

ROLES OF WORKPLACE STRESSORS ON JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG FRONTLINE EMPLOYEES IN SELECTED STAR RATED HOTELS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study: The hotel industry growth has been felt globally. Being an industry that requires fast and efficient services, there is need for the industry to establish the work place stressors that may affect its frontline employee's job performance. Overall objective of the study was to investigate the roles of workplace stressors on job performance among frontline employees at selected star hotels in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Statement of the research problem: According to a joint Health Advocate report, stress has a profound negative impact on worker productivity reaching \$ 300 billion each year. Around 60% to 80% of workplace accidents are caused by employee stress, around 1,000,000 employees do not attend routine tasks due to work-related stress and 60% of employees they are guilty of absences due to stress. Overloaded workers spend 46% of their time seeking medical attention, while 14%

of workers intend to hit their colleagues. Additionally, 29% of employees yelled at their co-workers due to stress, and 43% of workers believed their employers were concerned about work-life balance.

Methodology: A descriptive cross-sectional survey and convenience-sampling technique was used in order to get the required number of respondents. The former was used to put hotels into different categories (strata) whereas the latter was used to select the required number of the study participants from the hotels included in the sampling frame. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through interviews and self-administered questionnaires issued to 353 frontline employees from the thirty-one (31) star rated hotels in Nairobi City County.

Result: A weak positive relationship between work life balance ($r = .346$, $p < 0.05$) and job performance was depicted. Thus, null hypotheses indicate a relationship between the variables. It can be concluded that job performance increases with employee's assurance of work-life balance.

Conclusion and Recommendation: Results of the study have vital practical implications regarding how management of star rated hotels can enhance frontline employee's job performance by minimizing work place stressors, Designing jobs to reflect the demands of the changing environment as well as the organization's technology, to enhance work life balance.

Keywords: *Work-life balance, Job performance, Work stressors, Frontline employee, Star rated hotels.*

INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance involves the attitudes, behaviors, and well-being of employees, as well as the effectiveness of the organization (Au and Ahmed, 2014). Companies are obliged to incorporate new management practices that provide supervisory and social support. Superiors' perceptions of their own work-life conflict also largely dictate the career progression of employees (Au & Ahmed, 2014). In recent years, the issue of work-life balance has been extensively examined, especially in terms of increasing the flexibility of paid work and improving working conditions.

Daipuria and Kakar (2013), Work-family balance refers to efforts to ensure that there is a balance between work and life and to feel comfortable with work and family obligations. Deery and Jago (2015) found that work-life balance is an important variable within an organization to manage and

retain its employees, variables such as the attitude of employees in terms of commitment to the organization and job satisfaction. Work-life balance has already been found to be the main factor in improving employee productivity and this has a positive effect on the overall performance of organizations (Semlali & Hassi, 2016). Service in the hospitality industry is characterized by the many interactions that take place between employees and guests. It follows that the efficiency, friendliness and professionalism of the staff are factors that greatly influence the general perception of a hotel (Torres & Kline, 2013). The staff of the hotel can be classified as front - line or background. The Strathmore Business School (2011) reported mixed responses on the existence and extent of acceptance of work life initiatives by Kenyan organizations. Kenyan organizations still have a long way to go to be able to meet international standards by adopting work and life policies and practices. Work-life balance policies are a formal or informal set of conditions designed to enable an employee to combine family responsibilities and employment.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In Kenya, (Nyagahu and Bura, 2015) directed an exploration to decide the connection between work pressure and the exhibition of workers in a travel hotel and discovered massive connections between the two. Albeit many investigations have been led on work pressure by past specialists, more work is expected to comprehend the immediate impacts of work environment weight hands-on execution of forefront workers and aberrant effects of these tensions on execution work through work pressure. By examining the jobs of work environment stressors, this study has given basic observational information on the jobs that working environment stressors play in deciding position execution of cutting edge workers at chosen star evaluated hotels in Nairobi County. The study will fill in as a base for future exploration in the neighborliness industry overall.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The overall aim of this study was to investigate the roles of workplace stressors on job performance among frontline employees at selected star hotels in Nairobi City County, Kenya

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is no statistically significant relationship between work-life balance and job performance of front-line employees in star rated hotels in Nairobi City County.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by behavioral theory which emphasis on how to learn or acquire behaviors. The underlying principle of this theory is that behavior can be learned, not learned, and released (Nyaga, 2011; Watt, 2004), a view that essentially argues that learning and environmental processes influence the way people think and behave. . This theory is based on a scientific view of human behavior that takes a structured approach to counseling. Behavior modification is the application of basic research and theories from experimental psychology to influencing behavior to solve personal and social problems and improve human functioning (Thyer, Dulmus & Sowers, 2012).

Behavior modification aims to improve people's life skills, making them competent in various respects and thus giving them the ability to deal effectively with problems arising in their workplace that would otherwise adversely affect their performance. This knowledge therefore helps organizations understand the value of consulting for their employees to ensure their continued performance. Various techniques used in behavioral counseling, such as summarizing, reflection, explanation, and open-ended questions, help employees reexamine their attitudes, thoughts, values, beliefs, and behaviors. Thanks to this, the employee has the opportunity to deal with interpersonal difficulties in the workplace and outside of it. When correctly applied, the behavioral approach helps employees to competently and effectively deal with individual and organizational problems and conflicts that would otherwise have a negative impact on their performance (McLeod, 2008).

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Employee Job Performance

In any organization, employees are the real capital, as the success or failure of an organization also depends on the employees. The importance of the employee in the hospitality industry is of utmost importance, as the hospitality industry naturally focuses on manpower. Employee performance is more important in this area, as the employees are in direct contact with the customer and the employee of the hotel industry also addresses his customers (SHIK, 2017).

According to Zhang (2016), performance plays an important role in determining the profitability of hotels, as employees are one of the most important assets of hotels. The hospitality industry is

indeed a labor-intensive industry where hotels need to focus on performance and take appropriate steps to improve their performance. In addition, the performance of employees in the hotel industry is crucial because customers are in direct contact with employees and therefore hotel staff is responsible for customer satisfaction. Together with other employees, it is possible to improve overall performance and achieve the organizational goal together.

The knowledge, skills and competences that an employee brings to work, the degree of effort and motivation that they bring to perform it, and the nature of working conditions are conducive to employee productivity (Hashim, 2013). In line with this, Siddiqui (2013) added that effective action is a set of ways and behaviors that help an organization or administration achieve its long-term plans and goals. After the first effective performance provides a completely different and unique way of development of their work, giving them a variety of tools to assess and review in order to manage them with the work at the maximum level.

Employee performance may also be an increasingly popular idea among management science researchers, as employee performance is important to both individuals and organizations. Employee performance contributes to the overall improvement of organizational processes, especially in terms of efficiency and productivity (Abualoush, Obeidat, Ali, Masa'deh, and Al-Badi, 2018a). Work-life balance involves a balance between two completely separate roles performed by an individual, namely the professional and family roles, and for the role holder both these roles bring satisfaction (Shaffer, Reiche, Dimitrova, Lazarova, Chen, Westman & Wurtz, 2016). An employee's financial or non-financial results are closely related to the results and success of the organization, which is additionally reflected in the results of employees (Anitha, 2014).

As for the concept of performance, it is measurable through various mechanisms (Faiza and Nazir, 2015) and, in general, performance includes what the employee did or did not do. It is related to an individual's full performance or success during a given period of service, contrary to pre-established and established work standards and goals or standards (Abualoush et al., 2018; Pawirosumaro, Sarjana & Gunawan 2017). Productivity is supposed to be the product of the employee's ability multiplied by support and energy. Therefore, the reduction or non-existence of one factor causes a decrease in efficiency (Pawirosumaro et al., 2017).

Work-life Balance

According to Daipuria and Kakar (2013), work-life balance is an effort aimed at ensuring a work-life balance and ensuring a sense of comfort in reconciling work and family life trying to make them feel good. Several studies have looked at the effects of work-life balance on the overall performance of employees in various organizations. In the context of organizations and people, work-life balance has shown its importance over the last few decades. Work-life balance is indeed a key factor in improving employee performance and has been found to positively impact the overall performance of the organization (Semlali & Hassi, 2016). Organizations must implement an effective work-life balance policy, i.e. a policy that allows employees to stay in touch with society while controlling costs and turnover and increasing productivity (Helmle, Botero & Seibold 2014).

Deery and Jago (2015) found that work-life balance is one of the important variables in an organization in terms of managing and retaining employees. Other variables are, for example, employees' attitude to the organization and job satisfaction. Therefore, for an organization to retain its best talents in the organization, it is important to provide them with a work-life balance for both employees and the organization. Isaac (2016) explained the work-life balance in control. If this is a person who can control his job, it is assumed that he is in control of his personal and professional life. He also suggests adding the word "No" to his vocabulary to improve your quality of life.

Soemaryani and Rakhmadini (2013) conducted this study to find out how women working in mid-level banks are directly or indirectly affected by work-life balance, organizational culture and employee involvement. The results showed that approximately 44.8% of employee performance is affected by work-life balance and organizational culture, and approximately 37.9% of employee performance is due to their commitment. Overall, 50.9% of employee performance resulted from organizational culture, work-life balance programs, and employee involvement.

Tiwari (2017) noted that employees, especially women, have dual roles at work and at home. The study was carried out in the framework of a private organization employing 150 women. It was found that 93.32% of employees believe that a changing environment and its challenges interfere with both their work and home life. Also 56.67% of employees say that the culture and leaders of the organization do not help employees manage their personal and professional lives, while

83.32% of employees receive full support from the family to carry out their work and jeopardize family responsibilities.

Pandita and Singhal (2017) studied the relationship between employee involvement and work-life balance in the IT sector. It has proven difficult to engage employees in a rapidly changing environment if work-life balance is not ensured in terms of flexible scheduling, vacation policy and pay. Alegre and Pasamar (2018) found that the use of technology in the performance of tasks both at work and in personal life, such as, for example, gave a new approach focusing on innovation and the benefits of work-life balance. They also suggested that organizations need to keep their employees motivated, engaged and creative in the workplace by combining.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

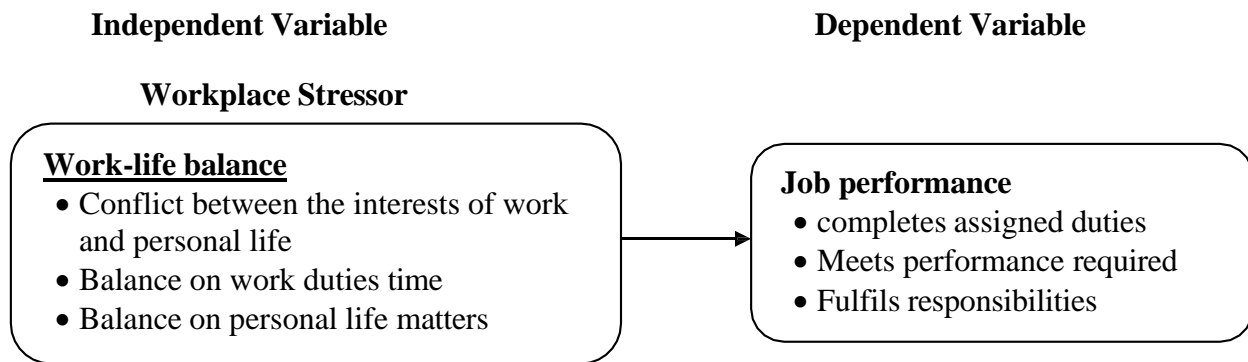


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to studies carried out by Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black (2010), research design provides the roadmap that takes into consideration the methods and procedures used in collecting and analyzing measures of study variables. In this study, descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data on the study constructs and to analyze in order to achieve the set objectives. The survey was carried out in Nairobi County which is home to majority of three, four, and five classified hotels. As per tourism regulatory authority (TRA, 2018), Nairobi county has ten 5-star hotels, eleven 4star hotels, and ten 3-star hotels totaling to 31 hotels, hence suitable for the current study. According to the data obtained, a total of 4,351 staff work at various positions in the identified 31 star rated hotels with five star contributing to 1,454 employees, 1,504 four star and

1,393 three star. The sample size for this study was computed using Cochran (1975) sample size determination formula. Supposing the proportion of frontline employees whose job performance is influenced by workplace stressors is 50%, the required sample will be calculated as follows:

$$Z^2pq$$

$$n = \frac{e_2}{e_1}$$

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2(0.5)(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384 \text{ Participants}$$

Since the population of the target study site (is estimated to be 4,351 (less than 10,000)). The sample will be adjusted using

$$n_o = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{n-1}{N}}$$

$$n_o = \frac{384}{1 + \frac{384-1}{4,351}} = 352.9 \cong 353$$

The desired sample size therefore will be **353±10%**

The study employed a stratified sampling process in order to select the study participants based on star rated hotel. Participants were randomly selected in the star rated hotels based on availability. To select the 353 employees for inclusion into the study sample, convenience sampling technique was used. Only employees in front-of-house (staff in reception, reservations, restaurant staff, porters and concierges) were considered for data collection.

4.0 Results and Discussions

Table 1: Response Rate by Hotel Star Rating

	Hotel category % (n)			Total
	3-star	4-star	5-star	
Response	113 32%	122 34.6%	118 33.4%	353 100%

Based on the results in Table 1, 34.6% (n=122) of the respondents were from four (4) star hotels, followed by 33.4% (n=118) five (5) star hotels and 32% (n=113) three-star hotels. The results

therefore indicate that at least of the three categories of the hotels that the researcher focused on were well represented. The findings are consistent with views expressed by Huselid, (2016), in that 5-4-3-star hotels form majority of the hospitality industry in the urban areas.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Work life balance

Variable	Percent % (frequency, n)					Mean	SD
	Strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	Strongly agree		
My personal life suffers because of work	29.7% (105)	39.4% (139)	12.7% (45)	15.6% (55)	2.5% (9)	4.01	0.421
My job makes personal life difficult	29.5% (104)	35.4% (125)	10.5% (37)	20.4% (72)	4.2% (15)	4.13	0.065
I neglect personal needs because of work	10.5% (37)	28.9% (102)	37.7% (133)	20.7% (73)	2.3% (8)	4.05	0.846
I put personal life on hold for work	8.8% (31)	22.4% (79)	35.7% (126)	28.0% (99)	5.1% (18)	3.98	1.031
I miss my personal activities because of work	9.3% (33)	21.2% (75)	35.7% (126)	27.2% (96)	6.5% (23)	3.97	1.012
My personal life drains me of energy for work	18.4% (65)	35.1% (124)	18.4% (65)	21.2% (75)	6.8% (24)	1.63	1.199
I am too tired to be effective at work	17.0% (60)	31.4% (111)	31.2% (110)	15.6% (55)	4.8% (17)	1.60	1.088
My work suffers because of my personal life	15.6% (55)	30.3% (107)	34.6% (122)	15.6% (55)	4.0% (14)	3.92	1.049
I find it hard to work because of personal matters	13.0% (46)	28.6% (101)	34.3% (121)	19.0% (67)	5.1% (18)	2.16	1.067
My personal life gives me energy for my job	3.4% (12)	16.4% (58)	18.7% (66)	36.8% (130)	24.6% (87)	3.63	1.124
My job gives me energy to pursue personal activities	4.8% (17)	8.8% (31)	18.4% (65)	43.3% (153)	24.6% (87)	3.74	1.073
I am at better mood at work because of my personal life	2.0% (7)	11.3% (40)	16.7% (59)	49.0% (173)	21.0% (74)	3.76	0.976
I am at better mood because of my job	3.4% (12)	6.8% (24)	19.0% (67)	51.6% (182)	19.3% (68)	3.76	0.953

A standard deviation (SD) of >0.8 indicates a significant difference on the job security impact among the respondents. The research findings in table 4.61 above reveals that most of the participants on average (Mean =3.41) had a strong moderate agreement on work life balance.

Majority of the respondents indicated that they are in a strong agreement with my job makes personal life difficult, I neglect personal needs because of work, my personal life suffers because of work, I put personal life on hold for work, I miss my personal activities because of work, my work suffers because of my personal life, I am at better mood at work because of my personal life, I am at better mood because of my job, my job gives me energy to pursue personal activities.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis of Work life balance and Job Performance

Variable	Frontline employee’s job performance	
Work life balance	Pearson Correlation	.346**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Notes: Determination coefficient (R²) = 0.119 (about 11.9%) **.Correlation is significant at P<0.05 level (2-tailed).

Work-life balance had a weak positive relationship with the frontline employee job performance ($r=0.346$, $p<0.05$). Pearson’s correlation coefficient r was less than 0.5 indicates a weak positive relationship between two variables In additional, the analysis returned a coefficient of determination (R²) equaling to 0.119 meaning that, about 11.9% of the total variation in job performance was as a result of work life balance. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis (H₀₃) there is no significant relationship between Work-life balance and frontline employees’ job performance. This implies there is a relationship between Work-life balance and frontline employee’s job performance

Table 4: Correlation Analysis

Variable	Frontline employee’s job performance		Work life balance
Frontline employee’s job performance	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
Work life balance	Pearson Correlation	.346**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

The correlation analysis summary above indicates that the associations between each of the independent variable and the dependent variable were significant at the 95% Confidence level.

The determinants of employee performance based on frontline employee rating existed in job security ($r=0.653$, $p<0.05$). Pearson’s correlation coefficient r was higher than 0.5 indicating a strong positive relationship between two variables. Work-life had a weak positive relationship with the frontline employee job performance ($r=0.346$, $p<0.05$). This analysis indicated how the independent variables influence the dependent variable.

Table 5: Summary of the Hypotheses Results

Variables	Pearson correlation	Job performance (R2)	Hypothesis	Results
Work life balance	$r = 0.346$ p-value = 0.000	0.119 (11.9%)	H ₀₃	Not supported

Notes: $p < 0.001$. $n = 316$. R2 = Determination Coefficient.

Table 6: Overall results and summary per star rated hotel

Determinants	3-star			4-star			5-star		
	Standardized Coefficients Beta	F	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients Beta	F	Sig.	Standardized Coefficients Beta	F	Sig.
Work life balance	.186	3.21	.001	.094	1.713	.088	.377	7.289	.000
Model			.000			0.00			0.00

CONCLUSION

Work-life had a weak positive relationship with frontline employee job performance ($r=0.346$, $p<0.05$). This finding is in line with the deduction made in Soomro, A.A., Breiteneker, R.J., & Shah, S.A.M. (2018) that work-life balance positively and significantly impacts employee performance. Support (Semlali& Hassi, 2016) study that work-life balance has indeed been found to be the major factor in improvement of employees and this has a positive impact on the general performance of organizations. Findings also agree with Deery and Jago (2015) found that work life balance is one of the important variables within organization to manage and retain their employees. From the results of correlation analysis, there was a positive and statistically significant correlation between work life balance and job performance. Regression results showed that work life balance had a positive and statistically significant relationship with job performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The policies and guidelines should be well defined. Goals and objective clearly defined and reporting procedures to reduce role stress. Designing jobs to reflect the demands of the changing environment as well as the organization's technology, to enhance work life balance. The future researchers should consider replicating the topic on other star rated hotels in Kenya. Furthermore, more research can be done in other service industries to compare the real issues affecting performance.

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