

Influence of Individual and Organizational Factors on Performance of Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Our study examines the influence of individual and organizational factors on performance of the academic staff in the public Technical Higher Education Institutions in Tanzania. Data were collected using questionnaire from 277 academic staff sampled using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The collected data were analyzed using Multiple Linear Regressions. Results indicate that: age, working experience, education level and designation had statistically significant and negative influence on performance. Administrative position had an insignificant influence on performance. Training and development, working environment, incentive and reward had statistically significant and positive influence on performance. The findings advocate that; individual and organizational factors significantly influence performance of academic staff when the mentioned factors are not interfered with administrative and management position.

Keywords: *Performance, Individual Factors, Organizational Factors, Academic Staff*

Numerous factors affect the performance of employees at work place in organizations (Saeed et al., 2013). Employees' performance is therefore a multidimensional construct and varies depending on a variety of factors (Armstrong, 2009). In other words, employees of the organizations do not perform in a vacuum but they are influenced by different factors including individual and organizational factors (Truong, 2012; Musiige & Maassen, 2015). The factors may influence each employee to have a different impact on performance at the workplace of any organization. Additionally, employees shape their respective organizations from the influence of both individual and organizational factors (Khan et al., 2013).

Academic staff are ones of those employees who shape their organizations particularly, higher education institutions. An effective work performance by the academic staff in such

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institutions leads to the realization of the broad core activities for which the institutions are established for (Abdulsalam & Mawoli, 2012; Igbojekwe, Ugo-Okoro & Agbonye, 2015). The core activities for evaluating academic staff of higher education institutions are teaching, research and consultancy (Igbojekwe, Ugo-Okoro & Agbonye, 2015).

The success of the institutions therefore depends upon solid functioning, faithfulness and the involvement of academic staff in a high level of teaching, research and consultancy (Hakan et al, 2011). In the meanwhile, the success of the academic staff is interrelated with individual and organizational factors; which have the most important place along with the work performance in the institutions (Khan, et al., 2013).

The individual factors are the characteristics of a population which are articulated statistically (Nayga, 1994; Cara, 2007). They include work experience, designation/job rank, age, sex, education level, income level, marital status, occupation, job administrative position, religion, and average size of the family, average age at marriage, death rate, and birth rate (Sadiq and Ishaq, 2014). On the other hand, organizational factors are tangible or intangible things, or a series of programmes and goals that focuses on the motivation, boosting and improvement of employees' capabilities, skills and talents of performing their routine activities within the organizations (McKinney, 2003). The individual and organizational factors make employees to practise successfully on their routine activities and functions. In other words, the employees become more productive, industrious and work in line with the organization's mission when the factors are managed carefully and properly guided within the organizations (McKinney, 2003).

Previous studies (Iqbal, 2010; Khan et al., 2013; Met and Ali, 2014; Thakur, 2015; Ugwu, 2017) examined the influence of individual factors on the work performance of employees in various organizations. The found influence was different with regard to the respective study as some found positive, some negative or some noted no any influence of individual factors on employees' performance. For example, Iqbal (2010) revealed that tenure, job category and position were positively associated with performance in public agriculture agencies in Malaysia. In contrast, education level negatively related to work performance. Furthermore, there was no any significant correlation that was found between age and performance.

Additionally, the organizational factors such as training and development, incentives and working environment were previously found to influence the employees' performance (Palmer, 2012; Tahir et al., 2014). For instance, Khan et al., (2011) found positive and significant influence of training and development on employees' performance. Likewise, Chandrasekar, (2011) and Ranasinghe (2012) revealed that, working environment influenced employees' performance positively. Similarly, Baba Gana and Bababe (2011) and Palmer (2012) divulged that, incentives and rewards influenced positively and significantly employees' performance.

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Although the above presented individual and organizational factors are proved to influence the employees' performance; a big number of such studies had inconsistent results especially the influence of individual factors on employees' performance. Similarly, most of the previous studies were mostly done in purely business sectors and not in the education sector. It is evident that:- the performance indicators in the business sector may not necessarily be applicable to the education sector (Owolabi & Makinde, 2012).

Besides, the previous studies examined the influence of individual and organizational factors separately on employees' performance. It must be remembered that, the employees' performance is influenced by a combination of factors and not few or separate factors. The paper mainly aimed at examining the influence of individual and organizational factors on the performance of the academic staff in the selected public Technical Higher Education Institutions in Tanzania. This objective came forth to study the relationship of such factors as whole to the performance. The study is different from the previous studies which studied the same factors separately in relation to performance. Examining them simultaneously in relation to performance make the study more comprehensive and broad different from the preceding studies.

METHODS

Area of the Study

The data were collected from Mbeya University of Science and Technology, Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) and Arusha Technical College (ATC), all in Tanzania. These Technical Higher Education Institutions were chosen because of their similar operating characteristics and the same history; they were all formally the technical colleges and went the same transformation process to higher education institutions. They also offer similar courses like engineering, science and technology. Just like other institutions of higher learning, these institutions have academic staff who perform teaching and other core activities like research and consultancy.

Data Collection

Stratified and simple random sampling technique were used to sample 283 academic staff obtained from the population of 536 (**Table 1**) using a formula by Kothari (2004). The questionnaires designed in English were distributed to 283 academic staff of which 277 questionnaires were received and found complete and useful for the data analysis. The response rate was 98%.

Table 1: Proposed and Field Obtained Sample Size

BM	Population	Proposed Sample Size	Surveyed Sample Size	Percentage
MUST	216	$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \cdot 0.05 \cdot 0.05 \cdot 536}{(0.04)^2 \cdot (536-1) + (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.05 \cdot 0.05}$	109	39.4
DIT	200		101	36.5
DIT	120		67	24.2
Total	536	283	277	100.0

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Data Analysis

The collected data were mainly analyzed using Multiple Linear Regression. It was used to test the relationship between individual factors, organizational factors and work performance of the academic staff in the Technical Higher Education Institutions. This was the best technique for analysis because of having more than one predictors and one continuous dependent variable. The predictors include individual factors and organizational factors while performance includes teaching/training.

$$Y = \alpha + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5 + b_6x_6 + b_7x_7 + b_8x_8 + \epsilon$$

Where: Y-Criterion (i.e. performance in terms of teaching)

α : constant (intercept)

b_{1-8} : Regression Coefficients

x_{1-8} : Predictors (age, working experience, administrative position, education level, designation, Training and development, incentive and reward, working environment)

Measurement of the Variables

Age and working experience were continuous variables measured in a number of years. Education level, designation and administrative position were categorical variables. Education level has four ordinal ranking levels 1. Diploma 2. Bachelor Degree 3. Masters' Degree 4. PhD; designation had five ordinal ranks: 1. Technician 2. Tutorial Assistant 3. Assistant Lecturer 4. Lecturer 5. Senior Lecturer. The administrative position had four ordinal ranking positions: 1.No Administrative Position 2. Coordinator 3. Head of Department 4. Principal.

Training and Development was a non-metric variable measured using five items. Similar measurements were used previously by other studies (Niazi, 2011; Khan, 2011; Raza, 2014). The five items are career development activities, programme, workshops and seminars, budget, and reviewing committee. The 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) was used to measure the statement items of training and development in the surveyed institutions.

Incentive and reward was a non-metric variable measured using nine items. Similar measurements were used previously by other studies (Alfandi & Alkawsaneh, 2014; Condy, Clark & Stolovitch, 2003). The nine items are retirement system, promotion, bonuses and extra advantages, salary systems, reward regulations, appreciation medals, appreciation certificates. The 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) was used to measure the statement items of incentives and rewards in the surveyed institutions.

The working environment was a non-metric variable measured using six items. Similar measurements were used previously by other studies (Oswald 2012; Singhe & Marpady,

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2005; Erasmus et al., 2004). The six items are availability and quality of office-room with lay-out of privacy, clean and decorative, enough lighting, noise absence, moderate temperature and ventilation, internet connection and working tools. The 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) was used to measure the statement items of the working environment in the surveyed institutions.

Teaching, research and consultancy are three core performance functions of academic staff in higher education institutions. Our study considered only teaching performance. Teaching was a variable with 5-points ranging from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 5 (Completely Agree). It was measured in statements with practices such as implementation of syllabus/course outline according to schedule and plan; availability and accessibility for discussion/consultations with students. The other practices were meeting deadline for marking exams; recommending and giving reading materials to students, class punctuality and class delivery; timely feedback giving for whatever assignments, guidance and counseling to students with one's course challenge. Others include presenting content of subject matter, providing clear and scientific information, student-student and student-lecturer interaction, students' participation, individual and team work, student interest and the motivation, incorporating and employing ICTs relating teaching to the professional environment, fostering research and a critical spirit in students. The above items were adapted from previous studies (Ishak, Suhaida & Yuzainee, 2009; Murcia, Torregrosa & Pedreño, 2015; Goos and Salomons, 2014).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Results

As already noted, academic staff in higher learning institutions could be assigned other administrative responsibilities apart from their core activities, teaching being one of them. That assignment is noted as the administrative position of individual academic staff. The results show that, 33.9% had no any administrative position; 27.1% were coordinators of a particular unit or section; 22.4% were heads of departments and 16.6% were directors/principals/deans in the surveyed institutions (**Table 2**). The majority of the academic staff were the academic staff with no any administrative position.

Education level is considered in recruiting academic staff. The lowest education level considered is an ordinary diploma in either science or engineering while doctorate of philosophy is considered as the highest education level. The results in **Table 2** established that, 32.5% of the academic staff had masters' degree, 28.5% had a bachelor degree, 24.5% had a PhD, and 14.5% had a diploma. The majority of the academic staff had masters' degree in the surveyed institutions.

Performance depends on the designation of a particular individual academic staff in the surveyed institutions. The designation results of the surveyed academic staff indicate that, assistant lecturers were 23.5%, tutorial assistant/instructors were 28.5%, lecturers were 18.1%, senior lecturers were 15.5% and technicians/technologists were 14.4%. The majority of the academic staff were assistant lecturers (**Table 2**).

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Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Individual Factors	Scale	Frequency	%
Administrative Position	1. No Admin. Position	94	33.9
	2. Coordinator	75	27.1
	3. Head of Department	62	22.4
	4. Dean/Principal/Director	46	16.6
	Total	277	100.0
Education Level	1. Diploma	40	14.5
	2. Bachelor Degree	79	28.5
	3. Masters' Degree	90	32.5
	4. PhD	68	24.5
	Total	277	100.0
Designation	1. Technician	40	14.4
	2. Tutorial Assistant	79	28.5
	3. Assistant Lecturer	65	23.5
	4. Lecturer	50	18.1
	5. Senior Lecturer	43	15.5
	Total	277	100.0

Concerning the variable age, the range of ages is from 30 to 60 years, with a mean of 45.98 and standard deviation of 7.257. The majority of the surveyed academic staff are aged between 39 and 53 years (**Table 3**). Concerning the variable working experience, the range of experiences is from 5 to 27 years, with a mean of 12.01 and standard deviation of 7.083. The majority of the surveyed academic staff had the working experience between 5 and 19 years (**Table 3**).

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
AGE	277	30	60	45.98	7.257	-.031	.146	-.515	.292
EXP	277	5	27	12.01	7.083	.995	.146	-.335	.292
Valid N (listwise)	277								

Inferential Statistics

A Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) was performed to predict work performance based on individual and organizational factors. In applying MLR in this study, some groundwork analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of regression. The assumptions checked included sample size, independence of residuals/relations, outliers, multicollinearity, normality, linearity and Homoscedasticity. Factor Analysis was likewise run to reduce the number of variable items (with the purpose of making new composite variables/summated scale) of the study. Factor analysis was conducted on the items of training and development, incentive and reward, working environment and teaching

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performance. The Correlation and Reliability of the items were tested when running Factor Analysis.

Adjusted R Square was used in assessing how much of the variance in the dependent variable (teaching performance) was explained by the model with the independent variables (individual and organizational factors). The value obtained was .400 which means the model explained 40% of the variance in the performance of teaching (*see Table 4*).

In testing how well the regression model fitted the data, it was found that the computed F statistics was 31.632 with an observed significance level of 0.000. The models reached the statistical significance which was $p < 0.01$ (*see Table 4*).

It was expected that, the individual and organizational factors had positive relationship with teaching performance of the surveyed academic staff. However, the regression analysis portrays the results obtained whose summary are in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Results

	B	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.081	.805	.422
Age	-.136	-2.013	.045
Working experience	-.050	-2.410	.017
Administrative Position	.024	1.504	.134
Education Level	-.053	-2.632	.009
Designation	-.046	-2.534	.012
Training and Development	.560	12.897	< .001
Incentive and Reward	.079	2.319	.021
Working environment	.076	2.212	.028
Multiple R	.642 ^a		
R Square	.413		
Adjusted R	.400		
ANOVA (F, SIG.)	31.632 (< .001)		

The results indicate that, age had a statistically significant and negative relationship with teaching performance (Beta=-.136, $t=-2.013$, $p < 0.05$). These results imply that, the more the academic staff become aged, the less they perform in teaching. The results are supportive to what was found previously by Shaffril and Uli (2010); Amangala (2013); Khan, Khan, Nawaz and Yar (2013); and Met and Ali (2014) in other sectors like business.

Furthermore, working experience had a statistically significant and negative relationship with the work performance of the academic staff regarding teaching (Beta=-.050, $t=-2.410$, $p < 0.05$). These results may suggest that, the more the academic staff become more experienced, the less they perform in teaching. The results contradict findings by Kotur and Anbazhagan, (2010) who found the statistically significant and positive influence of working experience on work performance.

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Moreover, the administrative position had an insignificant relationship with the work performance of the academic staff in teaching (Beta=.024, $t=1.504$, $p>0.05$). These results entail that, the more the academic staff are assigned administrative positions, the poorer they perform in teaching. These results are opposing to what Shaffril and Uli (2010); Panchanatham (2012) and Amangala (2013) found. They previously found statistically significant and positive influence of administrative position on work performance.

Likewise, education level had a statistically significant and negative relationship with the work performance of the academic staff regarding of teaching (Beta=-.053, $t=-2.632$, $p<0.05$). These results may suggest that, the more the academic staff become more educated, the less they perform in teaching. The results contradict the findings by Shaffril and Uli (2010); Iqbal (2010); Khan et al. (2013); and Amangala (2013) who found that, education level has significant and positive relationship with employees' performance.

Besides, designation of the academic staff had a statistically significant and negative influence on teaching performance. These results may notify that, the more the academic staff acquire higher job ranks, the poorer they perform in teaching. This particular finding contradicts on what was found by Cong and Van (2013). They proved that, designation had statistically significant and positive effect to employees' performance.

The results also show that, training and development had significant and positive influence on teaching performance (Beta=0.560, $t=12.897$, $p<0.001$). This means that, the more the academic staff are trained and developed, the more they perform in teaching. These results are consistent with what was found previously in other sectors apart from education. For example, Khan, et al. (2011); Kepha, Assumptah and Dismas (2012); Ameer and Hanif (2013); Tahir, Yousafzai, Jan and Hashim (2014) found statistically significant and positive influence of training and development on the employees' performance in various business organizations.

It was further noted that, the incentives and rewards had significant and positive relationship with teaching performance (Beta=0.048, $t=2.319$, $p<0.001$). The more the academic staff are given incentives and rewards, the more they perform in teaching. The findings are consistent with what was found previously by Mansor, Borhannuddin and Yusuf (2012); Abdullah and Wan (2013); Alfandi and Alkawsaneh (2014). They revealed that, incentives and rewards had statistically significant and positive influence on employees' performance in sectors like travel and tourism institutions, food sector and oil companies and chemical-based industries. They further insisted that, incentives and rewards became the external persuading factor and encouraging motivation for employees' performance.

It was eventually noted that, the working environment had significant and positive effect with teaching performance (Beta=0.76, $t=2.212$, $p<0.05$). The more the academic staff are subjected to quality working environment, the more they perform in teaching. These results

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are in line with what was previously found by Imran, Fatima, Zaheer, Yousaf and Batool (2012); Ollukkaran and Gunaseelan (2012); Naharuddin and Sadegi (2013); Mazin, (2014). They revealed that, working environment significantly and positively influenced employees' performance. This means that, the quality working environment influenced positively employees to finish their tasks on time, spent time performing important tasks, feel valued, perform up to their full potentials, improve the levels of motivation and increase the profits. The above regression results as well show the direction of the coefficients. That direction sheds light on the nature of the relationships. The direction of the coefficients shows that: age, working experience, education level and designation had negative a relationship with teaching performance. A follow-up of the in-depth interview was done in the surveyed institutions exploring the reasons for the negative direction of the aforementioned predictors. The interview results depicted that, most of the academic staff with more age, higher levels of education, working-experience and designation were always assigned and occupied with administrative and management tasks leaving behind teaching. As a result, they perform poorly in teaching. The obtained insignificant level of administrative position on teaching performance proves the given extra answer during the follow-up interview.

CONCLUSIONS

The individual and organizational factors influence teaching performance of academic staff in the Technical Higher Education Institutions in Tanzania. The individual factors negatively influenced teaching performance of the academic staff due to interference of administrative and management activities. The individual factors could be more positively influential to teaching performance when they are not interfered by the administrative and management position. This study suggests for the balance between administrative and the teaching activities.

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Appendix I: Correlations

Correlations Table: Individual Factors, Organizational Factors and Teaching Performance									
	Age	Experience	Position	Education	Designation	Training	Incentives	W. E	T.Perform.
Age	1								
Experience	.658**	1							
Position	.186**	.247**	1						
Education	.420**	.241**	.229**	1					
Designation	.386**	.321**	.145*	.620**	1				
Training	.395**	.331**	.177**	.515**	.422**	1			
Incentives	.494**	.524**	.195**	.309**	.351**	.407**	1		
W. E	.503**	.306**	.242**	.442**	.313**	.354**	.341*	1	
T.Perform.	.694**	.600**	.220**	.528**	.539**	.684**	.621**	.478**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).									
T. Perform= Teaching Performance, W. E= Working Environment									

Appendix II: Means and Standard Deviations

Descriptive Statistics										
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis		Kurtosis critical ratio
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	
Age	277	30	60	45.98	7.257	-.031	.146	-.515	.292	-1.7637
Experience	277	5.00	27.00	12.0072	7.08284	.995	.146	-.335	.292	-1.14726
Education	277	1	4	2.80	.714	-.285	.146	.018	.292	0.061644

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Descriptive Statistics										
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis		Kurtosis critical ratio
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error	
Designation	277	1	5	2.92	.887	.352	.146	.225	.292	0.770548
Position	277	1	5	2.68	1.731	.413	.146	-1.597	.292	-5.46918
T raining	277	-2.19160	2.57835	.0000000	1.000000	-.083	.146	-.548	.292	-1.877
Incentives	277	-2.22	2.16	.0407	.91227	-.210	.146	-.174	.292	-0.596
W. E	277	-2.54508	2.20119	.000000	1.000000	-.227	.146	-.414	.292	-1.418
T.Perform.	277	-1.51502	1.19083	.0799789	.72749633	-.038	.146	-.428	.292	-1.466
Valid N (listwise)	277									

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Conflict of Interest

The authors colorfully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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