



RETIREMENT ADJUSTMENT: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FOR SENIOR STAFF OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA

Rev. Kwesi Nkum Wilson (Ph.D.)¹

ABSTRACT

Retirement as a stage in life has been seen differently by different people based on their perception, preparation and personal experience. Whiles some people face retirement with bated breath and joy others face it with fear, trepidation and uncertainty. This study investigated some of the institutional and personality variables that could predict retirement adjustments among the senior staff of three public universities in Ghana. Using the descriptive survey as the research design, the study employed the stratified sampling technique to select the universities, and the availability technique to select a sample size of 111 respondents (who had less than 60 months to attain the compulsory retirement of 60 years in Ghana). The study made use of a self-report questionnaire (Retirement Adjustment Questionnaire [RAQ]), in data collection. The RAQ has an internal co-efficient of 0.872 Cronbach alpha. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used to analyze the data. Findings from the study revealed that one main consideration or adjustment process for retirement was the financial implications on the retiree. The study thus recommends among other things pre-retirement workshops/seminars on socio-economic, political and institutional factors that could influence retirement adjustment processes, and on potential investment opportunities as contingency plans to ease the transition from active working life to retirement.

Key Words: *Retirement Adjustment, retirement readiness, retirement adjustment strategies, Confidence of potential retirees and Internal and external contingency plan*

Background to the study

Retirement from full-time paid employment is a defining moment that marks the beginning of a transition in life. This requires adjustments in identity, thinking, feeling and action. While the act of retiring is an event, adjustment to retirement is a process that many retirees are unable to handle. Adjustment poses a significant problem, in that it requires change, and change, whether for better or for worse, can be stressful for staffs of public universities. Change commands a new routine which requires an entirely new repertoire for its reinforcement. The issue is that, many potential retirees in Africa are unprepared before going on retirement hence they find the adjustment process very difficult (Ross & Wills, 2009). They view it pessimistically, perceive it as a crisis, and become stressed. At times this stress may become depression. The unpreparedness of the potential retiree results in the lack of confidence about being able to cover the necessary expenses in retirement such as housing, food, clothing and other basic necessities of life.

Whereas there is abundant literature on pension adjustment in the developed world there is little empirical research on the issue in developing countries like Ghana. Research on retirement and retirement issues in developing countries are relatively new phenomena. This gap in the knowledge of retirement adjustment in developing countries has led to the assumption that adjustment predictors in the developed countries are the same in developing countries.

However, the situation in developing countries is unique (with different socio-economic variables) compared to the developed countries. For instance: age for retirement, number of dependants, income while in employment etc. all differ from the developed countries.

In a study, Egyir-Croft (2003) recommended that retirement education must be enforced at the work place. It should be made an integral part of welfare issues discussed at departmental meetings. Public awareness of retirement education must be increased, especially through the mass media. Mensah (1998) also noted that the fear of retirement is said to be most characteristic of

¹ Department of Psychology and Education, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

P. O. Box 25 Winneba, Ghana. West Africa

nkum04@yahoo.com, knwilson@uew.edu.gh

teachers. The study also showed that most of a teacher's life after retirement was not good and that most teachers become apprehensive about going on retirement.

To assume that pension predictors across countries are the same is problematic. It is in line with these aforementioned issues that the study sought to investigate predictors of retirement adjustment among the senior staff of public universities in Ghana.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design aimed at determining how age, number of dependants, marital status and gender can predict retirement adjustment among senior staff of public universities in Ghana. The study adopted a quantitative paradigm in data collection. The qualitative data allowed a detailed picture of how people adjust to pension. The quantitative data allowed the researcher to summarise vast sources of information and facilitate comparisons across categories.

Population

The target population of this research was all senior staff of public universities in Ghana. The accessible population, however, was all senior staff of public universities in Ghana who have 60 months (or less) for them to attain compulsory retirement age of 60. These persons were 3,551 in total.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sample is explained as a subset of a population of interest. Johnson and Christensen (2008) also define sample as "the set of elements or cases taken from a population" (p.45). The sample for the study comprised all senior staff in public universities who have 60 months or less to attain compulsory retirement from the public universities in Ghana. A multi-stage sampling approach comprising purposeful sampling, random sampling and convenience methods were used to select the sample for the study.

The researcher purposefully selected three public universities for the study. The researcher used geographical consideration to select these three institutions. The nation was zoned into savannah, forest and coastal zones and simple random sampling was used to select one institution from each zone. A lot was drawn from each of the three considerations. The universities drawn were University of Development Studies (UDS), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) and University of Ghana (UG) from savannah, forest and coastal zones respectively.

The researcher used convenience sampling to select senior staff who had less than five years (60 months) to retire from the public universities since they were few and readily accessible. In each institution the researcher conducted a seminar on retirement planning for the senior staff. After the seminar, the researcher, with the permission of union leaders sought audience with the senior staff who had 60 months or less to retire to respond to the questionnaire.

Instrumentation

This study made use a self-report questionnaire (Retirement Adjustment Questionnaire (RAQ) in data collection. The questionnaire (RAQ) consisted of 39 close-ended items. The RAQ is a factor analytically derived instrument that can be used to predict retirement adjustment.

The RAQ had four sections A, B, C, D; Section A had five items which measured the confidence of potential retirees. Section B had eight items which elicited respondents' internal contingency towards retirement. Section C had three items which measured respondent's external contingency towards retirement. Section D was made up of 15 items; it measured retirement adjustment strategies of potential retirees.

The questionnaire was a four-point Likert-type rating scale with the following response choices: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Weightings of one through to four were assigned to each response choice as follows: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; and 4 = Strongly Agree. In Section C statements 2, 3, 6, and 8 were inversely coded 4, 3, 2, and 1 because they had negative connotations.

The four-point Likert-type rating scale was deemed more appropriate in this study than the conventional five-point scale due to the recommendations of Casley & Kumar (1998). They explain that there is an increase in the tendency for respondents to select responses in the centre of the scale if an odd number response scale is used. The respondents might use the "not sure" or "undecided" to avoid making a real choice. With an even number of responses, respondents are obliged to choose between options provided.

Pilot Test

The aim of a pilot test was to sharpen and fine-tune the instruments and procedures by strengthening possible shortfalls that could characterize the items and steps. The data was also used to determine the internal and construct validity of the questionnaire. It was also used to determine the reliability of the instrument.

The pilot study was conducted at the University of Education, Winneba campus. Individual permission was sought from various participants. The researcher moved from office to office to contact senior staff nearing their retirement age to complete the questionnaire. In all, sixty copies of RAQ were administered, however fifty-three were retrieved and found useable and this formed the basis for modification and adjustment to the questionnaire before the actual administration.

Reliability

To establish the reliability of RAQ, the Cronbach co-efficient alpha, a measure of internal consistency, was used in the determination of the reliability of the pre-tested instruments. The Cronbach co-efficient alpha is deemed appropriate since the items in the questionnaire were multiple-scored especially on the Likert-type scale. It is also applied on the merit of Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh's (1990) view that "Cronbach alpha is used when measures have multiple scored items such as attitudinal scales. RAQ has reliability co-efficient of 0.872 (Cronbach co-efficient). The Cronbach co-efficient calculated was 0.872. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2009), a reliability figure should be 0.70 and preferably higher; 0.87 is a good value hence the instrument is reliable.

Validity

The traditional criteria for validity find their roots in a positivist tradition, and to an extent, positivism has been defined by a systematic theory of validity. Within the positivist terminology, validity resided among, and was the result and culmination of other empirical conceptions: universal laws, evidence, objectivity, truth, actuality, deduction, reason, fact and mathematical data to name just a few (Winter, 2000).

Initially, data cleaning was done to check input error; however no error entry was detected. The RAQ had four factor segments that were run. These were: general retirement issues, retirement self-efficacy, coping strategies and personality variables. After the first run, thirteen items were found to be cross-loaded and were therefore deleted. This brought the RAQ to 31 items with four new factors—confidence level of potential retirees, contingency (locus of control) in retirement, subsistence plan and retirement coping strategies.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher collected introductory letters from the Head of Department of Psychology and Education, and the Registrar of the University of Education, Winneba, to solicit the assistance of registrars of the universities under study. In each of the universities, the researcher was directed to the deputies in charge of human resource. The deputies in turn directed the researcher to the local or branch leadership of the Federation of Universities Senior Staff Association of Ghana (FUSSAG).

The researcher then arranged a meeting with the FUSSAG executive on their respective campuses and briefed them on the nature of the study and the specific assistance the researcher needed. The researcher, with the assistance of the FUSSAG executives fixed appropriate dates for the data collection.

For each institution, the researcher conducted a seminar on the theme, "Towards a Successful Retirement" which lasted for 35 minutes and was followed by open forum that also lasted for 45 minutes. At the end of each forum an invitation was extended to all members who have 60 months or less to retire to respond to the questionnaire. Each participant was given a questionnaire and a pen (which they kept as a memento); respondents completed the questionnaire independently of each other and submitted it to the researcher or any of the executives of FUSSAG. The seminar was useful because the researcher got access to the respondents without any difficulty and it also ensured a return rate of 100%. To ensure reliability, questionnaires collected each day were checked to ensure that the right thing was done by the respondents.

Data Analysis

Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 19 was used to analyze the data. Data gathered was serially numbered, edited and coded accordingly. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used in analyzing data collected. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the questionnaire data. McMillan (1996) agrees that descriptive study simply describes and provides an understanding of a phenomenon usually with simple descriptive statistics and it is particularly valuable when an area is first investigated. The descriptive statistics function of the SPSS was used to organize the background data collected on the respondents into frequencies and converted into percentages. These were used to define the respondents. The same function was used to organize the responses to the questionnaire into mean scores and standard deviations. This was used to answer the research questions 1-4. Multiple regression was used to test Hypotheses 1 and 2, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test analysis were used to test (Hypotheses 3-5), the relationship between dependent and independent variables and also to test the predictive strength of the independent variable.

Ethical Consideration

One of the most pernicious myths among some working class of Ghanaians is that life ends when you retire. This places much tension on potential retirees, thereby making open discussion on retirement a problem, especially among some Ghanaian workers, so this research was guided by the University of Education, Winneba policy on ethical conduct in research work. Section four of UEW Research Policy (March 2012) states: "Any work involving human or animal subject that is carried out by staff, students and other persons using the name of the University must be safe, ethical, and respect the rights of individuals, and must also include consent." (p.10). In adhering to this principle respondents, were informed about and made to understand as fully as possible, the aim and possible implications of the research, including the right not to participate to avoid any negative effects on him or her.

Letters inviting the participants to the meeting indicated the exact nature of the meeting. Also before the start of the meeting the researcher did a personal self-introduction and the nature and purpose of the study. It was during this stage that the researcher appealed to participants for support. The questionnaire used for the study also had a consent section which was signed by the

participants before responding to the questionnaire. Those who were reluctant to talk about their retirement were excluded from the study.

Data presentation

Research questions

Research Question 1: How do retirement adjustment strategies contribute to retirement adjustment among senior staff of public universities in Ghana?

Several retirement adjustment strategies were presented to respondents to rank; the data is presented. Their responses were organised into frequencies and converted into percentages. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Retirement Adjustment Strategies

Statement	SD	D	A	SA	
I am eagerly waiting for my retirement	8%	14%	52%	26%	
I will engage in business activities	8 %	16%	56%	20%	
I have sufficiently prepared myself	5%	25%	54%	16%	
My children are happy I am going on retirement	20%	14%	53%	13%	
My partner is happy I am going on retirement	15%	21%	54%	10%	
I wish my employers will assist me to prepare for retirement	4%	30%	60%	6%	
Retirement is an opportunity to accept leadership in church	20%	20%	52%	8%	
I have been sufficiently prepared by my employers	16%	10%	58%	16%	
Retirement is an opportunity to accept leadership role in my community		30%	17%	40%	13%
Retirement is an opportunity to visit my children and grandchildren		20%	25%	48%	7%
I will invest my gratuity in my children's education	14%	30%	46%	10%	
Retirement is an opportunity to look good in my appearance		30%	21%	30%	19%
I will devote the rest of my life to do voluntary work for my community		24%	27%	29%	20%
I will be visiting my friends during retirement		33%	20%	40%	7%
I will relocate during retirement to my village so as to assist/influence the young ones		25%	25%	32%	18%

From Table 1, 78% agreed that they were eagerly waiting for their retirement. It was followed by “engagement of business activities to supplement income”, with a score of 56% and 20% for agree and strongly agree respectively. The third most important strategy that the workers chose was “I have sufficiently prepared myself for retirement”.

The most important retirement strategy identified was to engage in business activities. This was reported by 56% who agreed while 20% strongly agreed. Among the least important retirement adjustment strategies chosen by workers were: doing voluntary work for the community, visiting friends during retirement and relocating to their villages so as to assist/influence the young ones. Since most of the respondents were eagerly waiting to go on retirement, it suggests that they were ready for retirement. Further analysis of the data showed that different workers from different institutions had different retirement adjustment strategies as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Important Adjustment Strategies among Senior Staff of Public Universities in Ghana

Statement	UG				KNUST				UDS						
	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA			
Eagerly awaiting Retirement				7%	15%	50%	28%	12%	10%	52%	26%	10%	10%	60%	20%
Prepared by employer				12%	44%	24%	20%	18%	20%	50%	12%	8%	32%	30%	30%
Personally Prepared				17%	30%	39%	14%	10%	10%	64%	16%	12%	12%	50%	26%
Visiting friends				19%	40%	20%	21%	15%	41%	22%	22%	14%	22%	40%	24%
Voluntary work				25%	25%	30%	20%	20%	36%	28%	16%	12%	24%	36%	28%
Business activities				8%	20%	50%	22%	11%	11%	50%	28%	10%	10%	64%	16%
Children's education				20%	30%	40%	10%	30%	24%	26%	20%	20%	20%	32%	28%
Relocate to village				28%-	20%	42%	10%	18%	50%	22%	10%	22%	10%	20%	48%
Employer's assistance				20%	30%	42%	8%	38%	14%	42%	6%	20%	24%	28%	28%
Children happy				10%	48%	20%	22%	12%	10%	50%-	28%	8%	16%	50%-	26%
Partner happy				8%	44%	40%	8%	12%-	16%	52%-	20%	8%	32%	50%-	10%
Church leadership role				22%	28%-	42%	8%	9%	15%	54%-	22%	20%	32%	20%	28%
Community leadership				20%	28%-	20%	32%	11%	27%	39%	33%	24%	20%	36%	20%
Opportunity to look good				29%	23%-	42%	6%	28%	10%	32%	30%	10%	42%	32%	16%
Opportunity to visit children				23%	30%-	40%	7%	22%	26%	37%	15%	25%	27%	39%	9%

Senior staff from the University of Ghana indicated that they were waiting for their retirement and it was shown by 50% who agreed while 28% strongly agreed. It was followed by engaging in business activity to supplement their income (50% agreed while 22% strongly agreed). The workers from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology agreed that they have made sufficient preparation to go on retirement first (64% agreed while 16% strongly agreed), eagerly waiting for retirement the second most important retirement adjustment strategy (52% agreed and 26% strongly agreed). Again 50% agreed and 28% strongly agreed to the importance of engaging in business activity to supplement income. Senior staff from University for Development Studies were eagerly waiting for their retirement, as 60% agreed and 20% strongly agreed. Similarly, 64% agreed and 16% strongly agreed to engaging in business activities to supplement their income as the second most important factor influencing retirement adjustment strategies. About 50% agreed and 26% strongly agreed that they have sufficiently prepared themselves for their retirement, and it was the joint third most important retirement adjustment strategy together with making children happy. It is also important to note that the perception that retirement was an opportunity to look good in appearance was the least supported at the University for Development Studies as reported by 32% who agreed and 16% strongly agreed.

Research Question 2: How does confidence of potential retirees contribute to retirement adjustment among senior staff of public universities in Ghana?

The following indicators were used to measure confidence of potential retirees: happy to go on retirement; good health as a person retires; retiring at the right age; sustenance of pension upon retirement, and financial assistance of children/dependants during retirement. A Likert scale rating 1 to 4; where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3=Agree and 4= Strongly Agree were used in collecting the data and were analysed using percentage score.

Table 3: Level of Confidence of Potential Retirees by Institution

Statement	UG				KNUST				UDS			
	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA
Happy to go On retirement	-	3%	60%	37%	4%	9%	58%	29%	2%	2%	76%	20%
In good health	-	-	73%	27%	-	25%	50%	25%	-	-	80%	20%
Right age	-	3%	52%	45%	8%	10%	60%	22%	-	4%	88%	8%
Pension Sustenance	20%	27%	23%	30%	16%	50%	17%	17%	3%	7%	63%	27%
Financial assistance	10%	29%	30%	31%	7%	35%	50%	8%	2%	22%	50%	26%

In University for Development Studies, 80% of the respondents agreed and 20% strongly agreed that, they would be retiring in good health. Similarly, at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology, 50% agreed and 25% strongly agreed that they would be retiring in good health. In University of Ghana, 73% agreed while 27% strongly agreed to retiring in good health. The main indicator of confidence of potential senior staff of public university retirees is the emotional urge (i.e. happiness). In ensuring that these workers had the confidence to go on retirement, they have to be made happy that they would be going on pension.

Research Question 3: How do internal contingency plans contribute to retirement adjustment among senior staff of public universities in Ghana?

The researcher used eight indicators to measure how internal contingency plans may be important in retirement adjustment plans of senior staff of public universities in Ghana and the data is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Internal Contingency Towards Retirement by Institution

Statement	UG				KNUST				UDS			
	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA
Investments	21%	21%	40%	18%	12%	20%	56%	12%	4%	6%	45%	45%
Not sure	19%	20%	50%	11%	14%	40%	30%	16%	7%	13%	65%	15%
Drugs for health	4%	32%	58%	6%	27%	27%	38%	8%	22%	14%	48%	16%
Accommodation	6%	14%	60%	20%	6%	20%	50%	24%	-	4%	86%	10%
Extra income	10%	26%	40%	24%	13%	17%	40%	30%	3%	9%	48%	40%
Resources on family	15%	30%	51%	4%	22%	50%	14%	14%	17%	23%	30%	30%
Completion of house	20%	25%	30%	25%	16%	50%	20%	14%	22%	22%	49%	7%
Immediate family	18%	27%	20%	35%	20%	44%	20%	16%	11%	33%	40%	16%

The results for internal contingency plans among the public universities differed from each other. Accommodation was the most important determinant of internal contingency towards retirement adjustment at the University of Ghana with 60% agreeing while 20% strongly agreed. This was followed by extra income with 40% agreeing while 24% strongly agreed. The senior staff members at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology ranked accommodation as the most important factor influencing internal contingency, with 50% agreeing while 24% strongly agreed. Similar to the choice of University of Ghana, they ranked hobbies for extra income as the second most important factor influencing retirement adjustment. The University for Development Studies senior staff agreed that accommodation is the most important determinant of internal contingency with 86% agreeing and 10% strongly agreeing. However, investment also meant a lot to the potential retirees and so they agreed that it is the second most important internal contingency plan with 45% agreeing and 45% strongly agreeing.

Research Question 4: How do external contingency plans contribute to retirement adjustment among senior staff of public universities in Ghana?

Data was collected from respondents and was analysed using percentage score. Table 7 presents the results.

Table 5: External Contingency plans towards retirement by Institution

Statement	UG				KNUST				UDS			
	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA
Post retirement Contract	8%	31%	51%	10%	25%	49%	18%	8%	9%	15%	55%	21%
Post retirement Job	15%	21%	40%	24%	19%	31%	42%	8%	12%	16%	50%	22%
New gadgets	19%	34%	30%	17%	30%	40%	15%	15%	21%	23%	40%	16%

The external contingency plans centred on three issues. A post-retirement job elsewhere was identified to be the first most important external contingency plan senior staff of public universities in Ghana thought of. The second most important external contingency plan as ranked by the senior staff was a consideration of a post-retirement contract. The last but not least was to use gratuity to buy new things that will make life more enjoyable. The results of senior staff from University of Ghana took a similar pattern. However, senior staff from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology agreed that securing new gadgets with pension gratuity is the second most important external contingency plan. On the other hand, senior staff in University for Development Studies agreed that post-retirement contract is the most important external contingency plan with 55% agreeing and 21% strongly agreeing and it was followed by a new post-retirement job (50 agreeing and 22% strongly agreeing) and then acquisition of new things/gadgets for leisure. The general trend emerging was that potential retirees from all the three public universities looked forward to post-retirement contracts as their external contingency strategy.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: *The extent to which age will influence retirement adjustment will depend on the number of dependants the person has.*

Table 6: Interaction between Age and Number of Dependants on Retirement Adjustment Strategy

Source	Partial SS	df	Mean Squares	F	P-value
Model	111.43	7	15.92	0.46	0.8603
Number of Dependants	61.35	3	20.45	0.59	0.6211
Age	13.22	1	13.22	0.38	0.5373
Interaction	3.84	3	1.28	0.04	0.9904
Residual	3553.38	103	34.50		
Total	3664.81	110	33.32		

R-squared = 0.0304

Adjusted R-squared = -0.0355

Number of observations = 111

Looking at the value of the adjusted R-squared of 0.0355 from Table 9, it suggests there are about 3.5% of some other variables other than age and number of dependants which contribute to the behaviour/changes in retirement adjustment strategy that the model doesn't capture. Again, the probability that the null hypothesis—the extent to which age will influence retirement adjustment do not depend on the number of dependants the person has is 0.99. The interaction between age and the number of dependants the person has, was found not to be significant ($p > .05$). The null hypothesis is accepted because the means between the samples were significantly not different from each other. Thus, the extent to which age will influence retirement adjustment of potential retirees do not differ for different levels of dependants.

Hypothesis 2: Type of institution one works with will significantly influence retirement adjustment

Table 7: ANOVA Table for the Type of Institution and Retirement Adjustment Strategy

Source	Partial SS	Df	MS	F	P-value
Model	279.482	2	139.741	4.46	0.0138
Type of Institution	279.482	2	139.741	4.46	0.0138
Residual	3385.329	108	31.346		
Total	3664.811	110	33.316		

R-Squared = 0.0763

Adjusted R-Squared = 0.0592

Number of observation = 111

The total mean score for retirement adjustment strategy is 40.22 (SD=5.77). The mean score for public university staff at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology was 41.48 (SD=5.74). Workers from University of Development Studies had a mean score of 40.96 (SD=4.76) and workers of University of Ghana had a mean score of 37.94 (SD=5.94). The workers from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology and University for Development Studies had mean scores above the total mean score. On the other hand, workers from University of Ghana had a mean score of 2.28 lower than the total sample mean. A 3-way ANOVA was calculated to determine the effect of type of institution retirement adjustment strategy among employees. The results are summarised in Table 10. The type of institution on retirement adjustment strategy was significant ($f(108)=4.46$, $p=0.0138$). Therefore the claim that the type of institution one works with will significantly influence retirement adjustment is strongly supported within the study.

Hypothesis 3: Married potential retirees will adjust better than their divorced, widowed and never-married counterparts.

Table 8: ANOVA Table for Marital Status and Retirement Adjustment Strategy

Source	Partial SS	Df	MS	F	P-value
Model	155.5219	1	155.5219	4.83	0.0301
Married	155.5219	1	155.5219	4.83	0.0301
Residual	3509.289	109	32.19531		
Total	3664.811	110	33.31646		

R-Squared = 0.0424

Adjusted R-Squared = 0.0337

Number of observation = 111

The probability of the mean score for unmarried respondents and married respondents were 0.0301 as shown in Table 8. Therefore the null hypothesis that there are no differences between the adjustment strategies of the married public university staff and those unmarried public university staff is not supported. With a p-value of 0.0301 for the ANOVA test, the differences between the mean was found to be statistically significant ($F= 4.83$, $P=0.0301$) at p-value of 0.05. In conclusion, the married public university staff potential retiree would adjust better than their divorced, widowed, separated and co-habiting counterparts. This situation is likely since those without husbands have already adjusted.

Hypothesis 4: Female potential retirees will adjust better than their male counterparts.

Table 9: Results of t-test between Retirement Adjustment Strategy and Sex

Group	Observation	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Dev.	(95% Conf. Interval)	
Female	50	40.04	0.70	4.93	38.64	41.44
Male	61	40.36	0.82	6.42	38.72	42.00
Combined	111	40.22	0.55	5.77	39.13	41.30
Difference		-0.32	1.11		-2.51	1.87

t = -0.290

P-value = 0.6138

Number of observation = 111

The mean score of retirement adjustment strategy scores for the males was 40.36 (SD=6.42) compared to 40.04 (SD=4.93) for the females (Table 9). A t-test analysis was performed to establish any significant difference between the mean scores. The results indicate no significant difference between the mean scores ($t(109) = .6138, p > .05$). In addition, the probability that the calculated t is greater than the theoretical t is 61.38%. Stated differently, the p-value for a t-test between retirement adjustment strategy and sex was found to be 0.6138. This is not statistically significant at both 5% and 10% levels of significance. Thus, we fail to reject the null hypothesis that there are no significant difference between the retirement adjustment strategy between female potential retirees and male potential retirees. And so, female public university staff potential retirees will not adjust better than their male counterparts.

Hypothesis 5: *There will be a significant difference in the type of retirement and retirement adjustment.*

Table 10: Results of respondents' mean score for t-test between Retirement Adjustment Strategy and Type of Retirement

Group	Observation	Mean	Std. Error	Std. Dev.	(95% Conf. Interval)	
Compulsory	102	40.04	0.57	5.77	38.91	41.17
Voluntary	9	42.22	1.89	5.67	37.86	46.58
Combined	111	40.22	0.55	5.77	39.13	41.30
Difference		-2.18	2.01		-6.16	1.79

t-statistic = -1.0886

P-value = 0.2788

Number of observation = 111

As the study seeks to investigate retirement adjustment strategies of potential retirees in public universities in Ghana, the influence of type of retirement on retirement adjustment strategies cannot be underscored. There were two main types of retirement—compulsory retirement and voluntary retirement. This hypothesis seeks to test whether there are any differences between the type of retirement and retirement adjustment strategy. The mean retirement adjustment strategy score for workers who had a voluntary retirement option was 42.22 (SD=5.67) compared to 40.04 (SD=5.77) for workers who had a compulsory retirement work plan as shown in Table 13. In absolute terms, the difference between the mean scores for the two types of retirement is 2.18. However, this difference is not significant as the p-value for a t-test between retirement adjustment strategy and type of retirement was found to be 0.2788. This is not significant at p value of 0.05. Thus, one fails to reject the null hypothesis that there are no significant differences between the type of retirement and retirement adjustment strategy.

DISCUSSION

Demographics of the respondents and their retirement readiness

Majority of the senior staff had at least three years more to go on compulsory retirement. This suggests that all the respondents declined the option of going on a voluntary retirement, which is 55 years. The social security law states that a public officer may, except as otherwise provided in the Pension Act, retire from the public service at any time after attaining the age of forty five years. The decision not to go on voluntary retirement confirms the assertion of Dobson & Morrow (1984) that a lot of people in developing countries refuse to go on voluntary retirement. They went further to state that, this describes the unpreparedness of many employees in developing countries. They posited that if there was nothing like compulsory retirement, only few people would have taken a break from their work.

Majority of the respondents had worked with their institutions for more than 21 years. This seems to suggest that the respondents had worked with their respective institutions for long. It stands to reason that staff of public universities are loyal. Erdner & Guy (1990) posits that employees who have long standing relationships with their organisation tend to plan for retirement than those who have less working relationship with their organisations. The explanation given by the authors is that employees who have long working relationship with their organisation have job security hence they have the peace of mind to plan towards their pension.

Majority of the respondents had two to four children or dependants. This suggests that adjusting to retirement is going to be challenging for the respondents. Ekuban & Brew (1991), report that employees who have highly dependent families are likely to face challenges in adjusting. This is because, they are no longer in a position to meet the financial demands of their families and this cause them stress.

Majority of the public university administrators anticipated a compulsory retirement. Although employees may be aware that they would be going on compulsory retirement soon, it does not guarantee a smooth transition. The attitude one has towards retirement influences how one feels after being retired. The administrators had developed a positive attitude towards retirement. If the worker anticipates it with pleasure and good plans, retirement will be worthwhile. If the potential retirees adjust themselves this way during their working life, then it is not likely they may come to terms with the realities of retirement life. Without good intentions and plans, retirement can be traumatic and unpleasant. Qualls & Abeles (2002) found that retirees who are most happy in retirement are the ones who anticipate it with pleasure. Since most of the potential retirees know that soon they will be due for

retirement, they will adequately prepare for such eventualities. Hence they will retire with boldness, gladness and a clear mind (Ode, 2004).

The importance of ‘retirement adjustment strategies’ to retirement adjustment

Most important retirement adjustment strategy identified was that the potential retirees were eagerly waiting to go on retirement (Table 1). The reason why most of the respondents were eagerly waiting to go on retirement had to do with the ease with which they can now approach life. When employees retire, it allows them to take things easy and they do not need to rush through life. This new phase of life is pleasant which is preferable to the situation where employees have to wake up at dawn to rush through the daily routine of trying to be at work on time. The findings support Erickson’s psychosocial theory of personality development in respect of what the theory says about the eighth stage (later adulthood). The potential retirees at this stage of nearing retirement have looked back and considered their mortality and changes in their body, behaviour and social roles.

This viewpoint is consistent with aspects of my theoretical underpinning of this study. The crisis of this stage is the conflict between ego-integrity and ego-despair (Erickson 1968). Resolving this crisis at each stage prepares the potential retiree to look back without regret, and to enjoy a sense of wholeness, a feeling of completeness and fulfilment. Ego-integrity and ego-despair are on a psychological continuum and not material possession, which ensures smooth adjustment in retirement.

Other important retirement adjustment strategies were: engaging in business and being sufficiently prepared (Table 1). This suggests that the respondents have planned what they will be doing on retirement. According to Akinade (2006), those who fail to plan only plan to fail. Those who plan for their eventual retirement enjoy smooth transition from active service to joyful life in retirement. Such retirees are able to manage their resources very well. Those who plan for their retirement are able to enjoy a high quality of life, better personal growth, high self-esteem, less stress, a very relaxed life style, satisfaction from challenging activities and even enjoyment of the goodwill of the office they used to occupy. The finding of potential retirees being prepared for retirement contradicts that of Ubangha & Akinyemi (2005) who found that many workers do not really know what they want for a lifestyle in retirement. The study also refutes Ndaman’s (2004) assertion that retired persons look miserable, confused and helpless as a result of lack of pre-retirement planning or improper pre-retirement planning. The potential retirees were clear as to what to do with their gratuities following retirement. Most of the potential retirees have been able to recognise their personal qualities, interests, talents, drives as well as skills that will aid them in the smooth transition from work to retirement.

The study found that majority of the potential retirees targeted establishing businesses to ease their transition to retirement (Table 2). This finding was not surprising as money is a major determinant of what an individual does in retirement. Bills (electricity, water, school fees etc.) pose great challenges which may result in stress and frustration, and consequently high blood pressure for some pre-retired workers (Adeoye&Legbara, 1997). This perhaps could be the reason why respondents placed high premium on engaging in a business. The worry over finances is usually compounded in developing countries because of the employer’s failure to pay retirement benefits, including gratuity, on time (Uzoigwe, 1997).

Evidence from the study shows the importance retirees place on engaging in business activity (56% agreed and 20% strongly agreed). Prospective retirees are clear as to what to do with their gratuities following retirement. The employees have been able to recognise their personal qualities, interests, talents, drives and skills, and have identified the kind of business they want to engage in.

An analysis of the interview suggests that the coping strategy of the employees is to do business or invest in something that will give them a return to supplement their pension. The “soon-to-become retirees” were trying to investor start a business that can keep them going while on retirement. They recognised that starting a business is the surest bet to sustain a regular income.

Also, the respondents reported the need for family and social adjustment. It is believed that retirees who make the best adjustment are the ones who develop new interests quickly. Substitutes for work and maintaining a support network of friends are characteristics of those who adjust well to retirement (Cox, 1984). This is because potential retirees who have friends fit directly into the society. Retirement is positive for husband-wife relations. Couples can now spend more time together and pursue mutual interests. Retirement can mean years of relaxation and enjoyment to one another’s company. According to the respondents, retirement is meaningful only when it is socially and temporarily situated in families. Family circumstances define and structure later life. Retirement provides time for family activities and involvement, and it is able to assist people to adjust in retirement. Having more time for the family role enhances retirement adjustment. The attitude of friends and family play an important role in retirement decisions. The finding of the study confirms a similar study reported by Ode (2004), who observed that retirement is influenced (affected) by family structure or relationship between members of the family. This is because members of the family assist the retirement adjustment process by extending a hand to the potential retiree.

An analysis of the interview held with the respondents indicates family and social adjustment as key. The potential retirees realise that during their working life, they did not get too much time for family engagements and social activities therefore retirement presents an opportunity for them to be active in the society and also as a way of adjusting into the society and being accepted by all.

Generally, the respondent’s retirement strategies highlight the importance they attach to the role theory. According to Rosow (1974), retirement necessarily produces a certain amount of role discontinuity and that employees must prepare to adjust to a new retirement role or must be able to find meaningful substitute for work.

In addition, the adjustment strategies confirm the disengagement theory. The potential retirees will inevitably withdraw from various roles they occupied in middle age and reduce their level of activities or sense of involvement in life. Disengagement theory shows a shift in preference from more engaging affective, obligation, vertical ties of work and family to less demanding, less affective voluntary, horizontal peership relation.

Confidence of potential retirees on retirement

Most of the respondents were found to be confident going on retirement (Table 3). This highlights their preparedness towards retirement. Respondents were confident that they were going to enjoy their retirement. The confidence of retirees also highlighted the fact that respondents had prepared for essentials. This is the basis of a planned retirement strategy and includes making provision for necessities such as food, housing, medical expenses etc. Because economic conditions may always be a little uncertain, potential retirees' goals must be to fund essential expenses with sources of guaranteed or stable income.

In addition, the potential retirees reported that they had prepared for the unexpected. Unanticipated events can have a damaging impact on retirement plans. Since retirees are no longer earning a salary, they typically lack the financial muscle to make up for consequences to their retirement plan from unexpected events. Medical expenses, supporting a family member and death of a spouse are some of the likely unanticipated events.

Again, the study found that the potential retirees were happy that soon they would be retiring. The potential retirees were not worried about going on retirement. They did not fear about the future as a result of the cessation of active working life. The findings were contrary to the assertion of Adeoye and Legbara (1997) who indicated that change is inevitable but most potential retirees tend to resist change.

The happiness of the potential retirees came with a sacrifice. For instance, they had to work over their entire working life so that they could receive a bigger pension. This trade-off indeed approximates aspects of the retirement decision. This implies that, in deciding on retirement, potential retirees actively evaluate what their lives would be like under different probable scenarios. An important prerequisite of the retirement decision therefore is the accurate prediction of the person's future emotions. Recognising the role effective forecasting can play in the retirement decision is very important for understanding why people want to retire. Potential retirees mentally simulate what retirement would be like before deciding to retire or not and their state of evaluation affects their happiness (Gilbert & Wilson, 2007).

Confidence of potential retirees was significant in easing the transition of potential retirees from their working life to retirement (Table 8). Potential retirees who estimate what they need for retirement save more and are very much confident about their ability to afford a comfortable retirement. Their confidence booster is that the potential retirees had planned for retirement and that had a positive impact on their confidence.

Internal and external contingency plan

Post retirement job was the most important external contingency plan that most of the potential retirees had (Table 5). They were looking at the option of seeking for a related job as that of their working life upon retirement. Others also wouldn't mind getting a different job to do elsewhere. This affirms Ode's (2004) point that many potential retirees in developing countries still would want to be active in the labour market upon retirement. The author added that this is the case because economic downturns make it practically impossible for retirees to depend solely on their pension.

The interview suggests that many of the potential retirees, especially senior members would love to take up contract positions as an internal contingency plan. It presents an opportunity for senior members to have a stable income right after going on retirement.

One other theoretical position that underpinned the study agrees that having both an internal and external contingency plan is a good adjustment decision. These are plans devised for an outcome other than in the usual (expected) plan. The respondents have contingency plan as a way of managing risk. This is seen in the light of Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory and directed by a person's locus of control, to the extent that respondents were having either internal or external contingency plan.

Internal contingency plan towards retirement was found to be significant. If the potential retiree has an internal contingency plan, it becomes less difficult to adjust to retirement life. Financial readiness was found to play a big role in terms of internal contingency. This is because in all this, the potential retirees did not downplay the importance of investment. They were confident that their investments were going to make them enjoy a comfortable life upon retirement. Once internal contingency considerations have been addressed, lifestyle planning for retirement becomes easy.

Compulsory retirement and preparation towards it

The interview conducted suggests that compulsory retirement is seen as a good thing. The employees saw it as a good thing because they were prepared for it. The act of planning for retirement is in itself valuable in terms of reducing pre-retirement anxiety and increasing post-retirement happiness and so access to financial advisors and retirement planning sessions through the fund or employer would help with improving happiness. Lim (2003) suggests that employers should accept some ownership over the retirement transition of their workers to help them adjust to the changes brought about by retirement. The key emphasis in these interactions is to create and manage reasonable retirement expectations which helps avoid a shock in the retirement process.

According to Datal (2009), retirement transition is a critical point in the life of the retiree as giving up their jobs means separating themselves from an important source of satisfaction and social contact. However, once the retiree has adequately planned for the retirement it eases the person's adjustment. The White House Conference on Aging as cited by Manion (1976) recommends that employees have to be prepared if they are to enjoy a smooth transition to retirement. The author posits that, "Retirement has profound implications for changes in an individual's social and economic status, in his inter-personal relationships, and in his self-perception and morale and that pre-retirement planning improves the chances of making a good adjustment to retirement." Woodruff (1983) asserts that retirement is a positive experience only when one plans well towards it. Hence for employees to retire from their field of work prepared and happy, information on effective planning and preparations towards retirement and counselling should be made available to them early enough to enable them plan ahead of time. In the view of Amason (2009) every employee knows that he or she would retire one day therefore it becomes necessary to plan and make effective preparations towards retirement. The findings with regard to the preparedness of the potential retirees contradict the findings of Jamal (2010) who reported that only few senior members make the necessary provision for their lives after retirement. Therefore when the time comes for their retirement, they find it difficult leaving the university and facing crises like shock, emotional as well as psychological traumas which make life difficult for them.

Conclusions

A number of conclusions can be adduced from the findings of the study. Firstly, the study established that senior staffs of the public universities were prepared for retirement. They were eagerly waiting to go on retirement especially those who had few years left to go on retirement. Their main preparation had to do with financial preparation. The senior staffs had inculcated the habit of investing in income generating ventures that will enable them live a decent retirement life. In this way, the future of the senior staffs looks brighter as they are aware of the need to invest so as to enhance the quality of their retirement life. This is the case because investment is generally recognised as the approach to enjoy better life.

Secondly, the major role of employers in assisting their employees in the retirement adjustment process was found to be valued by the public universities. The universities organise pre-retirement seminars/workshops for potential retirees as a way of preparing them to adjust better towards retirement. It was realised that this important role is taken seriously by the public universities. Consequently, majority of the workers were appreciative of the role their employers play in their retirement adjustment process. It therefore can be inferred that pre-retirement seminars/workshops is very important for potential retirees to attend. Although the employers showed interest in the retirement adjustment process of their employees, fellow employees did not bother to show concern. Colleagues did not help in preparing the minds of potential retirees. They believed it was the sole responsibility of the potential retiree to plan for their retirement.

Finally, the study found that the potential retirees were on track to retire successfully. They appreciated the essence of planning for retirement and had put in place strategies to ease their transition from work to retirement. Evidence is seen in close family ties, institutional support, health maintenance and social connectivity. Therefore it is imperative that potential retirees take planning for retirement seriously during their working life, as it has been proven, to ease the transition process.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made;

- 1) Although most of the potential retirees were prepared for retirement, sensitisation started late in their working life. Therefore, it is recommended that sensitisation on adjustment towards retirement must be done very early (at least five years to retirement) in the employees working life in order to allow them enough time to prepare to adjust adequately towards retirement. One way out is to attach the employee's date of retirement to his or her appointment letter so that it will serve as a constant reminder to the person during his working life.
- 2) Since internal contingency plans towards retirement were found to be significant, it is imperative that potential retirees have an internal contingency plan before going on retirement. The study recommends that potential retirees should consider investments as an internal contingency plan capable of easing their transition from work to retirement.
- 3) The public universities should do everything possible to improve upon the conditions of service of their workers. This will ensure that they get adequate gratuity or pension upon their retirement. Once their pension is adequate, only few people will think of going to seek for contracts or part time jobs upon retirement. It is upon this that potential retirees will see retirement as an opportunity to take a break from work rather than an opportunity to seek for something different to do.
- 4) The principle of "life is what you make it" is applicable during retirement. Hence potential retirees must take a holistic view of factors that can influence their retirement adjustment process such as economic, political and institutional factors. A careful consideration of these factors will assist them understand and appreciate the challenges that come with adjusting to retirement.

References

1. Adeoye, A., & Legbara, B. (1997). Retirement Realities: *Journal of Service Professionals* 42-55.
2. Akinade, C. (2006). Expectations of Retirement. *Journal of Human Resources* 40 (2): 456-500.
3. Alonge, M. F. (2010). *Essentials of Research Methods and Designs for Educators*, Lagos, Bolabay Publications.

4. Ary, D., Jacobs, C. L., Razavieh, A. (1990). *Introduction to Research in Education* (4th Ed), Chicago; Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc.
5. Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York, Freeman
6. Cox, T. (1984). "Best" Retirement Strategy. *International Journal of Service Professionals* 60-80.
7. Datal (2009). The growth in actively managed pension. *The Journal of Finance* 48(2), 777-789.
8. Dobson, C., & Morrow, C. P. (1984). "Effects of Career Orientation on Retirement Attitudes and Retirement Planning." *Journal of Vocational Behavior*
9. Egyir-Croffet, G. (2003). "Learning needs of pre-and post retirement workers in the Central Region of Ghana." An unpublished M.Phil degree submitted to the Institute of Adult Education, University of Ghana, Legon.
10. Ekuban, E., & Brew, C. (1991). Investment Management. *The Journal of Finance* 60(3), 1802-1882.
11. Erdner, V., & Guy, A. (1990). Asset allocation and pension fund performance. *The Journal of Business* 70(3), 400-445.
12. Erikson, E. (1968). *Development in Adulthood*. London: Oxford University Press. Retrieved April 17, 2013, from www.Quetia.com.
13. Frankle, J. R., & Wallen, E. N. (2009). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (2nd Ed) New York; McGraw-Hill Inc
14. Gilbert, A., & Wilson, T. (2007). Retirement security: *Journal of Monetary Economics* 50: 200-230.
15. Jamal, A. (2010). The economic effects of pension. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20 (2), 170-190.
16. Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. (2008). *Educational Research; Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Approaches*, U.K.: Sage Publication Inc.
17. Lim, V. K. G. (2003). An empirical study of older workers' attitudes towards the retirement experience. *Employee Relations*, 25(4), 330-346. Available: www.emeraldinsight.com/10.1108/01425450310483361 (Accessed June 4, 2014).
18. Manion, U. V. (1976). Preretirement Counselling: The Need for a new Approach; *Journal (The Personnel Guidance)* Vol. 55.
19. McMillan, A. (1996). *Social Science Research*, 4th Edition, South London, UK.
20. Mensah, G. E. (1998). Teachers are fleeing the classroom, *Daily Graphic*; Graphic Communications, December 2 p.5
21. Ndaman, K. (2004). *Performance in pension management*. Working Paper: University of Toronto.
22. Ode, B. (2004). *Preparing for Retirement*: Paper presented at the National Tax Association Nigeria.
23. Qualls, S. & Abeles, N. (Eds.) (2002). *Psychology and the Aging Revolution. How We Adapt to Longer Life*. Washington DC; American Psychology Association.
24. Rosow, I. (1974). *Socialisation to old age*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
25. Ross, D. G. & Wills, L. (2009). Measuring financial preparation for retirement: a new scale using Australian evidence. *Financial Services Review* 18, 381-399.
26. Ubangha, M. B., & Akinyemi, B. A. (2005). The Relationship between attitude to retirement planning and retirement anxiety among teachers. *The Counsellor*, 21: 156-163.
27. Uzoigwe, B. (1997). *Effectiveness of Retirement*. Working Paper. Nigeria: Department of Economics-Suroliru College.
28. Winter, G. (2000). A comparative discussion of the notion of validity in qualitative and quantitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 4(3&4). Retrieved February 25, 2013, from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4-3/winter.html>
29. Woodruff, B. (1983). Institutional investment management. *The Journal of Finance* 64(1), 760-770.

Bio

Rev. Kwesi Nkum Wilson, Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology and Education, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana; research fields: Counselling Psychology, Teaching methodology, Pastor