

Effect of Person Job Fit on Employee Performance in Government Ministries, Nandi County, Kenya

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of person job fit on employee performance in government ministries, Nandi County, Kenya. The theory informing the study is congruency theory. Explanatory research design was adopted. The target population comprised employees from the ministries in Nandi county totaling 240, the sample size of 144 employees were selected using stratified random sampling. Primary data was collected by use of structured questionnaire. Data analysis comprised both descriptive statistics in particular frequencies and percentages, and inferential statistics which included correlation analysis which was used to test the direct relationship between key variables. Spearman rho correlation was utilized to test hypotheses. Study findings showed that P-J-F has a positive and significant effect on job performance. Findings of the study are useful to the stakeholders within public sector in understanding the importance of successful implementation of P-J-F. This is expected to contribute positively to the performance of employees and the government as a whole.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Government Ministries, Person Job Fit

Introduction

Employee performance can be considered as backbone of organization as it leads to its development effectively (Gabcanova, 2011). Companies today are forced to compete and to act professionally in those harsh times; therefore, it is very important to have capable employees who can account on them to create competitive advantage. To remain in competitive market environment there is high need for firms to consider enhancing employee performance which is also an important tool for firm performance (Herman, 2013). In the current trend on performance a number of organizations are trying to cope with the challenges of competition and creating competitive edge to retain their image and positions in the market. Considering this and putting in mind the emerging issue of employee's performance, it is paramount that managers consider person job fit in order to attain notable employee's performance (Mutai, 2011).

Person Job fit has been defined as the extent to which the dispositions, abilities, expectations and performance contributions of an individual worker match the job demands, situational demands, expectations available and available Rewards of a particular job (Arora, 2000). Also, Person-job fit was defined as the compatibility that may exist between a person and the specific job demand (Edwards, 2008). Historically the primary focus in recruitment processes has been on job fit; the extent to which an employee's competencies, work experience and needs align with the requirements of a particular job. As a central part of the recruitment process, it is important that the approach to assessing job fit is as efficient and effective as possible. Thorough and robust assessments will offer employers vital knowledge about a candidate, enabling them to minimize the risk of making a bad hiring decision (Cubiks International Survey, 2013).

Every hiring manager has the same end goal: find the very best person for the job. Obviously you're looking for the candidate who has the level of skills, knowledge, and experience required for the position. You also want someone who will fit well with your company culture. Finally, you need an individual who possesses the right

personality traits and talents that will lead to topnotch performance. Finding someone who fits all those requirements can be pretty daunting, (Janna, 2011). As explained by Greguras and Diefendorff, (2009), an employee would like to have jobs that are significant and meaningful and able to provide satisfaction internally as well as with external rewards. Person job fit plays very essential role in organization to increase the level of job performance and organizational commitment (Silverthorne, 2004).

Person job fit has been found to be positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, task performance and contextual performance, acceptance of job offer, tension reduction as well as intention to leave (Cable and Edwards, 2004; Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005). Person-job fit can be a reasonable predictor of job performance because individuals with high person-job fit had found to have positive work outcome (Shin, 2004). Furthermore, the theory of congruence explained that person-job fit as the fit that may exists between individual preferences and the job requirements or the knowledge skills and ability (KSAs) (Lawrence, 2014).

From the public sector perspective, the pursuit of increased productivity in public service provision is a constant aspiration (Richard and Muiris, 2011). But there are many challenges which hinder the delivery of public service reforms in Africa (Lienert, 2003). The factors include those relating to human resources like manpower deficiencies and lack of psychological dispositions and shortage of financial and material resources necessary for effective delivery of services. The problems of accountability as well as ethical issues also continue to affect effective delivery of public service. The introduction of these new reforms is yet another attempt by the Government to manage and improve performance of the Civil Service and Local Authorities.

Yet, few systematic investigations have been undertaken to assess the relationship between person job fit and employee performance. It is essential that we have a better understanding of the impact that person job fit has on employee performance. Such an increase in understanding may assist researchers and managers in making improvements in the working conditions within the public sector. The presence of minimal knowledge on person job fit and employee performance specifically in public offices, in Kenya and further, though previous researches on employee job performance have shown that individual level factors like person-job fit (Behery, 2009) were able to affect the job performance of employees, these past researches were conducted in abroad, thus very little evidence exists to understand the job performance of employees in the Kenyan context. Therefore, there is a gap of such studies in an African perspective especially in Kenya and hence the need for this study. This study addressed this gap by: Examining the relationship between person job fit and employee performance. Thus this paper study hypothesized that;

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of person job fit on employee performances in the selected government ministries in Kenya.

Congruency theory

The investigation was guided by congruency hypothesis. The congruency display was first created by (Nadler and Tushman, 1980). The model depends on the rule that an association's exhibition is gotten from four components: assignment; individuals; structure and culture. The higher the consistency among these components, the more prominent the performance. The compatibility model can be utilized to consider different drivers of performance and viability as well. This is by searching for coinciding and incongruence between the key drivers one has distinguished. Further, directors need to comprehend their organizations to make them progressively productive. Hypothetical models are basic in this comprehension since they give a calculated structure to breaking down hierarchical issues and arranging remedial activities. One of these systems for breaking down little and huge organizations is the consistency display. (Basu, n.d) The compatibility show sees associations as cooperating parts that exist in relative congruity or fit with each other. Hierarchical issues emerge when there is a poor fit between a portion of these segments. Changes in a single part can influence

different segments in view of the individual and procedure linkages that exist inside associations. The compatibility show puts the best accentuation on the change procedure among sources of info and yields. The sources of info incorporate the outer condition, for example, rivalry and government guideline; money related, human and different assets; authoritative culture; and the vital choices important to address future difficulties and openings. The yields allude to items and administrations, and generally performance and adequacy (Basu, n.d). The component in the harmoniousness show is the idea of fit. Very essentially, the association's performance settles upon the arrangement of each of the components– the work, individuals, structure, and culture– with the majority of the others. The more tightly the fit– or, put another way, the more noteworthy the congruence– the higher the performance (Mercer Delta Consulting, LLC, 2003). The harmoniousness show is in excess of an intriguing state of mind about hierarchical elements. Its genuine esteem lies in its helpfulness as a framework– a psychological agenda, on the off chance that you will– for distinguishing the main drivers of performance holes inside an association. As proposed before, it gives an extremely broad guide and a beginning stage on the way to essential venture change. It gives the applied structure to a change procedure that includes gathering information on performance, coordinating genuine performance against objectives, distinguishing the reasons for issues, choosing and creating activity designs, and, at long last, actualizing and afterward assessing the adequacy of those plans (Mercer Delta Consulting, LLC, 2003). Henceforth from the abovementioned, thinking about the two segments in this investigation: the work and the general population with four components individual qualities, fulfillment, aptitudes and information, When the above components of the people included match the activity necessities of the current work, one can sensibly anticipate a moderately high level of performance. Further, the model gave the guide to recognizing performance hole in the association with respect to PJF. In view of the above discussion, the model below is proposed, as shown in Figure 1. Person Job Fit is conceptualized as antecedents of employee performance.



Fig 1: conceptual framework (author 2017).

Person Job fit and employee performance

Person-job fit can be a reasonable predictor of job performance because individuals with high person-job fit had found to have positive work outcome (Edwards, 1991). Furthermore, the theory of congruence as indicated by Lawrence (2004) explained that person-job fit as the fit that may exists between individual preferences and the job requirements or the knowledge skills and ability (KSAs). Thus when congruency exists between one's preference and the KSAs, it will lead to motivational outcome (Edwards, 1991; Barrett, 1978) and this is eminent in order to have greater job performance. Furthermore a large number of empirical researches have established that person-job fit is important for work outcome. Person-job fit had found to be positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, task performance and contextual performance, acceptance of job offer, tension reduction as well as intention to leave (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable and DeRue, 2002; Saks and Ashforth, 2002; Cable and Edwards, 2004; Shin, 2004; Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005; Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009). Hecht and Allen (2003) found person-job fit with respect to polychronicity does affect job performance as well as the well-being of employee.

Interestingly Kristoff *et al.*, (2005) found that when person-job fit and person-organization fit were tested on job performance, the relationship tend to have a modest correlations which contradicts with the findings by Li and Hung (2010) where person-job fit found to be highly correlated with job performance. Nevertheless, in relations to other attitudinal outcome, person-job fit is still demonstrating higher correlation than person-organization fit (Kristoff-Brown, *et al.*, 2002). Even though studies had found that person-job fit can have influence on job performance, the amount of research is still limited (Mosley, 2002). In addition given the variations in results on the relationship between person-job fit and job performance (Edwards, 1991), studies on the relationship between person-job fit and job performance has therefore yet to come to similar agreement (Taylor, *et al.*, 1984; Conte, *et al.*, 1999). Similarly past studies on the link between person-job fit and performance have contained mixed results (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable and DeRue, 2002; Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009), thus there is a need to carry out further investigation in order to further explore the relationship that may exist between person-job fit and the job performance.

In general, Past researches for instance (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable and DeRue, 2002; Saks and Ashforth, 2002; Cable and Edwards, 2004; Shin, 2004; Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005; Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009) have found that Person job fit is positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, task performance and contextual performance, acceptance of job offer, tension reduction as well as intention to leave. But in comparing P-J-F and P-O-F, Kristoff *et al.*, (2005) found that when the two are tested on job performance, person-job fit has a modest correlation with overall performance. Besides that, in relation to other attitudinal outcome, person-job fit is still demonstrating higher correlation than person-organization fit (Kristoff-Brown, *et al.*, 2002).

Also, the relationship between dimensions of fit and its outcomes from both organizational and individual perspectives has been widely been addressed by extant research. These studies have shown that PJ and PO fit are expected to lead to higher performance, stronger organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions among the workforce from an organizations side of view. From an employee's side of view, higher job satisfaction, lower stress, greater well-being and superior opportunities for career advancement may be elicited when fit is achieved (Edwards and Shipp, 2007; Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005). Hence improved work performance leading to higher productivity or improved service delivery.

According to Scroggins (2008), person-job fit found to be a significant predictor of meaningful work. In a similar way, meaningful work can be found in the workplace by ensuring alignment between an individual's competencies, values, and purpose and the job (Chalofsky, 2003). May, Gilson & Harter (2004) found that meaningfulness, security, and availability has a significant relationship with the engagement. They also found that job enrichment and precision tasks (role fit) is a positive predictor for meaningfulness. This shows that employees who feel comfortable with the job can increase the level of work engagement through positive work meaningful

Greguras & Diefendorff (2009) and Mohamed (2009) did a study on the effects of PJ fit on employees' affective commitment that could be used in explaining the relationship between PJ fit and employees' retention. The results of the study revealed that PJ fit was positively correlated to affective commitment which results to high job performance.

Saks & Gruman (2011) did a study on PJ fit and found that PJ fit had significantly influenced work engagement. They claimed that individuals who were sure about their job, through possessing KSAs in conducting their job, were more confident of their role and were likely to engage in work implementation. In addition, Manson & Carr (2011) also reported positive influence of PJ DA fit on work engagement. Employees with high PJ DA fit are those who are well equipped with specific KSAs needed by their job specification. They would feel easy to

conduct their job and would perform their job effectively and successfully, which subsequently enhances their performance.

Person job fit strongly influences the coworker's satisfaction and relation between Person job fit and job satisfaction is positive. If Person job fit increases then employee's intent to quit will decrease and employees are more committed towards organization. (Henry, 2005) Perception of person job fit in any organization strongly influences the number of outcomes such as job performance and job satisfaction. Person job fit plays very essential role in organization to increase the level of job performance and organizational commitment (Silverthorne, 2004). Number of formal job information sources and self-esteem has a positive impact on Person Job Fit that leads to job satisfaction and increases job performance (Saks & Ashforth, 2006).

In addition, the recent meta-analysis by Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) and Vilela *et al.*, (2008), confirmed that P-O fit is significantly linked to OC. In regard to this relationship, it was revealed that P-J fit is correlated with OC (Sekiguchi, 2004). The degree to which employees perceive that their abilities match the requirements of the job or that the job provides them with their needs, directly affects their commitment to their organizations (Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009).

Consequently, according to Kristof-Brown *et al.*, (2005) PJ fit is positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, in-role performance, extra-role performance, and job offer acceptance intentions, and negatively related to job strain, work and family stress, and turnover intentions (Cable & Edwards, 2004; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005). Compared to other fit types (e.g., person-organization fit, person supervisor fit, and person-group fit,), PJ fit has a noticeable impact on employee attitudes and behavior (Chuang et al., 2015; Edwards & Billsbury, 2010). In particular, outcomes that are specific to the job such as job satisfaction and task performance are more closely related to PJ fit compared to other types of fit (Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005). Accordingly, Chuang *et al.*, (2015) recently found that, in terms of both DA and NS fit, PJ fit not only accounted for the greatest amount of variance in job satisfaction (41%) compared to person organization fit (20%), person-group fit (27%), and person-supervisor fit (12%), but also explained a substantial amount of variance in task performance (40%).

When PJ fit is assessed in terms of either DA fit or NS fit, it is commonly associated with job performance for DA fit, and job satisfaction for NS fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002). On the relationship between NS fit and job satisfaction, the extent to which one's needs are fulfilled by their job forms the basis for satisfaction judgments. Accordingly, individuals' who perceive better NS fit tend to also report being more satisfied with their jobs (Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005).

accordingly, several studies have shown that DA fit is related to task performance such that individuals who perceive better fit tend to also perform better (Chuang *et al.*, 2015; Li & Hung, 2010). Despite the conceptual appeal and strong empirical support, some researchers have obtained null findings on the relationship between DA fit and task performance (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Wang *et al.*, 2011).

Evidently, numerous studies conducted in the Western context found that the P-J fit is positively related to job satisfaction, quality of work life, and positive adjustment in new organizations (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Guan *et al.*, (2010), who conducted study in the Asian context, noted that the P-J fit has a significant negative relationship with turnover intention among employees working for various organizations in Beijing, China. Most importantly, the study found that the relationship between the P-J fit and outcome was relatively stronger than the results found in the Western settings (see Cable & DeRue, 2002)

Material and methods

In regard to this study, explanatory research design using survey adopted. This study does not entail manipulation of variables hence the use of survey. Kothari further puts it that survey is examples of field research and are concerned with hypotheses formulation and testing the analysis of the relationships between non-manipulated variables. The study targeted workers in the public service numbering 240 and used 144 of the respondent in which they were chosen randomly. For this study, the respondents are from the government ministries and were selected using stratified random sampling. The response rate of the study was 87.5%.

Questionnaires were used to collect data. In order to test the construct validity of the measurements for this study, factor analysis was utilized. In testing whether factor analysis is suitable for testing the construct validity, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was used. Therefore, if the KMO values is greater than 0.6 (Coakes, *et al.*, 2009), and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is large and significant ($p < 0.05$) (Hair, Black, *et al.*, 2006) factorability is then considered as possible. Once factor analysis is carried out, items with factor loading that is greater than 0.3 will be used to represent a factor since it is regarded as the threshold to meet the minimal level for interpretation of structure (Hair *et al.*, 2006).

The findings in Table 1 were for factor analysis for PJF. From the findings, with regard to the KMO and Bartlett's tests, normally if $0 < \text{KMO} < 1$ and if $\text{KMO} > 0.5$, the data collected is considered to be adequate for factor analysis. From the results (Table 4.12), KMO was 0.842 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity at 95% level of confidence was significant, $\chi^2(10) = 256.334$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000$. These results indicated that the items on PJF were adequate for factor analysis paving way for the researcher to proceed with factor analysis. Table 1 show that the factor loadings results were above 0.5. This means that all the items were reserved for further analysis. All the PJF items were greater than 0.5, with the least being 0.612. The items were condensed into a single component which can be termed as right PJF. To sum up, the component accounted for 62.185% of the total variance.

Cronbach alpha coefficients, which are estimates of internal consistency was computed. The findings regarding the reliability of the items in the study in Table 2 revealed that the least Cronbach's alpha was 0.839 for person job fit and 0.800 for employee performance for the unstandardized items while the minimum was 0.821 for employee performance and the maximum was 0.855 for person job fit based on the standardized items. These results were in line with the rule of thumb recommended by Hair *et al.*, (2010). According to the rule of thumb, a coefficient value of 0.60 is considered an average reliability while a coefficient of 0.70 and above designates that the instrument has a high reliability standard (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, all items were incorporated in the research instrument.

Table 1: PJF

	Component
	1
I am the right type of person for this type of work	0.833
my personality is a good match for this job	0.807
There is good match between the requirement of this job and my skills	0.867
My abilities and training fit with job requirement	0.799
The job gives everything that is expected	0.612
KMO and Bartlett's Test	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.842
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, Approx. Chi-Square	256.334
Df	10
Sig.	0.000

Total Variance Explained; Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings

Total	3.109
% of Variance	62.185
Cumulative %	62.185
Reliability analysis	
Cronbach's Alpha	0.839

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: (research data, 2017)

Findings**Sample characteristics**

The study takes into focus the respondents personal characteristics to give general information about respondents and to assist the researcher understanding on the findings. Demographic characteristics that were highlighted were gender, age, education, position and job tenure. The findings on the demographic characteristics were presented in Table 3 and thereafter the association through the use of F test between the demographic characteristics and PJF were assessed and the findings presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Association between demographic factors and PJF

		P.J.F				
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F	Sig.
Gender	Male	67	4.4806	0.61993	9.997	0.002
	Female	59	4.1153	0.67691		
	Total	126	4.3095	0.6701		
Age	Below 20	2	5	0	0.611	0.656
	21-30	43	4.2558	0.70956		
	31-40	38	4.3368	0.46986		
	41-50	28	4.3143	0.81182		
	51-60	15	4.2933	0.75163		
	Total	126	4.3095	0.6701		
Education	High school certificate	5	4.52	0.43818	1.210	0.310
	college certificate	21	4.0857	0.66805		
	Diploma	57	4.4211	0.64662		
	University Degree	41	4.2439	0.705		
	Others	2	4.3	0.98995		
	Total	126	4.3095	0.6701		
Job tenure	less than 1yr	15	4.24	0.70589	0.643	0.589
	1-5 years	62	4.2613	0.74622		
	6-10 years	25	4.312	0.54185		
	above 10 years	24	4.475	0.56202		
	Total	126	4.3095	0.6701		

The F test was carried out to assess the nature of the association between the demographic factors and person job fit (PJF). The p-value (sig.) was assessed based on the 5% level of significance. The findings show that age is associated with PJF with the males having a mean of 4.481 and females having a mean of 4.115, $F = 9.997$, $p = 0.002$. However, the findings showed that age does not have a significant association with PJF, $F = 0.611$, $p = 0.656$, education of the workers does not have a significant association with PJF, $F = 1.210$, $p =$

0.310 while job tenure does not have a significant association with PJF, $F = 0.643$, $p = 0.589$. These findings indicate that when it comes to person job fit, male workers in the County had more PJF compared to the female workers. On the other hand, there was almost equal representation in terms of age, education and job tenure and PJF in the County.

Descriptive statistics

The overall response was 3.75 (std. = 1.080) that indicated agreement. The overall response for PJF was 4.309 (std. = 0.670) that indicated overall agreement with the items under PJF. The overall response for job performance was 3.7417 (std. = 0.59602) which indicated overall agreement with the statement. Some gaps were identified in terms of job performance such as the ability of the workers to freely air their complaints concerning their work and as such their ability to keep up with normal work requirements which point to the kind of work environment that the workers operated in the County.

Regression Results

The study sought to test the hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between person job fit and employee performances in the selected government ministries in Kenya. The findings were presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Effect of PJF on employee performance in government ministries

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Beta	Standardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error		t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.690	0.282		5.987	0.000
P.J.F	0.492	0.065	0.564	7.605	0.000
Model summary statistics					
R Square	0.318				
Adjusted R Square	0.313				
F	57.83				
Sig.	0.000b				
a Dependent Variable: employee performance					

The findings also revealed that PJF has a positive and significant effect on employee performance, 0.564, p -value = 0.000 and indicating that with each unit increase in PJF, employee performance increases by 0.564 units. These findings are in line with those of Edwards (1991) who found out that person-job fit can be a reasonable predictor of job performance because individuals with high person-job fit had found to have positive work outcome. Furthermore, person-job fit had found to be positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, task performance and contextual performance, acceptance of job offer, tension reduction as well as intention to leave (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable and DeRue, 2002; Saks and Ashforth, 2002; Cable and Edwards, 2004; Shin, 2004; Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2005; Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009). In addition to this, Hecht and Allen (2003) found person-job fit with respect to polychronicity does affect job performance as well as the well-being of employees while Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990) established that fit was positively associated with satisfaction and performance. Additionally person-job-fit found to be associated with satisfaction, turnover and performance (O'Reilly III, Caldwell and Mirable, 1992).

Conclusion

The general aim of this research was to undertake an examination of PJF-Employee performance relationship. The findings have showed that there is a positive and meaningful effect of PJF on employee performance. In theory, the acceptance of this hypothesis implies the dimensions of PJF play an important role in determining

the employee performance of employees in an organization. This is supported by earlier studies, where Saks & Gruman (2011) did a study on PJ fit and found that PJ fit had significantly influenced work engagement. They claimed that individuals who were sure about their job, through possessing KSAs in conducting their job, were more confident of their role and were likely to engage in work implementation. With regard to managerial implication, the study will help managers to understand the underlying phenomena of P-J-F and employee performance. Person job fit can be seen as an important tool for managing HR processes as it plays an important role in selection of the workforce who gives an organization the competitive advantage they need. So managers should focus on selecting such employee whose knowledge skills abilities and personality are in congruence with the job.

Lastly, In connection with the results known above, this study makes a number of possible implications to the concept of person job fit. First, this study has opened an insight into the factors influencing the job performance in County governments in Kenya thus expanding on previous literature. It has opened up further research avenues to compare and contrast these results with other Counties.

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