

**WORK LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN HOTELS IN KISUMU
CITY**

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project report is entirely my own work and to the best of my knowledge has not been submitted by anyone else in any other institution of higher learning.

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This research project has been presented for examination with my approval as University Supervisor

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, I thank God for helping me through this project writing. Secondly, special thanks to my supervisor Dr. Frankline Odayo for his guidance and assistance. Finally, I thank my family for supporting me throughout my studies.

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my family and friends

ABSTRACT

Globally, it has been unanimously accepted that work-life balance results in satisfied workers so that employees do not consider work as an affliction to them. Hence, work-life balance is a modern phenomenon that cannot be ignored by organizations. This has been largely attributed to by contemporary workers who value flexible working hours, increased urbanization, growth in human resource policies, and cut throat inter-company competition. Report shows that the hospitality industry in Kenya contributed up to 6.8% of the GDP by Quarter 1 of 2022. Besides, research work in Kenya has mostly been focused on other sectors though not in the hotel industry. Additionally, various studies on the linkage between work life balance and employee performance have yielded conflicting results. Moreover, the status of the work life balance research in Kenya, that is the conceptualization and operationalization are to a greater extent borrowed from the western literature which may not empirically be applicable in the Kenyan context which creates a gap for the present study. The main objective of this study was to establish the effect of work life balance on employee performance in hotels in Kisumu City, Kenya. The specific objectives were to; determine the effect of flexible working hours on employees' performance, establish the impact of leave entitlement on employees' performance, and investigate the impact of stress management at work on employees' performance. This study was anchored on constraint and signaling theory. The study adopted a correlational research design. Data collected was sorted, classified, and coded, then tabulated and also presented using tables and charts. The questionnaire was the main instrument for collecting primary data. Regression analysis was used to determine the cause-effect analysis while correlation analysis measured the strength of association between the study variables. The study is an invaluable tool for human resource managers in sourcing ways of increasing employee productivity. The study is also of help to government ministerial agencies in coming up with sound labour policies that shall not only safeguard employees' health but shall also make sure there is improved productivity at the workplace. Results shows that a significant high correlation exists between employee performance and flexible working hours ($p=0.683$, $\alpha<0.05$, $\alpha=0.0000$). Besides, flexible working hours is the best predictor of employee performance with $B=0.381$. Moreover, a significant moderate correlation exist between leave entitlement and employee performance ($p=0.464$, $\alpha <0.01$, $\alpha =0.004$). Though leave entitlement moderately predicts employee performance with $B= 0.357$. The study as well evidences that a significant moderate correlation exists between stress management and employee performance ($p=0.577$, $\alpha<0.01$, $\alpha=0.000$) and that stress management does not highly predict employee performance among hotel workers with $B=0.012$. The study concludes that the independent variables (flexible working hours, leave entitlement, and stress management) predict dependent variable (employee performance) up to 63%, that is $R^2=0.632$. This study also concludes that based on constraint theory, the main constrain in the hotel set up could be flexible work designs. That is, the human resource managers in the hotel set up should therefore consider implementing flexible work patterns. Moreover, in regard to signaling theory, hotel managements should always put in place attractive policies which will appeal and keep employees to work toward hotel specific and general objectives. Additionally, it is concluded that the findings in the western countries on factors affecting employee performance really applies to the hotel set ups in developing countries like Kenya. It is recommended that other sub variables of work life balance that were not considered in this study to be considered by other scholars in future studies on this topic to aid explicate the unsolved 37% of factors affecting employee performance in the hotel setup.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

PwC- Price Waterhouse Coopers

WLB- Work life balance

EP- Employee productivity

TOC- Theory of Constraint

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Work life balance	The division of one's time and focus between working and leisure activities daily. It shall encompass stress management, leave entitlement and flexible working hours
Employee performance	An assessment of the efficiency of a worker or a group of workers.
Stress management	The process of acquiring and practicing a wide range of both cognitive and behavioral procedures with the aim of coping with stress.
Leave entitlement	The act of being away from work or spending time off work. It could include packages such as sick days, personal days and vacations.
Professional Life	It means one's career in industry or commerce or other professional activities.
Job	This is a task that is paid for.
Work life	This means the amount of time spent in performing your job responsibilities as opposed to the time spent doing non work responsibilities.
Non work life	These are activities or time spent undertaking responsibilities that are not paid for
Human resources-	Group of people comprising an organization's workforce.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

This section of the study entails discussion on the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research hypothesis, and scope of the study as well as the conceptual framework of the study.

Work-life balance is a modern phenomenon which cannot be ignored by any organization. This has been largely attributed to by contemporary workers who value flexible working hours, increased urbanization, growth in human resource policies, and cut throat inter-company competition. Work-life balance is the division of one's time and focus between working and leisure activities daily (Gloria, 2018). It is therefore a crucial concept that concerns different workers in both the public and private industry. It does not just limit one to personal life and the work role (Lula, 2018). Operationally, work life balance implies an average between personal activities and job related activities. It is the ability to comfortably carry out an individual's assignment at work and at the same time satisfactorily carry out personal off the job activities. It therefore, implies that every human being requires a balanced lifestyle between work related activities and home activities which is the interest of the current study.

Hana & Meily (2021) in their study in Indonesia revealed that work-life balance results to satisfied workers so that they do not consider work as an affliction to them. They further contend that adequate balanced personal and job life positively improves the ability of the company to retain its employees. This study by Hana & Meily (2021) was based in Indonesia. It was a

general study on the workers falling in the generation 2000s. The observations were 196 from various individuals in different industries. Therefore, basing conclusions on the findings of this study to be applicable to the Kenyan hotel workers would not be adequate. Thus the need to still carry out this current study to establish the exact effect of work life balance on hotel workers in Kenya.

Saltstein & Ting (2002) in their study on work-family balance and job satisfaction in United States of America found that various employees utilized variety of what was considered family friendly policies to their advantage. Though it is reported that the policies had diverse effects on the federal employees. Besides, Casper & Harris (2008) in their study on the work life benefits and organizational attachments found that work life benefits influences organizational attachment citing various factors like flexible working hours, and perceived organizational support and favorable policies. The latter research works evidences that employee welfare is a global issue and has been researched. Hence there is need to further research work on work life balance locally.

The setup of this study is in the hospitality industry in Kenya. It is evidenced from report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2022) that the hospitality industry contributed up to 6.8% in the GDP by Quarter 1 of 2022. This portrays the significance of hospitality industry in regard to the Kenyan economic growth which makes the study area relevant. The currents study intended to determine the relationship between work life balance of hotel workers and the performance of hotels.

Lula (2018) notes that work-life balance affects employee's well-being, organizational effectiveness, attitudes, and behaviors. Therefore, many institutions in various industries are

competing for market leadership, and this may compel top management officials to heap excess workload on their employees to attain their targets.

In this study, work life balance entailed flexible working hours, leave entitlement and stress management. Flexibility is depicted as an approach to reduce work load among employees. Ritu (2018) posits that provision of flexi time has been found to result to improved employee satisfaction particularly among women and in organization at large.

Stress is operationalized as the strain among employees as a result of work responsibilities. This causes mental disorganization and the worker is then incapable of fully concentrating at work. Mount (2002) illustrates that there are two categories of stress; positive stress and negative stress. Positive stress is that which enable the employee to push himself/herself toward achieving organizational goals. On the other hand, negative stress is that which results to the employee pressure, mental health and inability to positively participate at work. Positive stress is therefore recommended.

It is a general consensus that leave guidelines implemented in developing countries could only be similar to a given extent to leave procedures in developed economies. For instance, the applicability of maternity leave, parental and paternity leave are highly regarded in developed economies (Valarino, Duvander, Linda, & Gerda, 2018). Favorable leave procedures allow employees to carry out their off-work responsibilities which translates to improved employee performance. Thus, the current study is based on a developing economy.

According to Lula (2018), performance is how best an employee is achieving his or her job requirements. That is, the ability to successfully develop positive attitude towards work, report to the work place, execute the tasks assigned and achieve management set targets is therefore

referred to as performance. It is considered that for an employee to work towards the company objectives and successfully achieve them, then there is need for that particular employee to be motivated. One of the key motivators toward performance is enabling the balance of a company employee between personal lifestyle and work-related assignments. This present study intended to unearth how an employee who has time to perform his personal off the job activities is capable of achieving the organizational objectives and goals.

In study on work life balance and employee retention conducted in Kenyan Commercial banks, it was revealed that family leave system, recreational services, child care services, and employee assistant programs impacts employee retention (Linnet, 2020). It can therefore be concluded that work life balance is a contemporary issue which is of concern both locally and globally.

It has been demonstrated that poor work life balance is an issue to be addressed. The standard Newspaper (2020) comment on the same when they present the story of a manager at an international audit and accounting firm who jumped to his death in 2020, leaping from the 17th floor of Delta Corner Tower, the headquarters of Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) in Westlands, Nairobi due to stress caused by long or crazy working hours. The preceding evidence led to the question whether companies in Kenya are offering solutions to work related causes of stress. This advises the present study principally in the hospitality industry.

People in high-pressure jobs are prone to mental breakdowns, and such incidents should be treated as physical health and safety issues at work. If one work in a factory, they are provided with safety gear. Consequently, if one work in a high-stress environment, the company should find a way to ease burnout or work-related stress (The standard Newspaper, 2020). However, is

this the case in all Kenyan organizations? This study intended to establish the same among workers in hotels.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Work life balance is an area that has been researched to a greater extent in Kenya. Justifiably, work life balance is a concern which exists on daily basis. It is an area which has not been fully resolved. Workers keep pressing for consideration of ample time to attend to their personal activities. On the other hand, employers are attracted to attaining organizational purposes and the company continued existence. Hence, work life balance is a continuous conflict which makes it an area often relevant to be researched despite the existing numerous research work. Besides, research work in in Kenya in regard to work life balance has mostly been focusing on other cases though not in the hotel industry. Moreover, the status of the work life balance research in Kenya, that is the conceptualization and operationalization are to a greater extent borrowed from the western literature which to some extent may not empirically be applicable in the Kenyan context which creates a gap for the present study.

In Kenya, hotel industry is a busy environment. Customers require to be served usually 24hours a day. This infers stretched working hours. Specifically at hotels in Kisumu city, particularly three star and at times five star hotels, employees report to work very early in the morning. The management team who in most cases are required to work without shifts are presented with a situation where they have to work from the reporting time (morning) and up to later in the night around 9-11 pm. This translates to 14 working hours a day implying that workers are not spared time to socialize and carry out their personal initiatives. Besides, employees cite a lack of incentives in relation to the longer working hours. This therefore begs the question as to whether

there is a need to consider employees' work life balance in the hotel industry which the current study intended to establish.

Empirically it is contended that unfavorable work life is generally a global concern that indeed influences the overall performances of corporations plus the workers' welfare and productivity. The balance between work life and personal life presents risks to the employees' welfare, and their ability to align themselves with the organizational goals; which therefore makes it a topic that cannot be ignored.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to analyze work life balance effects on employee performance among hotels Kisumu County, Kenya. The specific objectives are;

- i. To determine the effect of flexible working hours on employees performance
- ii. To establish the impact of leave entitlement on employees performance
- iii. To investigate the impact of stress management at work on employees performance

1.4 Research Hypothesis

- i. H₀₁-Flexible working hours do not affect employee performance
- ii. H₀₂-Leave entitlement does not impact employee performance
- iii. H₀₃-Stress management does not impact employee performance

1.5 Scope of the Study

The geographical scope of this study was Kisumu City in Kisumu County. Kisumu County has witnessed growth in recent past which has since saw the rise and growth of the tourism sector.

Explicitly, the recent Africanities function which was hosted in Kisumu city saw the growth of hotels within Kisumu city than any other town in the entire Nyanza region. Besides, Kisumu is considered a city within the Nyanza region and therefore boasts of many hotel facilities. Constructed on the preceding, the present study was conducted in Kisumu County to establish the effect of work life balance on employee performance in hotels. This research work considered the present employee situation to draw inferences in regard to various human resource policies applied by the hotels under study. This study was conducted between February 2023 to June 2023.

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is of help to Human Resource Managers in improving productivity through attaining of a work life balance by reducing the conflict between employees' personal life and job responsibilities to enhance their performance. The study is also an invaluable tool to governments, parliament and ministerial agencies in formulating sound work policies that enhances employee welfare and health. The study aids Human Resource scholars in appreciating the important role played by sound work life policies in enhancing employee productivity.

1.7 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an illustrated representation of an idea or body of knowledge based on individual understanding of the relationships between the variables. The illustration shows the variables and the hypothesized relationship (Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, 2013).

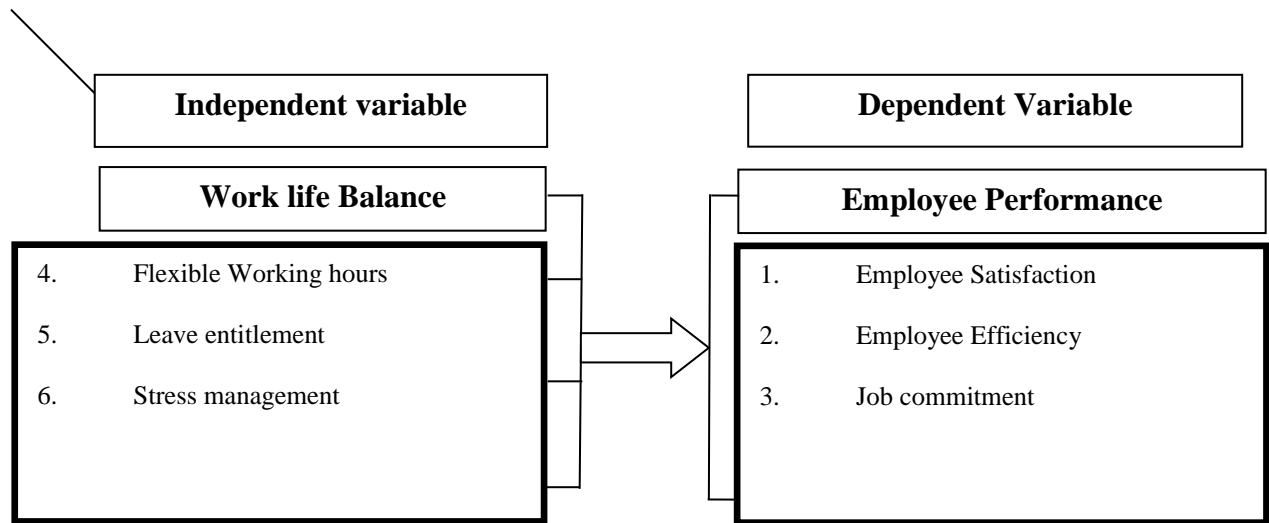


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework

Source: Research data (2023)

The study independent variable is work life balance while dependent variable is employee performance which includes; employee satisfaction, employee efficiency and job commitment. According to the framework, there is a direct association between independent variables and dependent variables. Work life balance was measured using flexible work patterns, employee leave entitlement, and how to manage stress among the employees. On the other hand employee performance was measured by level of satisfaction among staffs, the degree of efficiency in delivering at work and how committed an employee is in his/her work.

Therefore, the correlation approach enhanced detailed comprehension on the extent the work life balance parameters influenced employee performance parameters.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature is the information that has been presented by other individuals or institutions. Literature review enables the researcher to avoid re-inventing the wheel in the field of interest, that is, helps in avoiding spending long hours investigating something that has already been investigated (Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, 2013).

2.2 Theoretical Literature review

Theoretical framework specifies which key variables influence a phenomenon of interest and therefore what variables to measure and the rationale for relationships between the variables. This will inform what statistical relationships on which to focus the tests. Theory guides every aspect of research, from formulation of the research question through operationalization and discussion (Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology, 2013). This study was underpinned on two theories; the theory of constraint which partly deal with the independent variable and majorly deals with the dependent variable of this study and signaling theory which discusses aspects of independent variable of this study (work life balance).

2.2.1 Theory of Constraint

Eliyahu Goldratt, an Israeli business guru, in his book *The Goal* which was first published in 1984 coined the Theory of constraint (Goldratt & Jeff, 1984). In this book he presents an analogy of a plant manager who had few days to fix the problems of the company to enable turn around and to

avoid his company from being closed down due to lack of profitability. In this analogy, the theory of constraint was introduced.

Theory of constraint is based on the tenet that every system has a chock or a bottleneck which hinders its optimal production. A system consists of interrelated subsets or processes which work in one direction to achieve the common goal. In the process of the functioning of a system, there is always this one bottleneck which has to be experienced. Thus to enable the efficiency in the system, the theory of constraint is applied.

This theory was established with an aim of improving organizational processes. It is an approach which focuses on organizational improvement. There are two constraints, physical constraint where the capacity is constrained or policy constrains where the applied guideline does not promote business success. Theory of constraint holds that utmost improvements are attained when the challenges of an organization are addressed at their weakest links.

The theory re-counts well with this present study. Human resource managers are tasked to ensure that there is improved management of the business operations which to a greater extent contributes to the main corporations' goal. The contemporary organization requires highly trained and experienced human resource managers who are capable of identifying the physical constraints. Typically, applying the theory of constraint would mean a human resource manager should be able to manage the constraints in an organization by capacity building employees, rewarding and recognizing the performance (an incentive to others who did not meet the target to work toward meeting the set target), advise the management then help establish counseling department, and assisting the management in developing fair policies which consider job related factors alongside workers welfare to promote work life balance. The human resource manager

should also be in a position to establish the process of managing emerging employee issues. As per the theory of constraint, once one constraint is solved, another emerges and thus the need for policies to continually help monitoring of the employees, their behavior, and interwork relations as they work in the organization.

Practical application as per the current study in the hotel setup follows the following proposition of the theory of constraints; dealing with unclear hotel policies where employees do not have a clear point of reference to understand the exact guidelines. For instance, how cancellations of reservations can be done resulting in mismanagement of clients who wishes to cancel reservations. This then prevents repeat sales. Lack of understanding of the goal. The main gist of the theory of constraint is understanding the organizational goal. That is, what is the hotel intending to achieve overly within a specified duration. As a result, most second or third shifts employees who usually don't get to directly interact with the management do not understand the goal. This translates to employees working toward what they tend to think is right. Though not necessarily the hotel's goal. Work life balance is an aspect that the theory of constraints depicts. Constraints theory implies that employees working throughout without idle time are in-efficient rather than productive. As a result, the theory advocates for work life balance in the hotel set up which will in turn reduce burnouts, and encourage fresh energy consequently resulting to increased efficiencies. While casting the theory of constraint, the interplay among the characters involved shows that mentorship is one factor that cannot be ignored. This applies in the hotel such that when employees are capacity built on the exact objectives and expectations of the hotel, then they will always work with a goal in mind. This mentorship process persuades employees that they are valued. Therefore, they get motivated, committed and improve on the hotel's performance. Constraint theory suggests the need of teamwork for success. The hotel

employees, therefore, require to understand that all the departments in the hotel are important and that one is dependent on the other for general hotel success. Constraint theory also suggests ensuring employees safety and security. That is, working in hotels poses a lot of risks to employees which may affect the general hotel performance. For instance, employees may work in isolated areas within the hotel premise, traveling at odd hours upon shift completion, handling cash, and dealing with intoxicated clients. The hotel management can therefore offer deliveries of employees who finish their shifts late. Cameras can be installed in isolated areas. Operational planning can be enabled so that cash handling is properly managed. Therefore, it is true to conclude that the theory of constraint applies in this study by suggesting proper operational planning within hotels, clear policies to guide service implementation, work life balance to enable performance increment, mentoring of employees on the hotel goal which increases commitment, ensuring employee safety which will increase job satisfaction and team work. All these directly influence the general performance of both the employees and the hotel.

2.2.2 Signaling Theory

Signaling theory was developed by Andrew Michael Spence in his paper the job market signaling in 1973. In this model, the employees signal their employers by acquiring certain degree of education which is costly to them (Spence, 1973). This theory has since been applied in various disciplines. The current study will apply it in understanding human resource management.

By means of the signaling theory in understanding work life balance; application of policies that encourages work life balance, signals that business values its personnel. This is congruent with

suggestions of the signaling theory which affirms that observable actions by an organization are inferred as signals of less observable features (Spence, 1973).

The signaling theory postulates that the employee will often observe policy availability (flexible working hours), and organizational support as signs of the firm caring for their welfare which will then lead to employees improved work attitude, improved quality and quantity of output, satisfied customers and general improvement in the organizational performance.

Signaling theory from the word to signal means, to indicate or gesture something to someone. The applicability of this theory in the current study is that the employer should be in a position to attract very good employees who can serve clients to promote repeat sales (the customer can come again). In the context of this study, the employer will elicit signals by the offers it will indicate in its adverts during employees' recruitment or in the job offer. For instance, the job offer will read; 'you will be offered 35 leave days annually. You are expected to work for 8 hours a day with the work reporting time being dependent on the hotel supervisor's weekly schedule (an indicator of flexi time). You are entitled to 24/7 counseling and gym usage (stress management tackled).' With such attractive policies offered to employees, a hotel of this type is guaranteed success in its entirety.

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 Flexible working hours

Flexi time is where an employee has the incentive to report to his/her work at his own time. The employee is allowed the opportunity to perform the work either weekly, after two weeks or as per the management's arrangement. Here the worker has the freedom to simply put effort at work for predetermined number of hours before embarking on personal chores. Felix & Francis (2020)

suggest that flex work plays a major role in contemporary work environment by addressing the realities that employees faces on their day to day activities against the work they are supposed to do.

Flexibility is depicted as an approach to reduce work load among employees. Ritu (2018) posits that provision of flexi time has been found to result to improved employee satisfaction particularly among women and in organization at large. Ritu (2018) discussed flexi time to consist of; working in shifts, part time work, and working from home. This is in line with the suggestions of Stella, Iheriohanma, & Iheanacho (2022) who affirmed that flexible working hours include; working over the weekend, working in shifts, contracting on annual basis, implementation of overtime schedules, practice of part time activities, job sharing, employ, employment of casuals, fixed-term contracts, home-based work, telework and compressed work week.

Kossek & Distelberg (2009) suggests that flexi time is quite applicable in higher job cadre as compared to the lower levels. Besides, they contend that the flexible working hours is quite authentic in the service sector and some industries as compared to other industries. This suggestion is in line with the present study which is concerned with the service industry, that is, hotels.

Other studies give two aspects of flexi time thus; financial and non-financial flexi time (Klindzic & Marić, 2019). The fundamental discussion is that non-financial performance relates to the study of flexi time in relation to absenteeism, retention, and turn over. That is an employee if not accorded flexible working hours, then, they would rather create their own at the expense of the

company. For instance, an employee would rather fake sick leave even when not sick provided he achieves the comfort he/she perceives to be necessary.

Sangarandeniya & Ranasinghe (2020) recorded the following advantages that accrue to an organization as a result of flexible working hours; improvement in regard to efficiency and productivity, increased employee morale at work, high retention rates of the workers thus enabling retention of high skilled personnel, enhanced customer and employee loyalty.

Based on the above literature review, flexible work patterns have been settled on in this study first as an element of work life balance. Also, it is evident that flexible working hours come with various advantages such as; a form of short leave which an employee may utilize to probably sleep, relax or attend to personal activities before resuming to work. Moreover, flexible work patterns enhance morale at work, since an employee is sure that there are other staffs and he/she will only work for a particular period of time without being over worked. This research is based in service industry, the hotels. Literature shows that flexible work patterns are best practised in service industry. This also advises why it has been considered as a construct of work life balance.

2.3.2 Leave Entitlement

It is a general consensus that leave guidelines implemented in developing countries could only be similar to a given extent to leave procedures in developed economies. For instance, the applicability of maternity leave, parental and paternity leave are highly regarded in developed economies (Valarino, Duvander, Linda, & Gerda, 2018). Favourable leave procedures allow employees to carry out their off-work responsibilities which translates to improved employee performance. Thus, the current study is based on a developing economy.

Willibrord, Roy, & Johan (2009) focused on sick leave. They propose various sick leave determinants to include; changes in lifestyle, working conditions, gender, age, level of education and marital status. Though the current study intends to study all types of leave and not necessarily sick leave only.

Devin (2014) advocates that off work payments and medical leave guidelines completely influences personnel physical and mental health, the corporation's bottom lines, and the overall economy by offering a structure that permits workforce to take paid leave when they inevitably need it to care for a new child or sick relative. The current study will therefore establish the extent of applicability of the latter arguments in hospitality industry.

Employment Act of Kenya (2007) prescribes three months of leave entitlement to female workers additional to any other leave she may be permitted to take. Maternity leave is restricted to three months. Besides, maternity leave may not be prolonged to exceed the three months. Though, official request from the employer allows for extension. Paid paternity leave is allowed to the male counter parts for a period of not more than 14 days. Even though the government has its prescriptions, employers may also be having their own policies additional to this to enable organizational operations and employee satisfaction. The employers may be having more leave days depending on the nature of work.

In the early theories of management, the humanitarians discovered that irrespective of the level of economic benefit/reward to employees. The workers still requires time off the work so that they love and be loved back. They relax and rejuvenate before getting back to work. This being against the scientific theory of management by Taylor. As a result, leave entitlement is the only means an employee has time to take care of personal needs off the work place including visiting

hospital, attending to children at school among other home chores. Therefore, it is a significant work life balance construct which then forms part of the study sub-variables.

2.3.3 Stress Management

Stress is the situation when an employee is strained as a result of external pressures. In this context, stress is viewed in regard to work related activities. Thus stress is operationalized as the strain among employees as a result of work responsibilities. This causes mental disorganization and the worker is then incapable of fully concentrating at work.

Mount (2002) illustrates that there are two categories of stress; positive stress and negative stress. Positive stress is that which enables the employee to push himself/herself toward achieving organizational goals. On the other hand, negative stress is that which results to the employee pressure, mental health and inability to positively participate at work. Positive stress is therefore recommended.

Counseling is a necessary tool to enable stress management in an organization (Kirk & Wallace, 2011). The company should therefore establish a counseling department to deal with stressed employees. This will help improve the employee brain functionality which will in turn make the employee to focus on the job resulting to improved performance.

From the reviewed literature, it is true that a troubled individual will only concentrate on the trouble and may partially deliver. This applies to the organization's concept so that a stressed employee will experience reduction in performance. For instance, in the hotel set up, if the front desk manager is stressed. She/ he may end up extending part of this stress to the clients by either being too mean in welcoming guests. Or probably not caring in regards to how they may talk to guests. This will surely discourage repeat sales. Hence the need for counselors who may help to

constantly advise employees and even management on how to treat employees. To this extent, stress management is considered a real tool for work life balance.

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1. Flexible working hours and employee performance

Evidences from Croatia holds that flexible work arrangements enable flexibility in the design of the employees work which then results to improved performance of the corporation. This was demonstrated by Maja & Matija (2017) who carried out their research work among 171 corporations applying survey study design. The study was carried out in Croatia which signifies that human resource, particularly employee performance is a global concern. Though, the present study intends to empirically find out if the claim by Maja & Matija (2017) applies in the Kenyan hotel set up. In other words, the western aspects of work life balance could be different to the African context. The Kenyan economy is still developing and to a greater extent may not be comparable to the Croatian economy. Portraying that the findings in Croatia would need to be substantiated before concluding on them.

Extensive research in United Arab Emirates recommends that workers will produce improved quality outputs, increased job commitment and total work satisfaction if they are allowed to manage their personal and professional lives with ease using their preferred design (Hashmi, Ghaithi, & Sartawi, 2021).

In a secondary study investigating how flexible work arrangements impacts productivity in Africa, Ochieng & Kamau (2021) reported that high levels of productivity is exhibited among workers who are allowed to flex their work times compared to workers who embrace traditional approach of longer working hours. Though this latter study was based on literature review which

could otherwise mislead. The current results will be obtained from the primary source thus considered to give more accurate results.

A comparative analysis in Nigeria on the extent to which work life balance impacts on optimal employee performance among two large corporations; one being a multinational company and the other being a local company exhibited that flexible work arrangements are not applicable in those companies (Stella, Iheriohanma, & Iheanacho, 2022). Therefore, the employees in these companies still embrace the traditional approach to work, where one has to prioritize company activities. That is, the company does not care about the employee's off work responsibilities. This present study will then fill the gap by determining if flexible working hours are being embraced in the hotels within Kisumu City.

Similar studies in Nigeria among selected banks by Anekwe (2019) who considered 186 observation instituted that flexible working hours results to improved organizational performance. Specifically, flexible work time reduces stress among employees, promotes physical stability, and results to job efficiency and effectiveness. These results will therefore be tested by the present study to affirm their applicability among hotel workers in Kenya.

Agness, Esther, & John (2016) in their study in Kenya among commercial banks discovered that flexible working hours positively impacts on the performance of bank employees. So that with flexibility, the business has the capability of setting attainable targets and at the same time meet these targets. The findings of Agness, Esther, & John (2016) was based on banking survey. Therefore, assuming their results to be applicable to other industries would not be the correct decision since the practice in bank and hotels are different which then advises this present study.

Other research studies conducted in Agricultural cooperatives in Kenya by Bett, Sang, & Patricia (2022) recognized that with flexi times, there is reduced absenteeism, longer service hours, and improvement in ability of the employees to seek new roles. This then translates to the overall improved firm performance. This Agricultural cooperatives. And it is true that practices in Agricultural cooperatives are far much different from practices in Hotel industry. It may not be meaningful to assume that generalization from that sector are applicable to the hotel set up. Therefore, the current study was carried out in in the hotel industry which validates the need to probe if the findings in the Agricultural sector holds in hotels or not.

2.4.2 Leave entitlement and employee performance

American Psychological Association (2017) reported that annual leave results to reduced stress, improved mood, and an overall health boost among workers which in turn translates to reduced absenteeism, improved critical thinking, and improved productivity. Other studies propose that paid leave encourages increased productivity by promoting optimal attendance to an employees work station. Thus one major approach advised in this study by Hosick (1982) is the use of paid leave to improve employee performance.

Substantive research suggests that leave to the employees is linearly related to the staff performance (Akom, Charles, Florence, & Smart, 2021). This was evidenced in the study amongst university administrators in Ghana which consisted of 200 observations. These finding can therefore be empirically tested in this present study by finding out if the same holds among hotel workers in Kenya.

Studies in Kenya put forward that employees perform better when often granted annual leave, maternity/paternity leave, bereavement leave, and sick leave. This has been demonstrated by

Chungo & Anyieni (2019) in their study in Rift Valley Bottlers. Their sample size consisted of 69 respondents which is a small sample to be utilized in generalization thus necessitating the present study.

From the telecommunication industry in Kenya, it is submitted that there is a positive relationship between annual leave and employees' performance in the organization. A survey conducted among 90 respondents by Gatimu & Kagiri (2017) revealed the same. Though this latter study only dealt with a single independent variable, annual leave policy which to a greater extent could have not allowed the researcher to understand other kinds of leaves. For instance bereavement leave, and paternity/maternity leave. For adequate explanation of study variables, more sub-variable should be added to the independent variables. As a result, the current study considered other sub-variables which affects employees' performance though was not considered in the study by Gatimu & Kagiri (2017) like leave entitlement and employee performance.

2.4.3 Stress management and employee performance

Eddy & Narimawati (2017) in their study in Bandung city, Indonesia proposes that there are numerous stress factors (working condition, work shifts, learning new techniques, longer working hours, job risks, and technological changes) that to a greater extent influences employees. They note that these factors indeed are not directly related to employee job performance. However, the same factors are directly related to employee satisfaction which in the long run acts as incentives for employees turn over.

Sampson (2020) conclusions in the banking sector in Nigeria is that work induced stress results to decrease in productivity of the employees. He noted that employees who are under work related stress are not likely to exhibit any positive energy toward their jobs or creative problem

pursuits. Implying that an employee under stress as a result of work is likely to possess greater job dissatisfaction, increased absenteeism, and low morale of work coupled with health problems and low performance. Though the current study would particularly affirm these findings among hotel workers and in Kenya unlike the banking sector.

Gambian perspective, Adam & Lawrence (2020) had it that stress highly and negatively impacts employee performance. The study further revealed that if an organization lacks stress management policies, and strategies, then this additionally results in a negative impact on the growth and performance of the organization.

In a study among employees at Kenya Airways by Beatrice (2020), she did not find any significant relationship between work related stress and employee job performance so that work related Stress could only explain job performance up to 47.7%. The result by (Beatrice, 2020) is contrary to previous studies already reviewed which then necessitates the present study.

Milka & Esther (2019) in their study in Kisii University concluded that work related stress averagely affects employee performance. They found that there is an average positive correlation between work related stress and employee performance. This could be explained up to 42%. This study by Milka & Esther (2019) explained work related stress effects on employee performance of up to 42%. However, this generalization may not be embraced without proper substantiation. First, there is need to understand that the study by Milka & Esther (2019) was conducted in Kisii University. University context is really different from hotel industry and shall there be similarity, then to a small extent. Therefore, the current study should substantiate this finding by in hospitality industry.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review and Knowledge Gaps

A majority of work life balance studies have been done in countries that are either developed or are in advanced stages of development compared to Kenya (Maja & Matija 2017; Hashmi, Ghaithi, & Sartawi 2021; Stella, Iheriohanma, & Iheanacho, 2022; Anekwe 2019; American Psychological Association 2017; Eddy & Narimawati 2017; Adam & Lawrence 2020; Sampson 2020). This implies that the findings from these studies may not really be used hundred percent to inform the position in the Kenyan economy in regards to work life balance and employee performance. Instead there is still need to ascertain with a lot of clarity, the extent to which the suggestions may apply. Thus the need for this present study in the hospitality industry in Kisumu City, Kenya.

Reviewed studies portrayed existing relationships between flexible working hours, leave entitlement, stress management, and employee performance. However, there is other reviewed literature that did not find strong relationship between the latter sub-variables and employee performance. For instance, Beatrice (2020) found a small correlation (47.7%) between works related stress and employee job performance. Eddy & Narimawati (2017) concluded that stress factors are not directly related to employee job performance. Therefore resulting in mixed results. The present stud will hence establish the true position based on its findings.

Besides, it has been evidenced in all the research work reviewed empirically in this study, that no study was based in the hotel industry. Hotel industry is unique owing to the fact that workers employed in this sector are usually on their job for prolonged hours. Hence hotel industry may not be accorded similar treatment as other industries in Kenya. It then implies that work life balance should still be considered for further studies in the hotel sector. Majority of the studies

concentrated on Government departments, banking sector, other corporate organization and in Universities.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section highlights the research design, study area, target population and sampling procedures, data collection and model specification.

3.2 Research design

According to Creswell (2003), a research design is an action plan that a researcher intends to exploit in running his or her research activities. It is meant to help the researcher to keep track of his or her research goals (Cohen, 2013). This study adopted the correlational research design so as to establish the association existing between work life balance and employee performance. Correlational research design enables the researcher to uncover the transformations in study variables resulting from manipulations in another variable.

3.3 Study area

This study focused on the employees in the hotel industry within Kisumu city. Kisumu City is located in Kisumu County in the Western part of Kenya, in the former Nyanza province. Kisumu neighbors Vihiga county, Nandi county and Kericho county and has an estimated population of about 379,000 people according to the 2019 census report. Kisumu was chosen as the study area owing to the vast investments in the hospitality industry and the people's spending culture. The service sector drives the economy of Kisumu town as evident with the vast investments in the hospitality industry and local tourism. The study period was in the year 2023 as the study was concerned with the contemporary situation.

3.4 Target population

According to Neuman (2014), a target population is an element being considered in a study. This study targeted hospitality sector employees from hotels within Kisumu City. The study, therefore, targeted 36 hotels within Kisumu City. The study targeted 36 employees from the 36 hotels so that one employee per hotel forms part of the study.

Table 3.1: Target Population

S/No.	Description	Total
1	Hotel Managers/supervisors/team leaders	36
Total target population		36

3.5 Sample size and sampling procedures

Since the respondents targeted were not many, census sampling technique was applied to study 36 hotel employees within Kisumu city. Census implies head count. Therefore the managers were visited and issued a questionnaire one after another.

3.6 Data collection

Questionnaire was the data collection tool to obtain primary data from the sampled population. The questionnaires were given out to all the 36 hotel representatives in Kisumu City to respond and return back. The questionnaire was prepared in a structured manner and in various sections which contained demographic section and also as per the research objectives.

3.7 Model

The study assumed the regression analysis model to aid establish the nature of the relationship existing between employee performances, flexible working hours, stress management and

employee leave entitlement. Therefore, employee performance was a function of leave entitlement, stress management and flexible working hours.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu$$

Where;

Y = Employee performance

β_0 = Constant of the model

β_1 = Coefficients of the regression equation

X_1 = Flexible working hours

X_2 = Leave entitlement

X_3 = Stress management

μ = Tolerable error

3.8 Data Processing and Analysis

Data collected was sorted, classified, and coded for ease of analysis. SPSS (version 25.0) was used. Tables and other graphical presentations were used in the data presentation. The study utilized a probabilistic functional form of opinions about the relevant variables as observed from the rejoinders in the questionnaire to quantify data (Odek & Luke, 2021). Regression analysis was put into use to aid quantify data and establish the cause-effect relationship between the variables. Correlation analysis was utilized to institute the strength of the association between the variables. Likert scale was the tool for analyzing data (Odek & Luke, 2021).

3.8.1 Test for Normality

To help arrive at results, the researcher performed check for normality to inform the decision on the correct measure of central tendency to utilize in interpretation of data. That is, normality test

proves that the data is normal. As a result, in interpretation section like the demographic section, and reliability section, descriptive approach of interpretation applying measures of central tendency like frequency, mean and median was adopted.

3.9 Data presentation

Data was presented through the use of tables, and graph for easy comprehension after analysis.

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Permission to collect data for this study was sought from the Maseno Ethics Review Committee through the school of graduate studies.

3.11 Pilot Study

Pilot study was carried out by distributing a ten percentum of questionnaires to various hotels which was though not part of the final sample. That is a total of 5 hotel managers were issued questionnaires during the piloting stage to help understand any need for improvement and reduce any flaws realized in the questionnaire items. The findings from the pilot tests were subjected to examination for finality of the final data collection instrument.

3.12 Validity and Reliability

Validity

To establish content validity, supervisors in the school of business at Maseno University was presented with the data collection tool to help evaluate the questionnaire items in line with the study objectives.

Reliability

Reliability was executed with the aid of Cronbach's Alpha. Using Cronbach's Alpha, reliability is expressed as a coefficient between 0 and 1 so that a coefficient greater than or equal to 0.7 is acceptable. Therefore, the closer the co-efficient is to 1, the better for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Response rate

All the 36 sampled respondents were able to fill and return the questionnaire items. The researcher attended to all the sampled hotels. Distributed questionnaires. Some respondents filled on the spot. Others did not fill immediately and therefore the questionnaires were left and collected later on. The researcher ensured that there was 100% response being the small number of the population.

4.2 Reliability test

Table 1: Reliability Co-efficient

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.858	20

Reliability was executed with the aid of Cronbach's Alpha so that the closer the co-efficient is to 1, the better for the study. That is reliability co-efficient of 0.70 or higher is considered acceptable. Hence, as per table 1, Cronbach's Alpha is 0.858 which suggests that the items have relatively high internal consistency. In other words, the questionnaire items included in the data collection tool properly measured the main study variables and consistently.

4.2.1 Factor analysis

This was done with the aim of finding out the adequacy of the data. That is KMO and Bartlett's test were conducted. Besides, factor analysis aid reduce the many questionnaire items into the fewer study variables. This was done by transforming the questionnaire items into the three

independent study variables and one dependent variable. It is majorly applicable in situations of self made questionnaire like in this current study.

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test^a

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.595
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	14.719
	Df	3
	Sig.	.002

a. Based on correlations

Table 2 depicts that KMO was 0.595 \approx 0.6 implying the adequacy of the data. That is KMO is acceptable at 0.5 to 0.7. On the other hand, Bartlett is acceptable when it is less than 0.05 thus as per the table, Bartlett was 0.002.

4.2.2 Descriptive and Normality test

In carrying descriptive statistics, only statistics column is considered and thus illustrated in table 3. Moreover, to check for normality, skewness and, kurtosis are considered.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics.

Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Flexible working hours	2.0	0.76	0.68	0.29
Leave entitlement	1.4	0.39	0.26	-1.272
Stress Management	1.7	0.62	0.53	-0.732

Decision

Mean, standard deviation, Skewness, and kurtosis are acceptable if they are lying between -3 and + 3. Therefore, from table 3, the descriptive statistics is acceptable and the data is normal.

4.2.3 Demographic analysis

This was analysed as below;

Table 4: Demographic analysis

	Description	Count
Gender	Male	23
	Female	13
Highest level of education	Secondary	0
	College	14
	University	21
Position in the hotel	Chief Executive officer	0
	General Manager	9
	Other designations	12

It is evidenced that the majority of the respondents were males, besides most of the respondents were university graduates portraying their ability to respond to questionnaire items. Various titles are utilized in the hotel industry to designate managers thus only 9 respondents had the title general manager. The other respondents had title such as operations managers among others.

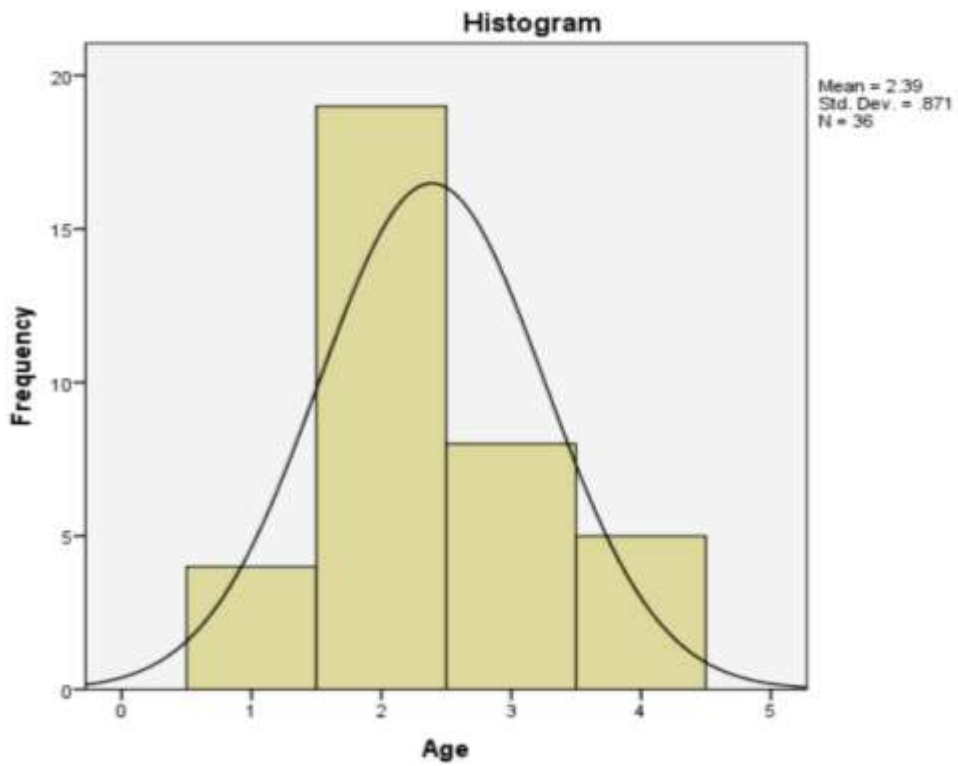
Table 5: Age of the respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Below 25	4	10.5
	26-35	19	50.0
	36-45	8	21.1
	Above 46	5	13.2
	Total	36	94.7
Missing	System	2	5.3
Total		38	100.0

Most respondents were in the age group of 26-35 years old. This implies that they had the experience to respond to the questionnaire items to enable achievement of research objective as illustrated in figure 2.

Figure 1: Age of the respondents

Figure 1 portrays that the age of the respondents is normally represented meaning that there is a proper spread of age of the respondents.



4.2.3 Effect of flexible working hours on employees' performance

Table 6: Response on the effect of flexible working hours on employees' performance

STATEMENTS	SA(1)	A(2)	U(3)	D(4)	SD(5)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1. Flexible working hours improves job commitment	63.2 % (24)	26.3 % (10)	0 -	5.3% (2)	0 -	1.44	0.773	Low perception
2. Flexible work hours reduces stress and promotes efficiency	68.4 % (26)	23.7 % (9)	0 -	0 -	2.6% (1)	1.36	0.762	Low perception
3. Flexible work hours reduces absenteeism	31.6 % (12)	39.5 % (15)	2.6 % (1)	13.2 % (5)	5.3% (2)	2.14	1.216	High perception
4. Flexible working hours enables an employee to work for longer hours while at work	18.4 % (7)	28.9 % (11)	15.8 % (6)	23.7 % (9)	7.9% (3)	2.72	1.279	High perception
5. Flexible working hours improves employees ability to seek new roles	42.1 % (16)	36.8 % (14)	7.9 % (3)	5.3% (2)	2.6% (1)	1.83	1.00	High perception
6. Flexible working hours promotes employee satisfaction	44.7 % (17)	36.8 % (14)	5.3 % (2)	5.3% (2)	2.6% (1)	1.78	0.989	Low Perception
7. Flexible working hours enables workers to produce quality output	68.4 % (26)	23.7 % (9)	2.6 % (1)	-	-	1.31	0.525	Low perception

Decision has been arrived at using the weighted average

Weighted Average = 1.80

Majority of the respondents had low perception that flexible working hours improves job commitment. Besides, there was low perception on the statement that flexible work hours reduces stress and promotes efficiency. On the other hand majority of the responses had high perception that working hours reduces absenteeism and enables an employee to work for longer hours while at work with maximum concentration. Moreover, many people highly responded that flexible working hours improves employees' ability to seek new roles as a result promoting employee satisfaction. Though, there was low perception that flexible working hours enables workers to produce quality output.

4.2.4 Impact of leave entitlement on employee's performance

STATEMENTS	SA(1)	A(2)	U(3)	D(4)	SD(5)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1. Employees are entitled to leave days	78.9% (30)	13.2% (5)	2.6% (1)	-	-	1.19	0.467	Low Perception
2. Leave entitlement improves mood amongst workers	60.5% (23)	28.9% (11)	5.3% (2)	-	-	1.42	0.604	Low Perception
3. Leave entitlement reduces stress among workers	44.7% (17)	44.7% (17)	2.6% (1)	2.6% (1)	-	1.64	0.798	High Perception
4. Leave entitlement enhances overall health boost among employees	57.9% (22)	28.9% (11)	5.3% (2)	2.6% (1)	-	1.50	0,737	High Perception
5. Leave entitlement promotes employee satisfaction	60.5% (23)	26.3% (10)	5.3% (2)	2.6% (1)	-	1.47	0.736	Low Perception
6. Leave entitlement promotes employee efficiency	52.6% (20)	34.2% (13)	5.3% (2)	2.6% (1)	-	1.58	0.841	High Perception
7. Leave entitlement enhances employee job commitment	47.4% (18)	34.2% (13)	5.3% (1)	5.3% (1)	-	1.71	1.017	High Perception

Decision has been arrived at using the weighted average

Weighted Average = 1.50

Majority of the respondents had low perception that employees are entitled to leave days in their organization. Further, most of the respondents had a low view point that leave entitlement improves mood amongst workers. On the other hand, majority of the respondents highly indicated that leave entitlement reduces stress among workers and enhances overall health boost among employees.

4.2.5 Impact of stress management at work on employees' performance

STATEMENTS	SA(1)	A(2)	U(3)	D(4)	SD(5)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Decision
1. My organization has counselling department to help employees manage stress	34.2% (13)	23.7% (9)	10.5% (4)	15.8% (6)	7.9% (3)	2.34	1.371	High Perception
2. Stress reduces employees working performance ability	57.9% (22)	31.6% (11)	2.6% (1)	-	-	1.43	0.655	Low Perception
3. Stress reduces employees energy toward work	52.6% (20)	34.2% (13)	2.6% (1)	2.6% (1)	-	1.54	0.817	Low Perception
4. Stress reduces employees creativity at their work	50% (19)	28.9% (11)	2.6% (1)	5.3% (2)	-	1.58	0.830	Low Perception
5. Stress reduces employees work efficiency	57.9% (22)	34.2% (13)	-	-	-	1.37	0.490	Low Perception
6. Stress reduces employees job commitment	52.6% (20)	34.2% (13)	5.3% (2)	-	-	1.60	0.976	Low Perception

Decision has been arrived at using the weighted average
Weighted Average = 1.64

Majority of the respondents indicated that their organization offer guidance and counselling. The remaining statements had low perception from that respondents.

4.4. Inferential statistics

4.4.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 7: Correlations

		Leave entitlement	Stress management	Employee performance	Flexible working hours
Leave entitlement	Pearson Correlation	1	.506**	.464**	.408*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.004	.013
Stress management	Pearson Correlation	.506**	1	.577**	.242
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.000	.162
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.464**	.577**	1	.683**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000		.000
Flexible working hours	Pearson Correlation	.408*	.242	.683**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	.162	.000	

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

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

This was conducted to understand the cause-effect relationship among the study variables. In table 6, there is moderate correlation between leave entitlement and stress management which is significant ($p=0.506$, $\alpha<0.01$, $\alpha=0.002$). A significant moderate correlation exist between leave entitlement and employee performance ($p=0.464$, $\alpha <0.01$, $\alpha =0.004$). The table likewise portrays significant moderate correlation between leave entitlement and flexible working hours ($p=0.408$, $\alpha<0.05$, $\alpha=0.013$).

A significant moderate correlation exists between stress management and employee performance ($p=0.577$, $\alpha<0.01$, $\alpha=0.000$). Further, there is a weak correlation between stress management and flexible working hours with no significance ($p=0.242$, $\alpha>0.05$, $\alpha=0.162$).

It is similarly evidenced that a significant high correlation exists between employee performance and flexible working hours ($p=0.683$, $\alpha<0.05$, $\alpha=0.0000$).

4.4.2 Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to check the effect of work-life balance on employee performance.

Table 8: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.795 ^a	.632	.596	.32355	.632	17.747	3	3	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible working hours, Stress management, Leave entitlement

R value of 0.795 (80%) tells the fit of the model, that is, the correlation between the predicted values and the observed values. R square value of 0.632 shows that the independent variables (leave entitlement, flexible working hours and stress management) are able to predict dependent variable (employee performance) up to 63%. Other factors, 37% are not explained by the model.

Usually when the independent variables are more, or when the cases analysed are more, then the R square tend to be a bit inflated. This is usually taken into account by the R square change. In this case, the R square change value of 0.632 is similar to R square value of 0.632 therefore depicting that R square is not inflated.

4.4.3 Hypothesis Results

Table 9: ANOVA^a

	Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	5.574	3	1.858	17.747	.000 ^b
1	Residual	3.245	31	.105		
	Total	8.819	34			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible working hours, Stress management, Leave entitlement

The dependent variable employee performance was regressed on the predicting variables of leave entitlement, flexible working hours and stress management. Table 8 shows that the independent variables significantly predict employee performance, $F(3, 31) = 17.747$ where $p < 0.001$, which indicates that leave entitlement, flexible working hours and stress management together have a significant effect on employee performance.

Coefficients were further measured to determine the effect of each of the sub variables of the independent variable on the dependent variable (employee performance). H_{01} - evaluated whether flexible working hours does not affect employee performance. H_{02} - evaluated whether leave entitlement does not affect employee performance and H_{03} -evaluated whether stress management does not affect employee performance.

The coefficient table show that flexible working hours has positive and significant effect on employee performance ($B=0.381$, $t=4.749$, $p=0.000$). Hence H_{01} is rejected. The results also shows that leave entitlement has no significant effect on employee performance ($B=0.012$, $t=0.073$, $p=0.943$). Therefore H_{02} was substantiated. H_{03} - evaluated whether stress management does not affect employee performance. Besides, the result in table 9 show that stress

management has a positive and significant effect on employee performance (B=0.357, t=03.448, p=0.002). Thus H₀₃ is rejected.

Table 10: Coefficients

Variables	B	Standard Error	t	Sig	P significance level	Decision
Constant	.142	.42	.616	.542		
Flexible working hours (H ₀₁)	.381	.516	4.749	.000	P<0.05	Rejected
Leave entitlement (H ₀₂)	.012	.100	.073	.943	p>0.05	Supported
Stress management (H ₀₃)	.357	.436	3.448	.002	P<0.05	Rejected

R=0.632, F (3, 31)

s

Model Application

The model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \mu$ is used. Where by:

Y= dependent variable (Employee performance)

β_0 = Population's regression constant

β_i (i= 0,1,2,3,...n) = are the population's regression coefficients for each independent variable

x_i

μ = the model error variable

Substituting into the equation;

Employee performance= 0.142+0.381*Flexible working hours + 0.012*Leave entitlement+ 0.357*Stress management

Rearranged beta values give;

Table 11: Ranking table

Rank	B value	Variable	Decision
1	0.381	Flexible working hours	Best Predictor
2	0.357	Leave entitlement	
3	0.012	Stress management	

Table 10 gives the best predictor of employee performance as flexible working hours. This implies that hotels that offer flexible working hours tend to have motivated employees who in turn deliver at work.

4.5 Discussions

4.5.1 Effect of flexible working hours on employees' performance

The findings revealed that a significant high correlation exists between employee performance and flexible working hours ($p=0.683$, $\alpha<0.05$, $\alpha=0.0000$). Results also showed that flexible working hours is the best predictor of employee performance with $B=0.381$. Qualitative rejoinders indicated that flexible work patterns reduces burn out implying that flexible working hours indeed influences employees' performance in hotels within Kisumu city. This is in line with findings by Maja & Matija (2017) in Croatia among 171 corporations applying survey study design where he concluded that flexible work arrangements enable flexibility in the design of the employees work which then results to improved performance of the corporation. This current finding also concurs with the findings by Hashmi, Ghaithi, & Sartawi (2021) in United Arab Emirates that workers will produce improved quality outputs, increased job commitment and

total work satisfaction if they are allowed to manage their personal and professional lives with ease using their preferred design. This study similarly substantiates Ochieng & Kamau (2021) who reported that high levels of productivity is exhibited among workers who are allowed to flex their work times compared to workers who embrace traditional approach of longer working hours.

4.5.2 Impact of impact of leave entitlement on employees performance

Results show that a significant moderate correlation exist between leave entitlement and employee performance ($p=0.464$, $\alpha <0.01$, $\alpha =0.004$). Thus, leave entitlement influences employee performance in hotels but to a moderate extent compared to flexible working hours which highly impacts employee performance. Leave entitlement as well moderately predicts employee performance with $B= 0.357$. Other qualitative answers showed that leave entitlement; allows employee some rest, enables time for family and socializing. The outcomes correlates with the results of (Akom, Charles, Florence, & Smart, 2021) that leave to the employees is linearly related to the staff performance. Correspondingly, the study validate the findings by Chungo & Anyieni (2019) in Kenya that employees perform better when often granted annual leave, maternity/paternity leave, bereavement leave, and sick leave.

4.5.3 Impact of stress management at work on employees performance

Quantitative results evidences that a significant moderate correlation exists between stress management and employee performance ($p=0.577$, $\alpha <0.01$, $\alpha=0.000$). It has also been demonstrated that stress management does not highly predict employee performance among hotel workers with $B=0.012$. Qualitative responses demonstrated that stressed employees have

negative attitude towards their work, they have increased absenteeism and therefore it is important to establish sources of stress by human resource managers so that the same is managed among workers. The finding authenticates the results by Milka & Esther (2019) where they concluded from their study that work related stress averagely affects employee performance. The results also validate a study by Beatrice (2020) among employees at Kenya Airways, where she found a small extent of relationship between work related stress and employee job performance so that work related Stress could only explain job performance up to 47.7% in her study. Though the findings do not validate reports by Eddy & Narimawati (2017) who concluded that stress factors are not directly related to employee job performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This study intended to find out the effect of work life balance on employee performance in hotels within Kisumu city. The study applied census sampling technique among 36 hotels. A total of 36 hotel representatives were included in the study which included accountants, marketing managers, front office managers, human resource managers, operations managers, security managers and general managers/supervisors.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The first objective of the study sought to establish the effect of flexible working hours on employee's performance. The results showed that flexible working hours is the best predictor of employee performance. The results also showed that flexible work patterns reduce burn out implying that flexible working hours indeed influences employee's performance in hotels within Kisumu City.

The results also showed that leave entitlement influences employee performance in hotels but to a moderate extent compared to flexible working hours which highly impacts employee performance. Leave entitlement as well moderately predicts employee performance, other qualitative answers showed that leave entitlement; allows employee some rest, enables time for family and socializing.

It has also been demonstrated that stress management does not highly predict employee performance among hotel workers with. Qualitative responses demonstrated that stressed

employees have negative attitude towards their work, they have increased absenteeism and therefore it is important to establish sources of stress by human resource managers so that the same is managed among workers.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concludes that the independent variables (flexible working hours, leave entitlement, and stress management) predict dependent variable (employee performance) up to 63%, that is $R^2=0.632$. It has also been evidenced that flexible working hours highly predicts employee performance while leave entitlement and stress management moderately influences employee performance. This current study as well evidences that even though stress management predicts employee performance in hotels, the variable stress management is an indirect element of work life balance. That is, this variable is partly considered under flexible work patterns and leave entitlement. So that, offering employees flexible work patterns and leave from work automatically work toward reducing stress which explains why an employee would go for flexible work patterns first before considering stress management policies in the institution. Therefore to explain the conflicting results in the literature reviewed, this study support the idea that stress management affects hotel employees performance but to an average extent.

Moreover, based on constraint theory, the main constraint in the hotel set up could be flexible work designs. That is, the human resource managers in the hotel set up should therefore consider implementing flexible work patterns. This will work toward creating positive employee perception and attitude at work which will in turn improve general organizational performance. Furthermore, it is true to conclude that flexible work patterns in the hotel set up allows hotel employees time off their official duties which they utilize in carrying out individual chores. They also consume such times in rejuvenating so that they get back to their work with energy and

hence perform. Moreover, in regard to signaling theory, hotel managements should always put in place attractive policies which will appeal and keep employees to work toward hotel specific and general objectives.

Additionally, it is concluded that the findings in the western countries on factors affecting employee performance really applies to the hotel set ups in developing countries like Kenya and indeed there is need to consider work life balance among employees.

5.4 Recommendation

This quantitative study was conducted in 36 hotels within Kisumu city in Kenya. The study recommends that similar study could be carried out though with larger samples across the country and even internationally for more accurate generalization.

The study variable including flexible working hours, leave entitlement and stress management only explains 63% of employee performance in hotel set up. Therefore, it is recommended that other sub variables of work life balance that were not considered in this study to be considered by other scholars in future studies on the same topic to aid explicate the unsolved 37% of factors affecting employee performance in the hotel set up by this study.

The findings and conclusions of this study were based on firsthand information from employees working in hotels within Kisumu City and therefore the study recommends that they be considered for improvements in the hotel industry.

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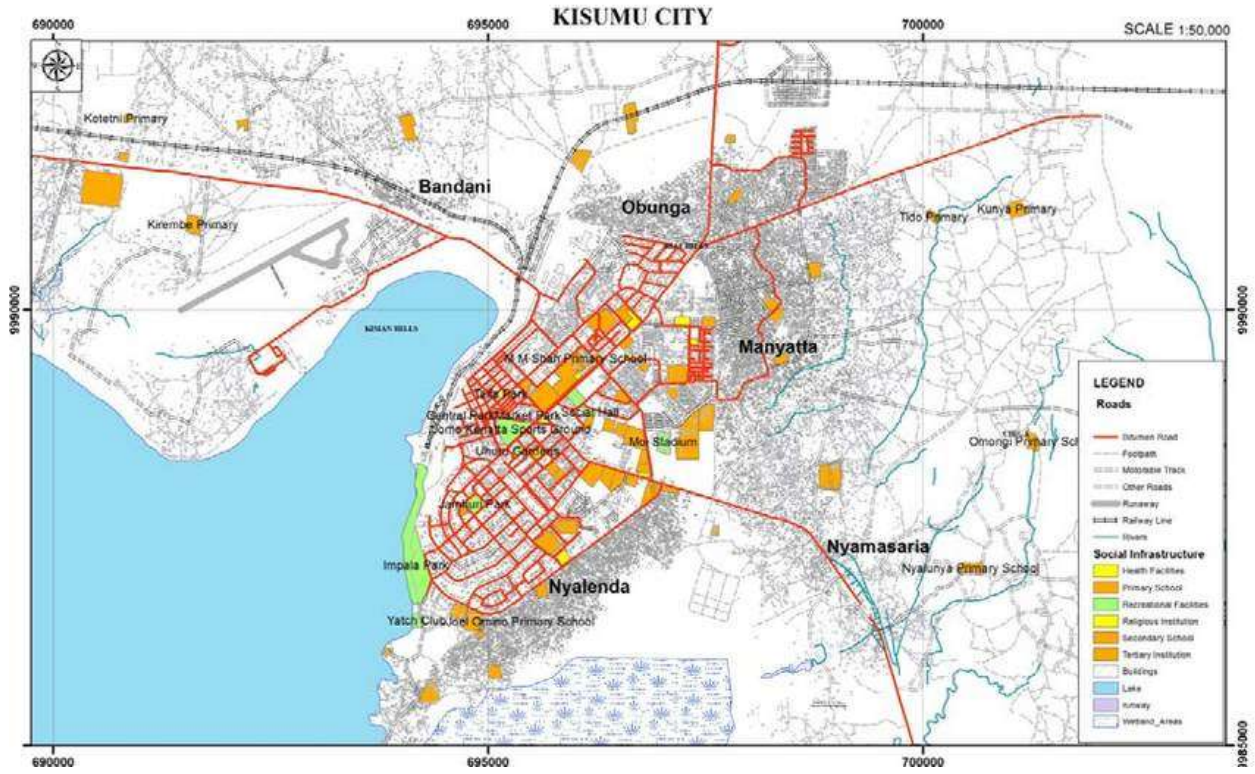
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: MAP OF KISUMU COUNTY



Source; MAPSKID

APPENDIX 2: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Maurine Odhiambo
P.O Box
Kisumu

18th May 2023

To: The Manager,
Hotel.....
P.O. Box, Kisumu

Dear sir/Madam,

RE: REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

I desire to carry out an investigation on the effect of work life balance on employee performance. This is a partial fulfillment of a Master degree at Maseno University, which I am currently undertaking. The study will include you as the hotel manager as my only respondent.

The conclusions of this study will provide the organization with material necessary to help foster and uplift on the employee motivation and this will in turn improve employee performance. A questionnaire that will take approximately 5 minutes to complete is attached.

Kindly note that all the information provided is strictly for this study only and will be treated with severe confidentiality, your designation will not appear in any place in the report.

Yours sincerely,

Maurine Odhiambo

Section C: Impact of leave entitlement on employees’ performance

Please evaluate the extent to which you agree with the statements below where SA is strongly agree, A – Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree. Please tick the appropriate response.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. Employees are entitled to leave days					
2. Leave entitlement improves mood amongst workers					
3. Leave entitlement reduces stress among workers					
4. Leave entitlement enhances overall health boost among employees					
5. Leave entitlement promotes employee satisfaction					
6. Leave entitlement promotes employee efficiency					
7. Leave entitlement enhances employee job commitment					

Any other Comment.....

Section D: Impact of stress management at work on employees’ performance

Please evaluate the extent to which you agree with the statements below where SA is strongly agree, A – Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly Disagree. Please tick the appropriate response.

STATEMENTS	SA	A	U	D	SD
1. My organization has counselling department to help employees manage stress					
2. Stress reduces employees working performance ability					
3. Stress reduces employees’ energy toward work					
iv. 4. Stress reduces employees’ creativity at their work					
v. 5. Stress reduces employees work efficiency					
vi. 6. Stress reduces employees job commitment					

Any other Comment.....