

# Effect of Working Condition on Employee Performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital

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## ABSTRACT

Employee performance is a very important factor of productivity and job quality, especially in health care workers. Poor healthcare quality is costly; it leads to loss of lives, loss of time, and loss of public confidence, low staff morale, and wastage of limited resources. This study aimed at examining effect of working condition on employee performance at Vihiga county referral hospital. The study was guided by Person-Environment Fit Theory. The descriptive survey research design was adopted with a target population of 308 employees. The sample size was 174 employees. The study employed stratified and simple random sampling methods. Structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data. A pilot study was conducted in Kakamega County General Teaching and Referral Hospital to test the reliability and validity of the research instrument. Cronbach alpha coefficient was used to measure internal consistency, and expert judgment was used to gauge the validity of the research instrument. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics through the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Results were presented using tables. The study findings revealed that working condition has a positive and significant effect on employee performance staff ( $\beta_1=.833$ ,  $p=.000<0.05$ ). The study concluded that working condition has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. The study recommends that the hospital management always ensure that their employees are provided with conducive working conditions.

**KEY WORDS:** working condition, effect, performance, employee

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Date of Submission: 12-03-2022

Date of Acceptance: 28-03-2022

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## I. Introduction

Employee performance is the key to success. Every individual employee must work toward the hospital vision and mission. Employee performance is all about how institution manage, upskill, and motivate their employees (Gregory, 2016). Employee performance can be derived from economic outcomes or social interactions at the workplace. In the field of organizational behaviour studies and human resources practice, there is increasing recognition of the fundamental significance of the concept of employee performance (Yee, & Cheng, 2018). Employee performance is the most robust antecedent of employee commitment, service quality delivery, organizational citizenship behaviors, and low employee turnover intention amongst others (Bolon, 2017).

Work environment health conditions refers to an entirety which comprises the totality of forces, actions and other influential factors that are currently and potentially contending with the employee's activities and performance (Hafeez et al., 2019). A positive work environment makes employees feel good about coming to work, and this provides the motivation to sustain them throughout the day. A healthy work environment not only benefits employees through improved health and wellness but also benefits customers, shareholders and communities (Aziz, Kumar & Lal, 2015). A fundamental requirement for employee performance is a working condition which allows employees to perform their work at an optimal level, in a conducive and comfortable environment (McGuire & McLaren, 2019). The Working Condition plays an integral role toward employee performance as well as the impact of employee performance on productivity.

In China, the improvement of health and safety standards within the organizational context is an important issue of global concern. China's occupational health and safety (OHS) has increasingly drawn national and international attention as it has not kept pace with its globalization of production and trade (Mei et al., 2020). The traditional approach to managing workplace working condition has focused on the technical aspects of engineering systems and processes, and it has attributed the majority of workplace accidents and injuries to unsafe working conditions instead of the safe work practices of employees (Fung et al., 2016). However, there has been a fundamental shift in the safety management research carried out across diverse

industries, which aims to measure the impact of attitudinal, organizational, cultural, and social dimensions on occupational safety (Zhu, Fan & Clissold, 2019).

In Zimbabwe, there is a national regulation on the safety of factories (Amended Factories and Works Act Chapter 14 (1976). Inspections are carried out on factories, for instance on drains, pollution and any areas that are lacking in terms of the act (Taderera, 2018). During an inspection, the inspector looks out for health hazards which the employer may or may not be aware of. The Factories and Works Act (1976) was amended to include the regulation that factories should renew their licenses annually. This is done to ensure that a Working Condition is safe. Some food factories are facing a risk with the health authorities due to dirty and degraded company environments, for example, the ferns are dusty and the paint on some of the equipment is chipped (Taderera, 2018).

The status of occupational health and safety (OHS) conditions in Kenya is an issue of growing importance to the industrialists, practitioners, the Government and consumers. Kenya, like all other countries globally, has tried to address OSH concerns. Despite these efforts, it is estimated that 2 million work related fatalities still occur every year (ILO, 2009). In Kenya, prior to the enactment of the OSH Act, (2007), matters of OSH were covered under the Factories and Other Places of Work, Act (1972), Chapter 514 of the laws of Kenya. This chapter has since June 2008 been replaced by the OSH Act (2007). The OSH Act is an Act of Parliament that provides for the safety, health and welfare of workers and all persons lawfully present at workplaces.

Employee being the most valued assets in any organization, there is a need to take care of their health and safety. If not considered by the management, this will and has always led to low productivity frequent accidents, loss of life among others. Poor healthcare quality is costly; it leads to loss of lives, loss of time, and loss of public confidence, low staff morale and also results in wastage of limited resources. For the last four years most, hospitals have about 20% of their staff not performing due to health and safety related reasons. In Kenya, hospitals account for 2% of the working population as was the report in the WHO report (2019). However, the health sector in Kenya is currently grappling with several challenges that is affecting employee's performance and service delivery to the people. These challenges include strikes and go slows, lack of equipment and proper infrastructure, lack of enough human resource among others (Agbozo, Owusu, & Atakorah, 2017). The health systems cannot be able to function effectively and efficiently without employees performing well. This is the case in Vihiga County Referral Hospital where Health staff went into strikes and go slows over unpaid salaries in 2020. The County Government of Vihiga has withheld salaries of nearly 300 health workers for the last five months on claims they were hired irregularly. Further, the healthcare employees at Vihiga County Referral Hospital are not satisfied in their workplace (County Public Service Board 2020). They complain of infections due to lack of enough PPEs, high stress level, low back pain, death, high medical cost and accidents. Health and safety are a cross-disciplinary area concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work or employment. The goal of all occupational health and safety practices is to foster a safe work environment (Sorensen, Sparer, Williams & Wagner, 2018). Therefore, this research was geared towards establishing effect of working condition on employee performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital.

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Person-Environment Fit Theory**

This study was guided by Person Environment fit theory developed Murrell and Norris (1983). This model concerns the interaction between the individual and his/her environment where it is assumed strain arises when there is a gap between personal motives (for example, involvement, economic benefit and self-development) and work feedback, or between job demands (for example, work load and complexity) and the individual's ability to deal with these requirements (Rocconi, Liu & Pike, 2020). The core premise of Person - Environment fit theory is that stress arises not from the person or environment separately, but rather by their fit or congruence with one another.

There are a number of assumptions common to all person-environment fit models used in vocational psychology. These assumptions are within an occupation, the well-adapted incumbents share certain psychological attributes; there are measurable and practically significant differences between people and between occupations; individual differences interact with occupational differences to positively or negatively affect outcome and person attributes and occupational characteristics show sufficient consistency across both time and setting to justify the prediction of long-term outcomes (Andela & van der Doef, 2019). It is implicit in these assumptions that if workers and work environments can be reliably measured, then the quality of the match (or fit) between the two may be a useful predictor of outcomes ranging from employee performance to productivity.

According to Stich, Tarafdar, Stacey and Cooper (2019) strain increases when there is a misfit in the interaction between people and their work environment. The individual's perceived wellbeing is maximized

when the actual job characteristics are aligned with his/her preferences. The Person Fit model emphasizes the need for a good fit between a person's abilities, skills and degree of control or decision latitude and the work environment's demands, complexity, expectations and challenges. An imbalance in either direction (too many skills, not enough demands, or too many demands and insufficient control) generates stress (Deng & Yao, 2020). According to Person-Environment fit theory, subjective P-E misfit leads to two sets of outcomes. One set of outcomes comprises psychological, physical, and behavioral strains, defined as deviations from normal functioning (Guan, Deng, Fan & Zhou, 2021).

Although research has shown that these judgements are highly related to job attitudes, they have been criticized because they confound the independent effects of the person and the environment with their joint effect and do not adequately capture the psychological process by which people compare themselves to the environment (Van Vianen, 2018). Although person-environment fit models have been criticized along similar lines as the trait-factor counseling approaches they grew out of, these models have been and continue to be very widely used. This use is due in part to the intuitive appeal of these models and in part to the psychometric rigor that was devoted to developing both individual assessment instruments and occupational classification systems.

## **II. Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. According to Cooper, Schindler and Sun (2016) descriptive design is used to describe phenomena associated with a subject population or to estimate proportions of the population that have certain characteristics. The design is found appropriate because the departments and units of the Vihiga County Referral Hospital are many and they were investigated independently.

This study targeted employees of Vihiga County Referral Hospital which comprise of administration (15), technical staff (157) and subordinate staff (136). Therefore, the target population was 308 employees. The researcher obtained the sample size of 174 respondents using

The study employed stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the sample of the other employees. Stratified sampling was used to achieve desired representation from various subgroups in the population.

**Table 1 Sample Size**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>
Administration	8
Technical staff	89
Subordinate staff	77
<b>Total</b>	<b>174</b>

The study used a structured questionnaire to collect the primary data. A Five Point Likert Scale was used to determine the degree to occupational safety and health affect employee performance at the hospital. The respondents were required to fill the questionnaires at their own convenient time to avoid inconvenience during work hours. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents and picked after two days.

The validity of this study was attained through experts and advice from the supervisor. The instruments were rated in terms of how effective it was in sampling the significant aspects of the purpose of the study. The validity of the instrument was asking the right questions framed in the least ambiguous way. The study used Cronbach's alpha coefficient to estimate the internal consistency reliability by determining how items of the instrument relate to each other and to the entire instrument using data that was obtained from the pilot test. Thus, it gave great proportions of reliability since holding different components steady, the more comparative the test substance and states of organization are, the more noteworthy the inner consistency dependability (Kimberlin, & Winterstein, 2008). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranges from 0.00 - 1.00. Cronbach's alpha of greater than 0.7 is considered acceptable.

Data was checked for accuracy, uniformity, logical completeness and consistency before analysis. Data was then be analyzed through the use of descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. Descriptive statistics included mean, mode, percentage, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics included correlation and multiple regression analysis to establish the effects of occupational safety and health practices on employee performance. Presentation of the findings were done by frequency distribution tables and diagrams, pie charts, and bar graphs.

The following regression model was used:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 1}$$

Where:

- Y** represents employee performance
- $\beta_0$**  represent the intercept when x is zero
- $X_1$**  represent working condition
- $\epsilon$**  represents error term

### III. Findings

#### Response Rate

Out of a total of sample 174 respondents targeted, 142 respondents successfully filled the questionnaires, which translate to a response rate of 81.6%. The response was appropriate for the study to continue and provide reliable results.

#### Working Conditions

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of working conditions on employee performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital, Kenya. Table 2 presents the study results.

**Table 2 Working Conditions**

Statements		SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mix	Max	Mean	Sd
The equipment used in the hospital are safe for use by the employees	F	54	47	11	18	12	1	5	3.80	1.30
	%	38	33.1	7.7	12.7	8.5				
The hospital has ambience that makes employees and customers comfortable	F	34	72	12	12	12	1	5	3.73	1.17
	%	23.9	50.7	8.5	8.5	8.5				
Hospitals have reduced opportunities for ergonomic stressors to manifest into injuries or repetitive stress disorders.	F	41	78	10	8	5	1	5	4.00	0.95
	%	28.9	54.9	7	5.6	3.5				
The hospital is maintaining rules and regulations concerning working condition	F	79	40	6	9	5	1	5	3.99	1.01
	%	55.6	28.2	4.2	1.4	3.5				
<b>Valid N =142</b>									<b>3.88</b>	

Table 2 showed that the majority, 101(71.1%) of the respondents, agreed that the equipment used in the hospital is safe for use by the employees. However, 30(21.1%) of the respondents disagreed that the equipment used in the hospital is safe for the employees. Furthermore, most respondents agreed that the equipment used in the hospital is safe for use by the employees, with a mean score of 3.80(1.30). The study findings also revealed that 106(74.6%) respondents agreed that the hospital has an ambience that makes employees and customers comfortable. However, 24(16.9%) of the respondents disagreed that the hospital has an ambience that satisfies employees and customers.

Further, the majority of respondents agreed the hospital has an ambience that makes employees and customers comfortable, as shown by a mean of 3.73(1.17). In addition, the study findings revealed that 119(83.8%) of the respondents agreed that hospitals have reduced opportunities for ergonomic stressors to manifest into injuries or repetitive stress disorders. However, 13(9.2%) of the respondents disagreed that hospitals have reduced opportunities for ergonomic stressors to manifest into injuries or repetitive stress disorders. Further, in terms of mean and standard deviation majority of respondents agreed that hospitals have reduced opportunities for ergonomic stressors to manifest into injuries or repetitive stress disorders, as shown by a mean score of 4.00(0.95).

Lastly, 119(83.8%) of the respondents agreed that the hospital maintains rules and regulations concerning working conditions. However, 14(9.9%) of the respondents disagreed that the hospital maintains rules and regulations concerning working conditions. Furthermore, the study results showed in terms of mean and standard deviation that the majority of respondents agreed that the hospital is maintaining rules and regulations concerning working conditions with a mean score of 3.99 and standard deviation of 0.912. The study results indicated that majority of respondents agreed that working conditions affect employee performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital, Kenya.

When equipment used in the hospital are safe for use by the employees, their performance is improved. When the hospital has an ambience that makes employees and customers comfortable, it will motivate performance. By reducing ergonomic stressors to manifest into injuries or repetitive stress disorders, the employees can work comfortably in the hospital hence improving their performance. When the hospital maintains rules and regulations concerning working conditions, the employees can work comfortably, improving their performance. The study results concur with Sukdeo (2017), whose findings of the study indicated that there is a very strong causal effect between the work environment and employee performance, which leads to increased productivity.

**Employee Performance**

The study sought to establish employee performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital, Kenya. Table 3 presents the study results.

**Table 3 Employee Performance**

Statements		SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mix	Max	Mean	Sd
The quality of work per employee have improved	F	50	45	11	18	18	1	5	3.64	1.40
	%	35.2	31.6	7.7	12.7	12.7				
There is increased work productivity per employee	F	34	68	12	14	14	1	5	3.66	1.23
	%	23.9	47.8	8.5	9.9	9.9				
The employees are working in a speed with efficiency	F	49	68	12	6	7	1	5	4.03	1.02
	%	34.5	47.8	8.5	4.3	4.9				
Clients are giving good feedback on the services offered in the hospital	F	37	73	10	12	10	1	5	3.81	1.13
	%	26.1	51.4	7	8.5	7				
<b>Valid N =142</b>									<b>3.79</b>	

Table 3 showed that 95(66.9%) of the respondents agreed that the quality of work per employee has improved. However, 36(25.4%) of the respondents disagreed that the quality of work per employee has improved. Further, in terms of mean and standard deviation majority of respondents agreed that the quality of work per employee have improved as shown by a mean score of 3.64 and standard deviation of 1.40. The study findings further revealed that 108(76.1%) of the respondents agreed that there is increased work productivity per employee. However, 28(19.7%) of the respondents disagreed that there is increased work productivity per employee. In terms of mean and standard deviation majority of respondents agreed that there is increased work productivity per employee with a mean of 3.66(1.23).

Further the study findings indicated that 117(82.4%) of the respondents agreed that the employees are working in a speed with efficiency. However, 13(9.2%) of the respondents disagreed that the employees are working in a speed with efficiency. Further, majority of respondents agreed that the employees are working in a speed with efficiency with a mean of 4.03 and standard deviation of 1.02.

Finally, the study findings revealed that 110(77.5%) of the respondents agreed that clients are giving good feedback on the services offered in the hospital. However, 22(15.5%) of respondents disagreed clients are giving good feedback on the services offered in the hospital. Further, the study results showed in terms of mean and standard deviation that majority of respondents agreed that clients are giving good feedback on the services offered in the hospital with a mean of 3.81 and standard deviation of 1.13. The study concluded that majority of respondents agreed that there is improvement in employee’s performance.

**Simple Linear regression model of Working Condition and Employee Performance**

The second objective sought to determine the effect of working condition on employee performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital, Kenya. The results are as presented in Table 4:

*Table 4 Model Summary*

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.858 <sup>a</sup>	.737	.735	.42047

The model summary Table 4 shows that the simple correlation between the variables R=.858 which indicates a high degree of correlation. This means that there was a high strength of association between working condition and employee performance at Vihiga County Referral Hospital, Kenya. The R-square value (.737) indicates that 73.7% of the total variation in employee performance could be explained by working condition.

The second output of the analysis showed how well the regression equation fitted the data that is, how well the independent variable (working condition) predicted the dependent variable (employee performance). The study results were presented in Table 5.

**Table 5 Regression Model Fitness Results**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Regression</b>	69.309	1	69.309	392.040	.000 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Residual</b>	24.751	140	.177		
<b>Total</b>	94.060	141			

The results in Table 5 revealed that the statistical significance of the regression model was 0.000 which is less than .05 and F-statistics =392.040. This indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependent variable (employee performance). The third output of the analysis is the summary of the coefficients that provide the information upon which the dependent variable (employee performance) can be predicted from the independent variable (working condition). The summary is as displayed in Table 6:

**Table 6 Regression Model Coefficients**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
<b>(Constant)</b>	.826	.175		4.719	.000
<b>Working condition</b>	.833	.042	.858	19.800	.000

Regression of coefficients results in Table 6 showed that working condition has a positive and significant influence on employee performance ( $\beta=.833$ ,  $p=.000<0.05$ ). This implies that an increase in working condition leads to increase in employee performance by 0.2833 units.

Therefore, the coefficients generate the regression equation as expressed hereunder:

**Y= 0.826+ 0.833X<sub>2</sub> .....Equation 4.2**

#### IV. Conclusion of the study

The study also concluded that working condition has a positive and significant influence on employee performance. This is shown when equipment used in the hospital is safe for use by the employees and improves their performance. When the hospital has an ambience that makes employees and customers comfortable, it will motivate performance. By reducing ergonomic stressors to manifest into injuries or repetitive stress disorders, the employees can work comfortably in the hospital, improving their performance. When the hospital maintains rules and regulations concerning working conditions, the employees can work comfortably, improving their performance.

#### V. Recommendations

The study recommends that the hospital management always ensure that their employees are provided with conducive working conditions. They are covered under WIBA and ensure that they are aware of OHS Policy and its implementation in the hospital.

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