

EFFECT OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

The main objective of this study was to assess the influence of employee work-life balance on the performance of employees in public universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. While in the recent past, public universities have been in the limelight for the challenges orchestrated by declined revenues, little has been mentioned regarding the employees, particularly their work-life balance. The study specifically sought to assess the effect of flexible work arrangements and organisational support on employee performance in public universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study was anchored on the resource-based view theory. Through a descriptive research design, the study targeted the administrative staff in Nairobi's three major public universities (University of Nairobi, Kenyatta University, and Technical University of Kenya). A sample of 356 senior, middle and administrative employees was selected through a sampling formula. The respondents were surveyed using a questionnaire, which was first pilot-tested using 10% of the sample size before being administered to the main sample size to ensure its validity and reliability. The collected data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The data was presented using tables. The findings revealed that flexible working arrangements and organizational support played an integral role in determining university employee performance. The study recommends that management in public universities in Nairobi City County embrace flexible working arrangements to enhance employee performance. The management of public universities in Nairobi City County has the duty of ensuring that the wellness of their employees is upheld through supporting wellness programs.

Keywords: *Work-Life Balance, Flexible Work Arrangements, Organisational Support, Employee Performance*

INTRODUCTION

In the wake of the 21st century, human resources are emerging among the crucial organizational resources that significantly promote effectiveness, efficiency and sustainable performance. Modern organisations are developing strategies to strengthen, support and enhance the effectiveness of human resources to reap the benefits. One of the emerging issues in human resources is work-life balance, which most researchers in HRM uphold as a key driver of human resource effectiveness and employee performance (Shafaghi & Adeel, 2022). Promoting employee performance has been the central focus for every modern organization seeking

competitiveness. Through employee performance, organisations can meet customer needs through enhanced employee commitment.

Embracing critical human resource strategies that enhance employee productivity has seen many organisations achieve better results quickly. According to Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2018), employee performance is simply the workforce's ability to commit to meeting organisational goals by actively playing their role. On the other hand, Pawirosumarto, Sarjana, and Muchtar (2017) define employee performance as the extent to which employees meet their targets in an organisation by fully utilising their skills and competencies. Therefore, embracing methods and techniques to enhance employee performance is essential for organisations to stir their performance. Paais and Pattiruhu (2020) allude that employee performance depends on how willing an employee is to meet the firm's goals with minimal supervision. This can be achieved by enabling the employees to focus on their individual goals and enhance their morale in meeting the organisational goals.

According to Soomro, Breitenecker, and Shah (2018), work-life balance has emerged in the modern business world as a concept where work-life and personal life are balanced. A work-life balance is when employees equally prioritise their work and personal lives. Ensuring work-life balance is one of the essential strategies organisations use to enhance employee commitment, performance and job satisfaction. According to Brough, Timms, Chan, Hawkes, and Rasmussen (2020), in Chicago, most employees have regarded work-life balance as an essential driver of their satisfaction, more than rewards and recognition. Mahmudah and Subroto (2021) reported that over 70% of millennial workers preferred work-life balance over increased salaries, promotions, and financial rewards. In India, Rashmi and Kataria (2023) alluded that most HR managers faced challenges balancing employees' work and personal lives, owing to the growing need for committed employees and increased family responsibilities.

According to Irawanto, Novianti, and Roz (2021), the competing and multi-faced demands between work and home responsibilities have assumed increased relevance for employees in Indian companies as a result of demographic and workplace changes, such as an increase in dual-career workers (employees with household responsibilities), transformation in family structures (a rise in the number of single parents), a growing reluctance to accept the longer-working hours' culture and technological advancements. In response to these changes and the conflict they generate among individuals' multiple roles, organisations are increasingly pressured to design a wide range of practices to facilitate employees' efforts to fulfil their employment and their commitments (Lestari et al., 2021).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, work-life balance has been a subject of concern, especially among the biggest companies in the region; both the private and public sectors are facing challenges in balancing the work and social life of the employees. Kumar, Sarkar, and Chahar (2023) indicate that despite companies in Nigeria having the desire to enhance employee satisfaction and performance through work-life balance, the dynamism in the operating environment has forced them to cost-save by scaling down the workforce and over-utilizing the few employees. This makes work-life balance unachievable, thus affecting the productivity of employees (Oyewobi et al. 2019). According to Bataineh (2019), employees in some South African organisations have a high prevalence of stress and work-related health issues because of an imbalance between work life and personal life. Employees' productivity is mainly determined by their satisfaction and mental stability (Akom et al., 2021). Limited time for personal life matters, and the employees' mental stability, level of concentration and satisfaction decline, thus affecting their performance.

According to Stamm, Bernhard, Hameister, and Miller (2023), flexible work arrangements and employee wellness programs are essential to enhance employee work-life balance.

In Kenya, work-life balance is becoming increasingly challenging, and organisations strive to balance employees' work and family obligations. Several studies have portrayed the extent to which Kenyan organisations have embraced work-life balance among their workforces, and most of the studies reveal that most Kenyan organizations are yet to uphold work-life balance among their employees effectively. According to Kamwenji, Ngugi, and Kamaara (2022), while work-life balance has been proven to play an instrumental role in steering employee performance and organisational success, many Kenyan organisations have been reluctant to embrace work-life balance, thus depriving themselves of the advantages of a productive workforce. Kamwenji *et al.* (2022) addressed work-life balance in terms of flexible work schedules and friendly working conditions, and the context was in the state corporations in Kenya.

The public universities have been essential in offering quality higher education across and out of the country. Their immense contribution to the country's socio-economic development has been vast. The universities are established as parastatals, which are state-owned entities aimed at delivering the higher education mandate on behalf of the government. There are 31 chartered public universities in Kenya, against the 18 chartered private universities (CUE, 2020). These universities have thousands of graduates yearly and join the labour market to contribute to economic development. However, the effectiveness of these graduates highly depends on the quality of education they receive, which, on the other hand, is determined by the productivity and performance of the staff members (Changamu & Ondiba, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Currently, employees are undergoing tremendous challenges, both personal and work-related. Financial constraints, stress, ill health, strained family relations and lack of concentration have been reported among employees, thus affecting their satisfaction and work productivity (Campo *et al.*, 2021). The Cambridge Centre for International Human Resource Management (CIHRM) (2022) reported that over 38% of employees record poor performance due to increased stress and poor commitment, mainly driven by increased family-work conflicts. This eventually affects the organisational output, thus slowing economic growth and development (Human Resource Management Service - HRMS, 2022). According to Muasya and Nzengya (2021), over 40% of employees who leave their jobs voluntarily are mainly driven by unmet social needs, which could be achieved with a work-life balance.

In Kenya, it is reported that over 60% of organisations do not comply with work-life balance aspects of human resources, resulting in declined employee job commitment and over-employee performance. Long working hours and failure to allow free time have left employees with minimal time to commit to their social and family issues, resulting in work-family conflicts. Accumulation of unresolved social matters, unmet targets and family obligations affect the employees' commitment to their jobs (Mmakwe & Ojiabo, 2018; Tetteh & Attiogbe, 2019). Organisations have faced the dilemma of enhancing employee productivity and upholding their work-life balance. While HR managers recognise the need for work-life balance in employee satisfaction, their concern remains on whether, with increased personal life timelines, there will be a decline in employee productivity (Perera & Jayarathna, 2022). According to Gitongu, Kingi, and Uzel (2016), while employees would be committed to their jobs when allowed time to focus on their personal life matters, this declines over time as attention is drawn away from work to their social life and personal commitments. Orogbu, Onyeiugbe, and Chukwuemeka (2015)

indicate that modern-day managers are sceptical of work-life balance, particularly the use of modern technology, such as remote work, to enhance it.

In Kenya, Public Universities, like other institutions, require a robust, committed and productive workforce to achieve their short-term and long-term goals. In the recent past, however, available evidence shows that there has been a continued decline in the performance of public universities in the country in terms of satisfaction of customers (learners), retention of staff and efficient and effective service delivery (CUE, 2018). According to the Kenya University Staff Union (KUSU) (2020), over 12 public universities have seen a surge in employee turnover and increased employee strikes over remuneration and good working conditions. According to the Commission for University Education – CUE (2021), 81% of public universities recorded between 15% and 30% employee turnover from 2018 to 2020.

The high employee turnover and frequent strikes in public universities have notably impacted Kenya's economy, particularly in relation to the education sector's contribution to GDP. Public universities play a significant role in developing skilled labour, which is essential for driving economic growth. The disruptions caused by strikes and high turnover rates have slowed the progression of education, resulting in a less prepared workforce. This has reduced productivity in sectors dependent on highly educated professionals, such as engineering, healthcare, and technology. According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), the education sector's contribution to GDP declined by approximately 3.5% between 2018 and 2020, partially attributed to the instability in public universities (KNBS, 2021). Furthermore, the frequent strikes have discouraged potential international students and investments in research, further limiting economic growth in related fields.

A study by Tuwei (2017) on the effect of work-life balance on employee productivity revealed that while work-life balance may enhance employee commitment in the short term, over time, their commitment reduces, affecting their performance due to divided attention between work and personal commitments. Murithi (2017), while assessing work-life balance and employee productivity in Kenyan universities, established that work-life balance significantly contributes to employee performance. While focusing on state-owned commissions, Nasimiya and Egessa (2021) revealed that work-life balance had a short-term impact on employee productivity. Tamunomiebi and Oyibo (2020) indicate that while organisations are focusing on remote working as a remedy to work-life balance, the inability to supervise employees working remotely may result in poor performance even with enhanced work-life balance.

However, the studies have focused on different contexts. Moreover, it remains unclear whether work-life balance contributes to employee performance since the available literature shows mixed results. It, therefore, remains integral to affirm this in a Kenyan context, particularly among public universities. Hence, the study sought to establish the effect of work-life balance on employee performance in public universities in Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

- i. Assess the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee performance in public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.
- ii. Examine the effect of organisational support on employee performance in public universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Resource-Based View Theory

The resource-based theory was first introduced by Penrose (1959) and has extensively been elucidated by Barney (2001) to explain how organisations can strategically place themselves in the market by utilising available resources. The theory address the essence of work-life balance through flexible working arrangements and organizational support to meet employees social and work-related needs. It emphasises that the firm's resources are the fundamental determinants of organisational performance. It adopts two assumptions when analysing sources of competitive advantage (Barney, 1997; Peteraf, 1993). This theory recognises human capital as the most valuable, non-substitutable and imperfectly imitable resource a firm can utilise to achieve organisational productivity and competitiveness. Resource-based theory is linked to human capital theory in that: - they both emphasise that investment in people adds value to the firm (Loasby, 2002).

Work-life balance is upheld as a significant driver of the commitment of employees and their ability to continue to commit to the goals and objectives of the firm. Therefore, enhancing the employee's ability to work and achieve the organisational goals starts with giving them adequate time to focus on their personal life issues (Liao et al., 2019). As RBV theory would suggest, this is one way that the unique resources (employee skills) can be enhanced and promoted for effectiveness. According to Le, Newman, Menzies, Zheng, and Fermelis (2020), offering flexible work arrangements and embracing employee wellness programs would vigorously promote employees' commitment to their jobs. This will be a unique focus that could easily be the point of competitiveness for the organisations. The study, therefore, utilises the Resource-Based View theory to support the role of flexible work arrangements and organizational support as essential aspects of employee work-life balance in promoting productivity.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the key independent variables drawn from employee work life balance and the dependent variable which is the performance of employees. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for the study.

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

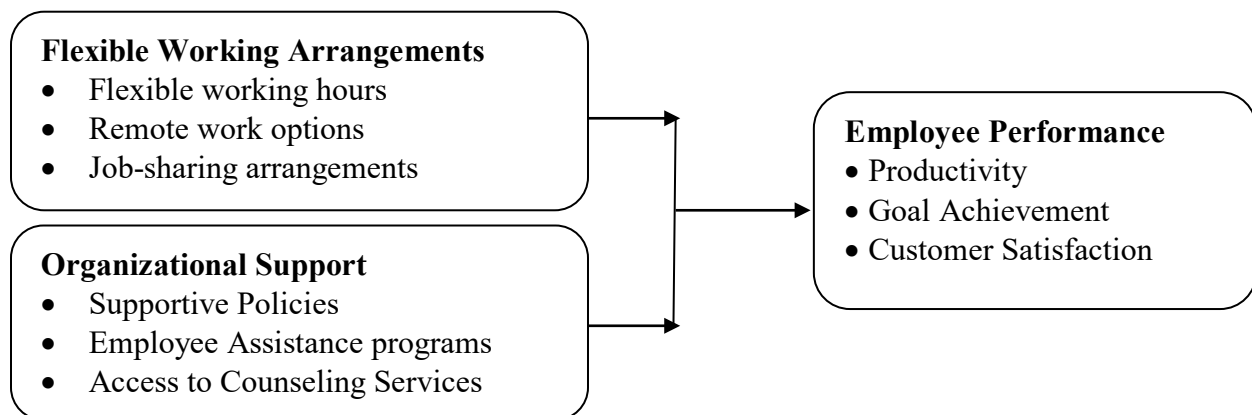


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Literature Review

Flexible Work Arrangements

Work-life balance is about having employees focus on their life commitments and having the organisation's operations proceed as usual, even when employees are not working. As described by De Tiroina and Mahdani (2021), one way of achieving this is through flexible work arrangements. Studies carried out on work-life balance and employee performance have tried to establish the role of flexible work arrangements on employees' productivity. Weerasinghe and Jayawardana (2020), while assessing the role of work-life balance on employee productivity, focused on flexible work arrangements and how they played a role in enhancing job performance. The study surveyed 180 employees drawn from the service industry in Sri Lanka. The findings revealed that flexible work arrangements that allowed the employees to work based on their availability and have flexible work hours enhanced their performance. According to Weerasinghe and Jayawardana (2020), a flexible working arrangement will give employees ample time to work and focus on their commitments.

Darko-Asumadu, Sika-Bright, and Osei-Tutu (2018) studied the role of flexible work arrangements in achieving employee work-life balance and promoting productivity among banking organisations in Ghana. The study utilised a cross-sectional research design and targeted 209 respondents drawn from various departments in the banking industry in Ghana. The findings revealed that a well-aligned working climate that allowed employees to be flexible and work based on the job requirements was essential in promoting employee work-life balance. According to Darko-Asumadu, Sika-Bright, and Osei-Tutu (2018), because of more flexible work and commitment by the management to make the working conditions and policies more flexible, employee productivity was enhanced, and this contributed to better organisational performance.

Okemwa (2016) studied the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee commitment in organisations in Kenya. The study focused on nurses in public hospitals in Kenya. Using a cross-sectional survey design, the study targeted 1217 nurses in 27 level 4 and 5 public hospitals and surveyed 364 nurses. The findings revealed that through a flexible working arrangement, the employees had time to focus on their social responsibilities; hence, they were more committed to their jobs while at work. Okemwa (2016) concluded that a flexible working environment where employees had reasonable control over their working hours contributed to commitment and productivity.

Muchiti and Gachunga (2015) assessed the influence of employee work-life balance on employee productivity in Milimani Courts in Kenya. Their study sought to establish the role of flexible work arrangements on employee productivity. Through a descriptive survey research design, the authors surveyed employees in the administration of Milimani Law Courts in Kenya. The findings revealed that the employees' productivity was enhanced through flexible working arrangements due to full attention and dedication, where the employees had adequate time to focus on their responsibilities and work responsibilities. According to Muchiti and Gachunga (2015), employees with greater control over work schedules are likelier to show increased engagement, commitment, retention and job satisfaction. They further established that flexible work arrangements enable employees to harmonise their work and family responsibilities.

Organizational Support

One of the essential aspects of work-life balance is wellness programs organised by organisations to promote the employees' psychosocial and mental health. These programs provide employees with off-the-work interactions that bring them together and boost their social

life (Nakrošienė et al., 2019). As one of the instrumental ways through which employee work-life balance can be achieved, employee wellness programs have been studied by various authors to establish how they influence employee productivity. Mustajab, Bauw, Rasyid, Irawan, Akbar, and Hamid (2020) studied the influence of employee wellness programs such as working from home on employee performance and firm competitiveness. Their study focused on social programs organised by organisational management whose mandates are to bring the employees closer to each other and boost their social skills. The study surveyed 240 respondents drawn from the banking industry in Indonesia. The findings revealed that because of employee wellness programs, the commitment of the employees to their jobs and their continued performance was enhanced. According to Mustajab et al. (2020), wellness programs were essential in boosting the concentration of the employees in their job duties, thus enhancing firm competitiveness.

Selesho and Naile (2014) conducted a study to determine the factors influencing the poor retention rate of academic staff at universities in South Africa. The findings indicated that job satisfaction was the main factor keeping academic staff in their profession. The study findings also revealed that working conditions were factors influencing retention. They recommended that organisations have clear academic support or clear career development support as one strategy to promote professional growth and retention of academic staff (Selesho and Naile, 2014).

Ngozi and Chinelo (2020) studied the effect of work-life balance on employee retention and productivity. The study aimed to assess the extent to which employees' commitment and performance were enhanced through a work-life balance orchestrated by wellness programs. Their findings revealed that employee wellness programs were essential drivers of work-life balance that significantly influenced employee performance. According to Ngozi and Chinelo (2020), employee wellness programs are policies that seek to enhance the balance between work and social life. Organisations provide an array of options to make their employees attain work-life balance through wellness programs. The nature of the programs an organisation puts in place greatly determines the ability of employees to realise the balance between work and family life, thus promoting their satisfaction and productivity.

A study by Lankeshwara and Wijesekara (2015) on the influence of employee wellness programs on job performance established that the wellness programs carried out by organisations to support employees were essential in promoting performance. According to Lankeshwara and Wijesekara (2015), some employees face various social problems such as marriage issues, depression and addictions, which, if not well attended to, would deteriorate their performance. Therefore, the wellness programs addressing these issues significantly contribute to employee productivity.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a descriptive research design to help make an in-depth analysis of the underlying factors under study, as Beins (2017) supported. This study's target population was public universities in Nairobi County. While most of the universities in Kenya have their campuses in Nairobi County, there are three public universities with their main campuses: Technical University of Kenya, University of Nairobi, and Kenyatta University. The study targeted these three universities. The study targeted the 3217 administrative staff from these universities. The study used a sampling formula by Yamane (1967) to establish the appropriate sample size. The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N*e^2}$$

Where:

n is the sample size

N is the target population (3,217)
 e is the error margin (0.05)

$$n = \frac{3,217}{1+3,217*0.05^2}$$

$$n = 355.76$$

The study used stratified random sampling to pick the 356 respondents in the three universities, where the universities were the strata. The study adopted a questionnaire mainly comprising of Likert's scale type of questions to gather data from the respondents.

Data analysis in this study was carried out using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 27). The data was first coded into the software and run-through to ensure was complete and with appropriate values. The data was then analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis was done using key statistics such as measures of central tendency (mean score), measures of dispersion (standard deviation), and frequency distribution (percentages). Inferential analysis was done using correlation analysis and regression analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Response Rate

The study had a sample of 356 respondents, where 356 questionnaires were issued across the administrative departments in the three public universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. Out of these, 261 questionnaires were duly filled out and given back for analysis. This represented a response rate of 73.4%, which is considered adequate for analysis. This is supported by Kothari (2016), who indicated that a response rate above 60% adequately represents the population and thus can be used for analysis.

Descriptive Analysis of the Study Findings

Employee Flexible Working Arrangements

The first objective of the study was to establish the influence of employee flexible working arrangements on employee performance in public universities in Nairobi City County. The respondents were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with specific statements on flexible working arrangements for employees, which were assessed through flexible working hours, remote work options, and job-sharing arrangements. Table 1 summarises the findings.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Flexible Working Arrangements

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
The career path in the university is flexible (not only fixed on one's qualifications)	45.9%	24.3%	10.7%	6.6%	12.5%	2.32	0.96
Most employees in the university can comfortably work in different sections across the institution	31.8%	36.2%	5.4%	16.8%	9.9%	2.36	0.97
The employees in the university have the freedom to choose when to sign in and out of the office	35.4%	35.4%	14.7%	9.4%	5.0%	2.33	1.01
Reporting to work late is allowed, provided one finishes their job duties for the day	38.8%	23.5%	15.4%	5.3%	16.9%	2.57	1.24
Employees in the university are allowed to share roles amongst themselves	33.2%	22.1%	7.6%	12.4%	14.7%	2.73	1.08
Delegation of duties has been embraced in the	37.4%	26.5%	16.9%	7.5%	11.8%	2.49	0.97

university for the employees to delegate and attend to their personal issues

The university has embraced remote working to enable the employees to work from home 24.7% 44.3% 6.9% 10.9% 13.2% 2.13 0.99

Employees with commitments outside the university are allowed to finish their duties at their opportune time 39.4% 31.6% 14.5% 9.4% 5.0% 2.31 1.01

Overall Mean

2.42

As the findings portray, most respondents disagreed that the career path in their respective institutions was flexible and not only fixed on one's qualifications (SD = 45.9%; D = 24.3%; Mean = 2.32; Std. dev. = 0.96). Most respondents further disagreed that the employees were comfortable working in different sections across the institution (SD = 31.8%; D = 36.2%; Mean = 2.36; Std. dev. = 0.97). The respondents further disagreed that employees in the university had the freedom to choose when to sign in and out of the office (Mean = 2.33; Std. Dev. = 1.01) and that reporting to work late was allowed, provided one finishes their job duties for the day (Mean = 2.57; standard deviation = 1.24). The findings further revealed that most respondents disagreed that the university employees were allowed to share roles amongst themselves (SD = 33.2%; D = 22.1%; Mean = 2.73; Std. Dev. = 1.08). The findings concur with those by Ngozi and Chinelo (2020), who established that flexible work arrangements were not effectively upheld in most public entities, and this affected employee performance negatively.

The findings further revealed that the majority of the participants believed that delegation of duties had not been embraced in the university for the employees to delegate and attend to their issues (Strongly Disagree = 37.4%; Disagree = 26.5%; Mean = 2.49; Standard deviation = 0.97). The respondents further disagreed that their respective universities had embraced remote working to enable the employees to work from home (Mean = 2.13; standard deviation = 0.99) and that employees with commitments outside the university were allowed to finish their duties at their opportune time (Strongly Disagree = 39.4%; Disagree = 31.6%; Mean = 2.31; Standard deviation = 1.01). The overall mean for the variable was 2.42, indicating that most respondents disagreed with the statements regarding flexible work arrangements as an approach to enhancing work-life balance in public universities. The findings concur with those by Adamu (2020), who established that due to poor flexibility of work arrangements, organisations had their staff not effectively focusing on their jobs, thus affecting their overall output. Further, as alluded to by Begum et al. (2022), the ineffective embrace of work-life balance through flexible work arrangements makes employees feel more occupied by their jobs than they should be, thus killing their morale and continued job commitment.

Organizational Support

The study's second objective was to examine the effect of organisational support on employee performance at public universities in Nairobi City County. The key measures of organisational support used in the study were supportive policies, access to counselling services, and employee assistance programs. Specific statements were drawn from these aspects, and the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement based on the 5-point Likert scale.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Organizational Support

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
The University management has always shown their commitment to the welfare of employees	35.4%	34.0%	10.3%	8.2%	12.1%	2.41	1.04
There are frameworks set to give employees the support they require to undertake their duties	35.4%	23.5%	18.4%	7.2%	15.4%	2.53	0.92
The university has an employee support policy to guide on how to cater for the wellness of employees	45.9%	21.8%	6.2%	12.6%	13.5%	2.16	0.93
There are programs set to assist employees meet their social needs	34.7%	25.0%	18.4%	7.2%	14.7%	2.62	1.30
Employees are taken for annual retreats for social-life training	33.2%	23.3%	14.7%	17.5%	11.3%	2.60	1.31
Employees found to be mentally disturbed are counselled and guided with the support of the University	48.8%	13.2%	8.4%	10.4%	19.1%	2.47	1.19
The University supports the rehabilitation of any employees found to have mental disorders	35.4%	19.6%	16.9%	11.2%	16.9%	2.34	1.30
Overall Mean						2.45	

As the findings show, the majority of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the University management had always shown their commitment to the welfare of employees, as shown by a mean of 2.41 and a standard deviation of 1.04. They further disagreed that there were frameworks set to give employees the support they require to undertake their duties (Strongly Disagree = 35.4%; Disagree = 23.5%; Mean = 2.53; standard deviation = 0.92) and that the institutions had an employee support policy to guide on how to cater for wellness of employees (Strongly Disagree = 45.9%; Disagree = 21.8%; Mean = 2.16; standard deviation = 0.93). The findings further revealed that the majority of the respondents disagreed that their respective universities had programs set to assist employees in meeting their social needs (Strongly Disagree = 34.7%; Disagree = 25.0%; Mean = 2.62; standard deviation = 1.30). The findings reflect that the surveyed public universities had not been effectively committed to enhancing employee's well-being through a commitment from top leadership, which could have negative impacts on their performance. The findings align with those by Irawanto et al. (2021), who established that failure by the senior management to offer support and commitment to employees' wellness negatively impacts employee performance as it deteriorates their commitment to organisational goals.

The findings further revealed that most respondents disagreed that employees were taken for annual retreats for social-life training (Strongly Disagree = 33.2%; Disagree = 23.3%; Mean = 2.60; Std. Dev. = 1.31). The respondents also disagreed that the employees found to be mentally disturbed were counselled and guided with the support of the University (Strongly Disagree = 48.8%; Disagree = 13.2%; Mean = 2.47; Std. Dev. = 1.19) and that the Universities supported the rehabilitation of any employees found to have mental disorders (Mean = 2.34; Std. Dev. = 1.30). The findings indicate that the support of employees through taking care of their well-being

was not effectively upheld in most surveyed universities. The findings concur with those by Chebet and Awino (2023), who indicated that with ineffective support of the well-being of employees, organizations lose in terms of employees' performance and their continued dedication to organizational goals.

Employee Performance

The study assessed the company's employee performance by asking the respondents to rate the critical statements on how well the employees performed. The respondents were to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with key statements drawn from the main measures of performance, which were productivity, employee engagement, and service delivery. A five-point Likert scale was used.

Table 3: Descriptive Results on Employee Performance

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
The majority of the employees in our institution have been enhancing their productivity over the years	49.3%	26.5%	6.6%	9.6%	8.1%	2.75	1.20
Most of the employees in the institution have always met their target on time	33.1%	16.2%	15.4%	8.8%	26.5%	2.21	1.24
There are fewer customer complaints regarding the services received from the employees in our institution	41.9%	16.2%	11.8%	15.4%	14.7%	2.28	1.32
There is more focus on customers from most of the employees in our institution as it was three years ago	38.2%	32.4%	3.7%	11.8%	14.0%	2.65	1.36
The commitment of most employees to their jobs has significantly increased in the past two years	33.8%	23.5%	19.1%	19.1%	4.4%	2.38	1.39
The level of job satisfaction among the employees has increased over the past two years	39.0%	22.1%	7.4%	14.7%	16.9%	2.36	1.38
fewer employees are left the institution in the past two years	50.7%	25.7%	3.7%	10.3%	9.6%	2.32	1.23
Most of my colleagues have expressed their intention to continue working for the institution in the next five years	36.2%	34.4%	3.7%	11.8%	14.0%	2.45	1.36
Overall Mean						2.48	

As the results portray, the respondents disagreed that the university employees had been enhancing their productivity over the years, as shown by a mean of 2.75 and a standard deviation of 1.20. They further disagreed that most of the employees at their respective universities met their target on time (Mean = 2.21 and standard deviation = 1.24). The respondents disagreed that there were fewer customer complaints regarding the services received from the employees (Mean = 2.28 and standard deviation = 1.32) and that the employees' commitment to their jobs had increased over the years (Mean = 2.65 and standard deviation = 1.36). The employees' job satisfaction level was also found to have decreased over the past years (Mean = 2.38 and standard deviation = 1.39). Moreover, the findings revealed that the majority of the respondents disagreed that fewer employees were leaving their respective universities in the recent past

(Strongly disagree = 22.1%; Disagree = 39.0%) and that the employees had increased their teamwork capabilities in the universities (Strongly disagree = 25.7%; Disagree = 50.7%). The overall mean of 2.48 was obtained, indicating that most respondents disagreed with the statements regarding employee performance at public universities in Nairobi City County. This indicates that the performance of employees in public universities in Nairobi County was ineffective, and this exposes the overall lack of commitment to work-life balance by the public universities in the Nairobi City County Government.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis was carried out to establish the association (relationship) between independent variables (work-life balance practices) and the dependent variable (employee performance in public universities). This was done using Pearson Correlation, a coefficient that tells the extent to which two variables linearly relate.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Results

		Employee Performance	Flexible Work Arrangements	Organizational Support
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.821**	.852**
	Sig.		.000	.000
	N	261	261	
Flexible Work Arrangements	Pearson Correlation	.821**	1	
	Sig.	.000		
	N	261	261	
Organizational Support	Pearson Correlation	.852**	.671**	1
	Sig.	.000	.000	
	N	261	261	261

The results revealed that the correlation between employee flexible work arrangements and employee performance had a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.821. This implies that there is a strong correlation of 82.1% between flexible work arrangements and employee performance in public universities in Nairobi County. Further, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) between organizational support and employee performance in public universities in Nairobi County was 0.852, implying that there was a strong correlation of 85.2% between organizational support and employee performance in public universities in Nairobi County.

Regression Model

Table 5: Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.845 ^a	.713	.708	.38020

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangements, Organizational Support

The model summary, shows the R^2 , which is the coefficient of determination [explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable (employee performance in public universities in Nairobi city County) is explained by changes in independent variables (Employee flexible work arrangement and organisational support)]. The results revealed that an R-square of 0.713 was obtained. This implied that the independent variables (Employee flexible work arrangement, and organisational support) led to a 71.3% variation in employee performance at the public universities in Nairobi City County. This implies that when put together, the aspects of work-life

balance would be responsible for over 71% of the observed change in employee performance in public universities in Nairobi city County.

Analysis of Variance Test Results

Table 6: ANOVA Test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	37.762	2	18.881	158.711	.000 ^b
Residual	30.702	258	.119		
Total	68.464	260			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Working Arrangements, Organizational Support

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out to test the significance of the model and the existence of variations among variables within the model. The results revealed that an F-statistic of 158.711 was obtained. This was within the 95% confidence level, as shown by a P-value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the model is statistically significant in predicting the relationship between flexible work arrangements, organisational support and employee performance in public universities in Nairobi City County. This implies that the overall regression model adopted was viable for testing the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables.

Regression Coefficients

Table 7: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.116	.124		.934	.351
Employee Flexible Work Arrangement	.249	.053	.256	4.661	.000
Organisational Support	.207	.046	.247	4.530	.000
Employee Well-being	.213	.054	.225	3.981	.000
Employee Social Support	.228	.051	.254	4.445	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The regression coefficients revealed that when combined, the two aspects of work-life balance (Employee flexible work arrangement, organizational support) significantly influenced employee performance in public universities in Nairobi County. Employee flexible work arrangements had the most decisive influence on employee performance in public universities in Nairobi County, as evidenced by a Beta coefficient (β) of 0.249. Organizational support had a Beta coefficient (β) of 0.207. All two variables had P-values of less than the standard p-value of 0.05, implying that Employee flexible work arrangement and organizational support significantly influenced employee performance at the public universities in Nairobi City County.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study concluded that employee flexible working arrangements had a significant effect on employee performance in public universities in Nairobi City County. The availability of flextime, having condensed work weeks and adopting the hybrid working mode were considered essential flexible working arrangements that ensured the employees had adequate time to work and focus on personal-life matters.

The study concluded that organisational support significantly affected employee performance in public universities in Nairobi City County. It concluded that the wellness programmes provided to the employees, the organisation's embrace of recreational programs, and effective stress management enabled the employees to perform better.

Recommendations

Employee Flexible Working Arrangements

The study recommends that management in public universities in Nairobi City County embrace flexible working arrangements to enhance employee performance. The management can achieve this by ensuring condensed work weeks where employees can entirely focus on the job and have other weeks to focus on personal life issues. The embrace of flextime and hybrid working modes can also be integral in enhancing the flexibility of the work to provide the employees with adequate time to work and focus on their personal life matters.

Organizational Support

The management of public universities in Nairobi City County has the duty of ensuring that the wellness of their employees is upheld through supporting wellness programs. This can best be achieved by having effective wellness programs targeting all employees, especially those found to be mentally disturbed. This can help to enhance the employees' engagement, thus improving their productivity. Providing medical coverage and having recreation programs could be essential in promoting the wellness of the employees.

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