

**Title: Operant Competence Analysis and Profiling: A Reflection in action Learning Framework for Articulating Individual and Managerial Competences**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study highlights the need to translate tacit knowledge into job tailored explicit operant competences that can allow the individual managers and their organizations improve performance. The study is built on the review of some the popular competence models used in management of performance in organizations. The study focus is on testing an operant competence analysis and profiling (OCAP) framework which purports to address some of the existing gaps in the reviewed competence models. The key constructs used to test the claims of OCAP include; reflection in action, competence mix, role clarity, job context, adaptability to work environment and performance.

The study design was a quasi experimental, non equivalent group, pretest-posttest design. It involved a pretest (baseline measurement) for two groups (the treatment group and the comparison group) and a posttest. After the pretest the respondents in the treatment group were trained in operant competence analysis and profiling. During the posttest a third group (second comparative group) was included to control for the effects that may arise as a result of interacting with the other groups during the pretest.

The geographic scope for this study was the districts local governments and the study sample included nine districts. The study sample comprised of 56 respondents in group one, 58 respondents in group two and 74 respondents in group three.

Quantitative data was collected using a questionnaire which was validated in a pilot study. The results generated by the questionnaire were analysed using Pearson product moment correlation, regression analysis, t-test (independent sample and paired sample) and ANOVA. Quantitative results indicated that reflection in action enables managers to determine a mix of relevant competences, perceive the work clearly and act proactively when faced with work environmental challenges. The entire process of OCAP was found to be influenced by the context of the job.

Qualitative results generated by the OCAP intervention were managed using Miles and Huberman (1994) qualitative display and Gibbs (2006) memos of concepts and ideas. The OCAP intervention encouraged managers to put emphasis on examining the past experiences, reflect on their actions and modify their operant competences to address the challenges in their work environment as a way of improving performance.

The study recommends that employers should regularly provide their employees with continuous opportunity to reflect on actions in their past experiences. In addition employees should periodically review their competence profiles and redefine or modify their job descriptions according the current organization job demands and objectives.