

## A descriptive, correlational study about the relationship between working conditions and employee performance in Kole District Local Government.

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### Abstract Background

This study aims to determine the relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole District Local Government.

### Methodology

The research was a descriptive, correlational research design that was cross-sectional in nature. The target population of this study was 124 employees of the Kole District local government. The researcher adopted Morgan & Krejcie's sampling table to determine the sample size, and 92 staff were selected as respondents of the study. Simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling were used to select respondents for the study.

This research used both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was obtained and given to the selected staff of the Kole district to fill out and return after one week. Secondary data was obtained directly from the magazines, newspapers, annual reports, and websites that are related to the study topic.

### Results

According to findings, there was inequity in payment as the amount of work performed was not equal to the paid salaries, and there were no employee benefits for staff, hence affecting employee performance. Also, findings showed a poor attitude by senior politicians towards the civil service as a major constraint on employee performance. Findings also showed that senior staff had a poor attitude towards junior staff in Kole District, hence junior staff lack opportunities to learn and perform better.

### Conclusion

The correlation between working conditions and employee performance was 0.762 with a sig value of 0.000. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole district local government. The provision of favorable working conditions contributes to employees' satisfaction and productivity.

### Recommendation

The local government should improve remuneration packages for its employees, as salaries and wages do not match the tasks and roles performed by employees.

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### Background of the study

The term "working conditions" is often used to refer to all aspects of the physical environment, including temperature, noise, ventilation, and lighting. These physical conditions can have an impact on employee health and safety, as well as on productivity and morale (Ramli, 2019). Other working conditions, such as wages and salaries, job security, and opportunities for advancement, also have an effect on employee satisfaction and performance (Badrianto, 2020). The most commonly used definition of working conditions in local government is provided by the International Labour Organization (ILO). (Kenneth, 2009) The ILO defines

working conditions as "the physical, psychological, and social environment in which work is performed." This definition includes physical conditions such as temperature, noise, and ventilation, as well as psychological and social conditions such as job security, wages and salaries, and opportunities for advancement (Choi, 2018). In addition to the ILO definition, other definitions of working conditions have been proposed. For example, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) defines working conditions as "the combination of physical, psychological, social, and organizational factors that influence the health of workers (Taheri, 2020).

Studies have found that parameters such as wages and salaries, job security, safety, health, and other working conditions have direct and indirect effects on employee morale, motivation, and job performance (Akamumpa, 2021). According to Roberts (2020), the working conditions in local government vary widely, depending on factors such as government policies on employment, the nature of the job, and the geographic location. Generally, local government employees in developed economies enjoy competitive wages, reasonable job security, and an array of benefits. Additionally, many local governments have adopted policies that strive to create a workplace that is free of discrimination and harassment (Nicholas, 2018).

Mobley (2015) identified ways to improve working conditions of employees of the Federal Government in the United States of America (Federal Governments in the USA are the equivalent of Local Governments in Uganda). Many have adopted policies to ensure that employees are treated fairly and equitably, and to create a safe and supportive work environment. Through initiatives such as hiring practices that promote diversity and the adoption of anti-discrimination policies, federal governments are striving to create a workplace that is welcoming and supportive of all employees. Additionally, many federal governments are now offering work-life balance initiatives such as flexible work schedules, telecommuting, and employee assistance programs to help employees manage their work and personal lives. These initiatives are designed to reduce stress and increase job satisfaction, which can lead to higher job performance and a healthier work environment (Schmidt, 2010).

This study aims to determine the relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole District Local Government.

### **Methodology**

This methodology is the same as the one published (Ongom & Kyokunda, 2025)

### **Research Design**

The research was a descriptive, correlational research design that was cross-sectional in nature. This was because the study described the characteristics of respondents, study variables, examined the relationship between variables, and collected data at a particular point in time.

The study was descriptive since it explained the specific issues where problems had been defined. Further, the study was correlational since it examined the relationship between the study variables. The researcher adopted a mixed approach comprising both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This helped to obtain relevant, recent, and in-depth information on the study topic at a point in time and for a short period, hence a cross-sectional design.

### **Target Population**

The target population of this study was the staff of Kole District Local Government. According to the Human Resource Report (2022), the district has 124 staff at its headquarters, hence the population of the study. These consisted of the Chief Administration Officer, the Principal Human Resource Officer, and other senior technical staff.

### **Sample size**

The researcher adopted Morgan & Krejcie's sampling table to determine the sample size. Therefore, 92 staff of the Kole District Local Government were selected as respondents of the study. These included the Principal Human Resource Officer and Chief Administrative Officer.

### **Sampling techniques**

The researcher used a simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling to select respondents for the study. A Simple Random Sampling Technique was used to collect information from the staff of the district. Purposive sampling was used to collect information from the key respondents, ie, CAO, RDC, and Principal Personnel Officer.

### **Research Instruments**

The researcher used questionnaires as the main data collection instrument. The researcher used a Likert-type format of questionnaires so as to capture detailed information about the study objectives. Also, the researcher used an interview guide to collect information from a few key respondents of the study, ie, Chief Administrative Officer, Principal Human Resource Officer, and the RDC.

### **Sources of data**

This research used both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was obtained using Self-Administered Questionnaires (SAD) that were given to the selected staff (civil servants) of Kole district to fill out and return after one week. Secondary data was obtained directly from the magazines, journals, newspapers, annual reports, and websites that are related to the study topic.

### **Validity**

The researchers used both content and face validity to ascertain the validity of the questionnaire. Cooper and Schindler (2008) describe validity as the correctness, the capacity of interpretations founded on study findings. The researchers conducted a pilot study to validate the study questionnaire using the supervisor as an expert who graded questions on being accurate and relevant to the study.

To ensure greater chances of data validity, the questionnaires were reviewed with the research supervisor for expert input. A content validity index (CVI) was

determined by dividing the relevant questions by the total questions ( $CVI=n/N$ ). The researcher continued with the questionnaire since a content validity index of 0.84 was obtained, which was greater than 0.7.

### Reliability

A test-retest method was used to test the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher pretested the interview questions on a few respondents before administering them to the entire sample size. The obtained answers were compared to the responses of the second test (retest) to ensure accuracy and reliability.

### Data Analysis and Presentation

Descriptive statistics such as mean and frequency distribution will be used to analyze the data. Inferential statistics were used in the conclusion. Data in the questionnaire were analyzed using frequency distributions and percentages to determine the respondents' responses. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Specifically, means, averages, and percentages were employed by the researcher. Data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data was coded and organized into concepts from which generalizations were made of the entire population. Data was then tabulated and frequencies calculated on each variable under study, and interpretations made from the field findings on the study objectives.

Pearson correlation was used to establish the significance of the relationship between the study variables, and multiple regression models were used to establish the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee performance in local government.

### Ethical Consideration

1. The researcher will undertake various steps to certify that the research observes research

principles and values. A research authorization letter will be obtained from the School of Graduate Studies and Research.

2. Participants will be asked to sign the consent forms to participate in the research. The researcher will ensure that this is achieved through the principle of informed consent. The researcher will seek consent from the Kole district Local Government Chief Administrative Officer.
3. Participants will be asked to consent to participate in the research, for which they will be free to participate or not. The researcher will explain to the respondents that the information they give will be used only for the study. The researcher will also explain that meaningful data for this study will be achieved if they contribute their views about the research topic.
4. The researcher will explain to the respondents that the data that will be gathered in this study will be treated in confidence and that the findings will be used for academic purposes.
5. The potential respondents will not be identified by name. Confidentiality of respondents will be treated as a matter of priority. Further, the researcher will engage the respondents before agreeing to answer the questions of this study.
6. The researcher will accord the respondents their due respect while at the same time ensuring that they answer the questions to the expectations of the study, interjecting intelligibly. The researcher will pick respondents without any discrimination.

### Results

#### Response rate

The study administered the following instruments for the collection of the data.

**Table 1: Showing the response rate of the respondents**

Targeted No	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
92	80	87%

*Source: Primary data 2023*

Table 1 demonstrates the respondents' distribution according to the instruments used by the researcher; 87% of the targeted respondents participated by answering the questionnaires. The outcome from the table shows that the level of participation was absolutely effective, as shown by the number of respondents. From the study, 85 questionnaires were filled out and returned, while 80 passed the data response clean-up process for acceptance for data analysis. The response rate was in line with Lin (1976), who suggests that for reporting of findings, a response rate of

50% is acceptable, and that one above 70% is very good; therefore, the response rate of 87% was very good to be relied upon to produce results of the findings.

#### Background of the respondents

This describes the background of respondents in terms of position, gender, age, level of education, marital status, employment status, and length of time the respondents had spent working with the Kole District Local Government.

**Table 2: Distribution of demographic characteristics of the respondents**

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	55	69%
Female	25	31%
<b>Age (years)</b>		
20-35	18	23%
36-45	43	54%
46-60	19	24%
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	13	16%
Married	48	60%
Separated	12	15%
Widowed	7	9%
<b>Education level</b>		
Secondary	5	6%
Tertiary	31	39%
University	44	55%
<b>Length of service years</b>		
(1-5)	19	24%
(6-10)	48	60%
11+	13	16%
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary data 2023

Table 2 shows that 55 respondents were male, who constituted 69% while Females were 25, constituting 31%. From this, it is seen that most of the employees at the Kole District local government are males. This indicated that in most cases, women have a lot of responsibility, and when they are absent for maternity leave, or they are attending to their children in hospital, or anything else, the service suffers, and this could also explain the large number of men employed by the local government who are committed to their jobs. This shows that gender significantly explains the effect of employee satisfaction on employee performance. Table 2 indicates that 54% of employees at Kole District Local Government are between the ages of 36-45 years, 24% are between the ages of 46-60 years, and 23% of the employees are between the ages of 20-35 years. While 51 years and above constitutes 3.5% of the respondents. This implies that age significantly determines the relationship between employee satisfaction and employees' performance at Kole District Local Government.

Further, Table 2 shows that 60% of the respondents were married, 16% were single, 15% of the employees were divorced/ separated, while 9% were widowed. This shows that the majority of the respondents (60%) were married. This implied that marital status has a significant effect on

employee performance at the Kole District Local Government.

Response shows that the majority of administrative staff at Kole District Local Government hold bachelor's degrees, representing 55% (University education), 39% of respondents had a tertiary level of education, and 6% of respondents had secondary education. This implies that the district mostly employs people who are University graduates. This statistic indicates that the Kole District Local Government has qualified staff and has appropriate skills and knowledge in handling the district services.

Figure 2 indicates that most respondents worked in the service for 6-10 years, showing 60%, 24% of respondents spent 1-5 years. Those over 10 years were represented by 16% representing. This, therefore, implies that 76% of the employees have experience of over 6 years working for the Kole District Local Government.

### **Working conditions and employee performance at Kole District Local Government**

The researcher used a Likert scale for this particular section of the study, where the responses were on a scale of 1-5. Where 1 = Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree. The table below shows

a summary of the participants' responses based on percentages (P), frequency (F), standard deviation (Std), and mean.

**Table 3: Working conditions and employee performance at Kole District Local Government**

	Mean	Standard deviation
There is low pay compared to the tasks performed by employees in the Kole district.		
Employees work for long hours at the Kole district, which has triggered some employees to be absent on several days, hence affecting the number of tasks performed.		
There are no employee benefits for staff, hence a lack of motivation to provide quality services in the Kole district		
The attitude of senior politicians towards civil servants has been negative, which creates conflicts, hence affecting the quality and amount of work performed by staff at the Kole District local government		
The attitude of senior staff towards the junior staff in Kole District has been poor, which creates tension and leads to poor quality of work by junior staff.		
There is a shortage of equipment to use by staff in performing given tasks, hence causing delays and work backlogs at the Kole District local government		
There is a relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole district local government		

According to findings in Table 3 above on the statement “There is low pay compared to the tasks performed by employees at Kole district”, the mean response was 2.02 with a standard deviation of 0.26. Therefore, respondents agree that there is low pay at Kole District compared to the quantity of work performed by employees.

On the statement “Employees work for long hours at the Kole district, which has triggered some employees to be absent on several days”, the mean response was 4.37 with a standard deviation of 0.46. Therefore, respondents disagree that employees do not work for long hours in the Kole district, which reduces productivity.

On the statement “There are no employee benefits for staff, hence a lack of motivation to provide quality services in Kole district”, the mean response was 1.87 with a standard deviation of 0.27. Therefore, respondents agree that there is no employee benefit for staff, which affects employee performance.

On the statement “The attitude of senior politicians towards civil servants has been negative, which creates conflicts, hence affecting the quality and amount of work performed by staff at Kole District local government”, the mean response was 2.31 with a standard deviation of 0.49. Therefore, respondents agree that the attitude of senior politicians towards civil servants has been negative, which creates conflicts, hence affecting the quality and amount of work performed by staff at the Kole District local government.

On the statement “The attitude of senior staff towards the junior staff in Kole District has been poor, which creates tension and leads to poor quality of work by junior staff”, the mean response was 2.01 with a standard deviation of

0.17. Therefore, respondents agree that the attitude of senior staff towards the junior staff in Kole District has been poor, which creates tension and leads to poor quality work by junior staff.

On the statement “There is a shortage of equipment to use by staff in performing given tasks, hence causing delays and work backlogs at Kole District local government”, the mean response was 1.34 with a standard deviation of 0.22. Therefore, respondents agree that there is a shortage of equipment to use by staff in performing given tasks, hence causing delays and work backlogs at the Kole District local government

On the statement “There is a relationship between working conditions and employee performance in Kole district local government”, the mean response was 1.18 with a standard deviation of 0.18. Therefore, respondents agree that there is a relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole district local government

### Discussion

According to findings, there was inequity in payment as the amount of work performed was not equal to the paid salaries, and there were no employee benefits for staff, hence affecting employee performance. Also, findings showed a poor attitude by senior politicians towards the civil service as a major constraint on employee performance. Findings also showed that senior staff had a poor attitude towards junior staff in Kole District, hence junior staff lack opportunities to learn and perform better.

Cerci (2019) conducted a study of the relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the local

governments of Turkey. He found that job autonomy, salary, and work-life balance were important factors influencing employee performance. He also found that job satisfaction and job commitment were positively associated with employee performance. Furthermore, they concluded that the quality of working conditions can have a significant effect on employee performance in organizations.

Heath (2016) found in his study that organizational targets can only be achieved if the work environment is conducive. The quality of the employees' workplace environment impacts their motivation level and hence performance. When employees have the desire, physically and emotionally, to work, then their performance shall be increased (Abdul and Tafique, 2015). They also state that having a proper workplace environment helps in reducing the rate of absenteeism and, as a result, can increase performance in today's competitive and dynamic business world. Chandrasekar (2011) sees that workplace conditions that are set in place have an impact on employee morale, productivity, and engagement, all positively. She also adds that factors of the workplace environment play an important role in overall performance.

However, findings showed that employees do not work for long hours in the Kole district, resulting in lower productivity. Further, findings revealed that there was a shortage of equipment used by staff in performing given tasks, hence causing delays and work backlogs at the Kole District local government. Also, findings showed that there was a relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole district local government.

The correlation between working conditions and employee performance was 0.762 with a sig value of 0.000. Therefore, there was a significant relationship between working conditions and employee performance in the Kole district local government. The provision of favorable working conditions contributes to employees' satisfaction and productivity.

Findings also showed that employee performance at the Kole district local government was 72.1% explained by working conditions (Adjusted R Square =0.721). The remaining 27.9% of the employee performance was explained by factors that influence employee satisfaction that were outside the study. The regression model was significant (sig 0.003≤0.05). This means that improved working conditions improve employee performance at the Kole district local government.

### Conclusion

There was a significant positive relationship between (r=0.478, sig=0.001) opportunities for growth and employee performance at the Kole district local government.

### Recommendation

The researcher recommends that;

1. The local government should provide contracts to employees and avoid staff layoffs to boost employee commitment and performance.
2. The local government should improve remuneration packages for its employees, as the salaries and wages do not match the tasks and roles performed by employees.

### List of Abbreviations

<b>ACODE</b>	Action for Community Development
<b>CVI</b>	Content Validity Index
<b>DLG</b>	District Local Government
<b>LG</b>	Local Government
<b>HR</b>	Human Resource
<b>KDLG</b>	Kole District Local Government
<b>NIOSH</b>	National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health
<b>SAD</b>	Self- Self-Administered Questionnaire
<b>SPSS</b>	Special Package for Social Science

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### Conflict of interest

The author had no conflict of interest.

### Author Biography

Fred Ojok Ongom is a master's student at Team University.

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