



**Perceived Competencies and Performance: A Study on Grade 11  
Teachers at Government National Schools in the  
Welimada Education Zone**

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**ABSTRACT**

Employee competencies and individual's competencies represent the capability the individual brings to the job situation. This study is undertaken to understand how competencies of teachers will affect their job performance. It is important to understand the factors that affect teaching performance in order to understand how to improve productivity and effectiveness in the teaching process. The study thus focuses on understanding the perception of teachers across different variables related to teacher competencies, performance and factors affecting them. The main objectives are to identify the current level of competencies of teachers, to understand the effect of demographic factors on JP and to understand the relationship between the level of competencies and JP. In order to address the set objectives, the research looks at competencies from the perspective of knowledge, skills and attitudes. JP was gauged through TP and OCB. The study assesses the effect of seven demographic factors and thirty specific competencies related to teaching on job performance. Sample sizes of 135 teachers of Grade 11 were selected from a study population of teachers from National schools in Welimada Education Zone. The perceived competency factors by Malhotra and Das (2009),

TP scale by William & Anderson (1991), OCB scale by William & Anderson (1991) and Demographic variables scale by Borman and Motowidlo (1997) were the measures of the study. Findings from the study reveals that three dimensions of the perceived competencies; Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of the teachers are very high and the relationship between perceived competencies and JP are positively correlated, to an increase in the level of perceived competencies adapted by individuals supporting influence performance as a group in organization. The study also reveals that the demographic variables education qualification and job tenure affect job performance, while gender, age and marital status do not affect job performance. Implications from the study for theoretical, managerial decision making and as well as recommendations for future research are discussed.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Vathanophas (2007) stated that human assets are one of the most important resources available to any organization and employee competence and commitment largely determine the objectives that an organization can set for itself and to its success in achieving them. Competent employees are the main resource of any organization in acquiring a competitive advantage. Land buildings or materials do not yield company productivity, rather, it is 'People Capital' that runs a business and produces value from existing resources. Hayer Group (2004) point out that an organization's best source of competitive advantage lies with its employees. Strategies, business models, products and services can all be copied by competitors, but talented and competent employees represent a sustainable source of differentiation for development of the nation. Vathanophas (2007) pointed out the demand for effective employees continuously increases in both public and private organizations during the last thirty years.

### **1.1 Teacher competency**

Catano and Harvey (2014) viewed that teaching is a great profession and teachers have a great role in their students' intellectual, personal and social development, there by influencing the whole nation's development. Hodges et.al (2001) also place that teacher competencies are certain characteristics of an individual that enable them to demonstrate appropriate specific actions to achieve expected outcomes of students.

### **1.2 Task Performance (TP)**

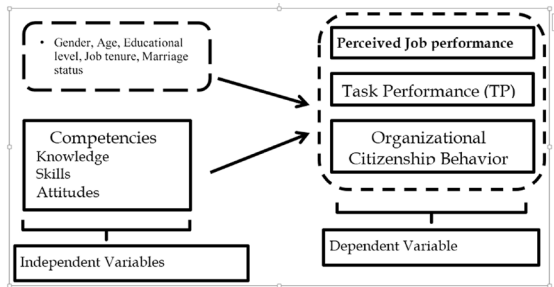
TP describes the core job responsibilities of an employee. It is also called "In-role prescribed behavior". Huang (2011) reflected that in specific work outcomes and deliverables as well as their quality. And it includes performance that implies on the technical aspects of a job; and reflects how well an employee performs duties required by job. Sharma and Jain (2014) along with data showing that personality successfully predict contextual performance; provide an alternative explanation that personality moderately correlates with overall performance.

### **1.3 Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (OCB)**

According to Huang (2011) success of schools fundamentally depends on teachers who are willing to go beyond role expectations voluntary. OCB is a useful term to describe these voluntary behaviors and has originally coined by Organ (1988). Derived from Sulaiman (2013) idea of extra-role behaviors and Bergman et.al (2004) define OCB as a set of helpful, discretionary and extra-role behaviors exhibited by employees that are not directly or clearly recognized by the formal reward system and have an overall positive effect on the operation of the organization; also they cannot be enforced by the employment contract. OCB is a matter of individual choice and failure to

display such behavior is not generally considered as cause for punishment. Based on this definition, Ilanlou and Zand (2011) emphasis OCB of teachers refers to all voluntary and helping behaviors extended to colleagues, principals, and students.

## 2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



## 3. PARTICIPANTS

The target population was teachers at government national schools. The sampling frame was grade 11 teachers of Welimada Zonal Education in Badulla district. National schools were selected based on their proximity, accessibility and their popularity among the public to take part in the study than provincial schools.

## 4. MEASURES

First part was the teaching competencies (Divided into the variables of Knowledge, Skill and Attitude). Second one was TP of teachers. Thirdly, OCB and finally, demographic variables. As the main part of the research the first section of the questionnaire dealt with competency factors such as Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes. The second section included measures to assess the TP of the participants. The third section includes measures that measure the levels of OCB of employees in the schools. Statement of the various instruments and scales were used. The fourth section included measures to assess the demographic information of participants which included gender, age, education background, job tenure and marital status the schools.

## 5. LEVEL OF COMPETENCY DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

By using the descriptive statistics, it was found that there is a higher level of competencies schools in government sector. The finding of the study confirmed this and revealed a higher level of competencies evident in the public sector. Further it was revealed that this high level of competencies has a distinctive influence on the performance of employees and thereby on the organization. The source of the study based on the confirmation with the study of Malhotra and Das (2009) who asserted the dimensions of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (KSA). The public sector employees tend to perceive a higher level of competencies with enacted norms and values from the educational context. Further, Bergman et.al (2013) in their studies revealed that public organizations will perceive higher level of competencies when compared to the private sector organizations as public organizations are bureaucratic in nature with no possibility for flexibility or change. In addition, the findings revealed that perception of organizational competencies varies significantly across both sectors. When an individual is satisfied, their JP might increase. They tend to be more committed to their work. Competency is important to ensure the quality of instruction taking place at school.

## 6. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND JOB PERFORMANCE

### 6.1 Employee gender, age, educational level, job tenure and marriage status affect perceived Job Performance.

Demographic variables such as gender, age, education level, job tenure and marital status will predict the job performance. Thus, to test this, One - Way ANOVA test was conducted. Each and every demographic variable were entered into the ANOVA test model of employees. More

specifically, the teachers at the National Schools determined whether there are any statistically significant differences between the means of two or more independent groups. However, gender, age and marital status were not a significant, thereby do not predict of JP of the employees. Accordingly, the proposed that the demographic variables; job tenure and educational level will predict JP is partially supported.

### **6.2 Gender, Age, Marital Status and Job Performance**

According to Bergman et.al (2004) one difficulty encountered by investigators of sex differences and performance among workers in organizational settings was the difficulty of comparing the performance of men and women carrying out exactly the same job owing to gender segregation in the allocation of work tasks. Gender age and marital status of employees however were not a predictor of the perceptions of job performance. These findings are in simultaneous to the findings of the study of Thomson and Strickland (2004); where it was revealed that perceptions of organizational JP significant. Thus, accordingly women perceived a higher level of organizational perception in their workplace, Further, another contrasting study was conducted by Jana (2016), who stated that women within the organizational structure tend to perceive themselves to be at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy and thereby may not be involved in decision making processes actively.

### **6.3 Job Tenure, Education Level and Job Performance**

Sanders and Vogel (1993) found evidence of a collinear relationship between organizational tenure and job performance. According to them, although the relationship of organizational tenure with JP is positive in general, Further it was revealed through the study with regard to the job tenure,

teachers exhibited different levels of competency, consequently, it was revealed that those who had been with the organization for a longer period of time perceived higher competency than those who had been with the organization for a shorter period of time. Research findings of studies conducted by Western and Wilson (2000) mentioned that an individual with a high job tenure familiarize oneself with the processes and procedures, and as one might have gained the required Knowledge Skills and Attitudes. This therefore goes to show that people who have stayed long on the job are not likely to make mistakes like new employees on the job, hence perform better. Likewise in this study, it was also revealed that among the demographic variable, the job tenure and educational level significantly affected to the job performance.

## **7. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TASK PERFORMANCE (TP) AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR (OCB)**

The study revealed that there is a highly significant positive relationship between TP and OCB, the two dimensions of JP with regard to the sample studied. Thus, employees who tend to perform their in-role performance well in their organizations tend to perform their extra role performance well too. This finding further compliments the theories reviewed. Thus, when individuals tend to view their organization as sensitive to their issues and grievances and thereby supportive, they tend to respond by displaying more commitment towards task related performances and subsequently move a step further by performing discretionary roles including OCB.

## **8. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMPETENCIES AND JOB PERFORMANCE**

There is a significant relationship between level of perceived competencies and job performance. There is a significant relationship between level of perceived competencies and TP and there is a

significant relationship between level of perceived competencies and OCB. Pearson's correlation tests was used to test the relationship between them. According to the above test, there is a high correlation between the two variables TP and OCB. The high correlation between the two variables indicated a need for a Factor Analysis and accordingly conducted and the two dependent variables TP and OCB were combined as one variable, i.e. job performance. Competency building and employee productivity is positively correlated to organizational performance. Therefore ultimately, it could be deduced that teachers who have required level of competency tend to execute and exhibit objectives with successfully enhance effective organizational performance. A Spearman's rank-order correlation was run to determine the relationship between 135 teachers' competency and JP. There was a strong, positive correlation between competency and JP, which was statistically significant ( $r_s = 0.828$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

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