

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE CAUSAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEES' LOCUS OF CONTROL AND CONTEXTUAL PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

Locus of control (LOC) has been construed as the extent to which individuals believe that they have control over their own destiny. This study is concerned with investigating the causal relationship between LOC and contextual performance of employees of Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research (KCCR). Contextual performance includes any behavior that contributes to organizational effectiveness through its impact on the psychological, social, and organizational context of work. These include volunteering to carry out tasks that are not formally part of one's job and helping and cooperating with others in the organization to get tasks accomplished. LOC levels of respondents were captured. Supervisors further assessed their contextual performance using a Likert scaled questionnaire provided. The findings of the study revealed that most of the respondents at KCCR have internal locus of control whilst a few have external locus of control. The majority of the respondents however had only moderate internal locus of control. The study further discovered that employees' educational qualification and religious denomination are the two socio-cultural variables with significant impact on employees' LOC. Other variables such as age, gender and marital status showed no significant correlation. Employing regression analysis, the study observed that there is a significant positive relationship between LOC and contextual performance; employees with internal LOC tend to have higher contextual performance than those with external locus of control. It is recommended that self-awareness programs, behavior modeling and further education will help employees develop the right mental attitude and contribute positively to the success of their organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The concepts of internal and external Locus of Control (LOC) have received a great deal of attention during the last two decades (Munir, & Sajid, 2010). Locus of control has been defined as the extent to which individuals believe that they have control over their own destiny (Thomas, et al., 2006). People with internal LOC believe that they can influence their environment, and that their actions affect what happens to them but people with external LOC believe that they have little influence over the environment and what happens to them is due to external factors such as luck, or the actions of others (Spector, 2002; Martin et al., 2005). The relationship between personality and job performance has similarly received considerable attention and debate throughout the 20th century (Impelman, 2007). A new phase of research beginning in the mid-1980s and growing in the early 1990s revealed optimistic results for the personality - job performance relationship (ibid). Contextual performance borrows from Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and is defined as extra role-discretionary behavior intended to help others in the organization or demonstrate

conscientiousness in support of the organization (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Contextual performance includes behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness through its impact on the psychological, social, and organizational context of work. These behaviors include influencing others to carry out organizationally valuable work, defusing hostility and conflict, and encouraging interpersonal trust. Contextual activities are important because they contribute to organizational effectiveness in ways that shape the organization's social and psychological context. Contextual activities include volunteering to carry out tasks activities that are not formally part of one's job and helping and cooperating with others in the organization to get tasks accomplished.

The relationship between LOC and contextual performance of employees has not been carefully considered by researchers. However, following the above observations and by extension of these lines of reasoning, it can be argued that people with internal LOC should have higher contextual performance since contextual performance involves employees using their own initiative and creativity to perform extra discretionary roles. In the light of this observation, this particular study seeks to ascertain the relationship between locus of control and contextual performance of employees in Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research and how the two concepts relate with each other. It is important for organizations to appreciate their employees so as to obtain the maximum from them and increase productivity. All organizations, especially the organizations in the third world which require a major increase in efficiency, must provide an environment in which their employees feel comfortable to achieve the organization's objectives by all their knowledge, experiences, abilities and capabilities (Asgari and Vakili, 2012). This cannot be achieved without analysing and recognizing the employees' personality traits and examining how they impact on their performance. The result of some studies have shown that a number of people believe that life is self-controlled while others believe their lives are controlled by external powers which are out of their control.

Over the years employers, in an attempt to increasing productivity, have been trying to motivate employees by rewarding them for their efforts and discouraging them when they withdraw or disengage themselves from the job (the carrot and stick approach). This notwithstanding, Asgari and Vakili (2012) argue that motivation of employees with the view to obtaining the best from their efforts and increasing productivity cannot be achieved without analysing and recognizing the employees' personality traits and examining how they impact on their performance. One of such personality traits that can be studied and managed to improve employee performance is LOC. It is in the light of this observation that this study seeks to analyse the relationship between employees' LOC and contextual performance with specific reference to the employees of Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research.

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance at the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research to ascertain how the two concepts interrelate with each other. To achieve this objective, the study specifically seeks to:

- a. To identify the dimensions of employees' locus of control at the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research.
- b. To examine the socio-cultural factors affecting employees' locus of control at the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research.
- c. To examine how locus of control facilitates or inhibits employees' contextual performance at the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research.

The study will further investigate the following hypothesis.

- H₁:** There is a relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance.
- H₀:** There is no relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents a review of related literature on the role of locus of control at work. It provides a theoretical framework design to determine the major areas researchers have previously considered on the topic. The section attempts to critically review the existing literature on the topic and to identify the gaps in the existing literature in this research area.

Locus of control is the extent to which individuals believe that they have control over their own destiny (Thomas, et al., 2006). It is an aspect of personality that deals with individuals' generalized expectancies that they can or cannot control reinforcements in their lives (O'Connell & Spector, 1994). In other words, locus of control refers to the circumstances that individuals attribute their success and failures to (Forte, 2005). Locus of control has had far-reaching influences in many areas of psychology. The locus of control construct emerged from Social Learning theory which was developed by Rotter in 1966. The locus of control construct has two dimensions, which are, internal locus of control and external locus of control. Individuals with an internal locus of control believe that they are the masters of their destiny and are therefore, often confident, alert, and active in attempting to control their external environments (Thomas et al., 2006). Moreover, they tend to see a strong connection between their actions and the consequences of those actions (Thomas et al., 2006). Individuals with an external locus of control, however, believe that they do not have direct control of their destiny and see themselves in a passive role with regard to the external environment (Thomas et al., 2006). Thus, they often attribute personal outcomes to external factors or chance.

Locus of control has been conceptualized as a hierarchical construct, with general locus of control existing at the highest level within this hierarchy (Chen, et al, 2004; Lefcourt, 1976; Phares, 1976; Rotter, 1975). As the broadest conceptualization of the construct, general locus of control refers to the extent to which one generally attributes rewards to one's own behavior rather than to external causes, such as luck or other people (example general locus of control items include "I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life" and "My life is determined by my own actions"; Levenson, 1981). Unlike narrower conceptualizations of the construct, general locus of control does not make reference to a specific context or situation. Several context-specific sub dimensions, such as health locus of control, marital locus of control, and parental locus of control, exist at lower levels of the hierarchy (Wang et al. 2012). The current study focuses specifically on work locus of control, which is another context-specific sub dimension.

Work locus of control represents the extent to which people attribute rewards at work to their own behavior (example work locus of control items include "People who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded" and "Most people are capable of doing their jobs well if they make the effort"; Spector, 1988). Thomas et al., (2006) explain work locus of control as the extent to which employees believe that they have control over their own destiny in the workplace. Specifically, work locus of control is related to rewards or outcomes within the organizational context such as promotions, bonuses, salary increases and job perks (Spector, 1982). Individuals with an internal work locus of control believe that there is a strong link between their actions and consequences. Thus, they are more likely to believe that performing well at work will lead to positive work

outcomes such as increased pay or promotion. On the other hand, individuals with an external work locus of control are more likely to attribute their success at work to external forces such as chance or fate (Muhonen & Torkelson, 2004).

Thomas et al., (2006) observed that an individual's work locus of control plays an important role in the performance of duties at work. For instance, it has been found that locus of control is related to various important work outcomes including job satisfaction and job performance. A meta-analysis on work locus of control has found that there are significant correlations between perceived control and job stressors such as role conflict and role ambiguity (Thomas et al. 2006). Moreover, research has found that individuals with an internal work locus of control generally have lower levels of job stress and perform better (Chen & Silverthorne, 2008).

Furthermore it has been found that there is a strong relationship between perceived work control and certain job-related factors such as job satisfaction and emotional distress (O'Connell & Spector, 1994). From a theoretical perspective, individuals with an internal work locus of control are generally more satisfied with their jobs than individuals with an external work locus of control. Furthermore, individuals with an internal work locus of control see their supervisors as higher consideration and initiating structure. Also, they feel that they have more work autonomy and control and report less job role stress (Spector, 1982). Indeed, employees with an external work locus of control do not believe that they can control important aspects of their work environment (O'Connell & Spector, 1994). Additionally, they generally find the work environment to be more threatening and stressful. That is, individuals with an external work locus of control are more likely to experience work strain.

The findings of Muhonen & Torkelson's (2004) study indicated that individuals with an external work locus of control reported a greater amount of work stress. Furthermore, it was found that work locus of control was significantly and negatively related to job satisfaction. Moreover, there was a significant positive relationship between work locus of control and symptoms of ill-health. These relationships indicated that individuals with an external work locus of control reported lower levels of job satisfaction and more symptoms of ill-health (Muhonen & Torkelson, 2004). Multiple regression analyses also indicated that work locus of control was a significant predictor for both health and job satisfaction. However, this was only the case for women. That is, work locus of control was only a significant predictor in females for both health and job satisfaction (Muhonen & Torkelson, 2004).

The usefulness of work locus of control in explaining initiative versus compliant performance was also tested (Blau, 1993). Initiative performance means that the employee is working beyond their basic job requirements. On the other hand, compliant performance means that the employee is doing only what they are required to do. The researcher hypothesized that Spector's work locus of control has a stronger relationship to initiative and compliant performance than Rotter's general locus of control. It was also hypothesized that work locus of control was positively correlated with compliant performance and negatively correlated with initiative performance. The results of the study suggested that the work locus of control construct was negatively related to initiative performance and positively related to compliant performance (Blau, 1993). Also, the findings of the study suggested that Spector's (1988) work locus of control scale had a stronger relationship to initiative versus compliant performance than Rotter's (1966) scale. The results of the study also indicated that work locus of control was significantly positively related to productivity and significantly negatively related to self-development (Blau, 1993). In other words, individuals with an internal work locus of control showed higher initiative performance and individuals with an

external work locus of control showed higher compliant performance. Furthermore, individuals with an internal work locus of control had a stronger relationship to self-development than individuals with an external work locus of control (Blau, 1993).

Recent research conducted by Bosman, Buitendach, and Rothaman (2005) investigated the relationship between job insecurity, work locus of control and dispositional optimism of employees. The study found that there was a significant relationship between job insecurity and work locus of control. The findings suggest that external work locus of control is related to increased levels of job insecurity whilst internal work locus of control is related to decreased levels of job insecurity. The findings suggested that work locus of control holds predictive value with regard to job insecurity (Bosman et al., 2005). Another study assessed the relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction as well as to determine whether work locus of control had a mediating effect on job insecurity and job satisfaction (Labuschagne, et al., 2005). The results from the research indicated that individuals with an internal work locus of control had higher levels of total job satisfaction as well as intrinsic job satisfaction. Furthermore, there was a relationship between internal work locus of control and low levels of job insecurity. Moreover, utilizing a regression analysis, support was found for partial mediating effect of work locus of control on the relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction (Labuschagne et al., 2005). The aforementioned findings validated Spector's assertion that Rotter's (1966) locus of control scale was inadequate in the workplace setting. Indeed, Spector maintained that using Rotter's scale yielded a moderate correlation between locus of control and work related outcomes (Spector, 1988). Work locus of control correlates with other work-related variables such as job satisfaction and job performance. Job performance is discussed in the next paragraph.

The main objective of this study as stated earlier is to ascertain the relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance in research organizations. In order to examine this notion, some insight with regard to contextual performance within an organizational context is required. The discussion in this section first concentrates on job performance before narrowing it down to contextual performance. The concept and definition of job performance has received considerable scholarly research attention over the past 15 to 20 years (Sonntag et al., 2010). Job performance can be defined as the total expected value to the organization of the discrete behavioral episodes that an individual carries out over a standard period of time (Motowidlo, 2003). There are several important ideas included in this definition that need to be discussed in order to understand the various factors in measuring and categorizing this construct.

First, individual job performance is related to behavior. Job performance entails something that people do and can be reflected in the actions individuals take. Performance does not include the consequence or results of those particular actions (Campbell, 1990). Results are often mistakenly to be included as measures of job performance due to their ability to be easily quantified and tracked (e.g., sales, turnover, production output). While results and outcomes are influenced by individuals, they are often affected by factors outside of the individual's control. For example, market conditions can have a direct impact on sales and profitability despite the efforts and behavior's exhibited by individuals trying to impact those outcomes.

The second important idea included in the definition of job performance is that performance relates to discrete behavioral episodes. Throughout an individual's workday, there exist several opportunities to behave in a manner that impacts the desired results of the organization; however

every behavior will not be related to job performance. Therefore, streams of work behavior are punctuated by occasions when people do something that impacts the organization's goals (Motowidlo, 2003). These discrete units of work behavior can be identified by others (Newtson et al., 1977) and can be captured with such techniques as job analytic procedures. Job analysis methods collect information about work tasks that have identifiable beginnings and endings that comprise an individual's workday. Information collected from this process can be used to determine skills and abilities required to perform the job or identify new methods to organize work in a more effective manner.

The final point emphasized in the performance definition is that performance refers only to behaviors that are relevant to the organization's goals. Individuals' behaviors can contribute slightly or substantially to the organization in a positive or negative manner. Whether a behavior is considered to be favorable or unfavorable to the organization depends on the consequences or outcomes of the behavior. This ad hoc judgment implies that the same behaviors can result in positive and negative outcomes in different situations. In addition, the valence of a work behavior depends on the expected outcome of the behavior if it were carried out over many occasions by many individuals. Therefore, each discrete behavior exhibited by a particular individual at a particular time would not be evaluated to determine its effectiveness. Rather it is the summed behavior that comprises job performance and its dimensions. This definition will serve as a framework to discuss the resulting job performance taxonomies and models.

Researchers agree that performance has to be considered as a multi-dimensional concept. A great deal of attention has been paid to the distinction between task and contextual performance. In order to further generalize the job performance into a more parsimonious structure, Borman and Motowidlo (1993) separated the performance domain into two dimensions: task performance and contextual performance. Task performance covers a person's contribution to organizational performance, refers to actions that are part of the formal reward system (i.e., technical core), and addresses the requirements as specified in job descriptions (Williams and Karau, 1991). At a general level, task performance consists of activities that transform materials into the goods and services produced by the organization or to allow for efficient functioning of the organization (Motowidlo et al., 1997). Thus, task performance covers the fulfillment of the requirements that are part of the contract between the employer and employee. In addition, task performance includes activities that maintain the technical core of an organization by replenishing raw materials, distributing finished products, providing planning, coordination, supervising, or staff functions that enable the organization to function effectively and efficiently.

Often however, it is not sufficient to comply with the formal job requirements, one needs to go beyond what is formally required (Parker et al., 2006; Sonnentag and Frese, 2002). Contextual performance includes behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness through its impact on the psychological, social, and organizational context of work. These behaviors include influencing others to carry out organizationally valuable work, defusing hostility and conflict, and encouraging interpersonal trust. These types of behaviors should lead to cooperation, cohesiveness, and improved morale at the group level and will positively impact group members' performance. Individuals can also benefit the organization and work group through their own readiness and preparation to contribute. These behaviors can also include sharing knowledge with others, preparing adequately for job assignments, and proactively addressing work issues. Another way to contribute to the context of work is through actions that affect the tangible resources of the organization. This can include conserving office supplies, electricity, and preventing theft or waste of organizational resources. Therefore, an individual that helps others, performs their own job well,

and effectively utilizes organizational resources will contribute substantially to the contextual aspect of their work. A related construct to contextual performance was provided by Organ (1988) who described organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly recognized by formal rewards systems, and that aggregates to promote the effective functioning of the organization. Organ later redefined the construct to capture the similar thrust of contextual performance which includes behaviors that contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context that supports task performance. Recent research has supported organizational citizenship behavior as distinct from, albeit strongly related to, task performance (Hoffman, et al., 2007). Different researchers can use contextual performance or OCB to define the counterpart to task performance, however contextual performance will be the term used in this research unless certain studies were specifically addressing the OCB construct.

The relationship between personality and job performance has received considerable attention and debate throughout the 20th century (Impelman, 2007). A new phase of research beginning in the mid-1980s and growing in the early 1990s revealed optimistic results for the personality - job performance relationship (ibid). There are an infinite number of personality characteristics that can differentiate between individuals; however a taxonomic structure helps explain scientific phenomena in a useful manner. An accepted personality taxonomy has been labeled the “five factor model (FFM)”. It is also cited as the “Big Five”. The labels for the five factors are conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability, and openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

A number of theoretical and empirical studies have provided continued support for the FFM as a useful taxonomy of personality. Although the FFM has received considerable attention and support, some researchers argue that the FFM is not comprehensive enough, and that many important variables are not captured in the current taxonomy (Hough, 1997; Paunonen & Jackson, 2000). One of the psychological variables of interest that might contribute to job performance among employees and has not been adequately examined is locus of control. People who have external locus of control determine their behavior according to other people's wills, needs, perception and interpretations rather than their own. On the other hand, people who have internal locus of control determine their behavior as to their own wills, needs, perception and interpretations. Many researchers have shown that locus of control has an important role on individuals' lives. Locus of control affects both physiological and psychological health to a considerable extent. Locus of control's being subjective can cause psychological problems. Locus of control is another factor found to be related to performance (Spector, 1982; Spector & OConnell, 1994). Individuals with internal locus of control seem to better adapt to varying situations in a more functional way than do people who have an external locus of control. Locke (1983) and Spector (1982) found that individuals with an internal locus of control orientation appear more motivated, perform better on the job, and express higher levels than individuals with an external locus of control. Garson and Stanwyck, (1997) stated that locus of control has been found to be positively associated with low-perceived stress and high performance. If internal individuals are found to take charge, perform better on complex tasks, are easier to motivate, and exercise a higher degree of initiative than externals, as much of the research using Rotter's I-E questionnaire suggests, then it is reasonable to expect internals to receive higher performance ratings and maintain a significantly greater performance average on their jobs than externals. Internals tend to have greater expectancies that their own effort will lead to good performance and in turn to reward.

Several studies support the notion that internals exert greater effort on the job and are subsequently better performers ((Asgari & Vakiri, 2012; Muhonen & Torkelson, 2004; Thomas et al. 2006). The

measure of performance within these studies is of key concern. Previous studies investigating the relationship between locus of control and job performance have showed a modest but significant relationship. Broedling (1975) conducted a study on 207 naval personnel with performance ratings made by the subjects themselves, peers, and supervisors. Correlations between the ratings and I-E control scores were small but supported the hypothesis that internals tend to score better on performance ratings. Lied and Pritchard (1976) collected scores and trainer ratings for 14, Air Force trainees and found significant correlation. Finally, Thomas et al. (2006) studied the relationship of locus of control and several organizational variables including performance. Locus of control was correlated with performance, with internals, as in the studies reported above, receiving the higher performance ratings.

The conclusions and findings of these studies suggest that internals do perform better than externals. Internals are seen to exert greater effort with the expectation that greater performance leads to reward, exhibit greater personnel career success, and in general perform better within the organization. Some of these conclusions are rather sharp based on the knowledge that internals will only display better performance if they perceive that effort will lead to reward. However, a clear gap in the existing literature is that, the researchers have generally focused on job performance in general without regards to the multi-dimensionality of job performance and the difference it can make. This research attempts to fill in this gap by exploring the causal relationship between employee's locus of control and contextual performance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research falls into the category of exploratory research as it attempts to identify relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance. Hence the descriptive approach to research design would be adopted for the study.

Data for this study comprised both primary and secondary types. Secondary data was collected and reviewed from both published and unpublished sources including journals, articles, books, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, internet sources etc.

A total size of 70 employees was sampled for the purpose of data gathering even though allowance was made for non-responses. Their selection was based on the convenience sampling technique. Questionnaires were the main data collection instruments. These were carefully designed and administered personally by the researchers at the Kumasi Centre for Collaborative Research.

A mixed approach (qualitative and quantitative) to data analysis was employed in the study. The data collected was edited, sorted, and coded. Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS Version 20) and Microsoft excel were then used to analyze the data. Frequency tables, percentages, bar charts and other descriptive statistics were used to analyze the results. A correlation analysis was used to ascertain the relationship between LOC and contextual performance. The results from these analyses provided the basis for finding out the relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance.

The measures used to construct the questionnaire were adopted and adapted from previous studies as detailed below. This was done to ensure that the data collected remained valid within the scope of the thesis. This study used the Work Locus of Control Scale developed by Spector (1988). It consisted of 16 items constructed to assess control beliefs in work setting. This scale is the only appropriate measure of locus of control in the work context at present and differs from the original

LOC scale by Rotter (1966). Spector (1988) found that measures of the work locus of control relationships were stronger than those found by the general locus of control scale. Indeed, Spector’s scale was found to be more reliable in predicting work-related outcomes than Rotter’s scale (Blau, 1993). Additionally, when researching locus of control in the organizational context, Spector’s scale was more preferable to the general scales (Orpen, 1992). Rotter’s scale was criticized for lacking context specificity (Hodgkinson, 1992). Therefore, Spector asserts that the work locus of control scale is a more appropriate measure to use in the organizational context (Spector, 1988).

Spector (1988) reported reliability coefficients ranging from .75 to .85 across 6 samples comprised of a total of 1,165 subjects. Furthermore, this scale has been used successfully in Malaysia by NikKamariahNik (1995) with cronbach alpha = .72. The scale is balanced with equal numbers of internally and externally worded items. In these measures responses are obtained on a 6-point Likert type scale where the highest score (6) means high internal locus of control and the lower score (1) means low internal locus of control or high external locus of control and low external locus of control (reverse-scored from the original Spector scale). To obtain the overall score of internal locus of control, the negative items will be reversed and added up with the positive items. Thus, the total score of internal locus of control ranged from 16-96.

Contextual performance was measured using a 16-item instrument developed by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) for their studies designed to distinguish task from contextual performance. For example, items asked a supervisor to rate how likely an employee is to “cooperate with others in the team” or “volunteer for additional work”. Supervisors rated each participant on a 5-point scale (1 = not at all likely; 5 = extremely likely). The mean of the 16 items formed the employees’ contextual performance score

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section deals with the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the primary data collected from the field on the causal relationship between employees’ locus of control and contextual performance. Primary data was gathered through a survey with the aid of carefully structured questionnaires which were administered to the respondents. Data was obtained from two categories of respondents: the first category comprised employees of KCCR and the other being their supervisors who assessed the employees’ contextual performance. Questionnaires were administered on a total of 70 employees. The statistical results that were obtained in the research are presented in this section. Descriptive as well as the inferential statistics are both presented. In order to obtain these results, Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS V.20) software were utilised.

This section of the report presents a brief summary of the demographic data obtained from respondents.

Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid Female | 25 | 35.7 | 35.7 | 35.7 |
| Valid Male | 45 | 64.3 | 64.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 70 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: Author’s Field Data (July, 2013)

Table 4.1 shows that 35.7% of the total respondents (N=25) were females while 64.3% (N=45) were males. The results showed that although there were slightly more males than females, the sample was still relatively balanced and reflect the actual situation at the KCCR which has more male employees than females. The data on sex distribution was deemed significant since it was expected that LOC would vary with the gender distribution.

In line with the second objective of the study, the researchers in the second part of the questionnaire attempted to assess the locus of control of the employees of KCCR. This study used the Work Locus of Control Scale developed by Spector (1988) in assessing the locus of control of the employees of KCCR. It consisted of 16 items constructed to assess control beliefs in work setting. The scale is balanced with equal numbers of internally and externally worded items. In these measures responses were obtained on a 6-point Likert type scale where the highest score (6) means high internal locus of control and the lower score (1) means low internal locus of control or high external locus of control and low external locus of control (reverse-scored from the original Spector scale). To obtain the overall score of internal locus of control, the negative items were reversed and added up with the positive items. Thus, the total score of employees' locus of control ranged from 16-96. Values closer to 96 mean high internal locus of control whilst values close to 16 mean high external locus of control. The midpoint of these two numbers is 56 and hence employees with a LOC of 16-56 were regarded as having external LOC whilst those with an aggregate LOC score of 57-96 were considered as having internal LOC.

The results of LOCs computed for all the respondents showed that the maximum LOC recorded among the sample was 87 out of 96 whilst the least was 48 out of 96. This presupposes that majority of the employees at KCCR are internals, but there is a significant variation in their level of internality as indicated by the high standard deviation (SD=10.618). Due to the significant variation in the LOCs of the internals, the respondents were further classified as externals ($16 \leq LOC \leq 56$), moderate internals ($57 \leq LOC \leq 79$) and high internals ($80 \leq LOC \leq 96$). The rationale was to distinguish respondents with only moderate internality from those with high internality. The result of the re-classification is as follows.

Table 4.3: Levels of internality and externality among respondents

| LOC | Description | Frequency | Percentage | Mean LOC |
|-------|--------------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| 48-56 | Externals | 10 | 14.28 | 51.76 |
| 57-79 | Moderate internals | 44 | 62.86 | 62.86 |
| 80-96 | High internals | 16 | 22.86 | 83.06 |
| | Total | 70 | 100 | 69.7 |

Source: Field Data (July, 2013)

Table 4.3 shows that 14.28% of the respondents (N=10) had LOCs between 48 and 56 and hence could be regarded as having external LOC. The average LOC for these groups was 51.76 which is less than the dividing line between the externals and internals. On the other hand 62.86% (N=44) of the respondents recorded LOCs between 57 and 79 and were described as having moderate internal LOC whilst the other 22.86% (N=16) recorded high internal locus of control with LOCs of 80 and above. The average LOC for this group was also significantly higher (83.06). This therefore implies that only a small proportion of the sampled employees (14.28%) can be regarded as having external LOC with the remaining 85.72% having internal LOC. However, there is significant variation in the level of internality which made it necessary to distinguish those with high internality

from those with moderate internality. The reclassification reveals that the majority of the employees at KCCR have moderate internal LOC whilst those with high internal LOC are in the minority. The variation in the respondents LOC will later be correlated with their level of contextual performance in order to establish if there is any significant correlation between LOC and contextual performance.

The researchers, after identifying the dimensions of the LOC of the employees, proceeded to examine whether there is any relationship between the LOC and certain demographic variables. The rationale was to ascertain whether certain socio-cultural variables have impact on employees' LOC. The socio-cultural variables examined include the age of respondents, gender, educational level, religion, and marital status of respondents. The Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the existence of a relationship between LOC and the socio-cultural variables.

Table 4.4 shows the mean LOCs for the various categories of the five socio-cultural variables examined. The Pearson correlation coefficient and the level of significance are further summarized below.

Table 4.4: Summary of Pearson's correlation coefficients

| Socio-Cultural Variables | | Age | Sex | Qualification | Marital | Religion | LOC |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------|
| LOC | Pearson Correlation | -.026 | -.177 | .276* | .292* | .292* | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .832 | .143 | .021 | .014 | .014 | |
| | N | 70 | 70 | 70 | | 70 | 70 |

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

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*

Source: Field Data (July, 2013)

The Pearson's correlation coefficients exhibited different kinds on relationships between the socio-cultural variables and employees LOC. With respect to age, the analysis revealed a weak negative Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.026. However since P-value of this coefficient is greater than 0.05, the correlation is not statistically significant to suggest any meaningful relation between age and locus of control. This is clear from the mean LOC of the various age groups which follows no particular order. The mean LOC is 70.10 for the age bracket 20-30, this drops to 68.64 for the age bracket 31-40, then increases again to 72.80 and finally falls back to 65.00 for 41-50 and 61 and above respectively. Therefore the conclusion is that, age does not have any significant effect on LOC.

Similarly, gender exhibited a weak negative Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.177 at a P-value of 0.143. Again since this P-value is greater than 0.05, the results of the correlation are not statistically significant to model any relationship between gender and LOC. However it is worth noting that, the female proportion of the sample recorded a high LOC (mean LOC = 72.20) than that recorded by the males (mean LOC =68.31). However this result is not statistically significant to conclude that females are more internals than males.

Marital status also exhibited a weak positive correlation coefficient of 0.025 at a P-value of 0.840. This is also insignificant as the P-value is greater than 0.05. Hence there is no significant relationship between LOC and marital status of employees.

Employees' level of educational qualification however exhibited fair positive correlation with LOC. The Pearson correlation coefficient recorded was 0.279 with a P-value of 0.021. It is therefore concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between LOC and employees' educational qualification. It is observed from the mean scores that the highly educated employees recorded the highest LOC, and the mean LOCs diminish with lower levels of educational attainments. Hence employees with doctoral qualification recorded the highest internal LOC whilst the SHS and MSLC employees recorded the least LOC. It is therefore concluded that the more educated a person is, the more likely it is for him/her to feel that he is in total control of his/her own destiny especially at the work place.

Finally, religion also exhibited a positive correlation with LOC which is very significant. The Pearson correlation coefficient recorded was 0.292 with a significance level of 0.014. The P-value again, is less than 0.05 so it is concluded that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between employees' religion and LOC. The mean LOC showed that Muslims have the least internal LOC (Mean LOC=56.67, followed by orthodox Christians (mean LOC = 68.52) with Pentecostal Christians recording the highest internal LOC (mean LOC = 72.00)

The null and alternative hypotheses for this study were respectively defined as follows: H₁: There is a relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance. H₀: There is no relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance.

To test this hypothesis, data on the contextual performance of the employees was captured with a separate questionnaire completed by the supervisors of the employees who completed the LOC questionnaires. The information was then coded into SPSS and ANOVA and regression analysis were used to examine the relationship between LOC and contextual performance.

The contextual performance assessment questionnaire contained 16 items on a scale of one to five. These items together examined all the five dimensions of contextual performance as elaborated by Borman and Motowidlo (1993). These include volunteering for activities beyond a person's formal job requirements; persistence of enthusiasm and application when needed to complete important task requirements; assistance to others; following rules and prescribed procedures even when it is inconvenient; and openly defending organizational objectives. The highest score any employee could obtain was 80 (5*16) and the least was 16 (1*16). The results indicated that the minimum score recorded was 44 whilst the highest was 80. However, the mean contextual performance rating for all 70 employees was 68.59 with a standard deviation of 8.659 showing significant variation between the contextual performance ratings of the employees. Similarly, minimum LOC recorded was 48/96 and the highest was 87/96. The mean LOC however was 69.70 whilst the standard deviation was 10.618 signifying a wide dispersion in the dataset.

In the regression analysis for the effects of LOC on employees' contextual performance, contextual performance was maintained as the dependant variable, whilst the independent variable was LOC. Hence LOC was used to predict the contextual performance of the employees. The results obtained for the inferential statistics of the relationship between LOC and contextual performance is depicted in table 4.6 and 4.7

Table 4.6: ANOVA test of relationship between locus of control and contextual performance.

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 Regression | 857.912 | 1 | 857.912 | 13.520 | .000 ^b |
| Residual | 4315.074 | 68 | 63.457 | | |
| Total | 5172.986 | 69 | | | |

- a. Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE
 - b. Predictors: (Constant), LOC
- Source: *Field Data (July, 2013)*

The coefficients of regression obtained were as follows as presented in table 4.13.

Table 4.7: *Regression Coefficients - relationship between locus of control and contextual performance*

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 45.438 | 6.367 | 7.137 | .000 |
| | LOC | .332 | .090 | .407 | .000 |

- a. Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE
- Source: *Author's Field Data (July, 2013)*

The regression analysis of LOC on contextual performance reveals a very significant relationship between employees LOC and contextual performance. A regression coefficient of 0.407 was obtained at a significance level of 0.00. This implies that the relationship between LOC and contextual performance, although not very strong (≤ 0.50), is very significant. A scatter plot of the respondents' LOC and contextual performance is further depicted in the graph below.

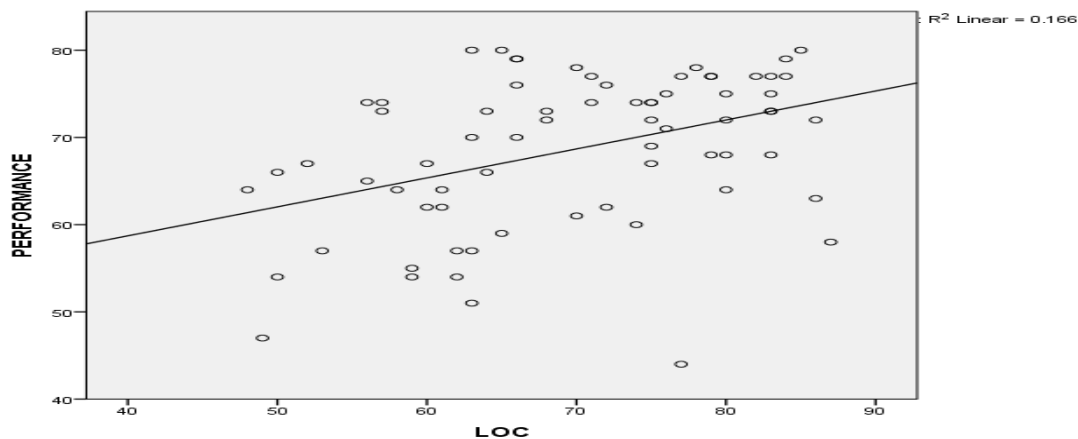


Figure 4.1: *Scatter plot of the relationship between LOC and contextual performance.*

Source: *Field Data (July, 2013)*

The graph again confirms the positive correlation between employees LOC and contextual performance. It is therefore concluded that employees with higher internal locus of control have higher contextual performance ratings than employees with external locus of control. Hence the alternative hypothesis which stated that there is a relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance is accepted whereas the null hypothesis which stated that there is no relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance is rejected.

The regression analysis reveals a significant positive correlation between LOC and contextual performance. This implies that, employees with higher or internal LOC tend to have higher contextual performance ratings than their colleagues with lower or external locus of control. An implication can be drawn therefore that higher locus of control or higher internality facilitates employee contextual performance whilst lowered LOC or externality inhibits contextual performance. This was indeed confirmed by the supervisors who assessed the employees' contextual performance. In their contextual performance assessment questionnaire, the researchers posed a question to solicit the supervisors' views on whether or not they think LOC has impact on the contextual performance of their subordinate employees. There was a unanimous (100%) concurrence with the question posed. All the supervisors responded "Yes". They explained that a person's attribution of control to him/herself or to external forces will determine the extent to which he/she takes responsibility and wants to apportion blame. "People who have internal LOC always take initiative and venture into new areas as opposed to externals who always want to be pushed", explained one supervisor.

Also, other studies have shown that LOC helps reduce occupational stress (Garson and Stanwyck, 1997) and thus contribute to greater well-being of employees which in turn lead to higher productivity. The findings of this study therefore support earlier studies which asserted that individuals with internal locus of control seem to better adapt to varying situations in a more functional way than do people who have an external locus of control. Locke (1983) and Spector (1982) asserted that individuals with an internal locus of control orientation appear more motivated, perform better on the job, and express higher levels than individuals with an external locus of control. Garson and Stanwyck, (1997) also stated that locus of control has been found to be positively associated with low-perceived stress and high performance. The higher motivation, higher task performance, reduced stress and job security associated with internal locus of control culminates in making employees with internal LOC perform higher contextually than employees with external LOC.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The study assessed the locus of control of the employees of KCCR using Spector's work locus of control scale. The maximum LOC recorded among the sample was 87 out of 96 whilst the least was 48 out of 96. The results revealed that only a small proportion of the sampled employees (14.28%) can be regarded as having external LOC with the remaining 85.72% having internal LOC. This presupposed that majority of the employees of KCCR have internal LOC but there was a significant variation in their level of internality as indicated by the high standard deviation of 10.618. However, there was significant variation in the level of internality which made it necessary to distinguish those with high internality from those with moderate internality. Due to the significant variation in the LOCs of the internals, the respondents were further classified as externals, moderate internals and high internals. The reclassification revealed that the majority of the employees at KCCR have moderate internal LOC whilst those with high internal and external LOC are in the minority.

The researchers, after identifying the dimensions of the LOC of the employees,' proceeded to examine whether there is any relationship between the LOC and certain demographic variables. Information was gathered on various socio-cultural variables including age of respondents, length of service in organization, gender, religion, qualification, and marital status of the respondents. The rationale was to ascertain whether these socio-cultural variables have impact on employees LOC. The Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the existence of a relationship between LOC

and the socio-cultural variables. The correlation analysis employed suggested that although employees' age, sex, length of service and marital status had slight variation with LOC, these variations are not significant to model a relationship since the significance level of the correlation coefficients were higher than 0.05. On the other hand educational qualification and religion had both stronger correlation coefficients as well as higher significance levels with LOC. This implies that a person's educational qualification and religion are more likely to determine or influence the way he/she perceives the things that happen around him/her especially at the work place. Hence educational qualification and religion are the two main socio-cultural variables exhibited to have significant impacts on employees' LOC.

The respondents' contextual performance was measured by Motowidlo and Van Scotter's (1994) contextual performance assessment scale. The results scores recorded ranged from 44 being the lowest to 80 which was the highest. However, the mean contextual performance rating for all 70 employees was 68.59 with a standard deviation of 8.659 showing significant variation between the contextual performance ratings of the employees.

A regression analysis was used to examine the existence of a relation between the employees' LOC and contextual performance measures. The analysis revealed a very significant relationship between employees LOC and contextual performance. A regression coefficient of 0.407 was obtained at a significance level of 0.00. This implies that the relationship between LOC and contextual performance, although not very strong, is very significant. It was therefore concluded that employees with higher internal locus of control have higher contextual performance ratings than employees with external locus of control.

It has been further highlighted that the findings of this study agree with that of two earlier studies on LOC and citizenship or contextual performance. Motowidlo and Van Scotter reported a significant correlation ($r=0.26$) between locus of control and citizenship performance whilst more recently, Underberg and Levy (1997) found a correlation of 0.33 between locus of control and self-reports on altruism dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior which is closely connected with the concept of contextual performance.

CONCLUSION

The study primarily sought to investigate the causal relationship between employees' locus of control and contextual performance. The findings of this study revealed that even though most of the respondents at KCCR have internal locus of control, there are a few with external locus of control. Besides, there is a significant variation in the level of internality for those with internal locus of control. The majority of the respondents had only moderate internal locus of control. The study further revealed that employees' educational qualification and religious denomination have significant positive correlation with locus of control. Other socio-cultural variables such as age, length of service, gender and marital status showed no significant correlation. Employing regression analysis to investigate the causal relationship between employees' LOC and contextual performance, the study observed that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. Employees with higher internal LOC tend to have higher contextual performance ratings than those with lower or external locus of control. This is supported by earlier studies which asserted that individuals with internal LOC are found to take charge, perform better on complex tasks, are easier to motivate, and exercise a higher degree of initiative than individuals with external LOC.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The most challenging phase in this research was that of getting the employees to respond to the questionnaires. Due to the sensitive nature of the information solicited in the questionnaire, most employees after reading it did not want to attempt answering. Hence the response rate was very low. Out of the over 100 questionnaires that were printed and administered, only 70 were effectively retrieved. This relatively small sample size makes it difficult to generalize the findings of the study. This challenge notwithstanding, the researchers did not give up on their quest to successfully execute the task set forth. Consistent visit and phone calls made and continual attempts to explain the essence of the work to the employees finally encouraged most of the respondents to answer the questionnaires as detailed and accurately as possible. It is therefore held that the findings and conclusions of this work are undistorted.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed.

The study has established that LOC has a direct positive correlation with employees' contextual performance. It is therefore recommended that employers and corporations intending to improve the contextual performance of their employees can achieve this by taking steps to help their employees develop the right mental attitude and a strong internal locus of control. This can be achieved in a number of ways. Self-awareness programs must be given to employees to develop right mental attitude towards their job, colleagues and the company. Training must be given to existing employees to update their knowledge and encourage them to take higher responsibility. Encouraging employees to develop the right mental attitude will help them appreciate and assume control over their own fate at work. This in turn will enable them take initiative and contribute significantly to organizational goals through high contextual performance.

It has further been shown that contextual performance implies going beyond one's job descriptions and helping others complete their own task towards fulfilling the broad corporate objectives. Employee should thus be encouraged to work in groups rather than as individuals. Setting task for groups implies that they whole group stand or fall together and hence employees will be more corporative and help each other. Also, short exercise can be used to illustrate benefits of good and bad team work and to mould new employee's attitude regarding good team work. Outward bound program is the best program used by many corporations to build team work. This training helps the employee to learn team spirit and co-operation and the need to trust and rely on each other by overcoming physical obstacles.

In order to encourage employees to go beyond their task performance, assessment of employees' performance should incorporate contextual performance assessment. Employees who go beyond their usual task, take initiatives in the organization's interest and help others accomplish their own tasks should be identified, commended and rewarded accordingly. This will encourage others to emulate these habits. However in situations where these efforts are disregarded, it will only be a disincentive to such people. Hence promotions and other performance appraisals should incorporate contextual performance assessment as an integral part of employees overall output in an organization.

Again, since it has been clearly revealed that employees' educational level has a significant impact on their locus of control, it is further recommended that employers and corporations who want to boost their employees LOC in order to improve their contextual performance must also invest in their employees' education. Scholarships and other grants and subsidies should be awarded to deserving employees to pursue further studies and obtain higher qualifications. The improvement in the employees' internality resulting from the further education and training will eventually equip them to perform well at work and even go the extra mile besides their job descriptions to help other employees and the organization as a whole in achieving its objectives.

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