

# Effect of Recognition on Work Commitment by Non-Teaching Staff in Public University in Kenya

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Received 21 June, 2015

Accepted 6 August, 2015

The study was conducted with the aim of examining the effect of recognition on work commitment by non-teaching staff in public universities in Kenya, through a descriptive survey of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. The study was conducted in order to address the issue of work commitment among non-teaching staff in the university, because due to the nature of their work it was perceived that they may not have been receiving the same types of non-monetary rewards as teaching staff. The study found that an absolute majority of respondents agreed that recognition had an effect on workplace commitment, and that there was a positive correlation between the supervisory recognition and employee commitment. The study concluded that such motivation arising out of recognition is not hierarchy-level specific. Rather it shows positive effects all along the hierarchy. These findings are significant because they show that recognition can no longer be overlooked as a factor that tends to promote commitment, and that practical steps should be taken to encourage it. Thus it is recommended that the university should implement a comprehensive recognition and awards plan, linked to other rewards, and comparable to the rewards given to teaching staff, in order to have comparable benchmarks for assessing the suitability of recognition, which should help increase commitment.

**Key words:** Recognition, commitment, motivation, engagement and performance.

## INTRODUCTION

A reward is anything given or received in response for a worthy behaviour or retribution for an undesirable act or return for commitment or a desired behaviour. Rewards are given to complement work that is done well and or timely. Rewards serve several purposes in an organization: motivating the people to obtain their commitment and engagement, help to attract and retain high quality people the organization needs, develop a positive employment relationship and psychological contract, as per Armstrong (2009). Alignment of an organization's reward practice and employee values is critical if an organization is to realize its business goals. Rewards help to improve performance and build a feeling of confidence (Bennet, 1975). Therefore, every organization needs to develop a reward strategy for its employees. A non-monetary reward strategy is the path that an organization will follow to develop and implement non-monetary reward policies, practices and processes

that will further the achievement of its goals (Bradler *et al.*, 2013). Recognition of staff is a crucial aspect of non-monetary reward in any organization. To recognize a staff in this study, refers to publicly showing respect for his/her work, contribution and innovation. It is public praise of a staff member work or action, or official acceptance and approval of something or somebody. According to Bennet (1975), a good recognition system should include issuing certificates or posting on memos, names of staff and even open declaration of staff that has made significant contributions to the organization. If the staff recognized realize that they are cared for and that a lot more is expected from them, there are high chances that they will try to live up to this expectation. On the other hand, where a clear guideline is absent in recognising the employees, dissatisfaction and non-committal behaviour creeps in, and in some cases, the employees withhold energies and may even sabotage

collective efforts. This poses major problems to the management which need to be dealt with by the management. Nelson (2005) states that a number of surveys confirm what almost every employee already knows: that recognition for a job well done is the top motivator of employee performance. However, the author further states that “most managers do not understand or use the potential power of recognition and rewards ... while money is important to employees, research shows that what motivates them really to perform ... is the thoughtful, personal kind of recognition that signifies true appreciation for a job well done.”

Indeed, management is aware of the work input from all workers, but can only recognize a subset of the employees explicitly due to time constraints. Indeed, in practice, managers are often constrained in the number of people they can praise in a thoughtful, personal way. Thus, recognition often comes as a surprise to employees, even in organizations with a culture for praise. While recognition in general might be expected in such organizations, the particular situation, timing, and kind of recognition usually remain a surprise. This is not without reason: Rogers and Frey (2014) argue that habituation to stimuli (such as recognition) is less likely if the stimulus is presented at unpredictable time intervals and is not presented in the same way every time. In many organizations, there is a growing commitment gap – a widening split between the expectations of employers and what employees are prepared to do. Recognition is also one of the most vital elements in the organization. If employees are satisfied with organization's policies then they will stay for long time otherwise they quit. Hence, commitment and recognition are strong contributors and success of the organization depends on these two elements (Bradler *et al.*, 2013).

Committed employees are one of the greatest assets any organization can have. Each year organizations invest substantial amounts of money in training and developing their work force to have talented and productive employees with them. Employee commitment plays a major role in overall business efficiency and profitability. Commitment also comes from the employee perception that their efforts will be rewarded. Thus, the company must share the fruits of its success with the employees (Robbins, 2007). The work of (Wayne *et al.*, 2002) on social exchange theory suggested that employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which their employer values their contributions and cares about their well being. Such perceived recognition may be encouraged by employees' tendency to ascribe human-like traits or characteristics to organizations. It is assumed that the fulfilment of socio-emotional needs by the organization should create an obligation to reciprocate with greater work effort. The obligation to repay organizational support with performance is considered to be a motive that drives work performance. This concurs with the findings of

Nelson (2003), who contends that while money is a motivator, it is not as powerful as the following: Feeling of contribution to the job, having management tell employees they are doing a good job, having the respect of peers and colleagues, being involved and informed of developments and having meaningful and interesting work. While Nelson (2003) finds these methods as good motivating tools, he outlines how the use of recognition is the ultimate motivator. The importance being, recognition is not just for the person who performed well. It also sends a message to other employees as it communicates the standard of the company Nelson (2003). Consequently, recognition will improve the level of commitment and thereby performance by employees, which inevitably improves the financial performance of the organization. The recognition should be in a form that is of actual value to the employee, not what the recognition committee thinks the employee should value. Providing a choice to the employee on what is to be received further increases the value to the individual. Delivering the recognition in the proper context is important, as it should be presented in a way that increases the value to the worker; whether that is through the person presenting the recognition, the audience witnessing the recognition, or other factors (Nelson, 2008). However, the bulk of the aforementioned studies have focused on recognition and commitment in corporations, without addressing the situation of employees in academic institutions such as universities. Thus the current study sets out to address this issue.

### **Problem Statement**

Monetary rewards are the primary form of reward in most workplaces. Often, the non-monetary rewards are considered as added incentives to monetary rewards. Recognition, as a non-monetary reward, is slightly different from other non-monetary rewards as it is often unexpected, and it is given subsequent to good performance rather than as a means of encouraging good performance in future. Recognition is linked to commitment in the sense that employees are more likely to commit to their work if they feel that their efforts are being acknowledged by their superiors (Cameron *et al.*, 2005). However, academic institutions provide a unique context for the investigation of the link between recognition and commitment, especially with regard to non-teaching staff. Since the goal of a university is to promote learning, teaching, and research, the greatest rewards, both monetary and non-monetary, go to the teaching (academic) staff. Accordingly, there is no universal agreement between the employers and the employees over the importance of recognition as a tool of motivation. Employees may feel undermined if not appreciated for their efforts, while employers may feel that employees are just doing the job they are paid to do. This creates an atmosphere of frustration and high

expectations with low performance, motivation and commitment. Thus, although the non-teaching staffs play crucial roles in the running of academic institutions, they may feel that their contribution is overlooked, in favour of the teaching staffs. This may lead to feelings of dissatisfaction, contributing to lack of commitment and greater employee turnover (Daniel and Metcalf, 2005). With the foregoing in mind, it is necessary to examine how non-monetary rewards, particularly recognition, can influence the commitment of non-teaching staff in Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT).

### **Significance of the Paper**

The findings of the study will be useful to diverse stakeholders. To begin with, non-teaching staff, particularly in public universities, will benefit from the study as it will offer suggestions as to how they can receive greater recognition for their work in institutions which primarily focus on academic pursuits. Academic staff and administrators will benefit from the study as it will recommend ways in which they can work more closely with non-teaching staff to achieve the goals of their institutions. Finally, university policy makers, including members of university senates, will adopt the study as a guideline in developing future policies for recognizing non-teaching staff as a means of increasing their levels of work commitment.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Recognition**

Recognition refers to acknowledging or giving special attention to employee actions, efforts, behaviour or performance. Recognition can include both formal and informal programs, and supports business strategy by reinforcing certain behaviours (e.g., extraordinary accomplishments) that contribute to organizational success. Recognition acknowledges employee contributions immediately after the fact, usually with predetermined goals or performance levels that the employee is expected to achieve. It involves day-to-day, informal and formal recognition. Recognition awards can be cash or non-cash (e.g., verbal recognition, trophies, certificates, plaques, dinners, tickets, etc.) (WorldatWork, 2008). This concurs with RPI (2007), who define recognition as an after-the-fact display of appreciation or acknowledgement of an individual or team desired behaviour, effort or business result that supports the organization goals and values.

Jeffrey and Schaffer (2007) had almost similar conclusions out of their research, in which they found that non-financial recognition based rewards are not only motivationally superior to cash rewards but also, from the employer perspective, they are favoured since the

employer does not need to pay out any cash, which is a scarce resource in most organizations. Eisenberger *et al.*, (2001) suggested that recognition affects performance at work (performance is used as a measure of commitment) by conveying to employees the organization propensity to notice and reward increased performance. Consistent with this view, recognition works the same way as perceived support from friends and relatives, which may fulfil socio-emotional needs in interpersonal relationships. Among the measures of organizational commitment, affective commitment contributes significantly toward job performance. In most of the literature on the commitment-job performance relationship, affective commitment has been reported to be highly associated with performance at work (Sood, 2002). It is so because affectively committed people have emotional bonds to their organization and feel an obligation to care about the organization welfare and to help the organization reach its objectives. Recognition contributes towards motivating them to fulfil their indebtedness through greater affective commitment and increased effort.

Day-to-day recognition encompasses a wide range of acknowledgement that is frequent, ongoing and informal. It may consist of intangible recognition, awards, celebrations or eligibility for awards or celebrations to recognize behaviours that support organizational goals and values. It may include thank you notes or forms that employees give to one another or verbal praise. All employees can participate in this recognition, supporting it up, down and across the organization (RPI, 2007).

Informal recognition singles out individuals or teams for progress toward milestones, achieving goals or projects completed. Celebrations may include low-cost mementos or refreshments as a way to celebrate achievements or outstanding positive behaviour. It is less structured than formal recognition and reaches a larger percentage of the employee population (RPI, 2007). Formal recognition consists of a structured program with defined processes and criteria linked to organizational values and goals, a nomination and selection process and an awards ceremony where employees receive public recognition and are presented with awards in a formal setting. Generally speaking, it is an annual program and only a small percentage of employees are recognized (RPI, 2007). The best way to implement a recognition program is as a rational, carefully formulated program that is based on sound business strategy and well integrated with an organization business strategy that recognizes the behaviours most likely to positively affect an organization value (Daniel and Metcalf, 2005). In addition, a rational program considers workers desires, using tangible or non-tangible rewards that workers value, so that they will produce value in return (Huff, 2006). Many current recognition programs may have been established for good reasons - e.g., improving the culture of recognition within an organization. However, these organizations do not fully integrate the various aspects of the program with

each other or with business strategy and/or desired culture. The result is a failure to capture the full value of worker recognition programs (Huff, 2006).

### Commitment

Martin (2005) conceives commitment as a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and it is these actions that sustain his activities and involvement. From this definition, it can be inferred that three features of behaviour are important in binding individuals to act: visibility of acts, the extent to which the outcomes are irrevocable; and the degree to which the person undertakes the action voluntarily. To the author, therefore, commitment can be increased and harnessed to obtain support for the organizational ends and interests through such things as participation in decision-making. According to Mowday *et al.*, (1979) "commitment is the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". "Employee Commitment is psychological bond of an employee to an organization, the strength of which depends on the degree of employee involvement, employee loyalty, and belief in the values of the organization". The concept of employee commitment lies in the heart of any analysis of human resource management. Porter *et al.*, (1974) define employee commitment as "relative strength of the individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization". Neckermann *et al.*, (2014) show that with the increased academic attention given to workplace commitment, it has become apparent that commitment is a complex and multifaceted construct. For many years researchers and theorists have been defining and operationalizing commitment in different ways, as a result, it has been difficult to synthesize the results of the accumulating research. It is now recognized that commitment can take different forms. For instance, Meyer and Allen (1991) described affective commitment as employee emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Continuance commitment refers to commitment based on the costs that the employee associates with leaving the organization. Finally, normative commitment refers to the employee feelings of obligation to stay with the organization. Rational commitment is a relationship based on employee financial interests or interests related with possibilities to improve professional skills and make a career. Employees usually tend to such considerations as how much effort has been put while working in the company, whether they are adequately rewarded for the effort, and finally, are there any alternatives (better paid, more interesting and perspective jobs). If an employee thinks that the company is investing in them a lot, they will repay with attentiveness and loyalty (RPI, 2007). Another type of commitment is called emotional commitment. Emotional commitment to the organization can be defined as a relationship where employees

appreciate and enjoy their job and believe in what they are doing. They accept company goals as their own and honestly perform their tasks (Nelson, 2005). Ashraf *et al.*, (2014) observed the relationship between organizational commitment and motivation in public servants and explained that public servants with emotional commitment voluntarily participate in organizational activity. It is the extent to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization - the amount of discretionary effort they provide and how long they stay with an organization as a result of that commitment (CLC, 2004).

### Motivation and Job Context

Work Motivation is a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual being, to initiate work-related behaviour and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration (Lantham and Pinder, 2005). A key assumption is that workers are conditionally altruistic, that is, they care more for an employer who cares for them. As a result, workers respond with increased effort when they perceive recognition as a credible signal of the employer kindness (Dur, 2009). This tendency to contribute to the welfare of a kind person can be seen as a form of reciprocity, but it has implications that are different from those of reciprocity, particularly for the response of non-recipients. According to conditional altruism, provision of public recognition should affect effort of recipients and non-recipients identically, as all workers receive the same signal on employer kindness. Hence, conditional altruism predicts that recognition raises the performance of all workers and that this increase is stronger with greater levels of recognition. Thus, recognition can be a cost-effective tool for increasing average effort, especially when recognition is provided to a substantial subset of high performers. On the other hand, managers need to take into account that the provision of scarce recognition provides information to workers about the work norm prevalent in the group. Depending on the circumstances, this may or may not be beneficial for the organization. For instance, when organizational performance is particularly determined by the best performing workers, scarce recognition may have limited or even adverse effects. In such cases, providing recognition to all employees is likely to be a better alternative, as doing so is more likely to boost performance of top performers (Neckermann and Yang, 2012).

### Theories

This study was pegged on two theories, namely; Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) argues that individuals are motivated by five levels of need (Bennet, 1975). When a person has satisfied the

first level he or she then moves on to satisfy the second level, then the third and fourth levels. The five categories of need, in the order in which Maslow's supposed the individual would seek to gratify them, are as follows:

**Physiological needs:** food, clothing, heat, shelter and similar basic survival requirements. Wages from employment enable the individual to satisfy these needs.

**Security needs:** job tenure, home security and protection against reduced living standards. Purchase of life, house and medical insurance and collective activities through trade unions are examples of attempts to achieve security.

**Social needs:** the needs for affection, to belong to a community and to feel wanted. Attempts to satisfy social needs result in social, cultural, sporting and recreational groups and at work in trade unions and formal and informal communication systems.

**Esteem needs:** desires for physical possessions, for recognition by others (evidenced perhaps by the acquisition of status symbols), for authority over others plus internal psychology demands for self-respect and self-assurance.

**Self-actualization needs:** the search for personal fulfilment. Having satisfied all other needs the individual will want to accomplish everything he or she is capable of achieving; to develop individual skills, talents and aptitudes. Few people ever reach this final stage.

The factors that lead to positive job attitudes do so because they satisfy the individuals need for self-actualization in his work (Bennet, 1975). Maslow concluded that, when one set of needs is satisfied, it ceases to be a motivator and therefore a higher level of needs is sought for, he therefore argues that people must be understood by the levels in which they operate, else they may not be motivated by something that motivates others.

The study was also based on Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Herzberg *et al.*, (1959) from a study carried out in a group of employees, developed a two-dimension theory to job satisfaction, that is, 'motivation' and 'hygiene' factors of job satisfaction. In Herzberg's theory, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are the products of two separate sets of factors. These sets are comprised of motivating factors or satisfiers versus hygiene (environmental) factors or dissatisfies. According to Herzberg *et al.*, (1959), hygiene issues cannot motivate employees but they can minimize dissatisfaction if handled properly. In other words, people can only be dissatisfied if hygiene issues are absent or mishandled. Hygiene issues include: company policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. On the other hand, motivators are defined as those factors that create satisfaction by fulfilling individuals' needs for meaningful personal growth. These are issues such as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility

and advancement. Herzberg *et al.*, (1959) argues that once the hygiene factors are addressed, motivators will promote job satisfaction and encourage productivity. Recognition and commitment are adequately addressed in Herzberg's and Maslow theories and therefore the theories are directly applicable to the study.

### Effects of Recognition on Work Commitment

Positive feedback exists in well-designed recognition programs that is not found in an incentive program meaning that there is the potential for significant long-term increases in job performance (used to measure commitment) from ongoing recognition programs. Positive feedback occurs when two or more system components in a system are linked and when an increase in any one component increases the other(s) (Skyttner, 2005). This means that increases in the expression of positive job behaviours will increase the amount of recognition received, which then increases motivation/commitment which, in turn, further increases the expression of positive job behaviours. The indirect link between recognition and job performance is the primary reason why the value of recognition programs is often under-appreciated and, usually, not measured. A well-designed recognition program aims to improve organizational culture and individual workers behaviour. While the ultimate long-term result may be optimal job performance and business value, these could require several cycles of the positive feedback loop to achieve. In contrast, the short-term results of an incentive program the benefit of increased short-term performance minus the cost of the incentive can be quicker and easier to measure (Skyttner, 2005).

It has been argued that the expectation of rewards for performance will decrease the intrinsic motivation to perform under some circumstances such as the use of tangible rewards and, possibly, when specific performance goals are not explicit (Gagne and Deci, 2005). In contrast, others have argued that the weight of evidence indicates that, in most cases relevant to the workplace, extrinsic rewards either have no negative impact on intrinsic motivation or the negative impact is seen only in situations unlikely to occur during work related activities (Cameron *et al.*, (2005). While it is important to consider the possibility that a few types of reward programs may backfire when it comes to building on the intrinsic motivation of some workers, it is critical that the potential adverse impacts are seen in context of an organization's total reward program (CLC, 2004).

The CLC (2004) study demonstrates that employee engagement can be increased in many ways, including the creation of a recognition culture in the organization. It is important to note that this study looked at the general features of an organization's workplace culture, not the specific programs or tools that create that culture. If recognition is thought of as a tool, and not just a cultural

attribute of a specific workplace, it is easy to envision recognition programs being used to reinforce and strengthen each of the key workplace cultures. This again points to the need for more careful research on how a "culture of recognition" improves employee engagement and performance. Towers Perrin (2008) found that companies with high employee commitment had a 19% increase in operating income and a 28% increase in earnings per share. In contrast, companies with poor employee commitment scores had declining operating incomes and an 11% drop in earnings per share. These results corroborate the CLC (2004) study showing a link between higher employee engagement levels and increased business value. Most importantly, the Towers Perrin (2008) study also showed that workers in organizations with higher business value were significantly more likely (68%, versus 49% for underachieving organizations) to agree that their immediate manager recognizes and appreciates good work. Indeed, the deployment of recognition programs is considered one of the distinguishing elements of an integrated reward and talent management system, with another being the linkage of individual and organization results to rewards (Watson, 2009).

WorldatWork (2008) found that employee recognition programs are still common, with 89% of surveyed organizations stating that they had employee recognition programs in place. These findings indicate both a high level of use of employee recognition programs; as well as the fact that the adoption of programs by contemporary organizations is stabilizing. Length of service (a measure of commitment) and above and beyond performance are the two most-often used employee recognition programs. They also demonstrate that many organizations have implemented multiple types of recognition programs beyond those two. This is important because an integrated employee recognition system, comprised of different programs targeted for specific goals (for example, improved safety, increased performance or higher retention), is the best way to achieve measurable results (WorldatWork, 2008).

## METHODOLOGY

This study took a descriptive survey approach. A descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing sampled respondents, or by giving questionnaires to fill in individuals. It is appropriate in collecting information about people, attitudes, opinions, habits or social issues. Access to business services encompasses all these areas. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995), a descriptive survey approach seeks to gain insight into a phenomenon as a means of providing basic information in an area of study. The strength of the survey method is also evident in its ability to study, describe, explore and analyze relationships

among geographically gathered subjects. Furthermore, survey research is capable of collecting background information and hard-to-find data, where the researcher does not have the opportunity to influence respondents' responses (Sproul, 1995).

In order to determine the sample size of respondents to be drawn from the 1275 in the study area, this study adopted the finding of Nassiuma (2000) who found that a sample size of 30 percent of the target population was sufficient for survey research. Thus the sample size was ascertained to be 383 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaires containing open and closed ended questions. It was administered to selected respondents. A structured questionnaire was preferred for collecting data because in such a questionnaire, the questions, their wording and sequence are fixed and identical to all respondents. This has the advantage of obtaining standard responses to items in the questionnaire, making it possible to compare between sets of data (2004).

Data collected was processed, coded and analyzed to facilitate answering the research questions. This was done using descriptive statistics (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The descriptive analyses, including frequencies, percentages, tables and cross-tabulations, were used to summarize and organize the data and to describe the characteristics of the sample population. Inferential statistics were used in making deductions and generalizations about the whole population using sample data. Data capturing was done using Excel software. The data from the completed questionnaires was cleaned, re-coded and captured using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (version 6.0). The SPSS was used in the data analysis. The descriptive statistics calculated in this study includes averages, frequency distributions of responses and cross – tabulation to relate the variables.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Effect of Recognition on Work Environment

To answer this question, the respondents were asked whether recognition affected work commitment in their opinion. 256 (66.9%) of the respondents reported that recognition affected work commitment while 127 (33.1%) of them reported that it did not. The respondents were presented with ten items to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement with various statements related to recognition.

Table 1, shows that over 30% of the respondents agreed with the statements that: their employer allows them to participate in decision making in the department on work-related issues, their employer has confidence in them that they can work without supervision, their employer utilizes their talents and capabilities in the workplace appropriately, their supervisor seeks votes

**Table 1:** Recognition and commitment

	Recognition	SA		A		NA		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	My employer verbally praises me for work well done	56	14.6	108	28.2	8	2.1	119	31.1	92	24
2.	My employer gives congratulatory and recognition letters to exemplary performance	18	4.7	45	11.7	169	44.1	82	21.4	69	18.1
3.	My employer allows me to participate in decision making in the department on work-related issues	58	15.1	132	34.5	8	2.1	132	34.5	53	13.8
4.	My employer has confidence in me that I can work without supervision	5	1.3	118	30.8	79	20.6	95	24.8	86	22.5
5.	My employer utilizes my talents and capabilities in the workplace appropriately	66	17.2	159	41.4	13	3.4	106	27.6	39	10.4
6.	My supervisor is supportive and helps me accomplish difficult tasks	53	13.8	24	6.2	8	2.1	177	46.2	121	31.7
7.	JKUAT allows employees to programme their working schedules	29	7.6	132	34.5	77	20.0	87	22.8	58	15.2
8.	My supervisor publicly announces any achievements so that everyone recognizes too	74	19.3	56	14.5	8	2.1	180	46.9	65	17.2
9.	My supervisor seeks votes form other employees on who deserves to be recognized for good performance	64	16.6	129	33.8	50	13.1	69	17.9	71	18.6
10.	In cases of evaluation, my supervisor gives back timely feedback to enhance performance	5	1.3	34	9.0	34	9.0	159	41.4	151	39.3

**Table 2:** Commitment levels on recognition.

Level of Commitment	Frequency	Percentage
Very high commitment	21	5.5
High commitment	53	13.8
Neutral	31	8.1
Low commitment	182	47.6
Very low commitment	96	25

from other employees on who deserves to be recognized for good performance and that JKUAT allows employees to programme their working schedules. 169 (44.1%) of the respondents were not aware that their employer gave recognition letters for exemplary performance. On the other hand, over 30% of the respondents disagreed with the statements that: their employer verbally praises them for work well done, their employer allows them to participate in decision making in the department on work-related issues, their supervisors are supportive and help them accomplish difficult tasks, their supervisors publicly announces any achievements so that everyone recognizes too, in cases of evaluation, their supervisors give back timely feedback to enhance performance. This implies that recognition has an effect on commitment and that JKUAT employees were not recognized for work well

done.

Table 2, shows that 21 (5.5%) of the respondents were very highly committed, 53 (13.8%) of them were highly committed, 31 (8.1%) were neutral, 182 (47.6%) had low commitment while 96 (25%) had very low commitment levels. This implies that recognition had an effect on commitment since the employees who were not recognized ranked low the commitment levels.

#### **Relationship between recognition and commitment**

Table 3 revealed that there is a positive strong relationship between recognition of employees and commitment at work. This had a correlation coefficient of 0.556 at  $\alpha$  0.01 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and alternative accepted, thus

**Table 3:** Correlation Analysis.

		Parental involvement	Academic performance
Recognition	Pearson correlation	1	.556(**)
	Sig (2 tailed)		.000
	N	.156	144
Commitment	Pearson correlation	.556(**)	1
	Sig (2 tailed)	.000	
	N	156	144

**Note:** \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

**Table 4:** Model Summary (b).

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	.580(a)	.336	.332	53.498	.336	76.001	1	150	.000

**Note:** a. Predictors: (Constant), Recognition

b. Dependent Variable: Commitment.

**Table 5:** Regression Coefficients.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	92.682	16.001		5.792	.000
	Recognition	4.450	.510	.580	8.718	.000

**Note:** a. Dependent Variable: Commitment.

there is relationship between the independent and dependent variables. A person's coefficient of correlation of 0.566 ( $r = 0.566$ ) was obtained indicating a positive relationship between recognition and commitment of employees. From Table 4, the model was significant at  $p < 0.01$  with a value of  $R^2$  of 0.336. The data suggests that recognition accounts for 33.6 % of the variation in commitment of employees in JKUAT. This implies that there are other variables that explain commitment that are not captured in the present study. The regression coefficients are presented in Table 5. The results indicate that recognition ( $\beta = 4.450$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) is a significant predictor of pupils commitment of employees.

### Summary

The respondents were asked whether recognition affected work commitment in their opinion. 256 (66.9%) of the respondents reported that recognition affected work commitment while 127 (33.1%) of them reported that it did not. Over 30% of the respondents agreed with the

statements that: their employer allows them to participate in decision making in the department on work-related issues, their employer has confidence in them that they can work without supervision, their employer utilizes their talents and capabilities in the workplace appropriately their supervisor seeks votes form other employees on who deserves to be recognized for good performance and that JKUAT allows employees to programme their working schedules. 64 (44.1%) of the respondents were not aware that their employer gave recognition letters for exemplary performance. On the other hand, over 30% of the respondents disagreed with the statements that: their employer verbally praises them for work well done, their employer allows them to participate in decision making in the department on work-related issues, their supervisors are supportive and help them accomplish difficult tasks, their supervisors publicly announces any achievements so that everyone recognizes too, in cases of evaluation, their supervisors give back timely feedback to enhance performance. This implies that recognition has an effect on commitment and that JKUAT employees were not

recognized for work well done. Twenty-one (5.5%) of the respondents were very highly committed, 53 (13.8%) of them were highly committed, 31 (8.1%) were neutral, 182 (47.6%) had low commitment while 96 (25%) had very low commitment levels. This implies that recognition had an effect on commitment since the employees who were not recognized ranked low the commitment levels.

## Conclusion

The study showed generally a positive correlation between the supervisory recognition and employee motivation and performance in the result. The study concluded that such motivation arising out of recognition is not hierarchy-level specific. Rather it shows positive effects all along the hierarchy. It showed that employees regardless of their seniority level need their efforts and achievements duly recognized by their seniors. Majority of respondents also showed a clear linkage between the employee motivation and performance. They were of the view that when people get motivated because recognition is awarded by the managers, they become more energetic intrinsically and hence more committed.

This study establishes efficacy of supervisory recognition in an organizational perspective. In this way it corroborates numerous studies conducted earlier and discussed upon in the literature review. So, it is recommended that the organizational managers should ensure use of formal performance and effort recognition programs in the organizations. They should also properly train the managers in this regard because verbal appreciation by managers in day-to-day matters on the job is an even stronger motivator than infrequent recognition. It is mainly because formal citations may be delayed which may result in reduced motivation potential. Whereby verbal appreciation and recognition is instant that is more productive.

## Recommendation

The university should implement a comprehensive recognition and awards plan. This should be tied in to other monetary and non-monetary rewards, and it should be comparable to similar rewards given to teaching staff. In this way, all members of staff in the university, both teaching and non-teaching, will have comparable standards of assessing their level of entitlement to recognition and other rewards. Such a transparent system of recognition will help to boost commitment across the board.

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