

# Influence of Work Environment on Anxiety Levels of Employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** - This study sets out to analyse the influence of work environment on anxiety levels of employees of the Kenya Meat Commission with the aim of coming up with preventive measures. The study employed an *ex post facto* research design to guide the study. The study's target population were all employees of Kenya Meat Commission Machakos County, Kenya, thus 427. The research utilized a questionnaire to collect information. Simple random, stratified and purposive sampling techniques to obtain a sample size of 201. The data collected was analysed and found out that participants level of interpersonal relations influences their level of anxiety where the poorer participants in interpersonal relations the higher the level of anxiety, that participants level of personal control influences their level of anxiety, and that participants level of motivation affects their level of anxiety where the more the participant is motivated the lesser the level of anxiety. Among the recommendations to the above findings is to increase the social activities in the working place, training the participants to cultivate self-control and to develop and maintain motivation levels to ensure suppressed levels of anxiety in the organisation for work productivity.

**Keywords:** Work environment, Kenya Meat Commission, Anxiety Levels, Employees.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In modern management, the application of human relations theories in managing human resource is seen to be critical in today's business competitive environment (Odongo 2006). Human Resource professionals are increasingly taking employee satisfaction and use of positive psychological contract as a relevant facet of work relationships and wider human behaviour. It is ascertained that as boundaries between cultures and nations become blurred and new technology makes it attainable to consider the planet as a "global village," the scope of international and intercultural relationships is speedily increasing. These trends indicate a heightened level of dynamic engagement and intensity in organizations' and management nowadays.

In all organizations, worker's profitability assumes a noteworthy part in the general achievement of the institution. Deteriorating motivation of employee's time and again results in a higher turnover. One measurement of these attitudes is evident from Kelly Services' Global Workforce Index of March 2011 across Americas, EMEA, and APAC regions.

60% of 134,000 workers studied in 29 nations anticipated that they would make no less than one noteworthy career change amid their lifetimes. Negative administrative connections and absence of professional success developed as two of the five main motivations for leaving a place of employment. As these discoveries recommend, administrators who appreciate workers' profession objectives confront the overwhelming assignment of propelling a procedure to discover their substitutions, (Taylor, 2011).

Work environment dynamics can have a progressive or undesirable effect on interpersonal relation, personal control and motivation of individual employee. Briner, (2000) established that, aspects of work environment may affect psychological health of employees and do so in complex ways. He further states that, most of the common psychological problems in the workplace are anxiety and depression and accounts for the large proportion of the negative impact on workers and their employer. This resulted in a wide range of theoretical approaches that led to developing a considerate relationship between work environment and the psychological health of employees. Many studies, which includes, 27 that were picked out by Shea, Pettit and De Cieri, (2011) in Australia while investigating the connection between work environment and psychological health, recommended more research to conclusively determine significance of work environment in the psychological health of employees.

In general, institutions and managers have many good reasons to worry about employee's work environment in relation to interpersonal relation, personal control and motivation. With none completely engaged employees, an institution is unlikely to achieve its desired objectives. As soon as employees lose interest in their jobs, institutions will have an equivalent reduction in morale, productivity and efficiency. Institutions and their managers who fall short to tackle these problems directly also put at risk their own jobs, since the institution relies on them to ensure that workers time and again carry out their task at high levels, (Ryff & Singer et al. 2012).

### *Statement of the Problem*

The reasons for the poor performance may vary but it is clear that productivity is tied to individual performance, and

performance is directly linked to one's work environment and anxiety levels. This study sets out to explore the influence of work environment on anxiety levels of employees of the Kenya Meat Commission with an aim of coming up with evidence to help in preventive intervention and is thus relevant.

### *Objectives*

- i. To investigate the influence of interpersonal relations on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.
- ii. To determine the influence of personal control on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.
- iii. To determine the influence of motivation on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

### *Hypotheses*

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant statistical relationship between interpersonal relations and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant statistical relationship between personal control and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant statistical motivation and anxiety level among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Work environment anxiety remains a concern for worker's welfare and success, as well as for institutions and can lead to lower job performance, (Troughakos, 2015). The impact of work environment and related anxiety on work performance is strongly linked to values of relations between representatives, managers and their collaborators, as indicated in a study at University of Toronto focusing on police officers, (McCarthy, 2015). Managers, Supervisors and colleagues who are compassionate and provide emotional assistance by means of listening to their friends go a lengthy way in cultivating a positive workplace (McCarthy, 2015). These kind of interpersonal relations are based on high levels of understanding and faith, which enables individual needs to be met.

### *Influence of Interpersonal Relations on Anxiety levels among Employees*

Anxiety among employees remains a phenomenon that affects employee's productivity. A study by Kang, (2016) concluded that employees working in offices are more likely exposed to risk of anxiety and depression than employees working in the field. The study further concluded that, working hours and type of work, remains workplace risk factor for anxiety and

depression. A similar study by Hoboubi, (2016), on effect of work stress and satisfaction on employee's productivity established that employees on rotational work change are less productive than those on regular day shifts. A similar study conducted in United State of America (USA) found that, too much work for an individual employee, lack of balancing and lack of appreciation for job well done in relation to working condition of employees in public, private and nongovernmental organizations causes stress at work (Kamaldeep, 2016). The study further pointed out that, management style and the kind of work are also responsible for workplace distress. Inconsistence in communication from the management, unfair treatment of workers and lack of appreciation remained the main source of anxiety.

Okello and Gilson, (2015) in their study found that, trust among health workers and good working relationship among Kenyan health workers as a strong motivation factor and reduce stress at work place. Team work among colleagues, professionalism and respect for each other was found to be a motivating factor among the doctors and nurses. Furthermore, good relationship, respect and trust from supervisors and managers motivate workers and reduce stress level. In this regard, the current study endeavour to investigate the influence of interpersonal relations on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

### *Influence of Personal Control on Anxiety Levels*

Employment related stress has been established to have an effect on the performance of the employees. Ekienabor, (2016) investigated the impact of job stress on employees' productivity and commitment among academic staff of Nigeria Universities and found that there is an impact of work stress on employee commitment as a result of worker's feelings of being uncared for by the institution there by resulting in reduction of employee's performance and productivity.

Karihe, (2015) conducted a study on how the work related anxiety leading to stress issues impact the performance of the employees in the public universities established that are recorded statistics on the influence of work place facilities and equipment's on the performance of employees. It means that enhanced situations at workplace may results in improved worker's performance. A similar study by Botha & Pienaar, (2006) supports the same and reported that salary, increased workload, insufficient office space, lack of working materials to perform task, lack of proper work system and adequate time to perform work are triggers of work related stress. In this regard, the current study intends to determine the effect of personal control on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

### *Influence of Motivation on Anxiety Levels*

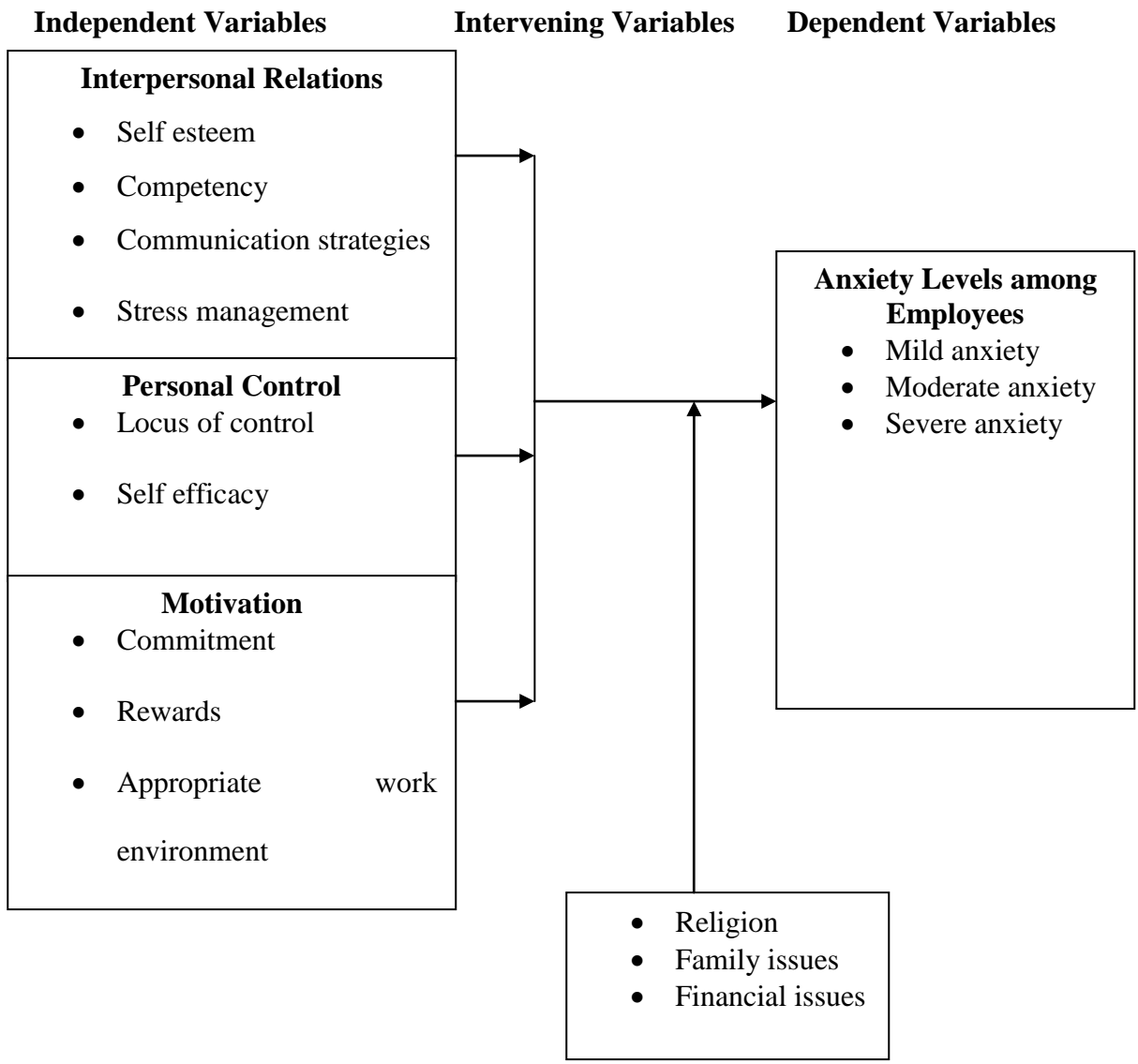
Motivation is the way in which institutions boost employee's morale and enhancing their performance either through incentives, provision of guidance by the management and

rewarding them for a job well done so as to inspire them to work in the way they desire. In a review of a study in Bangladesh on the effect of external motivation on worker’s performance established that, external factors are great motivators and rewarding of employees is inevitable. Periodic rewarding of employees should be maintained particularly incentives as employees may feel the requirement for cash incentives (Nabi, 2017).

Job satisfaction increases employee’s participation including involvement in their institution where they work according to surveys data from Finland, Spain and Czech Republic. Cabrita & Perista (2006) affirmed that the more employees are satisfied with their jobs the higher chances of their involvement in the institutions decision making procedure.

The Danish Work Environment Cohort Study (DWECS), survey by Christiansen, Nelson & Ouro (2005), established a more appealing result on relationship between work contentment and autonomy. The results were, as job decision reduces, fewer respondents’ reports a higher degree of job satisfaction. Additionally, 90% of male employees and 85% of female employees with high level decision are satisfied to a higher degree; whereas, 60% of employees with lower decision latitude report a higher degree of work satisfaction. In this regard, the current study intends to determine the influence of motivation on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

*Conceptual Framework*



III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research study utilized an *ex post facto* research design.

Target Population

The study's target population were all employees of Kenya Meat Commission Machakos County, Kenya, thus 427 (KMC, 2016).

Population	Male	Female	Total
Managers	7	8	15
Supervisors	24	11	35
Subordinate	264	113	377
			427

Source: KMC, 2016

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The sample size was categorized in to three clusters, Managers, Supervisors and the subordinate. Stratified sampling technique was used to identify various level employee cadres. Simple random sampling procedure was used to select the supervisors and subordinate staff who are more in numbers than those at other level of staff. Purposive sampling was used to select the managers from different sections of the institutional structure to obtain a sample of 201 composed of 7 managers, 16 supervisors and 187 subordinates from the target population of 427.

Sample Size

Population	Male	Female	Total
Managers	3	4	7
Supervisors	7	9	16
Subordinate	111	76	187
			201

Source: Researcher, 2018

Research Instruments

The research utilized employee's questionnaire to gather information on the objectives of the study. The data collected was based on demographic characteristic of the population of the participants and the study objectives: anxiety level of the employees, interpersonal relation levels of the employees, personal control levels of the employees and levels of motivation of the employees at Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Interpersonal Relations on Anxiety Levels

Objective one sought to investigate the influence of interpersonal relations on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. Results are presented in the table below.

			Level of anxiety			Total
			Mild anxiety	Moderate anxiety	Severe anxiety	
Level of interpersonal relations	Poor interpersonal relations	Count	6	17	2	25
		% within Level of interpersonal relations	24.0%	68.0%	8.0%	100.0%
	Good interpersonal relations	Count	59	51	5	115
		% within Level of interpersonal relations	51.3%	44.3%	4.3%	100.0%
Total	Count	65	68	7	140	
	% within Level of interpersonal relations	46.4%	48.6%	5.0%	100.0%	

Source: Researcher, 2018

Hypothesis one was derived from objective one and it states: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal relations and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. A Pearson

Product Moment Correlation was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. Results are presented in the table below.

Correlation

		Level of interpersonal relations	Level of anxiety
Level of interpersonal relations	Pearson Correlation	1	-.203*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.016
	N	140	140
Level of anxiety	Pearson Correlation	-.203*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	
	N	140	140

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

NOTE: N = 140; df = 138;  $\alpha$  = 0.05;  $r$  = -.203;  $p$  = .016; critical  $r$  value = 0.087

Source: Researcher, 2018

The table above shows that the observed Pearson Correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) for level of interpersonal relations and level of anxiety is  $-0.203$  which is greater than  $-0.087$  (two tailed test) ( $N = 140$ ;  $df = 138$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected and shows negative correlations between interpersonal relation and level of anxiety. This finding concludes that participants level of interpersonal relations affects their level of anxiety where the poorer participants in interpersonal relations the higher the level of anxiety. According to Billikopf, (2001) an interpersonal relation has a significant function in the growth and continuation of confidence and

constructive feelings in an institution to enhance its productivity. Dobre, (2013) further indicated that trust stands for the perception of individual to other person and his acceptance to respond based on his command and action.

*Personal Control on Anxiety Levels*

The second objective sought to determine the effect of personal control on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. Results are presented in the table below.

Level of personal control \* Level of anxiety

			Level of anxiety			Total
			Mild anxiety	Moderate anxiety	Severe anxiety	
Level of personal control	Full personal control	Count	19	10	2	31
		% within Level of personal control	61.3%	32.3%	6.5%	100.0%
	Moderate personal control	Count	43	55	5	103
		% within Level of personal control	41.7%	53.4%	4.9%	100.0%
	Partial personal control	Count	2	3	0	5
		% within Level of personal control	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	64	68	7	139
		% within Level of personal control	46.0%	48.9%	5.0%	100.0%

Source: Researcher, 2018

The second hypothesis was derived from objective one and it states: Personal control does not have any effect on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. A Pearson Product Moment

Correlation was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. Results are presented in the table below.

*Correlation*

		Level of personal control	Level of anxiety
Level of personal control	Pearson Correlation	1	.113
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.187
	N	139	139
Level of anxiety	Pearson Correlation	.113	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.187	
	N	139	140

NOTE:  $N = 139$ ;  $df = 137$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $r = .113$ ;  $p = .187$ ; critical  $r$  value = 0.087

Source: Researcher, 2018

The table above shows that the observed Pearson Correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) for level of personal control and level of anxiety is  $0.113$  which is greater than  $0.087$  (two tailed test) ( $N = 139$ ;  $df = 137$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected and shows positive correlations between personal control and level of anxiety. This finding concludes that participants level of personal control affects their level of anxiety where the

more the participant has full control the lesser the higher the level of anxiety.

*Motivation on Anxiety Levels*

The third objective sought to determine the influence of motivation on anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. Results are presented in the table below.

Level of motivation \* Level of anxiety

		Level of anxiety			Total	
		Mild anxiety	Moderate anxiety	Severe anxiety		
Level of motivation	Low motivation	Count	13	25	1	39
		% within Level of motivation	33.3%	64.1%	2.6%	100.0%
	High motivation	Count	51	40	6	97
		% within Level of motivation	52.6%	41.2%	6.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	64	65	7	136
		% within Level of motivation	47.1%	47.8%	5.1%	100.0%

Source: Researcher, 2018

The third hypothesis was derived from objective three and it states that: There is no significant statistical relationship between motivation and anxiety level among employees of the

Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. Results are presented in the table below

*Correlation*

		Level of motivation	Level of anxiety
Level of motivation	Pearson Correlation	1	-.120
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.164
	N	136	136
Level of anxiety	Pearson Correlation	-.120	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.164	
	N	136	140

NOTE: N = 136; df = 134;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ;  $r = -.120$ ;  $p = .164$ ; critical  $r$  value = 0.087  
Source: Researcher, 2018

The table above shows that the observed Pearson Correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) for level of motivation and level of anxiety is -0.120 which is greater than -0.087 (two tailed test) ( $N = 136$ ;  $df = 134$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The null hypothesis is rejected and shows negative correlations between level of motivation and level of anxiety. This finding concludes that participants level of motivation affects their level of anxiety where the less the participant is motivated, the higher the level of anxiety.

*Discussion*

The study established that respondents sometimes experienced difficulties having sleep. These findings were consistent with the results of Kang and Singh's (2006), that demonstrated poor interpersonal relationships significantly contributed to stress at work. Kang and Singh additionally expressed that low quality of interpersonal relations at work, both with employees and employers, frequently results in low level of social support which prompted difficulties in coping with stress at work among the employees.

The study established that respondents frequently prefer to keep their personal feelings and thoughts to themselves sharing only when they wish to do so while at work. The findings are in agreement with the study by Nella, (2015) who found that, employees with insecure job have high levels of anxiety, depression, stress and apathetic feelings coupled with low morale in comparison with workers not compromised of losing their jobs. Job related anxieties have also been realized

to be specific to the workplace setting and to individual employee Fay, (2013). He further stated that people who are in normal situation not anxious can turn to be anxious in a new settings or new assignments. This suggests that, the need to identify job related anxiety and general anxiety is necessary. The study further elaborates that, participation disorders that results from job anxiety is as a result of absenteeism due to sickness and avoidance (Fay, 2013).

The study established that respondents always hopeful about the future. According to Billikopf, (2001) an interpersonal relation has a significant function in the growth and continuation of confidence and constructive feelings in an institution that usually makes the workers to always be hopeful about the future. Dobre, (2013) further indicated that trust stands for the perception of individual to other person and his acceptance to respond based on his command and action. Claudia Harzer (2015), in his study in Swiss land on relationship among nurses revealed that individual Intelligence is mainly the key factor influencing workers coping mechanism with work related stress. Individual who have positive attitudes, kind to others coupled with good relationship have less stress than their opposite character trait. Moreover, Interpersonal potency in relation to positivity strength have stronger coping trait.

The study established that respondents sometimes get mixed feelings about going to work. This agrees with a study by

Ekienabor, (2016) who found that there is an impact of work stress on employee commitment as a result of worker's feelings of being uncared for by the institution there by resulting in reduction of employee's performance and productivity. This makes them to have mixed feeling concerning the organization operations.

The study established that participants level of interpersonal relations affects their level of anxiety where the poorer participants in interpersonal relations the higher the level of anxiety. According to Billikopf, (2001) an interpersonal relation has a significant function in the growth and continuation of confidence and constructive feelings in an institution to enhance its productivity. Dobre, (2013) further indicated that trust stands for the perception of individual to other person and his acceptance to respond based on his command and action.

## V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### *Summary of findings*

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of work environment on anxiety levels of employees of the Kenya Meat Commission with an aim of coming up with intervention measures to reduce anxiety levels among employees.

The study sought to answer the following research hypothesis, H01: There is no significant statistical relationship between interpersonal relations and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. H02: There is no significant statistical relationship between personal control and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. H03: There is no significant statistical motivation and anxiety level among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya.

### *Interpersonal Relations on Anxiety Levels*

The Hypothesis for objective one states that: There is no significant statistical relationship between interpersonal relations and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test this hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. The null hypothesis is rejected and shows negative correlations between interpersonal relation and level of anxiety. This finding concludes that participants level of interpersonal relations affects their level of anxiety where the poorer participants in interpersonal relations the higher the level of anxiety.

### *Personal Control on Anxiety Levels*

The second hypothesis was derived from objective two and it states: There is no significant statistical relationship between personal control and anxiety levels among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test this

hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels. The null hypothesis is rejected and shows positive correlations between personal control and level of anxiety. This finding concludes that participants level of personal control affects their level of anxiety where the more the participant has full control the lesser the level of anxiety.

### *Motivation on Anxiety Levels*

The third hypothesis was derived from objective three and it states that: There is no significant statistical motivation and anxiety level among employees of the Kenya Meat Commission, Machakos County, Kenya. The null hypothesis is rejected and shows positive correlations between personal control and level of anxiety. This finding concludes that participants level of motivation affects their level of anxiety where the less the participant is motivated, the higher the level of anxiety.

### *Strategies*

The interventions measures were drive from the qualitative data from open-ended questions which established that, the Kenya Meat Commission should proactively influence and increase the level of interaction between employees. Among the strategies to be use is to enhance open plan offices, team building and quick resolution of conflict between employees. Offices should have a separate place for taking coffee and socialising during tea breaks. Employees who have less control over their lives have higher level of anxiety. This means that the organisation should counsel employees and guide them to better self-control through trainings, counselling and even disciplinary process. Finally, the organisation should not only look for ways of motivating but also maintaining the motivation level of the employees. The less motivated the employees the further the level of anxiety.

### *Conclusion*

This finding concludes that participants level of interpersonal relations affects their level of anxiety where the poorer participants in interpersonal relations the higher the level of anxiety. The research further concludes that participants level of personal control affect their level of anxiety where the more the participant has full control the lesser the higher the level of anxiety. This research also found that participants level of motivation affects their level of anxiety where the less the participant is motivated, the higher the level of anxiety.

### *Recommendations*

Since the level of anxiety is directly tied to the level of interpersonal relations in the organisations, the organisation should proactively influence and increase the level of interaction between employees. Among the strategies to be use is enhanced open plan offices, team building and quick resolution of conflict between employees. Offices should have a separate place for taking coffee and socialising during tea breaks. Employees who have less control over their lives have higher level of anxiety. This means that the organisation

should counsel employees and guide them to better self-control through trainings, counselling and even disciplinary process. Finally, the organisation should not only look for ways of motivating but also maintaining the motivation level of the employees. The less motivated the employees the further the level of anxiety.

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