THE INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF AT JOMO KENYATTA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY (JKUAT).

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DECLARATION

I declare that this study is purely my work and has not been submitted for any other examination in any institution for academic purposes.

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D64/5432/2017

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family and friends who supported me throughout this process

and contributed to its successful completion.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBD   Central Business District

JKUAT   Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

KNEC   Kenya National Examination Council

KWS   Kenya Wildlife Service

SAJOREC   Sino-Africa Joint Research Educational Centre

SMARTEC   Sustainable Materials Research and Technology Centre

TSC   Teachers Service Commission

ABSTRACT

Organizations in today's society have to be able to swiftly respond to the dynamism of the work environment dynamism in order to compete with their competitors within the same market. Employee empowerment is a great way to enhance this dynamism and its usefulness in attracting and retaining employees within an organization. This study thus aimed to determine the effects of employee empowerment on employee commitment among the academic staff in JKUAT. Specifically, the study aimed at determining the effect of perceived support, access to information, access to resources and access to opportunity on employee commitment. The study used a descriptive survey. The study's target population was members of the teaching staff in JKUAT. The study used stratified random sampling technique to arrive at the sample size. A questionnaire was used to collect the data by the researcher. Descriptive statistics were alo utilized to analyse the data. Frequency tables were used to present the data for easy comparison. The findings of this study concluded that employees at JKUAT are affectively committed to the organization meaning they hold the university to a high regard and it holds a personal meaning for them that is beyond any form of monetary compensation. The study also revealed that the employees are empowered by the organization through offering perceived support, offering access of information to them and also offering opportunities for career development and growth. However the employees felt that the resources offered to them were not adequate for the completion of their tasks. Moreover, it was deduced that there is a significant positive relationship that exists between employee empowerment and employee commitment as revealed by the findings. This means that empowering employees through offering them support, giving them access to information, giving them ample access to the required resources and giving them access to opportunity subsequently leads to an increase in commitment among the employees. In reference to the findings, it is recommended that the university should empower their employees to attain ample commitment from them.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1Background of the Study

Workplace empowerment is a relatively new management intervention that has emerged over the recent years. It is basically the way in which members of staff in an organization can make their own decisions regarding their work without the need to consult with their bosses (Kumar, 2014). According to Grimsley (2018), empowerment is giving employees a certain degree of independence, decision making and autonomy regarding their jobs in an organization. Where there is employee empowerment, decisions do not have to be made at the top most levels of the organization, they can be made at the lower levels. Employee empowerment entails allowing employees to take ownership of the goals set for them to achieve by the organization and this inevitably makes employees more committed to their places of employment. When the employees in an organization are committed to the organization, they become more creative and innovative, their productivity levels go up, and they do above and beyond what is expected of them. The probability of a highly committed employee leaving the organization is significantly less due to the psychological attachment that is brought about by commitment.

Theories informing this study include the Kanter's theory of empowerment and the social exchange theory. According to Kanter (1993), empowerment is whereby an individual makes decisions independently. The theory posits that empowerment leads employees to be committed to their work and disempowerment among employees has a negative impact on them and their commitment to their work. Kanter goes on to say than any

organization that is centered on empowerment gives its employees autonomy to plan their own tasks and carry them out without needing to go through the supervisor. The second theory that will be discussed in relation to the study is the social exchange theory. The social exchange theory (Homans, 1950) posits that employees will remain with an organization and put their best foot forward within that organization if the organization shows that it values that employee by shaping their career accordingly. This theory states that people analyse their social relationships according to the risks versus the benefits that these relationships present. If the risks are more than the benefits within the relationship, it inevitably comes to a standstill.

This study will focus on JKUAT because it is a major employer of teaching staff in Kenya. This university is very significant and it makes a great impact in the Kenyan education system. Despite JKUAT having all these programs to offer and it being one of the oldest universities in Kenya, there is a level of mediocrity and demoralization exhibited among the teaching staff members. This is perfectly exhibited by the lecturers' strikes that have been occurring in our country over the last few years. There is an observed lack of commitment among the lecturers and they seem to be performing their duties almost robotically, that is lacking passion and a sense of drive. Evidently, the teaching staff at the university do not have enough resources to carry out their daily tasks, which in turn affects the quality of education passed down to their students. There are also minimal opportunities for promotions and there isn't much observable cohesion among the members of teaching staff all of which stem from lack of employee empowerment. Therefore, the motive behind this study is to investigate the effect of employee empowerment on employee commitment among the academic staff in JKUAT.

1.1.1 Employee Empowerment

According to Raquib (2010), employee empowerment is a situation whereby employees are allowed to fully own and be in control of their tasks. In an organization where employees are empowered, responsibilities that are traditionally considered to be managerial are passed down to the employees (Saleh, 2013). The decisions these employees are empowered to make can either be minor decisions or major organizational altering decisions depending on the extent to which the company has empowered their people. In some cases, employee empowerment actually involves training the employee to be able to make the decisions (Ramesh, 2014). Empowered employees have been proven to be more hardworking and motivated than employees who are disempowered. These employees are highly satisfied and this automatically translates to the customers because they treat them more respectfully.

Lockwood (2007) suggested that empowerment of employees is a multi faceted concept and that it can either be structural or psychological. Psychological empowerment focuses on the thought process of the employees within organizations and how these same employees view the roles they are meant to carry out within their given jobs. Structural empowerment has to do with enabling employees to access information, support, resources and opportunities and utilize these things in order to achieve ones objectives (Kanter, 1993). According to Menon (2001), empowerment enables employees within an organization to think and therefore behave in an autonomous way. According to, Kirkman et al. (2007), employee empowerment practices led to increased productivity among employees, superior customer service, job satisfaction and overall commitment to the organization.

1.1.2 Employee Commitment

According to Hanaysha (2016), employee commitment is the factors that keep an employee glued to their organization without exploring other options and these reasons are more or less psychological. According to Hall et al. (1970), commitment is situation whereby the individual objectives of the employee and the general organizational objectives are aligned and integrated into one and the same thing. Dordevic (2004) posited that an employee's performance at work, his productivity and even how often he misses work, both physical and mental absenteeism can be predicted by the employee's organizational allegiance. Decotii (1987) posited that disloyal employees to their organization give their organization a bad reputation on the outside and may actually affect the organizations ability to recruit high quality employees. On the other hand Meyer (1997) found that committed employees put in more effort towards their given tasks and thus these employees will exhibit high levels of performance.

There are three different types of commitment that are broadly recognized. These are affective, continuance and normative commitment. An affectively committed employee actually wants to remain within that organization. This kind of employee not only fully embraces the organizational goals and objectively, he also fits in with the organization (Meyer, 1997). Employees that are normatively committed on the other hand feel that they should stay within their organizations because they presume that leaving said organizations would be disastrous for various reasons. Continuance commitment is where employees stay with their current organizations because they feel that they need to. Committed employees add value to an organization and are hardly ever absent for no reason and they hardly move to other competing organizations (Iles, 1990). Employee

commitment within an organization produces a myriad of favourable outcomes like employee retention, attendance of work on a daily basis, good work quality, helping an organization attain its top most goals sacrificially and significant achievement by the employee (Randal, 1990).

1.1.3 Academic Staff in Universities in Kenya

According to the online dictionary, an academic staff is one who has been employed in a university to either teach, carry out research or both. The academic staff in universities consists of professors of various ranks, lecturers and researchers. Most universities staff members hold a Ph.D. or an equivalent high level degree in their field. The total academic staff in Kenya as a whole is said to be 16,318 with 74% in public universities while 26% in private universities. Of these, only 5604 academic staff had a PhD qualification which is only 34%of the total academic staff. Academic staff in Kenyan universities are categorized into 5 levels which are professors, senior lecturers, lecturers, assistant lecturers and graduate assistants (Okoth, 2007).

In order to qualify to be either an associate or a full professor in the university circles, one must have a PhD or a qualification that is considered the equivalent of this. In order to attain the rank of a full professor across Kenyan universities, one should have been an associate professor for at least four years and should have at least three publications that have been scrutinized by their colleagues in international journals. However, there are some academic staff that may not have attained their PhDs for some reason who are also called professors by their peers or even their students. The promotion of staff from one level to another in Kenya is highly political and a qualified member of staff may have

met the requirements needed to attain the position, but may have not yet received a promotion (Kiboye, 2007).

1.1.4 Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology is an educational institution located in Kiambu County, Juja. It is situated along the Nairobi Thika Superhighway. It initially started off as a college after the then president donated land to the university for expansion so that they could become a fully fledged university. In 1988 however JKCAT turned to JKUAT under the declaration of the President Daniel Arap Moi. It Admitted its first degree students in 1989 and later on became an autonomous, stand alone university. JKUAT offers various programs in different fields like Architecture, Science, Engineering, Technology and Building Sciences. Its motto as an institution of higher learning reveals that they want to be trend setters in the areas of innovation, research and the higher education sector at large (JKUAT, 2018).

JKUAT is made up of several schools and faculties and it offers courses of all ranges and diversities from science courses, law, business courses and engineering. JKUAT is best known for its engineering courses around the country and its electrical engineering course especially is very competitive. Only the highest performers in the country get into this course. It also offers E- learning or distance learning to students who cannot physically access the different campuses. JKUAT also has campuses and centers all over the country. It has a campus in Kisii, Kitale, Kakamega, Mombasa, Nakuru, Nairobi (CBD), Arusha, Kigali Westlands and Karen. It also aspires to encourage teamwork among the members of staff, promote transparency with the members of staff within the organization and also seeks to maintain a high level of integrity when dealing with its

customers and its employees alike. The university has a total of 817 staff members which constitute 51 professors, 76 assistant professors, 93 senior lecturers, 322 lecturers and 275 tutorial fellows (JKUAT, 2018).

1.2 Research Problem

Most researchers who have studied employee commitment and employee empowerment seem to all agree on the conclusion. According to Kanter (1997), the organizations that attract and keep the crème de la crème employees of any given society irrespective of the economical state of the area and the challenging economic times ensure that they include their employees in the decision making process. These employees were also seen to have more autonomy over their jobs. Janssen (2004) and Kahlel (2005) both carried out studies that revealed the strength of the relationship between employee empowerment and employee commitment. Empowerment makes the employees of a given organization feel valued by their employer and thus increasing their commitment levels and subsequently their performance (Sahoo, 2010).

Universities are very important in today's society as they contribute to the economic and social development of the Kenyan society. However these universities are facing difficult challenges, some of which include an increased number of student admissions, under staffing, inadequate funding, and low research output and so on. According to Too (2016), qualified employees are choosing to go to teach in other countries that offer better working conditions than those found in Kenya. Lecturers in the country seem to be dissatisfied with their working conditions due to the numerous strikes that they seem to be going on. This shows a general lack of commitment to their jobs. Although their

grievances are mainly due to remuneration, one would state that a lack of adequate empowerment would be one of their main woes. The seeming lack of commitment by the academic staff to their jobs ignited a level of curiosity that ignited the premise of this study.

A plethora of studies have been carried out in relation to employee empowerment and commitment both in Kenya and internationally in other parts of the world. A study was carried out by Imuezerua et al. (2016) and they investigated how job satisfaction among employees could be influenced by employee empowerment, support by the organization, climate and commitment by the top management. They studied organizations in South Africa and came to the conclusion that job satisfaction among employees is largely influenced by employee commitment. There was another study done by Elnaga et al. (2014) still on how job satisfaction is impacted by the empowerment of employees. This study was based in Pakistan and the findings were similar to those of the previous study. They revealed that job satisfaction was highly dependent on the level of employee empowerment. One local study was conducted by Kirui (2011) and it focused on the influence of employee empowerment on implementation of ISO standards in the University of Nairobi. This study concluded that indeed employee empowerment positively impacted the ISO standards at the university and it deduced that empowerment is important for the operational staff. Another study was carried out by Kariuki and Kiambati (2017) from Karatina University and it was focusing on empowerment, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour and firm commitment. They targeted a manufacturing firm in Kenya and came to the conclusion that empowerment significantly predicts firm performance. This study however focused on a

manufacturing company which is significantly different from an educational institution and it also focused on the performance aspect and not on employee commitment. Another study by Ng'ang'a and Moronge (2017) and it looked into the Kenya Wildlife Service and how employees' performance was interconnected with empowerment. The findings of the study revealed employee performance at KWS was influenced by the structural empowerment of the employees. This study however focused on performance as a variable and not commitment. None of these studies however focused on how employee commitment is impacted by empowerment among academic staff in universities, specifically JKUAT. Thus this study sought to answer the question; how does employee empowerment affect employee commitment among academic staff in JKUAT?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to determine the influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment among academic staff in JKUAT.

1.4 Value of the Study

This study will have a plethora of beneficiaries. JKUAT will benefit from this study because it will discover ways on how to increase employee commitment among the academic staff. On top of that, other public universities around the country can benefit from this study because the results will be applicable to all the universities that have similar circumstances to JKUAT.

This study will help in policy development in these institutions of higher learning and the policy makers may find the results beneficial while reviewing university policies. The policy makers are able to get fundamental information on the reasons why employees

stay committed to an organization and also why these same employees may leave an organization that they feel does not empower them.

This study will also be of exponential value to fellow academicians and scholars as it will create knowledge on employee empowerment and how it influences employee commitment. Scholars may find the study conclusions quite intriguing and use them to carry out their own studies. The results of this study will act as literature to inform future research and will act as future secondary data for research on this topic.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter entails the theoretical review as well as other empirical studies that have been done on the area of employee empowerment and employee commitment. It starts with the theoretical foundation of the study followed by literature on employee empowerment and commitment.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

The two theories informing this survey are the social exchange theory and Kanter's theory of empowerment in relation to employee empowerment and employee commitment.

2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory

As maintained by Homans (1950), the social exchange theory posits that people generally try to attain things from others that are of a higher value to them than the costs that they incur. People like feeling that they are getting more out of an exchange than they have to give up or forfeit. George Homans (1950) drew from different sociologists, theorists and fields while putting together some of his thoughts on social exchange. One of the people he drew from was Foote (1943) who studied Italian Immigrant gangs. Homans noted from this study that the Italians believed in equivalent exchanges as a sign of true friendship. If one person did not return the favours accorded to them, this person would not receive a favour from the person any time in the future.

The social exchange theory suggests that people constantly compare what they gave in a relationship and what they received from that same relationship current relationship with the same from a past relationship. People use this comparison element to assess how satisfied they are within their current relationship. People also evaluate the stability of their relationship by evaluating their alternatives outside the relationship. The person then carries out a cost benefit analysis to determine if they are in the correct relationship (Thibaut, 1969). A good example would be in an employment relationship where one might compare their current job to their previous job and expect the same level of benefits and satisfaction, if not more. However ones current job might not measure up, leading the person to seek alternatives elsewhere. The social exchange theory in itself has several elements that are relevant to this study. These elements are: Rewards, Social rewards, Costs, Profit, Equity and Social exchange.

Cost is defined as something which is of value that is given up or the withdrawal of a reward or punishment. Blau (1964) said that our choice to nurture one particular relationship automatically cancels out our ability to invest in another relationship that could potentially be of infinitely higher value. Levine (2010) posited that the most fulfilling relationships are those whereby the rewards one attains from being in the relationship outweigh the costs that one has to incur while investing in the relationship. Within relationships for instance, people seek out partners who will equal their costs and rewards.

2.2.2 Kanter's Theory of Empowerment

On the authority of Kanter (1993), power is defined as the "ability to mobilize resources to get things done". Within any given organization, power can come from either formal

or informal sources. Informal power emerges from the positive relationship that an employee has with his superiors, his peers and his subordinates. In an organization, the job positions that are highly visible and are vital for the fulfillment of the organizational goals are considered to be high in formal power. According to Wong (2011), an empowered employee has ample support available to him, he has access to relevant and timely information from the organization, organizational resources are easily available to him and the employee has opportunities to learn and grow. Kanter posits that if an organization is structured to give its employees ample empowerment, this structure will lead its employees to be more committed to their work. In an organization that is empowered, there will be increased autonomy, job satisfaction and ultimately commitment to this organization. Burn out and stress levels will also be drastically reduced in such an organization.

Kanter came up with four dimensions or aspects that are needed for empowerment of employees and these are perceived support, access to information, access to resources and finally the access to opportunities (Vacharakiat, 2008). Employees have been found to be more committed to their jobs if their employers provide these fours aspects of employee empowerment. Access to information has to do with the data, technical comprehension and expertise that are needed so as to perform ones job proficiently. Access to resources is whereby an employee can get their hands on vital resources that are important for the continuity of their tasks like cash, work supplies miscellaneous materials and even access to other employees who are vital for the achievement of organizational goals (Krishna, 2007). Access to support on the other hand has to do with feedback either from superiors or colleagues, guidance and direction that is provided by supervisors, peers and also

subordinates (Kanter, 1993). According to Kanter, employers in every organization should ensure that they provide support to their employees, they give relevant and timely information to their employees, they give adequate resources to them for continuity of their tasks and they give their employees opportunities for promotion and growth. Kanter's theory focuses on the way the employees view their actual working conditions and not on how the employee interprets the information on these conditions psychologically. One of the weaknesses of Kanter's theory of empowerment is adaptability. There isn't much information or knowledge out there on whether this theory can apply to different cultural contexts.

2.3 Components of Employee Empowerment

Today, many organizations are looking for an edge that will allow them to be the top performers in any given business environment and to gain market share. This is usually done by improving employee productivity. The best way to increase employee productivity is to in today modern world is to empower employees. This philosophy is based on the premise that when an employee is empowered to make his own decisions in the work environment, he becomes more confident in himself, more capable, and determined to work more effectively and efficiently.

In his theory, Kanter (1993) established several components of employee empowerment. The first component is perceived support. The support addressed can either be material support or psychosocial support. Material support is whereby the employee is provided with the tools and equipment he needs to carry out his tasks. Financial resources also fall under material support. Psychosocial support on the other hand is given by the employee's manager in the form of advice, and not necessarily tangible materials.

Support by an employee's supervisor is extremely important to the employee and also to the organization. There is a lot of evidence from previous research that shows that when an employee feels that he receives support from his supervisor, his peers and also his subordinates, then the employee becomes more committed to the organization. Thus, support should emerge from all facets of the organization (Burke et al., 2010).

Access to opportunity has to do with the access of opportunity to grow and move up the organizational hierarchy (Kanter, 1993). It entails employee's advancements in their careers, the opportunity for employees to learn more within their jobs and increase their knowledge, and also the opportunity to be rewarded for good job performance (Voyra et al., 2013). In addition to that, opportunity also involves receiving training, having ones career develop consistently throughout the year and having significant autonomy over ones job and tasks. When it comes to training, organizations should make strategies that ensure its employees are constantly undergoing retraining and continuous learning. This helps to curb the aspect of obsolescence and maintain the careers of employees. All these aspects of access to opportunity lead to reduced employee turnover within the organization and also the rate of absenteeism among the employees and thus employee commitment is increased.

Access to information in the context of an organization has to do with knowing ones objectives and goals within their position, knowing the decisions made by the organization on varied areas like change in policies and knowing the objectives of the organization (Kanter, 1993). Having access to information provides the employee with a sense of power (Xiaohui, 2007). Organizational efficiency can also increase due to having access to information because people with access to information can spread the

information to their colleagues or subordinates and hence the organization thrives (Kanter, 1993). For an employee to have access to vital information, the organization ought to encourage employee participation in decision making. An employee that has adequate access to information has both formal and informal knowledge that is vital for organizational efficiency.

According to Vacharakiat (2008), the most important and vital component of empowerment is access to resources. Access to resources is being able to reach the required material resources to carry out a given task. These material resources could be supplies, human resources, equipment, money, time and so on (Jons, 2005). According to Kanter (1993), the access of resources ought not to be available to the top level management as is the norm in most organizations but instead it should be decentralized and made accessible to the lower level employees within the organization to be able to have access to. This is vital for employees to be able to efficiently and effectively carry out their jobs and tasks. Employees within organizations get very frustrated when they are expected to carry out certain vital tasks but they have no access to the necessary resources. This aspect can definitely reduce employee commitment to an organization.

2.4 Dimensions of Employee Commitment

According to Park and Rainey (2007), organizational commitment is how different individuals within the same organization have varied loyalties to said organization. Carriere and Borque (2009) also posited that commitment connects individuals almost definitely to an action course that is relevant to the organization. Today, there is no organization that can be a high flyer or high performer unless the employees within the organizations are committed to the organizations goals and objectives and each employee

works as an efficient member of a team (Coetzee, 2005).Substantial research has revealed that indeed, employee commitment can be increased within an organization. Certain initiatives have been shown to lead to increased levels of employee commitment. These factors include having clear guidelines that define appropriate work behaviour, having efficient and effective communication with ones immediate supervisor and even senior level management and having clearly defined career paths.

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), organizational commitment can be divided into three dimensions. The three dimensions are affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment, also known as affection for your job occurs when one feels a great emotional attachment to their jobs. On top of that, an employee that has affective commitment is more likely to help his fellow colleagues, work extra hours and share any crucial information. Solinger et al. (2008) posited that the presence of affective commitment within employees leads to reduced absenteeism, increased employee performance and adequate organizational citizenship behaviours more than both continuance and normative commitment. Moreover, affective commitment has been found to mitigate stress levels among employees and diminish feelings of exhaustion and burnout according to various researchers (Schmidt, 2015). According to Mowday et al. (1982) highly committed employees to their organization put in additional effort in order to ensure that they meet the organizations goals.

Secondly, we have the continuance commitment which is also known as fear of loss. An employee with continuance commitment may feel the need to stay in a given company after he has weighed the pros and cons of leaving and has established that staying would be the best option for him. One may fear losing money, their seniority or even their work

friends. Shore et al. (1995) studied the concept of continuance commitment and he found levels of continuance commitment among well educated employees are significantly less than their lower educated counterparts. This is because people who are highly educated have more options when it comes to deciding which employer to work for and also have a larger pool of jobs to select from. On top of that, according to Harris et al. (2001) the employees who work in managerial positions tend to own their tasks more than their subordinates. Because of this, employees who are higher up in the job hierarchy exhibit more continuance commitment than those who are lower in the hierarchy.

The third type of commitment is the normative commitment. This one usually occurs when an employee feels obligated to stay with an organization, even though they may not be happy in that organization (Meyer, 1997). Normatively committed employees often feel hesitant to leave their current work places as they feel that the move would have disastrous consequences for their organization. Employees may feel that if they leave the organization, this will create a gap or a void in knowledge and skills which would then lead to increased work pressure on their colleagues (Werf, 2016). According to research carried out by various scholars affective commitment and normative commitment are quite parallel and seem to go hand in hand. However, this is not to say that normative commitment and affective commitment are one and the same thing. There are some significant differences between normative commitment and affective commitment, for instance normative commitment, unlike the other two dimensions of commitment has a positive relationship with socialization and also engagement according to Meyer (1997).

2.5 Employee Empowerment and Commitment

Several studies have been done on employee empowerment both locally and internationally. Hanasha (2016) carried out a study that looked into the manner in which organizational commitment is impacted by empowerment, training and teamwork. His study focused on the Malaysian education sector and its objective was to figure out how employee empowerment, team work and employee training affect employee commitment. The administrative and the academic staff within the public universities were the researcher's target population. This study revealed that organizational commitment is positively impacted by the empowerment of employees. Empowering employees makes them feel valued by the organization which in turn leads to employees being more committed to the organization and also improves the performance of the employees (Sahoo et al., 2010).

Ramos and Ales (2014) also carried out a study investigating how job satisfaction is affected by employee empowerment among university employees. The sample was drawn from a Spanish University and it was made up of 226 university teachers. The study analysed various facets of empowerment like opportunity, formal power given to the employee, access to resources by the employee, access to information and intrinsic satisfaction. These findings were congruent with Kanter's theory of empowerment (Kanter, 1993). The study revealed that structural empowerment and the levels of job satisfaction are interconnected. Also, according to the study it was revealed that the satisfaction with ones job and employee commitment are interlinked. The study suggested that access to opportunity and the feeling of autonomy among employees leads to increased levels of intrinsic job satisfaction.

Another study was carried out by Maina (2017) who was a PhD student at Jomo Kenyatta University. Her study was on how employee empowerment has influenced organizational commitment among workers in the Kenya Civil Service. She found that organizational commitment was significantly impacted by the psychological empowerment provided by the organization. The dimensions of psychological empowerment, which are cognition, competitive cognition and self-determination, exhibited a positive relationship with organizational commitment. The study went on to show that organizations will exhibit organizational commitment to a large extent if the employees have autonomy of work, if they find deep set meaning in their work and if they have confidence in their own skills and capabilities.

Mutiso (2017) also investigated the job satisfaction levels at Machakos level five Hospital in Kenya and how employee empowerment has influenced these levels. He used both structured and unstructured questionnaires to collect his data. The findings of his study was that empowering employees through various means like using training, through the provision of proper tools and equipment, and also involving this employees in decision making that affects them was very crucial in increasing the levels of performance and job satisfaction. In this hospital there was little to no empowerment with regards to the measurement factors that he used to determine empowerment and he recommended ways in which the hospital could empowerment could be carried out so as to improve motivation and employee satisfaction.

Bakari (2008) also decided to execute an empirical study on how employee empowerment and employee performance are interrelated at the City Council of Nairobi. He analysed his data and forged several conclusions from his findings. Tsala measured

whether the respondents have mastered the skills that are necessary for their jobs, whether the respondents had any kind of control over the aspects of the job that they are accountable and whether their work gave them the ability add on to the organization's success. He also measured whether the employees had significant opportunity for freedom and independence in doing their jobs and whether they get sufficient resources to do their jobs. The study concluded that the performance of the employees at the city council improved when employees became more empowered. Thus employee performance and employee empowerment are strongly correlated according to this study.

Moreover, Chinomona and Imuezerua (2016), two South Africa Based scholars carried out a similar empirical study as well. They targeted organizations within the province of Guateng to gather their information from. His study actually utilized secondary data to gather information on how employee satisfaction is influenced by employee empowerment, among other variables that his study targeted. The conclusions of this study were as expected and were just like the conclusions of most of the other empirical studies. The study revealed that employee satisfaction increased significantly when the employees in these registered companies were empowered by their employers.

Finally, Kimolo (2013) carried out a study at the Regional Development Authorities in Kenya. he looked into how employee empowerment and employee performance in this organization are correlated. The target population was all the employees of six regional development authorities whose total population was 1732 people, however only 173 employees were given the questionnaires. The employee empowerment practices that were measured by the study were training, communication with supervisors, teamwork among the staff, participation of employees in organizational goal setting and the

delegation of authority among others. He concluded that to some extent, employee empowerment practices determine employee performance; however the organization only moderately embraced employee empowerment.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the process through which data was collected, analyzed as well as interpreted with respect to the research carried out. It shows the methods of data collection instruments, the research design and the techniques that were used to analyze the data.

3.2 Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design. A descriptive study design describes the participants who are taking part in a given study. It is used to depict these participants in an accurate manner. A descriptive study will always answer the questions who, what and how. Since this study sought to establish the relationship between employee empowerment and commitment at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, a descriptive survey design was the most appropriate design to fulfill this study's objectives.

3.3 Population of the Study

This study focused on the teaching staff members in JKUAT. This study targeted the teaching staff members in JKUAT who are 817 in total. These do not include the teaching assistants as the teaching assistant's position is merely a training position and the people employed under this position are merely former students who attained a first class honors. This information was attained from the head of human resource management at JKUAT.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Design

The study used stratified Sampling to collect data for this study. The teaching staff can be divided into different strata according to the different levels. From the total population of 817 employees, a sample was taken. 10% of the population is adequate to attain a representative sample. However the sample of this study was a total of 162 people which is 20% of the total population. Table 3.1 shows the proportionate stratified sample.

Table 3. 1: Sample Size

Category of employee	Frequency	Proportion sample %	Sample
Professor/ Assistant Professor	127	20%	25
Senior Lecturer	93	20%	18
Lecturer	322	20%	64
Tutorial Fellow/ Assistant Lecturer	275	20%	55
Total	**817**	**20%**	**162**

3.5 Data Collection

A questionnaire was used for primary data collection and it was divided into three parts. The first part constituted of the general information of the respondents, while the second part of the questionnaire was on employee empowerment and finally the third part of the questionnaire was on employee commitment. The questionnaire was made up solely of closed ended questions in order to provide more structured responses and to generally come up with more tangible results.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected in this study was coded and logged in the computer using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The quantitative data was coded into various categories like percentages and frequencies. There was also the use of descriptive statistics which was basically the use of dispersion which is mean and standard deviation. The data was also presented in form of tables and for easy comparison. Regression analysis was done to establish the effect of employee empowerment on employee commitment. Afterwards, tables were used to present the results of the study so as to make the data easier to comprehend, as well as the making of recommendations.

The following model for the regression model was used to analyse the relationship:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \sum$

Whereby;

Y = employee commitment at JKUAT

X_1 = perceived support

X_2 = Access of information

X_3 = Access to resources

X_4 = Access to opportunity

β_0 = Intercept of the regression model

β_1 - β_4 = Coefficients of the regression model

$\sum$ = Error term

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, results and discussion of the findings. The objective of this study was to find out the influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment among academic staff in JKUAT. The survey targeted 163 respondents and 130 responded which brought the response rate to 79.75%.

4.2 Respondents Demographics

This study embarked of finding out the gender of the respondents, the age bracket within which the respondents fall, the academic level within which they belong, the faculty of college they work in and how many years they have worked for the university.

4.2.1 Respondents Gender

Table 4. 1 Respondents Gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	108	83.1
Female	22	16.9
Total	130	100

Source: Research Data (2018)

The study embarked on finding out the gender of the respondents. As seen in table 4.1, 83.1% of the respondents were male while 16.9% of the respondents were female. This shows that there are far more male workers in the university than female workers. The disparity in gender is brought about by the nature of the courses offered in the university. A majority of the lecturers at JKUAT are male because the university offers

predominantly science courses that were traditionally pursued mostly by males. This boils down also to the lecturers who teach these courses.

4.2.2 Age of Respondents

  According to table 4.2, 35.4 % of the respondents were aged between the ages of 38 to 47 years old. 23% of the respondents were aged between 30 to 38 years of age, 16.9% were aged between 57 to 65 years, 15.4% were aged between 48 to 56 years, 7.7% were aged above 65 years old and 1.5% of the respondents were aged below 30 years. From these findings we get to see that most of the respondents were in their prime working years which are between the ages of 38 to 47 years. That is the age when most people have already finished pursuing their PhDs and have started rising in the ranks of academia.

Table 4. 2 Respondents Age

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30 years	2	1.5
30 to 38 years	30	23.0
38 to 47 years	46	35.4
48 to 56 years	20	15.4
57 to 65 years	22	16.9
Above 65 years	10	7.7
Total	130	100

Source: Research Data (2018)

4.2.3 Teaching Level

Table 4.3 below shows where the respondents lie in regards to the teaching levels attained. According to the findings, 39.7% of the respondents were lecturers, tutorial

fellows also referred to as teaching assistants were 27%, 20.6% of the respondents were professors and finally the senior lecturers were 12.7%. 4 people did not input their teaching levels in their most of the employees at JKUAT are lecturers and there is room for promotions and career development.

Table 4. 3 Teaching Level

Teaching Level	Frequency	Percentage
Professor	26	20.6
Senior lecturer	16	12.7
Lecturer	50	39.7
Tutorial fellow/ Assistant Lecturer	34	27.0
Total	126	100

Source: Research Data (2018)

4.2.4 Working experience

Table 4.4 below indicates exactly how long individuals have worked in the university. 33% of the respondents have worked in the university for more than 20 years, 23.3 % have worked in the university between 5 to 10 years, 21.9% have worked in the university between 10 to 15 years, 14% of the respondents have worked in the university for 15 to 20 years and 7.8% have worked in the university between 1-5 years. From these finding it can be found that the members of academic staff who responded have been in the organization long enough to be able to give credible responses regarding employee empowerment and commitment.

Table 4. 4 Working Experience

Years	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 years	10	7.8
5-10 years	30	23.3
10-15 years	28	21.9
15-20 years	18	14.0
More than 20 years	42	33.0
Total	128	100

Source: Research Data (2018)

4.3 Employee Empowerment

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment among academic staff in JKUAT. The statements in the questionnaire had to do with employee empowerment within the university. The respondents were asked to rate various aspects of employee empowerment on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The findings are presented using a mean scale of 1-5. A mean of greater than 1 and less than 1.5 implied very little or no employee empowerment, mean greater than 1.5 and less than 2.5 implies disagree, a mean greater than 2.5 and less than 3.5 implies neutral, a mean greater than 3.5 and less than 4.5 implied agree and a mean greater than 4.5 implies strongly agree. Standard deviation is used to give a description of the distribution of the mean.

4.3.1 Perceived Support

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they felt that the university offers them adequate support when carrying out their work duties. This was done to establish the role of support in increasing employee empowerment.

Table 4. 5 Perceived Support

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
My achievements and successes are recognized by the university	3.35	1.06
My coworkers value my contribution and care about my well being	3.71	0.79
My supervisor is willing to re arrange my work days so as to increase my effectiveness on and off the job	3.48	1.04
Average on perceived support	3.69	0.96

Source: Research Data (2018)

The respondents as shown in table 4.6 above agreed that their co workers value their contribution and care about their well being as shown by a mean of 3.71. The average on perceived support was 3.69 with a standard deviation of 0.96. This indicated that the respondents agreed that indeed perceived support enhances employee commitment to the organization within the university and there was a consensus among the respondents as show by the standard deviation. The respondents were neutral that their supervisors were willing to re arrange their working days so as to increase their effectiveness on and off the job as shown by a mean of 3.48. The respondents were neutral on the fact that their achievements and successes are recognized by the university as shown by a mean of 3.35.

The respondents of this study therefore agreed that the university offers support to its academic staff as a way of empowering them. The above analysis implies that the academic staff at JKUAT value the work of their peers. However the recognition by the university and the job flexibility were somewhat not adequate.

4.3.2 Access to Information

Table 4. 6 Access to Information

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am always informed of what is going on in the university	3.31	1.14
I know what I should do, how I should do it and why I should do it in line with the university's goals	4.07	1.07
The information I receive is relevant and timely	3.49	0.99
Average on access to information	3.62	1.07

Source: Research Data (2018)

According to table 4.6, the respondents agreed that they know what they should do, how they should do it and why they should do it in line with the university's goals as shown by a mean of 4.07. They agreed that they receive relevant and timely information from the university as shown by a mean of 3.49. Finally, they were neutral on the fact that they are always informed of what is going on in the university as shown by a mean of 3.31. The grand mean was 3.62 with a standard deviation of 1.07. This shows that the respondents agreed that indeed access to information within the university led to an increase in employee commitment. However, some employees do not feel like the university informs them adequately of what goes on within the organization. Also some employees also feel like the information they receive is not always relevant nor is it timely. From this we can deduce that the university provides relevant and timely

information to its employees and it also informs the employees of the organizational objectives and goals. Thus the employees have role clarity.

4.3.3 Access to Resources

The study sought to establish some aspects of access to resources that influences employee commitment. The outcome is as depicted in table 4.7 below.

Table 4. 7 Access to Resources

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
I normally get sufficient resources to do my job	2.44	1.02
I am given ample time by the organization to accomplish my tasks	3.28	1.13
I have influence to bring in the materials I need to carry out my job	2.91	1.09
Average on access to resources	2.88	1.08

Source: Research Data (2018)

According to table 4.7 the respondents were neutral that they are given ample time by the organization to accomplish their tasks as shown by a mean of 3.28 and they were also neutral that they have influence to bring in the materials they need to carry out their job as shown by the mean of 2.91. The respondents disagree with the statement that they get sufficient resources to do their job as shown by a mean of 2.44. 2.88 was the average mean with a standard deviation of 1.08. This implied that the respondents were neutral with regards to whether or not they have access to resources. It also insinuates that the academic staff at JKUAT are also not satisfied with the time given by the university to complete their tasks. Also the university does not adequately allow the staff to acquire the

materials they need to carry out their jobs. The JKUAT academic staff thus feel that they do not have enough access to the resources that they need to carry out their jobs properly.

4.3.4 Access to Opportunity

The study sought to establish some aspects of access to opportunity that enhanced employee commitment.

Table 4.8: Access to Opportunity

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
My position allows for career growth and development	3.94	1.03
I have a chance to grow and be promoted within the university	3.82	0.92
My job offers me opportunities to participate in interesting projects and opportunities for increased responsibilities	3.89	1.03
Average on access to opportunity	3.88	0.99

Source: Research Data (2018)

According to table 4.8, the respondents agreed that their positions allowed for career growth and development as exhibited by an average of 3.94. The respondents also agreed that their jobs offer them opportunities to participate in interesting projects and opportunities for increased responsibilities as exhibited by an average of 3.89. The respondents also agreed that they have a chance to grow and to be promoted within the university as shown by a mean of 3.82. The grand mean was 3.88 with a standard deviation of 0.99. This implies that JKUAT provides access to various opportunities within the organization to enhance their careers. This also shows that JKUAT is doing a good job in ensuring that its employees rise up the ranks of academia.

4.4 Organizational Commitment

4.4.1 Affective Commitment

The researcher sought to demonstrate the extent of affective commitment exhibited by the respondents.

Table 4.9 Affective Commitment

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this university	3.57	1.10
I plan to work at my present job for as long as possible	3.68	1.02
This university has a great deal of personal meaning for me	3.71	1.11
I feel as if the university's problems are my own	3.14	1.22
I feel emotionally attached to this university	3.42	1.26
Average on affective commitment	3.50	1.14

Source: Research Data (2018)

According to table 4.9 above, the respondents agreed that the university meant a lot to them on a personal level as shown by the mean of 3.71. The respondents also agreed that they planned to work at their present jobs for as long as possible as shown by the mean of 3.68. They agreed that they would more than happy to stay within JKUAT for the remaining part of their careers as shown by the mean of 3.57. The respondents agreed that they felt emotionally attached to the university as shown by a mean of 3.42. The respondents were neutral on the fact that they feel that the university's problems are their own as shown by a mean of 3.14. The average mean was 3.50 and an average standard deviation of 1.14. This is to say that most of the academic staff at JKUAT have an affection for their work and are affectively committed to their jobs within the university.

The respondents would be satisfied to spend the rest of their careers at JKUAT meaning the university holds great meaning and significance for the respondents. However some do not own the institution's issues as if they were theirs neither do they feel emotionally attached to the university.

4.4.2 Continuance commitment

The results of the findings on continuance commitment were analysed through means scores and presented in table 4.10 below.

Table 4. 10 Continuance Commitment

Statements	Mean	Std. Deviation
It would be very hard for me to leave this university right now even if I wanted to	2.92	1.15
I feel I feel like I don't have enough options to consider leaving this university	2.27	0.99
Had I not put so much of myself into this university, I would have considered working elsewhere.	2.68	1.00
Average on continuance commitment	2.62	1.05

Source: Research Data (2018)

According to table 4.10, the respondents were neutral that it would be very hard for them to leave the university as shown by a mean of 2.92. The respondents were neutral that if they had not put so much of themselves into the university, they would have considered working elsewhere as shown by a mean of 2.68. The respondents disagreed that they felt that they did not have enough options to consider leaving the university as shown by a

mean of 2.27. The average mean of continuance commitment was 2.62 with a standard deviation of 1.05. This implies that the respondents were neutral on whether they exhibited continuance commitment. This commitment is not desirable especially from the organization's perspective because employees stay committed to an organization due to a lack of alternative and how much they feel they have invested into the organization. This kind of commitment does not lead to increased productivity within the university.

4.4.3 Normative Commitment

The results of the findings on the extent of normative commitment were summarized in table 4.11 below.

Table 4. 11 Normative commitment

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I would not leave this university right now because I have an obligation to the people in it	3.00	1.11
This university deserves my loyalty	3.43	1.15
I feel an obligation to remain with my current employer	3.03	1.13
Average on normative commitment	3.15	1.13

Source: Research Data (2018)

According to table 4.11, the respondents were agreed that the university deserves their loyalty as shown by a mean of 3.43. The respondents were neutral that they felt an obligation to remain with their current employer as show by a mean of 3.03 and neutral on the statement that they would not leave the university at that time because they have an obligation to the people in it as shown by a mean of 3.00. The average mean was 3.15 and the average standard deviation was 1.13. This indicates neutrality of the respondents

when it comes to normative commitment. This is a good sign because normative commitment only occurs out of obligation to stay with an organization and not out of genuine love for ones job. The statistics of continuance commitment and normative commitment are both similar meaning that the respondents more or less exhibit the same levels of these two dimensions of commitment.

4.5 Regression Analysis

A regression analysis on employee commitment (dependent variable) versus employee empowerment (independent variable) was performed. The output of the regression equation that had been provided is as follows:

Table 4. 12: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.913[a]	.833	.828	.27654

a. Predictors: (Constant), access to opportunity, access to information, access to resources, perceived support

Source: Research Data (2018)

From the table above, there was an averagely strong relationship between the two variables as shown by .913 which is the correlation coefficient. R squared is the coefficient of determination which tells us the variation in the dependent variable due to changes in the independent variable. Form the findings in table 4.12, the value of the R

37

squared was .828, an indication that there was variation of 82.8% in employee commitment due to perceived support, access to information, access to resources and access to opportunities.

Table 4. 13 Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	47.643	4	11.911	155.750	.000[b]
1	Residual	9.559	125	.076		
	Total	57.202	129			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

b. Predictors: (Constant), Access to Opportunity, Access to Information, Access to Resources, Perceived Support

Source: Research Data (2018)

From the ANOVA statistics, the processed data which is the population parameters had a significance level of 0.00 which shows that the data is ideal for making conclusions on the population's parameter as the value of significance (P- value) is less than 0.5.

Table 4. 14: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.696	.122		5.725	.000
	Perceived Support	.205	.029	.327	7.021	.000
	Access to Information	.155	.026	.246	6.013	.000
	Access to Resources	.209	.027	.352	7.885	.000
	Access to Opportunity	.203	.033	.279	6.116	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

Source: Research Data (2018)

From the data in the above table, the established regression was

$Y = 0.696 + 0.205X_1 + 0.155X_2 + 0.209X_3 + 0.203X_4$

From the above regression equation, it was revealed that holding perceived support, access to information, access to resources and access to opportunity to a constant of zero, commitment would be 0.696. This means a unit in increase in perceived support would lead to an increase in commitment by a factor of 0.205, a unit increase in access to information would lead to an increase in commitment by a factor of 0.155, a unit increase in access to resources would lead to an increase in commitment by a factor of 0.209 and a unit increase in access to opportunity would lead to an increase in commitment by a

factor of 0.203. All variables were significant as their significant value was less than ($p<$ 0.5). From the study findings, empowering employees by providing access to resources contributed the most to employee commitment. However, there wasn't much of a significant difference between the four variables.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

When it comes to the various aspects of empowerment, the employees agreed that there is indeed perceived support in the university and that the university supports their work endeavors to make the teaching process as easy as possible for the teaching staff. This perceived support has proved to be a contributing factor to employee commitment. This finding concurs with Burke et al. (1997) who found that indeed employees who feel supported by their supervisors, their peers and their subordinates become more committed to the organization. When it comes to the second variable which is access to information, the employees agree that the university provides them with adequate access to the relevant information that they need to carry out their tasks, information on what is going on in the university and information that is relevant and timely which empowers the employee. This is in line with Xiaohui (2007) who said that having access to information provides employees with a sense of power. The employees were neutral on the fact that they have adequate resources to carry out their jobs efficiently. This shows that they are not content with the amount of resources that they receive and they would like to receive more resources from the organization. The employees therefore need more financial resources and also more time to accomplish their tasks. Kanter (1993) concurs with this and he says that a lack of access to resources leads to reduced employee commitment. The employees agreed that they have access to opportunities for career

growth and development and to climb the organizational ladder. They concur that they indeed participate in interesting projects and have increased responsibilities within their job descriptions.

Moreover, the respondents largely indicated that they were affectively committed to the university meaning that their loyalty to the university is rooted on factors beyond monetary compensation and the university means a great deal to them. These findings are in line with the suggestions of Meyer and Allen (1991) who claim that if an employee is affectively committed to his organization the employee feels a great emotional attachment to the job that is independent of the income he receives. This shows that the members of the teaching staff exhibit high levels of commitment which eventually translate to performance and also the rate of employee turnover. This proves that indeed employee empowerment within any given organization will lead to increased employee commitment. This goes hand in hand with the findings of Hanasha (2016) who found that employee empowerment indeed had a significant positive impact on organizational commitment.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the summary of findings and conclusions of the study. The chapter also presents recommendations and suggestions for further research in future.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The objective of the study was to determine the influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment among academic staff in JKUAT. Questionnaires were used to collect information in the university whose population of academic staff is 162. From this population, 130 respondents filled and returned the questionnaires. Of the 130 employees who responded, 108 of these were male employees and only 22 of these were female employees.

Employee empowerment was broken down into four dimensions namely perceived support, access to information, access to resources and access to opportunity. When it comes to perceived support the study found that the employees agreed that they received support from the university that is support from both their fellow colleagues and their supervisors. The study revealed that indeed the academic staff at JKUAT value the work of their peers. However, the university does not adequately recognize the achievements and successes of its staff and the job flexibility is somewhat inadequate.

The study also revealed that the employees are not satisfied with the time they are given by their organization to accomplish various tasks. The university also does not adequately allow the staff to acquire the materials they need. The study also revealed that the employees have adequate opportunities for career growth and development. The employees feel that they have been provided with adequate promotion opportunities and that their jobs do offer them opportunities to participate in interesting projects in the work place.

Employee commitment was also broken down into three different dimensions that is affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. It was revealed the academic staff in JKUAT have an innate affection for their jobs within the organization that has nothing to do with the amount of money that they earn. They genuinely feel that the university means a great deal to them. However, some do not assume personal ownership of the university and its problems neither do they feel a sense of emotional attachment to the organization. Moreover, the employees within the university feel that if they wanted to leave their organization they would freely do so without hesitation. The study showed that when it comes to normative commitment the employees are neutral. This implies that the respondents do not stay with the university out of obligation or loyalty to the organization. All in all it is clear that the employees in the university work there for the right reasons and they have the right incentives to stay.

Regression analysis was executed on the data and it basically concluded that holding perceived support, access to information, access to resources and access to opportunity to a constant of zero, commitment would be 0.696. It also revealed that providing access to resources to the employees contributed the most to employee commitment even though

the difference between the four variables wasn't that significant. All the variables emerged significant as they were all less than 0.5. Indeed there is a positive relationship between employee empowerment and commitment.

5.3 Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, empowering employees through offering support, giving them access to information, giving them access to resources and giving them access to opportunity helps to improve employee commitment. The relationship between perceived support and employee commitment was found to be positive meaning employees are committed to the organizations when they perceive to have the support of the organization, their fellow colleagues and the support of their supervisors. There was also a positive relationship between access to opportunity and organizational commitment indicating that employees at JKUAT are committed to the university when they are provided with opportunities for career growth, opportunities for promotion and also opportunities to carry out any occurring projects. Access to information also has a positive relationship with employee commitment leading to the conclusion that these employees within the university are committed to their organizations when they are provided with information on what is going on in the university and they are provided with information on a relevant and timely manner. The study also found that the members of the teaching staff in JKUAT are not provided with enough resources to carry out their work efficiently. They don't feel like they get sufficient resources to carry out their jobs, and also they would like more time to be able to accomplish their tasks.

The study also concludes that the employees in within the university are actually happy with their jobs and would not mind staying within these positions for the remaining part of their careers. These employees have an emotional attachment to the institution and they plan to remain with the university for the as long as possible. Due to the level of empowerment provided at JKUAT, the employees do not exhibit continuance commitment to a large extent. They do not feel obliged to stay with the organization due to a lack of options nor do they feel like they would happily leave the university had they not invested so much of themselves in the university.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that employee achievements and success should be recognized by the university as some of the employees did not feel satisfied by the extent to which this is carried out. The supervisors should also be more flexible and should be willing to re arrange the work days of the employees in order to increase efficiency on and off the job. When it comes to access to information, the study found that the employees do not feel that they receive information that is not only adequate and precise but prompt. Therefore the university should create better communication channels with its employees so that the employees are always informed on new developments within the university.

Universities and other organizations should offer employees opportunities for career growth and development and they should also carry out internal recruitment and promote the employee within the organization. The people in charge of running the university should also communicate the objectives of the organization in a timely manner and should offer clarity on each individual's roles and personal objectives. Also the employees are quite dissatisfied by the resources they receive. The university should

therefore increase the resources it provides to its employees to enhance efficiency on the job. The employees should also be given lee way to bring in the materials that they need to carry out their jobs efficiently.

The employees are partially satisfied with their chances for career growth and promotion opportunities. However the university should make the promotion process much easier by completely eliminating the politics involved in the promotion processes. The promotion of members of the teaching staff should be based purely on merit. The university should also offer more numerous opportunities to the employees to participate in interesting projects that are unique and have never been done before and also provide opportunities for increased responsibilities to the employees.

The employees are affectively committed to the university however the university should put more effort to make the employees feel as if the university's problems are theirs. This would be done by promoting ownership of the university by the employees and ensuring that the employees participate in important decision making. The university should also strive to ensure that the employees are attached to the organization on an emotional level. Moreover, the university should strive to reduce the levels of normative commitment exhibited by the employees which is not the ideal type of commitment an organization would desire. Employees should be committed because they want to be loyal to the university without any external motivating factors.

The university should come up with a reward system whereby employees' achievements and successes are rewarded so as to motivate the employees towards higher levels of commitment. The university should also come up with methods and ways to enhance

team work within the university so as to form strong bonds among the employees which will eventually lead to support among them. The supervisors within the university should also allow the members of the teaching staff themselves to make their own decisions regarding pertinent issues and should give them autonomy to make these decisions on their own, and hence face the consequences of their actions. Autonomy will then lead to the employees being more confident in their decisions.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

This research had a couple of impediments despite the successful achievement of its objective. One of these impediments was that the study outcomes are not be applicable globally and this study may only be limited to public universities in Kenya.

Another limitation came during collecting of data. The respondents who are teaching staff have varied schedules and it was difficult to find some of them to fill in the questionnaire. This resulted in the data collection process taking longer than it should have ideally and also resulted in some of the questionnaires not being filled. The researcher however made several visits to the university until many of the questionnaires were filled.

Also, the respondents did not want to give information about the university and its intricacies as they considered this kind of information to be private and confidential. However the researcher assured them of the utmost discretion while handling the information in the questionnaire. This information would only be used for the purposes of this study.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

This study is limited in that it only focused on JKUAT as it is the only public university in Kiambu County. Further research should be carried out and should examine the influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment in other universities and parastatals in general.

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APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Ruth Wangui Njoroge

University of Nairobi

P.O. Box 1775-00232

Ruiru, Kenya.

Dear interviewee,

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on the influence of employee empowerment on employee commitment among the academic staff at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). If there are any issues that require clarification, kindly get in touch with the researcher, Ms. Ruth Wangui, through the contacts given below

1. Email: ruthyqui7@gmail.com

Or

2. Cell phone: 0705878589

The study is being carried out as a requirement in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Science (Msc.) in Human Resource Management at the school of business, University of Nairobi. Your answers will be treated with all the confidentiality deserved and will not be divulged to any other user.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated

Yours Sincerely,

RUTH WANGUI NJOROGE

MSC STUDENT

Please fill in the following questionnaire by answering all the questions given as instructed. All information will be treated in high confidence and shall be used for research purposes only. Please do not indicate your name anywhere in the questionnaire.

Section A: Respondents profile

Personal data (tick appropriately)

1. What is your gender?
   a. Male   [ ]
   b. Female   [ ]

2. What age bracket are you within?
   a. Below 30 years   [ ]   b. 30 to 38 years [ ]   c. 39 to 47 years [ ]
   d. 48 to 56 years [ ] e. 57 to 65 years [ ]f. Above 65 years [ ]

3. What academic teaching level do you belong to?
   a. Professor   [ ]   b. Senior lecturer [ ]   c. Lecturer [ ]
   d. Assistant lecturer [ ]   e. Graduate assistant [ ]

4. What faculty do you work for?

5. How many years have you worked for the university?
   a. 1-5 years [   ]   b. 5-10 years [   ]   c. 10-15 years [   ]

   d. 15-20 years [   ]   e. More than 20 years [   ]

SECTION B. EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT

State the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements in the table.

Use the key provided below.

1. **Strongly disagree**
2. **Disagree**
3. **Neutral**
4. **Agree**
5. **Strongly agree**

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
	Perceived support					
1	My achievements and successes are recognized by the university					
2	My coworkers value my contribution and care about my well being					
3	My supervisor is willing to re arrange my work days so as to increase my effectiveness on and off the job					
	Access to information					
4	I am always informed of what is going on in the university					
5	I know what I should do, how I should do it and why I should do it in line with the university's goals					
6	The information I receive is relevant and timely					
	Access to resources					
7	I normally get sufficient resources to do my job					
8	I am given ample time by the organization to accomplish my tasks					
9	I have influence to bring in the materials I need to carry out my job					
	Access to opportunity					
10	My position allows for career growth and development					
11	I have a chance to grow and be promoted within the university					
12	My job offers me opportunities to participate in interesting projects and opportunities for increased responsibilities					

SECTION C. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
	Affective commitment					
1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this university					
2	I plan to work at my present job for as long as possible					
3	This university has a great deal of personal meaning for me					

4	I feel as if the university's problems are my own					
5	I feel emotionally attached to this university					
Continuance commitment						
6	It would be very hard for me to leave this university right now even if I wanted to					
7	I feel I feel like I don't have enough options to consider leaving this university					
8	Had I not put so much of myself into this university, I would have considered working elsewhere.					
Normative commitment						
9	I would not leave this university right now because I have an obligation to the people in it					
10	This university deserves my loyalty					
11	I feel an obligation to remain with my current employer					

THE END