

Personality types persistency, occupational consistency, and occupational satisfaction of graduates

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ABSTRACT

Personality type affects career path and can determine an individual's job satisfaction or dissatisfaction after graduation. In Kenya, high graduate unemployment has forced many to seek jobs unrelated to their qualifications or personalities. The purpose of the current study was to examine persistency of Holland's personality types, mediating effect of consistency of career choices, and the degree of occupational satisfaction, informed by Holland's theory. Longitudinal cohort research design was adopted, to access participants involved in a study conducted in 2012, from which 76 participants were accessed and provided required data. Data was collected using Holland's self-directed search 4th edition questionnaire and an interview schedule. Spearman's rank correlation was used to determine correlation between persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction. Logistic regression was used to check the mediating effects of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. Results of the study indicate that there was a positive significant relationship between persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction at $p < 0.05$; mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction was statistically significant at ($\beta = 0.254$, $p < 0.05$). This study highlights the importance of persistency of personality types and consistency of career choices in ensuring occupational satisfaction.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Graduates actively seek pre and post-graduation careers to develop and maintain a decent lifelong career against labor needs [1]. However, due to limited work opportunities globally, most graduates work in occupations that do not match their academic programs [2], [3]. Further, graduates are forced to accept available job opportunities, their formal qualification level notwithstanding [4]. Holland [5] argues that individuals search for work environments that suit their personalities typed. He further argues that there are specific vocational environments that every individual can fit into and that the vocational environments present the interests of an individual. Holland [5] proposes six personality types and six environments in a hexagonal model abridged as RIASEC, i.e., realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. Every individual tends to like or dislike certain activities related to certain careers. The activities that a person likes, thus, form their career interests, and the individual will spend time doing those activities. For example, a real person will be involved in career interests such as police officers and

engineering in a realistic environment. Personality types influence career choices. However, it is not known whether personality types endure over time or not and whether they influence occupational satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is positively related to employee retention, increased productivity and staff turnover [6]. This implies that satisfied employees are more likely to stay in an employment as compared to their counterparts who are unsatisfied. Thus strategies towards retention of employees should focus on employee satisfaction [7]. Satisfaction may also lead to increased productivity. Based on Holland's theory, individuals who are based in careers that match with their personality, and their area of study are more satisfied at work and are likely to be more productive. Consequently, personality types play an important role in career choice and development.

Research in the area of personality types and vocations choices and decisions has been carried out; for example, a study by Hussain *et al.* [8] indicated that personality traits influences the career decisions and choices, consequently personality types should be considered in career development [8]. In Europe, studies have indicated that some graduates work in occupations that are unrelated to their university areas of study thus leading to negative consequences such as low job satisfaction, low retention of employees and low productivity [2], [9]. Kemboi *et al.* [10] showed a relationship between vocational aspirations and personality types in that individuals choose careers that are related to their interest.

Currently, in Kenya, there are increased cases of joblessness, casualization of work, contracts and temporarily engagements which do not allow employees to enjoy the fundamental rights of an employee [11]. Furthermore, some graduates may opt for any career opportunity, some of which have little or no relationship with the degree program undertaken at the university. What is unknown is whether personality types and career choices endure or change as one advances in their profession. People spend much time in the process of career development and matching the careers with the matching work environment. Consequently, if a standard way of determining the personalities and the environments were in place, it would make the choice and employment of graduates easy. Thus, this study sought to examine the persistency of Holland's personality types and the degree of occupational satisfaction; and to determine the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction. The study focused on a group of graduates who were assessed using Holland typology in 2012 when they were in their 3rd year of study at a local university in Kenya, to determine if their personality types and occupational choices have persisted after graduation, and whether there is satisfaction in the occupations they are currently pursuing.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction

It has been suggested that personality traits are rigid, hard-to-change patterns of ideas, feelings, and behaviors that set one person apart [12]. However, research demonstrates that personality traits are dynamic features that vary throughout a person's lifetime [13]. Personality is initially conceptualized regarding temperaments and traits that indicate predominant personality stability across the lifespan. Wilks [14] investigated personality types' stability and personality change over time and revealed that other aspects of life might contribute to personality change, stability, temperament, and traits. Wilks [14] focused on other theories of personality, such as trait theories, rank-order models, and temperament theories, but needed to consider Holland's personality classification and the change or stability of the personality types and their impact on occupation.

Environmental factors and life events such as unemployment may have psychological implications on individuals, thus affecting personality types. Boyce *et al.* [15] investigated whether the personality traits of an individual change as a result of natural maturation or contextual or environmental processes, using the case of unemployment, an expected life event. The results indicated that the unemployed individuals experienced a significant change in their mean levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness compared to those who had remained in employment. Boyce *et al.* [15] used the five-factor model of personality, considered joblessness as the ecological factor affecting personality changes, and did not consider Holland's classification of personalities.

Although personality changes throughout life, youth and old age are when these changes are most visible, and societal pressures and experiences partly cause the shift [16]. The study by Boyce *et al.* [15] focused on the Big Five personality traits theory based in Germany and across all adulthoods. In addition, personality may vary for reasons other than inherent maturation, in that personality predicts the occurrence of several objective major life events (selection effects) and changes in response to experiencing these experiences (socialization effects). As one ages and matures, their personalities may alter, indicating developmental adaptations that enable people to adapt their everyday activities and behavior to the available resources [17], [18].

2.2. Consistency of Holland's work environments and occupational satisfaction

The consistency of an individual can be hypothesized to relate to persistence and achievement. Individuals with RIASEC scores better fitting Holland's circular structure can find matching/congruent environments [19]. This implies that an individual with consistent scores in the RIASEC model would better find an agreeing working or congruent environment. Further, Tracey *et al.* [19] argue that individuals with well-differentiated profiles and those with high scores inconsistency are likely to be clear in the selection of work environment and can find fitting environments.

Wolniak and Pascarella [20] argue that income is vital in determining job satisfaction, but it only explains some things that influence it. Wolniak and Pascarella [20] carried out a longitudinal study to investigate predictors of job satisfaction. They found that although income explains much of the variation in job satisfaction, it does not explain everything that brings about occupational satisfaction, which includes individuals' perceptions of congruence or other characteristics of the work experience. Wolniak and Pascarella [20] did not consider consistency as a factor influencing occupation satisfaction.

Occupational satisfaction denotes the extent to which a person likes their job, which depends on their subjective evaluation, either entirely or concerning specific attributes [21]. Thus, one employee may be more satisfied/dissatisfied than the other in the same job. Job satisfaction is positively influenced by salary and benefits, workplace environment, top management leadership, and individual amount of work at workplace [22]. Thus, institutional management should implement applicable leadership styles and establish operational policies and strategies to ensure employee satisfaction and increase productivity.

There are no studies found which investigated the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. Most studies from literature review have found that there is a relationship between personality types and job satisfaction. Consequently, the need to investigate the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction.

2.3. Theoretical review

Different theories have explained the concept of job satisfaction: Based on the Hollands typology theory, individuals remain in a given career based on whether the environment is congruent with their personality. As such, congruence influences an individual's decision to remain or change to a different occupation. However, in Herzberg's two-factor theory [23] other factors such as the job, recognition, achievement, responsibility, and progression influence an employee's retention rate. Job satisfaction or absence depends on the employee's perception of the degree to which his work delivers things that the employee desires [23]. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory [24], [25] argues that individuals want to increase the things they want to achieve and prioritize their needs according to their importance. According to the model, employees derive satisfaction if their priority needs are satisfied.

Personality traits are associated with job satisfaction [26]–[28]. These studies indicated that personality traits such as extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience, and conscientiousness have a significant positive relationship with job satisfaction. Thus, showing that personality traits influence the occupational satisfaction of employees. Identifying and understanding individuals' personality dimensions is vital for organizations [12], [24]. This is because the employee's satisfaction with the occupation influences their performance and overall performance since employees are the drivers of the organization's success. Hollands' theory of personality types indicates that individuals derive joy and satisfaction with their occupations when they find themselves in matching environments with their interest [29]–[32]. For example, a person with a social personality in a social environment (occupation).

2.4. Theoretical framework

This study is derived from a follow-up of a previous study [33] that applied Holland's theory [5] to examine the applicability of the assumptions that people fall into six distinct personality types that correspond to the work environment, which can be applied in a learning environment. Holland's theory [5] classified people into six categories: RIASEC as shown in Figure 1, and is indicated by three-letter codes that are measured by the use of self-directed search (SDS) activities.

The first letter indicates the personality type of the individual. Holland postulates that the six personality types match six environments, and a given personality type dominates each. This implies that individuals are better placed in matching working environments to permit them to apply their skills and abilities, show their attitudes and values, and assume agreeable circumstances and roles. This study, therefore, sought to advance and interrogate the applicability of Holland's assumptions longitudinally, to check on the persistency (endurance) of personality types, consistency of occupational choices and satisfaction with occupation ten years after graduation. The study hypothesized persistency as the state of an individual being in the same personality type over a period of time. Holland refers to consistency as the proximity between an individual's two dominant work environment. This study hypothesized consistency as

the endurance of an individual's work environment i.e. if an individual was in a realistic environment in 2012 and they have remained to be in realistic environment 10 years later, then they are consistent.

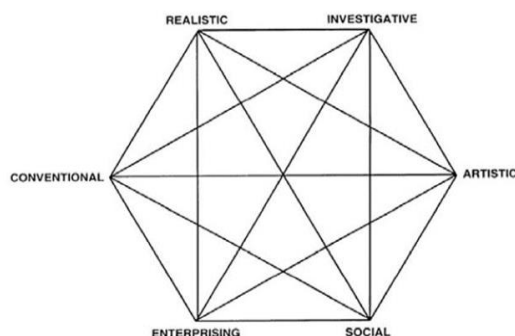


Figure 1. Holland's hexagonal model for personality types and vocational interests

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants and procedure

The study adopted a longitudinal cohort research design from which a cohort or a representative group was selected to participate [34], [35]. This study is a follow-up of Muriithi study [33] that was carried out in 2012 on participants who were in the university as students pursuing various degree programs, thus, this study was conducted as a follow-up study ten years later. According to Super's model of career stages, the age period between 25-44 years lies in the second career development stage known as the establishment stage [36].

The researcher conducted a study on all respondents who had completed the SDS questionnaire in 2012 and had indicated contacts, emails, or phone numbers. From the 2012 study, the researcher contacted all the 112 participants who had completed the SDS questionnaire. And only 76 respondents provided adequate data by actively participating in this study which was conducted in 2023 which was their second time to interact with same SDS tool. Thus, this tool was used to provide data for the past (2012) and the current study (2023). Qualitative and quantitative data was collected and hence the study employed mixed methods in order to provide an in-depth and complete perspective on persistency of personality types, consistency of career choices and occupational satisfaction. Qualitative data provides more insights into some problems that are difficult to quantify by numerical measurement, thus enhancing quantitative data [37].

3.2. Instruments

Primary data was collected using an adapted SDS questionnaire which provided respondents' demographic data, personality types and levels of occupational satisfaction of the individuals. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A comprised the respondent's demographic data. Section B focused on the personality types, namely: realistic (R), investigative (I), artistic (A), social (S), enterprising (E), conventional (C). The respondents were required to check the boxes in the SDS test for "L" (Likes) and "D" (Dislikes), the totals were recorded in the boxes shown on the test. The researcher then counted the Ls, and picked the three top scores, e.g., RIA, whereby the highest, R was the profile with the highest score, thus the individual's personality. Section C comprised statements that described the respondent's feelings concerning their current occupation. Data was gathered using a Likert scale, containing scores ranging from 1-5. The Likert scale contained statements to assess the respondents' feelings regarding their occupation satisfaction which were scored at five levels. The item contained a five-point scale, where 5=Strongly agree (SA), 4=Agree (A), 3=Undecided (U), 2=Disagree (D), and 1=Strongly disagree (SD). The expected outcomes were either the respondents were satisfied with their occupation, or dissatisfied with their occupations. Therefore, the scores were dichotomized to have two categories of levels of satisfaction i.e. scores between 1-2.4 on average were considered dissatisfied, while scores between 2.5-5 on average were considered satisfied with the occupation.

The questionnaire provided standard guidelines to all the participants. Moreover, an interview guide was used to gather data to give an in-depth insight into the nature of the work the participants were involved in. A set of five questions guided the researcher to gain insights from the respondents. The researcher targeted all the respondents for interviewing and collected data until the data was saturated [38], [39].

3.3. Data analysis

Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and the results were presented by use of percentages and frequencies. The relationship between persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction was analyzed using spearman's ranking correlation. A logistic regression analysis was employed to establish the relationship between personality types, consistency of career choices, and occupational satisfaction. Due to the data's binary nature, logistic regression was the appropriate model for analyzing such data. A model specified in (1) was applied.

$$\log \left(\frac{p}{1-p} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

Where, p is the probability of interest/success, $1 - p$ is the probability of failure, β_0 is the intercept, $\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_n$ are the regression coefficients of respective independent variables, X_1 is the personality types, X_2 is the consistency of personality types, X_3 is the work environment, ϵ is the error term.

To find out the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction, the researcher followed Baron and Kenny's four steps [40] as shown in Figure 2. The mediation variable is a full mediator if the relationship between independent and dependent variables will not differ from zero after the mediation variable is included in the model. It is a partial mediator if the relation between the independent and dependent variables is significantly smaller but greater than zero when the mediator variable is included.

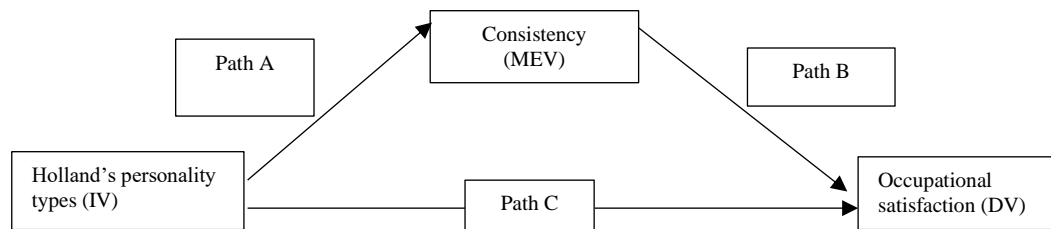


Figure 2. Mediating relationship between the IV and DV

The following four steps were taken:

- Step 1: demonstrate a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Path C in Figure 2). It is represented by (2).

$$DV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (IV) + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

- Step 2: the independent variable is related to the mediator. The researcher treated the mediator variable as a dependent variable in this case. The researcher tested Path A as shown in Figure 2 using (3).

$$MEV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (IV) + \epsilon \quad (3)$$

- Step 3: the mediator variable relates to the dependent variable (Path B in Figure 2). It is established by controlling for the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable, as shown in (4).

$$DV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (MEV) + \epsilon \quad (4)$$

- Step 4: the strength of the relation between the independent and the dependent variable is significantly reduced when the mediator is added to the model (Path C in Figure 2), as shown in (5).

$$DV = \beta_0 + \beta_1 (IV) + \beta_2 (MEV) + \epsilon \quad (5)$$

Qualitative data analysis involves obtaining detailed information about the topic under study and establishing patterns and trends from the information collected [39]. The researcher transcribed all interviews, organized them into meaningful categories and grouped them into related codes. The coded information was then organized into themes and presented in a narrative form. The qualitative data analysis enhances and enriches the quantitative data analysis [41].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Demographic results

4.1.1. Age

Respondents indicated their age and the data was presented as shown in Table 1. Results in Table 1, most respondents (80.3%) were in the age bracket of 30-34 years, 18.1% were in the age bracket of 35-39 years, and one was above 40 years. This implies that the respondents have been in the work environment for about ten years. Furthermore, the respondents were undertaking their undergraduate degree ten years ago within the age bracket of 20-30 years.

Table 1. Respondents by age

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage (%)
30-34 years	61	80.3
35-39 years	14	18.4
40 years and above	1	1.3
Total	76	100.0

4.1.2. Respondents' gender

Respondents indicated their gender and the data was presented as shown in Figure 3. From this figure, a majority (53.9%) of the respondents were female, while 46.1% were male, indicating a 7.8% gender difference. Majority of the respondents were female and were also willing to participate in the study.

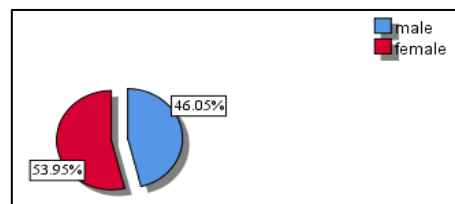


Figure 3. Distribution of respondents by gender

4.2. Descriptive results of persistency of Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction

4.2.1. Occupation satisfaction

Respondents indicated their level of occupational satisfaction; the data was presented in Figure 4. From this figure, most respondents (90.8%) were satisfied with their career occupations, while 9.2% were dissatisfied. This implies that the respondents were happy with their careers 10 years after their graduation. The results also indicate an increase in satisfaction from 67.1% and a decrease in dissatisfaction levels 32.9% from the 2012 study. This implies that the respondents were more satisfied at work than they were with their career choice at college level.

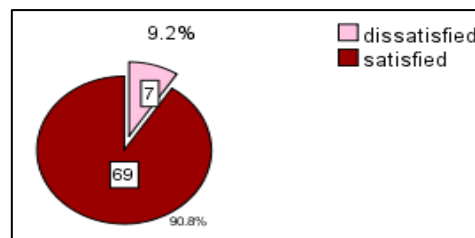


Figure 4. Respondents' degree of occupational satisfaction

4.2.2. Persistency of personality types

Persistency was derived from comparing the dominant codes of the personality types tested in 2012 and the current personality types. To achieve this, a comparison was made between the personality types tested in 2012 and those tested in 2023. The results of the analysis were as shown in Table 2. The results in Table 2 revealed that most respondents' personality types (82.9%) were persistent, while 17.1% were not.

Further, the results suggest that more females, 59% are likely to be persistent compared to males, 41%. In addition, 69% of the cases that were not persistent were male, while 31% were female. These findings denote that the female respondents were more persistent than the male respondents.

Table 2. Persistency of personality types

Persistency	Gender		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Not persistent	9 (69.2)	4 (30.8)	13 (17.1)
Persistent	26 (41.3)	37 (58.7)	63 (82.9)
Total	35 (46)	41 (54)	76 (100)

4.2.3. Persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction

The study sought to find out the persistency of personality types and the occupational satisfaction and the results were presented in Figure 5. From the figure, a majority of the respondents (63) were persistent, while 13 were not. Out of the 63 persistent individuals, a majority (57) were satisfied. At the same time, six were dissatisfied with their occupations, and out of the 13 individuals who were not persistent, one was dissatisfied with their occupation, while 12 were satisfied. These results reveal that a majority of the respondents who were persistent were satisfied with their occupations, and a minority of the respondents who were not persistent were also dissatisfied with their occupations.



Figure 5. Persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction

4.3. Relationship between persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction

The relationship was defined using the Spearman rho ranking correlation since the requirements were ranked. The results were presented in Table 3. The table indicates that there exists a high positive significant ($R=0.701$, $P<0.05$) relationship between the persistency of Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction. This implies that individuals whose personalities endure over time are more likely to be satisfied in their occupations as compare to the individuals whose personality types are not persistent.

Table 3. Correlation between persistency and occupational satisfaction

		Persistency	Occupational satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Persistency	Correlation coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	76
	Occupational satisfaction	Correlation coefficient	.701**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	76

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

4.4. Mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between Hollands personality types and occupational satisfaction

4.4.1. Relationship between consistency of academic environments and work environments

Consistency of the work environments/jobs was investigated. The distribution of respondents according to academic environments is shown in Table 4. The table also compares academic environments 2012 (degree programs) and 2023 current work environments (jobs). From Table 4, a majority of the respondents (16%) moved from the Investigative field to other fields. This could result from unemployment, lack of job opportunities, and personality change. This may explain why the number of enterprising increased

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by 12%, whereby the respondents became enterprising to meet life demands financially. Convention and Enterprising had the highest increase of 13% and 12%, respectively. This implies that the respondents moved from other work environments to these two fields.

To find out whether there was a match or a mismatch between the academic environment and the work environment, the dominant codes of the academic environment in 2012 and that of the work environment in 2023 were compared, then categorized into the low middle or high consistency, as proposed by Holland, as shown in Figure 6. The figure indicates that a majority (78.9%) of the respondents were consistent, while 13.2% had middle consistency and 7.9 were low in consistency.

Table 4. Comparison between 2012 academic environments and 2023 work environments

Environments	Frequency (%)		Variance (%)
	2012	2023	
Realistic	6 (7.9)	5 (6.6)	-1.3
Investigative	21 (27.6)	9 (11.8)	-15.8
Artistic	6 (7.9)	5 (6.6)	-1.3
Social	32 (42.1)	27 (35.5)	-6.6
Enterprising	10 (13.2)	19 (25.0)	11.8
Conventional	1 (1.3)	11 (14.5)	13.2
Total	76 (100)	76 (100)	

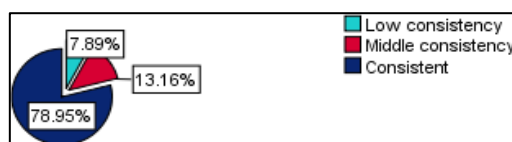


Figure 6. Consistency of academic environments and work environments

4.4.2. Consistency and occupational satisfaction

The consistency of career choices (academic environment and work environment) was investigated in relation to occupational satisfaction, as shown in Figure 7. From this figure, a majority of the respondents were satisfied with their occupation and consistent (55), and 14 respondents were not consistent. For those who were dissatisfied, 5 were consistent and only two were inconsistent. The results imply that majority of the consistent respondents were also satisfied with their occupations.

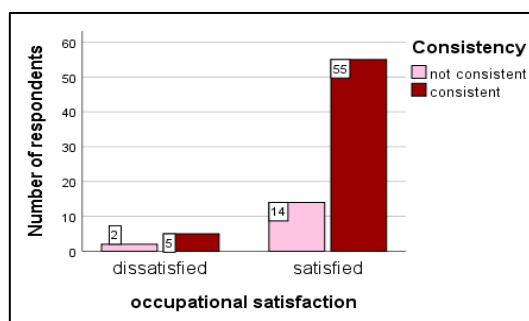


Figure 7. Consistency and occupational satisfaction

4.4.3. The mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction

The effect was determined using Baron and Kenny approach [40]. The respective equations were analyzed using logistic regression. The first step was to determine the effect of personality types (IV) on occupational satisfaction (DV), and it was presented in Table 5. From the table, personality types have a positive significant effect on occupational satisfaction ($B=0.127$, $P<0.05$). Thus, the first condition was fulfilled as per Baron and Kenny approach [40]. The second step was to determine the effect of personality types (IV) on consistency (MEV). The results were presented in Table 6. The table shows that, personality types have a positive significant effect ($B=0.212$, $P<0.05$) on consistency. This implies that majority of the

respondents were consistent in their career choices, and personality types influence career choices. The second condition was fulfilled. The third step, was to determine the effect of consistency (MEV) on occupational satisfaction (DV). The results of the analysis are as shown in Table 7.

Table 7 shows that consistency has a positive significant effect ($B = 0.438$, $P < 0.05$) on occupational satisfaction. This implies that the more consistent an individual is, the more satisfied they are with their occupation and vice versa. The third step was fulfilled. The fourth step was to investigate the statistical effect of Holland's personality types and consistency on occupational satisfaction. In this case, the mediation variable is a full mediator if the relationship between independent and dependent variables will not differ from zero after the mediation variable is included in the model. It is a partial mediator if the relation between the independent and dependent variables is significantly smaller but greater than zero when the mediator variable is included. The results were presented in Tables 8 and 9.

From Table 8, using Nagelkerke R Square (0.891) indicates that the model is capable of explaining up to 89.1% of variations when predicting occupational satisfaction using consistency and personality types. Since it is high, the model is adequate, thus it was used and data was presented in Table 9. The table shows that personality types and consistency have a positive significant effect on occupational satisfaction ($B = 0.245$, $B = 0.076$, $p < 0.05$). Comparing the beta values shows that the beta value is reduced after controlling the factor mediator. This means there is a partial mediation, thus indicating that consistency partially mediates the relationship between Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction.

Table 5. Regression analysis model between personality types and occupational satisfaction

	B	S.E	Wald	df	Sig	Exp (B)
(Constant)	.373	.082	20.69	1	.000	1.453
Personality types	.127	.019	44.62	1	.000	1.135

Table 6. Regression analysis model between personality types and consistency

	B	S.E	Wald	df	Sig	Exp (B)
(Constant)	.368	.073	15.52	1	.000	1.467
Personality types	.212	.023	84.82	1	.000	1.236

Table 7. Regression analysis model between consistency and occupational satisfaction

	B	S.E	Wald	df	Sig	Exp (B)
(Constant)	.562	.058	93.89	1	.000	1.754
Consistency	.438	.065	45.43	1	.000	1.549

Table 8. Model summary for the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between Hollands personality types and occupational satisfaction

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R square	Nagelkerke R square
1	6.730 ^a	.409	.891

Table 9. Regression analysis model between personality types and occupational satisfaction with the presence of consistency

	B	S.E	Wald	df	Sig	Exp (B)
(Constant)	.397	.080	24.60	1	.000	1.487
Consistency	.245	.091	7.23	1	.001	1.278
Personality types	.076	.026	8.32	1	.002	1.078

4.5. Qualitative analysis of the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction

Respondents were interviewed about their current job and interests and whether they would change their careers. Respondent 007 studied an academic program in the social environment but would like to change to an investigative field which may lead to inconsistency between the studied degree and work environments. Respondent 007 had the following to say:

"Yes, I would want to change my career. I studied for a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work because it was my only option. I tried changing it, but I was not successful. I am already employed, but now I am looking for a scholarship to go back and study a course in medical laboratory technician because that is what I would like to be."

In addition, some respondents are still changing from one career field to another in search of stable careers or employment in their respective fields of study due to the challenging economic times. For example, when asked about what influence the decision to their current occupation, Respondent 005 said:

“I studied education, early childhood specialization. As you know, early childhood education was devolved to the County Governments. I have been following up on their employment opportunities. My family requires me to provide upkeep, so I had to look for an alternative job. I picked whatever came my way just to put food on the table. I am in the transport industry at the moment.”

Respondent 005 studied a program in a social environment but is currently in a realistic environment due to a lack of employment. They still need to study to earn daily bread and support their family.

On the other hand, mismatch between work and personality may lead to inconsistency, and vice-versa is also true. This means that individuals may find themselves in a field that does not match their personalities, thus moving to a matching field. Respondent 001 was asked what were their career interests during the selection of the degree program. The respondents switched from engineering to business to find a fit in the work environment.

“I am okay with my career. My first degree was in engineering. It was not my choice; my parents dictated the program. I went back to school and studied for a bachelor of commerce, which was my interest. Recently I started my own business, and I love what I do.”

Respondent 001 moved from a realistic environment (engineering) to an enterprising environment (business) in a move to get a match between the work environment and their personality; consequently, this implies that the fit plays a significant role in the consistency of career choice. The lack of consistency may compel an individual to quit a particular work environment in search of an environment that matches their skills and abilities since the mismatch brings feelings of dissatisfaction. For example, Respondent 005, who studied a Bachelor's degree in education and ended up in transport, mentioned that they were unhappy and willing to return to the teaching career if presented with the opportunity.

The respondents who were in consistent work environments were happy. Respondent 020, who undertook a degree program in a social academic field, worked in a social environment and was happy. Respondent 001 who studied Bachelor of Commerce (enterprising academic field) and was managing their own business (enterprising environment) indicated that they were happy with their career. Respondent 020 had the following to say:

“I studied for a bachelor's degree in education and am currently teaching in one of the secondary schools. I love my job, and I am happy working in this school. I would not change my career for anything, I love that I mold students into great people in society, and I love my profession.”

4.6. Discussion

This study investigates the persistency of personality types and occupational satisfaction; the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. Based on the findings, there is a positive significant ($R=0.701$, $P<0.05$) relationship between persistency of Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction. This implies that Holland's personality types persist over time and influences satisfaction positively. Majority of the respondents' personality types had persisted 10 years later, in that their personality types were still the same as the ones tested in 2012. This supports the argument that personality types of an individual endure over time to a great extent for some individuals, but for others, they keep changing [15], [23], [42]. Wilks [14] argues that personality is initially conceptualized regarding temperaments and traits that indicate predominant personality stability across the lifespan. Personality traits in adulthood may signify stable inter-individual variances, while the contextual perspective stresses personality changes as a response to life experiences, such as environmental factors [15], maturity of individuals [17], and role changes [42]. Individuals who were not persistent may have changed their personality types due to adaptations to their environments that come with age [15].

In addition, the findings revealed that persistency influences individuals' occupational satisfaction. This implies that the persistence of Holland's personality types influences how employees feel about their job. The more persistent they are, the more satisfied they are. Various factors may have contributed to the persistence of the personality types. This may include the congruence of the individuals with their work environment [5] and the fact that personality types are stable personality traits across the lifespan [14].

On the second objective, the study investigated the mediating effect of consistency on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. Based on the findings, consistency

influences the relationship between Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction. The findings indicated that consistency had a significant positive effect ($p < 0.05$) on the relationship between Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction. This denotes that the endurance of career choices influences an individual's satisfaction levels in that a majority of the consistent cases were also satisfied with their occupations. Thus, consistency of work environment plays an important role in employee's satisfaction.

The findings of the study indicate that majority of the respondents were consistent with their careers, implying that there was a match between their academic and work environment. This implies that they had not changed their interests and that they were still in the same environment as per their academic degree of study. This indicates that there was a match between the skills learnt and the work environment. The results of this study support the assumptions of Hollands theory in various aspects.

Majority of the consistent respondents were also satisfied with their occupations. This implies that, consistency influenced the individual level of satisfaction. A mismatch between academic degrees and available jobs may result to the waste of the human capital accrued by the graduate during study years leading to undesirable impacts, such as wage penalties and lower occupational satisfaction [9]. Consequently, a match between a job and the academic degree may lead to dissatisfaction with the career since the interests do not match [8], [43]–[45]. As such, a mismatch may compel the individual to change their careers in search for occupational satisfaction. The minority of the respondents who were dissatisfied, cited other causes that have been found to influence the satisfaction of employees by researchers such as incongruence [5] low pay, poor working conditions, lack of career progression, and personality types [22], [23], [43], [46].

However, some individuals were interested in moving to other careers of their interests. These findings support previous studies that explain why graduates find themselves in mismatching careers with their academic background in search for work environments that fit their personalities [14], [18]. As adults, the respondents have moved to more congruent work environments, which explains the increase in those in conventional work environments from one in 2012 to 11 in 2023. The stability of personalities as a result of the maturity of the respondents may be a contributing factor whereby respondents get stability in careers as they mature with age [17], [18], [42], [46]. Thus, individuals may change careers with changes in their developmental stages to adulthood. Difficult economic circumstance may push some respondents to switch careers in quest of steady jobs in their field of study [2], thus bringing about inconsistency.

Overall, while previous studies emphasized on the direct link between personality types and occupational satisfaction [10], [33]; emoluments, leadership and occupational satisfaction [22], this study underscores the crucial role played by persistency of personality types and consistency of career choices on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. The positive effect of persistency and consistency of career choices influences employee's satisfaction leading to increased productivity of employees, thus bringing about business continuity of an organization. It also ensures that individuals are placed in the correct work environment.

The results of this study have significant implications for educational policymakers and employers. These study suggests that Holland classification [5] can be effectively applied to a Kenyan population, to categorize individuals into six categories. The classification can aid in aligning individuals with suitable career choices. Therefore, the Ministry of Education should support schools and higher education institutions in providing career guidance and counseling using these personality classifications. This approach will help students make career choices based on informed decisions because career choices made in early stages persist over time. Additionally, employers could use these classifications to match employees' roles with their interests during recruitment and employment, alongside considering academic qualifications and job responsibilities. This will ensure that employees are assigned roles based on their interests and abilities.

Like other research studies, this study has limitations such as long duration between the initial and the current study, and the small sample size. Based on the limitations, further research is recommended to carry out similar study at intervals of five years to provide the trends in persistency of personality types and consistency of career choices over time. This will ensure that the researcher is in contact with the respondents. In addition, a similar study with a larger population is recommended over a period of time to ascertain the reliability and validity of the Hollands SDS tool among the Kenyan population. Further research could also be conducted to ascertain applicability of Hollands classification during recruitment by employers.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigated the relationship between persistency of Holland's personality types and occupational satisfaction. Persistency was found to have a positive significant relationship on the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. This suggests that the presence of persistency is crucial in ensuring occupational satisfaction amongst the employees. Individuals whose personality types have persisted over time have stabilized in their interests and abilities, thus leading to occupational satisfaction. In addition, the study investigated the relationship between personality types, occupational

consistency and satisfaction. Consistency of career choices was found to partially mediate the relationship between personality types and occupational satisfaction. This suggests that, the more consistent individuals are on their careers choices the more satisfied they are. When organizations recruit individuals who have persisted in their careers, they will feel more satisfied about their careers, thus increasing productivity. Understanding these relationships can help educational policymakers, career counsellors and employers to create policies and environments that pay attention to individual's personality types and career interests.




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