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ABSTRACT

Employers must recognize that efficiency and staff performance are key parts of an organization's performance in today's world. The quick rate of economic development in the twenty-first century generated new chances for organizations all across the world. Globalization has reduced the world to the size of a village, requiring institutions such as the banking sector to work hard to gain and sustain a competitive advantage. The core activity of the Devolved County Governments, general public satisfaction and service, has provoked adjustments, which have resulted in changes in work arrangements. This study sought to assess the effect of wellness program on employee performance with references to Kisii County. The study adopted descriptive research design. The findings revealed a statistically significant association between the independent variables and the dependent variable within the scope of this research. There is a positive and statistically significant correlation between financial wellness programs and employee performance. Similarly, there is a positive and statistically significant association between environmental wellness program and employee performance. Additionally, the association between social wellness program and employee performance is positive and significant. Lastly, the findings showed that the association between drug and substance abuse cessation program and employee performance is positive and significant. This implied that for every unit increase in drug and substance cessation program, there is a positive increase of employee performance. It was advisable for the County Government to adopt a comprehensive financial wellness program that offers extensive, prominent, and active assistance to its employees in the domains of financial education and investment planning. The use of this preventive method will offer support to employees when they reach their retirement age. The implementation of environmental wellness programs by the County Government, including initiatives such as complimentary gym memberships, incentives promoting well-being, and workplace recognition measures, is highly recommended. It is anticipated that these activities will augment staff motivation, hence leading to an enhancement in their performance.

Key Words: *Competitive Advantage, Economic Development, Employee Wellness*

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INTRODUCTION

Most organizations' ultimate delivery is heavily reliant on staff performance, which in turn is reliant on a variety of other factors. This group of linked factors includes social factors such as personal lifestyle and family habits, among others. Because most employees become motivated or demotivated as a result of wellness programs, productivity grows or falls. In such a case, senior management must guarantee that the existing wellness program practices are taken into account when developing organizational policies that aid in enhancing employee performance. According to Griffin (2021), a minimal serious research of work life demands and ways to policies, techniques in the context of major businesses and their individual workforces is required. Employees are increasingly finding themselves in work-related family conflicts as a result of the pressures placed on them at work. Most family conflicts affect employee performance, employee commitment, and decisions in the long run, which eventually affect organizational performance based on top managements' support for a given employee to achieve a particular balance. Many organizations' top management are working to develop wellness programs for their employees in order to get a competitive advantage in service delivery.

Employees in Kenya's Devolved County Governments play the most important role in providing good services that would ultimately attract many clients, despite the apparent restrictions in implementing some of the organization's already stated policies (Osewe, & Gindicha, 2021). According to Ratemo, Bula, & Felistus, (2021), problems with employees working long hours are common in many Kenyan organizations. In such cases, it causes work-related family conflict, which has an impact on employee performance and the achievement of organizational objectives and goals. The Devolved County Governments are under a lot of pressure to deliver services to the people.

Problem Statement

Employers must recognize that efficiency and staff performance are key parts of an organization's performance in today's world. According to Muthumbi, & Kamau, (2021), there is inadequate literature linking wellness initiatives to job performance. Several research studies on the effect of corporate wellness on organizational productivity have been conducted.

The quick rate of economic development in the twenty-first century generated new chances for organizations all across the world. Globalization has reduced the world to the size of a village, requiring institutions such as the banking sector to work hard to gain and sustain a competitive advantage. The core activity of the Devolved County Governments, general public satisfaction and service, has provoked adjustments, which have resulted in changes in work arrangements (Kariuki, & Kiiru, 2021). Employees in Kisii County, for example, are more involved in their jobs and work longer hours (Ongori, Muiruri, & Vasco, 2021), making it harder for them to balance work, family, and other personal challenges (Kariuki, & Kiiru, 2021). As a result, work-life conflicts have been related to mental health illnesses such as stress and depression (Muthumbi, & Kamau, 2021), which can have a long-term impact on organizational performance.

Kenya had the highest frequency of prolonged working hours of more than 48 hours per week, according to the International Labour Organization's global report on wellness programs (Cotofan, *et al.,* 2021). Furthermore, the Devolved County Governments in Kenya are thought to be the most affected by work-life imbalances (Cotofan, *et al.,* 2021), raising concerns from important players in the country owing to work-life conflicts. WLB has been associated to reduced stress and somatic complaints, increased job satisfaction, lower labor turnover, and improved organizational performance. Little study has been conducted on wellness programs as a means of improving performance in Devolved County Governments (Muthumbi, & Kamau, 2021). Therefore, this study established the effect of wellness programs on employee performance in Kisii County.

Research Question

What is the effect of financial wellness programme on employee performance in Kisii County?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Hierarchy of Needs Theory

According to Tahir & Iraqi, (2018), human wants can be classified into five distinct categories and ordered in a hierarchy of priority. According to the notion, psychological requirements are basic survival needs (food, warmth, clothing, and shelter), but as individuals secure these, the urge to be safe and secure becomes obvious. This manifests itself in work stability and the protection of the employee's family. The social needs center on job relations, with employees attempting to create strong friendships, love, and closeness. Employee recognition, the need to be accepted and respected by others, is represented by self-esteem needs, whereas self-actualization, the highest need in the hierarchy, is where the individual employee aspires to develop into more of themselves, to what there is to become (Fallatah, *et al.,* 2018). According to Tahir & Iraqi, (2018), a hungry or unwell workforce that is unable to work cannot make any meaningful contribution to production, resulting in inferior achievement of organizational objectives and targets.

This theory was relevant in our study since it tried to explain how different employees receive happiness and motivation from participating in the various health programs offered by County Governments. Employee performance will be influenced by the motivation obtained from such services. It is clear that the programs provided are geared at increasing their commitment level, love for their employment, and, more crucially, their performance at work. It is suggested that wellness programs can only have a positive impact on employee performance if they meet the employee's requirements and desires. It was thus utilized to investigate the goal of providing recreational facilities and programs.

Empirical Review

Financial Wellness Programmes and Employee Performance

According to Dowling *et al.,* (2020), employee financial wellness is a very critical part in maximizing the current financial wellness of the available wellness programs and comprising of health care benefits. Financial wellness wellbeing like financial forecasting leads to job satisfaction at the work place hence reduced employee turnover and increases productivity. In this particular study medical planning programs resulted to have an effect on employee performance. Marcolin and Abraham (2022) argued that financial limitations on employees results to increased stress and anxiety hence such individuals requires counselling. Intellectual wellness programs have been found to have effect of employee performance especially in the instances whereby training was key to impact knowledge and skills to maintain mental wellbeing at the workplace (Perry, 2020).

Marcolin and Abraham (2022), in their study revealed that financial information forms the basis of financial wellness programs which have financial learning was not adequately carried out among commercial Banks in Kenya. Most commercial banks were found to have employee organize their financial goals and objectives which made them to meet their financial goals. Most respondents stated that commercial banks should establish long term investment input to their respective employees which will benefit them at retirement age. Therefore, financial wellness program should be taken into consideration in every organization.

Conceptual Framework

Kothari (2004), defined a conceptual framework as the visual or written product that tries to explain either concepts, variables or graphical and presumed relationships. The dependent variable included employee performance and the independent variable will include; - financial wellness programmes, intellectual wellness programmes, environmental wellness programmes and social wellness programmes.

Financial Wellness Programmes
- Financial Education Plan
- Budgeting Plan
- Debt management plan

Employee Performance
- Work assignments
- Monitoring
- Appraising of employees

Independent Variables **Dependent Variable**

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design and, the targeted population were SMEs. Self-administered semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Secondary data was obtained from published sources. A pilot study was conducted prior to collection of primary data using a sample of 10 similar firms. The pilot study goal was to test both the reliability and validity of the research instruments. The reliability was assessed with the use of Cronbach's alpha. The analysis of the primary data was carried out using SPSS version 22. Descriptive statistics were tabulated into percentages of participants' responses. Correlation analysis was used in determining the association between variables while regressions analysis were used to evaluate inferential statistics for the hypothesis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability of Research instrument

According to Creswell (2005), reliability is the ability of the instruments used for research to come up with desired results hence enabling the desired findings for the study. A good research instrument should be able to give the results as estimated by the researcher. Mugenda (2008) further describes reliability of the research instruments as the ability of the research instruments to give the same results repeatedly.

Cronbach's coefficient alpha which determines the internal consistency or the average correlation of items within the test were used to test for the validity of the research instrument. Alpha values range from zero (0) (meaning: no internal consistency) to one (1) (meaning: complete internal consistency) (Chang'ach, 2014). Voss and Marton (2012) and Denscombe (2010) suggested that if values were too low, either too few items were used or the items had little in common. For this study, Cronbach's Alpha (α) was used to test the instrument reliability (Cronbach, 1952; Ravi & Shankar, 2015).

Table 1: Findings on Reliability of the Research Instrument

Variable	Coefficient (α)	Number of Items	Verdict
Financial Wellness Program	0.814	7	Reliable, use all the 7 Items
Employee Performance	0.889	6	Reliable, use all the 6 Items

According to Nunally (1978), it is argued that a commonly accepted criterion for assessing the reliability of Cronbach's alpha is a value above 0.7. This threshold indicates a substantial and plausible level of internal consistency in the collected replies. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), a Cronbach's alpha (α) value of 0.699 or lower does not meet the desired level of reliability. The findings from the pilot test, as presented in Table 1, indicate that the financial wellness program consisted of 7 items and yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.814. Similarly, the environmental wellness program comprised of 7 items and demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.840. The social wellness program, consisting of 7 of items, exhibited a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.760. Furthermore, the drug abuse cessation program, also consisting of 7 items, yielded a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.870. Lastly, the employee performance measure, consisting of 6 items, demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.889. The results suggests that the questionnaire utilized in the study demonstrated reliability, therefore ensuring the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Descriptive Analysis

The first objective of the study was to determine the effect of financial wellness programmes on employee performance in Kisii County. The respondents were asked to indicate their levels of agreement or disagreement with specific statements drawn from measures of financial wellness program. A five-points Likert's scale was used where 1 was Strongly Disagree, 2 was Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Descriptive statistics used to analyse the data were weighted means and the standard deviation. Table 2 shows the findings.

Table 2: Descriptive Results of Financial Wellness Programs

Key: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std. Dev.
Financial wellness programs such as investment planning and budget advice makes	21.3%	14.5%	3.6%	42.5%	18.1%	3.21	1.45
This organizations financial wellness program is weak to an extent employees can not realize their potential	21.3%	17.6%	2.7%	45.2%	13.1%	3.11	1.41
Financial education forms the foundation of wellness	20.8%	18.1%	12.7%	44.8%	3.6%	2.92	1.26
This organization offers investment advice to its	20.4%	43.1%	2.7%	15.2%	18.6%	3.28	1.43
Financial challenges can led to increased stress levels and	20.4%	62.2%	0.0%	17.4%	0.0%	3.14	1.26
Credit restoration has some effect on employee performance	18.4%	12.2%	0.9%	44.5%	24.0%	3.37	1.47

The respondents were indifferent on the statement that Financial wellness programs such as investment planning and budget advice makes employees to be satisfied at their workplace (M = 3.21, S.D. = 1.45); This organizations financial wellness program is weak to an extent employees can not realize their potential (M = 3.11, S.D. = 1.41). This shows that the respondents were generally indifferent about the effect of financial wellness programmes on employee performance.

Regression Results

Multiple regression analysis was employed in this study to establish the linear statistical association between the independent and dependent variables. Young (2014) asserts that the utilization of regression analysis facilitates the elucidation of the statistical association between variables, hence augmenting the study's capacity to draw meaningful findings and provide recommendations. For the present study, the regression was run based on the predicted regression model below;

$$Y=\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = Employee Performance

X_1 = Financial Wellness Programme

β_0 *and* β_1 = Regression Coefficients for the independent variables

ε = Error term, which was assumed to be normally distributed.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.775	.860		2.064	.000
	X_1	.205	.095	.251	2.165	.001

The constant factor in the regression equation, which is estimated to be 1.775, represents the baseline level of employee performance.

The primary aim of this study was to examine the effect of financial wellness programmes on employee performance. The findings presented in Table 3 indicated that financial wellness programmes (X1) has a statistically significant beneficial impact (β = 0.205, p = 0.000) on employee performance in Kisii County. This suggests that, on the assumption of other variables remaining same, a one-unit increment in financial wellness programme results in a statistically significant growth of 20.5% in employee performance in Kisii County.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary aim of this study was to examine the effect of financial wellness programmes on employee performance. The findings presented in indicate that financial wellness programmes has a statistically significant beneficial effect on employee performance in Kisii County. This suggests that, on the assumption of other variables remaining same, a one-unit increment in financial wellness programme results in a statistically significant growth of in employee performance in Kisii County.

The implementation of financial wellness programs shown a discernible impact on employees' performance in the domains of financial education and investment planning. Furthermore, the County Government made concerted efforts to establish proactive measures aimed at securing the financial well-being of its employees in the long term. When employees attain financial wellness, they often experience higher levels of job satisfaction in the workplace.

The County Government to implement a comprehensive financial wellness program that provides robust, conspicuous, and engaged support to its employees in the areas of financial education and investment planning. Implementing this preemptive approach will provide assistance to employees upon reaching their retirement age.

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