (.157). It was negatively correlated on self confidence and empathy and social orientation. Line management is positively correlated with self awareness at 0.01 level of significance on accurate self assessment at .121. It is also positively correlated on social awareness at 0.01 level of significance on organizational awareness at .208. Work itself and environment had a 0.05 level of significance on self awareness and 0.01 significance on organizational awareness. Organizational effectiveness and ethics was found to be correlated for both self awareness and social awareness at 0.01 level of significance. Employee involvement and autonomy was not significant at emotional self awareness and self confidence but was found to be significant at 0.01 significance on accurate self assessment and organizational awareness. It was also significant at 0.05 level of significance on empathy and social orientation. Work life balance was found to be significantly correlated with accurate self assessment and organizational awareness at 0.05 level of significance. It was also significant at

0.05 level of significance on emotional self awareness however it was not significant on self confidence and empathy and social orientation.

Reward was not significant on accurate self assessment and empathy and social orientation. However it was highly negatively correlated on self confidence at 0.01 level of significance and correlated with organizational awareness at 0.05 level of correlation. Information flow and internal communication was not significant on emotional self awareness, self confidence and empathy and social orientation. It was significant at 0.01 level of significance on accurate self assessment and organizational awareness. Resources were not significant on self confidence and empathy and social orientation, however, they were significant at 0.05 level of significance on emotional self awareness, accurate self assessment and organizational awareness. Self awareness was found significant at 0.01 level of significance on accurate self assessment but not on emotional self awareness to correlate with corporate image and reputation. It was significant on social awareness at 0.01 level of confidence on organizational awareness and not on empathy and social orientation. Therefore self awareness and social awareness generally correlate with employee engagement.

The findings showed the social management and the relationship management domains to be correlated to drivers of employee engagement.

Self Management and Relationship Management
Self management and relationship management impact were correlated on employee engagement at both 0.01 level of significance and 0.05 level of significance. Vision and direction was highly significant at both 0.01 level and 0.05 level except on adaptability. Career development was not found to be significant at all. Recognition of employee contribution was only significant at 0.05 level of significance on self control (.092), developing others (096), and influence & change catalyst(0.090). Line management correlation was significant at 0.01 level of significance on trustworthiness & conscientiousness (.119), optimism (121), initiative (117), and teamwork and collaboration (.138). It was significant at 0.05 level of significance on leadership & Building bonds (.099). Correlation of self management and relationship management was only significant at 0.05 level of significance on initiative (.106) and influence & change catalyst (.091) for work itself and environment.

Significant correlation was found for organizational effectiveness and ethics at 0.01 level of significance except in optimism(.108) where it was significant at 0.05 level. However it was not significant on self control. Significance was also found on trustworthiness & conscientiousness (.092) for employee involvement and autonomy, significant on developing others (.160), leadership & building bonds (.130) and influence & change catalyst (.101). It was not significant on self control, adaptability, optimism, initiative, achievement drive, communication & change catalyst and teamwork & collaboration.

Self management and relationship management was found significantly correlated with work life balance only with self control (.144) and developing others (2.01) only. Significance was only found in developing others(129) at 0.01 level of significance on reward. Correlation was significant on self control (.089), developing others (.141), leadership & building bonds (.110) and influence & change catalyst (.147) for information flow and internal communication. Also

significance was found on trustworthiness & conscientiousness (.139), developing others (.188), and leadership & building bonds (.126) for corporate image and reputation. However, it was not significant on self control, adaptability, optimism, achievement drive, and influence & change catalyst. Therefore generally self management and relationship management impacted employee engagement.

All Universities self and relationship management

	Self Control	Trustworthiness & Conscientious-ness	Adaptability	Optimism	Initiative	Achievement drive	Developing others	Leadership & Building bonds	Influence & Change catalyst	Communication & Change catalyst	Teamwork & collaboration
Vision and direction	.120**	.160**	.087	.105*	.207**	.112*	.169**	.197**	.153**	.196**	.141**
Career development	.056	.084	-.038	.041	.036	-.033	.073	.082	.059	-.020	.075
Recognition of employee contribution	.092*	.029	.012	.006	-.006	.009	.096*	.052	.090*	.063	.001
Line Management	.076	.119**	.036	.121**	.117**	.050	.082	.099*	.078	.078	.138**
Work itself and environment	.053	.005	.013	.076	.106*	.084	.086	.057	.091*	.081	.085
Organizational effectiveness	.087	.144**	.113*	.108*	.138**	.141**	.221**	.150**	.095*	.141**	.151**

and ethics											
Employee involvement and autonomy	.054	.092*	.058	.033	.076	.066	.160**	.130**	.101**	.037	.088
Work-life balance	.144**	.039	.080	-.014	.064	.085	.201**	.077	.077	.074	.046
Reward	.029	-.039	.042	.046	.000	-.037	.129**	.048	.060	.010	.000
Information flow and internal communication	.089*	.016	.063	.020	.014	.006	.141**	.110*	.147**	.061	.053
Resources	.067	.028	.076	.058	.082	.072	.095*	.080	.112*	.051	.067
Corporate image and reputation	.075	.139**	.034	.063	.111*	.010	.188**	.126**	.112*	.032	.102*

The employees identified five aspect of the university that would assist them to better manage themselves at work. Conducive working environment had the highest percentage at about 21% followed by teamwork at 10%, seeking employees views was at 9%, integrity had 8% and communication was the lowest with 7%. The findings indicate the value that employees place on having a conducive working environment and teamwork.

Discussions
Effect of Self and Social Awareness on EE all Universities Discussion
It is worth noting that different universities have different perceptions even though some are similar. For instance in establishing the effect of self-awareness and social awareness on employee engagement a comparison of the four public universities reveals different perceptions

with some similarities. Self awareness was measured by emotional self awareness, accurate self assessment and self confidence. Social awareness was measured by empathy and social awareness and organizational awareness.

Egerton University strongly perceived that only emotional self awareness and accurate self assessment and self confidence was linked to employee engagement in vision and direction. This shows that employees recognition of their emotions and their effect on self and others, seeking out feedback and learning from mistakes, and being sure of one's self worth and capabilities are perceived to be linked to employees clearly seeing how their role supports the university inspiring vision and direction and want to play their part well. However, sensitivity to others needs and understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the university which measure social awareness were not perceived as being significant.

University of Nairobi however perceived that self awareness and social awareness both significantly had an effect on vision and direction where employees clearly see how their role supports the university vision and direction and want to play their part well. This shows that in university of Nairobi, sensitivity to others needs and employees understanding of emotional currents and power relationships in the university are also linked to vision and direction. JKUAT found accurate self assessment, self confidence and empathy and social awareness linked to vision and direction. Kenyatta University perceived emotional self awareness, accurate self assessment, empathy and social awareness and organizational awareness to affect vision and direction. However for all the universities accurate self assessment was perceived to be linked to vision and direction where employees clearly see how their role supports the organization's inspiring vision and direction and want to play their part well.   This is in line with Goleman (1998) who points out that self-awareness is critical to understanding others

Egerton university did not perceive self awareness and social awareness to be significant in career development where the university is committed to help employees develop their skills and make progress in a clear career path. Nairobi University had accurate self assessment significant for career development. JKUAT had organizational awareness (understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the university) linked to vision and direction. Kenyatta University perceived organizational awareness linked to vision and direction. There is a similarity in JKUAT and Kenyatta University. Boyatzis, 1982 as cited by Reeds 2005 also points out that the ability to read situations objectively, without the distorting leans of employees own biases and assumptions allows individuals to respond effectively.

Egerton university did not have any significance for self awareness and social awareness for recognition of employee contribution. University of Nairobi perceived that accurate self assessment (seeking out feedback and learning from mistakes together with understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the university) was linked recognizing employee contribution. JKUAT had only emotional self awareness linked recognizing employee contribution. Kenyatta University perceived organizational awareness linked to employees appreciation and being rewarded for doing a good job so they take pride in their work and put in extra effort when its needed (recognizing employee contribution).

Egerton University did not link self awareness and social awareness to line management. University of Nairobi linked accurate self assessment and organizational awareness to line management in that employees work with confidence towards corporate goals because line

managers support the goals and employees. Self awareness and social awareness was not linked to line management for JKUAT. Kenyatta university perceived organizational awareness to be linked to line management.

Egerton university found organizational awareness significant for work itself and environment. Accurate self assessment was perceived by University of Nairobi to affect work itself and environment. JKUAT had organizational awareness significant and Kenyatta University had emotional self awareness and organizational awareness. Therefore Egerton University, JKUAT and Kenyatta University all found organizational awareness significant in this study where employees enjoy work and getting alot out of it since the workplace environment meets employees needs , therefore they can focus on the job and the big picture.

Egerton University linked emotional self awareness, accurate self assessment, self confidence, empathy and social awareness and organizational awareness to organizational effectiveness and ethics. University of Nairobi also had accurate self assessment, self confidence and organizational awareness. Self awareness and social awareness was not significant for organizational effectiveness and ethics for JKUAT and Kenyatta University. Therefore Egerton and Nairobi University linked accurate self assessment, self confidence and organizational awareness as perceived to affect the day to day running of activities well without wasting time and making the most of what everyone has to offer so employees learn, adapt and improve and are therefore positive to change.

Accurate self assessment, empathy and social awareness and organizational awareness were perceived as significant for employee involvement and autonomy for Egerton University. Accurate self assessment, self confidence and organizational awareness were linked to employee involvement and autonomy for University of Nairobi. JKUAT linked self confidence and Kenyatta University perceived organizational awareness to be significant. Therefore Egerton University, Nairobi University and Kenyatta University found organizational awareness affecting employee involvement and autonomy. This means that understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the three universities assisted employees feel that they influence what the university does so they have a bigger personal stake and care more about its success.

Organizational awareness was linked to work life balance for Egerton university. University of Nairobi had accurate self assessment and organizational awareness as being significant. JKUAT linked emotional self awareness and self confidence while Kenyatta University found organizational awareness to be significant. Therefore Egerton, Nairobi and Kenyatta Universities perceived organizational awareness as affecting work life balance. Therefore understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the three universities was linked to recognition of employees personal needs and therefore they are there for the University.

Self confidence was perceived in Egerton university to be negatively linked to reward. This is because though employees are sure of their self worth and capabilities, the pay and benefits do not fairly reflect the value of the work they do so they may not be likely to stay. Self awareness and social awareness was not at all significant for reward at University of Nairobi and JKUAT but Kenyatta University had emotional self awareness significant.

Organizational awareness was significant for information flow and internal communication in Egerton University. Accurate self assessment, and organizational awareness was linked to information flow and internal communication for Nairobi university. Self and social awareness was not linked to information flow and internal communication for JKUAT but it was significant

for organizational awareness in Kenyatta University. Organizational awareness in Egerton, Nairobi and Kenyatta University was found significant in that understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the two universities affected sharing of information and views being heard.

Self awareness and social awareness was not linked to resources for Egerton University and also for Nairobi university and JKUAT. Kenyatta University had emotional self awareness, self confidence and organizational awareness significant for corporate image and reputation. Accurate self assessment was significant for corporate image and reputation at Egerton University. Self awareness and social awareness had no significance for Nairobi University and JKUAT where corporate image and reputation is concerned. However Kenyatta University linked emotional self awareness and organizational awareness to corporate image and reputation.

Impact of Self and Social Management on EE all Universities Discussion
Determining the impact of self management and relationship management on employee engagement comparison of universities yielded the following results. Self management was measured by self control, trustworthiness and conscientiousness, adaptability, optimism, initiative and achievement drive. Relationship management was measured by developing others, leadership and building bonds, influence and change catalyst, communication and conflict management and teamwork and collaboration.

Egerton university only found self control significant for organizational effectiveness and ethics. University of Nairobi had self control significant for line management. JKUAT had self control significant for employee involvement. Kenyatta university had employee involvement and autonomy impacted. The findings are in agreement with Goleman (1998) who identified emotional control as the ability to keep one's impulsive feeling and emotions under control and restrain negative actions when provoked, faced with opposition, hostility or when working under pressure. Further, Boyatzis 1982 as quoted by Reeds found that among managers and executives, top performances are able to balance drive and ambition with self control, suppressing personal needs in the service of organization's goals.

Trustworthiness and conscientiousness was for Egerton university linked to organizational effectiveness and ethics and corporate image and reputation. Trustworthiness and conscientiousness was not significant for Nairobi university and JKUAT. Trustworthiness and conscientiousness was significant for vision and direction, recognizing employee contribution and employee involvement and autonomy for Kenyatta University. The findings are in agreement with Reed (2005) that individuals who exhibit this competency maintain integrity and take responsibility for personal performance.

Adaptability was connected to organizational effectiveness and ethics for Egerton university. Nairobi university had adaptability not at all significant and also JKUAT. Adaptability was not significant for Kenyatta University. Optimism was perceived to be significant for Egerton university with organizational effectiveness and ethics. Optimism was also not significant for Nairobi university. It was significant for JKUAT for reward. It was not significant for Kenyatta university.

Initiative was linked to organizational effectiveness and corporate image and reputation for Egerton university. Initiative impacted vision and direction and line management for Nairobi

university. It affected work life balance for JKUAT. Initiative impacted work itself and environment and resources for Kenyatta university. Crant, 1995 and Rosier 1996 as cited by Reeds (2005) agree with these findings in that those with initiative competence act before being forced to do so by external events.

Achievement drive connected with organizational effectiveness and ethics together with reward for Egerton university. Nairobi university had achievement drive perceived to affect vision and direction, line management and organizational effectiveness and ethics. Achievement drive affected vision and direction for JKUAT. Achievement drive was significant for line management for Kenyatta university. This is supported by the need to continually improve performance by Spencer and Spencer 1993 as quoted by Reeds (2005) as it strongly sets apart superior and average executives.

Developing others was significant for career development, organizational effectiveness and ethics, employee involvement and autonomy, work life balance, reward and corporate image and reputation for Egerton university. Developing others for Nairobi university was connected with vision and direction, line management, organizational effectiveness and ethics, work life balance and reward. JKUAT had developing others linked to vision and direction, organizational effectiveness and ethics, employee involvement and autonomy and corporate image and reputation. Developing others was not at all significant for Kenyatta university.

Egerton university had leadership and building bonds linked to vision and direction, career development, line management, organizational effectiveness and ethics, employee involvement and autonomy, information flow and internal communication and corporate image and reputation. Leadership and building bonds impacted vision and direction, line management and organizational effectiveness and ethics for Nairobi university. Leadership and building bonds was found for JKUAT not significant and also for Kenyatta University. Goleman (2000) supports these findings as he points out that this competence implies a desire to lead others and those adept at it draw on a range of personal skills to inspire others to work together towards common goals. He further notes that these leaders articulate and arouse enthusiasm for a shared vision and mission.

Influence and change catalyst for Egerton university impacted vision and direction, career development, employee involvement and autonomy and information flow and internal communication. Nairobi university had influence and change catalyst affect vision and direction, line management and organizational effectiveness and ethics. Influence and change catalyst was for JKUAT was significant for information flow and internal communication and corporate image and reputation. It was not significant for Kenyatta University. The findings are supported by Reed (2005) who cites Spencer and Spencer 1993 that the ability to persuade, convince or impact others in order to get them to support a specific agenda or course of action is an emotional competence that emerges over and over again as a hall mark of high performance particularly among supervisors, managers and executives. They also point out that this competence requires authenticity and the ability to put collective goals before self-interests to keep effective persuasion from becoming manipulation.

Egerton university had communication and conflict management perceived to affect organizational effectiveness and ethics. Influence and change catalyst was connected to vision and direction for vision and direction, and organizational effectiveness and ethics for Nairobi

University. JKUAT had communication and conflict management impact vision and direction. It was not significant for Kenyatta Univeristy. The findings are in line with what Goleman (1998) posits that this competence involves spotting trouble as it is brewing and taking steps to calm those involved thus handling difficult people with diplomacy, encouraging debate and open discussion and orchestrating win-win situations.

Teamwork and collaboration for Egerton university was found to impact career development, line management, work itself and environment, organizational effectiveness and ethics, information flow and internal communication and corporate image and reputation. Nairobi university had teamwork and collaboration significant for organizational effectiveness and ethics. Teamwork and collaboration was significant for vision and direction in JKUAT. It was not significant for Kenyatta University. Goleman (1998) notes that teamwork has taken on increased importance in the last decade with the tread toward team-based work in many organizations and these finding clearly indicate that universities are not exempted form the trend. Further, Totterdell, Kellet, Teuchmann & Briner, 1998 as cited by Reed (2005) point out that the positive mood of a team leader at work promotes worker effectiveness and retention. Therefore positive emotions and harmony in a top management team predict its effectiveness.

In conclusion, Goleman notes that maximum development in all competencies is not necessary but that the ability to draw on one or more competencies from each of the four domains namely self awareness and social awareness and self management and relationship management is. Therefore it is the interplay of competencies from these four clusters that distinguishes exemplary leaders from average ones.

Vision and direction and organizational effectiveness and ethics correlated with the all the competencies of self and social awareness domains thus they had the most significant effect of self and social awareness on employee engagement. This shows that self and social awareness domains effect on employee engagement is on employees seeing clearly how their role supports the organizations inspiring vision and direction and wanting to play their part well. It also shows that running day to day activities well without wasting time and by making the most of what everyone has to offer, employees learn, adapt and improve and are therefore positive to change is affected by the self and social awareness domain. Further, organizational awareness is the competence that correlated with all the drivers of employee engagement. This shows the importance of understanding emotional currents and power relationships in the universities for employees. Generally, vision and direction is the driver of engagement that all universities linked to self and social awareness competencies. These competencies enable individuals to be cognizant of their own feelings and thoughts as well as personal strengths and weaknesses.

Employee engagement is impacted by self and relationship management in that vision and direction significantly linked with all the competencies except for adaptability in this study. Organizational effectiveness and ethics linked with all the competencies except for self control. Further developing others was linked to all the drivers of engagement except for line management and work itself and environment. Almost all the competencies are perceived by the universities to be linked to at least one driver of employee engagement. Self management is the ability to regulate distressing affects like anxiety and anger and to inhibit emotional impulsivity. The relationship management domain competencies have the most direction affect on the interaction with other people hence the link of the competencies with almost all drivers

of engagement. This indicates for universities that soft skills like emotional intelligence may be utilized to achieve more for less.

Conclusions

The drivers of employee engagement explored in this study are on areas of policy or practice that often have an influence on engagement which employees tend to respond positively to. Emotional intelligence through self and social awareness and self and relationship management domains was seen to affect and impact employee engagement through mainly vision and direction and organizational effectiveness and ethics. Specifically organizational awareness was pointed out as the most significant EI competence that is linked to all the drivers of engagement. In conclusion, Human Resource Managers can play a critical role in encouraging utilization of EI by establishing systems that are equitable, carefully making management development programs, establishing fair compensation systems and designing jobs towards increased employee engagement. This is because it is important to not only recognize the value of EI but to encourage and promote the improvement of these skills within the university. That way, a win-win scenario is achieved for both the individual and the University and EE is enhanced through EI.

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