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Determining the Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Public Sector Employees' Commitment in Kenya

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Abstract:
This study aims to determine the influence of emotional intelligence on the commitment of public employees in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties, Kenya. The study's objective was to determine the influence of emotional self-awareness on the public sector employees' commitment in the selected Counties as the representation of Kenya. The study reviewed three theories of emotional intelligence influencing employee commitment and one theory on organizational commitment. These theories were; Multiple -intelligence theory, Coleman's emotional Quotient theory, and Organizational commitment theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design for data collection and analysis. A stratified random sampling technique has been used to draw a sample size of 126 respondents from the target population of 20600 public sector employees in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a and Makueni Counties. A total of 206 Questionnaires were used as data collection instruments. Quantitative and Qualitative methods were used for data analysis. A pilot study using 13 Questionnaires was carried out for validity and reliability testing. Descriptive data were analyzed in frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistical analysis was used to show the cause-effect among the variables, whereby linear regression analysis (ANOVA) was applied. Chi-square f–test was used on the regression analysis results for hypotheses testing. The findings were presented in tables and figures. The p-value for the independent variable co-efficient indicated that emotional self-awareness has a moderately significant positive influence on the employee commitment to the public sector in Kenya.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, emotional self-awareness, employees, public sector and organizational commitment

1. Introduction

Emotional intelligence has become a popular topic since the publication of a bestseller by Goleman in October 1995. Although the construct of emotional intelligence is not new, its application in the workplace has begun at a somewhat frenzied pace during the past decades (Bharwarey et al.). The precursors of these efforts extend past the second-world war era with extensive studies conducted by the U.S.A office of personnel management and the work of David Mac clelland at Harvard University that focused on the importance of emotionally and socially intelligent behavior among managers (Bar-On, 2007).

Although multiple definitions have been proposed, they all share the view that commitment is a psychological state that characterizes an employee's relationship with his/her organization and has implications for that employee's continuing membership in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

However, the nature of the described psychological state has traditionally differed among these definitions of organizational commitment (Becker, 1960; Monwday, Sleers & Porter, 1979; Wiener, 1982). In order to acknowledge these differences, Meyer and Allen (1991) developed a three-component model of organizational commitment. The first component is an affective commitment which refers to an employee's emotional attachment to identification with and involvement in an organization. The second component is continuance commitment which refers to an employee's perception of being associated with leaving an organization. Lastly, a normative commitment refers to an employee's feelings of obligation to remain in the organization.

Studies conducted in many parts of the globe recently indicate that emotional intelligence is emerging as a soft skill related to employee commitment. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and regulate emotions in self and others and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Meyer, Salvey & Caruso, 1997). In Canada (Wong & Law, 2002), an exploratory study on the effect of leaders and followers concluded that the emotional intelligence of the follower affects job performance and satisfaction while the leader's emotional intelligence affects satisfaction and organizational behavior. Emotional intelligence mediates the influence of work satisfaction and organization. The study set out to ascertain the influence of emotional intelligence on public sector employees in Kenya.

2. Literature Review

The early emotional intelligence theory was initially developed by the work and writing of psychologist Dr. Howard Gardner in 1983. Gardener stated that intelligence was not a single ability. Instead, there were different bits of intelligence for processing different information. For example, verbal information has its intelligence for processing, known as linguistic intelligence; therefore, emotional processing has its intelligence known as emotional intelligence. Dr. Gardner proposes eight different bits of intelligence to account for a broader range of human potentials in children and adults.

Multiple intelligence theory revolutionized how we understand intelligence as it challenged the idea of a single intelligence Quotient where human beings are said to have one central "computer" where intelligence is housed. Howard proposed that multiple types of human intelligence represent different ways of processing information (Gardner, 2017).

Verbal intelligence (linguistic intelligence) refers to an individual's ability to analyze information and produce work that involves oral and written language, such as speech books and e-mails. Logical (mathematical intelligence) (Tamlimson, 2014) describes the ability to develop equations and proofs, make calculations, and solve abstract problems.

Coleman's emotional Quotient theory was advanced by Daniel Coleman in 1990. Coleman (1990) argued that Intelligent Quotient (conventional intelligence) is too narrow and that areas of emotional intelligence dictate and enable us to be successful. Coleman argued that leadership success is more than I.Q (Intelligence Quotient) which tends to be the traditional measure of intelligence, ignoring essential behavior and character elements. Coleman further argues that there are academically brilliant people who are socially and intra-personally inept (Coleman, 2017). That means despite possessing a high I.Q. rating, success in leadership does not automatically follow. Leadership requires adequate emotional self-awareness, control, and management of one's emotions and those of others. Coleman identified five Emotional Quotient domains: knowing one's emotions, managing one's emotions, motivating one's self, recognizing and understanding other peoples' emotions, and managing relationships. The mixed model defines emotional intelligence as an ability with social behavior traits and competencies. Coleman popularized emotional intelligence and made a new and extraordinary claim about its importance, including that it is as powerful and at times more powerful than I.Q. Goleman's mixed model conceptualizes the emotional intelligence framework and outlines five competencies associated with emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self–motivation, social-awareness or empathy, and social skills or relationship-management. This was revised in 2000 based on statistical analysis conducted by Boyatzis and Goleman, and the five clusters which were integrated into the following four dimensions which form the basis of the model which are: Self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship-management, and internal motivation (Boyatzis & Goleman, 2000).

The mixed model by Goleman is a competency-based approach to emotional intelligence in the workplace. The model was in terms of performance, abilities, personality, and their effects on the workplace (Goleman, 2012). This model was created and adapted to predict the effectiveness and personal outcomes in the workplace and the organizational fields (Goleman, 2010). The theoretical model is significant to the study as it views emotional intelligence's intrinsic and extrinsic nature as an individual not operating in isolation. It further considers other factors that can influence employees' intelligence within organizations. It is essential to understand (Goleman, 2013) the idea of learned competence because emotional competencies represent the level to which a person dominates specific abilities or skills based on his/her emotional intelligence. The level of emotional intelligence and its dimensions make a person more effective in their work. This theory is relevant to the study as it links emotional intelligence and employee commitment which is influenced by the workplace environment (Coleman, 2015).

First, it is imperative for the managers to be aware of their emotions and affect other people around them and therefore be able to express and use these emotions intelligently as part of their leadership skills to instill commitment.

Secondly, the theory presents the idea that emotional intelligence as a competence can be enhanced, and employees can train to improve their soft skills factor in emotional Intelligence. This theory is essential to the construct, emotional self-awareness of emotional intelligence, and the affective dimension of commitment in employees as it addresses internal motivation.

Organizational commitment theory was advanced by Aaron Cohen (2003) and reviewed by the same in 2014. The theory states that employees are said to be committed to the organization when they are willing to extend effort on behalf of the organization and when they desire to maintain their connection with the organization. Therefore, organizational Commitment theory is relevant to the study's dependent variable as it relates to employee commitment in their workplace regarding affection, faithfulness, attitudes, and intentions (Cohen, 2003).

The theory has a three-component model: continuance commitment, affective commitment, and normative commitment. Continuance commitment refers to the degree an employee believes that leaving the organization would be costly. Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment to an organization, and normative commitment refers to the degree an employee feels obligated to the organization and the feeling that staying is the right thing to do. These three components are significant to the study as they form the sub-variables of the dependent variable. Aaron (2014) argues that commitment is not based on just one of the three components but on an interaction between the three to give positive results.

2.1. Empirical Studies and Hypothetical Development

Studies conducted in many parts of the globe in the recent past indicate that emotional intelligence is emerging as a soft skill related to employee commitment. Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and regulate emotions in self and others and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions (Meyer, Salvey & Caruso, 1997).

In Canada, Wong & Law (2002), in an exploratory study on the effect of leader and follower, concluded that the emotional intelligence of the follower affects job performance and satisfaction while the leader's emotional intelligence affects satisfaction and organizational behavior. Emotional intelligence mediates the influence of work satisfaction and organizational commitment. The job may remain the same but change in perception impacts either positively or negatively on employee commitment (Tukiman & Gumant, 2018). Tukiman and Gumant conducted a study in Indonesia on the mediating role of emotional intelligence on employee performance.

Morgan (2011) indicates that self-awareness among managers and employees is essential and requires the concerned to be open-minded because commitment is the cause – and – effect of relational management between employees and the work environment. Through this exploration, managers and employees can use self-awareness because it will improve projections of their skills in their interactions in the workplace (Hacioglu, 2015, from Malaysia). Furthermore, self-management behavior can influence employee career services via influencing the objectives of the organizational conditions. Employees with a high degree of active self–management will more likely be perceived as able and stand out in the organization. This, in turn, earns them rewards with high pay increasing their continuance commitment (Daniel, 2015).

At the regional level, Nikhaslat and Hojab (2012) from Cairo, Egypt, state that employee loyalty is closely related to the extent to which an employee views himself/herself attached to the organization. Employees' feelings about their work are essential to commit to the organization (Dalgero, 2014) from Egypt. Some research studies reveal that emotions such as excitement or enthusiasm could stimulate employees to provide better service, complete work assignments, or contribute to the organization. Conversely, negative emotions such as anxiety and fear would result opposite (Song et al., 2010). Psychological factors have been seen as an antecedent of employee commitment. The nature of relationships and the ability to sustain these relationships have an impact on the commitment in an organization. A study by Salami (2008) on the demographic and psychological factors predicting the organizational commitment of industrial workers in Nigeria showed that work role resilience, motivation to succeed, job satisfaction, and entire demographic factors except for gender significantly predict organizational commitment. Among psychological factors, emotional intelligence was proposed as an essential predictor of crucial organizational outcomes (Van & Viswesvaran, 2004).

In the case of Dangote flour mills workers, Bostwana on the impact of emotional intelligence on employees 'commitment revealed that emotional intelligence is relevant for predicting organizational commitment. Employees require managing their emotions in order to remain committed coefficient determination between emotional intelligence and organization was found to be at 56% (Ugunu, 2014). Therefore, Ugunu (2014) recommended that organizations require new employees to participate in organizational socialization programs that include emotional intelligence tests.

Adeyemo (2007) from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, concluded a study on emotional intelligence by stating that the extent to which employees are connected emotionally to their organization and the extent to which it gives them joy, excitement, surprise, and satisfaction, to that extent will employees be committed. Self-awareness enhances organizational commitment and the expected results.

Lafegha et al. (2017) recommend that private hospitals in Nigeria intensify their efforts in developing workers' self-awareness skills and self-management through training so that the workers' commitment can be improved to give the hospitals a competitive edge. Lafegha et al. (2017) conducted an empirical reflection on emotional intelligence and employee commitment in private hospitals in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, which indicated a strong correlation between the two variables.

Putter (2019), in a thesis presented to the North West University on South Africa's organizational commitment and emotional intelligence in higher education, indicated a correlation between the two variables.

Organizations in South Africa have focused mainly on incorporating emotional intelligence into leadership development programs and talent management. In essence, emotional intelligence has been reserved mainly for the upper levels of management within large corporations and multinationals (Dennis, 2010). Dennis discloses that emotional intelligence training has not filtered through actual training events for employees. This is despite the organization's recognition of emotional development and commitment to developing all the employees.

The current economic climate and its effect on training budgets have a significant role in this instance (Dennis, 2010). However, Dennis continues to state that developing emotional intelligence in South Africa's workplace would make the country more productive and successful because developing emotional intelligence contains many stress-reducing elements for the individual and organizations. This includes decreasing conflicts, improving relationships and understanding, and increasing stability, continuity, and harmony (Litha-Lithu, 2010).

Extensive work and studies have been done on the role of emotional intelligence in the workplace in South Africa. One of the recent studies was conducted by Mayer, Rudolf, and Suitee (2017) on emotional intelligence in South African women leaders in higher education leadership. The purpose of the study was to identify strengths and possible areas of improvement. The researchers also wanted an insight into the emotional intelligence of the women leaders because this is an essential component associated with effective leadership qualities, creativity, and innovation, as well as empathetic communication needed in challenging higher education institutions. The findings indicated that women leaders mainly refer to:

- Intra-personal emotional quotient followed by the emotional interpersonal quotient,
- Adaptability,
- Stress management,
- Interpersonal relationship,
- Problem-solving empathy,

- Emotional awareness,
- Assertiveness,
- Impulse control, and
- Social responsibility.

These sub-variables of emotional intelligence affect employee commitment in a significant way.

At the local level, Nzomo (2013) from Kenya states that leaders (school principals) should use their emotional intelligence to generate and maintain excitement, enthusiasm, confidence, optimism as well as cooperation and trust in institutions which would translate to employee (teachers) commitment in schools or teaching services.

Ayiro and Sang (2014) from Kenya, in a study on the influence of emotional intelligence and leadership of quality assurance managers in Kenya Universities, argue that leaders need more than just traditional and technical managerial skills. They need soft skills like emotional intelligence in order to make a difference in terms of organizational performance. There is, therefore, a need to examine the influence of emotional intelligence on employee commitment which is closely linked to organizational performance. The study established that emotional intelligence enhances the quality of the service the managers offer as an individual emotional intelligence is a key determinant of effective leadership. Employee perception of their managers' effectiveness is strongly related to emotional intelligence. Their study further established a necessary pre-requisite training of staffing self-evaluation and peer-reviewing. Therefore, investment in emotional intelligence development in quality assurance managers in the universities is necessary. The involvement of peer-reviewers from other institutions within and outside the country for self-assessment exercises can enrich the process. However, selection must be made carefully to justify the high cost (Ayiro & Sang, 2014).

The public sector is one very significant factor that supports counties' development. It includes the management and administrative machinery in which human capital is a critical commitment. The public sector is also the driving force behind the counties' economic development and remains the largest service provider offering services for all the devolved functions. Despite the various policies and transformative strategies introduced in the public sector in Kenya, there is still a vacuum that tarnishes the image of the public sector (Siti, 2014). The public sector is under pressure to function more proactively and improve performance and service delivery systems, including the role of the county officials in all the devolved departments. Quite evident in the pursuit of greater excellence in the public sector, the behavior of the public officers has become the symbol of the quality of county government services. Therefore, emphasis should be given to behavioral, emotional, and organizational commitment (Rangriz, 2011). More significant organizational commitment at the counties is needed to restore the lost confidence. However, the efficiency and effectiveness of human resources towards improving organizational commitment cannot be achieved if human resources work in an emotionally strained environment. Such an environment will result in rebellious feelings, inner protests, and job dissatisfaction translating to low organizational commitment (Negosesau, 2012).

Studies conducted previously indicate that Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties have challenges with employee commitment. A study by Wawira et al. (2015) established a lack of employee commitment in the Counties' governments due to career stagnation, work-related stress, and lack of job performance. The study showed a positive correlation between the above components with a significance of 0.875 for lack of skills and 0.659 for work-related stress levels. Previous studies indicate that service delivery in the County Governments is just on average and that commitment of the service providers is not satisfactory (Tilas, 2014). The essence of devolution was to bring service closer to citizens, but the county government's performance depends on its workforce's commitment.

Studies on the influence of emotional intelligence on employee commitment in Kenya remain unexplored, as shown by the fact that literature on emotional intelligence and employee commitment for the County is scarce. However, the subject has global attention, evidenced by the many articles and studies on the same. Unfortunately, research on the influence of emotional intelligence has not been conducted on Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni public sector employees. Therefore, with background, the researcher selected the Counties as the study context.

The influence of emotional intelligence has an emerging track of being linked to employee commitment. Emotional intelligence has become increasingly popular in the competitive world, especially regarding human behavior. Emotional issues are silent factors that affect employees' commitment subtly (Goleman, 2014). Any organization with a highly committed workforce has a competitive edge, making soft skills like emotional intelligence critical (Alavi, 2013). Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties public sector employees, like all other public sectors in Kenya, are faced with employee commitment challenges (KIPPRA, 2018).

The consequences of low organizational commitment have far-reaching effects on organizations which include: high absenteeism, tardiness, low productivity, poor quality of work, and high turnover. The study, therefore, sought to determine the influence of emotional self-awareness on the public sector employees' commitment to filling this gap.

3. Methodology of the Study

The study adopted a descriptive survey design that combined both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis as it sought to establish the relationship between emotional intelligence and public sector employees' commitment to Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties. This research design allows for more divergent findings from the respondents, and inferences made can be stronger (Creswell, 2003; Wiley, 2009; Driscol, Yeboah, Saliba & Ruper, 2007). Using this design also helps overcome the weaknesses of a single research approach, such as lack of in-depth information and failure to capture information that is not factored in the questionnaires. Ivonkova and Sick used the descriptive research design (2002), and Jogula and Pansiri (2011) and their findings supported the view that this research method strengthens in-depth findings and inferences of social phenomena compared to a single method. The target population of this study was the 20600 public employees in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties, Kenya. A

sample size of 206 respondents was determined from the target population of 20600 public sector employees in said Counties.

The study used a structured and semi-structured questionnaire for data collection and a Likert scale to measure the ratings of items by the participants concerning the various variables under investigation. Likert scales are preferred because they are easy to complete and analyze data (Golembiewski, 2005).

Correlation and regression techniques and the analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used to test the study hypothesis. The correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between emotional self-awareness and public sector employees in Kenya by computing Pearson product-moment correlation (Cooper & Shindler, 2011). A linear regression model was used to derive inferential statistical indicators like the correlation-coefficient of determination, F-statistics, and the p-value. Qualitative data was generated from the semi-structured question responses being analyzed and classified into various themes. The numerical values were then calculated into percentages.

3.1. Hypothesis Testing

The objective was to influence emotional self-awareness on the commitment of the public sector employees in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties, Kenya.

H0: Emotional-self has no positive influence on the public sector in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties, Kenya. A simple regression analysis was conducted between the two variables using the analysis of variance (ANOVA) and F-Test to establish whether to accept or reject the null hypotheses. The F-Test of hypotheses will be based on the statistical significance of R2 (as an indicator of goodness of fit) of the full model at a level of $P<0.05$. A null hypothesis (H0) will be rejected, and an alternate H1 will be accepted. If the calculated F- statistic is greater than F-critical and vice versa (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The regression analysis findings returned a significant model fit of the dependent variable for all the independent variables. This implied that emotional intelligence, which constructs emotional self-awareness, emotional social awareness, emotional self-management, and emotional relational-management, influences employees' commitment. In other words, employees' emotional intelligence affects their commitment to work. This finding concurs with the findings of Jalal, Haghighat, Monfared, and Ahmad (2015).

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative study analysis was carried out on the independent and dependent variables using the content analysis method. In addition, the findings were drawn from the semi-structured questionnaire's responses using the content analysis method.

Figure 1

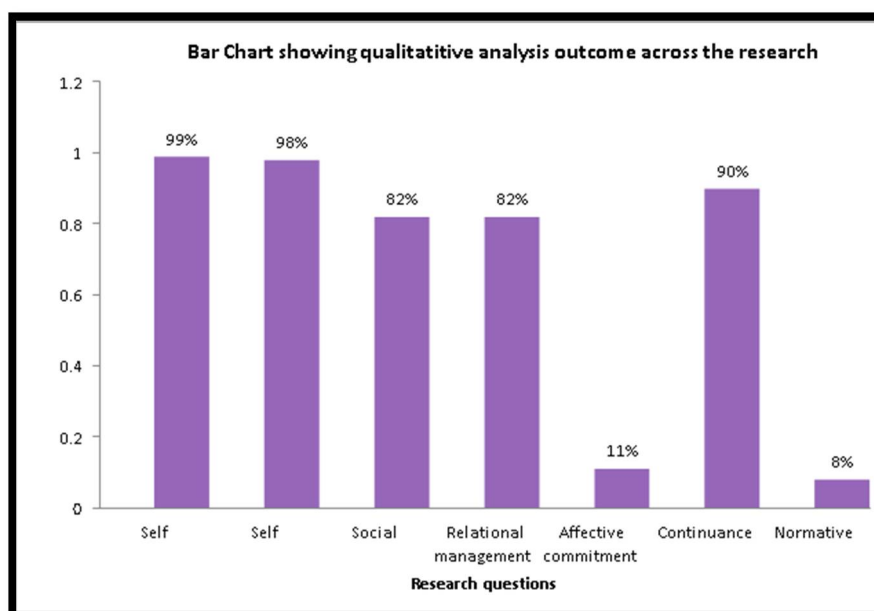On Self-awareness, 90% of the respondents indicated that they could assess their emotions as they experience them. However, 1% expressed their lack of ability to tell when they are bitter or desperate. The respondents indicated that they were aware of their emotions through

- Their verbal outbursts,
- Talking too much,
- Feeling low and un-energized,
- Lack of concentration at their workplace,

- Losing interest in their assigned tasks,
- Feeling unworthy,
- Being rude to fellow workmates,
- Feeling they want to be alone,
- Feeling positive about their work,
- Desiring to find solace and
- Having a poor relationship with workmates

These experiences indicated to the respondents that they were angry, bitter, anxious, desperate, or excited. However, it is difficult for adults to admit that they cannot assess their emotions.

On affective commitment, 11% of the respondents indicated they are passionate about their work and would do overtime without pay. Some even indicated that they have been doing it. "I am so passionate about my work." Notably, this sentiment mostly came from workers in the health sector; 89% of the respondents indicated that they would not work overtime without pay. These respondents indicated they would feel deprived, exploited, demotivated, and misused; others said they would do it to please the boss but later ask for compensation. Some respondents indicated plainly, "No pay, No work- It is a torture and exploitation of oneself. I would feel wasted and mistreated. Honestly, I would feel deprived and mistreated". These respondents would work overtime to avoid punitive action from their seniors. One respondent indicated she would be bitter if asked to work overtime without pay.

The majority of the respondents felt that the values and policies of their sectors were friendly and manageable. In addition, communication was rated as fairly good.

On continuance commitment, 92% of the respondents indicated that they are in their jobs for financial benefits. "Money, money, and more money" were the sentiments of one of the respondents. Other responses were "To pay my bills," "definitely for pay," and "to be comfortable" (benefits). The 8% indicated that they were in their jobs because they were passionate about what they were doing and were determined to shape the future of the coming generations. These sentiments mainly came from the health and education sectors.

Regarding the alternative workplace, many respondents indicated they would leave for greener pastures." However, a few respondents indicated they had no choice but to remain due to age, family responsibilities, and the loans they were servicing. Still, on these issues, some felt they had to remain in their jobs "to remain relevant and afloat." However, a respondent indicated, "I like the environment and the pay, hence no need to leave."

On normative commitment, 8% of the respondents indicated that they would remain because obligation they owe to their seniors. One of such respondents said, "Yeah, my seniors depend on me so much. I think my leaving would leave a gap that might never be replaced." A few of the respondents felt indebted to their students and learners. However, 92% of the respondents felt they were under no obligation to remain in their current workplace; only their workmates would miss them. Therefore, they are not under any obligation to remain.

4.2. Quantitative Analysis Result Presentation Descriptive Analysis

Frequency analysis was done across each item scale to establish the feeling of the respondents across each of the leading research questions. The tables below capture the feelings of the respondents across the 5-Likert scale. Further, the general feeling concerning the main research questions under the summated scale in each case has been computed. Finally, the tables display the summary of the SPSS frequency analysis in terms of percentages across the Likert scale: SA (strongly agree), A (agree), UN (uncertain), D (disagree), and SD (strongly disagree).

	Sub-questions	SA	A	UN	DS	SD
1	I know when my anger is affecting my commitment	25.5	22.5	23.5	14.7	13.7
2	I am not aware when my fears of the unknown are affecting my commitment	26.5	27.5	23.5	17.6	4.9
3	I know when bitterness within me is affecting my commitment	17.6	38.2	13.7	22.5	7.8
4	I know when excitement is affecting my commitment	21.6	32.4	22.5	15.7	7.8
5	I know when feelings of hopelessness are affecting my commitment	30.4	26.5	21.6	15.7	5.9
6	I know how hopes for a brighter future affect my work commitment	26.5	27.5	19.6	16.7	9.8
7	Sometimes I do not know why I feel depressed while in my place of work	16.7	30.4	23.5	20.6	8.8
8	Often times I do not understand my feelings	22.5	18.6	22.5	22.5	13.7
	Summated Scale	23.4	28	21.3	18.3	9.1

Table 1: The Influence of Self-Awareness on Commitment of Public Sector Employees

Table 1 shows the result of the main research question: the influence of self-awareness on the commitment of public sector employees.

According to the summated scale, the respondents' general feeling was that 23.4% and 28% strongly agreed and agreed that self-awareness influences the commitment to work of various public sector employees. On the other hand, 21.3% were uncertain, while 18.25% and 9.1% strongly disagreed and disagreed that self-awareness influences public sector employees' commitment.

4.3. Result across the Sub-Questions

From the analysis above, 25.5% and 22.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they were aware when their anger was affecting their commitment to work, while 23.5% were uncertain. Approximately 14% of the respondents were unaware of when the anger affected their commitment. 26.5% and 27.5% of the respondents were unaware when their commitment was affected by the fear of the unknown. In comparison, 23.5% were uncertain. 17.6% and 4.9% strongly disagreed and disagreed that they were unaware that fear of uncertainty affected their commitment. 38.2% and 17.6% agreed that they were aware when internal bitterness affected their commitment, while 22.5% and 7.8% were unaware when internal bitterness affected their commitment, with 13.7% being uncertain. 21.6% and 32.4% of the respondents knew when excitement affected their commitment, while 22.5% and 7.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed that they were aware of when it affected their commitment. On hopelessness, 30.4% and 26.5% strongly agreed and agreed they were aware when the hopelessness affected their commitment, while 21.6% were uncertain with 15.7% and 5.9% strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively. 26.5% and 27.5% of the respondents were aware when the hope for a bright future affected their commitment. At the same time, 19.6% and 16.7% strongly disagreed and disagreed. 30.4% of the respondents were unaware when they were stressed. At the same time, a majority of respondents were uncertain they were aware when depressed, represented by 23.5%, with 20.6% and 8.8% being in disagreement. Most respondents understand their feelings often, represented by 22.5% and 13.7%, while 22.5% and 18.6% strongly agreed and agreed that they did not often comprehend their feelings.

4.4. Employee Commitment

Employee commitment was categorized into three types: normative, affective, and continuance commitment. The descriptive frequency analysis was done on each category; each commitment type's results are represented in the tables below.

	Sub-variables	SA	A	UN	DS	SD
1	I would be happy to work in this department for the rest of life	31.4	22.5	25.5	12.7	7.8
2	I love the way communication is done in my place of work	27.5	26.5	22.5	18.6	4.9
3	I set goals that are beyond the expectation of my employment	12.7	40.2	19.6	20.6	17.6
4	I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to this department	12.7	26.5	22.5	20.6	17.6
5	I am concerned about the quality of service we give to the public	35.3	27.5	15.7	13.7	7.8
6	I can recommend a friend to come and work in my department	30.4	25.5	21.6	14.7	7.8
7	I do not mind working overtime	19.6	28.4	21.6	19.6	10.8
8	I like the way my seniors support and value my effort at my place of work	29.4	17.6	23.5	19.6	9.8
	Summated Scale	24.9	26.8	21.6	17.5	10.5

Table 2: Affective Commitment

4.5. Results on the Main Research Question: Affective Commitment

Generally, the summated scales depict a 24.9% strong agreement that public sector employment is linked to an affective commitment of employees, with 26.8% further agreeing. On the other hand, 21.6% of the respondents were uncertain about affective commitment in public sector employment, while 17.5% and 10.5% expressed disagreement.

A result across the sub-questions shows that 31.4% of the respondents agreed strongly while 22.5% agreed they were happy to work in the particular department for the rest of their lives. However, 25.5% were uncertain about it, while 12.78% were unhappy with working in the particular department forever. Most respondents loved how communication at work was being done, with 27.5% strongly agreeing and 26.5% agreeing, while 22.5% were uncertain and 18.6% disagreed with the assertion. Furthermore, 40.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that they set goals beyond the expectations of their work, while 20.6% disagreed. However, 19.6% were uncertain.

Similarly, 26.5% agreed, while 20.6% disagreed that they did not feel a strong sense of belonging to their respective department, while 22.5% of the respondents were uncertain. Further, most of the respondents were concerned about the quality delivery of work, with 35.3% strongly agreeing while 27.5% agreeing. However, 13.7% of the respondents did not agree. Similarly, 30.4% and 25.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they would

recommend their friend to work in their department, while 21.6% were uncertain, with 14.7% disagreeing. Furthermore, most respondents were willing to work overtime, with 19.8% strongly agreeing and 25.5% agreeing; however, 21.6% of the respondents indicated they were not sure about working overtime, while 19.6% were not willing to work overtime. Lastly, 29.4% of respondents strongly agreed that they liked their seniors' treatment of them while at work, while 23.5% were uncertain about this. Further, 19.6% of the respondents disagreed that their seniors' treatment of them was likable.

	Sub-variables	SA	A	UN	DS	SD
1	It would be very difficult for me to leave my job now even if I wanted	23.5	26.5	23.5	14.7	10.8
2	The allowances I get make me stay in this job	20.6	15.7	29.4	19.6	14.7
3	I long for my retirement everyday	12.7	22.5	23.5	26.5	14.7
4	I have too few options to consider leaving this job	18.6	24.5	21.6	22.5	11.8
5	One of the major reasons I continue to remain in this job is that leaving would require a considerable personal sacrifice	24.5	19.6	25.5	16.7	13.7
6	The pay I get in this job meets my needs; hence I cannot leave	15.7	20.6	24.5	24.5	14.7
7	I often feel dissatisfied with my present job, but I cannot leave because my pay is good	15.7	18.6	20.6	28.4	16.7
8	I am often willing to work overtime	18.6	13.7	29.4	22.5	15.7
	Summated Scale	18.7	20.2	24.8	21.9	14.1

Table 3: Normative Commitment

Table 3 shows the result of the main research question: normative commitment. 18.7% of the respondents strongly agreed with normative commitment, with 20.2% further agreeing. However, a substantive majority of 24.8% expressed uncertainty about normative commitment, while 21.9% showed total disagreement towards it.

4.6. Result across the Sub-questions

A substantial majority of respondents were not willing to leave their job, as depicted by 23.5% strong agreement and 26.5% agreement; however, 23.5 were also uncertain about leaving their job even if they wanted while 14.7% totally disagreed. 20.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that work allowance contributes to their continued stay at work, while 29.4% were uncertain about this; however, 19.6% disagreed that work allowance keeps them at their current job. Similarly, 22.5% of respondents agreed that they were eagerly waiting for retirement, while a substantial majority of 23.5% was undecided about retirement while 26.5% were not eagerly waiting for retirement. 24.5% of the respondents agreed that they had limited options and could consider leaving their job, while 21.6% and 22.5% were uncertain and disagreed about it. What kept a majority of respondents at their job is the personal sacrifice that comes with leaving the job, with 24.5% strongly agreeing and 19.6% agreeing; however, 25.5% of the respondents were uncertain about this, while 16.7% totally disagreed.

Further, 24.5% of the respondents were uncertain and disagreed that their job wages meet their needs, while 20.6% agreed that their job wages meet their needs and thus cannot leave the job. Most respondents disagreed that even though their job is dissatisfying, it is the good pay that makes them not leave the job, while 20.6% were uncertain about this, with only 18.6% agreeing while 15.7% strongly agreeing. Lastly, 29.4% of the respondents were unsure whether they could work overtime while 22.5% disagreed on working overtime; however, 18.6% strongly agreed they could work overtime while 15.7% strongly disagreed.

	Sub-variables	SA	A	UN	DS	SD
1	I do have an obligation to remain in my current job	25.5	20.6	21.6	17.6	14.7
2	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my current workplace	29.4	19.6	20.6	19.6	10.8
3	I have benefited a lot in this job; it is difficult for me to change workstations	23.4	28.4	20.6	19.6	7.8
4	I like the support I get from my seniors in this department	22.5	28.4	18.6	21.6	8.8
5	This job has given me a lot of work experience I should use it here	32.4	27.5	19.6	12.7	7.8
6	It would be unfair for me to leave my current workplace	21.6	31.4	22.5	18.6	5.9
7	It would disappoint many people if I left my current job	29.4	25.5	13.7	20.6	10.8
8	I am rarely absent from work	27.5	20.6	21.6	20.6	9.8
	Summated Scale	26.5	25.3	19.9	18.9	9.6

Table 4: Continuance Commitment

Table 4 shows the results of the main research question: continuance commitment.

26.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with continuance commitment, with 25.3%% further agreeing. However, 19.9% expressed uncertainty about continuance commitment, while 18.9% and 9.6% disagreed.

4.7. Result across the Sub-Questions

There was a strong feeling of agreement among the respondents that they were obliged to remain in their current job, with 25.5% strongly agreeing and 20.6% agreeing to it; however, 21.6% of the respondents were undecided about their obligation toward the job while 17.6% showed total disagreement. 29.4% of the respondents were unwilling to leave their current work despite favorable terms, while 20.6% were uncertain, and 19.6% disagreed about leaving their current job. Most respondents agreed that they had significantly benefited from their current job and were unwilling to change departments, with 28.4 agreeing and 23.4% strongly agreeing. However, 20.6% and 19.6% were uncertain and disagreed, respectively. Most respondents agreed that their job had given them enough experience, with 32.4% strongly agreeing and 27.5% agreeing; however, 12.7% disagreed.

Similarly, 29.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that leaving their current job would disappoint people, with 25.5% further agreeing. However, 20.6% of the respondents disagreed that leaving their job would not be a disappointment to many people. Further, 20.6% of the respondents frequently missed work, while a majority of respondents expressed the agreement that they rarely missed work, where 27.5% strongly agreed while 20.6% agreed.

4.8. Inferential Statistical Analysis and Results

For this analysis, the data were transformed using SPSS. The averages for the scale responses were computed for each independent variable: Emotional self-awareness, emotional self-management, emotional social awareness, and emotional relationship. The dependent variable, which is the employee commitment, was obtained by finding the average responses for the affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Preceding the analysis were the diagnostic tests for the data across reliability, normality, multi-collinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation. The test results are presented below.
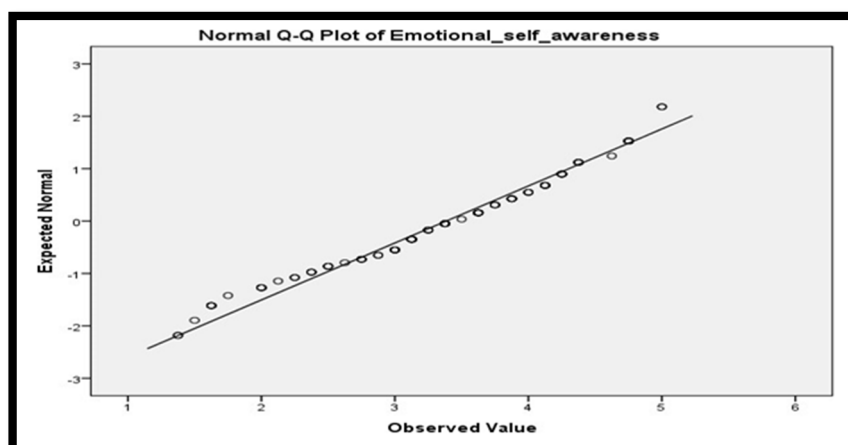

Figure 2: Diagnostic Tests Result for the Study Variables (Normal Q-Q Plot)

Normality using quantile-quantile plot, also known as Q-Q plot, for the independent variable (employee commitment), based on the findings, it was clear that the majority of the values observed were falling on a straight line meaning that the variable employee commitment was normally distributed. An extension of the independent variable was also done.

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Emotional_self_awareness	.084	102	.073	.967	102	.012

Table 5: Tests of Normality of Data

Since Regression analysis and ANOVA are robust normality tests and are the main proposed parametric tests, the transformed data fits these parametric tests even though 2 of the 5 variables are not normally distributed (Das & Imon, 2016). Further, for any sample n>20, any robust tests to normality will yield a consistent result for such data; hence since our sample size is 102, the proposed parametric tests will suffice.

4.8.1. Multi-collinearity

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for all the independent variables: Emotional self-awareness (VIF=1.23), Emotional self-management (VIF= 1.51), Emotional social-awareness (VIF=1.28), Emotional Relational Management (VIF= 1.05) show that there is little to no multi-collinearity among the variables which indicates that variables are not correlated.

4.8.2. Reliability Test

The Cronbach alpha reliability test on the variables showed that the research instruments were reliable, as indicated by the Cronbach alpha statistics: Emotional self-awareness (0.871) and employee commitment (0.851). Indicating that the variables have high-level reliability, Cronbach alpha >0.8, depicting that the transformed data is highly reliable.

4.8.3. Correlations Analysis

The upper half of the correlational matrix for the variables, which is shown below, depicts instances of moderate significant positive correlations between Emotional social awareness and Emotional self-management (.437, p-value = 0.00) and Emotional self-awareness and emotional self-management (.399, p-value=0.00). There is also a significant positive correlation between employee commitment and emotional relational management (.331, value=000) and significantly weak negative correlations between emotional self-awareness and emotional relational management (-.123, p-value=0.04). The rest of the variables' correlations are insignificant since their p-values are greater than the significance level (0.05).

Variables	Employee Commitment	Emotional Self-Awareness	Emotional Self-Management	Emotional Social-Awareness	Emotional Relational Management
Employee commitment	1	-0.028 P=.392	-0.008 P=.468	0.057 P=.285	0.331 P=.000
Emotional self-awareness	-	1	0.399 P=.000	0.064 P=.262	-0.174 P=.040
Emotional self-management	-	-	1	0.437 P=0.00	-0.123 P=.109
Emotional social- awareness	-	-	-	1	0.072 P=.236
Emotional relational management	-	-	-	-	1

Table 6: Correlations Matrix

4.8.4. Regression Analysis Results

Multiple regression was conducted to determine the relationship between dependent and independent variables where Employee commitment was the dependent variable while the independent variables were: Emotional social-awareness, Emotional social-awareness, Emotional self-management, and Emotional relational management.

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
					Change Statistics					
1	.334[a]	.111	.075	.59023	.111	3.036	4	97	.021	1.679

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional_relational_management, Emotional_social_awareness, Emotional_self_awareness, Emotional_self_management

b. Dependent Variable: Employee_commitment

Table 7: The Multiple Regression Result for the Model Summary

The regression model summary shows that the regression model is significant F (4, 97) = 0.021<0.05). The coefficient of determination for the model is 0.111, which shows that 11.1% of the variance in dependent variables is explained by the independent variables (employee commitment). Coefficient of determination is not an absolute indicator of goodness of regression fit because it does not explain the causation relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Also, the correctness of the regression model is not explained by r-squared, and thus it is not a conclusive indicator of model fitness (Renaud & Victoria-Feser, 2010) and thus should be used with other tests such as F-

test as earlier stated. The Dubbin Watson test statistic is 1.679, which depicts there are instances of positive autocorrelation in the data as this value is close to 2.0.

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.231	4	1.058	3.036	.021[b]
	Residual	33.792	97	.348		
	Total	38.023	101			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee_commitment

b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional_relational_management, Emotional_social_awareness, Emotional_self_awareness, Emotional_self_management

Table 8: Regression Model

The ANOVA results show that the regression sum of squares is 4.231, and the total sum of squares is 38.023, which implies that the model explains (10.58%) of the total variability in the data. Further, $F_{(4, 97)}$ = (3.036, p=0.021), indicating that the regression model obtained is significant.

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	2.221	.435		5.109	.000	1.358	3.083		
	Emotional_self_awareness	.016	.071	.024	.228	.820	-.124	.157	.814	1.228

Table 9: The Regression Coefficients for Emotional Self-Awareness

The tables above shows that model standardized beta coefficients for each independent variable are all positive. It indicates that all the independent variables positively impact employee commitment (dependent variable), with relational management being the greatest positive contributor to employees' commitment in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties. The regression model that can be obtained is represented as the beta coefficients for the two variables.

Employee commitment (Y) = 2.221+ 0.024*X1, where; Y=employees' commitment and X1= emotional self-awareness.

The p-value for the independent variable coefficient indicates that emotional self-awareness (β=0.24, p= 0.820) has no significant positive influence on the Public sector employees' commitment in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties, Kenya, since the p-values are greater than the level of significance (0.05).

5. Conclusions

The study concludes that the construct of emotional intelligence directly influences the commitment of public sector employees of Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties, as depicted by the significant model fit of regression analysis. This conclusion agrees with the findings of Taghrid, Suifan, Ayman, and Abalallah (2015) from Jordan University in their study on the influence of emotional intelligence on employee commitment which concluded in their finding that all the dimensions of emotional intelligence significantly affected the performance of employees. The construct of relational management is the most outstanding, with a significant positive impact on the performance of the public sector employees in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a Makueni Counties. The rest of the constructs influence the performance of public sector employees in Uasin Gishu, Murang'a, and Makueni Counties. However, this study's result did not significantly impact these three constructs.

This study recommends that the Public Service Commission of Counties Governments develop a framework within which the public sectors within the County can be educated on the role that soft managerial skills such as emotional intelligence can have in uplifting the commitment levels of employees. This recommendation is important because this study finding on social awareness as an emotional intelligence construct revealed that most employees agree that it significantly affects their commitment. Therefore, the public sectors need to be sensitized on how to read non-verbal cues on negative emotions that their respective employees may express.

Secondly, public sectors within County Governments should come up with targeted training to develop their employees' understanding of how emotional intelligence can influence the delivery of services and the organization's general performance. This recommendation is essential because it strategically positions an organization to reap the benefits of an emotionally intelligent workforce in spurring its growth. As Nyerere & Barasa (2015) and Kathungu (2010) alluded to, job performance strongly impacts employees' commitment. Thus, emotionally intelligent employees are needed if any organization is willing to achieve strategically.

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