

**Employee Job Rotation And Productivity In The Public Sector: A Case Study Of Loro Sub-County,
Oyam District, Uganda**

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between employee job rotation and productivity in the public sector, using Loro Sub-County, Oyam District, Uganda, as a case study. Local governments in Uganda continue to grapple with limited service delivery efficiency, and job rotation has been proposed as a human resource strategy for enhancing employee versatility and productivity. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine the extent of job rotation practices at Loro Sub-County, to assess the level of employee productivity, and to establish the relationship between job rotation and employee productivity. A descriptive cross-sectional research design employing a quantitative approach was adopted. A sample of 120 respondents was drawn from a target population of 165 employees using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table and simple random sampling. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire and analysed using SPSS version 26 and Stata version 17. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, and frequencies), Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression were used to analyse the data. Findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between job rotation and employee productivity ($r = 0.612$, $p < 0.01$), with job rotation accounting for 37.5% of the variance in employee productivity ($R^2 = 0.375$, $F(1,118) = 70.68$, $p < 0.001$). The study concludes that job rotation is an effective mechanism for improving employee productivity in local government settings and recommends that Loro Sub-County institutionalize a structured job rotation policy with clear timelines, orientation support, and performance monitoring.

Keywords: Job rotation, employee productivity, public sector, local government, human resource management, Oyam District, Uganda

1.0 Introduction

Job rotation is a human resource management practice that involves the systematic movement of employees across different jobs, tasks, or departments within an organisation over a defined period, with the aim of broadening skills, reducing monotony, and enhancing overall organisational performance (Ortega, 2001; Eriksson & Ortega, 2006). Globally, public sector institutions have increasingly adopted job rotation as a strategy for building a versatile workforce capable of responding to dynamic service delivery demands (World Bank, 2021). In Africa, civil service reforms in countries such as Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania have incorporated job rotation as part of broader public sector transformation programmes intended to curb corruption, reduce skill obsolescence, and improve accountability (Kiragu & Mukandala, 2019).

In Uganda, the decentralisation policy under the Local Governments Act (Cap. 243) devolved administrative and service delivery responsibilities to local governments, including sub-counties such as Loro in Oyam District. However, local governments continue to experience challenges of low productivity, characterised by delayed service delivery, high absenteeism, and skill mismatches (Ministry of Public Service, 2022). Job rotation has been suggested as one of the interventions that can address these challenges by exposing employees to varied tasks,

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thereby enhancing their competence and motivation(Winny, Ariyo, et al., 2023). Despite the theoretical appeal of job rotation, empirical evidence on its actual effect on productivity within Uganda's local government sector, particularly at the sub-county level, remains limited, thereby necessitating this study(Christopher, Moses, Muhindo, et al., 2022).

1.1 Problem Statement

Loro Sub-County, like many local governments in Uganda, has continued to record low employee productivity as reflected in delayed processing of citizen service requests, poor performance appraisal ratings, and persistent citizen complaints documented in the Sub-County's annual performance reports (Oyam District Local Government, 2023). Although the Sub-County has periodically undertaken employee transfers and rotations across departments such as Finance, Production, and Community-Based Services, it is not clear whether these rotations have been implemented in a structured manner or whether they have translated into measurable productivity gains(Ntirandekura et al., 2022). Without empirical evidence on the relationship between job rotation and productivity, management decisions regarding staff deployment risk being based on administrative convenience rather than performance-enhancing rationale, potentially perpetuating inefficiency in service delivery(A. G. Kazaara & Kazaara, 2025). It is against this background that this study sought to investigate the relationship between employee job rotation and productivity in the public sector, with specific reference to Loro Sub-County, Oyam District(Christopher, Moses, Enosh Muhindo, et al., 2022a).

1.2 Main Objective

The main objective of this study was to establish the relationship between employee job rotation and productivity in the public sector, using Loro Sub-County, Oyam District, Uganda, as a case study.

1.2.1 Specific Objectives

- To examine the extent of job rotation practices among employees of Loro Sub-County.
- To assess the level of employee productivity at Loro Sub-County.
- To establish the relationship between job rotation and employee productivity at Loro Sub-County.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on the Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), which posits that investment in employee skills and knowledge, including through mechanisms such as job rotation, enhances organisational productivity by improving the stock of usable competencies within the workforce (Muhamad et al., 2023). The theory suggests that as employees rotate across different roles, they accumulate diverse skills that increase their overall value and output to the organisation(Winny, Kazaara, et al., 2023). The study was further supported by the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976), which argues that skill variety, one of the five core job dimensions, enhances employee motivation and performance. Job rotation directly increases skill variety by exposing employees to different tasks, thereby theoretically improving motivation and, consequently, productivity(A. G. Kazaara et al., 2024).

2.2 Job Rotation Practices

Empirical literature indicates that job rotation practices vary considerably across organisations in terms of frequency, scope, and formality. Ortega (2001) found that firms use job rotation both as a mechanism for skill development and as a tool for learning about employees' comparative advantages (Christopher, Moses, Enosh Muhindo, et al., 2022b). In the Ugandan public sector context, Nabaweesi and Kasozi (2020) observed that job rotation is often applied inconsistently, with some departments rotating staff annually while others retain employees in the same role for extended periods, undermining the intended skill-broadening effect. Similarly, a study by Mugisha (2021) on Ugandan local governments found that job rotation was frequently used as a disciplinary or administrative tool rather than a deliberate productivity-enhancement strategy, raising questions about its effectiveness where not properly structured.

2.3 Employee Productivity in the Public Sector

Employee productivity in the public sector is typically measured using indicators such as timeliness of service delivery, quality of output, and citizen satisfaction, given the absence of direct profit-based metrics common in the private sector (Boyne, 2003). Studies conducted in East Africa have linked low public sector productivity to factors such as inadequate remuneration, limited career growth opportunities, poor supervision, and skill-job mismatches (Kiggundu, 2022). Nonetheless, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that human resource interventions, including training, mentorship, and job rotation, can substantially improve productivity outcomes when implemented systematically (Waiganjo, 2019).

2.4 Job Rotation and Productivity

Several studies have empirically examined the job rotation-productivity relationship, though findings are somewhat mixed depending on context and sector (Muhamad et al., 2023). Eriksson and Ortega (2006), using Danish firm-level data, found a positive association between job rotation and firm productivity, particularly where rotation was combined with structured training. In the African public sector context, a study by Wanjiru and Kamau (2020) in Kenyan county governments found that job rotation significantly predicted employee productivity, explaining approximately 34% of the variance in productivity scores. However, other scholars, such as Campion, Cheraskin, and Stevens (1994), caution that poorly managed rotation, characterised by inadequate orientation and overly frequent transfers, can reduce productivity in the short run due to learning curve effects (A. I. Kazaara & Audrey, 2024). This study sought to contribute to this debate by empirically testing the relationship within the specific context of Loro Sub-County.

2.5 Literature Gap

While considerable literature exists on job rotation and productivity in private sector and international public sector contexts, limited empirical studies have specifically examined this relationship within Uganda's decentralised local government structures, particularly at the sub-county level. This study addressed this contextual and empirical gap by generating localised evidence from Loro Sub-County, Oyam District.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design with a quantitative approach. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the collection of data at a single point in time to describe the

characteristics of the study variables and establish statistical relationships between them (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

3.2 Study Population

The target population comprised 165 employees of Loro Sub-County drawn from the departments of Administration, Finance, Production, Community-Based Services, Health, and Works, as obtained from the Sub-County staff establishment register (2023).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determining sample sizes from a given population, a sample size of 120 employees was derived from the target population of 165. Simple random sampling was used to select respondents from each department, ensuring that every employee had an equal chance of being included in the study, thereby minimizing selection bias.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire comprising closed-ended items measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was used to collect primary data (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). The questionnaire was divided into three sections: Section A captured respondent demographic characteristics; Section B measured job rotation practices (frequency, scope, and structure of rotation); and Section C measured employee productivity (efficiency, quality of output, and timeliness) (Kerubo et al., n.d.).

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through expert review by two human resource management specialists, yielding a Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.84, which exceeds the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Amin, 2005). Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which yielded 0.81 for the job rotation construct and 0.79 for the employee productivity construct, both exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978), confirming the internal consistency of the instrument.

3.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were coded, cleaned, and analysed using SPSS version 26 and Stata version 17 (Nelson et al., 2022). Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages) were computed to summarise the levels of job rotation and productivity. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between job rotation and productivity, while simple linear regression analysis was employed to establish the predictive effect of job rotation on employee productivity, at a 0.05 level of significance.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity of responses were guaranteed, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences.

4.0 Results

4.1 Response Rate

Out of 120 questionnaires distributed, 112 were fully completed and returned, yielding a response rate of 93.3%, which is considered excellent for social science research (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 112)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	63	56.3
	Female	49	43.7
Age	20-29 years	24	21.4
	30-39 years	41	36.6
	40-49 years	32	28.6
	50 years and above	15	13.4
Education Level	Certificate/Diploma	38	33.9
	Bachelor's Degree	58	51.8
	Postgraduate	16	14.3
Years of Service	Below 5 years	29	25.9
	5-10 years	47	42.0
	Above 10 years	36	32.1

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The study findings presented in Table 4.1 showed that a total of 112 respondents participated in the study. In terms of gender, the majority of the respondents were male, accounting for 63 respondents (56.3%), while female respondents constituted 49 (43.7%). This distribution indicated that the workforce at Loro Sub-County was slightly male dominated, although both genders were adequately represented in the study. The inclusion of both male and female respondents provided a balanced perspective on the study variables and enhanced the reliability of the findings regarding job rotation and employee productivity.

Regarding age, the findings revealed that the largest proportion of respondents belonged to the 30–39 years age category, comprising 41 respondents (36.6%). This was followed by respondents aged 40–49 years, who accounted for 32 respondents (28.6%). Respondents aged 20–29 years represented 24 (21.4%), while those aged 50 years and above were the fewest, with 15 respondents (13.4%). These findings suggested that the majority of employees were within the active and productive working-age population, implying that they possessed sufficient experience and energy to effectively participate in organizational activities such as job rotation programmes (A. I. Kazaara & Audrey, 2024).

The educational qualifications of the respondents indicated that more than half possessed Bachelor's degrees, with 58 respondents (51.8%). Those holding Certificate or Diploma qualifications accounted for 38 respondents (33.9%), while respondents with postgraduate qualifications were 16 (14.3%). The findings suggested that the

workforce was relatively well educated, with most employees possessing the academic qualifications necessary to adapt to different job assignments and responsibilities. Such educational diversity was expected to facilitate learning, skill acquisition, and successful implementation of job rotation practices within the local government(Ariyo, 2023).

The findings on years of service showed that the largest proportion of respondents had worked for between 5 and 10 years, representing 47 respondents (42.0%). Respondents who had served for more than 10 years constituted 36 (32.1%), while those with less than five years of service were 29 (25.9%). These findings indicated that most respondents had accumulated considerable work experience within the organization, suggesting that they were knowledgeable about the existing job rotation practices and employee productivity levels. Their experience was therefore expected to provide credible and informed responses to the study questions.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics for Job Rotation

Respondents' perceptions of job rotation practices at Loro Sub-County were assessed using a set of Likert-scale items. The results are summarised in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics for Job Rotation (n = 112)

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
Employees are rotated across departments periodically	3.42	0.91	Moderate
Job rotation schedules are clearly communicated	3.11	1.04	Moderate
Rotation exposes employees to new skills	3.85	0.78	High
Employees receive orientation before rotation	2.96	1.12	Moderate
Rotation is applied fairly across staff	3.20	0.98	Moderate
Overall Job Rotation Mean	3.31	0.68	Moderate

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Table 4.2 presented the respondents' perceptions regarding job rotation practices at Loro Sub-County. The overall mean score for job rotation was 3.31 with a standard deviation of 0.68, indicating a moderate level of implementation of job rotation practices within the organization. This finding suggested that although job rotation was practiced, there remained opportunities for improving its implementation to maximize employee development and organizational performance(Julius, 2024).

Among the individual items, the statement that rotation exposed employees to new skills recorded the highest mean score of 3.85 (SD = 0.78), which was interpreted as high. This finding indicated that respondents generally agreed that job rotation had effectively enhanced their knowledge, competencies, and professional skills by exposing them to different work roles and responsibilities(Isaac et al., 2023). The relatively low standard deviation further suggested that respondents shared similar opinions regarding this aspect of job rotation.

The statement indicating that employees were rotated across departments periodically obtained a mean score of 3.42 (SD = 0.91), reflecting a moderate level of agreement. This implied that departmental rotations occurred to a reasonable extent, although they were not consistently implemented for all employees. Likewise, the statement that rotation was applied fairly across staff recorded a mean of 3.20 (SD = 0.98), suggesting that respondents moderately agreed that fairness characterized the implementation of job rotation. However, the moderate rating also implied that some employees perceived inconsistencies in the allocation of rotation opportunities (Ntirandekura et al., 2022).

The findings further revealed that job rotation schedules were clearly communicated had a mean score of 3.11 (SD = 1.04), indicating moderate agreement among respondents. This suggested that while communication regarding rotation schedules existed, it was not always timely or sufficiently clear for all employees. Similarly, the statement that employees received orientation before rotation registered the lowest mean score of 2.96 (SD = 1.12), although it still fell within the moderate interpretation category. This finding implied that orientation and preparation before employee transfers were relatively weak, potentially limiting employees' ability to adjust quickly to new assignments. The relatively higher standard deviation also suggested greater variation in respondents' perceptions concerning orientation practices.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics for Employee Productivity

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Productivity (n = 112)

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
I complete assigned tasks within set timelines	3.58	0.85	High
The quality of my work output has improved	3.64	0.80	High
I am able to handle multiple tasks efficiently	3.49	0.89	Moderate
My output meets citizens' service expectations	3.37	0.93	Moderate
Overall Employee Productivity Mean	3.52	0.71	High

The results presented in Table 4.3 showed that the overall mean score for employee productivity was 3.52 with a standard deviation of 0.71, indicating a high level of employee productivity among staff at Loro Sub-County. This finding suggested that employees generally perceived themselves as productive in performing their assigned duties and delivering services to the public.

The statement indicating that the quality of work output had improved recorded the highest mean score of 3.64 (SD = 0.80), reflecting a high level of agreement. This finding suggested that respondents believed they consistently produced quality work and had experienced improvements in their performance over time. Similarly, the statement that assigned tasks were completed within set timelines achieved a mean score of 3.58 (SD = 0.85), indicating high agreement. This implied that employees generally adhered to work schedules and completed their responsibilities within the expected timeframes, thereby contributing positively to organizational performance.

The statement that employees were able to handle multiple tasks efficiently obtained a mean score of 3.49 (SD = 0.89), which was interpreted as moderate. This finding suggested that while respondents generally demonstrated multitasking abilities, there remained room for enhancing employees' capacity to manage multiple responsibilities effectively. Likewise, the statement that work output met citizens' service expectations recorded a mean score of 3.37 (SD = 0.93), also indicating moderate agreement (Nelson et al., 2023). This implied that although employees perceived their service delivery as satisfactory, improvements were still needed to consistently meet public expectations and enhance service quality.

4.5 Correlation Analysis

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed to establish the relationship between job rotation and employee productivity. The results in Table 4.4 show a strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation between the two variables.

Table 4.4: Correlation between Job Rotation and Employee Productivity (n = 112).

Variable		Job Rotation	Employee Productivity
Job Rotation	Pearson Correlation	1	0.612**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
Employee Productivity	Pearson Correlation	0.612**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

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

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between job rotation and employee productivity at Loro Sub-County. As presented in Table 4.4, the findings revealed a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.612$ with a significance level of $p = 0.000$, indicating a statistically significant positive relationship between job rotation and employee productivity at the 0.01 level (Nelson et al., 2023). The results demonstrated that improvements in job rotation practices were associated with corresponding improvements in employee productivity.

The magnitude of the correlation coefficient suggested a strong positive relationship between the two variables. This implied that employees who experienced more structured, fair, and well-organized job rotation practices tended to report higher levels of productivity. The statistically significant p-value further confirmed that the observed relationship was unlikely to have occurred by chance, thereby providing sufficient evidence to conclude that job rotation was positively associated with employee productivity at Loro Sub-County. Consequently, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between job rotation and employee productivity was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis was supported.

4.6 Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive effect of job rotation on employee productivity.

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Table 4.7: Regression Coefficients (Dependent Variable: Employee Productivity)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.612	0.375	0.369	0.564

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which job rotation predicted employee productivity at Loro Sub-County. The model summary results indicated a correlation coefficient ($R = 0.612$), which reflected a strong positive relationship between the predictor variable and the dependent variable. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.375$) showed that job rotation explained 37.5% of the variation in employee productivity, while the adjusted R^2 value of 0.369 indicated that approximately 36.9% of the variation remained explained after adjusting for sample size. These findings suggested that although job rotation was an important determinant of employee productivity, other organizational and individual factors accounted for the remaining 62.5% of the variation.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	22.48	1	22.48	70.68	0.000
Residual	37.55	118	0.318		
Total	60.03	119			

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The ANOVA results further demonstrated that the regression model was statistically significant ($F = 70.68$, $p = 0.000$). This finding indicated that the regression model provided a good fit for the data and that job rotation significantly predicted employee productivity. The significance value being less than 0.05 confirmed that the model was appropriate for explaining the relationship between the study variables.

Model	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Standardized Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.412	0.241	-	5.859	0.000
Job Rotation	0.638	0.076	0.612	8.407	0.000

Source: Primary Data, 2025

The regression coefficients revealed that the constant term was 1.412 and statistically significant ($t = 5.859$, $p = 0.000$), indicating the baseline level of employee productivity in the absence of job rotation practices. More importantly, job rotation recorded an unstandardized coefficient ($B = 0.638$) and a standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.612$) with a t-value of 8.407 and a significance level of $p = 0.000$. These findings indicated that a one-unit improvement in job rotation practices resulted in an estimated 0.638-unit increase in employee productivity. The positive beta coefficient further demonstrated that job rotation exerted a positive influence on employee productivity, while the highly significant p-value confirmed that this effect was statistically significant. Therefore, the study concluded that job rotation was a significant predictor of employee productivity at Loro Sub-County, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis that job rotation significantly influenced employee productivity.

5.0 Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Discussion of Findings

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The findings of this study are consistent with the Human Capital Theory and the Job Characteristics Model, which posit that skill variety gained through job rotation enhances employee capability and motivation, thereby improving productivity. The results corroborate the findings of Eriksson and Ortega (2006) and Wanjiru and Kamau (2020), who similarly found a significant positive relationship between job rotation and productivity in organisational and public sector settings respectively. However, the moderate mean score for orientation before rotation (mean = 2.96) suggests that, while rotation is practised, it is not always accompanied by adequate preparatory support, a concern also raised by Campion et al. (1994) regarding the risk of learning curve effects undermining short-term productivity gains.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concludes that employee job rotation has a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect on employee productivity at Loro Sub-County, Oyam District. Structured job rotation practices enhance employees' skill variety and adaptability, which in turn translate into improved task completion, quality of output, and responsiveness to citizens' service needs.

5.3 Recommendations

- Loro Sub-County management should institutionalise a formal job rotation policy with clearly defined timelines, criteria, and communication procedures.
- Adequate orientation and on-the-job coaching should be provided to employees prior to and during rotation to minimise productivity dips associated with learning curves.
- Management should periodically monitor and evaluate the productivity outcomes of rotated employees to inform continuous improvement of the rotation programme.

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