

Influence of Job Rotation on Employee Performance in Embu County Government, Kenya

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100900429>

Received: 19 September 2026; Accepted: 24 September 2026; Published: 13 October 2026

ABSTRACT

Employee performance is essential for effective service delivery in public institutions. Although on-the-job training enhances employees' skills, competence and efficiency, county governments in Kenya continue to face performance and service delivery challenges. Embu County Government has particularly experienced concerns about employee effectiveness, timeliness and service quality, creating a need to assess the role of job rotation in improving employee performance. The study examined the influence of job rotation on employee performance in Embu County Government, Kenya, motivated by concerns about low employee effectiveness, poor service delivery and inadequate skills. The study was guided by Performance Enhancement Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Human Capital Theory. A descriptive research design was adopted, targeting 3,020 employees, from whom 353 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, including multiple regression and ANOVA. Diagnostic tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity were also conducted. A pilot study was undertaken in Tharaka Nithi County before the main data collection. The findings revealed that job rotation had a significant positive effect ($\beta = 1.030$, $p > 0.05$) on employee performance in Embu County. The study concluded that job rotation positively influences employee performance in the County Government of Embu. Through practical learning experiences, mentorship and hands-on training, employees acquire valuable skills and competencies that enhance their ability to perform assigned tasks. The study recommended that the County Public Service Board should incorporate job rotation into human resource policies and career development strategies.

Keywords: Employee Performance, Job Rotation, Employees Skills, Competence, Embu County

INTRODUCTION

Globally, employee training has become an important human resource development practice aimed at improving employee competence, productivity and organizational performance (Oktavia et al. 2025). Employee performance has increasingly become a central concern in both public and private organizations because it determines the extent to which institutions achieve their goals and deliver quality services (Agbo, 2020). In the contemporary organizational environment, characterized by rapid technological changes, increasing complexity of work and rising public expectations, organizations are compelled to continuously develop the knowledge, skills and abilities of their employees (Siame, 2024). Among the various human resource development practices, training particularly on-the-job training has emerged as a critical strategy for enhancing employee competence and improving overall organizational performance (Erpan, 2023).

Rising role of globalization, technology, liberalization and risks has brought about changed workplaces and nature of work in every country in the world International Labor Organization (ILO, 2020). To succeed every organization whether public or private needs employees with a comprehensive skill set composed of cognitive, technical, digital and social economic skills. The development of these skills is enhanced by employee training and is likely to contribute to organizational performance (Gupta, 2021). Globally, organizations are keen on

attracting, hiring and developing employees with essential skills critical for organizational success (Vokshi, 2020).

Training is one of the major strategies adopted by many organizations in their pursuit of increased performance and development of employees' careers (Suleman et al, 2023). Training refers to a company's structured effort to promote employees' learning on job-related competencies, which include information, abilities, or attitudes necessary for successful job performance (Armstrong, 2017). To be more productive, employees need specific training to tackle their workplace activities, be able to use the existing tools and equipment and master new technologies (ILO, 2020). Employee performance and training are closely linked, as training equips employees with the knowledge, skills and competencies required to perform their duties effectively and efficiently (Sidhu & Nizam, 2020).

Training is broadly categorized into two main approaches, namely on-the-job training and off-the-job training, both of which are used by management to improve employees' knowledge, skills and competence. According to Armstrong (2017), these two forms of training differ in terms of where and how learning takes place. Off-the-job training refers to training that occurs away from the normal work environment and is intended to meet the learning needs of a group of employees rather than an individual employee (Oktavia et al. 2025). It commonly takes the form of lectures, seminars, workshops, computer-based training, role plays, games and simulations. Holtmann and Solga (2023) note that off-the-job training provides employees with an opportunity to concentrate fully on learning without interruptions from daily work activities. It is particularly useful when organizations wish to introduce new concepts, theoretical knowledge or general skills to many employees at the same time (Ega et al. 2025). However, because it takes place outside the actual work setting, employees may find it difficult to transfer what they learn into their day-to-day job tasks.

Job rotation refers to the planned movement of employees from one job, department, or work unit to another within an organization with the aim of broadening their skills, knowledge and experience (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). According to Noe (2020), job rotation is a training and development technique that exposes employees to different tasks and responsibilities, enabling them to acquire a wider understanding of organizational operations. Similarly, Dessler (2020) describes job rotation as a systematic approach to employee development that enhances flexibility, reduces job monotony and prepares employees for greater responsibilities within the organization. Job rotation provides employees with opportunities to learn new skills, gain diverse work experiences and develop competencies that improve their effectiveness and adaptability. Armstrong and Taylor (2023) argue that job rotation promotes continuous learning, enhances employee versatility and facilitates career development by exposing employees to different functional areas. Consequently, employees who participate in job rotation programmes are likely to develop a broader understanding of organizational processes, improve problem-solving abilities and enhance overall job performance.

Despite its benefits, job rotation may present challenges such as adjustment difficulties, temporary reductions in productivity during transitions and resistance from employees who prefer specialized roles. Nevertheless, when properly implemented, job rotation remains an effective training method for developing a flexible and multi-skilled workforce capable of responding to changing organizational demands (Noe, 2020). In this study, job rotation was measured using indicators adapted from employee development and job rotation literature, namely regularity of rotation, existence of a rotation policy, opportunities for new work experiences, contribution to continuous employee development and enhancement of employee versatility (Noe, 2020; Dessler, 2020; Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). These indicators reflect the extent to which job rotation is implemented as a strategy for employee learning and performance improvement.

Employee performance evaluations can provide essential information to management for the organization's success (Nzuve, 2019). The review highlighted personnel strengths and deficiencies, as well as areas where training, transfers, or recruiting are required. The evaluation can also provide information on the effectiveness of monitoring. When a person relates what he or she is learning with their profession, they learn more efficiently. He or she should be able to increase their performance and spend less time on minor details and repetitive chores by learning more about the work and developing their talents. Employees are frequently given formal feedback in the form of performance appraisals. Because of the indirect and direct relationship between performance and

training, it is critical for organizations to implement development programs to help their employees grow (Gadot, 2022).

Embu County Government Staff Audit Report presented by the office of the Auditor general to Embu County in 2025, found that the majority of employees continued to fall short of the County Public Service Board's (CPSB) expectations on performance parameters measured through performance reviews and work efficiency. Upon adoption of the report, the department laid down stringent measures geared towards negating the outcry. A major policy review passed was on apprenticeship and coaching programs to be offered by the county government. This program would be a twelve-month project aiming at training young graduates to fully appreciate public service before they could be confirmed for a permanent/contract arrangement (Embu County Staff Audit Report, 2025). This justifies the choice of Embu county for the current proposed study.

Embu County Government was selected for this study because it has continued to experience notable challenges in employee productivity and service delivery. Previous studies in the county found that employee capacity and level of training significantly influence productivity, yet many workers still lack the practical skills required to perform effectively in a devolved and technologically changing environment (Okech & Muturi, 2021). In a study involving 345 county employees across ten departments, inadequate employee capacity and insufficient work-related training were identified as major contributors to low productivity (Njuguna & Minja, 2023). Similarly, another study reported that only 38.5% of public officers in Embu County had attended any form of capacity-building programme within the previous three years, indicating a substantial training gap (Njoroge et al. 2024). These persistent performance concerns make Embu County Government an appropriate setting for examining whether job rotation can enhance employee performance. Therefore, this study sought to examine the effect of job rotation on employee performance in Embu County Government, Kenya.

Research Objective

To establish the influence of job rotation on employee performance in Embu County Government.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jocom et al. (2017) examined the impact of job rotation and training on employee performance in Pegadaian, Indonesia, using a causal research design and multiple regression analysis. The study collected primary data from 100 respondents through questionnaires. The findings revealed that job rotation had no significant effect on employee performance, while training showed a positive and significant effect. Although the study provides important insights into job rotation and employee performance, it was conducted within the context of Indonesia, where organizational structures, human resource practices and public service systems may differ from those in African public sector institutions. These contextual differences may influence how job rotation is implemented and how employees respond to such training practices. In particular, limited empirical evidence exists on the effectiveness of job rotation in improving employee performance within Kenyan county government systems such as Embu County Government. Therefore, this study sought to address this contextual (geographical) gap by examining whether similar or different relationships exist between job rotation and employee performance in the Kenyan public sector context.

Yusof et al. (2023) examined the impact of job rotation on employee performance through job satisfaction in the Malaysian public civil service in Melaka. The study adopted a quantitative research design and collected data using structured questionnaires from a sample of 144 civil servants drawn from various government departments. Using statistical analysis techniques, the findings revealed that job rotation positively influenced employee performance, with job satisfaction playing a significant mediating role. The study concluded that exposing employees to diverse tasks and responsibilities enhanced their skills, motivation and overall job outcomes. However, the research was limited to the Malaysian public civil service, which operates in a different cultural and institutional context compared to Kenyan county governments. This highlighted a contextual gap, as little was known about how job rotation, as a form of on-the-job training, influenced employee performance within devolved government structures in Kenya, such as Embu County Government.

Suleman et al. (2022) explored the effect of job rotation practices on employee performance, with job satisfaction and organizational commitment as mediating variables. The study employed a quantitative research approach using a survey questionnaire administered to a sample of 203 employees from selected organizations in Ghana. Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling to test the relationships among the variables. The findings revealed that job rotation positively influenced employee performance and this relationship was significantly strengthened when employees experienced higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The study emphasized that job rotation not only equips employees with diverse skills but also fosters engagement and loyalty, which translate into better performance outcomes. However, the research was conducted in the Ghanaian private sector, where organizational dynamics and performance expectations differ from those in Kenya's public sector. This created a contextual gap, as limited evidence existed on the effect of job rotation on employee performance within Embu County Government in Kenya, where bureaucratic structures, limited resources and political influences may shape the effectiveness of on-the-job training strategies.

Dewa (2021) examined the influence of work motivation, job rotation and career development on employee performance. The study adopted a quantitative research design and employed survey questionnaires to collect data from a sample of 105 employees in an Indonesian organization. Using regression analysis, the findings showed that work motivation, job rotation and career development all had significant positive effects on employee performance, with job rotation being a particularly strong determinant in enhancing employee skills, adaptability and productivity. The study highlighted that when employees were given opportunities to rotate tasks and grow professionally, their engagement and performance improved considerably. However, the research was conducted in a private organizational context in Indonesia, which differs from Kenya's devolved government structures where training opportunities, resource allocation and performance measurement are often constrained by bureaucratic and political factors. This revealed a contextual and institutional gap, as limited studies had explored how on-the-job training practices such as job rotation influence employee performance in public institutions like Embu County Government.

METHODOLOGY

The research employed a descriptive design.

Target Population

The study targeted a population of 3020 respondents ranging from management, operations and technical staff from Embu County Government. The unit of analysis was Embu County Government. Table 1 represents the target population:

Table 1: Target Population

Department	P&P	Contract	Totals
Agriculture, fisheries, livestock, vet and cooperatives	420	3	423
Gender, culture, children, children and social services	11	3	14
Land, water, environment and natural resources	134	3	137
Youth Empowerment and Sports	3	2	5
Public service and administration	333	132	465
Trade tourism, investment and industrialization	13	2	15
Education Science and Technology	77	498	575
Infrastructure, public works, housing and Energy	51	3	54
Finance and Economic Planning	20	5	25
Health	1281	2	1283
Public Service Board		7	7
Governors Office	2	15	17
Totals	2345	675	3020

Source: Embu County Government Staff Audit (2024)

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size determination

The study employed a stratified random sampling technique, in which a target population is divided into homogeneous subgroups before a simple random sample is taken from each division (Orodho and Kombo, 2002). The purpose of stratified random sampling is to obtain the desired amount of population representation from various segments (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Participants from each stratum was chosen at random for this study, therefore the sample size was large. For each group, the total number of respondents in the target population is proportional to the number of respondents chosen from management, administration and operations. An appropriate sample size was established using the Yamane Formula (1967) with a coefficient of determination of 0.05 of error and a 95% degree of assurance.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = sample (required response), e^2 = Margin of error (95%) and N = Target population

The target population was 3020 employees drawn from the County Government of Embu. When the data is calculated at a level of confidence of 95%, the degree of error is 0.05, thus;

$$n = \frac{3020}{1 + 3020(0.05)^2}$$

n = 353 employees from the County Government

Table 2:Sample Matrix

Department	P&P	Contract	Totals
Agriculture, fisheries, livestock, vet and cooperatives	47	2	49
Gender, culture, children, children and social services	1	1	2
Land, water, environment and natural resources	13	3	16
Youth Empowerment and Sports	-	-	
Public service and administration	40	14	54
Trade tourism, investment and industrialization	1	1	2
Education Science and Technology	9	58	67
Infrastructure, public works, housing and Energy	5	1	6
Finance and Economic Planning	2	1	3
Health	149	2	151
Public Service Board	-	1	1
Governors Office	-	2	2
Totals	267	86	353

Source; Researcher, (2026)

The sample of 353 employees from the County Government of Embu was distributed across the departments using stratified sampling to ensure fair representation of functional areas and staff categories. Within each department, respondents are further proportionately distributed across their terms of employment to reflect the actual staffing structure and capture diverse perspectives across different employees with different terms of employment. This proportional distribution enhanced representativeness, minimize sampling bias and ensure that the views of all the employees across all departments are adequately captured for meaningful analysis of on-the-job training and employee performance.

Research Instruments

The instruments of data collection that were used were close ended questionnaires.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The gathered information was processed, compiled, and coded. Collected data from questionnaires were checked for errors and missing information. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 was used to conduct the analysis. The results were analyzed and summarized using descriptive and inferential statistics. Data that was displayed in tables and figures were tabulated using inferential statistics. This facilitated interpretation and conclusion-making. To establish the relationship among variables, regression analysis was employed. Assumption of the linear regression model of linearity, homoscedasticity and normality were tested before analyzing the data. Estimated simple and multiple linear regression models were used to analyze the relationship between job stress and performance of academic stress where hypotheses were tested using t-test while the overall significance of the model was tested using F-test at a 5% level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following were the results and discussions of the study:

Demographic Characteristics of the respondents

The study achieved a very high response rate of 98.02%, with 346 of the 353 questionnaires distributed to Embu County Government employees successfully completed and returned, indicating adequate participation for the study. The reliability analysis showed that all study variables were reliable, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.711 to 0.895, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 and confirming satisfactory internal consistency of the research instrument. Regarding gender, females constituted the majority of respondents at 56.4%, while males accounted for 43.6%, indicating relatively balanced representation. In terms of education, 49.7% held bachelor's degrees, 30.9% had diplomas, and 19.4% had master's degrees, suggesting that respondents were sufficiently educated to provide informed responses. Concerning length of service, the majority (50.6%) had worked in the county for 6-10 years, followed by 37.3% with 1-5 years and 12.1% with 11-15 years of service. Overall, the findings indicate that the study obtained a highly representative sample comprising adequately educated respondents with considerable experience in Embu County Government, making them suitable for providing reliable information on on-the-job training practices and employee performance.

Descriptive Statistics on Job Rotation

The study analyzed the influence of job rotation on employee performance in Embu County Government. Participants indicated the extent to which job rotation is applied in the organization. They were rated on a five-point scale ranging from scale 1 to 5. The appropriate responses for each construct of job rotation were analyzed using mean scores and the corresponding standard deviation. The results were presented in Table 13.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Job Rotation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Supervisors actively demonstrate how tasks should be performed.	346	4.10	.646
Practical opportunities are provided to apply learned skills.	346	3.94	.529
Constructive feedback is provided to enhance performance improvement.	346	4.20	.596
Supervisors actively demonstrate how tasks should be performed.	346	4.10	.646
Practical opportunities are provided to apply learned skills.	346	3.93	.534
Supervisors work alongside employees when introducing new tasks.	346	3.48	.788
Supervisors are approachable and willing to listen to employee concerns.	346	3.92	.618
Supervisors provide emotional support when employees face work-related challenges	346	3.83	.831
Supervisors are approachable and willing to listen to employee concerns.	346	3.92	.618
Average	346	3.936	0.645

Source: Survey Data, (2026)

The findings in Table 3 indicate that job rotation is moderately to highly practiced in Embu County Government, as evidenced by an overall mean score of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.645. The mean score, suggests that employees generally agree that job rotation practices are implemented within the organization. The relatively low standard deviation indicates consistency in respondents' perceptions regarding the application of job rotation. Among the job rotation practices assessed, constructive feedback provided to enhance performance improvement recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.596$), followed by supervisors actively demonstrating how tasks should be performed ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.646$). Practical opportunities to apply learned skills were also highly rated ($M = 3.94$, $SD = 0.529$; $M = 3.93$, $SD = 0.534$), suggesting that employees are exposed to different work roles that enable them to utilize and develop new competencies. Supervisors being approachable and willing to listen to employee concerns received a mean score of 3.92 ($SD = 0.618$), while supervisors providing emotional support when employees face work-related challenges recorded a mean score of 3.83 ($SD = 0.831$). The lowest-rated aspect was supervisors working alongside employees when introducing new tasks ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.788$), indicating that this practice may not be consistently applied across all departments.

The findings suggest that job rotation is an important on-the-job training practice in Embu County Government. By exposing employees to different tasks and responsibilities, job rotation enhances their skills, broadens their understanding of organizational operations and increases their adaptability to changing work demands. Consequently, the effective implementation of job rotation is likely to contribute positively to employee performance by promoting versatility, competence and improved service delivery within the county government.

Job Rotation and Employee Performance

The study assessed the effect of Job Rotation on employee performance among the County Government of Embu. Regression analysis was conducted and the results are presented in Tables 4, 5 and 6.

The following hypothesis was tested:

H_{01} : There is no statistically significant influence of job rotation on employee performance in Embu County Government.

Table 4: The Goodness of Fit of Model

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.824 ^a	.679	.678	.18976
a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Rotation				

The findings in Table 4 show that the R-squared value was 0.679. This indicates that job rotation accounts for 67.9% of the variation in employee performance among employees in the County Government of Embu. The remaining 32.1% of the variation in employee performance is explained by other factors not included in the model, such as organizational, individual and environmental factors. The high R-squared value suggests that job rotation is a strong predictor of employee performance and plays a significant role in enhancing employee effectiveness in the County Government of Embu.

ANOVA was used to determine the significance of the estimate model and to test further for the impact of job rotation on employee performance. The findings are shown in table 5.

Table 5: The Overall Significance of the Model

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	26.223	1	26.223	728.244	.000 ^b
	Residual	12.387	344	.036		
	Total	38.609	345			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Rotation

Source: Survey Data, (2026)

The ANOVA results presented in Table 5 show an F-value of 728.244 and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the significance level of 0.05 ($0.000 < 0.05$), the overall regression model examining the effect of job rotation on employee performance was statistically significant. The findings indicate that job rotation is a significant predictor of employee performance in the County Government of Embu. Therefore, the model is suitable for explaining and predicting employee performance based on job rotation practices.

Regression Coefficients for the model on job rotation and employee performance were presented in Table 24.

Table 6: The Individual Significance of the Model

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.133	.151		-.884	.377
	Job Rotation	1.030	.038	.824	26.986	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Source: Survey Data, (2026)

Table 6 presents the regression coefficients for the effect of job rotation on employee performance in the County Government of Embu. The results indicate that job rotation had a positive and statistically significant influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.824$, $p = 0.00 < 0.05$). The coefficient for job rotation ($B = 1.030$) implies that a one-unit increase in job rotation would lead to a 1.030 unit increase in employee performance, holding other factors constant. The p-value of 0.000 is less than the significance level of 0.05, indicating that the relationship between job rotation and employee performance is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no statistically significant influence of job rotation on employee performance in Embu County Government was rejected. The study concluded that job rotation significantly and positively influences employee performance in the County Government of Embu. The model can be restated as:

$$Y = -0.133 + 1.030X_2$$

Where;

-0.133= constant (is expected estimate of employee performance when job rotation is zero)

Y = Dependent variable, Employee performance

1.030 = Regression of coefficient

X_2 = Job rotation

The findings are supported by Performance Enhancement Theory, which posits that employee performance improves when organizations provide opportunities for continuous learning, skill development and exposure to diverse work experiences. The findings are consistent with Dewa (2021), who established that job rotation significantly improves employee performance by enhancing employee motivation and career development. The findings also agree with Yusof et al. (2023), who reported that job rotation enhances employee performance by exposing employees to different responsibilities and improving their overall job satisfaction. However, the findings differ from Suleman et al. (2022), who observed that although job rotation improves employee motivation, its direct effect on performance may be limited when employees are not adequately prepared for new

roles. This variation may be attributed to differences in organizational environments and the implementation of job rotation programs.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECCOMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

The study sought to determine the influence of job rotation on employee performance in the County Government of Embu. The descriptive findings revealed that job rotation was fairly practiced within the organization, with employees indicating that they were exposed to different tasks and responsibilities, received guidance from supervisors and were provided with opportunities to apply and expand their skills in various work areas. The inferential analysis established that job rotation had a positive and significant influence on employee performance, indicating that employees who are assigned different roles and responsibilities develop a wider range of competencies, become more adaptable to changing work demands and are better equipped to perform their duties effectively.

Conclusion

The study concluded that job rotation positively influences employee performance in the County Government of Embu. By exposing employees to different roles and responsibilities, job rotation broadens their knowledge, strengthens their skills and enhances their adaptability to changing work demands. Consequently, job rotation contributes significantly to improved employee effectiveness and organizational performance.

Recommendation

Managers should facilitate job rotation opportunities to enhance employees' skills, competencies and adaptability within the workplace.

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