

**EMPLOYEE AGE, GENDER AND TARGET ACHIEVEMENT AT
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted to any other University for examination.

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SUPERVISOR’S DECLARATION

This Research project has been submitted with my approval as the University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my Father Pius and Brother Kizito without whom, my dreams of going to School would not have been possible. It is also dedicated to my beloved husband Fredrick Masibo Wandili and children Pauline, Eliza, Elvis, Ronny and Ken for their encouragement, patience, and understanding in the course of my studies when they most needed my attention and whose prayers, love and tolerance have strengthened me all the time.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship of age and gender on target achievement in Construction and maintenance department at the University of Nairobi. The study employed descriptive research design for it portrays an accurate profile of situations. The study targeted 115 staff in Construction and maintenance department at University of Nairobi and a census sampling method was conducted. Secondary data was used on age, gender and target achievement. This data was obtained from personnel records at the Construction and maintenance department for the period of 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 of the performance contract targets. Descriptive statistics was employed to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviation, correlation analysis and percentages was used to analyze the data. Inferential statistics was used to present the results. The results indicated that correlation between age and target achievement was strong and positive, while correlation between gender and target achievement was negative but insignificant. The conclusion drawn from this study shows that there is relationship between age and target achievement since most aged employees scored 70% and above in their target achievement results. This implies that the more the employees age advances the more the more the target is achieved. It was also concluded that there was no significant relationship between gender and target achievement. The researcher recommends that Construction and maintenance department should have a clear gender balance policy. The managers should consider gender equity during departmental interviews in order to ensure gender balance in the department. The researcher also recommends that retirement age should be increased since most employees who scored higher were aged. It is also recommended that reward systems should be considered in order to reward target achievers.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In most Western societies, there exists a gender binary, a social dichotomy that enforces conformance to the ideals of masculinity and femininity in all aspects of gender and sex (Riley et al. 2008). Some societies have so called third gender categories that can be used as a basis for a gender identity by people who are uncomfortable with the gender that is usually associated with their sex; in other societies, membership of any of the gender categories is open to people regardless of their sex. Gender historians are interested in how sexual difference has been perceived and configured at different times and places, usually with the assumption that such differences are socially constructed.

According to Sonya et al. (2010), gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision making opportunities.

Gender identity, for instance, is a person's private sense, and subjective experience, of their own gender. This is generally described as one's private sense of being a man or a woman, consisting primarily of the acceptance of membership into a category of people (Scott et al. 2008). All societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of the formation of a social identity in relation to other members of society. In most societies, there is a basic division between gender attributes assigned to males and females. In all societies, however, some individuals do not identify with some of the aspects of gender that are assigned to their biological sex.

Furthermore, Zemon et al. (2006) suggested that older women's socio economic status is partially rooted in the gender division of labour which assumes that women's primary involvement is in reproductive labour, unpaid household work, care giving and unequal power relations at home. Such activities often restrict women's employment opportunities, mobility, educational attainment and skills development. When they actively participate in the labour market, most women are concentrated in low wage, insignificant and demanding jobs, or are relegated to part-time employment with few benefits and little security. Nevertheless, during their lifetime, women spend more time on combined unpaid and paid work than men do. While in many developed countries, differences in life expectancy between women and men are significant and in some instances are growing, they are smaller in regions such as the Middle East and South Asia.

In developed societies, older women's economic security varies depending on their access to retirement plans and pension policies. Older women are often disadvantaged because they have spent less time in the labour market in remunerated jobs than men, or because the benefits are tied to wages, and women have traditionally earned much less than men. As a result, their retirement benefits and pension coverage are almost always less than those of men (Riley 2008). In developing countries, pension systems generally cover a minority of women, depending on the kind of employment their husbands had or the position they occupied in the labour market (Sonya et al. (2010). Most elderly women rely on traditional support systems, namely, their children and other members of their extended families. Thus, the number of older women living alone is much lower than in developed countries.

1.1.1 The Concept of Gender

Butler et al. (2010) suggested that gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Whereas biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures.

Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them.

Gender identity is the gender or genders a person self-identifies as one's biological sex is directly tied to specific social roles and expectations. Butler et al. (2010) considers the concept of being a woman to have more challenges, owing not only to society's viewing women as a social category but also as a felt sense of self, a culturally conditioned or constructed subjective identity. The term "woman" has chronically been used as a reference to and for the female body; this usage has been viewed as controversial by feminists, in the definition of "woman". There are qualitative analyses that explore and present the representations of gender; feminists challenge the dominant ideologies concerning gender roles and sex. Social identity refers to the common identification with a collectivity or social category that creates a common culture among participants concerned.

Categorizing males and females, for instance into social roles creates binaries in which individuals feel they have to be at one end of a linear spectrum and must identify themselves as man or woman. Globally, communities interpret biological differences between men and women to create a set of social expectations that define the behaviors that are "appropriate" for men and women and determine women's and men's different access to rights, resources, power in society and even health behaviors. Although, the specific nature and degree of these differences vary from one society to the next, they typically favor men, creating an imbalance in power and gender inequalities in all countries (Fausto et al. 2009). Many cultures have different expectations based on gender, but there is no universal standard to a masculine or feminine role across all cultures.

Fausto et al. (2009) claims that as sexual subjects, humans are the object of power, which is not an institution or structure; rather it is a signifier or name attributed to "complex strategically situation". Because of this, "power" is what determines individual attributes, behaviors, etc. and people are a part of an ontologically and epistemologically constructed set of names and labels. Such as, being female characterizes one as a woman,

and being a woman signifies one as weak, emotional and irrational, and is incapable of actions attributed to a "man". Butler et al. (2010) suggested that gender and sex are more like verbs than nouns. She reasoned that her actions are limited because she is female. "I am not permitted to construct my gender and sex willy-nilly," she said. This is so because gender is politically and therefore socially controlled. Rather than 'woman' being something one is, it is something one does." More recent criticisms of Judith Butler's theories critique her writing for reinforcing the very conventional dichotomies of gender

Woman's role in economic development, there was a realization that development affected men and women differently and there began to be more of a focus on women and development. Butler (2010) argued that women were marginalized in the modernization process and practices of growth, development, and development policy threatened to actually make women worse off. The primary goal of women in development was to include women into existing development initiatives, since it was argued that women were marginalized and excluded from the benefits of development.

1.1.2 The Concept of Age

According to Roebuck (2009), job performance is the quality and quantity that is expected from an employee. Age and job performance is judged constantly in the workplace. Many employers feel as if the older an employee gets the more their job performance suffers in the workplace compared to younger more alert workers. The stereotype is that older workers speed; strength, agility, and health greatly affect the performance they have. Employers feel as if young people who are new in the company are able to adapt to the changing work conditions that the economy is pushing for. It is commonly thought of that older workers are no longer assets to the company since they're basically deteriorating in the eyes of employers but not everyone who is old has health problems or has trouble seeing (Gorman, 2009). The problem is that supervisors are just assuming that if one person has the problem they all will but just because an older worker has health problems at 60 doesn't mean they all do. Some never have any health issues until their 80's. This assumption can affect a company's performance in the future. Just because someone is aging doesn't mean his or her performance is lowering.

Togunu (2008) suggested that organizations need to understand that as long as they keep thinking that young workers are more valuable to spend their money training on, they will see a decrease in business. If employers keep training their older workers then they will be able to use the experience they have and convert it into business for the company. If businesses keep letting its older workers go, they will only have young less experienced employees which will mean lower performance rates. People should know that age means nothing when it comes to performance; just because technology is changing doesn't mean older employees can't learn to adapt like the younger ones (Brubaker and Powers, 2006). Employers need to acknowledge older workers amount of experience that they've had throughout their years of working at the company which younger workers don't have. When a company puts groups of younger and older workers together it allows for the best of both world since you have older employee experiences and younger workers knowledge in technology. That is how businesses can use the knowledge of all its employees to the fullest potential.

The ageing process is of course a biological reality which has its own dynamic, largely beyond human control (Roebuck, 2009). However, it is also subject to the constructions by which each society makes sense of old age. In the developed world, chronological time plays a paramount role. The age of 60 or 65, roughly equivalent to retirement ages in most developed countries is said to be the beginning of old age. In many parts of the developing world, chronological time has little or no importance in the meaning of old age. Other socially constructed meanings of age are more significant such as the roles assigned to older people; in some cases it is the loss of roles accompanying physical decline which is significant in defining old age. Thus, in contrast to the chronological milestones which mark life stages in the developed world, old age in many developing countries is seen to begin at the point when active contribution is no longer possible.

Men and women have achieved positions of power at all stages of life, but it is remarkable how many have lived in obscurity until their forties and gone on to do remarkable things. It may be true that the work of statesmen depends greatly on experience, which compensates for any falling off in cerebral powers. Churchill certainly

benefited by what he had gone through in the First World War. In the whole field of human activities, there are many areas where experience seems less significant (Gorman, 2009).

1.1.3 Concept of Target

Goals are a form of motivation that sets the standard for self satisfaction with performance. Achieving the goal one has set for oneself is a measure of success, and being able to meet job challenges is a way one measures success in the workplace (Locke, 2008). Goals that are deemed difficult to achieve and specific tend to increase performance more than goals that are not. A goal can become more specific through quantification or enumeration, such as by demanding increase productivity by 50%, or by defining certain tasks that must be completed.

According to Graham (2013), goal setting involves establishing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time targeted goals. Work on the theory of goal setting suggests that an effective tool for making progress is to ensure that participants in a group with a common goal are clearly aware of what is expected from them. On a personal level, setting goals helps people work towards their own objectives. Goal setting features as a major component of personal development literature. The word goal is also one of the most recognizable words in management for motivational endeavors.

In business, goal setting encourages participants to put in substantial effort because every member has defined expectations for their role, little room is left for inadequate, marginal effort to go unnoticed. Managers cannot constantly drive motivation or keep track of an employee's work on a continuous basis. Goals are therefore an important tool for managers, since goals have the ability to function as a self regulatory mechanism that helps employees prioritize tasks. People perform better when they are committed to achieving certain goals (Richman and Larry, 2011). An understanding of the effect of goal setting on individual performance, organizations are able to use goal setting to benefit organizational performance.

1.1.4 University of Nairobi

The University of Nairobi can be traced to 1956 when the Royal Technical College of East Africa was established in Nairobi. By 1961 the Royal Technical College had evolved into a university college giving London University degrees. In 1964 it became a college of the University of East Africa under the name Royal College Nairobi. In 1970, the University of East Africa was disbanded and an autonomous University of Nairobi established through an Act of Parliament (Onsongo, 2007). The University of Nairobi has expanded and boasts of 6 colleges and 30 faculties, schools, institutes and centres. It offers over 300 programmes and has 70,000 students. It comprises of 2052 academic staff and 3,380 administrative and technical staff. It has 17 service departments including the Construction and maintenance department.

The only institution of higher learning in Kenya for a long time, the University of Nairobi responded to the national, regional and Africa's high level manpower training needs by developing and evolving strong, diversified academic programmes and specializations in basic sciences, applied sciences, technology, humanities, social sciences and the arts. Through module II and III programmes, invaluable opportunity was opened to thousands of Kenyans and foreigners, on a paying basis, who meet university admission requirements, but who have not been able to access university education due to restricted intake into the regular programmes that is determined by limited resource allocation by Government. The location of the seven campuses of the University in the capital city and its environs and facilitating easy access, has been an asset that has seen the university increasingly become the busy hub and citadel of academic activity at all times. In addition to the regular and evening and weekend programmes, classes are conducted at the University's Extra Mural Centres located at the country's county headquarters. The University is proud of its distinguished record of achievements in teaching, research, development and consultancy while strategizing for a greater future as the centre of academic, research and professional excellence.

1.1.5 Construction and Maintenance Department, University of Nairobi

Construction and maintenance Department operated under Estates Department as a section until it was separated in March, 2006. Construction and maintenance Department was previously known as Clerk of Works Division undertaking only development works while physical facilities were under Estates Department. Construction and maintenance Department is charged with the responsibility of maintaining existing physical facilities and developing new ones. The main functions of the Department, therefore, are: developing and expanding physical facilities for the University as well as maintaining the facilities through routine maintenance work.

The mission of the department is to maintain adequate physical facilities to enable provision of quality education and training. Its vision is to develop and maintain world class physical facilities for the university and contribute to the success of the University's Mission and Vision. The age of 60 to 65, is roughly equivalent to retirement ages in most universities in Kenya and is said to be the beginning of old age. The department has majority of employees in 40 years and above and male outnumber females in terms of gender composition. Other socially constructed meanings of age are more significant such as the roles assigned to older people; in some cases it is the loss of roles accompanying physical decline which is significant in defining old age.

1.2 Research Problem

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important tool for managers, since goals have the ability to function as a self regulatory mechanism that helps employees prioritize tasks. People perform better when they are committed to achieving certain goals.

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Construction and maintenance Department is one of the service departments at the University of Nairobi. It is charged with the responsibility of maintaining existing physical facilities and developing new ones. The main functions of the Department, therefore, are: developing and expanding physical facilities for the University as well as maintaining the facilities through routine maintenance work. It has a total of 111 workers. The age distribution in the department can be summarized as follows: those between 35

years and below 14 staff, 36 to 45 years totals to 42 members and those aged 46 and above amounts to 66 staff. There are 48 females and 62 males in the Construction and Maintenance departments. Target setting in the department by individuals, began after the Government of Kenya introduced Performance Contracting in the Public Service in 2004 as one of the tools to improve service delivery. The university signs the performance contract with the government and it cascades it downstream up to individual level.

Serene (2010) carried out a study on age and gender inequality on motivation in the savings and credit cooperative societies in Kenya. She found that young females are motivated in their work due to their flexibility. Dickens (2002) did a study on gender and age practices on goal setting in hospitality industry in Kenya. He found that adults work hard to achieve goals set by the organization while the younger employees are keen on shifting jobs for greener pasture. Mukuha (2006) did a study on age and gender on incentives in petroleum industry in Kenya. He realized that non monetary incentives motivate adults to work while monetary incentives motivate the young. Mwangi (2008) carried out a study on the effect of age and gender on performance. He found that performance decreases as workers advance on age. Ohato (2011) did a study on age and gender equality in supermarkets in Kenya. He noted that there is no equality in employment since most staff in supermarkets is females. Studies from the Caribbean economies and transition economies show that women have experienced declines in access to jobs relative to men. To improve the nature and conditions of work, employment enhancing economic growth is a prerequisite for low income countries, coupled with social policy that eliminates discriminatory employment barriers (Palmary, 2009).

It is evident that these studies did not focus on the influence of employee age and gender on target achievement thus creating a knowledge gap. Therefore the research question for this study is, what is the influence of age and gender on target achievement at Construction and maintenance departments at the University of Nairobi?

1.3 Research Objectives

- i. To determine the relationship between age and target achievement at Construction and maintenance department, University of Nairobi.
- ii. To determine the difference between male and female employees in target achievement at Construction and maintenance department, University of Nairobi.

1.4 Value of the Study

The study will be importance to the Construction and Maintenance department at the University of Nairobi because it will assist the management to understand and appreciate emerging challenges that if not dealt with, will affect the sustainability of employees' target achievement. The researcher therefore will propose new ways that can be used in achieving targets in order to make the department more sustainable. The University will benefit from the researcher's new strategies that will facilitate efficient target achievement of gender and age. It will also assist the University to appreciate other alternative ways of achieving set goals.

The study stands to benefit future researchers, scholars and academicians who will wish to study gender and age on target achievement in related issues. The study will also provide an attempt to derive a truth in a deductive manner and truth about behavior. An investigation into the background of the previous studies will lead to conclusions that enlightened other aspects of future study. In addition, the research will enlighten the stakeholders on the influence of gender and age on target achievement at Construction and maintenance department, creating in them awareness and the interest of ensuring stability of their respective institutions.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the review of literature on the influence of age and gender on target achievement in Construction and maintenance department at the University of Nairobi. It comprise of theoretical framework, the influence of age and gender on target achievement and research gaps to be addressed.

2.2 Theoretical basis of Study

The study will be guided by goal achievement theory and self determination theory.

2.2.1 Goal Achievement Theory

Individuals have a 'personal theory' about what achievement means to them for that specific situation or task. The characteristics of the situation and task interact to impact the state of the goal the individual adopts. Achievement behaviour is the behaviour in which the goal is to develop or demonstrate to self and others high ability or avoid demonstrating low ability. Ability is constructed in two ways. For instance, ability can be judged high or low with reference to the individual's own past performance or knowledge (Bell, 2007). In this context, gains in mastery indicate competence. However, to demonstrate high capacity, one must achieve more with equal effort or use less effort than others do for an equal performance.

The types of goal achievement could be activated, depending on which conceptions of ability were held salient at that point in time. When gains in mastery indicate competence, individuals are said to be task involved. On the other hand, when achievement of more with less effort than that of others indicates competence, they are said to be ego involved. There is a plethora of literature on the goal perspective theory

(GPT). Carson et al, (2007) provide a strong case for applying the GPT to the sport achievement domain.

Other literature stated that goal achievement theory did not correlate with the goal setting literature. It stated that goals motivate and direct behaviour as an ego orientation and cannot be detrimental to performance because high class athletes would naturally set outcome goals. Current literature also shared the consensus that successful performers have multiple perceptions of their competence and would integrate the use of performance, outcome and process goals to good effect. This therefore indicates that individuals can have both high ego and a task orientation at the same time. To support this argument, Ensley et al. (2005) provided a critique of the traditional goal perspective theory. As a result, the theorists highlighted conceptual and measurement (psychometric) inconsistencies of the goal perspective theory.

A large body of research has demonstrated the validity of using achievement goal theory to understand and promote adaptive beliefs about work. Specific research associated with this theory suggests that the ideal work environment should be characterized by mastery goal orientations (Flaherty et al. 2007). Work environments that emphasize these goals encourage workers to set self standards for performance, to view the development of new skills as a necessary outcome of the learning task, and to accept, and persist in, challenging work situations. Workers who adopt mastery goals approach work situations with a focus on understanding material, not simply reaching an outcome, as individuals with performance goals do in work situations. A focus on mastering material invokes adaptive work strategies that aid workers in persisting and completing tasks. Conversely, performance oriented individuals focus on outcomes and, thus, are less likely to utilize deep processing strategies.

In regard to workers' beliefs about their own capabilities, both relational and observational studies have shown that mastery goal orientations relate to positive levels of self efficacy, incremental views of intelligence, and high levels of cognitive engagement (Hackman et al. 2005). In addition, experimental studies have found that adopting mastery goals leads to the use of deeper processing strategies and better

performance on tasks. Conversely, research has shown that performance goal orientations, which can be characterized as approach or avoidance in nature, are often related to less adaptive beliefs about working.

Goal orientations are also related to how individuals view intelligence; those who believe in incremental theories adopt a mastery oriented interpretation of success and failure experiences, and those adopting entity theories espouse a performance oriented interpretation of success and failure experiences (Higgs et al. 2005). Specifically, incremental theorists who believe that intelligence is malleable and can be cultivated through working are more likely to explain success and failure as a result of the degree of effort expenditure, persistence, and motivation. Entities theorists who believe that intelligence is fixed, uncontrollable, and cannot be changed are more likely to explain outcomes both successes and failures-in terms of a lack of ability.

Mastery and performance goals exist in various forms in the work place, both within and between workers and management. Management provides cues for workers through instructional practices utilized in their work place. For example, Kozlowski and Ilgen (2006) found that elementary aged workers were more likely to set mastery goals than performance goals if their manager utilized a contingency contract form of evaluation rather than a token economy evaluation system. Although Kozlowski and Ilgen showed the relationship between different systems of evaluation and workers' goal orientations, few studies have provided in-depth descriptions of how workers design entire programmes to create mastery goal orientations and support employee motivation (Lau and Murnighan, 2005).

2.2.2 Self Determination Theory

The study of motivation in physical activity and sport has played an important role among researchers in the field of sport psychology, since it represents the force that determines whether

a person starts and commits themselves to a specific activity, as well as the effort invested in it. During the last decades, a large number of investigations have supported

two important motivation theories. The achievement goal theory (Lim and Klein, 2006) and the self determination theory, with the aim of finding motivational strategies focused on the achievement of more positive consequences in the sport environment. The goal achievement theory postulates that people can have two predominant dispositional goal orientations in achievement contexts, such as the sport context, which are created by a social influence. Task orientation is focused on personal success and improvement through effort, while ego orientation is focused on outperforming others and on reaching better results than the rest.

The target achievement is another interesting concept that the above mentioned theory establishes. Motivation was defined by Mathieu and Gilson (2008) as a set of implicit and explicit signals, perceived in the environment, by which the keys to success and failure are defined. The motivational climate transmitted by the coach can be of two types namely a task involving motivational climate, in which effort, self referenced personal improvement and the development of self comparative skills are fundamental, or an ego involving motivational climate, in which the most important aspects are victory and the demonstration of having a higher ability and performance than others. The results of the studies show a positive relation between task involving motivational climate and task orientation and between ego involving motivational climate and ego orientation (Lombardo, 2005).

2.3 The Relationship between Age and Target Achievement

Age can be described as noteworthy determinants of employee satisfaction. It is because younger employees possessing higher energy levels are likely to be having more employee satisfaction than older age employees (Charlesworth, 2005). Young employees possessing high energy levels feel more satisfied. Old employees, on the other hand, resist accepting new techniques. An age analysis of participation rates across several countries also reveals the same. For example, while young Australian women enjoy relatively high levels of participation rates, they fall behind other advanced economies by the time they reach child bearing age. Examining the reasons behind the drop in the

female participation rate during those years is important if we are to capitalize on our labour force capabilities.

The elderly learn at a slower pace than younger individuals especially if what they learn is qualitatively different from what they already have mastered. Lombardo, (2005) argue that as people grow older, they undergo an encapsulation of job know how, implying that the individuals skills are attached to certain work domains, and are increasingly less transferable. In some occupations, the cognitive abilities that remain stable are the ones most closely correlated with job success. Senior employees can remain highly productive within a field that they know well and where long experience is beneficial.

An example of an age-robust ability is tacit knowledge, procedural knowledge used to solve everyday problems, which can explain why many older managers perform as good as younger ones (Mathieu et al. 2008). However, when they perform unfamiliar work, they have to rely on the ability to learn and adjust skills where younger individuals tend to be better endowed. Senior individuals are less able than young individuals to reorient themselves to new task requirements and to solve novel problems and age-induced productivity reductions may increase with age.

2.4 The Relationship between Gender and Target Achievement

According True (2010), women's work, both paid and unpaid, is critical to the survival and security of poor households and an important route through which households escape poverty. Moreover, paid employment is critical to women's empowerment. In settings where women's mobility is restricted, increased employment opportunities can improve women's mobility and enable women to seek and access reproductive health care. It can also expose them to new ideas and knowledge and broaden the community with which they engage.

The governments of most industrialized countries accept some public responsibility for sharing the cost of rearing their nations' children, and many governments have developed comprehensive family policies. Recognizing the value of early education, especially

targeted to poor children, governments in many developing countries, including China and India, also support childcare and early education services. Yet, no single country provides the investment in care services that is required to fully meet the needs of women and their children. Filling this gap is essential for meeting targets in organizations (Bibbings et al. 2012).

With regard to the conditions at work, women's status in the labor market is inferior to men's in most countries of the world, according to key indicators such as occupational distribution, earnings, the nature and terms of employment, and unemployment. In the labor force women and men typically perform different tasks and are located in different industries and occupational sectors. Occupational segregation by sex is extensive in both developed and developing countries (Stratigaki, 2005). Approximately half of all workers in the world are in occupations where at least 80 percent of workers are of the same sex. In many countries, occupational segregation is significantly higher for the least educated workers than for those with higher education.

Gender differences are also apparent in unemployment, with women more likely to be unemployed than men in recent years. Studies from the Caribbean economies and transition economies show that women have experienced declines in access to jobs relative to men. To improve the nature and conditions of work, employment enhancing economic growth is a prerequisite for low income countries, coupled with social policy that eliminates discriminatory employment barriers (Palmary et al. 2009). For poor women, especially those in rural areas, public employment guarantee schemes can be an important intervention for providing work and increasing income, although evaluations of country programs reveal a mixed track record. Public employment guarantee schemes can also be gender biased. In many programs, women earn less than men, partly because they are excluded from higher wage and physically difficult tasks.

Similarly, others have suggested that males appear more likely to be morally disengaged than females (Stratigaki, 2005). More females than males appear to have an internalized care orientation, making them more concerned with human welfare. Thus, under certain

conditions, evidence suggests women may engage in more target achievement than men. For instance, it was found that females achieved much more than males, and further, that female-female pairs achieved their target more than female-male pairs, which, in turn, were more performance oriented than male-male pairs. Females also appear to be more likely to act to prevent harm and to help avoid negative outcomes. Palmary et al. (2009), for example, suggests that females may understand better the importance of being ethical in some situations than males. The preponderance of women as whistle blowers suggests that woman may be more sensitive to such issues compared to men. Some studies have suggested that women may be more sensitive to expectations for achieving targets, even if engaging in such behaviors is difficult. Overall, women seem less likely to engage in acts such as shirking and more likely to consider the high performance.

In light of these considerations, female employees appear more likely to engage in performance and to expend extra effort regardless of the reward system. However, the differences may be less noticeable under conditions of perceived equity as men may also be willing to engage in these performances, but more for extrinsic rewards provided by the compensation system, while women would engage in these target achievement more for intrinsic rewards (Togunu, 2008).

2.5 Relationship between age, gender and target achievement

The average age of people in the workforce is getting higher, with increasing numbers of middle-aged and older workers employed in many different jobs (Roebuck, 2009). Thus, it is important to know whether target achievement is higher or lower for older workers in comparison with younger workers. Most studies on this issue have concluded that although individual studies differ, averaging across available studies reveals virtually no relationship between age and target achievement. The fact that there is no observable relationship is interesting to many people because it is known that age related declines can occur in important mental and physical abilities.

Gorman (2009) indicated that other than the possibility that there may truly be no relationship, there are several other possible reasons why there is no observed

relationship between age and target achievement. Thus for a variety of reasons, people who are not performing well generally do not stay in a job. People may quit or find a job that they can perform better, rather than stay in a position that exceeds their capabilities. An older person who finds that he or she cannot perform the job anymore may decide to seek a different one. Also, those who cannot perform a job may be removed by the organization. They may be transferred into a different position that is more suited to their skills, or they may be terminated. The end result of either of these processes is that if older workers cannot perform well because of age related changes in their skills, they probably will not be in the job for very long. Consequently, comparing older and younger workers in performance will not include those older workers who cannot perform and are no longer on the job.

Togunu (2008) suggested that in many jobs declining abilities can be compensated for by other factors, such as more experience, more knowledge, taking more time to complete demanding duties, and so forth. Further, there is little evidence that the type of job in question moderates or makes a difference in the size of the target achievement age relationship. Thus it is possible that in many jobs, a decline in abilities can be offset by experience and knowledge. However, this does not address the question of whether two workers of equal experience and unequal ages will perform similarly. That is, although age may be associated with experience in many settings, it may not be in all settings. Less studies has addressed the question of whether an older worker and a younger one assigned to a brand new job at the same time will perform similarly. In fact, much of the cumulative research done on the age target achievement relationship has not controlled for differences in experience across age (Brubaker and Powers, 2006). Thus the effects of age on performance by workers of equal experience but unequal age is not as well researched as the overall question of whether there is a general association between age and target achievement.

Performing work successfully will increasingly involve learning and developing new skills, learning and development will be an important concern for aging workers. There could be a tendency to give preference to younger workers over older ones in assigning

or encouraging training and development opportunities. Increasingly, as organizations manage older workers; this legal concern is a critical issue to deal with effectively for the sake of both the organizations and the workers (Butler and Judith, 2010). Most studies so far indicate that the age of a person, by itself, has little real meaning in explaining target achievement. However, other than the possibility that there may truly be no relationship between age and performance, there are several others possible reasons why there is no observed relationship between age and performance. It is also important to note that age is only a number that is very loosely associated with many other more meaningful changes and differences in people.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. It comprises of research design, population, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a plan outlining how information is to be gathered. It includes identifying the data gathering method(s), the instruments to be used or created, how the instruments will be administered, and how the information will be organized and analyzed. The study employed descriptive research design for it portrays an accurate profile of situations and because the research was conducted on department with many people at the same time. (Saunders et al. 2009). The study relied on the collected target achievement results from Construction and maintenance registry at the University of Nairobi.

3.3 Target Population

Population refers to the entire group of individuals, events or objects having common observable characteristics. The study targeted 115 employees of Construction and maintenance department at the University of Nairobi. This was a census study based on the small number of the population (Kisilu et al. 2005).

3.4 Data Collection

Secondary data was used on age, gender and target achievement. The data was obtained from personnel records at the Construction and maintenance department for the period of 2012 and 2013 of the performance contract targets. Published data is the most basic secondary source of information for data collection. Published data can be obtained from various sources like books, magazines, newspapers, journals and periodicals. Published data is the most reliable secondary source of information. The validity of published data is greater than unpublished data. Personnel records can also be very useful in research if

data is unavailable in published form. Some personal sources like letters and diaries are invaluable assets (Saunders et al. 2009). Letters and diaries can have a personal bias as they are written by human beings and they contain personal judgement. The chances of bias should be eliminated before using these sources for references.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data were examined and checked for completeness and comprehensibility. Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores, standard deviation, frequency and percentages was used to analyze the data. The influence of employee age on target achievement was established through Pearson's correlation analysis. Difference between female and male was established by comparing relative percentages and results were presented in tables.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis; the data from the target achievement results were summarized and tabulated in the form of descriptive statistics and percentages were computed for selected data to enhance interpretation. Out of 115 targeted, only 110 target achievement results were found which constituted 96% of the sample. This was considered sufficient to yield meaningful statistical analysis. The others who were not found could have retired or employed before or after the results of target achievement. The results were presented using tables as explained below.

4.2 Summary Statistics

Descriptive analysis presents the minimum values, maximum values, mean and standard deviation of the different variables in the study. To check the relationship of the variables, the findings showed that mean log of age was 3.1 while the standard deviation was 0.34. The maximum value of age at Construction and maintenance department was 3.59 and the minimum value was 2.6. From the results, the average target achievement for the Construction and maintenance department was 3.09 with a standard deviation of 0.23. The maximum target achievement by department was 3.5 while the minimum level of target achievement was 2.8. This is presented in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Y	110	7.00	14.00	10.4615	2.10616
Age	110	2.60	3.59	3.1508	.34594
Target	110	2.80	3.50	3.0923	.2362
Valid N (listwise)	110				

Source: Author (2014)

4.3 Age and Target achievement

The presentation was based on the need to establish the ages of the employee in construction and maintenance department. The findings revealed that, 46% of the employees had ages between 30 years to 40 years, 45% had ages between 40-50 years, 9% had ages of between 50-60 years, it can be established that majority of the employees age in the department are between 30-40 years. This implies that most employees are still young.

The findings indicated that most (62%) of the employees in construction and maintenance department are male while 38% were female. It can be concluded that there is no fair gender balance in this department. In terms of target achievement, the results showed that most employees between 50-60 ages scored 70% and above, most employees between 40-50 ages scored 60% and above and most employees between 30-40 years scored 50% and above. It can be established that majority of the aged employees in this department had high target achievement.

4.3.1 Results of Correlation Analysis

Table 4.2 Results of Correlation Analysis for the link between age and target achievement.

Variables	Target achievement
Age	0.209

Source: Author (2014)

*P<0.05

A correlation between age and target achievement shows that there was a strong positive correlation of 0.209 which was significant at $p < 0.05$.

4.4 Gender and Target achievement

The results were based on the need to determine the mean between gender and target achievement of the employees in Construction and maintenance department. The findings

indicated that male employees had a mean of 73.3 whereas female employees had a mean of 68.1. The mean is therefore the measure of central tendency that best resists the fluctuation between different data. The mean uses every value in the data and hence is a good representative of the data. Even though mean can be calculated for numerical ordinal data, many times it does not give a meaningful value.

Table 4.4.1 Results of Mean between gender and target achievement.

Variable	Mean of target achievement
Male	73.3
Female	68.1

Source: Author (2014)

4.5 Discussion

The findings showed that most (62%) of the employees in Construction and maintenance department are male while 38% were female. It was concluded that there is no fair gender balance in this department. In terms of target achievement, the results showed that most employees between 50-60 ages scored 70% and above, most employees between 40-50 ages scored 60% and above and most employees between 30-40 years scored 50% and above. It was established that majority of the aged employees in this department had high target achievement. The relationship between age and target achievement shows that there was a strong positive correlation of 0.209 which was significant at $p < 0.05$. The mean score of male in terms of target achievement was 73.3 while female mean score was 68.1

Today, young employees possessing high energy levels feel more satisfied in target achievement. Old employees, on the other hand, resist accepting new techniques of work (Charlesworth, 2005). An age analysis of participation rates across the world also reveals the same. The elderly learn at a slower pace than younger individuals especially if what they learn is qualitatively different from what they already have mastered. Lombardo

(2005), argue that as people grow older, they undergo an encapsulation of job know how, implying that the individuals skills are attached to certain work domains, and are increasingly less transferable. In some occupations, the cognitive abilities that remain stable are the ones most closely correlated with job success. Aged employees highly achieve their target within a field that they know well and where long experience is beneficial.

On the relationship between gender and target achievement, studies have suggested that males appear more likely to be morally disengaged than females (Stratigaki, 2005). More females than males appear to have an internalized care orientation, making them more concerned with human welfare. Thus, under certain conditions, evidence suggests women may engage in more target achievement than men. For instance, it was found that females achieved much more than males, and further, that female-female pairs achieved their target more than female-male pairs, which, in turn, were more performance oriented than male-male pairs.

According to Palmary et al. (2009), women seem less likely to engage in acts such as shirking and more likely to consider the high performance; female employees appear more likely to engage in performance and to spend extra effort regardless of the reward system. However, the differences in target achievement with male may be less noticeable under conditions of perceived equity as men may also be willing to engage in these performances.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study as they relate to the objective of the study. The data obtained in this chapter were obtained from target achievement results for 2012/2013 and 2013/2014. It also includes suggestions for further research in the area of employee age, gender and target achievement. Findings have been summarized alongside the objective of the study, conclusions have been drawn from the study and the recommendations for actions were given.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study aimed at assessing the employee age, gender and target achievement in Construction and maintenance department at University of Nairobi. The study applied secondary methods of data collection. Secondary data was collected through construction and maintenance department previous reports on age, gender and target achievements. The findings were summarized below.

The results revealed that, 46% of the employees had ages between 30 years to 40 years, 45% had ages between 40-50 years, 9% had ages of between 50-60 years, it can be established that majority of the employees age in the department are between 30-40 years. This implies that most employees are still young. It was also revealed that most (62%) of the employees in construction and maintenance department are male while 38% were female. It can be concluded that there is no fair gender balance in this department. In terms of target achievement, the results showed that most employees between 50-60 ages scored 70% and above, most employees between 40-50 ages scored 60% and above and most employees between 30-40 years scored 50% and above. It can be established that majority of the aged employees in this department had high target achievement. A correlation between age and target achievement shows that there was a strong positive

correlation of 0.209 which was significant at $p < 0.05$. The mean score of male in terms of target achievement was 73.3 while female mean score was 68.

5.3 Conclusion

The conclusion drawn from the findings of this study shows that there is relationship between age and target achievement since most aged employees scored 70% and above in their target achievement results. This implies that the more the employees age advances the more the more the target is achieved.

It was also concluded that there is no significant relationship between gender and target achievement. In light of this conclusion, female employees appear more likely to engage in target achievement and to spend extra effort regardless of the reward. However, the differences may be less noticeable under conditions of perceived equity as men may also be willing to engage in these target achievement, but more for extrinsic rewards provided by the compensation system, while women would engage in these target achievement more for intrinsic rewards.

5.4 Recommendations

The researcher recommends that Construction and maintenance department should have a clear gender balance policy. The managers should consider gender equity during departmental interviews in order to ensure gender balance in the department.

The researcher also recommends that retirement age should be increased since most employees who scored higher were aged. The study also recommends that reward systems should be considered in order to reward target achievers.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

Obtaining secretive information was quite a challenging task. Construction and Maintenance department is usually busy place; some employees showed some signs of

declining the researcher's advances by failing to cooperate fully as expected, citing that they are having a tight schedule.

The perception of employees were a major limitation since most of them did not take the study seriously and may ended up giving misleading information which interfered with the data reliability and validity.

The respondents approached were reluctant in giving information fearing the confidentiality and sensitivity of the study as a major limitation since many respondents held information due to high level of suspicions and lack of trust where they thought the study aims to use the findings against their job undertakings. Many documents used in research were not originally intended for research purposes. The various goals and purposes for which documents were written can bias them in various ways.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research

The study suggests that a survey method be used in the future instead of a case study method. This is because generalizing the results of a case study is limited and hence surveys would act as better pointers of employee age, gender and target achievement in construction and maintenance at University of Nairobi.

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APPENDIX I



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

Telephone: 020-2059162
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE: 3.10.2014

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter is DR. MUKHEBI DEPHINATH SURAKO


Registration No. De1/64101/2011

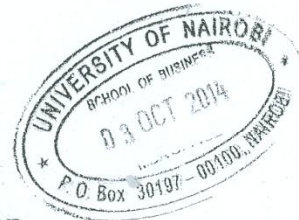
is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.


PATRICK NYABUTO
MBA ADMINISTRATOR
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



APPENDIX II

**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SUMMARY RESULTS OF STAFF PERFORMANCE TARGETS
COLLEGE: CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT: CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE**

S/NO	FEMALE TARGET ACHIEVEMENT	MALE TARGET ACHIEVEMENT
1	71	60
2	68	72
3	64	74
4	77	65
5	76	74
6	68	73
7	59	76
8	58	68
9	67	72
10	62	74
11	71	65
12	71	74
13	68	73
14	64	76
15	77	60
16	76	72
17	68	74
18	59	65
19	58	74
20	67	73
21	62	76
22	71	60
23	71	72
24	68	74
25	64	65
26	77	74
27	76	73
28	68	76
29		60
30		72
31		74
32		65

33		74
34		73
35		76
36		60
37		72
38		74
39		65
40		74
41		73
42		76
43		81.79
44		62
45		76.7
46		81.24
47		72.03
48		81.2
49		71.78
50		82.3
51		81.24
52		72.03
53		81.2
54		71.78
55		81.79
56		62
57		76.7
58		81.79
59		62
60		76.7
61		81.24
62		72.03
63		81.2
64		71.78
65		82.3
66		82.3
67		81.79
68		62
69		76.7
70		81.24
71		72.03
72		81.2
73		71.78
74		82.3
75		81.79
76		62

77		76.7
78		81.24
79		72.03
80		81.2
81		81.79
82		62
Total	1,906	6,006.83
Mean	68.1	73.3