

Interpersonal Relationship and Adjustment to Retirement among Retiree Teachers in Meru County, Kenya

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Abstract

Aging is viewed as a typical, unavoidable biological phenomenon that brings about a variety of life changes that necessitates multiple adjustments. Retirement is one of the most important life transitions. This transition poses substantial changes to many retirees that demand considerable personal adjustments. There is an increase in the number of retired teachers in Meru County in Kenya because majority of the pioneer teachers in Meru County have begun retiring since independence. This prompted the need to establish the relationship between interpersonal relationship and adjustment to retirement among retiree teachers in Meru County, Kenya. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study involved 318 respondents from a population of 1800 comprising of 600 retirees, 600 spouses of retirees and 600 close relatives of the retiree teachers. A sample of 318 respondents was selected, encompassed 106 retiree teachers, 106 spouses and 106 close relatives who participated in the study. Data was collected through questionnaires and Interview schedules. A pilot study was carried out and a Reliability of the instruments tested using split-half method. Quantitative data was analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. Descriptive statistics included frequencies, percentages, standard deviation and mean while Inferential statistics used was Wilcoxon signed rank test. Qualitative data collected was analyzed by classifying the responses into meaningful categories thematically. The findings of this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and adjustment to retirement. The study recommends that the teachers commission and other relevant government institutions may consider introducing post retirement counselling programmes and activities which could consider engaging the already retired teachers to help them handle retirement psychosocial effect.

Keywords: Interpersonal, Relationship, Adjustment Retirement

1. Introduction

Retirement is gradually becoming a topic of research in contemporary society. This is because it is one of the challenges associated with aging. Growing old is not easy and involves life changes which demand multiple adjustments requiring stamina, ability and flexibility. The loss of work through retirement is one of the major adjustments for aging individual (Eliopoulos, 2010). According to Atchley & Barusch, 2004, retirement may mean withdrawal from employment, change into a role with new norms, duties and rights, or a transition passage from middle adulthood to old age. It is one of the most important late life transitions. It is a transition that marks the end of middle age and the beginning of old age. Retirement therefore, is a major stage in adult development and it especially marks the split from middle years to old age. Van Solinge & Henkens, 2007 stated that the transition may involve substantial changes, demand considerable adjustment, and influence both positively and negatively on individuals' health and wellbeing.

According to Longino (2009), retirees go through six phases. The first phase is the pre-retirement phase when the employee is preparing to retire. Then there is the actual retirement date when the employees leave the organization and get farewell messages or even a farewell party. After the farewell, the next phase is the honeymoon phase where the retiree feels that they are now free to do all that they dreamt of doing during their working period. Once the honeymoon phase is over the retiree now faces the reality of retirement at the disenchantment phase. The retiree need to then re-orient himself or herself to face the new reality. Depending on how one re-orient themselves they can either properly adjust in retirement or end up living a messy retired life (Longino, 2009).

Challenges that are related to retirements can be psychosocial, psychological, healthy or financial. These challenges can betermeda stress, depression worry anxiety and attitude towards retirement (Rodda, Boyce & Walker, 2008). These challenges faced in retirement are related to many life circumstances for instance, family issues, housing issues, finances physical health and bridge work (Forster 2008). The nature of the retirement's anxiety involves fear and worries about an individual future as a result of cessation of active working life. Fears brought about by changes are inevitable but most people resist the change because it is never convenient (Bryant,

Jackson & Ames, 2008). Various issues with varying degrees may impact adjustment to retirement. Some issues may bring about a great sense of well-being to workers that moving away from demanding and or stressful career jobs, while it may also lead to reduced well-being for individual who lose their attachment, identities and social networks (Kim & Moen, 2002).

Interpersonal relationship is the ability to create good relationship between a person and others through interaction. Retired people feel lonely and isolated after leaving workmates. Other retired persons do not spend much time with their children and grandchildren as they would like (Klever, 2018). Kahn and Antonucci (1980) notes that social support is important to individual well-being throughout the life course both for its direct effects as well as capacity to moderate the effects of stress. Blazer (2006) reported that older adults with limited social support were 3.6 times more likely to pass on within the next five years than those with substantially support. Social support can also mediate the effects of adversity and other negative life circumstances, such as retirement, relocation, widowhood and illness (Cohen, 2004; DuPertuis, Aldwin, & Bosse, 2001).

A bulky of literature has been devoted to study adjustment to retirement, however less attention has been devoted to the interpersonal relationship and adjustments to retirement among retiree teachers in Meru county. Notable is that, retirement is a major shock, a point in which free time immensely increases, hence time use and other activities patterns could be rearranged. Transitions out of the labour force at older ages may have the potential to induce large changes in social networks, because after retirement, the opportunity to meet new people and interact with colleagues, diminishes, while there is more time to invest and strengthen existing relationships. However, robust research to evaluate relationship between interpersonal relationship and retirement of retiree teachers is scarce, so this paper intends to fill the gap.

2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine relationship between interpersonal relationship and adjustments to retirement among retiree teachers in Meru, County, Kenya.

3. Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study was to establish the relationship between interpersonal relationship and adjustments to retirement among retiree teachers in Meru, County, Kenya.

4. Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study sampled 318 respondents from a population of 1800 comprising of 600 retirees, 600 spouses of retirees and 600 close relatives of the retiree teachers. A sample of 318 respondents, comprising of 106 retiree teachers, 106 spouses and 106 close relatives were selected to participate in the study. Data was collected from retiree teachers and their spouses through questionnaires. Interview schedules were used to collect data from retiree teacher's close relatives to get in-depth information. Reliability of the instrument was determined through a pilot study to check on flaws, limitations or weaknesses in the instruments. All the instruments had a reliability coefficient of 0.7 and above. Quantitative data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.R statistical software was used to generate K10 scores and inferential statistics. (Wilcoxon) while SPSS version 23 was useful in generation of descriptive statistics, Descriptive statistics comprised of frequencies, percentages, standard deviation and mean while Inferential statistics engaged Wilcoxon signed rank test. Data was presented in cross tabulations, graphs and charts. Qualitative data collected was analyzed by classifying the responses into meaningful categories thematically.

5. Results of the Study

The study was set to determine the interpersonal relationship between adjustment to retirement among retiree teachers in Meru county Kenya. Information was obtained from 318 respondents and data analysis generated the following results.

5.1 Interpersonal Relationship and Adjustments to Retirement

The relationship between interpersonal relationship and adjustments to retirement was established using the responses from the retirees, their spouses and their close relatives. The responses were examined using the descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Data was collected using likert scale which was converted into Kessler Psychological Distress Scale. In the interpretation of results, higher scores indicated poor interpersonal relationships while lower scores indicated good interpersonal relationships. A score of 10-19 indicated good interpersonal

relationships, 20-24 moderate interpersonal relationships, 25-29 poor interpersonal relationships and 30-50 very poor interpersonal relationships. The K10 scores obtained were graphically represented in a histogram (figure10) The findings from the descriptive analysis of the retirees’ responses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Retirees’ Responses on Interpersonal Relationship and adjustments to Retirement

Variable 1	5	4	3	2	1	med	mode
My friends treat me with suspicion since retirement	59	13	6	5	23	5	5
My family members distanced themselves since retirement	36	39	6	3	22	4	4
I don’t trust my family members	36	28	14	5	23	4	5
I have no friends since retirement	29	41	9	6	21	4	4
I’m never happy since retirement	33	27	11	10	25	4	5
I hardly make friends since retirement	33	33	9	7	24	4	5
I’m often uninterested in the feelings of others since retirement	33	32	11	8	22	4	5
I like staying alone since retirement	40	26	12	5	23	4	5

Likert scale score strongly agree = 5 agree = 4, not sure =3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1. Med-median,

The results in Table 1 showed that retired teachers tended to agree that retiring made their family members distant themselves which led to distrust between the retirees and their family members. They also agreed that they have no friends since retirement, they are never happy since retirement, they hardly made friends since retirement, they were often uninterested in the feelings of others since retirement and that they liked staying alone since retirement. However, they strongly disagreed that their friends treat them with suspicion since retirement. The responses of the retirees’ spouses were also analyzed descriptively to find out the relationship between interpersonal relationship and retirement. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Retirees’ Spouses’ Responses on Interpersonal Relationships and adjustments to Retirement

Statement	5	4	3	2	1	med	mode
My spouse’s friends treat them with suspicion since retirement	18	27	15	2	44	3	1

My spouse's family members distanced themselves since retirement	21	45	16	21	3	4	4
My spouse doesn't trust the family members	16	45	36	3	6	4	4
My spouse has no friends since retirement	17	40	37	3	9	4	4
My spouse is never happy since retirement	32	52	8	3	11	4	4
My spouse hardly make friends since retirement	22	42	27	4	11	4	4
My spouse is often uninterested in the feelings of others since retirement	26	33	31	5	11	4	4
My spouse likes staying alone since retirement	38	24	11	26	7	4	5

Likert scale score strongly agree = 5 agree = 4, not sure =3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree = 1. *Med*-Median.

The results in Table 2 showed that the spouses of the retirees tended to agree that the retirees' family members distanced themselves since retirement, the retiree didn't trust their family members, the retiree had no friends since retirement, the retirees were never happy since retirement, the retirees hardly made friends since retirement, the retirees were often uninterested in the feelings of others since retirement and liked staying alone since retirement. However, the spouses were not sure if their retirees were treated with suspicion by their friends since they retired. According to these findings the retired teachers suffer loneliness and rejection from friends and relatives. This is agreeing with the findings by van Solinge and Henkens (2008) that retirement brings loneliness, disillusionment, boredom and feelings of uselessness. Employees can be helped manage these feelings through retirement counseling as recommended by Osborne (2012). He noted that proper counselling assists retired teachers enjoy their life in retirement. He further stated that it helped them have a sense of purpose in life. Retirement counselling help them create new daily schedules, new marital ground rules as well as create a new identity. Results of this study concurs with findings of a study by Danaldson, Earl and Muratore (2010) done in Austrilia which revealed that changeable factors for example more conducive conditions of exit as well as a greater feeling of mastery play a significant role in influencing satisfaction in retirement life. The study further recommended that retirees, organizations, career counsellors and psychologists have a vital role to play in promoting the retirees well-being into retirement.

These findings partly differ from results of study conducted by Diko (2013) in south Africa who reported that serving as retired police service employees were not exposed to preretirement

counselling in preparation for retirement. This concurs with the results of a study done by Olatunde Onyinge in (2013) in Ekiti Nigeria who noted that their state should organize retirement programmes for retirees to enable them prepare for retirement life. Results of this research coincide with study findings of Cohen mansfield (2011) who established that very few retirees from Israel’s population was exposed to preretirement planning and a lot of people in Israel do absolutely nothing to prepare for retirement period of life. These results are in agreement with the results of a study done by Inaja and Rose (2013) in Nigeria which revealed that most public servants had undergone untold hardship in retirement because they had not undergone any preretirement counselling. The descriptive statistics analysis was also extended to the responses of the retirees’ close relatives. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Retiree Teachers’ close Relatives’ Responses on Interpersonal Relationship and adjustments toRetirement

		Frequency(f)	Percentage(%)
Interrelationship	Relationship with family	34	32.08
	Relationship with former colleagues	33	31.13
	Relationship with friends	39	36.79

The highest percentage of the retirees’ close relatives had strained relationship between the retirees and their friends followed by a strained relationship between the retirees and their family members. The least strained relationship was observed between the retirees and their former colleagues. These findings indicate a negative impact of retirement on the retirees’ interpersonal relationship.

The hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and retirement among retiree teachers in Meru County, Kenya was tested using one-sample Wilcoxon signed rank test. The K10 scores for interpersonal relationship obtained were graphically represented in a histogram Figure 1.

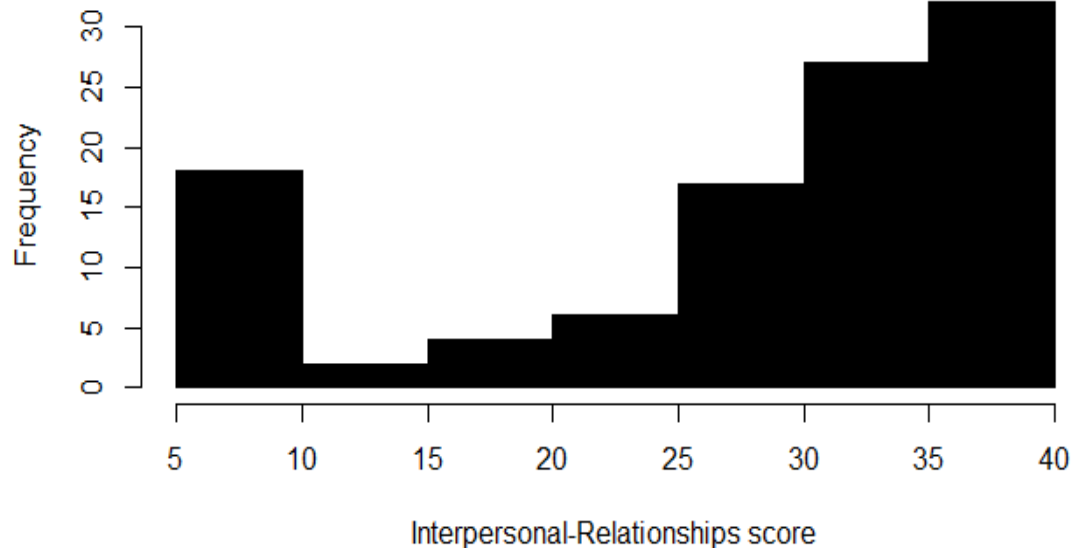


Figure 1: Interpersonal relationships and adjustments to retirement scores distribution of Retiree Teachers

The results in Figure 1 show that the histogram for the K10 scores on the interpersonal relationships was skewed to the right. This shows that the K10 scores were not normally distributed. This means that the Wilcoxon signed ranked test could be used in hypothesis testing using the K10 scores since it does not make an assumption on the distribution of the K10 scores.

The hypothesis tested using the K10 scores was;

$H_0 : M = 20$ Interpersonal relationships did not change after retirement

$H_1 : M > 20$ Interpersonal relationships changed after retirement

The computed value of the test statistic based on the hypothesis is presented in Table 17.

Table 4: Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test for Interpersonal Relationship of Retiree Teachers

statistic	p.value	Method	Alternative
4822	1.86E-10	Wilcoxon signed rank test with continuity correction	greater

The results in Table 4 show that the computed value of the test statistic was 4822 with a probability value of 1.86E-10. The probability value is less than the level of significance. Based on these results, the null hypothesis that the interpersonal relationships of the retirees did not change after retirement is rejected at 5 % level of significance. This shows that the interpersonal

relationship of the retirees was affected by retirement. The retiree teacher's interpersonal relationship was negative.

6. Discussion

The findings of this research agrees with the findings of a research done by Kim and Moen (2002) which revealed that a retired teacher may lose their attachment identities and social networks. The results of this study concurs with those of a study by Holt-Lunstad, Smith and Layton (2012) done in USA established that the retired people who experience more supportive relationship with their family members, friends and community at large have better results on measures of wellbeing, higher levels of life satisfaction, lower rates of morbidity and mortality. The findings of this research agrees with the results of a study done by Collins and Feeney (2014) in USA who reported that caring and supportive relationships allow people to thrive on multiple levels which is important in helping people adjust to retirement challenges. These research concur with the results of a study by Herzog and House (1991) which found out that pursuits that one may find significance and valuable of retirement may involve for instance, volunteering, educating or remaining in contact with nuclear family and comrades.

A Study by Pascale *et al.* (2012) whose findings concur with the results of this study has shown that divorce after 50 years is on the increase, and retirement may have something to do with it. This is because some couples are not prepared for the realities of being around their partners more frequent. Some married people might realize they don't have quite as much in common as they once thought. While still in the workforce, underlying differences can be masked, because so much attention is taken up by work and bring up a family. But these variations can come to the forefront when partners are more focused just on each other.

A study by Duran Leaud and MC Laughlin (2014) whose findings agree with findings on this study on interpersonal relationships and retirement. The study proposed a reason why retirement may lead to strained relationships among couples as for instance, a wife might presume her retired spouse will help more with homestead chores, or either partner may expect more participation from the other in their preferred free time activities. Sentiments of disappointment

because of ruffled expectations can lead to resentment if either spouse feels neglected or is not getting fair consideration of his or her own hobbies. Another reason is that women are generally more socially integrated, having more and stronger emotional ties to companions and family. Males, in contrast, have fewer close associations, and many depend on their spouses to keep them socially involved (Duranleau & McLaughlin, 2014).

Other reasons that have been attributed to affected interpersonal relationships due to retirement include; for instance, in a situation where a husband retires before the wife, the husband may have dreams of daily golfing, and periodic travel trips (Figueira *et al.*, 2017). The retired husband who is not likely to consider taking on the household chores of cooking and cleaning, whereas his partner might consider it his turn at becoming the household engineer. This could lead to strained relationships if not well handled. During working years, men usually do not have much personal space in the homestead. They have a portion of the closet allocated for your clothing, and a drawer or two for socks, and so forth. Beyond that, their defined space ends. It is intermingled with the rest of the family space, and since they usually spend more time in the home, what you once thought of as yours has been appropriated. Once males retire, this lack of space becomes an issue. Males often identify themselves by their previous work title and the space they once occupied while on the job. Once this personal space has been removed, males can frequently feel displaced.

7. Conclusion

Based on the study findings the following conclusions were made: Results of the study supported that retirement significantly affected interpersonal relationships among the retiree teachers. This manifested itself in the descriptive analysis of the responses of the retirees, their spouses and their close relatives. The analysis showed that the retiree teachers showed signs of affected interpersonal relationships. The inferential analysis done by testing the null hypothesis that there was no significant, statistical relationship between interpersonal relationships led to rejection of the null hypothesis and the conclusion that retirement significantly affected the interpersonal relationship of the retiree teachers.

8. Recommendations

- i. The government may consider introducing post retirement counselling programmes and activities which could consider engaging the already retired teachers to help them handle retirement psychosocial effect.
- ii. All organizations, governmental or non-governmental, may need to expose their intending retirees to pre-retirement counseling to prepare them fit in retirement life.

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