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The Role of Employee Engagement in Revitalizing Creativity and Innovation at the Workplace: A Survey of Selected Libraries in Meru County - Kenya

Paul Maku Gichohi Mr.
Kenya Methodist University, pmakuster@gmail.com

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Paul Maku Gichohi; *Senior Librarian, Kenya Methodist University, Po Box 267-60200, Meru.*

Corresponding author email: pmakuster@gmail.com

Creativity and innovation can neither be imposed nor can it be driven by disengaged employees. This study postulated that the level of employee engagement spurs creativity and innovation in the library. It aimed to establish the empirical evidence on whether employee engagement affects the level of creativity and innovation in libraries. It investigated the effects of employee engagement on creativity and innovation suggests improved model on the same. The study used descriptive cross-sectional survey design to examine three purposively selected libraries. Structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used to collect research data. Descriptive, correlation, regression, t-test and ANOVA were used to analyze the collected data. The response rate was 91% from a sample size of 31 library staffs. Both levels of staff engagement and that of creativity and innovation from the three libraries were found to be relatively high, 81.85% and 78.03% respectively. The mean values of these two variables did not differ significantly and exhibited 83.1% relationship. No significant difference was established between the two constructs but the outcome depended on how key constructs are configured. The study concludes that employee engagement assumes a critical precursor role to creativity and innovation at the workplace. Library leaders act as central catalysts and facilitators during the configuration process. The study recommend need to challenge work processes, environment, systems and patterns of thinking in library set-up, in order to nurture empowering atmosphere. An integrated model of employee engagement on creativity and innovation has been proposed.

Introduction

The swiftly changing paradigms in information seeking behavior, escalating competition among information providers, changes in information packaging and modes of access, the far-reaching impacts of technology have all necessitated a greater need for continuous creativity and innovation in all library operations. This study was triggered by consideration of how libraries are expected to thrive in the aforementioned impetuous environment. Libraries are increasingly challenged to embrace creativity and innovation as a key driver to distinctive and sustainable competencies. This amplifies the need for development of thinking organizations and execution of deliberate measures of tapping people's creative and innovative capacities in order to remain relevant to library clients.

Despite the volatile operating environment and insufficient funding, libraries in Kenya envision facilitating effective access to information sources and services in support of mission of parent organizations. Since these libraries are not in profit making business, the information professionals are likely to be less bothered by the need for high sales volumes, high bottom-line; no worry for break-

even or no pressing need for hastening the payback period of investment done on library building and resources. This orientation poses numerous organizational effectiveness challenges hence libraries are increasingly receiving pressures to re-invent themselves by innovating their products and services.

Proponent of human resources argues that staffs are the main sources of creativity and innovation in organizations. However, creativity and innovation can neither be imposed nor can it be driven by disengaged employees. Surprisingly, a global research by Gallup (2005) reported that only 29% of company employees are engaged while others are either partially engaged or completely disengaged. Undoubtedly, disengaged employees are a liability to the organization and hardly challenge the status quo while engaged employees exhibit emotional job attachment, unreserved commitment, increased productivity, high job passion, and in most cases they go extra miles (Perrin, 2003; Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz, 2011; Abraham, 2012; Right Management, 2009 and Echols, 2005).

The study therefore aimed to establish the empirical evidence on whether staff engagement affects the level of creativity and innovation in libraries. The specific objectives were: to investigate effects of employee engagement on creativity and innovation, and to suggest an improved model. The study postulated that level of employee engagement spurs creativity and innovation in the library and hence the hypothesis:

> H_1: The level of employee engagement will be positively related to the level of staff creativity and innovation in the library.

It was guided by one research question:

> RQ1: Are the constructs of employee engagement positively related to the constructs of staff creativity and innovation in the library?

The study is limited to the specific purpose of exploring whether drivers of employee engagement can influence employee creativity and innovation in the library. First, a contextual background and empirical literature on employee engagement is presented, followed by creativity and innovation at the workplace. A theoretical framework is also provided respectively. Second, methodology used and analysis techniques are described. Finally, a discussion of results, conclusion and recommendation bring this paper to close.

Literature and Empirical Review

The Meaning of Employee Engagement
The concept of employee engagement was developed by Kahn (1990) in his ethnographic work on summer camp employees and also employees at an architecture firm. Published literatures present several definitions of this term. Although each definition represents unique perspectives of the time, context and field, the disjointed approach to defining employee engagement has posed misinterpretation (Shuck and Wollard, 2010). However from a general view, employee engagement is defined as a distinct and unique construct that consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components that are associated with individual role performance (Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz, 2011). Fleming and Asplund (2007, p. 2) describes employee engagement as, "the ability to capture the heads, hearts, and souls of your employees to instill an intrinsic desire and passion for excellence". McEwen

(2011) present employee engagement as the affective and cognitive connection employees have for their organization that leads them to exert discretionary effort at work.

Abraham (2012) explain employee engagement as the degree to which workers feel job satisfaction and an emotional connection to the success of their organization while Kahn (1990), describe it as the harnessing of organization members selves to their work roles resulting to them being psychologically present when occupying and performing an organizational role. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) define it as the individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work while Schaufeli et al. (2002; 2006) descried it as work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Sundaray (2011) emphasized the cognitive, emotional and behavioral elements associated with employee engagement. According to Sundaray, cognitive engagement is employees' beliefs about the company, its leaders and the workplace culture. The emotional aspect is how employees feel about their company, their leaders and their colleagues while the behavioral factor is the value added component reflected in the amount of effort employees put into their work (Lockwood, 2007).

The human resources practitioners have globally been vocal on the need for organizations to devise strategies of ensuring employees are engaged at the workplace for organizational performance excellence. Majority of corporate executives are increasingly treating an engaged workforce as an organizational priority (Shuck and Wollard, 2010). States (2008) in Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz (2011) gave the example of North Shore LIJ Health System that recently invested $10 million into training and development with determination to raise engagement levels within their organization.

Determinants of Employee Engagement
Employee engagement involves inter-linked aspects that move staff beyond satisfaction hence better understanding of employee engagement and practical strategies is critical for developing an engaging culture at the workplace. Right Management (2009) emphasized on the need for organization to understand the dynamics of employee engagement. According to McEwen (2011), engagement results from how employees perceive and evaluate their work experience, including their employer, its leaders, the work itself and the organization's environment. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) proved job resources, salience of job resources, and personal resources as key drivers of work engagement. Additionally, Anitha (2014) argued that employee engagement is determined by leadership, team, co-worker relationship, training, career development and compensation. Other an indispensable attributes include, organizational policies, procedures, structures, systems, and workplace wellbeing. In a review paper, Echols (2005) advised that in order to impact employee engagement, managers should pay attention to staff skills, knowledge and talent. Echols argued that when employees' awareness of their strength is linked to their talent, it drives engagement level and hence high performance.

Rothmann and Storm (2003) propagated that work engagement is characterized by energy, satisfaction, involvement and efficacy. Swaminathan and Rajasekaran (2010) also agrees that engagement occurs when satisfaction, motivation and effectiveness intersect. Right Management (2009) conducted a global research of more than 28,800 employees in 15 countries on factors most closely associated with driving employee engagement. The study established inter-relation of an organization's culture, strategy execution, leadership ability, structure and processes with engagement levels. Also reported is how employee engagement influences customer satisfaction and overall organization effectiveness. The report further revealed that failure to create an organization that promote high levels of employee engagement, will result in failure to successfully execute strategic mission. Abraham (2012) investigated job satisfaction as a precursor to employee engagement while Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz (2011) examined an employee's unique experience of being engaged in their work. IPMA-HR (2010)

provided recent suggestion on how companies can engage employees while Bakker and Demerouti (2008) provided a review towards a model of work engagement.

There are several actions that organizations can take to drive employee engagement which involves careful configuration of antecedents to employee engagement. Employees need the capacity to engage, reasons to engage and the feeling that they are free to engage mobilization and configuration capacities (SHRM, 2012). According to IPMA-HR (2010), the employee engagement needs of an organization can best be fulfilled through adoption of a holistic philosophy that demonstrates a framework or model of concern, appreciation, respect and encouragement for all employees. Saks (2006) was the first researcher to specifically conceptualize and test antecedents and consequences of employee engagement. Saks empirically linked engagement drivers to employee engagement and underlying consequences.

Outcome of Employee Engagement
There is substantial previous empirical studies and published literatures on employee engagement such as by, Echols (2005); Right Management (2009) and others which have successfully verified the significance of employee engagement on organizational performance excellence and success in different industries. Recent studies for example by, Gallup (2005); Abraham (2012); Rana and Chhabra (2011); Garg and Kumar (2012) have expounded why employee engagement has gained attention across many organizations with biasness to high productivity and improved performance excellence. Perrin (2003) earlier found that engaged employee led to 19% increment of operating income while Anitha (2014) examined the impact of employee engagement on employee performance and found that there is a statistically significant impacts of employee engagement on employee performance. According to Abraham (2012); Echols (2005) and Right Management (2009), employee engagement results to better customer service, innovation, productivity, low staff turnover, dedicated workforce, great sense of work commitment, willingness to put extra time in the job, and pride in their work.

Other studies suggest that the presence of higher level of employee engagement significantly reduces turnover intention (Maslach et al., 2001; Saks, 2006). Harter et al. (2002) were the first to look at employee engagement from business perspective and demonstrated a link of employee engagement with increased business outcomes. Abraham (2012) reported how companies with highly engaged employees recorded an improvement of staff productivity by 26%, while total returns to shareholders went up by 13% over a period of five years. States (2008) in Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz (2011) reported how at Johnson and Johnson engagement has become part of the work culture as teams are provided with real time feedback about how their work enables their individual business units to meet their quarterly goals. Vance (2006) in Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz (2011) gave the example of Caterpillar, a large multi-national construction equipment supplier and manufacturer which estimated a saving of the $8.8 million in turnover costs alone by increasing the proportion of engaged employees at one of their European-based plant.

The extensive empirical research on employee engagement by Gallup organization since 1997 has empirically shown that employees' engagement in their organization influences the overall performance of a successful organization while the opposite is true. Other studies are by Saks (2006) who examined and tested a model of the antecedents and consequences of job and organization engagements based on social exchange theory. The study by Swaminathan and Rajasekaran (2010);

Right Management (2009) have also linked employee engagement to numerous organizational outcomes as summarized below:

- Increased profits (profitability)
- Productivity and performance gains
- Improved customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and sales
- Personal initiative on the job
- Willingness to go the extra mile
- Motivation to perform to the highest standards
- Increased employee retention (decrease in turnover)
- Decreased accidents (increase in safety behavior)
- More creativity and innovation
- Apply creative energy to their work
- Builds passion, commitment and alignment with the organization's strategies and goals
- Increases employees' trust in the organization
- Creates a sense of loyalty in a competitive environment
- Provides a high-energy working environment
- Boosts business growth
- Vested interest in their company's success
- Hold others in the organization to high standards of performance
- Makes the employees effective brand ambassadors for the organization
- Consistently deliver beyond expectations
- Employee performance efficiency
- High customer service, satisfaction, loyalty and retention

Anitha (2014) summed up the determinants and outcomes of employee engagement in a model as shown below.
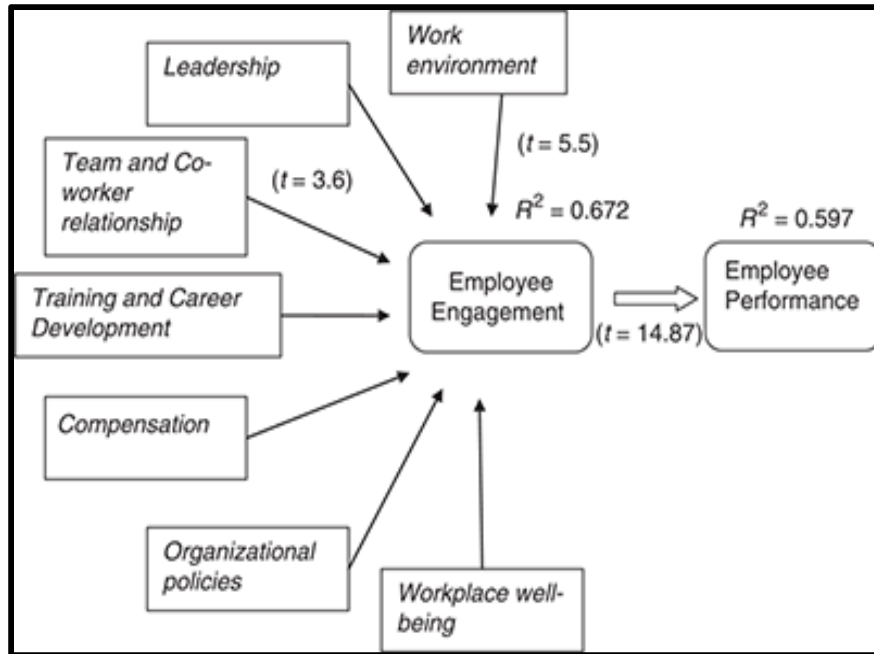
Fig 1: Validated model of impact of employee engagement on employee performance by Anitha (2014)

Why the Employee Engagement is Necessary
Levels of employee engagement vary with industry and from one country to another (Right Management, 2009). In addition to responding to user-related demand, organizations in the world at large are facing technology and economic pressures to achieve more with little. Undoubtedly, turbulence and uncertainty in the operating environment result to many organization having less attention to staff engagement matters (Right Management, 2009) and focuses more on reducing costs and squashing development projects in order to survive. Ultimately, many staff becomes disengaged hence less creative and innovative. This goes a long way in diminishing organization's ability to compete and adapt in the ever changing environment. Libraries are not exception to this.

In a longitudinal study, Gallup (2002) established three types of people: engaged employees, not engaged employees, and actively disengaged employees. Engaged employees according to Gallup are builders who consistently strive to give excellence within their roles. Not engaged employees focus on the tasks spelled out to them rather than the goals of the organization. They do what they are told to do. Actively disengaged employees are dangerous individuals who not only do not perform well but also demotivate the performer in the organization. McEwen (2011) observed that engaged employees are fully involved, and are enthusiastic about their work. They care about the future of their organizations and are willing to invest discretionary effort to see their organization succeed.

Employee engagement reflects the level of commitment and involvement of an employee towards the organization and its values (Sundaray, 2011). Surprisingly, the study by McEwen (2011) reported that only 21-31% of employees are truly engaged, and that 52-62% is not engaged in majority of organizations. These individuals have no passion or excitement in what they do while 17-24% of employees are actively disengaged (McEwen, 2011). This denotes an indispensable need to address the observed trend even in libraries.

With the above consideration, appropriate strategies to ensure enduring value are inevitable. For libraries, it point out on the need to re-think and revamp levels of staff commitment in their job and change approaches to service delivery. Solis and Hampton (2009) observed that librarians are to a large extent identified with dull spinsters whose prime concerns are meticulousness and organizing books in a sphere of efficiency. This seems to suggest that information professionals have to brand themselves aggressively in the marketplace by addressing the real issues that make them withdrawn in their workplace. According to Right Management (2009), creation of work environment where employees understand and commit to the company's direction, strategy and goals is the most challenging issue across many organizations.

Workplace Creativity and Innovation

The context of this study adopted the Anderson, Potočnik and Zhou, (2014, p. 2) integrative definition of creativity and innovation at workplace as the *"process, outcomes, and products of attempts to develop and introduce new and improved ways of doing things. The creativity stage of this process refers to idea generation, while innovation refers to the subsequent stage of implementing ideas toward better procedures, practices, or products. Creativity and innovation can occur at the level of the individual, work team, organization, or at more than one of these levels combined but will invariably result in identifiable benefits at one or more of these levels of analysis"*.

Specifically, Nair and Gopal (2010) explain creativity as the mental ability to produce novel and useful ideas by individuals or group of individuals working together and hence it is critical for organization long-term survival and competitiveness. The ultimate aim of creative initiative is to clarify, resolve, provide superior solutions, and to improve the competence of the organization at all levels (Nair & Gopal, 2011, p.144). Unsworth (2003) describes innovation as the process of engaging in behaviors designed to generate and implement new ideas, processes, products and services. This implies that creativity precedes innovation. Notably, creativity begins with unleashing of the imaginative potentials within the human mind. This perspective brings forth the critical aspect of psychological empowerment of one's mind which the theoretical arguments and the empirical study by Zhang and Bartol (2010) showed how psychological empowerment impacts staff intrinsic motivation and its linkage with staff creativity.

The ability of organization to nurture creativity and innovation depends on organizational culture. According to Nair & Gopal (2011), such a culture is built incrementally by providing facilities, incentives, conducive work atmosphere, and leadership. Good leadership influences followers' ability to generate new ideas and question the way things are done. This is achieved by leaders showing empathy, consideration, and support, which should help to overcome the fear of challenging the status quo (Gong, Huang & Farh, 2009). Avolio & Bass (2002) also reported the key role of transformational leadership in nurturing creative environment through provision of a learning atmosphere, delegating and encouraging follower autonomy.

Hon (2012) also agreed that creativity and innovation behavior among employees is based on the principle of intrinsic motivation. In a study which was based on hospitality industry, Hon proved that a sense of autonomy impacts employee creativity and innovation. Interestingly, some factors that have been empirically established to determine employee engagement also stood out as key factors in promoting creativity through autonomous motivation. Examples of such factors include empowering

leadership, and workplace climate. Other factors such as personal conflict, a controlling or coercive management style and external standards were found to be negatively related to autonomous motivation and hence were adversative to employee creativity and innovation at the workplace.

There are burgeoning literatures and studies on workplace creativity and innovation (Baas, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2008; George, 2007; Hennessey & Amabile, 2010). On one hand, the study by Gong, Huang and Farh (2009) found a positive relationship between creativity and performance while the Hon (2012) examined the role of intrinsic motivation in shaping environment conductive to creativity. On the other hand, Somech (2006) proved that leadership behaviors and styles influence the nature of creative and innovative work of employees.

The Value of Creativity and Innovation in Libraries

The influx of changes taking place in the information industry and the unprecedented changes in information seeking behavior explains why the operating environment of libraries is becoming increasingly unpredictable. With this scenario, libraries have to re-invent themselves in order to retain their relevance. To survive, the embracement of creativity and innovation is a critical working language and practice (Bergart & D'Elia, 2010) which Nair and Gopal (2010) said is precipitated by good leadership and coherent organization culture.

A culture of creativity and innovation is critical at all levels in the library since it is not sufficient for new ideas to always emanate from director of libraries or senior staffs only. The leading blue chip companies that have survived the turbulent environment are largely characterized by strong culture of creativity and innovation where individual staffs are encouraged to think of new ideas always (Nair & Gopal, 2010). Reviewed literature shows that libraries which have nurtured a creative culture are largely characterized by refinements of existing procedures or processes to enhance efficiency or the discovery of alternative procedures or processes that are more effective to enable employees to improve their personal job performance (Gong, Huang, and Farh, 2009). Lessons learnt implies that librarians need to find methods of creating cultures that promote this behavior by fostering an atmosphere where individuals feel free to express ideas and experiment new things that may challenge assumptions and the status quo.

Creativity and innovation is vital as libraries seek to support their student learning effort. Its root can be traced from Ranganathan's Fifth Law of Library Science which directly states that "The library is a growing organism" (Kurt, Kurt & Medaille, 2010). By planting the seeds of innovation and nurturing creativity, Bergart and D'Elia (2010) said that libraries are better able to support the users' learning environment. Despite the espoused value of creativity and innovation, there is still more talk about it in libraries than it is actually happening. Like in 2007 American Library Association (ALA) Conference, some participants thought that libraries are not truly creative and innovative. This view and orientation is misplaced but can linked to the limited resources and a culture that discourages experimentation in libraries (Pace, Janes, Schneider, & Abram, 2007). According to Bergart and D'Elia (2010), innovation and creativity in many libraries is haphazard, seldom and has not become a habitual part of work practices. Many lacks deliberate plan or procedure to ensure such initiatives emerges.

The argument of this study is that creative behavior and culture can neither be imposed on staff nor can it be driven by disengaged staff. Eric (2013) emphasized that involvement of staff in creative environment will results to employee engagement but this study argue that the reverse is true. Organizations need to ensure all factors of engagement are present in order for staff to feel free to give ideas that can help to improve the current situation.

An in-depth interrogation of the previous studies revealed that there is no empirical research that specifically investigated whether employee engagement impacts creativity and innovation in libraries. Even the study by Unsworth (2003) only used inductive methods to investigate factors that lead employees to engage in the innovation process. Pienaar and Boshoff (1996) studied five libraries from South Africa to examine the relationship between creativity and innovation and the organizational climate. The study revealed operationalization problems of the creativity and innovation constructs. Kurt and Medaille (2010) carried out an experiment on creativity and innovation in libraries with a focus on the use of play as a powerful method of fostering innovation and creativity.

Employee Engagement Vis-À-Vis Creativity and Innovation

Just like employee engagement, creativity and innovation in the workplace have become increasingly important determinants of organizational performance, success, and long-term survival (Anderson Potočnik, and Zhou, 2014). Employee engagement is one of the key antecedents of creativity and innovation yet there is no research that empirically linked the two phenomena. Bakker (2009) provided scanty preliminary link between the two phenomena. He referred to a study among 572 Dutch employees by Langelaan, Bakker, Van Doornen, and Schaufeli (2006) which related work engagement to temperament and the big two personality factors—neuroticism and extraversion. Their findings revealed that engaged workers are characterized by high levels of mobility, low neuroticism, and high extraversion. This means that engaged workers are well able to respond adequately to changes in environmental demands. They adapt quickly to new surroundings and switch easily between activities. In addition, highly engaged employees do not have the general tendency to experience the distressing emotions such as fear, depression, and frustration that is characteristic of neurotics. In contrast, they seem to have a disposition towards cheerfulness, sociability, and high activity (extraversion) (Bakker, 2009).

Heightened connection between employees and their work triggers creativity and innovation (IPMA-HR, 2010) and that is why Sundaray (2011) noted the great need for employees to be flexible, innovative, and willing to contribute beyond the normal tasks. Sundaray considered employee engagement as key to retaining talented people and as sources of distinctive competencies which are very difficult to imitate. This also implies that engaged employees are enthusiastic about their work and will often be fully immersed in their job. The outcomes will be improved ways of doing things putting creativity and innovation into great perspective.

This study identified a gap in previous studies which failed to investigate the impacts of drivers of staff engagement on creativity and innovation at the workplace. Although there is a growing body of literature investigating engagement (Alban-Metcalfe & Alimo-Metcalfe, 2008), there is no notable study that directly link employee engagement to creativity and innovation. Even studies by shin and Zhou (2003); Ryan and Deci (2000) did not explore the relationship between the two variables. Many studies in this area have established factors influencing the success of employee engagement in the workplace which can be summed up to external and internal factors. Unsworth (2003) used inductive methods to investigate factors affecting engagement in the innovation process. The results identified three types of demand that were interdependent and interacted to influence engagement - which provide clear implications for managers who wish to increase employees' innovative behavior. Few previous researches on employee engagement for example by McEwen (2011) have partially

mentioned creativity and innovation as an outcome of engaged employees. This study therefore provide empirical examination on the linkage between the two phenomena by measuring how key constructs of employee engagement impacts creativity and innovation at the workplace.

It must be acknowledged that the copying strategies that involves cutting prices and downsizing which have been witnessed in many organizations has a limit and hence, a sustainable strategy is indispensable. This paves way for new thinking in order for organizations to survive and succeed (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). This paper proposes a model that emphasizes on the need to create conducive employee engagement environment that is necessary to encourage creativity and innovation at the workplace. The empirical results evidently show that employee engagement can make a true difference which ultimately leads to staff coming up and utilizing new ideas at the workplace (Bakker, 2009).

Conceptual Model
Previous empirical studies have empirically linked both constructs i.e. 'employee engagement' and 'creativity and innovation' to organizational performance. Few studies reported creativity and innovation as an outcome of employee engagement (Right Management, 2009; McEwen, 2011; Unsworth, 2003; Amabile, 1983; Bakker, 2009). In this study, models from the aforementioned studies were considered and modified in coming up with the proposed employee engagement vis-à-vis creativity and innovation model shown below. Key determinants and antecedent factors for employee engagement were identified from published literatures and previous studies which were summed up into three main constructs namely; 'internal enhancement factors', 'leadership and organizational culture', and 'external enhancement factors.' These constructs have previously been proved to influence the level of employee engagement in an organization (Anitha, 2014; Sundaray, 2011; Right Management, 2009; McEwen, 2011; Saks, 2006; SHRM, 2012; Whittington & Galpin, 2010). The resulting scenario impacts the nature of creativity and innovation experienced at the workplace.
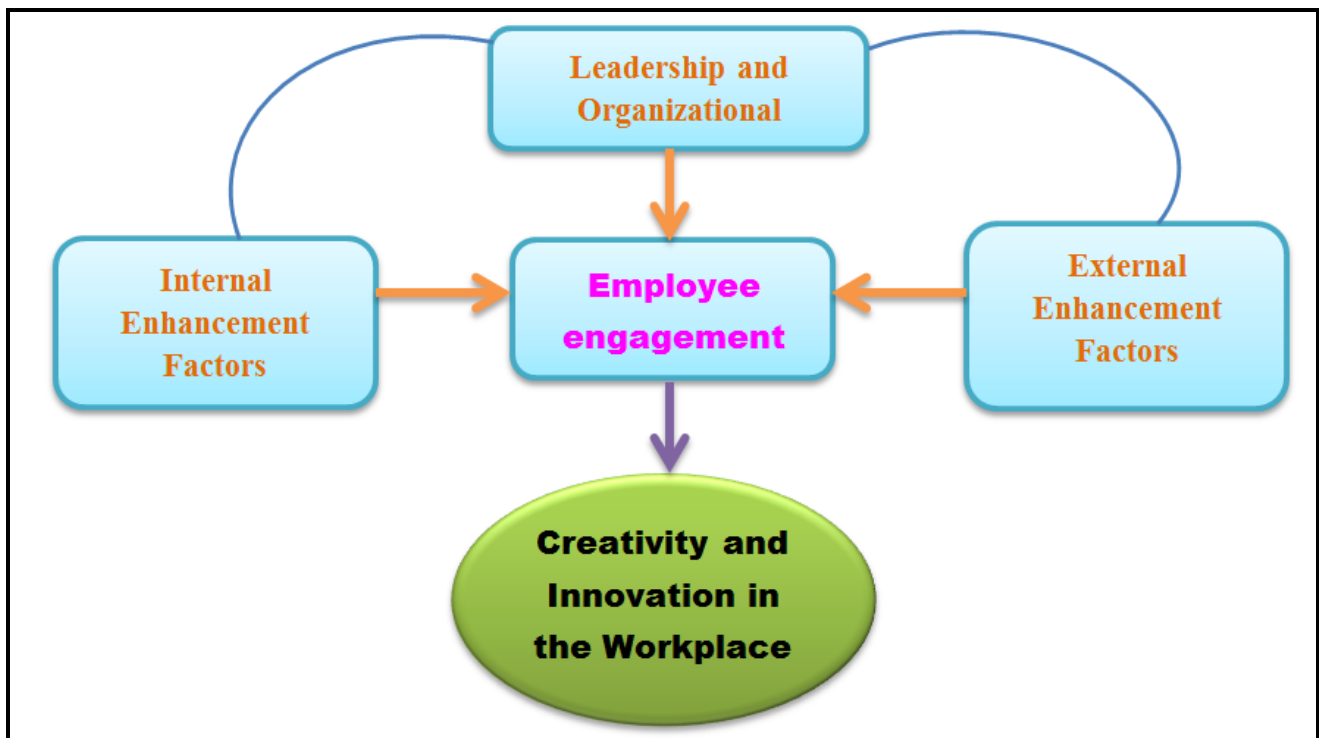
Fig 2: proposed Model of Employee Engagement Vis-À-Vis Creativity and Innovation

The proposed model was validated as evidenced by results which are discussed later in this paper.

Theoretical Perspective

The theoretical background of employee engagement is as discussed by Shaukat and Asadullah (2014). According to Shaukat and Asadullah, the Social Exchange Theory (SET) provides theoretical foundation of engagement and creative behavior of employees. According to SET, when employees are given values by empowerment and training, the employees feel sense of consideration and they repay the organization by showing engaged behavior. This engaged behavior of employees motivates them to perform more than their duties and results into creativity and innovation in the organization. Moreover, engaged employees are source of creative performance and attracts more talented people to the organization while disengaged employees are a liability to an organization.

Unsworth (2003) has also presented two theories surrounding the creative and innovation process with engagement in perspective. The first theory is the updated Amabile's (1996) componential theory of creativity. According to this theory, the creative process begins with "problem identification." Identification implies a more volitional process, and as such, is more consistent with the concept of engagement. Amabile argued that the main factor affecting problem identification is intrinsic motivation or motivation that comes from the task itself. She suggests that factors that support autonomy, competence or task involvement will increase this motivation, and extrinsic motivators and constraints will decrease it.

The second theory was proposed by Ford (1996), who positioned creative and habitual actions as competing behaviors. As such, (Unsworth, 2003) observes creativity and innovation as an intentional act. Ford then identified three groups of factors that might lead an individual to choose to be creative rather than habitual. The first set of factors relates to the schema an individual holds towards innovation, or their sense making processes. The second factor was motivation; he argued that a general form of motivation evolved from goals, receptivity beliefs (the degree to which creativity is reinforced in the setting), capability beliefs, and emotions. Finally, he suggested that knowledge and abilities affect innovation. Unsworth (2003) termed this theory to have presented a large step forward in understanding creative and innovation attempts. The constructs highlighted by these two theories helps to contextualize the underlying variables of this study.

Methodology

This study adopted the recommendation by Right Management (2009) on the use of quantitative survey supported by qualitative interviews in measuring employee engagement levels. Qualitative data were found necessary since according to Right Management, the drivers of employee engagement that are unique to an organization cannot be determined by looking at frequency counts and percentages alone. It used the descriptive cross-sectional survey design which had also been used by Rothmann and Storm (2003) to investigate the influence of job stress and coping strategies on work engagement in the South African police service.

The study was carried out in Meru County in Kenya between April and May 2014. Respondents were employees from three libraries; one from public universities (Meru University library), one from private universities (Methodist university library) and one from public libraries (Meru District library) which were purposively and conveniently selected. Non proportionate census sampling techniques was

used among staff from the three study areas. The study population from these libraries was small and hence the census sampling technique was preferred. This gave a sample size of 34. A total of 31 employees responded yielding a response rate of 91% percent.

Structured questionnaire with likert-type scale questions and semi-structured interview were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively. Questions from Zhang and Bartol (2010); Whittington and Galpin, (2010) were adopted and carefully modified, to help uncover the engagement behaviors and practices on creativity and innovation in the library. This was meant to also help in knowing what libraries need to do in the design of solutions to the current problem.

The interviews were conducted in English on face-to-face format and lasted between 15 and 20 minutes with each head of the sampled library. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked independently for accuracy. The semi-structured interview method was used to ensure participants could share information regarding their experience on library staff engagement and subsequent impacts on creativity and innovation at the work place. An interview guide was used to help the interviewer focus on the research topic while providing flexibility and openness (Bakker, 2009).

In measuring employee engagement, the study adapted and modified the summarized Gallup Organization 12 key questions as outlined by (Buckingham and Coffman, 1999). The four items by Hon (2012) and the three-item on employee creativity measure by Oldham and Cumings (1996) were also modified and enriched to sufficiently measure impacts of internal and external factors on employee engagement and subsequent impacts on creativity and innovation. The emphasis by Whittington & Galpin (2010); Right Management (2009); Nair and Gopal (2011); Somech (2006); Bergart and D'Elia (2010); Nair and Gopal (2010); Avolio and Gibbons (2002); Difeng, (2013) on organizational culture and leadership role in influencing employee engagement was also incorporated in this study as independent variables. The survey tool was split into four sections on employee engagement and also on creativity and innovation in the workplace. The main paradigms of measurement were:

Employee engagement measurement
   i.   Meaningfulness of work and confidence in high performance
  ii.   Commitment and involvement in decision making
 iii.   Existence of conducive and empowering atmosphere in the workplace
 iv.   Individual competence and impact on organization

Staff creativity and innovation in the workplace measurement
   i.   Problem identification and information searching
  ii.   Atmosphere for creativity and innovation
 iii.   Leader encouragement for creativity and innovation
 iv.   Empowerment

Procedure and analysis

The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to KeMU library staffs while the head of other two libraries were requested to help in distributing the questionnaires to all their library staffs. The

filled questionnaires were picked following day. Head of the three libraries were later engaged in an interview. The researcher prepared pertinent questions with reference to quantitative data collected from library staffs. A convenient time for interview with each participant was sought.

The reliability (Cronbach's Alpha score) of employee engagement was found to be 0.970 and the employee creativity and innovation was 0.929. The reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most Social Science research situations using Cronbach's Alpha (Garth, 2008). Ethic related to data collection from human subjects was observed and respondents were assured that information provided was to be used for the purpose of this study only. Data collected was subjected to descriptive, correlation, regression analysis, t-test and ANOVA to satisfy the objective of the study. Key constructs of the study were cross-tabulated on employee positions. SPSS and excel package were used to analyze the collected data. The findings are presented in tables, chart and descriptive statements with subsequent discussion. Based on the results, suitable suggestions are provided to improve creativity and innovation in the library.

Results

The overall response rate of this study was 91%. Only 4 out of 34 staffs were on annual leave when the study instruments were administered. The level of staff engagement from the three libraries was found to be relatively high at 81.85% while the level of creativity and innovation at the workplace was also found to be high at 78.03%. Frequencies of their demographic data were arranged in descending order as presented on table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

Description	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Name of library			
Meru University Library	12	38.7	38.7
Kenya Methodist University Library	11	35.5	74.2
Meru District Library	8	25.8	100.0
Gender			
Female	20	64.5	64.5
Male	11	35.5	100.0
Total	**31**	**100.0**	
Years of work experience at the current library			
Between 4 and 7 years	13	41.9	41.9
Less than 1 year	7	22.6	64.5
Between 1 and 3 years	5	16.1	80.6
From 15 years and above	4	12.9	93.5
Between 8 and 14 years	2	6.5	100.0
Age of Staff			
Between 31 and 39 years	12	38.7	38.7
From 40 years and above	11	35.5	74.2

Name of library			
Description	**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Meru University Library	12	38.7	38.7
Kenya Methodist University Library	11	35.5	74.2
Meru District Library	8	25.8	100.0
Between 20 and 30 years	8	25.8	100.0
Nature of Job Tenure			
Permanent and pensionable	19	61.3	61.3
Contract	6	19.4	80.6
Casual	4	12.9	93.5
Volunteer	2	6.5	100.0
Total	**31**	**100.0**	
Highest level of Individual Academic and Professional Qualification			
Diploma	16	51.6	51.6
Bachelor Degree	12	38.7	90.3
O-level	2	6.5	96.8
Postgraduate Degree (Master or PhD)	1	3.2	100.0

There are more females (64.5%) than males (35.5%) staff in the library. Most of these staffs (74.2%) are above 31 years old meaning they are mature adults. 61.3 percent were found to be on permanent and pensionable employment terms, 19.4 percent were on contract while the rest were either casuals or volunteers. This confirms the results of study by Right Management (2009) which reported job tenure being positively related to employee engagement level. It was encouraging to note that majority of library staffs are very experienced where 61% indicated to have worked with the current employer from 4 years and above. Only 39% had worked from 3 years and below with their current library. This further indicated low staff turnover which was positive on employee engagement status in the library. The study by Swaminathan and Rajasekaran (2010); Maslack et al (2001); Saks (2006); Sundaray (2011) and Right Management (2009) showed that disengaged employee are likely not to stay longer with their current employer since high level of staff disengagement is related to high turnover.

Impacts of Employee Engagement on Creativity and Innovation at the Workplace

The mean average level of employee engagement as well as for creativity and innovation was calculated with corresponding standard deviation scores and skewness. The overall results indicated almost equal means and standard deviation (4.192 to 3.8876, and 1.0893 to 1.0239) on the independent and dependent variables respectively. The result is presented on table 2 and 3 below.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Engagement

Aspects of Employee Engagement	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Skewness**	
N = 31	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Std. Error**
Meaningfulness of work and confidence in high performance				
1 I know what is expected of me at work	4.71	0.824	-3.593	0.421

#		Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
2	My supervisor/manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the organization.	4.45	1.028	-2.62	0.421
3	I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right	4.03	1.14	-1.366	0.421
4	My supervisor/manager believes that I can handle demanding tasks and also in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes	4.19	1.014	-2.056	0.421
5	My supervisor/manager expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level	4.29	1.039	-2.159	0.421
6	My supervisor/manager makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple	4.29	1.039	-2.159	0.421
7	My supervisor/manager allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy users' needs	3.97	1.048	-1.417	0.421
Commitment and involvement in decision making					
8	The atmosphere and conditions at my work station makes me feel my job is important	4.23	1.146	-1.61	0.421
9	I can concentrate on and often think of my job when I am at my work station	4.19	1.167	-1.614	0.421
10	My supervisor/manager makes many decisions together with me; including those that affects me and the strategic decisions	3.94	1.093	-1.337	0.421
11	My supervisor/manager gives all library staff a chance to voice their opinions	3.87	1.147	-1.006	0.421
12	My supervisor/manager communicates timely feedback and teaches our staff how to solve problems on their own	4	1.125	-1.35	0.421
Existence of conducive and empowering atmosphere in the workplace					
13	I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job	3.84	1.003	-1.35	0.421
14	I have the authority that I need to do my job well	4.32	1.536	2.483	0.421
15	I am encouraged to take ownership of my work	4	1.183	-1.291	0.421
16	My work activities and tasks are personally important and meaningful to me	4.19	1.078	-1.949	0.421
17	I feel free and inspired to bring my best to work	4.26	1.125	-1.752	0.421
Individual competence and impact on organization					
18	I am confident about my ability to do my jobs	4.39	1.022	-2.475	0.421
19	I have mastered the skills necessary for my job	4.39	1.022	-2.475	0.421
20	My impact on what happens in my department is significant and evident	4.29	1.006	-2.315	0.421
Average mean scores		**4.192**	**1.08925**	**-1.6706**	**0.421**

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Creativity and Innovation

Aspects of Creativity and Innovation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
N = 31	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Statistic**	**Std. Error**
Problem identification and information searching				
1 I spend considerable time trying to understand the nature of the problem if it occurs at my immediate workplace	3.48	1.092	-0.285	0.421
2 I think about the problem from multiple perspectives	3.52	1.092	-0.208	0.421
3 I usually decompose a difficult problem/assignment into parts to obtain greater understanding	3.35	1.05	-0.419	0.421

4	I consult a wide variety of information sources and other people for ideas and for solutions to problems that I face in the event of executing my duties	3.58	1.057	-0.497	0.421
5	I generate a significant number of alternatives to the same problem before I choose the final solution.	3.52	0.996	-0.372	0.421
6	I try to come up with ways of solving problems –ways that are somehow different from what people are used of	3.26	1.182	-0.022	0.421
7	I enjoy finding solutions to complex problems, creating new procedures, improving existing services /products and processes on the tasks assigned to me	3.71	1.243	-0.071	0.421
Atmosphere for creativity and innovation					
1	Staff having freedom to come up with new and practical ideas, better means to achieve goals or performing tasks, and fresh approaches and solutions to problems	4.58	0.923	-2.565	0.421
2	Staff being challenged to search out for new ideas on technologies, processes, techniques, and or services/products	4.13	1.056	-1.361	0.421
3	Staff being regarded as a good source of creative and innovative ideas	4.52	0.811	-2.859	0.421
4	Staff being not afraid to take risks	4.1	0.944	-1.221	0.421
5	Leader having a lot of trust with subordinate staffs	4.26	0.999	-1.634	0.421
6	Staff being given challenging tasks	4.26	0.93	-1.889	0.421
7	Staff having opportunity to exhibit creativity and innovation, promote, and develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas	4.39	0.919	-1.983	0.421
Leader encouragement for creativity and innovation					
1	My supervisor/manager encourages, respects, emphasizes and reinforces new ideas coming from library staffs	4.26	0.93	-1.889	0.421
2	My supervisor/manager allows and expects employees to try to solve the same problems in different ways	3.52	1.235	-0.21	0.421
3	My supervisor/manager rewards and recognizes employees who are creative and innovative in doing their job	3.42	1.089	-0.442	0.421
Empowerment					
4	I regard myself as an employee who wants to have greater decision-making power	4.32	0.832	-2.173	0.421
5	Having certain degree of power and freedom to decide at my workplace is an important part of feeling good about myself and enlightens my inner person	4.23	0.845	-1.882	0.421
6	I would feel disadvantaged and low self-esteem if I don't have the freedom to decide on things related to my daily tasks	4.35	0.839	-1.501	0.421
7	My immediate supervisor/manager gives me the support I need to do my job well	4.26	0.893	-1.753	0.421
8	My immediate supervisor/manager encourages me on my progress and development in my career and profession	4.23	0.805	-2.088	0.421
9	My organization invests in its staffs' learning and development	3.29	1.419	-0.479	0.421
10	The operating procedure in in my library encourages and helps me to develop passion for my work	3.65	1.05	-0.688	0.421
11	There are sufficient incentives to perform well at my organization	3	1.366	0.168	0.421
Average mean scores		**3.8876**	**1.02388**	**-1.13292**	**0.421**

Source: Primary data

Table 4: Summary Mean score of the employee engagement and of staff creativity and innovation in the library

Employee engagement measurement; N=31			
Employee engagement measurement	**Mean**	**S.D**	**%**
Meaningfulness of work and confidence in high performance	4.28	1.0189	87.53
Commitment and involvement in decision making	4.05	1.1356	76.10
Existence of conducive and empowering atmosphere in the workplace	4.12	1.185	79.98
Individual competence and impact on organization	4.36	1.0167	93.50
Average	**4.19**	**1.0893**	
Staff creativity and innovation in the workplace measurement			
Problem identification and information searching	3.49	1.1017	51.60
Atmosphere for creativity and innovation	4.32	0.9403	86.17
Leader encouragement for creativity and innovation	3.73	1.0847	66.67
Empowerment	3.92	1.0061	73.02
Average	**3.89**	**1.0239**	

Source: Primary data

Apart from using the calculated means or average for employee engagement, the study also evaluated the way staff responded on all engagement specific questions for consistency in the responses. The same was tested and compared to integrity of creativity and innovation scores using specific questions that included:

- I spend considerable time trying to understand the nature of the problem if it occurs at my immediate workplace
- I think about the problem from multiple perspectives
- I usually decompose a difficult problem/assignment into parts to obtain greater understanding
- I consult a wide variety of information sources and other people for ideas and for solutions to problems that I face in the event of executing my duties
- I generate a significant number of alternatives to the same problem before I choose the final solution.
- I try to come up with ways of solving problems –ways that are somehow different from what people are used of
- I enjoy finding solutions to complex problems, creating new procedures, improving existing services /products and processes on the tasks assigned to me.

According to table 2, 3, and 4 above, employee engagement among the respondents of the study was found to be high (mean score = 4.19) while the employee creativity and engagement level was found to be slightly low with the mean score of 3.89. The mean values of these two variables did not differ significantly. This shows that some factors of employee engagement considerably overlap those of staff creativity and innovation and hence the respondents who are engaged may also not be fully creative and innovative at the workplace. To study the relationship between employee engagement and employee creativity and innovation at the workplace, correlation analysis was done and the results are given below.

Table 5: Correlations between employee engagement, and creativity and innovation at the workplace

Correlations				
			Engagement	Creativity and Innovation
Spearman's rho	Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.100
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.831
		N	7	7
	Creativity and Innovation	Correlation Coefficient	.100	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.831	.
		N	7	7

Source: Primary data

Table 5 above indicates that employee engagement is related with staff creativity and innovation in the workplace with R value of 0.831 (p< 0.01). This means that there is 83.1% relationship between employee engagement and staff creativity and innovation at the workplace. This outcome seems to suggest that when people positively evaluate their experiences in their organization, they are more likely not only to feel psyched, satisfied, committed and proud, but also feel to engage in creative and innovative behavior.

The results also points out that there could be other factors that influences staff creativity and innovation at the work place apart from those related to employee engagement. Conceptually, similar findings were reported by Schaufeli, Bakker, and Salanova (2006) in a Spanish context. Results showed that work life experiences, particularly control, rewards and recognition and value fit, were significant predictors of employee engagement. The study by IPMA-HR (2010) observed that when employees derive meaning from their work or have an emotional attachment to it, they are more likely to expend additional effort to accomplish their work above and beyond that needed to just get through the day. According to Hon (2012), this leads to creative behavior amongst staffs.

In order to know the effects of constructs of employee engagement on staff creativity and innovation in the library, regression analysis and independent sample tests were done and the results are given below.

Table 6: Regression between employee engagement on staff creativity and innovation in the library

Coefficients[a]								
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlations		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part
(Constant)	2.805	1.521		1.844	.124			

Engagement	.166	.370	.197	.450	.672	.197	.197	.197

a. Dependent Variable: Creativity and Innovation

ANOVA					
Creativity and Innovation					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.116	5	.023	1.612	.533
Within Groups	.014	1	.014		
Total	.131	6			

Source: Primary data

Table 7: Independent sample test on employee engagement factors with those of staff creativity and innovation in the library

Variables	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Employee engagement - Creativity and innovation in the work place	0.19335	1.1935	0.21435	-0.24415	0.6314	0.82455	30	0.2623

Source: Primary data

Table 7 shows the results of the independent samples t-test on employee engagement factors with those of staff creativity and innovation in the library. The p value of Levene's test was 0.2623 which shows that the two variances did not differ significantly. The p value of the t test of employee engagement factors is more than 0.05. Further, since the according to table 6, the p-value of 0.533 is greater than 0.05, the hypothesis is accepted. This indicated that the level of employee engagement and staff creativity and innovation across libraries is not statistically different hence the hypothesis is confirmed.

It can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the constructs of employee engagement and those of staff creativity and innovation at the workplace and hence a proof to the hypothesis that the level of employee engagement are positively related to the level of staff creativity and innovation in the library. According to McEwen (2011), engaged employee not only results to high productivity but also help to generate high profit, creativity, innovation and high customer satisfaction. Apart from performance improvement as noted by Whittington and Galpin (2010), employee engagement also results to extra-role behaviors amongst staff and this precipitates creativity and innovation at the work place.

The level of employee engagement vis-à-vis creativity and innovation amongst library staff by Positions

The overall staff engagement was found to be relatively high from the three libraries at 81.85%. This contradicts the findings by Right Management (2009); Gallup (2002) and McEwen (2011). The result however is consistent with Wiley (2010) that employees who work in the upper scale are more engaged than those who are in the lower scale in the organization hierarchy. The overall level of creativity and innovation score among library staffs was also found to be relatively high from the three libraries at 78.03%, although slightly lower (3.81%) than the employee engagement level.
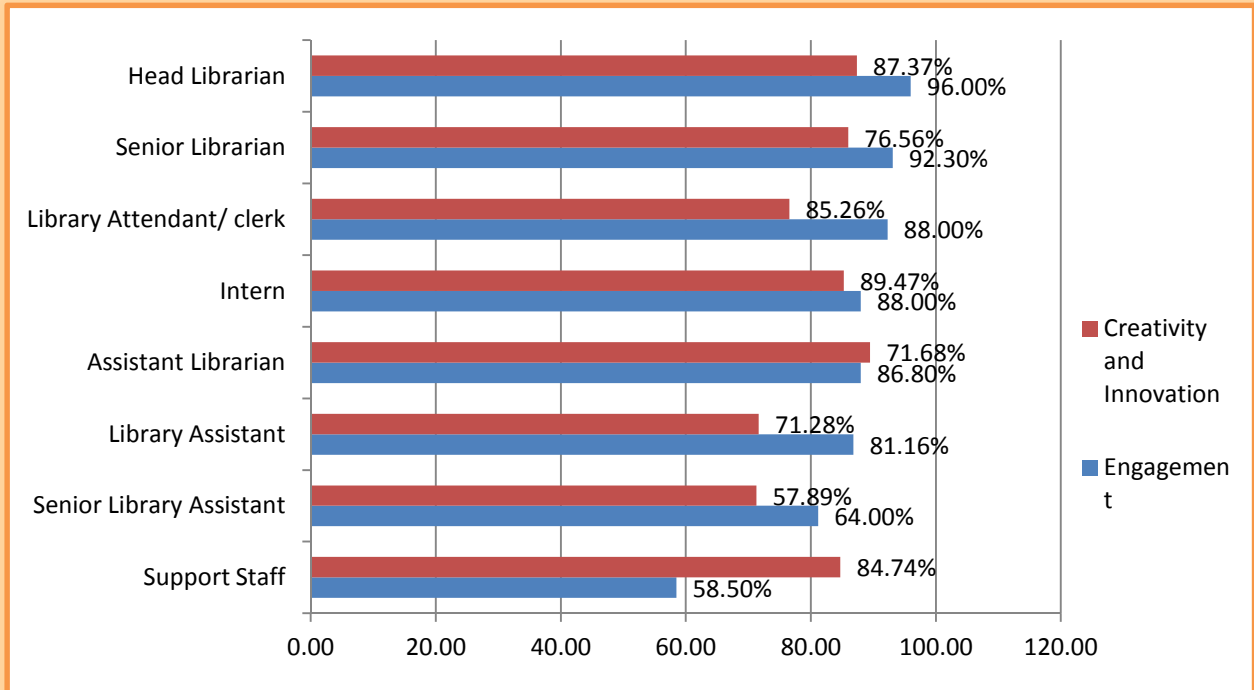

Fig 3: Employee engagement vis-à-vis creativity and innovation amongst library staff

Source: primary data

Two factor ANOVA was further conducted to determine whether scores on the two variables are significantly different with reference to employee designation. This enabled a further test on hypothesis.

Table 8: Two factor ANOVA on employee engagement and staff creativity and innovation by positions

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Employee engagement and staff creativity and innovation by positions	58.12859	1	58.12859	0.642109	0.449289	5.591448
Error	633.6937	7	90.52767			

Source: primary data

The significance value of the F test in the ANOVA table 8 on both constructs was 0.642109 with a p-value of 0.449 hence the directional hypothesis is accepted that there is no statistical difference between the level of employee engagement and staff creativity and innovation in the library. This indicated that the level of employee engagement and staff creativity and innovation across various library positions is not significantly different.

Interview notes and responses were read and coded. A comparison with published literature was done where major categories were collapsed into five themes. Responses and comments provided by librarians who are in-charge of sampled libraries had consensus that the immediate work environment, culture and leadership role are critical elements in nurturing creative and innovative behavior amongst library staff. These broad themes have been empirically proved to be key antecedents to employee engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; McEwen, 2011; Right Management, 2009; Anitha, 2014; Rothmann & Storm, 2003; Rajasekaran, 2010; Shuck, Rocco & Albornoz, 2011; Abraham, 2012; Saks, 2006; Gallup, 2002 and Hon, 2012). Regarding what library managers are doing to encourage creativity and innovation at their library, one senior library officer said, *"I like allowing my staff to come up with solutions themselves and this motivates them very much."* Moreover, the suggestions provided by library staff on what they think should be done in order to encourage creativity and innovation at their library seemed to also concur with the broader themes. Their responses were summed to five elements (table 9) that included, leadership, sufficient facilities and equipment, training and development, motivation (intrinsic, autonomous), and reward, recognition and compensation.

Table 9: Staffs' feeling on what they think should be done in order to encourage creativity and innovation at their library

No.	Suggestions
1.	Ensure library is well equipped
2.	Have interactive session with staff to solicit new ideas
3.	Provide enough freedom for people to air their views
4.	Allow staff to solve problems and make decisions at their level
5.	Enable staff to attend workshops and conferences to enhance their skills
6.	Give staff freehand to make decision so long as it does not contravene the university policy
7.	Encourage staff to attend workshops and conferences to improve their skills

- Leadership
- Sufficient facilities and equipment
- Training and development
- Motivation (intrinsic, autonomous)
- Reward, recognition and compensation

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8.	Library to organize for symposiums, workshops and conferences	
9.	Allow staff to air their opinions	
10.	Staff to be encouraged to take ownership and have authority over their work	
11.	Recognize and reward creativity from staff	
12.	Staff motivation	
13.	Need for teamwork in the library	
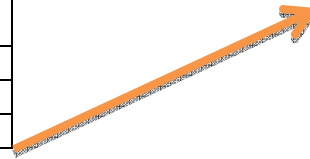
Finally, empowerment stood out on both constructs of employee engagement and on staff creativity and innovation at the workplace. According to Hon (2012), empowerment leads to autonomous motivation which he reported as having positive relationship with creativity. This is in the form of increased responsibility, job, trust, and task control. The underlying logic is that, if individuals are more able to monitor their tasks and workloads, it affords them to think creatively for solutions and hence innovative behavior. Similarly, the act of empowering employees may make one to feel that the management trust and value individuals input in the job hence this perception is likely to positively impacts creative and innovative behavior amongst library staffs (Unsworth, 2003).

Conclusion

The results amplify the antedating role of employee engagement on creativity and innovation in the workplace. Notably, employee engagement is an important area that libraries should concentrate in order to nurture creative and innovative behavior in staff and hence increased productivity and performance excellence in the library department. This initiative helps to unleash creativity and innovation in the workplace. It is expedient not to separate employee engagement from staff creativity and innovation at the workplace. This is because engaged employee are exhilarated in their duties and tasks which make them to think creatively and to go extra mile. Empirical literatures have shown that engaged employees are enthusiastic and are likely to employ creative energy in their job. This study concludes that employee engagement assume a critical precursor role to creativity and innovation at the workplace. The two phenomena require almost similar conditions in order to thrill. These conditions comprise of internal factors, external factors, the organizational culture and leadership. This affirmed the proposed integrated model of employee engagement on creativity and innovation which provide opportunity for libraries to re-examine their strategies for spurring employee creativity and innovation by strengthening the relevant constructs.

The level of staff engagement and the nature of creativity and innovation exhibited in the workplace differ from one library to another but largely depend on how each configures and manipulates the aforementioned constructs. Library managers stood out as central catalysts during the configuration process and play important facilitative role of ensuring high engagement level of their staffs. This would ultimately lead to substantive outcome of creativity and innovation in the library. It is therefore paramount for library leadership to ensure sustained employee engagement in order to nurture a creative and innovative environment.

A trustful work environment, job empowerment and some sense of autonomy are not only relevant in enhancing employee engagement but are also significant in encouraging creative and innovative

thinking amongst library staffs. Other internal enhancement factors include; hastening the meaningfulness of work, value congruence, involvement in decision making, expression of confidence in high performance and the feeling of ones impacts on the success of the organization as well as the psychological status of an individual staff.

The level of employee engagement and the nature of creativity and innovation in the library can also be hampered or enhanced by external factors which are beyond library department. These include organization policies on employees, general organizational culture, social life and other related factors.

Recommendation

This study adds to the growing body of research and literature that emphasizes the importance of employee engagement in fostering or inhibiting creativity and innovation at the work place. The study recommends on greater need to revamp employee work environment in order to stimulate creative and innovative behavior amongst library staffs. The senior staff entrusted with employees' supervision in the library should be trained on leadership dimensions since their role is critical in enhancing job meaningfulness to their staffs –which have significant impacts on employee engagement and consequently on staff creativity and innovation in the library.

There is need to challenge existing assumptions and patterns of thinking in library set-up in order to empower library staff with a learning environment. Also needed is organization redesign focused on the creation of atmosphere of high engagement and creative work processes and systems. Library leadership should foster for staff dialogue that leads to a clear, common view of what high engagement means to the organization. They should also evaluate every decision and management practices, and reflect on how that affects their employees, with careful assessment on their subsequent implications on workplace creativity and innovation. It is important for library managers to foster atmosphere which inspires their staff to think beyond the routine tasks and duties. Soliciting for staffs views and involving them in decision making at all levels is critical in shaping up creative and innovative environment in the library. Staffs need to feel trusted and empowered, and be encouraged in order for them to provide weird ideas that can drastically change the status quo. The set norms and systems that do not lead to the prescribed atmosphere in the library should be re-addressed. In order to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of employee engagement, the study recommends determination, identification and embracement of section-specific key drivers.

Organizational culture that promotes conducive environment for creative ideas should be nurtured. This translates to deliberate measures and actions that fosters, expects and rewards high engagement of library staffs. The outcomes will spur creativity and innovation that will ultimately results to high productivity and improved performance excellence in the library.

Recommendation for Further Research

There is need for empirical determination of percentage impact level of the 'Leadership and Organizational Culture', 'Internal and External Enhancement Factors' constructs of employee engagement since they are statistically significant in shaping up an atmosphere for staff creativity and innovation at the workplace. Moreover, employee engagement is not the only factor for creativity and

innovation in the workplace. This indicate a need to measure the relative weight exerted by employee engagement vis-à-vis other antecedents of creativity and innovation at the workplace.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

The Role of Employee Engagement in Revitalizing Creativity and Innovation in the Workplace: A Survey of Selected Libraries in Meru County

Dear Information Professional,
I am developing a conference paper and would appreciate your assistance in responding to the following questionnaire. The information provided will inform libraries on requisite measures and strategies for spurring employee creativity and innovation. Your honest opinion will be very much appreciated. The information provided in this questionnaire will be strictly used for the purpose of this research only.

Thank you, Paul Gichohi, Kenya Methodist University

Kindly tick or put X in the space provided the appropriate response on each question.

a) Choose your Library
    1. [   ] Kenya Methodist University Library
    2. [   ] Meru University Library
    3. [   ] Meru District Library

b) Indicate your gender
    1. [   ] Male
    2. [   ] Female

c) What is your current position in the library?
    1. [   ] Head librarian
    2. [   ] Senior Librarian
    3. [   ] Librarian
    4. [   ] Assistant Librarian
    5. [   ] Senior Library Assistant
    6. [   ] Library Assistant
    7. [   ] Library Attendant/Clerk
    8. [   ] Others, please specify_____

d) What is your years of work experience specifically at your current library
    1. [   ] Less than 1 year
    2. [   ] Between 1 and 3 years
    3. [   ] Between 4 and 7 years
    4. [   ] Between 8 and 14 years
    5. [   ] From 15 years and above

e) My age bracket is
    1. [   ] Between 20 and 30 years
    2. [   ] Between 31 and 39 years
    3. [   ] From 40 years and above

f) Nature of my current job tenure is
    1. [   ] Contract
    2. [   ] Permanent and pensionable
    3. [   ] Casual

g) My highest completed level of education and professional qualification is
    1. [   ] O-level
    2. [   ] Certificate
    3. [   ] Diploma
    4. [   ] Bachelor Degree
    5. [   ] Postgraduate Degree (Master or PhD)

h) Engagement Construct in the Library

With reference to your library, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following aspects of Employee Engagement?

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Aspects of Employee Engagement in the library		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Meaningfulness of work and confidence in high performance	I know what is expected of me at work	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager helps me understand the importance of my work to the overall effectiveness of the organization.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager believes that I can handle demanding tasks and also in my ability to improve even when I make mistakes	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager expresses confidence in my ability to perform at a high level	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager makes it more efficient for me to do my job by keeping the rules and regulations simple	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager allows me to make important decisions quickly to satisfy users' needs	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Commitment and involvement in decision making	The atmosphere and conditions at my work station makes me feel my job is important	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	I can concentrate on and often think of my job when I am at my work station	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager makes many decisions together with me; including those that affects me and the strategic decisions	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager gives all library staff a chance to voice their opinions	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My supervisor/manager communicates timely feedback and teaches our staff how to solve problems on their own	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Existence of conducive and empowering atmosphere in the workplace	I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	I have the authority that I need to do my job well	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	I am encouraged to take ownership of my work	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My work activities and tasks are personally important and meaningful to me	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	I feel free and inspired to bring my best to work	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Individual competence and impact on organization	I am confident about my ability to do my jobs	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	I have mastered the skills necessary for my job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	My impact on what happens in my department is significant and evident	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

i) **Creativity and Innovation Constructs in the Library**

In your job, how often do you indulge yourself in the following actions when seeking to accomplish an assignment or solve a problem?						
Aspects of creativity and innovation in the library		**Never (1)**	**Rarely (2)**	**Occasionally (3)**	**Frequently (4)**	**Very Frequently (5)**
Problem identification and information searching	1. I spend considerable time trying to understand the nature of the problem if it occurs at my immediate workplace.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	2. I think about the problem from multiple perspectives.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	3. I usually decompose a difficult problem/assignment into parts to obtain greater understanding.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	4. I consult a wide variety of information sources and other people for ideas and for solutions to problems that I face in the event of executing my duties.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	5. I generate a significant number of alternatives to the same problem before I choose the final solution.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	6. I try to come up with ways of solving problems –ways that are somehow different from what people are used of.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	7. I enjoy finding solutions to complex problems, creating new procedures, improving existing services /products and processes on the tasks assigned to me.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

To what extent do you think the following statements are significant in encouraging creativity and innovation in your library?						
Aspects of creativity and innovation in the library		**Very insignificant (1)**	**insignificant (2)**	**Moderate (3)**	**Significant (4)**	**Very Significant (5)**
Atmosphere for creativity and innovation	1. Staff having freedom to come up with new and practical ideas, better means to achieve goals or performing tasks, and fresh approaches and solutions to problems.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	2. Staff being challenged to search out for new ideas on technologies, processes, techniques, and or services/products.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	3. Staff being regarded as a good source of creative and innovative ideas.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	4. Staff being not afraid to take risks.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
	5. Leader having a lot of trust with subordinate staffs	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	6. Staff being given challenging tasks	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	7. Staff having opportunity to exhibit creativity and innovation, promote, and develop adequate plans and schedules for the implementation of new ideas.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

To what extent do you agree with the following aspects of Staff creativity and innovation in the library?

Aspects of creativity and innovation in the library		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Leader encouragement for creativity and innovation	1. My supervisor/manager encourages, respects, emphasizes and reinforces new ideas coming from library staffs.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	2. My supervisor/manager allows and expects employees to try to solve the same problems in different ways.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	3. My supervisor/manager rewards and recognizes employees who are creative and innovative in doing their job.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Empowerment	4. I regard myself as an employee who wants to have greater decision-making power.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	5. Having certain degree of power and freedom to decide at my workplace is an important part of feeling good about myself and enlightens my inner person.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	6. I would feel disadvantaged and low self-esteem if I don't have the freedom to decide on things related to my daily tasks.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	7. My immediate supervisor/manager gives me the support I need to do my job well.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	8. My immediate supervisor/manager encourages me on my progress and development in my career and profession.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
	9. My organization invests in its staffs' learning and development.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

10. The operating procedure in in my library encourages and helps me to develop passion for my work.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
11. There are sufficient incentives to perform well at my organization.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

j) Feel free to state here what you think should be done in order to encourage creativity and innovation at your library.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you very much for your time and valuable responses.

Paul Gichohi, Kenya Methodist University