

East African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies

eajis.eanso.org

Volume 5, Issue 1, 2022

Print ISSN: 2707-529X | Online ISSN: 2707-5303

Title DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/2707-5303>

ENSO

EAST AFRICAN
NATURE &
SCIENCE
ORGANIZATION

Original Article

Effects of Employee Job Commitment on Organizational Performance in Kenya: A Case of Huduma Centre – Baringo

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Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajis.5.1.762>

Date Published: ABSTRACT

20 July 2022

Keywords:

*Employee
Commitment,
Organizational
Performance,
Huduma Centres.*

Employee job commitment continues to influence the work performance of employees in many organisations around the globe. While there has been broad research to understand the effect of employee job commitment, there is limited evidence to show the effect of key employee job commitment on the performance of Huduma Centres. The study focuses on examining the effect of employee job commitment on organisational performance, in the case of the Huduma Centre. Social exchange theory is the theory upon which the study is anchored. This study used the descriptive research design to examine the effect of employee attitudes on the organisational performance of Huduma Centre, Baringo. This study conducted a census of 60 employees who were administered with questionnaires comprising mainly of closed-ended questions. The study used questionnaires to collect data from non-supervisory and supervisory staff respondents. The collected data was then coded and analysed with the help of analytical software. Descriptive measures were used to analyse quantitative data, specifically the mean and the standard deviation, while for inferential statistical techniques, Pearson correlation was used. Frequency tables were used to present the data. The study ensured informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity were observed when collecting and processing the data. The demographic data results indicated that the majority of the respondents were female, married, had a diploma, and had served an average of three and half years at the Huduma Centre. The study findings indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between job commitment and organisational performance ($r = 0.556^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). The findings of the study have an implication for Kenyan public sector policymakers on the need to enhance job commitment so as to increase service delivery of Huduma Centres.

APA CITATION

Jemesunde, L., & Ng'eno, W. (2022). Effects of Employee Job Commitment on Organizational Performance in Kenya: A Case of Huduma Centre – Baringo *East African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 5(1), 161-169. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajis.5.1.762>.

CHICAGO CITATION

Jemesunde, Lydia and Weldon Ng'eno. 2022. "Effects of Employee Job Commitment on Organizational Performance in Kenya: A Case of Huduma Centre – Baringo". *East African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 5 (1), 161-169. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajis.5.1.762>.

HARVARD CITATION

Jemesunde, L., & Ng'eno, W. (2022) "Effects of Employee Job Commitment on Organizational Performance in Kenya: A Case of Huduma Centre – Baringo", *East African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 5(1), pp. 161-169. doi: 10.37284/eajis.5.1.762.

IEEE CITATION

L., Jemesunde, & W. Ng'eno. "Effects of Employee Job Commitment on Organizational Performance in Kenya: A Case of Huduma Centre – Baringo", *EAJIS*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 161-169, Jul. 2022.

MLA CITATION

Jemesunde, Lydia & Weldon Ng'eno. "Effects of Employee Job Commitment on Organizational Performance in Kenya: A Case of Huduma Centre – Baringo". *East African Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, Vol. 5, no. 1, Jul. 2022, pp. 161-169, doi:10.37284/eajis.5.1.762.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Organisations around the world leverage employee performance to increase their competitiveness and enhance survival. Yet, organisations with higher productivity, creativity, and innovation have been closely associated with favourable workplace attitudes. An attitude is a psychological state of mind which could be either positive or negative (Bullock et al., 2015). It is expected that the attitudes of employees regardless of being in the private or public sector, will affect their work performance. Employees with good attitudes exhibit superior performance, while those with poor attitudes portray dismal performance (Reddick, 2010). They constitute feelings, behavioural intentions, and beliefs that workers have towards different aspects of their work environment.

Public sector employees face constant criticism for prevailing negative attitudes. Besides affecting the public's wellbeing, the negative image hurts employee morale, commitment, and engagement. Job satisfaction, as a parameter of organisational management, remains a critical aspect of employee attitude. Employees are far more likely to have a positive attitude in the workplace if they enjoy their work, are confident and able to complete the tasks assigned, and value the role they are given (Afande, 2015). From the first engagement with employees, even before they become employees, job satisfaction influences the priorities of an organisation (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

It is the attitude that ranks high in the list of preferred qualities that a human resource manager will be looking at from a prospective employee. Employees that are involved in their work, proactive, initiative, and provide the highest level of service to consumers are in high demand in today's global organisations, particularly in service corporations (Eliyana & Muzaki, 2019). The study of employee attitude is imperative in understanding the influence that it has on the performance of the organisation.

The majority of the countries in Africa have embraced the notion of government efficiency. It is expected of the public sector to deliver distinctive goods and services when driven by compensation and incentive system reforms. However, drawbacks such as corruption, nepotism and tribalism continue to curtail the efficiency and effectiveness of many public sector organisations in Africa (Abudu, 2016). Unpredictable fluctuations in worker attitudes are associated with erratic service provision to citizens, the nonchalant attitude of staff, and careless or casual handling of tools and machines (Suleiman, 2013).

Cultural differences in job attitudes dominate most of the workforce in many African nations (Adigun, 2006; Olajide, 2014). Nevertheless, perceptions of job motivation from the employee perspective are rarely affected by the cultural background of an employee but influence organisational performance. Thus, allowing employees to use their abilities and initiative is one of the most recent organisational trends. Any employee will always seek to be part of the achievements made by the organisation they

work for (Iddagoda & Opatha, 2017). An employee becomes satisfied and motivated when the organisation empowers and allows them to take the initiative. This is especially the case when innovative employees utilise their ideas and technical capacity to generate greater organisational outputs. Thus, building an environment where employees are highly engaged has the potential to enhance and increase the chances of business continuity, growth, and success.

Every organisation benefit from the emotional desire to stay longer and contribute more to the success and growth of the organisation. Isaac and Oklikah (2020) opine that an employee's commitment is the attitude of the employee towards the organisation as well as the expression they have concerning the success of the organisation or otherwise. Workers are said to be devoted to the company if they put up the consistent effort, according to Yüksel and Yüksel (2008), whether they are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. As a result, workers' devotion is demonstrated by their willingness to take on duties on behalf of their bosses without much guidance (Decker, 2015). Employees' commitment to management is also demonstrated by their performance by meeting the required standards and aligning with the institution's mission, vision, objectives, goals, and interests.

The glamour for change in Kenya has been synonymous with the demand for efficient delivery of government services. Kenyan public sector performance, like in many developing countries, continues to be hampered by a lack of transparency and accountability, low productivity, inefficiency, and corruption (Lankeu & Maket, 2012). One of the objectives of public sector reforms was to change indiscipline and unethical behaviour and attitudes. Ong'era and Musili (2019) observe that attitude impacts the implementation of government policies, especially where policies are complex in nature or where employees exercise substantial discretion in policy implementation. It is through the Vision 2030 agenda that the government of Kenya shows the determination to positively influence the attitudes of civil servants for quality service delivery and efficient government.

The creation of Huduma Centres envisioned the achievement of public sector goals stipulated in Vision 2030. Given that citizens' needs and demands of governments are evolving, public sector employees are required to improve their service delivery (Robbins & Judge, 2010). The efficiency in service delivery of Huduma Centres is largely influenced by the value that employees attach to change and decision-making processes (Ng'aru & Wafula, 2015). Nonetheless, employees can develop a negative attitude to the process and in turn affect the efficiency and effective delivery of public services (Thomas, 2014). This shift is complicating government operations, which is exacerbated by the limited resources available to meet numerous competing needs in service delivery.

The Huduma Centre in Baringo is one of the programs established to provide citizen-oriented services to individuals and businesses at the county level. The Kenyan government established Huduma Centres to provide a one-stop service centre where individuals may obtain basic services (Waiguru, 2013). The services at Huduma Centre - Baringo, delivered by about 60 employees, are designed to provide residents with satisfaction in ways that previous government services did not. As a result, the focus is on how Huduma Kenya's service quality affects citizens seeking services at the centres' satisfaction levels. It is critical to investigate the employee attitude factors such as employee commitment as they affect the delivery of services to citizens. The study investigated the effect of employee job commitment on organisational performance of Huduma Centre, Baringo.

Statement of the Problem

Kenya's state explored a variety of actions in the early 1990s to address poor service delivery to citizens. According to Murithi (2012), the Kenyan government laid off almost 100,000 employees, yet it had little influence on the civil service's efficacy or efficiency. Past research shows that there is a relationship between the attitudes of employees and organisational performance (Decker, 2015; Murithi, 2012; Olajide, 2014; Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Bosak *et al.* (2016) argue that skilled and talented employees with negative attitudes are prone to severe underperformance as compared to those with

positive attitudes even when not talented and skilled. It is expected of employees with positive attitudes in the workplace to have work enjoyment, confidence in their abilities to execute assigned tasks, and appreciation of assigned roles.

The public service leadership implemented a number of changes to improve the prevailing circumstances starting in the early 1990s through results-oriented management, but by 2005, little had changed (Murithi, 2012). Huduma Centres were launched in 2013 and aimed at transforming citizen service through enhanced and efficient service delivery processes. The establishment of the centres was launched with the purpose of delivering effective government services to the citizens at their convenience.

While the new platform is supposed to improve service delivery and close gaps in organisational inefficiency, there is little research work to show whether or not employee job commitment has improved the organisational performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya. In the past, employees placed little emphasis on the process of change and decision-making, believing it to be a routine activity (Chepkorir, 2015). The majority of managers are unconcerned about employee job commitment, which is significant in determining organisational performance. There is a need to understand the effects of employee commitment and how it affects the performance of the organisation. This research study investigated the effects of employee job commitment on the organisational performance of Huduma Centre in Baringo, Kenya.

Justification and Significance of the Study

Research on the performance of Huduma Centres in Kenya is fairly new given that it has been not so long since its establishment. Since employees are at the centre of service delivery, it is important to explore their commitment as this affects the performance of the centre. Past researchers have concentrated their study of service delivery at Huduma Centres in major Kenyan towns and this study considers Baringo as a possible study setting outside these towns. Also, Baringo being a hardship area with a lot of insecurity cases and its wide geographical coverage makes it more ideal for this study. Moreover, it brings about job satisfaction, job

commitment, and employee engagement which have had limited attention in Huduma Centre service delivery research.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Job Commitment and Organisational Performance

Bireswari (2013) sought to find out whether organisational performance was affected by the attitude and behaviour of the staff. The study utilised job satisfaction, commitment, and engagement variables. The study used a judgmental sample of 310 Information Technology (IT) employees from India. The author analysed data using the regression analytical technique. The study findings indicated that employee attitudes and behaviour significantly impacted the performance and the outcomes of the organisation. The study utilised job satisfaction and organisational commitment in private sector firms. This left a gap in the effect of worker attitude on public sector service delivery outcomes and, in addition, the Kenyan context. This study used the same variables as the author chose census to make a link to public sector service outcomes.

Chepkorir (2015) investigated the influence of service quality on the satisfaction of customers at Huduma Centre - Nairobi. The author used mixed methods for a sample of 50 respondents and analysed the data using inferential and descriptive statistics (Pearson correlation). The study findings showed that service quality, friendliness of staff, and timely settlement of customers' difficulties were all elements that contributed to consumer satisfaction at the centre. While the study setting is similar to this study, the variables are different and did not consider attitude factors such as job satisfaction, employee commitment, and employee engagement. The study filled this gap by investigating the three attitude factors and how they influence Huduma Centre's performance.

Ndai and Makhamara (2021) investigated the effects of employee commitment on firm performance by considering Timaflor Company, a private firm in Kenya. The study used the following variables; employee training, employee compensation, working conditions and employee

continuance involvement. It utilised stratified random sampling to obtain a sample of 340 employees to respond to the survey. The study exploited a descriptive research design and regression analysis model. The study found that employee training, employee compensation, working conditions, and employee continuance involvement influenced organisational performance. This study investigates employee commitment as an attitude variable that influences organisational performance. However, it left a gap in the use of the correlation method and also the public sector context, which is the performance of Huduma Centres. This study used correlation measures to investigate the effect of employee commitment on the performance of Huduma Centres.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Exchange Theory

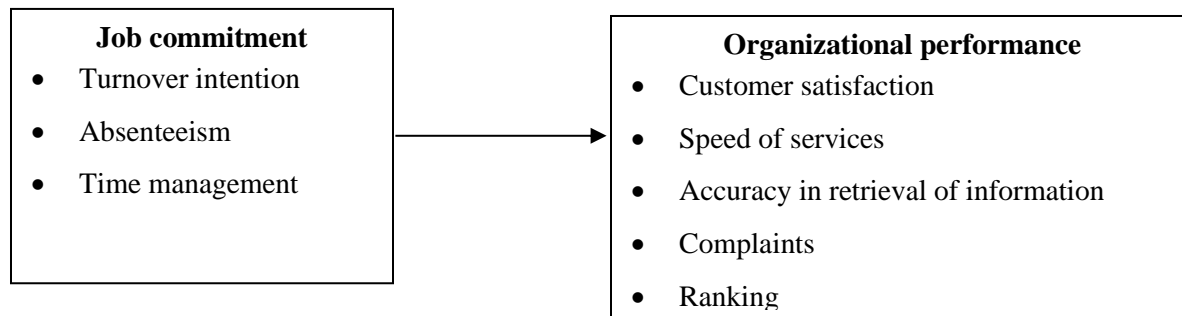
In different times 1961-1974, Homans, Blau and Emerson proposed the social exchange perspectives within sociology. George Homans originated this theory in 1957 by stating that the social behaviour of people is a result of an exchange process which seeks to minimise costs and maximise benefits. A general argument of social exchange theory (SET) in employee commitment is that as individuals

behave in a certain way toward an entity, the entity endears more to them. Therefore, when an employee gives more of their time and energy to the organisation, the entity in exchange responds by rewarding them with good pay and a comfortable work environment. Social behaviours influence how people feel about their jobs (Chang & Stansbie, 2018).

From its origins in psychology theory, Osborne and Hammoud (2017) opine that the concept of commitment has found its way into the realm of management. The effort justification paradigm of social exchange in employee commitment idealises that if workers strive hard toward an organisational goal, they will eventually find it appealing. As a result, the previously indicated paradigm shift is extended to a variety of behaviours, including employee dedication to work and to the organisation. This theory was relevant to this study in the sense that employees show commitment to the organisation in exchange for employee turnover, absenteeism, lateness, and general withdrawal behaviour. Besides, employees’ views of human resource practices can be strong enough to entice them to reciprocate with a positive attitude and behaviour, which in turn boosts organisational performance.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed the survey research design to demonstrate how employee commitment to their jobs affected the performance of Huduma Centre, Baringo. Huduma Centre, Baringo is located in Kabarnet town, in Baringo County, a district under the former province of Rift Valley in Kenya. Both

secondary and primary were collected for the study. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from all the staff at the centre since the census was used. Census was adopted since the population at the centre was not too big to warrant any sampling. Reliability and validity were tested after a pilot test of the questionnaire was conducted at Huduma Centre – Eldoret, which was found to be

reliable (0.856) and valid. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics, specifically mean and standard deviation as well as Pearson correlation, while qualitative data was analysed and presented using themes. Ethical standards of informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and objectivity were observed throughout the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Information of the Respondents

The majority of the respondents were female (55.4%), while 44.6% were male. The results indicated that the mean duration of employment at Huduma Centre – Baringo was 3.63 (SD = 1.73) years. This means that, on average, the respondents had worked for between 1 year and 5 years within the centre, given that the Baringo centre is only 7 years since inception. The maximum duration is 7 years, while the minimum duration is 3 months. This indicated a range of 6 years and 9 months between the longest serving and the recently deployed employee. Since the inception of e-government services, Huduma Centre has been steadfast in providing these services. An average of 4 years’ experience working at Huduma centre shows that employees have a good mastery of work tasks, citizen satisfaction, as well as organisational ethics and goals.

The ages of respondents spread between 18 years and 60 years. The majority of the respondents (21, 37.5%) were aged 40-49 years, 18(32.1%) aged 30-39 years, 8 (14.3%) and 9(16.1%) were aged 18-29 years and 50-59 years respectively. The results indicate that employees were in mid-life with greater aspirations for work-life balance, career progression, and personal development. It is expected that older workers to be more satisfied in their roles compared to younger employees. They offer useful experience and apprenticeship to those 30-39 years and 18-29 years. These age brackets

constitute employees who feel satisfied when they receive benefits that help them navigate the challenges of family life including role change and personal satisfaction.

The results in the academic qualifications of the respondents show that the majority of them were Diploma holders (37.5%), 26.8% had a certificate, while 25% of them had graduated with a Bachelor’s degree. Only 5.4% indicated that they had completed Form Four, while an equal proportion (5.4%) indicated that they had a postgraduate qualification (masters).

The academic qualification and work experience determine employee satisfaction. Individuals with higher academic qualifications may aspire for roles and job descriptions that best fit their highest qualifications. The academic qualification has a great effect on productivity because people with relevant training in the subject area are empowered and capable of handling tasks. The feeling of empowerment is necessary for the organisation’s overall productivity and performance.

The majority of the respondents were married (36, 64.3%), while 13(23.2%) were single. Only 5(8.9%) were divorced, and the remaining 1(1.8%) responded that they were widowed. The majority of the respondents were married, implying that they primarily intended to provide for the needs of their immediate family members and children.

Employee Job Commitment and Organisational Performance

The study established the relationship between employee job commitment and organisational performance by performing Pearson correlation statistics. The statistic provided a measure of both the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation of the Employee Job Commitment and Organizational Performance

		Organisational Performance
Job commitment	Pearson Correlation	0.556**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N (56)	

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

The Pearson correlation results indicate a strong positive relationship between job commitment and organisational performance ($r = 0.556^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). The results show that a unit change in the employee job commitment provides a 55.6% change and effect on the performance of the Huduma centre – Baringo. It also shows that when the employees increase their commitment to work, the organisational outputs increase. The study confirms that organisations that seek to improve their performance purpose to increase the level of commitment of their employees towards work.

Committed employees are more likely to have benefited from regular employee training, better employee compensation, improved working conditions, and employee continuance involvement. These aspects were critical in enhancing their commitment to work. In the study, employees with a higher level of commitment had low absenteeism and turnover intentions and had good time management abilities. It is desirable for the senior management in the organisation to maintain high levels of commitment among employees. By doing so, employees get to satisfy their clients, generate a higher speed of services, and lower frequency of complaints

The study findings indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between job commitment and organisational performance. The results were consistent with those of Bireswari (2013) and Ndai and Makhamara (2021), who found that employee commitment influenced firm performance. These authors had shown that employee training, employee compensation, working conditions, and employee continuance involvement were critical in enhancing their commitment to work. The findings indicated that employees with a higher level of commitment had low absenteeism and turnover intentions and had good time management abilities. Given higher levels of commitment, it was obtained that employees easily satisfied their clients, had a higher speed of services and had a lower frequency of complaints.

The study shows that employees who are committed to the organisation have full trust in the mission, vision, and shared goals. They are ambitious and get work done quickly and efficiently. The findings are consistent with those of Princy and Rebeka (2018),

who showed that employee commitment had a significant influence on organisational performance. They observed that employees who are committed are motivated to perform and have the energy and time to achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation. This also implies that organisations that have strong loyalty and retention strategies build foundations on employee job involvement and satisfaction. Successful and top-performing organisations have learned ways to motivate employees through salaries and incentives as well as promotional opportunities. Doing so will reduce turnover rates and will motivate employees to increase their productivity.

CONCLUSION

The study tried to establish the influence of employee attitudes on the performance of Huduma Centre, Baringo. The study findings indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between job commitment and organisational performance. It showed that employee commitment had a significant influence on organisational performance. Successful and top-performing organisations have learned ways to motivate employees through salaries and incentives as well as promotional opportunities. Doing so reduces the rate of turnover and eventually motivate employee to increase their productivity. They get ambitious and do their work quickly and efficiently. They observe that employees who are committed are motivated to perform and have the energy and time to attain the goals and objectives of the organisation. The study shows that employees who are committed to the organisation have full trust in the mission, vision, and shared goals. This also implies that organisations that have strong loyalty and retention strategies build foundations on employee job involvement and satisfaction. The bond or attachment to the organisation is founded on psychological conditions of commitment and the perception that there is fairness in the treatment of individual employees. Such employees will go the extra mile to be creative and innovative, hence driving the organisational targets and goals even higher.

The transformation of the basic organisational inputs to outputs to refined outcomes is necessary for survival and long-term profitability. In the case

of Huduma Centre, the commitment of employees is necessary for reducing cost and maximising outcomes measured through citizen satisfaction. Employees feel attached and committed to the organisation; they feel satisfied and engaged. This makes commitment a key element in organisational success because outputs are directly attributed to individual strengths.

Recommendations

Employees at Huduma centre should be encouraged to minimise wastage and instead focus on sustainable use of resources and time. Committed employees have more attachment to the organisations, colleagues, and work roles. They look forward to working in the organisation and feel part of the results that the entity celebrates each time. Huduma centres should locate suggestion boxes and conduct regular surveys to determine the level of satisfaction of employees. It should be able to promote a culture of transparency and encourage innovations among employees.

Suggestions for Further Research

There is a need to conduct further research on employee commitment using a comparative study on two or three Huduma Centres to obtain any differences in the effectiveness of services and performance. Doing so will help in the generalisation of the study or individual assessment of Huduma Centres by the relevant government department. From the study, only 55.6% of the changes in the performance of the organisation could be explained by the changes in employee commitment, there is therefore a need to research the other 44.4% of explained changes in organisational performance.

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