WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN FIVE- STAR HOTELS IN KENYA

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Human Resource Management of Murang'a University of Technology

August, 2025

DECLARATION

Student Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has not been presented for a degree in this or any other University. I understand what plagiarism is and I am aware of the University policy in this regard. I understand that any false claim in respect of this work shall result in disciplinary action in accordance with the University Anti-Plagiarism Policy.

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Supervisors' Approval

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend the acceptance of Murang'a University of Technology a Thesis entitled, "**Work-Life Balance Practices and Employee Engagement in Five- star Hotels in Kenya."**

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents; Simon Mbuva Kathukya and Sarah Mueni Kathukya. Thank you for believing in me and constant encouragement throughout this academic journey.

ABSTRACT

In the last five years, hotels in Kenya have recorded an employee turnover rate of more than 50% suggesting dissatisfaction and disengagement. As a result, low engagement has led to poor productivity, high pressure on employees, poor customer service, high recruitment and training costs which negatively affect customer satisfaction and overall success of these hotels. This study examined the effect of work-life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs and employee assistance programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Further, the study sought to examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The study was guided by the Social exchange theory as the main theory. It was also supported by Spillover theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory, and Organizational Support Theory. The study adopted a positivism research philosophy and a descriptive research design. The study had a target population of 25 five-star hotels in Kenya. Multistage sampling technique was employed. Purposive sampling was adopted to select seven five-star hotels in Kenya then stratified random sampling was used to distribute the sample size among the selected five star hotels. Slovin's formula was employed to obtain a sample size of 369 employees. A structured five-point Likert questionnaire was adopted in data collection. Descriptive statistics employed percentages, mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation. Correlation and regression analysis were applied in inferential statistics. A pilot study was conducted in two five-star hotels which represent 8% of the entire population. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the reliability of the research instrument and all variables had coefficients above 0.7 which is considered as high reliability. Factor analysis, expert reviews and pilot test were conducted to ensure validity of the instrument. The results of multiple linear regression analysis indicated that work life balance practices account for 84.4% of the variance in employee engagement. Organizational support increased R^2 by 3.2% and was found to have a moderating effect on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement. The findings of this study contribute to the development of existing theories, provide meaningful insights to policy makers to enhance employee engagement and will give researchers crucial empirical evidence in future studies. Findings of this study contribute to empirical evidence, and fill both contextual and theoretical gaps. The study concluded that there was a significant relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement. The study recommended that five-star hotels should provide necessary tools and technology to support remote working. Further, the study recommended that the medical insurance cover should be expanded, that safety training should be regular, that employees should be allowed to use recreational facilities availed in the hotels and that employees should be given paid time off. Further research is recommended to explore the generalizability of these findings to other sectors such as health, education, manufacturing and retail. Future studies can consider other determinants of employee engagement, conduct comparative studies across different regions and employ other tools; interviews and focus groups in data collection.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CGL	Capital Group Limited
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CWP	Corporate Wellness Programs
DF	Degrees of Freedom
EAP	Employee Assistance Programs
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
EPRA	Energy, Petroleum and Regulatory Authority
FWA	Flexible Work Arrangements
IT	Information Technology
KCB	Kenya Commercial Bank
KEBS	Kenya Bureau of Standards
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
KPA	Kenya Ports Authority
MMR	Moderated Multiple Regression
NACOSTI	National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OS	Organizational Support
OST	Organizational Support Theory
PLS	Partial Least Squares
SET	Social Exchange Theory
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
VPN	Virtual Private Network
WLB	Work-Life Balance

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Flexible Work Arrangements:	Refer to those employment arrangements that permit employees to change their work schedule, the number of hours they work, or the location they work from.
Employee Engagement:	It is the level of commitment and willingness of an employee to go beyond their defined tasks to ensure the success of the organization.
Remote working:	It's an arrangement that gives employees more freedom to select where they want to work from and conduct work-related activities from their homes typically utilizing digital technology.
Employee Assistance Programs:	Refer to the employer-sponsored workplace programs that are implemented to support employees stemming from emotional issues, stress, health, psychological, legal, substance use, and marital concerns.
Corporate Wellness Programs:	Refer to practices intended to facilitate people's ability to adopt healthy behaviours, adjust unhealthy lifestyles, and achieve a balanced picture of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual health.
Work-life balance:	It refers to the compatibility between the personal and professional lives of employees and ensuring needs of workers are satisfied in both work and family aspects.
Job sharing:	It's an arrangement that gives employees more time to attend to personal or family commitments and development of partnerships among or between job sharers by learning from each other.
Flextime:	It's an arrangement that gives workers freedom of choice when they do their work by enabling individual control over the start and finish time of a working day.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Employees are regarded as a vital component of an organization's value, and their engagement is crucial for meeting the goals and objectives of an organization (Atiku & Van Wyk, 2024). However, keeping employees engaged with their assigned tasks has emerged as one of the greatest challenges in today's workplace (Satya, Supriadi, Setiadi & Desmintari, 2022). Employee engagement has been a key obstacle that industries have attempted to address for decades (Naqshbandi, Kabir, Ishak & Islam, 2024). Alfiyanto and Sukarno (2023) describe employee engagement as the level of involvement or emotional commitment a worker has towards their employer. Chanana and Sangeeta (2021), define it as the level of commitment and willingness of an employee to go beyond their defined tasks to ensure the success of their organization. This study adopted the definitions by Alfiyanto and Sukarno (2023) and Chanana and Sangeeta (2021).

While researchers have strived to comprehend how to engage workers under different circumstances, prominent global managers have proved that establishing employee engagement while delivering substantial business achievements is attainable (Juyumaya & Torres, 2023; Sathyanarayana, 2024). The continued commitment of various industries to enhance employee engagement is demonstrated through global programs focused at measuring engagement levels (Gallup, 2018; Lim, 2023). Employee engagement enhances productivity, innovation, performance and overall business success in the global landscape which has propelled this growth (Sjahruddin, Sari & Hakiki, 2024). The indicators of employee engagement in this study include job satisfaction, commitment and efficiency of workers.

Mann and Harter (2016) stated that there is a crisis in employee engagement in the world which has had a lasting effect on the global economy. According to the State of the Global Workplace 2023 report, only 17% of Kenyan workers are engaged while 83% are either "quiet quitting" (not engaged) or "loud quitting" (actively disengaged) (Gallup, 2023). The 83% are disengaged from their jobs and are only stuck with their employers because the chances of finding another job are minimal. The report categorizes quiet quitters as workers who are mentally disconnected from their jobs

and put in the bare minimum of effort while loud quitters are the employees who make decisions that actively harm the organization, such as sabotaging objectives and challenging leaders at work (Gallup, 2023). Kenya's engagement level of 17% is lower than that of countries like Uganda (18%), Tanzania (24%), the Republic of Congo (30%), and Mali, which topped the rank with 47%. Additionally, it is lower than 20% of the Sub-Saharan region and the global average of 23% (Gallup, 2023). About 31% of Kenyan employees surveyed by Gallup faced challenges such as daily stress, anger and cited work-life balance strategies such as flexible working and increased wellness programs, as measures that can be adopted to increase employee engagement (Gallup, 2023). A recent report by Gallup revealed that globally, the level of employee engagement in the hospitality industry was at 28% which was the lowest compared to other sectors examined such a healthcare, education, retail and manufacturing (Gallup, 2024)

Since the emergence of COVID-19, the 'why' of work has shifted, and employees now expect different things from their employers e.g. a caring employer, greater work-life balance, and flexibility in their work (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020). The world of work is continuously changing and has become increasingly volatile as a result of global competition, demographic and societal changes and rapid growth of internet usage that compel organizations to seek new innovative ways to foster and preserve engagement in the workforce (Smith, 2023). Recognizing the crucial role of a driven, talented, and resourceful workforce in handling business problems and market conditions, organizational leaders continually emphasize the significance of employee engagement (Porath, 2023; Parent & Lovelace, 2018 and Even & Christiansen, 2023). The HR Congress in 2022 suggested that employer value propositions should incorporate work-life balance to engage employees as they recover from the effects of COVID-19 and the Great Resignation. Further, organizations must be innovative in how they structure and organize work to attract and win the hearts of employees (Chin, 2024).

Five-star hotels in Kenya face challenges such as employee turnover, recruitment costs, low productivity and poor customer relationships. The importance of employee engagement has been more emphasized in the hospitality industry since human resources make a decisive contribution to service quality and customer experience

(Aslam, Nor, Omar & Bustaman, 2020). Understanding the need for organizations to invest in human resource practices that drive employee engagement is imperative (Tensay & Singh, 2020). Without proper employee engagement, an organization cannot survive for a lengthy period. Employee engagement is therefore a concept that organizations cannot afford to ignore.

Recently, the discourse around work-life balance (WLB) has gained widespread attention from researchers and management practitioners (Nicklin, Meachon & McNall, 2019). This can be attributed to the rapid changes in the workplace such as technological advancements, remote working, globalization and other demographic factors such as age and gender that have led to the increased difficulty for individuals to effectively manage their personal and work lives. Various emerging trends have been observed in the work-life balance practices of organizations such as the rise in employment of women, the existence of dual-career couples, and emphasis on high quality of work–life through recreational facilities and other leisure activities (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022). Today, employees confront the challenge of combining work and family life in an increasingly demanding workplace. Sen and Hooja (2018) observed that there is a growing concern as the hours of work are getting longer along with added pressures and demands of work, leaving very little time for quality time beyond the work environment. Work-life balance practices are designed to reduce work-family conflict and enable employees to be effective in both work and personal roles (Gragnano, Simbula & Miglioretti, 2020).

The concept of work-life balance is commonly used to describe policies that were previously known as family-friendly policies, though they have been extended beyond the scope of the family (Obiageli, Uzochukwu, & Ngozi, 2015). Work-life balance is the degree to which the satisfaction of employees is related to their work and family roles (Bellmann & Hubler, 2021). Work-life balance enables employees to manage both work and family assignments to reach an equilibrium position without inconveniencing the other (Kar & Misra, 2017). Work-life balance emphasizes on the compatibility between the personal and professional lives of employees and ensuring needs of workers are satisfied in both work and family aspects (Haar et al., 2019). The current study defines work-life balance as harmonizing work and family roles in a win-win situation to create a healthy and supportive work environment, which allows

individuals to have a balance between work and personal responsibilities.

Different researchers have identified various work-life balance practices (Poulose & Sudarsan, 2017). These practices include flexible work arrangements (flextime, job sharing, remote working, compressed workweek, telecommuting), corporate wellness programs (safety programs, screening programs, fitness programs, and recreational facilities), leave programs (family leave, adoptive leave, annual leave, study leave, parental leave, maternity/parental leave, compassionate leave, and emergency leave) and employee assistance programs such as workplace counselling, coaching, childcare services, mentorship, training, financial support, medical health insurance and having supportive managers (Brough, Timms, Chan, Hawkes & Rasmussen, 2022). Work–life balance enables employees to integrate their work and family demands, which can in turn lead to enhanced employee productivity and significant business improvement (Rothbard, Beetz & Harari, 2021). Further, it can bring multiple benefits to organizations as employees can be more motivated, productive, less stressed and increases the effective commitment of individuals to the organization (Duan, Deng & Wibowo, 2023).

1.1.1 Global Perspective of Work-life Balance Practices and Employee Engagement

Globally, work-life balance practices have been adopted by major corporations such as Google, Apple, Oracle, World Resources Institute, Microsoft, Ford, Amazon, Hub Spot, Infosys, Facebook, and Deloitte. These practices benefit employees and organizations collectively (Mulang, 2022). Smith (2023) asserted that the freedom to choose when and where to work is a growing priority for people struggling to fulfill the many roles they play within and outside work, yet many companies still fail to make these practices a reality for employees, or, if they do, they discriminate against those who take up the option of working remotely. Engaged employees are more likely to achieve favourable organizational results such as decreased turnover, increased retention, higher customer satisfaction, and record higher productivity in the USA (Smith, 2023). In addition, work- life balance has emerged as a significant aspect in employee attraction and retention, and is associated with higher levels of engagement among workers (Brough et al., 2022).

Most business leaders understand the importance of providing working environments

where people can thrive, where workloads are manageable and where there is a good work–life balance but many of them are not taking action to make this happen (Smith, 2023). Work-life imbalance brings absenteeism and stress among employees, low productivity, dissatisfaction with work, and other negative psychological symptoms (Durodolu & Mamudu, 2020). To overcome these issues, human resource experts are integrating work-life balance practices with strategic business goals to inculcate a better perception of employees concerning their work environment to achieve positive work related outcomes (Lee & Eissenstat, 2018). Many article reviews have highlighted the importance of work-life balance in achieving better job outcomes such as employee engagement (Mulang, 2022; Brough et al., 2022). Studies have shown that if the organization can provide various support measures for employees to achieve work-life balance, then employees will better recognize the company's values and increase their commitment to the organization (Aruldoss, Kowalski & Parayitam, 2021).

In China, long working hours have become a cultural phenomenon that is difficult to question and change in the hospitality industry and employees are increasingly required to sacrifice their personal lives and family responsibilities to meet their heavy workloads (Liu-Lastres, Wen & Huang, 2022). This often leads to work-life conflicts and unhappiness (Jolly, Gordon & Self, 2022). These concerns are shared by hotels internationally because they are harmful to hotelier motivation, engagement, and retention (Guzzo, Abbott & Lee, 2022; Varga, Mistry, Ali & Cobanoglu, 2021). Notably, more than 50% of the global tourism and hospitality workforce are females (UNWTO, 2019). With the increasing trend of dual-career families and female employees, employers have to consider family-friendly policies in the workplace (Mooney, 2020).

In Indonesia, the challenge of employee engagement lies on the company workforce as they face the challenge of entering the millennial generation in the world of work. Millennial generations have different thoughts and demands, need attention because of their growing numbers in the workplace and retaining them is important for business growth (Mohd, Shah & Zailan, 2016). A research conducted by Mohd et al., (2016) found that employee engagement can be influenced by rewards, work environment, and work-life balance. Lasarati, Hasanati and Istiqomah (2019) asserted

that organizations can enhance the level of employee engagement by taking into account the welfare of employees' personal and professional lives. The study also supported the need for human resource managers to align work-life balance practices with corporate strategic objectives in order to improve employees' perceptions of their workplace and achieve outcomes related to the workplace, such as employee engagement.

Iqbal, Zia, Arif, Raza and Ishtiaq (2017) indicated that employee engagement led to favourable organizational outcomes like lower intention to leave the company, higher customer satisfaction, and higher levels of productivity and profit in the banking industry of Faisalabad in Pakistan. In addition, the findings suggested that employers should create a conducive environment for workers that will enable them to maintain a healthy work-life balance (Iqbal et al., 2017). Poor work-life balance leads to burnout as employees struggle to balance their personal life and their work with most deciding to leave if they feel the pressure is beyond them (Adeyinka-Ojo, 2018). Jaharuddin and Zainol (2019) found a positive relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement among executive employees in Klang Valley, Malaysia. The employees were more motivated, productive, and willing to go above and beyond expectations to support their companies' survival and expansion when engaged in their work. Work-life balance was found to have a significant effect on employee engagement as it allowed employees to attend to both their work and non-work responsibilities, which made them more passionate and committed (Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019).

In Europe, Bjork-Fant, Bolander and Forsman (2023) stated that work-life balance and work engagement were significantly correlated throughout European welfare states. When the welfare regime was factored into the research, the differences in work-life balance between countries were minimized. Additionally, the findings revealed that work-life balance was part of the socioeconomic backdrop, and this ought to be included in the development and execution of future work-life policies, as well as the construction of health-promoting workplaces throughout Europe (Bjork-Fant et al., 2023). Znidarsic and Maric (2021) hinted that, improving work-life balance had a favourable impact on life and work happiness, and life contentment which resulted to increased work engagement. Organizations can strengthen teachers' work engagement by valuing them while also promoting a harmonious work-life balance in the form of

family-friendly policies and practices, which contribute to positive employee behaviour and improves teacher productivity (Znidarsic & Maric, 2021).

Aveline and Kumar (2017) emphasized that employee engagement levels were found to be higher for those with better work-life balance policies in the software industries in Chennai, India. Additionally, the motivated employees were more keen in both what they did and in their efforts to support the organization's success, felt more responsible and accountable and recorded lower absence rates. Aveline and Kumar (2017) recommended the implementation of more effective work-life balance programs to increase job engagement. Nishanthi and Thalgaspitiya (2015) affirmed that work-life balance had a positive and significant impact on the job engagement of married female machine operators in the apparel sector in Sri Lanka. Lack of work-life balance can destroy employees' family life, psychological health, and well-being, which will lead to dissatisfaction and disengagement with their work (Rashid, Subhan & Imran, 2022). Likewise, the longer the working hours, the lesser the ability to balance their work life and personal life, and the higher their dissatisfaction with work (Rashid et al., 2022).

Despite decades of organizational focus, employee engagement remains a persistent challenge globally, with only 23% of workers reported as engaged in the state of the global workplace report 2024 (Gallup, 2024). The hospitality industry recorded the lowest level of employee engagement (28%) compared to other sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing etc. Key unresolved issues include the lack of standardized engagement measurement tools, difficulties in adapting strategies across diverse cultures and generations, and limited managerial capacity to drive engagement (Gallup, 2024). The rise of remote and hybrid work models has also introduced complexities in maintaining connection and motivation. Furthermore, many organizations continue to struggle with translating engagement theory into meaningful, sustained practices (Gallup, 2024).

1.1.2 Regional Perspective of Work-life Balance Practices and Employee Engagement

Work-life balance is crucial in Sub-Saharan Africa as businesses struggle to strike a balance between the social needs of their workforce and productivity demands (Kumar, Sarkar & Chahar, 2023). Although many organizations in Africa acknowledge the value of work-life balance in raising employee engagement,

operational difficulties, such as staff turnover that put a strain on remaining employees, make practical implementation difficult (Oyewobi, Oke, Adeneye, Jimoh, & Windapo, 2022). As a result, workers experience more stress, which lowers their job satisfaction and commitment (Akom, Obeng-Sarpong, Aflakpui & Sarpong, 2021).

Work-life balance in African countries is considered more challenging compared to developed countries (Muasya, 2023). According to the state of the global workplace report, only 20% of the workforce in the Sub-Saharan Africa are engaged while 63% are not engaged and 17% are actively disengaged (Gallup, 2024). 74% of the employees surveyed indicated that they were struggling and were actively seeking for new jobs and better opportunities. The role played by work life balance in boosting employee engagement remains a major concern for employees, managers and organizations and has also attracted the attention of researchers in Africa. However, despite the increased interest globally, there has been an under-representation of academic work on work-life balance across the African continent (Muasya, 2023).

In Nigeria, Sheyindemi, Daniel and Abubakar (2023) established that maintaining a healthy balance between work and personal obligations affected how paramilitary staff were involved in their work. Sheyindemi et al., (2023) further demonstrated that improving employee engagement is a successful strategy for raising organizational performance and keeping talented workers on board. Similarly, employee behavioural outcomes like engagement, job satisfaction, and the intention to stay were predicted by work leave policies, flexible work arrangements, employee time off, employee social support, and dependent care initiatives within Commercial Banks in Nigeria (Oludayo, Falola, Ahaka & Fatogun, 2018). The study highlighted the need for top management to evaluate the suitability and relevance of work-life balance programs, policies, and activities that support and encourage employees concerning their personal and family life issues to promote appropriate behaviour at work. Employers who support work-life balance are seen by employees as being concerned about their wellbeing, which also motivates them to be more dedicated and may eventually result in lower levels of turnover, absenteeism, and improved engagement (Varga et al., 2021). This is confirmed by Opoku, Kwao and Johnson (2023) who indicated that work-life balance boosts productivity and produces positive results, such as low absenteeism, reduced turnover intentions, good organizational citizenship behaviour,

high performance and improved employee engagement in Ghana.

In South African context, Els, Brouwers and Lodewyk, (2021) established that employees with high levels of quality of work life will be able to satisfy their personal and working needs, have no intention to leave the organization and their commitment to the organization is enhanced. Mohamed and Zaki (2017) in Egypt provided evidence that motivated workers were more committed to their jobs, stayed with the same company for a longer period of time, and made an effort to go an extra mile. In Ethiopia, Muzeyin et al., (2022) revealed that employee engagement was significantly influenced by work-life balance as it led to improved employee commitment and engagement while assisting staff in achieving organizational goals.

According to the State of the Global Workplace report in 2024, employee engagement level in Sub-Saharan Africa is at 20% which is below the global average (Gallup, 2024). This challenge could be attributed to economic instability, poor governance, and limited prioritization of human resource development. Many organizations operate without strategic HR frameworks or evidence-based engagement models, often borrowing Western approaches that lack contextual relevance (Muasya, 2023). Job insecurity, poor communication, and weak leadership contribute to widespread disengagement in Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, there is a lack of investment in understanding local drivers of engagement, and research in this area remains sparse, limiting region-specific interventions (Gallup, 2024).

1.1.3 Local Perspective of Work-life Balance Practices and Employee Engagement

With shifting workplace dynamics and demographics such as dual-career couples and changing family configurations, the need for work-life balance has increased (Muasya, 2023). In Kenya, several organizations such as Safaricom PLC, Strathmore University, EPRA, Coca-Cola, University of Nairobi, Nairobi Serena Hotel, Radisson Blu Hotel, United Nations Embassy, and Britam have embraced work-life balance practices (Mutuku & Makhamara, 2022). They have integrated wellness programs for their employees that include crèche, internal medical clinics, staff clubs, management gyms and flexible schedules such as remote working in their policies. Equity Bank, Eco Bank, and Safaricom PLC have also invested in learning and development of work-life balance practices that take care of health education, financial wellness,

nutritional care, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS peer education, stress management and day cares for breastfeeding mothers (Muriuki, 2018). However, studies have shown that more than 60% of organizations in Kenya do not properly follow work-life balance guidelines, which results in low job satisfaction and poor engagement (Mmakwe & Ojiabo, 2018). Lack of policies, advancements in technology, women's roles, and a lack of experienced labor are some of the elements that contribute to this crisis (Muasya, 2023).

Afwande and Kiiru (2023) emphasized that work life balance practices such as job sharing, teleworking, employee assistance programs, and work flexibility all significantly impacted employee engagement in Commercial Banks within Nairobi City County. Afwande and Kiiru (2023) also revealed that offering work-life balance helped the banks retain valuable employees, attract top talent and recorded a decrease in absenteeism, accidents, and grievances. Kangure (2015) reported that corporate culture, work-life balance, workplace policy, supervisor support, and coworker support had the potential to increase employee engagement within state corporations in Kenya. Hazel (2014) observed that employees in Safaricom PLC attributed their commitment, satisfaction, and engagement to the organization's work-life balance policies and as a result, the employees arrived at work on time, felt more motivated and satisfied with their work.

Organizations in Kenya try to manage work and family role, but research indicates that majority have not fully adopted work-life balancing practices, particularly in the public sector (Kamwenji, Ngugi & Kamaara, 2022). Although some organizations offer flexible work schedules, acceptance is generally low, which lessens the potential advantages of having a balanced, effective workforce (Kamwenji et al., 2022). Nyang'ori (2017) emphasized on the significance of work-life balance in influencing the engagement of millennials. Further, millennials can undoubtedly quit their jobs if they do not yet feel a sense of attachment to the organization. Their enjoyment of leisure activities contributed significantly to their sense of well-being at work. They value a safe working environment that promotes flexibility and safeguards their overall well-being and mental health.

Muindi (2015) indicated that improving work-life balance could potentially boost performance as well as job satisfaction and employee engagement in horticultural

farms. Muindi (2015) suggested that the farms should implement employee assistance programs, study leave and flexible working schedules as this would give employees greater work autonomy to plan their workload in a way that enables them to take care of personal matters during off-peak working hours. Oyiolo (2018) demonstrated that work-life balance programs improved employee motivation, loyalty to the company, organizational dedication and reduced intention to quit.

Recent reports by Gallup show that the level of engagement in Kenya is 18% which is below both global and Sub-Saharan Africa averages (Gallup, 2024). Further, Gallup report indicated that, majority of Kenyans are sad, stressed, lonely and not thriving in life. 81% of Kenyans are actively looking for a new job or watching for opportunities (Gallup, 2024). This highlights a workforce that is disengaged and unsettled. Unresolved engagement issues stem from a disconnect between supportive labor laws and their implementation in workplaces, especially in sectors like hospitality industry. While policies exist to protect worker rights, actual engagement practices are often superficial, focusing on compliance rather than cultivating a supportive culture (Muasya, 2023). Employers frequently overlook intrinsic drivers like recognition, wellness, and work-life balance, leading to emotional fatigue and reduced commitment. Moreover, many organizations are slow to adapt to changing employee expectations, particularly among younger generations who value flexibility, purpose, and inclusion (Gallup, 2024). The low wellbeing metrics and high job mobility highlight stress and dissatisfaction which reinforces the importance and urgency of researching how work life balance practices influence employee engagement in five-star hotels.

1.1.4 Five-star hotels in Kenya

There are 25 five-star hotels in Kenya which are located in seven different counties such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Laikipia, Kwale, Kilifi, and Narok County (Tourism Regulatory Authority, 2023). This study specifically focused on all 5-star hotels in Kenya due to their economic contribution to revenue generation and source of employment for many Kenyans. They are also an appealing destination for Kenyan politicians, business people, and athletes. Further, these hotels have adopted various work-life balance practices. However, Markey and McIvor (2018) point out that the poor engagement of workers in the hospitality sector, of which five-star hotels account

for a significant number, has had an impact on the sector's overall contribution to the economy. Workers opt to work in hotels more for survival than for growth and advancement in their careers (Markey & McIvor, 2018).

Within the hotel sector, hotel rating is based on the facilities they have and the quality of services they offer. Hotels and Restaurants Authority (HRA) under the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage in Kenya is mandated to give this classification rating (Shapoval et al., 2021). The classification criteria are based on available facilities, hygiene and sanitation requirements, safety and security levels, and human resources, which take into account management, employee welfare, and workforce quality (Nyokabi, Muchara & Namada, 2019). This criterion highlights the significance of human resources in the success of the hotel industry (Tourism Regulatory Authority, 2023). The name for each star hotel is 1- star (Tourist), 2-star (Standard), 3-star (Comfort), 4-star (first class) and 5-star (luxury). Thus, five-star hotels are the most luxurious ones in the market of hospitality industry in Kenya.

In five-star hotels in Kenya, government policies such as the Employment Act (2007), OSHA (2007), and the National Labour Policy (2019) play a central role in shaping employee engagement. These regulations ensure fair treatment, workplace safety, and work-life balance, all of which foster a supportive environment where employees are more likely to be committed, motivated, and emotionally invested in their work. Five-star hotels in Kenya are grappling with multiple challenges including high employee turnover, work-related stress, skill gaps, and inconsistent enforcement of labour laws. Emerging issues such as technology disruption, mental health concerns, changing workforce expectations, and the push for sustainability are also reshaping the industry. These dynamics directly affect employee engagement, making it imperative for hotel management to adopt proactive and adaptive strategies that foster employee engagement.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The hotel industry is a major pillar in the economic development of Kenya as it contributes to 11% of Kenya's GDP and employs 18% of the Kenyan workforce (PwC, 2019). Despite their economic significance, these hotels often face substantial challenges that impede their success. Within the last five years, hotels in Kenya have recorded an employee turnover rate of more than 50% suggesting dissatisfaction and

disengagement (Kobia, 2021). Albeit the relevance of employee engagement, the State of the Global Workplace 2023 report indicated that only 17% of Kenyan workers were engaged while 83% were disengaged. As a result, low engagement has led to poor productivity, high pressure on employees, poor customer service and high recruitment and training costs. This negatively affects customer satisfaction and overall success of these hotels (Adebayo & Ibrahim, 2023). Work life balance practices have been linked with reduced absenteeism, low turnover, reduced burnout, reduced stress, improved mental health as well as increased productivity, more creativity, improved innovation, increased job satisfaction, increased loyalty, increased retention and increased engagement (Opoku et al., 2023).

Keeping employees engaged with their assigned tasks has become one of the biggest problems in the modern workplace (Satya et al., 2022). Engagement of workers has a significant impact on performance, enhances productivity, innovation, organizational efficiency, advances customer relationship management and contributes to overall business success (Sjahruddin et al., 2024). Disengagement of workers manifests in high absenteeism, poor customer interactions, failure to meet targets, accidents and costs the world economy $8.8 trillion which accounts for 9% of its total GDP (Gallup, 2023). Recent reports show that the hospitality sector has the lowest level of employee engagement compared to others such as healthcare and education (Gallup, 2024).

Most studies done in Kenya on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement have focused on parastatals, Commercial Banks, hospitals and non-governmental organizations and overlooked five-star hotels (Afwande & Kiiru, 2023; Muindi, 2015; Nyang'ori, 2017; Oyiolo, 2018). This implies that managers continue to lack practical strategies to enhance engagement through tailored work-life balance practices, indicating a managerial gap. The absence of organizational support as a moderator in previous studies highlights a significant gap in the literature which this study seeks to address thereby increasing its contribution to existing knowledge. Further, studies have not jointly measured the work life balance practices; flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs and employee assistance programs examined in this study. Therefore, this study endeavoured to examine the effect of work life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study was to examine the effect of work-life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Evaluate the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.
2. Determine the effect of corporate wellness programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.
3. Investigate the effect of leave programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.
4. Assess the effect of employee assistance programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.
5. Examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following null hypotheses:

H_{01}: Flexible work arrangements have no statistically significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

H_{02}: Corporate wellness programs have no statistically significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

H_{03}: Leave programs have no statistically significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

H_{04}: Employee assistance programs have no statistically significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

H_{05}: Organizational support has no statistically significant moderating effect on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study holds significant importance for various stakeholders. The findings of this study contribute to the enhancement, expansion, and development of existing theories by offering a framework that connects work-life balance practices and employee engagement. The study outcomes enrich the social exchange theory by shedding light on how flexible work arrangements affect employee engagement and also strengthen spillover theory by providing information on the impact of leave programs on employee engagement. The results of this study further contribute to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory by providing insights on the effect of employee assistance programs and corporate wellness initiatives on employee engagement, respectively. The outcomes of this study contribute conceptually and theoretically to the current literature on the study's variables, hence closing gaps and advancing knowledge.

To the government and policymakers such as the Tourism Regulatory Authority and the Ministry of Labour, the findings of this study provide invaluable insights and a more reliable guide to evaluate employee engagement in the hotel sector. Further, the study outcomes illuminate how work-life balance practices affect employee engagement and thus facilitate their ability to formulate appropriate policies and laws that will act in favor of five-star hotels. Human resource managers in the hotel sector may use the findings as a basis for creating and putting into practice efficient work-life balance practices to boost the engagement of workers. This study also provides critical insights to enhance employee engagement which might result in improved job satisfaction, commitment and efficiency.

The results of this study provide academics and researchers with a comprehensive grasp of the relationship that exists between the variables examined in a combined framework. Further, they learn about knowledge gaps they can fill and obtain crucial empirical evidence for their future research. The outcomes of this study extend the existing literature on work-life balance and employee engagement in the hotel sector. Investigating the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement also helps to set the stage for further studies on work-life balance in five-star hotels in Kenya.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted within five-star hotels in Kenya. These hotels are geographically located in Nairobi City County, Mombasa County, Kwale County, Kilifi County, Nakuru County, Narok County, and Laikipia County. Five-star hotels were selected as the focus because of their vital contribution to the Kenyan economy and the existing gaps in knowledge. Further, these hotels provide work-life balance practices to their staff, they have well-established systems, easily accessible, and they are also the most popular places for tourists visiting Kenya. The target population of the study was all the employees working five-star hotels in Kenya. This study was conducted between September 2022 and April 2025.

The study concentrated on how various work-life balance practices affect employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The study examined the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and employee engagement. The study was limited to four theories— Social exchange theory, Spillover theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, and Organizational support theory.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study focused on work life balance practices such as; flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and their effect on employee engagement. Future studies can examine other determinants of employee engagement apart from work life balance. The accuracy of participants' responses may have been limited by organizational confidentiality policies emanating from principles of data protection in Kenya. To address this, respondents were assured of the study's academic purpose, the strict confidentiality of their responses, and the acquisition of a valid research permit from NACOSTI.

The nature of work was a challenge due to the tight schedules of employees in the hotel sector. This was overcome by giving them more time and allowing them to fill the questionnaires during their free time or off days. The other limitation was that the five-star hotels are geographically located in different parts of the country and distributing questionnaires to the respondents was a challenge to the researcher. To

mitigate this, the researcher sought help from human resource managers in the distribution of the questionnaires to their workforce. Lastly, the study was limited to five-star hotels in Kenya therefore the findings of this study may not accurately represent the views and experiences of employees in other star rated hotels in Kenya. However, the choice of the study area was informed by systematic literature review.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

This study is based on several key assumptions. It assumes that the selected five-star hotels in Kenya have implemented various work-life balance practices such as flexible work arrangements, leave programs, employee assistance programs, and corporate wellness programs, and that these practices are accessible and known to employees. It is further assumed that employees understand the concept of employee engagement and are capable of accurately assessing their own levels of engagement in response to the research instruments used. The study presumes that participants responded truthfully and objectively, free from social desirability bias or fear of victimization. Additionally, it assumes that the instruments used for data collection are valid and reliable in capturing both work life balance practices and employee engagement. The study also assumes that the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement can be observed and measured without major interference from external variables such as economic shifts, industry-wide changes, or sudden organizational restructuring. Moreover, it is assumed that all five-star hotels operate within similar policy frameworks guided by industry standards and labor regulations in Kenya, allowing for generalization within this category. Lastly, it is assumed that the sample selected is representative of the broader population of employees in five-star hotels, thus enabling meaningful interpretation and inference of the findings.

1.9 Contributions of the Thesis

This thesis contributes to the body of knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement within the context of five-star hotels in Kenya. It enhances theoretical understanding by integrating concepts from the Social exchange theory and Organizational support theory to explain how work life balance practices influence employee attitudes and behaviours. By identifying which specific practices such as flexible work arrangements, leave programs, employee assistance programs, and corporate wellness

programs are most effective in promoting engagement, the study offers valuable insights that extend existing models of engagement and work-life interface, particularly in service-oriented and high-pressure sectors like hospitality.

From a practical perspective, the thesis provides valuable recommendations for human resource managers, hotel managers and policy makers in the hospitality industry in Kenya. It underscores the strategic importance of investing in supportive work life balance practices to enhance employee commitment, job satisfaction and efficiency. By demonstrating the positive link between work life balance practices and engagement, the study supports the formulation of targeted human resource policies and interventions that not only improve employee well-being but also drive organizational performance. The findings can serve as a benchmark for other industries and regions, contributing to evidence-based human resource management practices in Kenya and similar developing economies striving to balance competitiveness with employee-cantered management approaches.

1.10 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into five main chapters, each addressing a critical component of the research process. Chapter one provides the introduction of the study. It includes the background of the study, highlighting the importance of work-life balance practices and their potential influence on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. It outlines the problem statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research hypotheses, significance of the study, scope of the study, limitations, assumptions, and the contribution of the thesis.

Chapter two presents a comprehensive review of existing literature related to work-life balance and employee engagement. It discusses the theoretical foundations underpinning the study. The chapter also highlights empirical studies, provides critique of empirical studies, identifies research gaps, and presents the conceptual framework that guided the study.

Chapter three outlines the research philosophy, research design, target population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments used, and procedures followed. It also explains how the reliability and validity of the instruments were tested, as well as the data analysis techniques used for both quantitative and qualitative data. Ethical

considerations are also discussed.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study, including both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. It also provides a detailed discussion of the findings in relation to the research objectives and existing literature. The chapter also presents factor analysis, diagnostic tests and hypothesis testing results. The final chapter summarizes the key findings of the study and draws conclusions based on the research objectives. It provides practical recommendations for hotel managers, HR practitioners, and policymakers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores pertinent literature on work-life balance practices and employee engagement. The theoretical framework section specifically covers relevant theories to the study. The conceptual framework discusses the figurative representation of the variables under investigation. The subsection of the empirical review discusses studies undertaken by different researchers on work-life balance practices and employee engagement. Further, the chapter critiques existing literature and points out research gaps.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Social exchange theory, (Homans,1958; Blau, 1964), Spillover theory (Piotrkowski, 1979), Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943), and Organizational support theory, (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa, 1986). The effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement was underpinned on the social exchange theory while spillover theory informed the relationship between leave programs and engagement of workers. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory helped to find out the outcome of providing workers with employee assistance programs and corporate wellness programs while organizational support was reinforced by the Organizational support theory. The main theory of this study was the social exchange theory which is founded on the principle of reciprocity and explains how organizations can use work life balance practices to engage their workforce.

2.2.1 Social Exchange Theory

Homans (1958) is the proponent of social exchange theory. It was then expanded to psychology by Blau (1964), sociology by Thibault and Kelley (1959), and management by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005). The social exchange theory (SET) refers to the extent of any social form of transaction between persons, including tangible/intangible and material/nonmaterial items exchanged (Yin, 2018). The study is anchored on this theory as it carries more weight in informing the effect of work life balance practices on employee engagement. Social exchange entails actions that are contingent on others' rewarding reactions (Blau, 1964). Simply expressed, human actions and behaviour are influenced by social costs and rewards. As a result, this

theory emphasizes the interdependence of persons in a relationship. The primary premise of SET is that people engage and sustain relationships with the expectation of obtaining a net positive value (Mitchell, Cropanzano, & Quisenberry, 2012). According to the social exchange theory, all social relationships reside inside an exchange framework. It asserts that when engaging in human interactions, people maximize their rewards while minimizing their expenses. When one party receives benefits from another, they feel obligated to pay back favours to continue this rewarding exchange tie.

According to the social exchange theory, all human interactions are generated through a subjective cost-benefit analysis and a comparison of alternatives (Wainaina, 2015). A chain of exchanges leads to obligations in social exchange. These interactions are typically viewed as interdependent and dependent on the actions of others. The social exchange perspective argues that people measure the overall worth of a connection by deducting its expenses from the benefits it delivers (Thomas & Gupta, 2021). To explain the connections between employer and employee, the SET employs three principles: rationality, reciprocity, and specificity (Foa & Foa, 2012). Rationalism dictates that employees will associate with an organization that can provide desirable rewards and satisfy their needs and desires. The reciprocity principle posits that a social relationship between an employer and an employee is always reciprocal while the specificity principle rules out that, only reciprocity can sustain an exchange relationship between employees and an organization (Ahmad et al., 2023). There is a relationship between an employee and the organization in an organizational setting, and its fate is determined by the value of the relationship for both parties (Chiaburu et al., 2013). The principle of reciprocity is the most applicable in explaining the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement.

Employers should practice social exchange, to promote worker loyalty, commitment, job satisfaction, engagement, and productive behaviour (Yin, 2018). The central premise of SET is that employees feel obligated to repay any good deeds done by the organization with desirable attitudes and behaviours. For example, when employees believe their organization provides them with resources (e.g., flexible work arrangements) that will benefit them, they are more likely to reciprocate by developing and displaying attitudes that will benefit the organization (Kakar, Kruger, Durrani,

Khan, & Meyer, 2022). Flexible work arrangements may encourage employee participation in organizational activities and initiatives by creating a sense of obligation to put in extra effort in exchange for additional benefits (Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, Purtill & Parry, 2017). Flexible work arrangements also assist employees in balancing their work and personal lives (Kotey & Sharma, 2016). As a result, organizations that offer flexible work arrangements may induce an obligation manifested as increased employee engagement. Employees who believe their organizations do not provide any work-life balance practices, on the other hand, will experience high levels of stress, emotional exhaustion, burnout and will become more cynical about their organizations (Koon, 2022). Research has also shown that, social exchange theory serves as a robust predictor of the strength of relationships, trust, and long-term commitment (Davis-Sramek et al., 2022; Stafford & Kuiper, 2021)

Scholars have pointed out that providing employees with work life balance practices such as flexible work arrangements will make them more competitive and autonomous in managing work and family, whereas organizations will find workers who are satisfied with their jobs are committed to the organization (Koon, 2022). Work life balance practices also send signals to employees that they are cared for and valued by the organization (Kakar et al., 2022). Employees who perceive flexible work arrangements positively, in terms of all the benefits that flexible work arrangements can bring to them, may feel more engaged at work (Berkery et al., 2017). Employees who have the option to use flexible work arrangements gain more autonomy and control over their jobs, improve their work-life balance, and experience a higher level of energy and mental resilience at work, a stronger involvement in their work, and a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge, as well as higher concentration and preoccupation with work (Deery & Jago, 2015).

Several empirical studies have used this theory to explain how organizations can use flexible work arrangements to boost employee engagement. Chen and Fulmer (2018), for example, employed social exchange theory to forecast the association between flexible work arrangements and employee commitment. Ivanauskaite (2015) also adopted social exchange theory to explain the relationship between flexible work arrangements and an organization's ability to have a committed and engaged workforce. Tsen et al., (2022) and Okemwa (2022) found similar results, indicating

that flexible work arrangements increase organizational commitment and worker engagement. In a similar study, Onken-Menke et al., (2018) found that flexible work schedules can increase employees' organizational commitment. As stated by these studies, workers who have access to flexible work arrangements demonstrate higher levels of commitment, satisfaction, and engagement.

Despite the theory's applicability, critics attest that it does not adequately address the issue of perception errors (Attia & Hadi, 2020). The theory is also criticized for lacking theoretical precision, resulting in limited utility. Furthermore, many similar and overlapping constructs are used to operationalize initiating actions and target responses in the theory. There is an under appreciation of how positive some of the constructs commonly used in social exchange research are. The social exchange theory is also criticized for failing to fully articulate the distinction between behavioural action and inaction (Stafford & Kuiper, 2021). It assumes that the absence of something positive is effectively equivalent to the presence of something negative. Critics also argue that social exchange's behavioural predictions have become too broad and imprecise. However, given the strong empirical support, this theory is useful and helpful to this study in understanding how flexible work arrangements influence workers' behaviour in hotels in improving their engagement.

This study considered social exchange theory relevant because it informs the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Theoretically, providing favourable work-life balance initiatives such as flexible work arrangements may increase employee engagement in the organization. This implies that organizations that offer flexible work arrangements may experience higher levels of engagement because employees will feel morally obligated to reciprocate with increased engagement to continue enjoying the benefits provided.

2.2.2 Spill-Over Theory

Piotrkowski proposed the spillover theory in 1979. Work and family life are discussed in this theory. The author argued that job-related and family-related factors should be balanced so that employees can be productive, provide customer satisfaction, have job satisfaction, and keep employee turnover under control. The theorem was to control work or family-life-related stress so that it does not affect work or family life (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). This means that social imbalance has an impact on an individual

employee's work efficiency and effectiveness. According to the theory, there is a spillover between work responsibilities, personal demands, and family responsibilities (Enemuo et al., 2016). It is also observed that spill over could result in negative or positive work or non-work outcomes depending on the flexibility or inflexibility of the demands of each of these multiple domains (Mungania et al., 2016).

Lakshmypriyak and Ramakrishna (2016) asserted that negative spillover happens when work demands and family responsibilities are rigidly structured in terms of time and space, leading to either work or family imbalance or conflict. Flexible interactions between family obligations and work responsibilities lead to positive spillover. Positive spillover makes it possible for employees to juggle work demands with family obligations, which in turn improves commitment and engagement among workers (Lakshmypriyak & Ramakrishina, 2016). This suggests that balancing work and personal obligations leads to positive spillover effects. From this theory, it can be deduced that businesses that prioritize positive spillover, such as leave policies, tend to have initiatives that promote work-life balance and enhance employee engagement.

This theory demonstrates the reciprocal relationship between work and family by describing the effects of playing multiple roles (Babu & Raj, 2013). When an employee is stressed in one area of work but is unable to control it there, the stress transfers to another area, where it is also expressed. For instance, when a worker has a challenging, stressful day at work and returns home yelling at family members, this is known as a negative spillover to the family. The stress that is felt at work is then felt at home (Blanco-Donoso et al., 2021). Positive spillover is essential for achieving a healthy work-life balance when flexibility allows people to integrate and overlap work and family responsibilities in time and space. Work-life balance has a variety of other benefits, such as improved performance at work and home, well-being at work, home, and in general, and an impact on co-workers, friends, and family (Obiageli et al., 2015).

As stated by Schnettler et al., (2021), the spillover theory contends that there are connections between what happens at work and at home. Schnettler et al., (2021) asserted that, this theory emphasizes the tendency of the worker to carry over their emotions, attitudes, skills, and behaviours from their work environment into their personal lives. This is because work and family domains are connected despite their physical and temporal boundaries, implying a bi-directional relationship between the

two domains. In other words, work may spill over into family (work-to- family spillover) and family may spill over into work (family-to-work spillover) (Kramer et al., 2019). The decision of an employee to stay or leave a job will be significantly impacted by excessive time demands from either family or work (Schnettler et al., 2021). Positive spillover can result in high levels of commitment, satisfaction, and performance, whereas negative spillover can cause stress. This theory has been in previous studies exploring how work-life balance practices influence employee engagement (Schnettler et al., 2021; Yildirim, 2022). This theory affirms that leave programs can improve work-life balance. Employers give workers time off when it's necessary to attend to important and frequently unanticipated personal matters (Yildirim & Aydemir-Karadag, 2022). Employees are permitted to take a set number of days or weeks off from work to rest and unwind for longer periods (Yildirim, 2022). Employers and employees should both take time off. For instance, maternity leave, compassionate leave and sick leave allow employees to attend to personal obligations which improves both their physical and mental health and create positive spillover. Spillover theory has been used extensively in the research on work- family frameworks (Frezza et al., 2019).

Numerous studies in the area of work-life balance have shown that employees who consistently work for long hours' experience higher levels of conflict at work (Brough et al., 2022). Positive spillover happens from an organizational perspective when employees are given time off to attend to non-work obligations like family and studies. An organization will perform better if its employees are happy because their customers will be served well, and vice versa. Furthermore, happy customers are more inclined to stick with that particular enterprise, and loyalty fosters higher productivity within an organization. On the other hand, when employees are denied access to leave policies like sick leave, compassionate leave, study leave, emergency leave, etc., they become frustrated and this can negatively affect their co-workers and clients, and even cause accidents at work.

In relation to this theory, organizations should adopt policies that will allow employees to have a healthy work-life balance, as this will motivate them to commit to the goals of the organization. This theory informs the third objective as it suggested that providing leave programs to workers is likely to have a positive spillover that would

boost engagement and performance in five-star hotels. Spillover theory, like many other theories, has its limitations because it generates results that are susceptible to measurement error. Critics also point out that it is incompatible with welfare economics because it inevitably relies on some other non-economic social theory. Despite its flaws, this theory best fits this study because it informs how leave programs can impact employee engagement in five-star hotels.

2.2.3 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow developed this theory in 1943. People are inherently motivated to work to meet their most basic needs, as suggested by Maslow (1943) in his hierarchy of needs. He also made the crucial point that people are dependent beings. This suggestion was based on the notion that people are constantly looking for new needs, and those needs depend on the things they already possess. With this, he put forth the idea that human needs are arranged in a hierarchy, or pecking order of importance. As stated in this theory, people are only motivated by unmet needs and once a lower need is met, interest in meeting the subsequent higher need will grow to be overwhelming (Tanner & Arnett, 2016). The theory contends that people struggle to overcome ongoing difficulties and incorporate new experiences into a sense of self because they have innate traits that drive them towards psychological growth and development.

Human needs are arranged in a hierarchy, moving from the most basic to the most complex (Hopper, 2020). Maslow's hierarchy of needs includes; physiological, safety, social, self-esteem, and self-actualization needs (Ozguner & Ozguner, 2014). This theory is based on the assumption that, after a person's lower-level need is met, they move on to their next higher-level need. Maslow believed that people must meet the requirements of one category before moving on to the next. Needs drive human behaviour and behaviour is influenced by satisfaction or a lack thereof (Tang et al., 2018). With regard to the hierarchy of needs, a person's behaviour should be guided by their goals, and motivation should result in goal-directed behaviour (Nurun & Dip, 2017). To achieve work-life harmony, an employee's roles at work and outside of work must be balanced. An employer should work to achieve this balance, which will increase the employee's commitment and engagement. However, if they fail or are unable to meet their needs, people may experience more stress (Musheshe, 2020).

As a result, Maslow's theory is applicable to both organizational growth and employee

development (Kaufman, 2023). Both employees and managers must identify organizational needs and make efficient use of available resources to meet predetermined objectives (Hopper, 2020). This study has adopted this theory to demonstrate how different employees become motivated and satisfied by using the various employee assistance programs and corporate wellness programs offered in five-star hotels. The commitment of workers, which ultimately affects performance, will be influenced by the motivation and satisfaction gained from medical insurance, recreational facilities, employee training and counselling. It is clear that the programs offered are designed to improve their level of dedication, their love for their work, and most importantly their performance at work (Hopper, 2020). Employee assistance programs are said to only benefit an employee's performance if they cater to their needs and preferences.

The hierarchy of needs theory is pertinent to the current study as it links motivation to employee engagement and performance. Employee commitment, satisfaction, dedication, engagement, and productivity are all likely to increase when employee needs are met. In the long run, this theory is significant because it can be applied to give various organizations direction in motivating their employees (Suharyati, 2017). Also, through the theory, managers are provided with suggestions on how to lead their workers to be self-actualized (Rao et al., 2019). Multiple researchers have drawn attention to the startling proportions of food service employees who struggle with role stress encountered as part of their jobs (Liu Lastress et al., 2022). Once employees are content, they will have a positive attitude towards their work, resulting in quality service delivery within the organization (Yang et al., 2020). Wellness programs have been linked to lower turnover rates, improved motivation, decreased absenteeism, less productivity losses, and reduced medical costs for insurance premiums (Varga et al.,2021).

The theory is criticized by researchers because they allege that it is more Western in nature and cannot be applied in various parts of the world (Vansteenkiste et al., 2020). Due to its premise, the theory has not received much support. Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs is under scrutiny, and scholars contend that while it implied that the satisfaction of one need frequently predicated the presence of another need, this was not always the case (King-Hill, 2015). However, Miltko (2020) declared that this

theory is still applicable in every business sector today. The services provided by employee assistance programs (EAP) and corporate wellness programs are anticipated to entice employees, which will enhance their engagement. The offered programs are designed to ensure that the staff members are in good health, their social issues are addressed through counselling, and that stress is managed. Consequently, employees will be more focused at work because the employer has taken care of their needs and wants.

2.2.4 Organizational Support Theory

Organizational support has been regarded as critical to maintaining positive job outcomes (Kurtessis et al., 2017). The organizational support theory (OST) was proposed by Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, and Sowa (1986). Organizational support is closely linked to the fulfilment of socio-emotional demands and an organization's willingness to recognize extra efforts made by employees (Eisenberger, Rhoades & Wen, 2020). Within the framework of organizational support theory, employees form a general opinion about how important the organization views their contribution based on the kind and quantity of rewards and benefits that are provided to them. In exchange, employees show concern for the organization's vision and assist in achieving the organization's goals (Wang et al., 2020). With regard to this theory, employee perceptions about an employer are based on how the employer treats the employee. When there is a positive perception, workers are more likely to take more action in their roles, perform extra work, and exhibit less stress and withdrawal behaviours, which raises commitment levels (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, & Ford, 2017). Proponents of OST further argue that support from the organization increases employees' felt obligation to contribute to the organizations efforts towards realization of set goals. Behaviours associated with organizational support include increased role performance, engagement and a decrease in absenteeism, stress and turnover (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Employees interpret the treatment they receive from the organization as a reflection of the organization's overall favourable or unfavourable attitude towards them (Eisenberger et al., (2020). According to Kurtessis et al., (2017), the most important predictors of organizational support are organizational fairness, leadership support, favourable practices and a conducive working environment. Organizational support

will be strengthened if employees consider benefits and work conditions provided by the organization as incentives (Wong & Wong, 2017). The willingness of an organization to give employees certain benefits when their work exceeds specified standards gives workers the perception that they are appreciated and that whatever they are doing for the organization contributes tremendously to the accomplishment of its goals (Kurtessis et al., 2017). The employer's actions could be the assistance offered to employees to help them balance work and personal or family obligations (in this case, appropriate and supportive work-life balance initiatives, supportive managers, open communication, fairness, and equity). The organizational support theory fits the current study well because it clarifies how employees' perceptions change within an organization, which is in line with the study's core focus on the mediating role of organizational support in the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement.

This informs that when employees experience supportive managers, open and efficient communication, fairness and justice, their engagement levels are enhanced due to the favourable perception created and hence employees feel indebted to exert more effort in return for more support (Wong & Wong, 2017). This theory acknowledges that a positive employee-employer relationship satisfies crucial socio-emotional needs for workers, which may improve worker well- being as evidenced by factors like decreased stress, and elevated job-related effects like happiness, job satisfaction, and safety. These fundamental requirements support one's well-being and sense of self. In their meta-analysis study, (Kurtessis et al., 2017) stated that organizations that value, support, communicate with, and recognize their employees' extra contributions build positive perceptions of organizational support. This behaviour results in extra role performance, enhances employee commitment, and engagement as confirmed by Dabke and Patole (2014), who also observed that work engagement is a notable result of organizational support. This theory informs the moderating variable which is organizational support. It explains the need for organizational support to employees and how various practices such as proper leadership, well established communication channels and fairness can be utilized in order to advance employee engagement.

However, critics of this theory argue that, when organizational support is present in excess, it can be perceived as self-threatening, thus, employees may perceive

organizational support as an indication of being incompetent or over helped and thus employees become unable to reciprocate for a high level of organizational support, resulting in subsequent negative reactions (Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2020).

2.3 Empirical Literature Review

This section presents an analysis of previous research studies carried out on the aspect of work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The section is presented with regard to the chronological arrangement of the research objectives set forth in chapter one of this study.

2.3.1 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Engagement

In numerous empirical studies, the nexus between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement has remained at the forefront. In a UK manufacturing company, Juvonen (2019) examined the effects and perceptions of those who were offered flexible working arrangements. 335 employees participated in the survey that was sent to them electronically. The survey collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The results demonstrated that flexible working increased employee engagement by enabling workers to focus more intently on their work. These arrangements allowed employees to dedicate more time and attention to their responsibilities. Additionally, workers felt more motivated, productive, and trustworthy. Progressively, a motivated workforce eventually achieves high levels of performance and satisfaction, which results in achievement, recognition, responsibility, promotion, and growth.

In the Republic of Serbia, Gasic and Berber (2021) explored the effects of flexible work arrangements on employee behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic. Employee engagement and intention to leave the company were used to gauge employee behaviour. On a sample of 219 employees, data was gathered using Google Forms electronic survey. A descriptive research design and stratified sampling technique were adopted in this study. Smart PLS 3 software was employed in data analysis. The results indicated that flexible work schedules have a direct positive impact on worker satisfaction and a negative impact on plans to leave their jobs. Given the fact that engagement focuses on an individual's efforts on finishing tasks and activities related to work and allows for the investment of an individual's energies into the full expression of one's role, engaged employees were encouraged to act in ways that enable high-quality performance. Moreover, flexible policies create an

atmosphere where employees can live and work. People work longer hours and live shorter lives in this cutthroat society, but this can be changed by allowing for more flexibility.

In India, flexible work arrangements were assessed by GP and Justus (2021) as a factor influencing employee engagement. 150 working women who must juggle between taking care of children and work were chosen through convenient sampling to take part in the study. When gathering data, questionnaires were used and path analysis was employed in data analysis. A correlation research design was used. The majority of working parents believed that having flexible schedules helped them better balance their work and personal lives. The employees believed that the flexible work arrangements provided allowed them to focus on taking care of their children, their studies, and their general well-being, which encouraged them to be devoted and loyal to their jobs. GP and Justus (2021) also revealed that working mothers were stressed as a result of COVID-19, but this could be avoided by allowing for flexibility in their work schedules. This study demonstrated that having flexible schedules increased workplace happiness, fostered loyalty, increased job satisfaction, fostered commitment, encouraged employees to exert extra effort, and resulted in more engaged workers.

In a related study, Ugargol and Patrick (2018) established that flexible work schedules were positively correlated with employee engagement within, IT companies in Bengaluru, India. Ivanauskaite (2015) examined the correlation between the availability of flexible work arrangements (flextime and flexplace) and organizational outcomes (employee engagement and affective organizational commitment) in Lithuania, Europe. This study used a quantitative research design. Data was gathered using a standardized questionnaire. An analysis of 232 employees revealed that having access to flexible scheduling and work environments increased organizational commitment and employee engagement. The study also found that using flexible work arrangements increased organizational citizenship behaviour, and job satisfaction; as a result, employees worked harder and were less likely to leave the company. The study recommended that organizations should make flexible work options more accessible for all and shouldn't be viewed as a privilege.

In Pakistan, Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) assessed the connection between

flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction in public universities in Karachi. This research used a descriptive research design. A structured questionnaire was employed to gather data from an approximate 211- sample size online and during physical visits to universities. Convenience sampling was employed to choose the respondents. Smart PLS was adopted to analyze the quantitative data using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling. Flextime, contractual work, work shifts, and telecommuting were some of the variables examined. The results of this study showed a positive correlation between flexible work schedules and job satisfaction. With the help of flexible work arrangements, employees can successfully juggle their work and personal commitments. Working flexibility gives employees job autonomy to manage their schedules as well as organizational pride, which increases commitment, engagement and quality service delivery with greater customer satisfaction.

Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) investigated the impact of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement of large corporations across six industries operating in the South African context. A qualitative single method was employed in this study. To gather qualitative, exploratory data, a total of 23 semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted. Eight subject matter experts and 15 employees representing six different companies and six different industries made up the respondents. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the interviews. As shown in this study, there was a positive correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement. Additionally, findings indicated that flexible work arrangements had a favourable relationship with several employee engagement constructs identified in the literature, with the positive influence of flexible work arrangements on employee well-being being the most notable finding. The significance of offering flexible work arrangements to engage workers was emphasized as a key practice. The experts interviewed declared that it was crucial to include flexible work arrangements in an organization's value proposition because workers were placing an increasing emphasis on work-life balance. The experts emphasized further that flexible work arrangements reduced costs, and addressed employee needs and generational differences in employee demands.

In Nigeria, the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee commitment was examined by (Umukoro, Egwakhe & Akpa, 2020). The preferred

research design was a cross- sectional survey. A well-designed questionnaire was used to gather data from 377 regular non- academic staff members who were chosen at random from six private universities in Ogun State. With the help of descriptive and hierarchical multiple regression analysis, the primary data obtained was analyzed. The results showed a significant link between flexible work arrangements and commitment among workers. The respondents linked benefits like work-life balance, employee well-being, employee engagement, and productivity with flexible work arrangements. The research also revealed that dedicated workers were upbeat, result-driven, result-focused, enthusiastic, engaged, willing to go above and beyond, proud of their work, and believed in the objectives and values of the company (Umukoro et al., 2020). Employee commitment was identified as a crucial issue because it can be used to predict performance, engagement, absenteeism, and other attitudes and behaviours related to the workplace. The study suggested that future research could be expanded to include other industries (Umukoro et al., 2020).

Eshak (2021) analyzed the effects of flexible work schedules on employee performance within private universities in Egypt. A questionnaire and the descriptive analytical method were both used by the researcher to gather data. The data was collected from a sample of 423 employees obtained using stratified random sampling. SPSS and AMOS statistical software were used to analyze the data. The findings demonstrated that flexible work arrangements improved employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention, which resulted in higher productivity. Additionally, the provision of flexible work arrangements led to higher rates of productivity and performance as well as an improved work-life balance and employee well-being. The study revealed that flexible work arrangements were a competitive tool that businesses could use to draw in top talent, foster loyalty, achieve commitment and job satisfaction, engage staff, boost productivity, and improve performance. The study concluded that flexible work arrangements were necessities for both work and life, not something that a company could provide to some employees at the expense of others or that one company could offer without the cooperation of another.

In Tanzania, Nnko (2022) evaluated the impact of flexible work arrangements on nurses' performance in regional hospitals. The study used a mix of quantitative and qualitative explanatory research designs. A sample size of 404 nurses was randomly

chosen from a target population of 1347 workers at 8 regional hospitals. For data collection, a semi-structured questionnaire was used. Summative content analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression were used to analyze the data. The study linked flexible work arrangements to additional organizational outcomes like increased commitment, engagement, job satisfaction, and retention. The study found that flexible work arrangements are a significant problem in the nursing field, which is characterized by a heavily female workforce and persistent labor shortages. The study urged hospital administrators to support flexible work arrangements to encourage nurses' dedication and engage young mothers who are juggling work and caring for their families. In addition, the study recommended that the government should enforce labor laws and rules about workplace flexibility.

Okemwa (2022) examined the relationship between flexible work schedules and nurses' commitment in Kenyan public hospitals. The target population for the study, which used a cross- sectional survey design, was made up of 1217 nurses working in 27 level 4 and level 5 public hospitals. 364 nurses were chosen via proportionate simple random sampling from the 7 hospitals sampled. Using questionnaires with both structured and unstructured questions, primary data were gathered. Data analysis employed linear regression analysis. The results showed a significant relationship between the aforementioned variables. The study found that workers who have more control over their work schedules exhibit higher levels of commitment, engagement, retention, and job satisfaction. Further, the findings indicated that flexible work arrangements allowed employees to juggle work and family obligations without conflict, which lowers work-life conflict.

Mungania (2017) examined the effect of flexible work arrangements on the performance of the banking sector in Kenya. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the study's survey research design. Through stratified simple random sampling, 380 respondents were chosen to participate in the study. Data collection involved the use of a structured questionnaire. SPSS and Microsoft Excel were used to analyze the data that was collected. Regression, descriptive, and Pearson correlation analyses were also adopted for the analysis. The study discovered a strong correlation between the performance of Kenya's banking sector and flexible work arrangements. Additionally, it was discovered that work-life balance policies gave

employees the freedom to change how, when, and where they work to balance work and non-work demands, such as taking time off to further their careers or take care of family members.

Muriithi (2023) set out to determine how hybrid working arrangements affected the productivity of employees at the Communications Authority in Kenya. The study used descriptive and correlative research designs and a positivist research philosophy. To choose the 153 respondents, a stratified sampling technique was used. Online and offline surveys were used to gather the data, which was then analyzed using correlation and multiple regression analysis with a 0.05 level of significance. The findings made a strong case for flexible work schedules having favourable and significant relationships with worker productivity. These arrangements give employees more freedom in terms of where (location) and when (timing) they complete their work tasks, which has the potential to improve flexibility, autonomy, and work-life balance. They also contribute to the improvement of employee well-being and give the most talented workers a reason to remain with the company. Based on the study's findings, offering appropriate, flexible alternatives within an organization is crucial for boosting worker commitment, productivity, and performance.

Opuko and Munjuri (2017) investigated the impact of flexible work arrangements on employee performance at an international courier delivery services company based in Kenya. The 90 employees of the company who work in the offices in Nairobi and Mombasa were surveyed, and data were gathered using a structured questionnaire. A descriptive research design was employed in the study. A significant and favourable correlation between flexible work practices and job performance was identified by the study. It was discovered that the elements of flexible work practices had a significant impact on job performance. Further, the study observed that flexible work arrangements prove to employees how much an organization cares about their well-being in terms of when, where, and how they perform their work, and that acceptance of such practices is rising quickly as it enables employees to balance work and family obligations. Employees are also more likely to stay with organizations that adopt flexible work arrangements. Employee satisfaction increases productivity and quality of work as well as an organization's competitiveness, productivity, and success. In line with the study's findings, flexible work arrangements significantly improve employee

productivity.

2.3.2 Corporate Wellness Programs and Employee Engagement

Kitali (2021) conducted a study at the Kenya Commercial Bank in Nairobi City County, Kenya, to establish the effect of employee wellness programs on employee commitment. A descriptive cross-sectional research design was adopted for this study. Data was gathered using surveys that were distributed via Google Forms through a WhatsApp link. The study employed a census methodology, and the sample comprised all 154 employees. Using SPSS, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. Based on the study's findings it was established that widely implementing wellness programs helped to increase employees' satisfaction with their work and commitment to the company. Similar studies in Kenya's banking sector by Ng'eno (2020) and Mungania et al., (2016) found that employee wellness programs helped workers increase productivity, resulted in job satisfaction, and produced healthy, committed, devoted, and motivated workers. Employee engagement is influenced by each of these elements. A happy, healthy, motivated, committed, and dedicated employee will be more invested in the company. Additionally, these programs reduced healthcare costs, amplified bank profitability, and increased expected return on investment.

Muriuki (2018) sought to assess the perceived benefits of corporate wellness programs at Radisson Blu Hotel in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design and through stratified sampling, a sample of 170 workers was chosen. To gather data, the study used structured questionnaires. Regression analysis was used to analyze the data obtained and present the results in a simple linear regression model. The findings showed that successfully implementing wellness programs had a positive impact on staff morale and commitment to the hotel, improved employee productivity, decreased employee turnover, improved safety, productive behaviour, and reduced absenteeism. Additionally, there were lower healthcare expenses, fewer claims for workers' compensation, and an improved corporate image. These findings support the notion that integrated corporate wellness programs promote healthier lifestyles and higher worker productivity. Thus, a workforce that is in good health will be highly committed to the company. Moreover, employees' value programs that have made them feel cared for thus increasing employee engagement, which raises productivity as well.

Muthoki and Were (2017) examined the sustainability of wellness programs at the Nairobi Serena Hotel. The study employed a descriptive research design. Structured questionnaires and interviews were used as research instruments, targeting 135 employees. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Version 22 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed in data analysis. The findings indicated that rewards and recognition encouraged people to engage in wellness activities, and employees were more likely to do so if their head of department participated as well. The management's support, involvement, and direction were also cited as essential to the longevity of the wellness initiatives. Numerous benefits have been attributed to these programs, including improved job performance, increased employee engagement and motivation, and cost savings for the hotel. The use of wellness programs was acknowledged by the staff as the reason for their dedication and commitment to the hotel. Further, the study established that employee wellness programs were adopted by many businesses to boost employee commitment.

Within the context of a parastatal organization in South Africa, Kumar, De Bruyn & Bushney (2020) explored the relationship between employee wellness programs and employee engagement. Data were gathered through an electronic questionnaire. The study used cross-sectional and quantitative research designs. 210 employees were chosen at random from the target population to make up the sample size of the study. Using SPSS (version 24), exploratory factor analysis was carried out. The correlation between employee wellness and engagement was found to be exceptionally high. Likewise, it is stated that well-being is essential for long-term engagement, which implies that greater levels of wellness lead to greater levels of engagement. The results also indicated perks of employee wellness for organizations as decreased absenteeism, fewer occupational accidents, lower healthcare costs, lower employee turnover, increased employee performance and productivity, improved employment relations, compliance with legal requirements, increased profitability, improved employer brand, and improved employee health. The study concluded that these programs supported improvements in the quality of life of staff and faculty members, which therefore enhanced their health and productivity while lessening the financial burden on society.

Ndung'u (2015) researched the factors affecting the adoption of employee wellness programs at Safaricom Limited. A descriptive research design was used. Staff members were grouped according to where they worked; a random sample of 10% of the population was taken, and a semi- structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The study found that Safaricom had put in place corporate wellness programs that boosted workers' productivity, motivation, work-life balance, and overall health and well-being, as well as the employer's profitability. Employees were happy with their jobs, more creative, committed, and engaged with the organization. The study also discovered a link between job performance, perceived organizational support and job satisfaction. The study concluded that to achieve the desired results, employers should inform and sensitize their workforce about the existence and usage of wellness programs.

In the US hospitality industry, Marshall (2020) investigated the impact of extensive wellness programs on workers' job satisfaction levels. Two hundred self-identified hospitality organization employees either utilized the wellness programs or did not participate in the survey. The research findings held that there was a substantial variance in the levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction among participants and non-participants of the wellness programs. Further, the study demonstrated that maintaining good health improved an employee's overall mind set, which then influenced their job satisfaction. Since many wellness programs offer some sort of access to a fitness center, having one will affect how the employee feels about the workplace and the office atmosphere. A highly engaged workforce that participates in wellness initiatives can affect the employees' overall healthcare costs while also raising their level of job satisfaction and reducing absenteeism and turnover. To engage their workforce, the study encouraged organizational leaders to keep investing resources in their current wellness programs.

At Capital Group Limited, also known as Capital FM in Kenya, Wainaina (2011) conducted a descriptive study on the relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee job satisfaction. The study used a census sampling technique, which allowed all of the employees to participate. Data was gathered using semi-structured questionnaires. During the analysis of the data, descriptive statistics were used. Regression analysis was computed using non-parametric tests. The study's

findings confirmed that CGL offered wellness programs and that its employees had adopted them and found them to be relevant and significant. The results showed that wellness programs had improved workers' overall well-being, significantly raised their morale and job satisfaction, and ultimately increased employee engagement. The company had also reaped notable benefits from the wellness programs, including lower absenteeism, labour turnover, medical costs, and improved productivity. The study recommended that wellness programs should be maintained and improved to guarantee ongoing and increased benefits for both parties.

Matheka (2016) carried out a descriptive research study to evaluate the factors affecting investments in wellness programs by corporate organizations using the Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) as a case study. 110 respondents were chosen through stratified random sampling. Data was gathered using structured questionnaires distributed to selected employees and key informant interviews. Data collected was analyzed using content analysis and descriptive statistics. According to the study, KEBS management had made investments in the main components of employee wellness initiatives. Unfortunately, the study showed that employees underutilized the wellness programs. The study recommended training management teams in organizations on how to promote employee use of wellness services as well as sensitizing the general public on the efficacy of wellness initiatives.

Gubler, Larkin, and Pierce (2018) examined the relationship between corporate wellness programs and workers' productivity in five laundries in California. 111 workers were the sample size for the study. The findings showed that healthier workers were not only more cost-effective and less likely to be absent but also more engaged and productive. The adopted wellness programs were shown to boost perceptions of organizational commitment to employees and job satisfaction. Improving well-being may improve employee attitudes by effectively conveying to staff that the company cares about their quality of life outside of work as well as their quality of work life. The study found that wellness programs improved workers' work-life balance and general well-being. Besides that, they discovered that employees' productivity rose by 10% as a result of improved health. The study recommended that organizations could boost operational productivity by implementing socially conscious practices that emphasized on enhancing employee health.

Owusu-Poku (2014) did a qualitative study on the adoption of wellness initiatives in a mining company in Ghana. Female employees in the company were the main focus of the employee wellness programs uptake. The main technique for gathering information from 10 full-time female employees was semi-structured in-depth interviews. Using Open Code Software 4.02 to systematically code and identify patterns, the data were then analyzed using thematic network analysis. According to the analysis, implementing wellness programs enhanced employee happiness, job satisfaction, and brand loyalty. They also lowered female employees' stress levels and absence rates. The results illustrated that workplace employee wellness programs assisted women in managing workplace stressors and enhanced their general well-being. The vast majority of the respondents reported that wellness initiatives helped women workers balance work and life obligations.

In India, Britto and Magesh (2018) assessed the effect of wellness programs on employee engagement. To gather a sample of 847 workers, cluster and random sampling techniques were employed. Surveys were used to gather data. For data analysis, structural model path analysis was used. The study found that wellness initiatives provided kept workers content, motivated, and dedicated. In addition, they contributed to bettering employee professional well-being by enhancing work-life balance, lowering stress levels, boosting morale and motivation, and developing a positive workplace culture. Further, it was discovered that wellness initiatives improved the efficiency, profitability, and productivity of the organization as a whole. Results demonstrated that motivated employees helped the business achieve its goals, carry out its strategy, and produce better outcomes. In a related study by Tiihonen (2024), the corporate wellness initiatives offered increased worker satisfaction, work-life balance, and workplace productivity. Employee satisfaction is linked to high morale and greater engagement at work. Welfare facilities also improve employee performance, which boosts the efficiency of the business.

In Selected Micro Finance Banks in Nigeria, Ikechukwu et al., (2021) analyzed the relationship between wellness programs and employee engagement. A cross-sectional survey method was used in the study. A sample size of 72 executive officers was obtained using the purposeful sampling technique. With the help of the SPSS Package version 23, descriptive statistics and Spearman's rank correlation were used for data

analysis and hypothesis testing. Based on the correlation coefficient (r), there was a strong and favourable correlation between employee engagement and wellness initiatives. Employee engagement significantly affected profitability, workforce productivity, employee retention, and customer loyalty. Further, the study supported the claim that employee well-being positively impacts work performance and productivity as well as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and work-life balance. The study recommended that Chief Executive Officers and management personnel should develop wellness initiatives that can boost employee engagement.

2.3.3 Leave Programs and Employee Engagement

Mogeni (2020) assessed the influence of the family leave system on employee retention in Commercial Banks in Kenya. Emergency leave, compassionate leave, and dependent care leave were the indicators used. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The target population consisted of 4,054 employees from all 40 listed and active Commercial Banks in Kenya, who worked in Nairobi County. The sample size of 364 respondents was selected using a stratified random sampling design and included workers from the management, supervisory, and secretarial levels. Self-administered questionnaires were used to gather primary data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. SPSS was used for the analysis. A content analysis method was used to analyze qualitative data. Regression analysis results showed that the family leave policy had a significant positive impact on employee retention. The study also found that providing leave helped employees manage their work-family obligations better, improved their emotional well-being, decreased presentism, and ultimately increased employee retention. The study recommended the provision of unpaid leave to the employees.

At Eco Bank Kenya, Kamau, Muleke, Mukaya and Wagoki (2013) studied the effects of work-life balance practices on employees' job performance. Assessing how leave policies affected job satisfaction and performance was one of the study's objectives. An exploratory cross-sectional survey was used in the study. The participants were chosen at random from ten banks, totaling 330. To analyze the data, the researchers used simple percentages, tables, graphs with descriptive statistics, and Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient. The results showed a significant and strong

relationship between annual leave and job satisfaction. Employees who took time off said their performance improved significantly. After taking a break, employees felt more motivated, and the quality of their work increased. Researchers concluded that taking time off from work provided a change of scenery and a break from the routine working environment. After the leave, this led to successful organizational outcomes because it significantly improved employees' satisfaction, and psychosocial well-being, and eliminated fatigue, and work-related stress.

Kisilu (2015) evaluated the impact of leave options on workers' job satisfaction in Makueni County Government. The research design used in the study was a descriptive survey. The study targeted 240 employees working at Makueni County Offices, from which a sample of 72 respondents were chosen using stratified random sampling. The primary data collection tools were interview guides and questionnaires. The results of the study indicated a significant and favourable correlation between employee leave policies and job satisfaction among staff members of Makueni County Government. The study also discovered that leave policies aided workers in carrying out extracurricular tasks, which had the effect of balancing work and personal responsibilities.

Orogbu, Onyeizugbe, and Chukwuemeke (2015) conducted a study to find out the degree to which leave policy impacts service delivery in several Commercial Banks in Lagos state. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The study's target population was 759, and Taro Yamane's formula was used to arrive at a sample of 262. The main method of gathering data was through questionnaires. The hypothesis was tested using Pearson product-moment correlation and regression, and the reliability of the survey was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The researchers found that the relationship between leave policy and service delivery was significantly positive. According to the study, leave policies gave workers a chance to unwind for a while and come back to work with fresh enthusiasm. The study found that leave policies were a crucial component of work-life harmony. To boost employee performance, the researchers advised managers of Commercial Banks to give priority to developing various work-life balance incentives, such as leave programs.

In the Philippines, Kim and Ryu (2017) explored the relationship between organizational commitment and employee satisfaction with leave policies. The

research made use of secondary data gathered in 2014. Through stratified random sampling, 1330 managers and supervisors were chosen to make up the sample. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study established that workers who took time off reported significantly higher commitment, improved performance, improved attendance, and emotional well-being. The results of the study showed that taking time off from work had positive effects on employees' emotional health, which lowered work-related stress. The researcher observed that to improve organizational performance, systematic efforts should be made to improve work-life balance through leave arrangements. The results proved that work-life balance policies meant to improve employee well- being could help foster greater organizational commitment.

The aim of a study by Okemwa (2022) was to ascertain the impact of leave policies on nurses' commitment in Kenyan public hospitals. A cross-sectional survey design was used in the study. The sample was made up of 364 nurses who were chosen via proportionate simple random sampling. To test the null hypothesis, linear regression and Pearson correlation were used. The findings showed that taking annual leave significantly increases nurses' commitment because it inspires a fresh enthusiasm for providing care. Further, taking time off from work has a positive impact on an employee's mental health, reduces work-related stress, and increases commitment. The results indicate a positive correlation between staff leave policies and nurses' commitment to public hospitals. The study also showed that giving employees time off was important because it gave them a chance to take care of other obligations and responsibilities outside of work. Moreover, firms that offered paid time off to their workers had more dedicated workers, which resulted in the accomplishment of the company's goals.

Baum and Ruhm (2016) assessed the impact of paid family leave policy on labor market outcomes in California. The results showed that paid leave encouraged workers and they were more dedicated when they went back to work. The majority of respondents firmly agreed that taking leave from work motivated them and that leave policies had a positive effect on their job satisfaction. In a related study on the effects of paid family and medical leave on employment stability and economic security, Boushey and Glynn et al., (2012) declared that the availability of leaves like maternity

and sick leave increased employee satisfaction and loyalty while lowering the instances of employee turnover, which in turn increased employee productivity.

Obiageli et al., (2015) evaluated the association between work-life balance and employee performance in several banks in Lagos. The goal of the study was to determine how the leave policy affected the provision of services. The study used a descriptive survey research design, and Taro Yamane's formula was used to obtain a sample size of 262. To gather information, structured questionnaires were distributed. The hypothesis was tested using regression analysis and Pearson product-moment correlation. To evaluate the instrument's reliability, Cronbach alpha was employed. The research findings indicated a strong correlation between leave policies and service delivery. The results showed that leave policies encouraged employees' capacity to provide services effectively and efficiently. Work-life balance incentives must be continually improved by the organization if it wants its employees to remain productive. As a result, the employee will provide services to the client more effectively and efficiently (Obiageli et al., 2015).

Musyoka (2015) conducted a study to assess the impact of welfare programs on employee satisfaction in Kenyan Commercial Banks. This study used a descriptive research survey design. A sample of 274 managers was obtained through a stratified sampling technique. Data were gathered based on the research questions using structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine frequencies, percentage distribution tables, and the mean. Correlation, linear regression, and multiple regression were all used in the analysis of inferential statistics. The results showed that there was a statistically significant correlation between leave policies and employee satisfaction. The study revealed that the various leaves (annual, family, and sick) had a favourable significant impact and improved the relationship with employee satisfaction. The study recommended that banks should encourage staff members to take breaks by utilizing the various leaves designed to encourage a healthy work-life balance.

2.3.4 Employee Assistance Programs and Employee Engagement

Afwande and Kiiru (2023) analyzed the impact of employee assistance programs on employee engagement in Commercial Banks in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design. A stratified sampling technique was used to

choose a sample size of 194 respondents. To collect primary data, self-administered questionnaires were used. With the help of SPSS, the study used both qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze the data. The findings revealed that, employee assistance programs significantly and favorably impacted employee engagement. The bank had put systems in place to give employees advice on how to take advantage of new opportunities. It also regularly scheduled ongoing employee counselling and health initiatives. As stated in the findings, offering employee assistance programs helped the organization through improved productivity, job satisfaction and engagement, reduced turnover costs, absenteeism, and providing a safe space for employees to vent.

Archmedes (2022) examined the effects of employee assistance programs on the productivity of employees in state corporations a case of Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) in Kenya. The study used a descriptive research design and selected 135 participants using a stratified and purposive sampling strategy. A structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data. While content analysis provided crucial insights into qualitative data, the research used regression modeling and descriptive statistics to analyze quantitative data. The results of the study indicated that employees who used employee assistance programs performed more efficiently due to decreased anxiety and stress, showed more workplace morale, were more punctual, and recorded reduced absences from work. The study recommended that state corporations should consider establishing a policy that provides guidelines for using employee assistance programs and initiate the process of having EAPs included in the Employment Act of Kenya.

Okemwa (2022) assessed the influence of employee assistance programs on nurses' commitment in Kenyan public hospitals. Proportionate simple random sampling was used to choose a sample size of 364 nurses for the study. The research design was cross-sectional. Data were gathered using semi-structured questionnaires. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The results revealed a positive relationship between the nurses' level of commitment and employee assistance programs. Additionally, the findings showed that employee assistance programs improved attendance rates, lowered absenteeism, fostered positive working relationships between management and employees, enhanced social welfare, and relieved stress, enabling participants to consistently contribute to the organization. The

study concluded that there was a significant positive correlation between the level of commitment and the effectiveness of employee assistance programs. This finding suggested that if nurses' employee assistance programs were improved, their level of commitment would also increase.

Kipkemoi, Omolo, and Onditi (2016) examined the effectiveness of employee assistance programs at Mumias Sugar Company. A descriptive research design was used in the study, which focused on the 1269 employees of Mumias Sugar Company. A sample of 297 respondents was chosen using simple and stratified random sampling. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Multi-regression analysis was used to analyze the data, as well as means and percentages, and the results were displayed on bar graphs, tables, and pie charts. The study found that employee assistance programs helped employees and their families avert serious problems. When used effectively, they also ensure a positive organizational culture, improved morale, job satisfaction, employee commitment, employee engagement, attraction of top talent. Based on the study's findings, identifying and implementing employee assistance programs would increase productivity, reduce absenteeism, boost organizational morale, and improve workplace effectiveness.

In South Africa, Manganyi and Mogorosi (2021) explored the use of employee assistance programs in a tertiary hospital. The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research design. Self-administered questionnaires were used to gather data from a sample of 100 hospital employees (administrative, support, and professional staff). Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Following the findings of the study, implementing employee assistance programs increased workers' commitment to their jobs and performance through social and life management skills as well as better mental and physical health. Findings also showed that employee assistance programs were underutilized, as targeted employees were unaware of the availability of such programs. The study recommended that there was an urgent need to improve on elements like worker-supervisor training on the role of employee assistance programs, as well as the marketing of the services offered in the workplace, to increase program reach and improve effectiveness.

Mwangi, Boinett, Tumwet and Bowen (2016) conducted a study on the effects of work-life balance on employee performance at Kabarak University. Employee assistance programs were one of the variables measured against performance. The study utilized a case study research design. The main method of gathering data was through questionnaires. A sample size of 70 was drawn from the 244 members of the target population. The study found that employee assistance programs had a significant impact on employee performance in institutions of higher education. The researchers discovered that employee assistance programs provided an effective opportunity for an organization to assist specific employees and that doing so had a positive effect on staff commitment. From the results, the programs enhanced employees' job performance, attendance, productivity, job satisfaction, and engagement. They also helped managers deal with issues related to behaviour, performance, and productivity. The study concluded that employee assistance programs were a crucial tool for obtaining the commitment required for increased productivity.

Ndumba, Nkanata, Muchangi and Kiiru (2021) studied the effect of employee assistance programs in level five hospitals in Kenya. Descriptive and correlational research designs were used in the study. In addition, eight level-five hospitals were chosen for the study, with a total sample size of 40 physicians, 278 nurses, and 37 clinical officers. The participants in each stratum of the study were chosen using simple random sampling. A semi-structured questionnaire was used to collect the data using a pick-and-drop method. With the aid of both descriptive and inferential statistics, the data was analyzed using SPSS Version 23. The study established that employee assistance programs had a significant effect on health and the workers' decision to remain with their current employer. Researchers discovered that offering childcare services increased employees' loyalty to their employer and decreased turnover. The study also found that motivated workers were more loyal to their employers. The employees believed that the programs offered helped them deal with their health issues; as a result, they would consider the absence of these programs as a sufficient reason to look for alternative employment. The study findings suggested that to support and motivate their staff, the management of public level five hospitals in Kenya should invest in enhancing their employee assistance programs. This would ultimately result in increased worker engagement.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is usually a written or diagrammatic model of the expected relationships between the variables of the study. It is typically developed from the evaluation of extant empirical and theoretical literature and frequently encompasses the sub-construction of the variables being studied (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). The conceptual framework for this study is shown in Figure 2.1.

Employee engagement in five-star hotels was the dependent variable. It was measured through job satisfaction, commitment, and efficiency at work. Work-life balance practices were the independent variable and were indicated by flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, and employee assistance programs. This was arrived at with the argument that when employees are provided with favourable practices they would be satisfied with their work, committed, efficient, and thus engaged. The term moderating variable refers to elements that may enhance or mitigate the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. In this case, organizational support was proposed to moderate the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five- star hotels in Kenya.

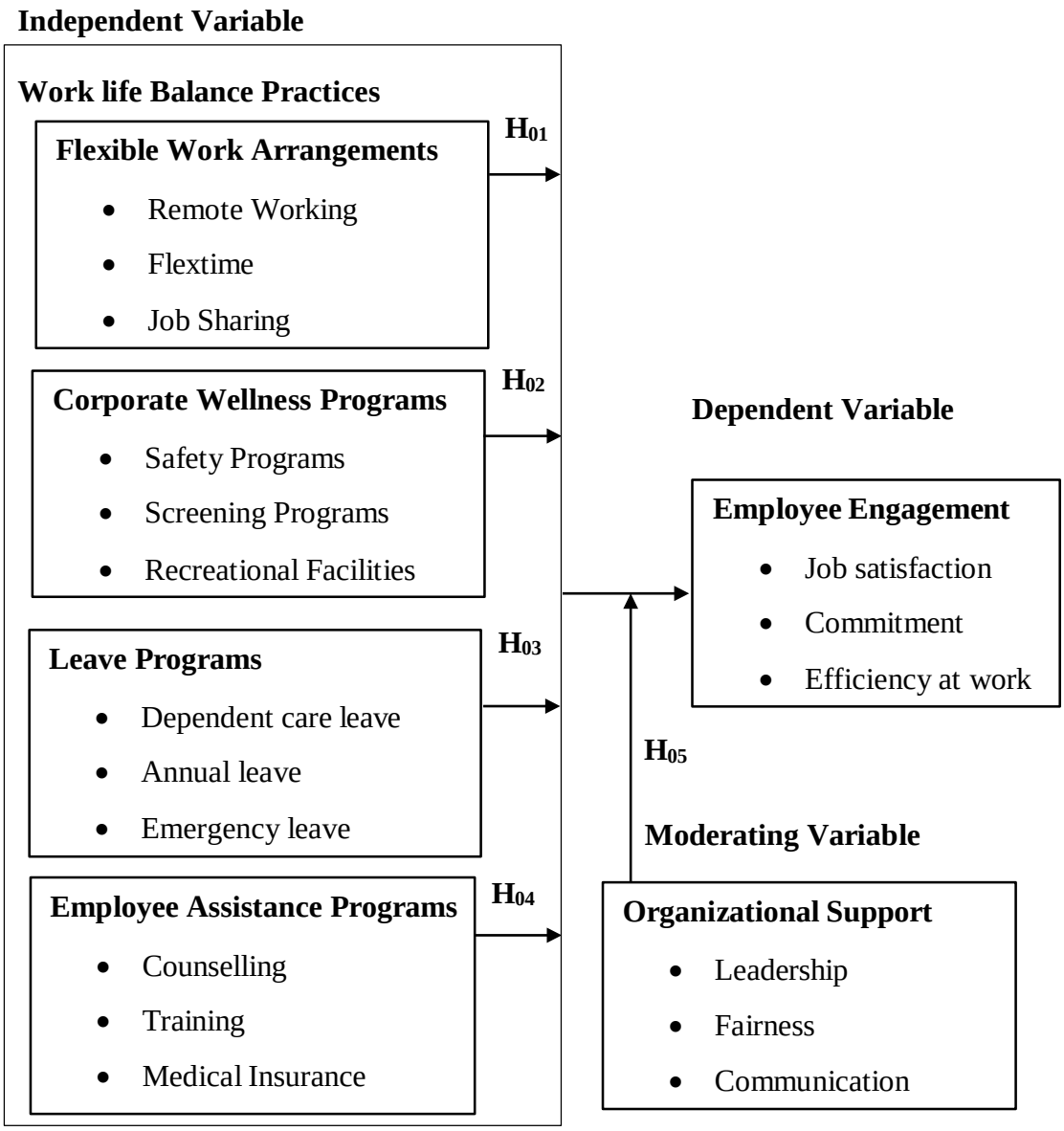


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

2.4.1 Flexible Work Arrangements

Flexible work arrangements are those employment arrangements that allow employees to change their work time frame, the number of hours they put in, or the place they do their work (Orishede & Ndudi, 2020). Additionally, Flexible work arrangements (FWA) have been acknowledged as practices that improve work-life balance, employee engagement, and productivity (Caesens, Stinglhamber & Demoulin, 2017). The common FWA mentioned by Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) include remote working, flextime, job sharing, telecommuting, and compressed workweeks. This study only measured remote working, flextime and job sharing because they are the most prevalent in five-star hotels in Kenya. The benefits of flexible working

arrangements for employers include increased productivity and employee retention, cost savings, and a more satisfied and engaged workforce (Zafari, Hartner-Tiefenthaler & Koeszegi, 2019). Additionally, there are benefits for workers such as decreased stress and conflict between work and family, increased wellbeing, work engagement, and autonomy (Piszczek & Pimputkar, 2021).

Remote working refers to using digital communication tools and online collaboration platforms to carry out job duties from a place other than the employer's physical office (Kim & Kim, 2024). Research has shown that remote working has benefits for most employees as it offers the flexibility for people to work from anywhere, at any time (Kim & Kim, 2024). Employees are able to make savings on travel costs, spend less time commuting and strike the right balance between their work and family-related duties (Zafari et al., 2019). Working all the way remotely offers flexibility and autonomy but new strategies must be developed to keep employees engaged (Allen et al., 2021). Fatima, Javaid, Arshad, Ashraf and Batool (2024) found a significant relationship between remote work and employee engagement. Similarly, other researchers also found a positive correlation between remote work and employee engagement (Swaroop & Sharma, 2022). Robust communication strategies and supportive organizational policies are essential for the success of remote working (Fatima et al.,2024).

2.4.2 Corporate Wellness Programs

Corporate wellness programs are approaches used to help people adopt healthy habits, change unhealthy lifestyles, and achieve a balanced state of mental, physical, social, spiritual, and intellectual health (Torres & Zhang, 2021). In the words of Berry, Mirabito and Baun (2020), an employee wellness program is an organized, employer-sponsored initiative created to assist staff members and occasionally their families in establishing and maintaining lifestyle choices that lower health risks, enhance the quality of life, increase individual efficiency, and benefit the business as a whole. Torres and Zhang (2021) identified some of the popular wellness initiatives, including safety, screening, and recreational facilities. As stated by Munyiri (2023), the goal of a wellness program is to assist individuals in adopting healthy lifestyle choices that combine emotional, social, mental, and physical fitness. The health of an employee is positively impacted by employee wellness programs, which also increases an

employee's energy levels, morale, and attitude, enabling them to be more dedicated and engaged in their work (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Previous studies by Munyiri (2023) and Kitali (2021) demonstrated that participation in corporate wellness programs increases commitment, engagement, and job satisfaction, all of which have an impact on productivity. A content, healthy, committed, and motivated employee will be more engaged.

2.4.3 Leave Programs

Employee leave programs are a common practice in the workplace today. This kind of work-life balance is fundamental because it enables employees to take personal time off, which maintains a balance between their work and personal life. In the words of Baum and Ruhm (2016), leave programs are organized using an array of models and formats for a variety of purposes and to achieve a variety of goals. Leave refers to being away for something that lasts for a while, usually just a short while (Chungo & Anyieni, 2019). Notably, an employee is believed to have a mix of professional and personal obligations, and therefore one can decide to take a brief time off work to fulfill obligations related to their personal lives. Employees are an organization's most valuable asset. As a result, poor leave management may lead to absenteeism, which can reduce productivity and cause disruptions at work. Sagwa and K'Obonyo (2015) indicated that the Employment Act of Kenya recommends statutory leave programs like sick leave, annual leave, maternity/paternity leave, study leave, and compassionate leave. Satisfied employees will go out of their way to maximize their productivity.

2.4.4 Employee Assistance Programs

Employee assistance programs (EAPs) are employer-sponsored workplace initiatives that assist employees in finding solutions to a range of personal issues, including emotional problems, stress, health, psychological, legal, substance abuse, and marital issues (Frey, Pompe, Sharar, Imboden & Bloom, 2018). As noted by Chen and Fulmer (2018), EAPs are currently viewed as "one of the main vehicles for occupational stress management." The original purpose of EAPs was to address issues of alcohol abuse among workers (Frey et al., 2018). Since that time, EAPs have expanded to include more employee services. EAPs typically receive praise and are accepted by employees more widely than other management techniques as they play a crucial role in enhancing

employee engagement (Hsu et al., 2020). They appear to be the answer to all problems in the workplace, addressing both private and public matters to improve outcomes for both workers and employers.

Despite the demanding work environment and other problems in employees' personal lives, organizations continue to devote closer attention to meeting the needs of employees and keeping them happy and productive (Joseph, Walker & Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, 2018). The main components of EAPs are health-related interventions that aid in avoiding work pressure, job-related actions that aid in adjusting to the management infrastructure, and life-related efforts that assist in resolving interpersonal issues that might have an impact on one's ability to do their job. EAPs contribute to the overall well-being and satisfaction of employees (Ampofo, Owusu, Coffie & Asiedu-Appiah, 2022). When employees feel supported and cared for by their organization, they are more likely to be engaged in their work. Workplace counselling, mentoring, training, professional assessment, medical insurance, and referrals are frequently among the core services provided by EAPs (Chen & Fulmer, 2018).

2.4.5 Organizational Support

Organizational support refers to employee perceptions of how much their employer values their efforts and is concerned about their well-being (Kurtessis et al., 2017). It lowers work-related stress, burnout, and withdrawal while increasing trust, job satisfaction, commitment, and psychological well-being (Rockstuhl et al., 2020). For work-life balance practices to be implemented successfully, organizational support is essential. This means that they ought to be incorporated into the organizational structure, beginning with the appropriate job description and work standards. It is imperative to note that if work-life balance practices are not supported by the organization, their impact won't be felt (Austin & Fiske, 2023). The moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement has not been well articulated in prior studies. The availability of work-life balance practices and perceptions about corporate policies that assist families are moderately related to organizational support (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Organizational support is one of the important predictors of poor and high-performing employees. It is considered for maintaining favourable work outcomes such as engagement, task performance, and organizational citizenship (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Organizations that provide assistance to employees, both in terms of work and well-being, have a good impact on workplace engagement because valuing employees' roles and paying greater attention to their welfare builds employee trust in the organization (Prasetyo & Mugi, 2023). Eisenberger et al., (2020) list the profound results of organizational support, which include leading improvements in role and extra- role performance that contribute to the organization's welfare. Employees who receive more organizational support, benefits, and are encouraged to get involved in making decisions will have greater engagement and higher feelings of commitment and dedication towards the organization, as well as be motivated to meet their obligations and be fully engaged at work (Eisenberger et al., 2020). Further, organizational support improves employees' subjective well-being, positive attitudes towards the organization and work, and positive actions (Caesens et al., 2017). Lack of organizational support has been shown to hinder employees from achieving their goals, resulting in frustration, withdrawal behaviour, less engagement, and higher turnover intentions (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

A study by (Caesens et al., 2017) established that employee engagement and organizational support have a favourable relationship. In another study, Kurtessis et al., (2017) discovered a connection between strong organizational support and high employee engagement levels. Therefore, with organizational support, work-life balance practices might be strengthened, which would ultimately strengthen their impact on employee engagement in the hotel sector. This study investigated the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

2.4.6 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is defined by Sihag (2021) as a satisfying, work-related attitude characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Employee engagement has evolved from a single focus on job satisfaction to a complex construct that encompasses employees' emotional commitment and dedication to their work and employer (Faridullah, 2024). It involves task-related activities correlated with the capacity and ability of a person to honestly communicate their desires and views at work (Tkalac, Galic & Znidar, 2021). Engagement occurs when a person is consciously alert and emotionally connected to others (Albro & McElfresh, 2021). Engaged employees have

an attachment to their work, show confidence in their abilities, and have the assumption that work is fun while disengaged employees detach from work tasks and withdraw consciously and emotionally (Heslina & Syahruni, 2021).

Effective engagement means that your employees are mentally present while performing their duties. They know what to do, have what they need, and have a management and team who are supportive. They are prepared for work and understand why their work is important (Gallup, 2023). Moreover, employee engagement is key in promoting diversification in an organization since it improves harmony among employees and between the management and the subordinates (Abbas & Zhiqiang, 2020). Employee engagement reflects the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace (Bui & Le, 2023). Employees can become engaged when their basic needs are met and when they have a chance to contribute, have a sense of belonging, and have opportunities to learn and grow (Tensay & Singh, 2020). According to a global survey by the Gallup Institute, out of the 155 countries assessed, only 15% of employees are fully engaged, while 85% are disengaged (Motyka, 2018). A similar report indicated that the level of disengagement globally trend has been a cause of worry because only 13% of employees were “highly” engaged and the rest were disengaged (Nel & Linde, 2019).

Employee engagement has gained global interest from researchers and practitioners, as organizations recognize the positive impact and competitive advantage that engaged employees bring to an organization (Alam, Kartar Singh & Islam, 2021). A study done by Towers Watson (2017) across fifty organizations globally, reported a 19.2% increase in operational income among organizations that showed high employee engagement. The study also noted a 3.74% higher operating margin in organizations with a high employee engagement score. Previous research by Kumar and Pansari (2015) shows that organizations with highly engaged employees experience customer satisfaction, profitability, job satisfaction, decreased absenteeism, improved quality, increased retention and productivity. Bui and Le (2023) opined that employee engagement advances customer relationship management which helps in driving customer loyalty, purchase intention, and satisfaction with the service delivery.

2.5 Critique of Existing Literature

There have been reviews of several empirical studies. All of these have been crucial in shedding light on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement on a global, regional, and even local level in Kenya. However, they have presented certain gaps. This section examines these contributions and their limitations.

In the South African context, Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) investigated the impact of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement of large corporations in six industries. The study provided significant information on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement. However, it only targeted experts and senior managers. The small sample size was discriminatory and the perceptions of subordinate employees who may benefit from flexible working were overlooked. In India, GP and Justus (2021) assessed flexible work arrangements as an influencer of employee engagement. The study only focused on working women who have kids. This does not necessarily mean that the other employees do not need flexible work arrangements. By failing to involve all the employees in the study, it failed to provide precise information on whether flexible work arrangements influence employee engagement. The findings are only limited working women with children.

Kitali (2021) conducted a study to ascertain the influence of employee wellness programs on employee commitment at Kenya Commercial Bank in Nairobi County, Kenya. Data was collected through questionnaires distributed via Google Forms, sending the link on WhatsApp. This was not effective considering not all employees use WhatsApp and could have affected the accuracy of data collected. This study did not present any new findings since most of the studies have focused on Commercial Banks within Nairobi City County. It was therefore a duplication. Muthoki and Were (2017) explored the factors affecting the sustainability of wellness programs in the Nairobi Serena Hotel. The study provided knowledge on why wellness programs were failing or underutilized. On the flip side, it failed to show the role of sensitization to encourage participation in the available wellness programs.

Muriuki (2018) sought to establish the perceived effects of corporate wellness programs at Radisson Blu Hotel in Kenya. This was an instrumental study indicating how wellness programs can be used to motivate employees and enhance employee

engagement. However, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other hotels in Kenya. The study also examined the perceptions of the employees on the wellness programs. Further, since the study used a census sampling technique allowing everyone to participate in the study, those who were new to the organization may not have given accurate information. This also applies to those who were not interested in utilizing the wellness programs. Kangure (2015) investigated the relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement in state corporations in Kenya. The study found that workplace policy, supervisor support, co-worker support, and corporate culture contribute positively to employee engagement. This study failed to measure work-life balance practices such as wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and employee assistance programs, which are currently a source of concern for modern workers (Kangure, 2015).

Manganyi and Mogorosi (2021) evaluated the utilization of employee assistance programs in a tertiary hospital in South Africa. The study failed to show why the programs were underutilized and which role the management played in enhancing participation. The study did not include doctors due to their busy schedules but surprisingly, they may need these programs more which emphasizes why they should have been included.

2.6 Research Gaps

From the contextual perspective, the prevailing gap from extant studies is that majority of them have explicitly linked work-life balance and employee engagement in other sectors, overlooking the five-star hotels in Kenya. Afwande and Kiiru (2023) assessed the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement in Commercial Banks in Nairobi City County. Lasarati et al., (2019) examined the effects of work-life balance on employee engagement in millennial generation employees in Indonesia. In Nigeria, Sheyindemi et al., (2023) explored the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement of paramilitary personnel. Mohamed and Zaki (2017) analyzed the relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement among flight attendants in Egypt while Iqbal et al., (2017) explored the relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement in the banking sector of Faisalabad in Pakistan. All the above studies failed to show the relationship of the main variables in the hotel sector. Further, most were conducted in different contextual settings which is different

from Kenya.

In addition, many studies focused on the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. For instance, Mwangi et al., (2016), (Ndumba et al., 2021) Amoro (2021), Otieno (2020), and Mbanya (2018). The studies conducted in this area have been done in a different context. The few studies conducted in Kenya on work-life balance are majorly conducted on multinational firms, State corporations, Commercial Banks, institutions of higher learning, public hospitals, and only a few in the hospitality industry. Previous studies have focused on the following organizations: Safaricom Limited Company, Kenya Ports Authority, Kenya Bureau of Standards, Level 5 hospitals, Kenya Commercial Banks, and very few five-star hotels within Nairobi City County. The current study therefore bridges this gap as the research will be conducted in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 2.1: Summary of Literature and Research Gaps

Author(s)	The focus of the Study	Key Findings	Research gaps	How the current study addresses the gaps
Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020)	Impact of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in South Africa.	The study found a strong correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement.	Contextual gap- this study was conducted in South Africa therefore the findings cannot be generalized to Kenya. Methodological gap- this was a qualitative study that used interviews to collect data.	It's a qualitative and quantitative study that was conducted in Kenya and questionnaires were be used to collect data.
Umukoro et al., (2020)	Effect of flexible work arrangements on employee commitment in Private universities in Nigeria.	Results showed a significant link Between flexible work arrangements and commitment among workers.	Contextual gap- the study focused on private universities in Nigeria. Methodological gap- a cross-sectional research design was adopted.	This study focused on the five-star hotels and a descriptive research design was adopted.
Kangure (2015)	Relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement in state corporations in Kenya.	Employee engagement was positively and significantly impacted by work- life balance.	The study focused on state corporations and only measured different work-life balance practices.	This study was done in five-star hotels and measured different practices of work life balance.

Author(s)	The focus of the Study	Key Findings	Research gaps	How the current study addresses the gaps
Aveline and Kumar (2017)	Explored the effect of work-life balance on employee engagement in the software industries in Chennai, India	Employee engagement levels were found to be higher for those with better work- life balance policies.	The study conducted in the Software industries in India.	The contextual gap was filled by focusing on the hospitality industry in Kenya.
Marshall (2020)	Impact of Extensive Wellness Programs on Workers' Job Satisfaction Levels in the Hospitality Industry in the USA.	Research findings held that there was a substantial variance in the levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction among participants.	This study was held in the USA therefore the findings can't be generalized to Kenya. It only measured a single indicator of employee engagement.	This study was done in Kenya and it measured three indicators of employee engagement; commitment, satisfaction, and efficiency.
Mohamed and Zaki (2017)	Effect of work- life balance on employee engagement among flight attendants in Egypt.	The workers were more committed, dedicated, loyal, and motivated by the provision of the work-life balance practices.	The study was done in Egypt and only focused on flight attendants.	The study was conducted in Kenya and it targeted employees in the hospitality industry.
Muriuki (2018)	Assessed the perceived benefits of corporate wellness programs in Radisson Blu Hotel in Kenya.	Wellness programs had a positive impact on staff morale, commitment, employee productivity, decreased turnover.	This study was held in a single hotel therefore its findings cannot be generalized to imply the situation in other hotels.	This study focused on all five-star hotels in Kenya therefore findings can be generalized.

Author(s)	The focus of the Study	Key Findings	Research gaps	How the current study addresses the gaps
Mogeni (2020)	Influence of family leave system on employee retention in Commercial Banks in Kenya.	providing leave helped employees manage their work- family obligations better, improved their emotional well-being and decreased presentism	The study was conducted in banks therefore the findings cannot be generalized to the hotel sector.	This study was conducted in hotels and adopted a both descriptive research design.
Kisilu (2015)	Impact of leave options on workers' job satisfaction in Makueni County Government	results of the study indicated a significant and favourable correlation between the variables studied.	The study focused on one aspect of employee engagement.	The study focused on various aspects of employee engagement.
Afwande and Kiiru (2023)	Impact of EAPS on employee engagement in Commercial Banks in Nairobi City County, Kenya.	employee assistance programs significantly and favourably impacted employee engagement.	This study focused on Commercial Banks.	This study was done in 5- star hotels.
Manganyi and Mogorosi (2021)	Explored the use of EAPS in a tertiary hospital in South Africa.	There was an Improvement in commitment, performance, and health of the workers.	This study employed a cross-sectional research design and it was conducted in a tertiary hospital.	The study adopted a descriptive research design and focused on five star hotels.

2.7 Chapter Summary

Chapter two reviewed existing theoretical and empirical literature related to work-life balance practices and employee engagement. It explored key work-life balance practices such as flexible work arrangements, leave policies, employee assistance programs, and corporate wellness programs and how these influence employee engagements in organizational settings. The chapter was anchored on Social exchange theory, Spillover theory, Hierarchy of needs theory and Organizational support theory, which provided a theoretical lens for understanding the reciprocal relationship between employer support and employee engagement. Empirical studies from both global and local contexts were examined, highlighting a gap in research within the hotel sector in Kenya. A conceptual framework that outlined the hypothesized relationships between work-life balance practices and employee engagement was presented. The chapter concluded with a critique of literature with a summary of the research gaps identified and how they will be filled.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was employed to ensure that suitable data was collected using appropriate methods. It covers research philosophy, research design, target population, sampling method, sample size, data collection instrument, pilot study, validity and reliability of the instruments, data analysis, and ethical issues considered in the study.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The purpose of research philosophy is the creation of knowledge (Sefotho, 2015). Yang, Zhang and Zhou (2020) defined research philosophy as the basic idea or understanding that drives the entire research process, particularly the choice of research technique and method of analysis. Further, research philosophy is the belief in how data is acquired, analyzed, and utilized by researchers to comprehend a phenomenon (Yang et al., 2020). The adopted philosophy dictates the research design to be employed, the data collection methods to be used, as well as the data analysis and strategy to arrive at results and conclusions. There are four types of epistemological philosophy namely; pragmatism, interpretivism, realism, and positivism (Scotland, 2012).

The pragmatic research philosophy is rooted in the historical foundations of pragmatism and characterized by a diverse range of methodologies (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). In the pragmatic view, research is seen as a process where ideas and theories arise from individuals' interactions with their environments and their past experiences and actions. Typically, researchers employing pragmatism draw on various concepts to elucidate ongoing phenomena (Sumara & Kuang, 2021). Interpretivism is based on the idea that knowledge and reality are dynamic and may be investigated through qualitative research (Eksteen, 2019). Interpretivists argue that a comprehensive understanding of reality can only be achieved through subjective interpretation and philosophical inquiry. Central to interpretivist philosophy is the examination of phenomena in their natural settings, recognizing that researchers inevitably influence the subjects they study. They acknowledge the existence of multiple interpretations of reality, asserting that these interpretations contribute to the scientific knowledge being

pursued (Carlson, 2018). In contrast, realism posits that an objective world exists independently of the researcher, waiting to be discovered, while relativism suggests that reality is shaped by individual perceptions and experiences (Putnam, 2020) Historical realism further posits that reality evolves over time through various values, including social, political, cultural, or gender influences (Putnam, 2020).

This study was guided by positivism which is concerned with the acquisition of absolute knowledge regarding objective reality (Coleman, 2019). Positivism is based on the assumption that research questions in a given study can be answered objectively (Geydar, Arumugam, Kuppusamy, & Singh, 2020). Further, it seeks to portray reality objectively and quantitatively, particularly to show potential relationships (Boussaguet & Faucher, 2020). A positivist philosophy was appropriate because the study focused on objectively measuring the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement using quantifiable data, hypothesis testing, and statistical analysis. Under positivism, the researcher remains detached and neutral, ensuring that the findings are free from personal bias. This approach was appropriate because the study relied on structured questionnaires, statistical techniques such as correlation analysis and regression, and hypothesis testing to establish potential relationships. Furthermore, five-star hotels have structured human resource policies which aligns well with positivist assumptions, where observable phenomena can be measured, compared, and interpreted objectively.

3.3 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive research design. Descriptive research designs allow researchers to describe variables (Agapito, 2023). A descriptive research design, as explained by Khan (2019), focuses on answering questions related to what exists or what has occurred, compiling data to present an accurate representation of reality. Additionally, Aggarwal and Ranganathan (2019) describe a descriptive research design as a framework for fact-finding inquiries that outline the conditions of the variables being examined. Agapito (2023) highlights that this design is suitable for collecting data aimed at describing phenomena, individuals, environments, or organizations. Given that the current study sought to provide an in-depth overview of work life balance practices and their relationship with employee engagement, a descriptive approach was deemed appropriate. This method also facilitated the

characterization of respondents' opinions, attitudes, and behaviours (Borgstede & Scholz, 2021).

A descriptive research design was appropriate for this study because it enabled the researcher to systematically collect, summarize, and interpret data related to work-life balance practices and employee engagement within five-star hotels in Kenya. The aim was not to manipulate variables but to describe the existing conditions, perceptions, and practices as they naturally occur among employees. Descriptive design also allowed the researcher to draw insights from a large sample across multiple hotels, which enhances the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, it aligns well with the positivist philosophy where the goal is to observe and measure phenomena objectively. This design was also suitable for assessing the level of employee engagement across different demographic and organizational contexts and identifying relationships and trends between work life balance practices and engagement. Thus, the study employed a descriptive research design to conduct a thorough investigation and provide a comprehensive overview of the variables under investigation (Siedlecki, 2020).

3.4 Target Population

The target population of the study comprised of all the employees working in the 25 five-star hotels in Kenya (Tourism Regulatory Authority, 2023). The choice of the five-star hotels was based on the fact that they have adopted work-life balance practices which are of interest in this study. Similarly, they are selected owing to the fact that, majority of the studies in Kenya have focused on parastatals, Commercial Banks, hospitals and non-governmental organizations and overlooked five-star hotels (Afwande & Kiiru, 2023; Muindi, 2015; Nyang'ori, 2017; Oyiolo, 2018). In this study, the unit of observation was the 4857 employees working in all the five-star hotels while the unit of analysis was all the five-star hotels in Kenya. The involvement of managers in the study was because they are involved in the formulation and implementation of organizational policies and strategies and therefore have relevant information regarding the study variables.

3.5 Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

The study utilized multistage sampling. The target population was heterogeneous, consisting of employees from different departments, job levels, and demographic backgrounds in five-star hotels in Kenya. This diversity enriched the data and enhanced the generalizability of the findings. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the target population, the study adopted purposive sampling to select seven five-star hotels which were used as a representative sample of the 25 five-star hotels located in seven counties in Kenya. Then in each hotel, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. Employees were first grouped into relevant strata based on departments and job levels, after which a random sample was drawn from each stratum. This approach ensured balanced representation across diverse categories of hotel employees. Random sampling guarantees that everyone will be given equal opportunities to participate in the study. This aids in the elimination of selection bias, an internal validity issue in research (Heale & Twycross, 2015). This probability sampling technique was used in the study since the target population was assumed to be heterogeneous and had lower sampling errors compared to others. Further, stratified random sampling increases accuracy and representativeness of results, especially in heterogeneous populations.

3.5.2 Sample Size

An acceptable sample size is critical for a researcher to be able to generalize the findings from a random sample while avoiding biases or sampling errors (Taherdoost, 2016). The primary goal of sampling is to get an understanding of some traits or features of the entire population based on the characteristics of the sample. The sample size for this study was 369 employees drawn from the sampled five-star hotels in Kenya. The larger the sample the more representative it is and the lesser the sampling error (Taherdoost, 2016). The size of the sample should neither be excessively large, nor too small. It should be optimum. An optimum sample fulfills the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability, and flexibility (Taherdoost, 2016).

The researcher used a sample size of 7 five-star hotels out of the 25 five-star hotels in Kenya. The 7 five-star hotels selected are a representative sample of the hotels located in seven counties in Kenya. The selection was based on specific criteria such as

operational consistency and geographical representation. Representative samples are often used to infer meaning about the entire population due to the high costs and time constraints of conducting a census. A sample size of 369 respondents was obtained using Slovin's formula (1960). The sample size of 369 was distributed amongst the 7 five-star hotels through stratified proportionate random sampling. In this study, Slovin's formula helped ensure that the sample would be representative of the total population of employees in five-star hotels. Similarly, this formula has been employed previously by Otado (2022) to establish antecedents of career salience in the five-star rated hotels industry in Kenya.

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + Ne^2)}$$

Where,

n = Number of samples,

N = Total population; in this case N = 4857

e = Error tolerance, 95% confidence level therefore e = 0.05 Therefore,

$$Sample\ size = \frac{4{,}857}{(1 + 4{,}857 \times 0.05 \times 0.05)} = 369\ Respondents$$

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

This study used primary data. Structured questionnaires served as the primary research tool utilized to gather primary data. The questionnaire was adopted from the Work-life Balance Scale (Brough et al., 2014), Flexible Work Arrangements Scale (Greenberg & Landry, 2011), Employee well-being index (Dyrbye, Satele, & Shanafelt, 2016), and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) (Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006) and modified to suit this study. Use of questionnaires was justified on the ground that they allow the collection of data from large samples within a limited period of time. Questionnaires can also provide detailed answers to complex problems (Cohen et al., 2017). Likert scales are commonly employed in most research in business and other related courses in social science, particularly when the respondent's agreement is necessary (Zikmund et al., 2013).

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A gathered background

information of the employees. Section B collected data regarding work-life balance practices such as flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, and employee assistance programs. Section C assessed organizational support while Section D measured the level of employee engagement. The questionnaire contained both open-ended and closed questions, which allowed the respondents freedom to give opinions and express their perceptions.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher administered the questionnaires through drop-and-pick method to collect primary data. Personal administration of the questionnaire was considered since it gave the researcher a chance to interpret and clarify questions in the questionnaire to the respondents. This also ensured that the respondents fully understood the questions before answering, hence ensuring a high response rate. Further, follow up was done through telephone (sending polite reminders via SMS) and personal visits as it was deemed necessary to ensure that the respondents who were left with the questionnaires filled them in time.

3.8 Pilot Study

Before conducting research, all parts of the data-gathering instrument should be tested (Bryman, 2016). Pilot testing helps reveal practical hurdles and errors in collecting data, allowing researchers to make necessary modifications to their methods. For instance, researchers may encounter questions that are ambiguous or take longer than expected to complete, leading to lower participant involvement (Bryman, 2016). Pilot testing improves instrument reliability by giving preliminary data for analysis to ensure consistent responses (DeVellis, 2017). A well-executed pilot test strengthens the research design and improves the likelihood of delivering trustworthy and valid results in the final study.

For this study, the suitability of the questionnaires was pre-tested by administering them to thirty respondents in 2 five-star hotels within Nairobi City County which translated to 8% of the entire population. This is consistent with Lakens (2022) who recommended a pre-test sample size of 1% to 10% of the target population. Participants were selected through purposive sampling. The choice of Nairobi City County was based on the fact that it houses 12 five-star hotels out of the 25 five- star hotels in

Kenya. It was also easily accessible and convenient to the researcher. The pilot study evaluated the design, relevance, language, content validity, and reliability of the research instrument. Findings from the pilot study were not included in the final study to avoid data distortion but rather utilized to test the quality of the instrument that was later employed in data collection.

3.8.1 Validity of the Research Instrument

The study checked for content, construct and face validity. Validity of a measure captures all aspects of a particular construct. It refers to how well a measuring equipment covers the issue being studied. The questionnaires were developed and operationalized in accordance with the study variables to ensure that the questions in each variable were sufficient and indicative of the study's purpose and objectives. Content validity focuses on determining if items are an accurate representation of all items within a specific construct's content domain. Content validity is increased by properly assessing the relevance of the content utilized in the questionnaire (Heale & Twycross, 2015). There was an element of discretion involved in determining content validity, which necessitated some consensus on what a specific construct indicated. A disagreement over the meaning of a construct will limit the achievement of high content validity. It tests the complete representation of what it intends to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015).

A research tool can only obtain content validity if it undergoes a rational analysis by professionals familiar with the academic field of study. After careful review, the research instrument was validated with evidence from the literature, and various modifications were made before the final research instrument was developed. Further, the questionnaire was reviewed by two academic supervisors to ensure content validity. Their ideas and recommendations were integrated into the questionnaire to ensure that the desired results were obtained. Following that, three experts from the domains of hospitality management and human resource management evaluated the questionnaire items to ensure they were relevant to the variables examined and within the context of the study. The academic supervisors verified the content validity of research instruments which ensured that the questions presented in the research instrument reflected the underlying concepts and constructs of work-life balance and employee engagement.

Construct validity refers to the correctness of inferences drawn from observations or measurements (typically test scores), particularly whether or not a test can reasonably be expected to reflect the desired concept (Cobern & Adams, 2020). There are two types of construct validity: discriminant validity and convergent validity (Cobern & Adams, 2020). Discriminant validity shows whether a measure is unrelated or negatively connected to measures of divergent constructs while convergent validity reveals the level to which a measure fits in with measurements of related constructs. In this study, construct validity was attained through confirmatory factor analysis whereby items with factor loadings greater than 0.5 were accepted and retained for analysis. The goal of construct validity was to determine whether the test would assess the desired concept (Cobern & Adams, 2020).

Face validity is concerned with the participant's perception of the instrument. Face validity refers to how well a test is perceived to cover the topic it is designed to measure (Allen, Robson, & Iliescu, 2021). A test is considered to have face validity if it appears to measure what it is intended to measure. It is frequently compared with construct validity and content validity. All items were evaluated to see if they fit into the specified conceptual scope of work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The face validity determines if the subject matter of the test seems to be appropriate for its objectives (Allen et al., 2021). Face validity was improved through a review of the instrument after the pilot study. An instrument's face validity may be diminished if it seems overly repetitive, extremely difficult, or too simple. The willingness of the respondent to complete the questionnaire is impacted by these errors. The respondents were allowed to share their perception using the Likert scale while opinions were shared through open ended questions. This made it possible to gather objective data while taking a variety of viewpoints into account.

3.8.2 Reliability of the Research Instrument

Reliability is concerned with the ability of a research instrument to maintain the consistency of an outcome when the test is repeated (Garcia-Ramos & Janicijevic, 2020). A test is regarded as reliable when it can be used by different researchers under stable conditions, with consistent and non-varying results being attained (Garcia-Ramos & Janicijevic, 2020). Cronbach’s alpha was used to determine the reliability

of the instrument because it is considered to be appropriate for testing internal consistency when numerous Likert scales are used. Studies have suggested that a greater coefficient (Cronbach's alpha of >0.7) indicates that the measurement instrument is reliable (Sun, Wang, Jing, Xi, Dai, & Zhou, 2020).

Cronbach's alpha tests the correlation between the various responses and the higher the correlation, the higher the reliability of the items. Gliem and Gliem (2018) recommended a Cronbach's value of 0.7 as reliable, Cooper and Schindler (2020) suggest a range of 0.7 to 0.9 Cronbach's alpha coefficient with a cutoff point of 0.6 while Bagozzi and Yi (2020) suggested a minimal reliability cut-off point of 0.5 for further analysis. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient cut off for this investigation was 0.7. This is consistent with Gliem and Gliem's (2018) suggestions that a reliability score of 0.7 or higher indicates strong instrument reliability.

3.9 Data Analysis and Presentation

Once the questionnaires were returned, the raw data was edited for any errors or omissions and improvements were made whenever possible. This research was quantitative and qualitative in nature. Coding and classification of the acquired data was completed and entered into the applicable statistical program for ease of analysis. This was necessary to maintain data correctness and consistency. To analyze the quantitative data, this study used both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics used percentages, mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation to explain and summarize the data clearly, whereas inferential statistics made conclusions from the analyzed data, aiding in generalization. Inferential statistics used correlation and regression analysis to measure potential relationships among constructs and test hypotheses. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 aided in regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and correlation analysis. This data analysis employed a 5% level of significance. Content analysis is a method used to analyze written, verbal, or visual communication. In this study, data gathered through open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis.

Further, an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out to test the significance of the overall model, while also testing the hypotheses of the study. The regression was used to examine how changes in the independent variables (work-life balance) influence changes in the dependent variable (employee engagement). The study

sought to predict employee engagement using variables such as flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, and employee assistance programs. Correlation analysis was used to determine the potential relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The fundamental goal of these correlations are to allow the research study to forecast the deviation of a variable from the normal (Mohajan, 2020). For each of the objectives, descriptive statistics, content analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis were conducted.

3.9.1 Hypothesis Testing

Regression models were used to test the individual hypotheses of the study.

Table 3.1: Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Hypotheses Test	Regression Model
Hypothesis 1: H_{01}: There is no statistically significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.	$H_0: \beta_1 = 0$ Vs $H_1: \beta_1 \neq 0$ Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$, otherwise fail to reject the H_0	$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$ Where: Y= Employee engagement β_0=Constant (Coefficient of intercept) β_1 =Regression coefficient of X_1 X_1 = Flexible Work Arrangements ε=Error Term
Hypothesis 2: H_{02}: There is no statistically significant relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.	$H_0: \beta_2 = 0$ Vs $H_1: \beta_2 \neq 0$ Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$, otherwise fail to reject the H_0	$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$ Where: Y= Employee engagement β_0=Constant (Coefficient of intercept) β_2=Regression coefficient of X_2 X_2= Corporate Wellness Programs ε=Error Term
Hypothesis 3: H_{03}: There is no statistically significant relationship between leave programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.	$H_0: \beta_3 = 0$ Vs $H_1: \beta_3 \neq 0$ Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$, otherwise fail to reject the H_0	$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$ Where: Y= Employee Engagement β_0=Constant (Coefficient of intercept) β_3=Regression coefficient of X_3 X_3= Leave Programs ε=Error Term
Hypothesis 4: H04: There is no statistically significant relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five- star hotels in Kenya.	$H_0: \beta_4 = 0$ Vs $H_1: \beta_4 \neq 0$ $p < 0.05$ Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$ otherwise fail to reject the H_0	$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$ Where: Y= Employee engagement β_0=Constant (Coefficient of intercept) β_4=Regression coefficient of X_4 X_4= Employee Assistance Programs ε=Error Term

3.9.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression model was used to test the combined effect of work-life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The multiple regression model seeks to establish whether the independent variables have a significant effect on the dependent variable when combined. Step wise regression model was adopted in order to identify the most relevant predictors and improve the model fit.

Model 1: $\boldsymbol{Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \ldots}$**(1)**

Where:

Y = Employee Engagement

β_0 = constant coefficient

β_1 - β_4 = regression coefficient for the independent variables

X_1 = Flexible Work Arrangements, X_2 = Corporate Wellness Programs, X_3 = Leave Programs, X_4 = Employee Assistance Programs

ε = error term

3.9.3 Testing for Moderating Effect

Organizational support was the moderating variable in this study. The study sought to examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using Moderated Multiple Regression. This model was employed to examine the fifth hypothesis of the study.

H_{05}: There is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

The first phase involved estimating the effect of predictors and the moderator (Z) through regression analysis:

Model 2: $\boldsymbol{Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_z Z + \varepsilon}$**(2)**

Where:

$\boldsymbol{Y}$ = Employee Engagement

$\boldsymbol{\beta_0}$ = constant coefficient

$\boldsymbol{\beta_1 - \beta_4}$ = regression coefficient for the independent variables

$\boldsymbol{X_1}$ = Flexible Work Arrangements $\boldsymbol{X_2}$ = Corporate Wellness Programs $\boldsymbol{X_3}$ = Leave

Programs

X_4 = Employee Assistance Programs

β_{1z} -β_{4z} = estimates of the population regression coefficient for the product term (X*Z)

β_Z = estimate of the population regression coefficient for Z

Z = Organizational Support (Moderating Variable)

ε = error term

In the second step, the interaction variable was added to the equation:

Model 3: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_z Z + \beta_{1z} X_1 * Z + \beta_{2z} X_2 * Z + \beta_{3z} X3 * Z + \beta_{4z} X_4 * Z + \varepsilon$ **……(3)**

3.10 Diagnostic Tests

The following diagnostic tests were conducted before correlation and regression analysis; Test of Normality, Multi-collinearity test, Linearity test, Autocorrelation test and Heteroscedasticity test.

3.10.1 Test of Normality

One of the requirements for using the regression model is that the data must be normally distributed (Khatun, 2021). Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov Smirnov tests were used to check for normality in the data collected. Dudley (2023) emphasized the significance of using the Shapiro-Wilk test, particularly to determine whether the data is normally distributed. When using the Shapiro-Wilk test, discrepancies in the data can be found more effectively compared to using other tests such as the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Demir, 2022). To determine whether the data was normally distributed, the researcher performed a Shapiro-Wilks test, Kolmogorov Smirnov tests and examined the p-value. Generally, a p-value of less than 0.05 typically means that the alternative, which claims that the data is normally distributed, is accepted and the null hypothesis, which claims that there is no normality, is rejected.

3.10.2 Multicollinearity Test

In particular, when using multiple linear regression models, the multicollinearity test is one of the most significant. Multicollinearity is defined by Bayman and Dexter (2021) as the state in which a regression model's predictors have a high degree of correlation with one another. Variance inflation factors (VIF) quantifies how much the

variance of a regression coefficient is inflated due to correlations among predictors (Bayman & Dexter, 2021). Obite, Olewuezi, Ugwuanyim, and Bartholomew (2020) contend that when the explanatory variables in a linear regression model have a high degree of correlation, this is referred to as multicollinearity and can eventually cause distortion in the model estimates. Variance inflation factors were used in the current study to determine whether multicollinearity existed in the independent variables.

3.10.3 Linearity Test

Lim et al., (2024) defines linearity as the state in which a dependent variable can be calculated as the linear function of multiple independent variables because it has a linear relationship with those variables. The linearity test was used whereby the Goodness of Fit examination was adopted. This helped in condensing the disparity between the values projected and the values observed by a statistical model. If the nonlinear component's significance value is less than the critical value ($p<.05$), then nonlinearity is highly significant (Lim et al., 2024).

3.10.4 Autocorrelation Test

This assumption asserts that the error terms are not related with each other. Autocorrelation refers to the characteristic of data where the correlation between the values of the same variables is determined by the relationship between related objects (Kim, Mawuntu, Park & Jeong, 2023). The presence of autocorrelation was determined by calculating the Durbin-Watson statistic to test for autocorrelation. The Durbin Watson test looks for a specific type of serial correlation. The Durbin-Watson statistic should fall between the range of 1.5 to 2.5 when dealing with independent observations.

3.10.5 Test of Heteroscedasticity

In regression analysis, heteroscedasticity means a systematic change in the spread of the residuals over the range of measured values or unequal scatter in the context of the residuals or error term, (Farrar, 2022). Heteroscedasticity is a problem because ordinary least squares regression assumes that all residuals are drawn from a population that has a constant variance otherwise called homoscedasticity. Heteroscedasticity occurs more often in datasets that have a large range between the largest and smallest observed values, mainly because of the error variance changing

proportionally with a factor, which may be variable in a model. This study adopted the Breusch–Pagan test, performing an auxiliary regression of the squared residuals on the independent variables (Farrar, 2022).

3.11 Ethical considerations

Ethical practices were adopted during the entire period of undertaking this research. The researcher obtained approval from the University Board of Postgraduate Studies, and then proceeded to acquire a research license from National Council for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI). Subsequently, the researcher got authorization from the management of sampled hotels to collect data as this served as a guarantee to a good response rate. Consent was obtained from the respondents and they were informed about the goal of the study. Private or personal questions were avoided in the questionnaire in order to ensure objectivity and evade distortion of outcomes.

The study complied with ethical standards of confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, honesty, and integrity. The identity of the participants remained anonymous. The researcher clarified to the participants that this study was purely for academic reasons. There was voluntary involvement of the participants in the study hence no coercion. The participants were protected from any harm whether physical or psychological during data collection. Periodicals, manuscripts, and reports from documents reviewed have been acknowledged and cited accordingly using APA referencing style.

3.12 Operationalization of Variables

The operationalization of the study variables is essential to demonstrate how each variable will be measured appropriately and, more importantly, to identify the indicators that may need to be measured to support any further statistical analysis. As a result, Table 3.2 provides an overview of the operationalization of variables.

Table 3.2: Operationalization of Variables

Variable	Nature	Indicators	Operationalization	Measurement
Flexible Work Arrangements	Independent Variable	Flextime Remote working Job Sharing	Flexible schedules that give employees the freedom to choose when and where to do their work.	Five-point rating Likert scale Multiple choice questions
Corporate Wellness Programs	Independent Variable	Safety Programs Screening Programs Recreational Facilities	Programs designed to enhance the wellbeing of employees while at work.	Five-point rating Likert scale Multiple choice questions
Leave Programs	Independent Variable	Dependent care Leave Annual Leave Emergency Leave	Arrangements that allow employees to take time off from work to attend to personal matters.	Five-point rating Likert scale Multiple choice questions
Employee Assistance Programs	Independent Variable	Counselling Training Medical insurance	Services provided by the employer to improve the welfare of the workers	Five-point rating Likert scale Multiple choice questions
Organizational Support	Moderating Variable	Leadership Fairness Communication	Efforts made by the organization to provide a conducive working environment.	Five-point rating Likert scale Multiple choice questions
Employee Engagement	Dependent Variable	Job satisfaction Commitment Efficiency	Level of commitment and dedication of workers.	Five-point rating Likert scale

3.13 Chapter Summary

Chapter three outlined the methodology used to conduct the study. It adopted a descriptive research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The target population consisted of employees in selected five-star hotels in Kenya. Purposive and stratified simple random sampling techniques were used to select respondents. Data were collected using structured questionnaires. The chapter explained how validity and reliability of the research instruments were ensured through pilot testing, expert reviews, and statistical tests such as Cronbach's alpha. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and multiple regression, while qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis. Diagnostics tests conducted in the study are discussed. Operationalization of variables was done to identify the indicators of each variable. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were also addressed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis results and the discussion of the findings. Data analysis was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Under descriptive statistics the study used percentages, mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation while under inferential statistics the study adopted correlation and regression analysis. Content analysis was employed to analyze data obtained through open ended questions. Diagnostic tests were performed prior to conducting regression analysis. Hypothesis testing was done based on the findings of the simple linear regression.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher distributed 369 questionnaires to employees working in sampled five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Response	319	86.45
Non response	50	13.55

Out of 369 questionnaires, 26 were not returned, 24 were spoilt and incomplete while 319 were completely filled resulting to a response rate of 86.45%. The study's response rate was considered good for a survey research as supported by Creswell and Creswell (2017) who recommend a response rate of 70% as good. Yin (2018) proposes a 50% response rate as satisfactory, 60% as good and above 70% as very good whereas Njeru and Muchelule (2024), propose that a response rate of 60% is a good representation of the population of the study. Therefore, the response rate of this study was regarded as an outstanding response rate and was utilized for further analysis and discussions in the study.

4.3 Pilot Study Results

A pilot test of the research questionnaire was carried out to evaluate the functionality of the tool and to verify the adequacy of the questions, as well as their internal and external consistency. Key focus areas during this pilot test included the questionnaire's format, the clarity of the questions, and the reliability of respondents in understanding them. To thoroughly address these concerns, the pilot testing involved administering the questionnaires in person. A pilot study was carried out using thirty respondents selected through purposive sampling from 2 five-star hotels within Nairobi City County in Kenya. This pilot sample was representative of the broader target population. The two five-star hotels from which the pilot sample was obtained did not participate in the actual study to avoid bias as they had already been exposed to the questionnaire.

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's alpha provides a unique quantitative estimate of the internal consistency of a scale and has the highest utility for questions on an interval scale like the ones used in the study (Cooper & Schinder, 2020). The results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Summary of Reliability Statistics

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Flexible Work Arrangements	9	0.846	Accepted
Corporate Wellness Programs	8	0.818	Accepted
Leave Programs	9	0.843	Accepted
Employee Assistance Programs	9	0.858	Accepted
Organizational Support	8	0.793	Accepted
Employee Engagement	8	0.924	Accepted

From the summarized results of the variables in Table 4.2, flexible work arrangements had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.846, corporate wellness programs had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.818, leave programs had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.843, employee assistance programs had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.858, organizational support had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.793 while employee engagement had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.924. All the variables were within the cut-off points recommended by Hinton (2020) who

suggested that, (0.90 and above) indicates excellent reliability, (0.70-0.90) indicates high reliability), (0.50-0.70) indicates moderate reliability while 0.50 and below indicates low reliability. The measuring instrument was therefore considered to be suitable for application in data analysis for this research study.

4.4 Validity Test Results

This study considered face, content and construct validity. Face validity was measured through review by academic supervisors, peers and a pilot test. To check for content validity, the tool was evaluated by experts in the field of human resource management and reviewed by academic supervisors who thoroughly examined and critiqued it where appropriate, validating that the questionnaire items addressed all relevant aspects of the study. Construct validity pertains to how well a set of indicators represent a notion and seeks evidence to support the measure's interpretation. Construct validity was checked through factor analysis. Before factor analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests were conducted. KMO was employed as a sample adequacy metric to assess each variable's suitability for factor analysis. If the KMO value is more than 0.5, the sample size is adequate for factor analysis to be used. According to Bartlett's sphericity test, p-values less than 0.05 suggest substantial correlations between variables, rendering the data eligible for factor analysis.

Table 4.3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Variables	KMO	Bartlett's Approx. Chi-Square	Bartlett's df	Bartlett's Sig.
Flexible Work Arrangements	.795	3202.165	36	.000
Corporate Wellness Programs	.676	1676.440	28	.000
Leave Programs	.732	2807.435	36	.000
Employee Assistance Programs	.724	1939.882	36	.000
Organizational Support	.853	2854.006	28	.000
Employee Engagement	.839	2646.268	28	.000

The variables' KMO values were as follows: flexible work arrangements (0.795>0.5), corporate wellness programs (0.676>0.5), leave programs (0.732>0.5), employee

assistance programs (0.724>0.5), organizational support (0.853>0.5) and employee engagement (0.839>0.5). Therefore, all the variables had KMO values above 0.5 implying great acceptability for the use of factor analysis. All variables had Bartlett's significance values of 0.000 which was less than the recommended significance level of 0.05 and this inferred that there is significant correlation between variables.

4.5 Demographic Information

The study analyzed data from demographic characteristics of the respondents. The variables examined in the study included the respondents' department, gender, age bracket, highest academic qualification, years of experience in the hotel industry, marital status, whether they had children, and their position in the hotel. The results are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Characteristic	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Department		
Human Resource and Administration	6	2%
Food and Beverage	120	38%
Sales and Marketing	20	6%
Finance	12	4%
Operations	161	50%
Total	**319**	**100**
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	173	54%
Female	146	46%
Total	**319**	**100**
Age	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
20-29	106	33%
30-39	140	44%
40-49	58	18%
50 and above	15	5%

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Diploma	170	53%
Bachelor's degree	128	40%
Post-graduate	21	7%
Total	**319**	**100**
Years worked in this Hotel	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0-1 year	22	6%
1-5 years	126	40%
6-10 years	152	48%
Over 10 years	19	6%
Total	**319**	**100**
Marital status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Single	95	30%
Married	224	70%
Total	**319**	**100**
Do you have children?	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	246	77%
No	73	23%
Total	**319**	**100**
Employment position	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Manager	29	9%
Supervisor	46	14%
Support Staff	244	77%
Total	**319**	**100**

The study sought to establish the departments where the employees were working and the results showed that 50% of the respondents were working in the Operations department, 38% were in Food and Beverage department, 6% were in Sales and Marketing, 4% were working in the Finance Department while only 2% were working in Human Resource and Administration department. This was important because different departments often have unique needs, constraints, and cultures that can influence how work life balance practices are implemented and experienced in the

workplace. The study analyzed the gender of the respondents and found that 54% were male while 46% were female. These findings implied that the selected sample had a relatively good gender balance and the findings represent the opinions of both male and female genders.

The study also sought to establish the age bracket of the respondents working in 5-star hotels in Kenya. The results showed that 33% of the respondents were between 20 and 29 years, 44% were between 30 and 39 years of age, 18% were between 40 and 49 years, while 5% were aged 50 years and above. These findings demonstrated that majority of the employees in five-star hotels were between 20 and 39 years which is a reflection of the demographic characteristics in Kenya (KNBS, 2019). Further, the study endeavoured to assess the highest academic qualification of the respondents. The results indicated that 53% had a Diploma, 40% had a Bachelor's Degree while only 7% had reached the Postgraduate level. These findings implied that the respondents had the requisite level of education to respond meaningfully to the questionnaire. The study aimed to determine the years of experience in the hotel and results indicated that, 7% worked for less than 1 year, 40% worked for a period of up to five years, 48% worked between five and ten years while only 6% had worked for over ten years. These findings inferred that majority of the respondents had worked in five-star hotels for five to ten years and therefore they had utilized work life balance practices provided and were in a position to provide reliable and relevant information for this study. On marital status, the findings indicated that 30% of the respondents were single while 70% were married. These findings add emphasis to the rise of dual career couples which increases the need for work life balance practices.

Moreover, the study set out to explore whether the respondents had children and results showed that 77% had children while 23% did not have children. This emphasizes the need for provision and effective use work life balance practices to allow those with children to attend to them. Work life balance practices would be very important for parents who want to be actively involved in the lives of their children by participating in activities such as taking their children to the hospital, attending school meetings and spending quality time with them. On employment position, results showed that majority, 77% were working as support staff, 14% as supervisors while 9% were managers. These findings inferred that the sample size was composed of employees

from all the levels of management hence the findings can be generalized for all the employees in five-star hotels.

4.6 Descriptive Analysis of the Study Variables

This section provides descriptive statistics for each variable within the scope of the study. The study implored the respondents to indicate the extent to which they perceived the contribution of the work life balance practices that is; flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and organizational support had an effect on employee engagement. The responses were measured on a 5 point Likert scale where: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree with a summary of the results presented using Percentages (%), mean scores (M), standard deviation (SD) and coefficient of variation (CV). In line with recommendations by Bedeian and Mossholder (2019), the researcher categorized the coefficient of variation using the following ratings; 0 to 25% very good; 26% to 50% good; 51% to 75% fair; and 76% to 100% poor. For every component of work life balance, the researcher provided a summary of descriptive results calculated from the respondents' opinions about the different statements in regard to each component.

4.6.1 Flexible Work Arrangements

The study examined the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This objective was measured using the following indicators; remote working, flextime and job sharing. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to which flexible work arrangements affected employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya on a Likert scale of 1-5. The findings were presented using percentages, mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics for Flexible Work Arrangements

Statements on Flexible Work Arrangements	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M	SD	CV %
Remote working has increased my satisfaction with work.	9.7	58.0	3.1	25.4	3.8	2.55	1.086	42.59
Employees have the necessary tools to work effectively from different locations.	6.9	62.7	0	30.4	0	2.54	0.999	39.33
Working from home has increased my worklife balance.	0	68.0	3.1	28.8	0	2.61	0.904	34.64
Working hours in this hotel are flexible.	0	20.1	6.0	59.9	14.1	3.68	0.951	25.84
Flextime motivates me to continue working in this hotel.	25.1	10.0	1.9	63.0	0	3.03	1.318	43.50
Employees can comfortably adjust their work schedules for personal commitments.	4.7	17.2	2.8	62.7	12.6	3.61	1.058	29.31
Job sharing helps me to cope with work demands.	1.6	15.7	0	78.4	4.4	3.68	0.845	22.96
Employees are allowed to exchange shifts.	0	13.2	3.1	83.7	0	3.71	0.687	18.52
Complementary schedules have increased my job satisfaction.	3.1	31.4	7.8	48.6	9.1	3.29	1.099	33.40
Average						**3.19**	**0.994**	**32.23**

83.7% of the respondents indicated that employees were allowed to exchange shifts. This statement had a mean of 3.71 and standard deviation of 0.687. 78.4% agreed that job sharing helped them to cope with work demands (M=3.68, SD=0.845) and 62.7% agreed that employees could comfortably adjust their work schedules for personal commitments (M=3.61, SD=1.058). In regard to flexible schedules, the findings revealed that provision of flextime motivated them to continue working in five-star hotels as indicated by 63% with a mean of 3.03 and SD=1.318. 59.9% of the

respondents agreed that working hours in five-star hotels were flexible (M=3.68, SD=0.951) and 48.6% agreed that complementary schedules have improved their job satisfaction thus engagement (M=3.29, SD=1.099). However, 68% disagreed with the statement that working from home has increased their work life balance with a mean of 2.61 and SD=0.904, 62.7% refuted that they had the necessary tools to work effectively from different locations (M=2.54, SD=0.999) while 58% disagreed with the statement that remote working has increased their job satisfaction (M=2.55, SD=1.086).

The aggregate mean of 3.19 demonstrated that five-star hotels provide flexible work schedules while the coefficient of variation of 32.23% implied that flexible work arrangements were a good predictor of employee engagement. The high agreement on flextime aligns with a previous study by Okemwa (2016) who established that workers who have more control over their work schedules exhibit higher levels of commitment, engagement, retention, and job satisfaction. These findings concurred with Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) who found that working flexibility gives employees job autonomy to manage their schedules as well as gain organizational pride, which increases job satisfaction and engagement. The cultural practice in five-star hotels entails long working hours which also includes day, night and weekend shifts therefore provision of flexible work arrangements allows the employees to enjoy work life balance which then enhances their commitment and engagement.

4.6.2 Corporate Wellness Programs

The study sought to determine the effect of corporate wellness programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This objective was measured using the following indicators; safety programs, screening programs and recreational facilities. The analysis was useful to identify specific wellness interventions made by five-star hotels in Kenya and how these practices impact employee engagement. Table 4.6 provides a summary of the descriptive results for corporate wellness programs.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Corporate Wellness Programs

Statements on Corporate Wellness Programs	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M	SD	CV %
The hotel provides health education to all employees.	7.2	20.4	6.6	56.4	9.4	3.40	1.128	33.18
Safety training is regularly availed to all employees.	3.1	62.7	0	31.3	2.8	2.68	1.039	38.77
Sensitization on health hazards has reduced accidents at the workplace.	2.8	12.5	6.3	62.7	15.7	3.76	.959	25.51
Health screening is regularly availed by the organization.	11.9	31.3	2.8	47.6	6.3	3.05	1.233	40.43
Screening programs provided improve the health of workers.	1.3	6.3	12.9	63.9	15.7	3.87	.795	20.54
Employees have access to recreational facilities such as gym, swimming pool.	22.9	62.7	0	11.3	3.1	2.09	.978	46.79
My work allows time for exercise or relaxation activities.	12.5	65.8	5.6	14.1	1.9	2.27	.919	40.49
Wellness programs offered meet the needs of workers and promote engagement.	3.8	15.0	3.8	62.7	14.7	3.70	1.018	27.51
Average						**3.10**	**1.009**	**34.15**

63.9% of the respondents were in agreement that screening programs provided have improved their health as indicated by a mean of 3.87 and SD=0.795. 62.7% agreed that sensitization on health hazards has reduced accidents at the workplace (M=3.76, SD=0.959) and wellness programs offered met the needs of workers and promote engagement (M=3.70, SD=1.018). 56.4% agreed that five-star hotels provided health

education to all employees (M=3.40, SD=1.128) and 47.6% indicated that health screening was regularly availed by the hotel (M=3.05, SD=1.233). However, 65.8% disagreed that their work allows time for exercise (M=2.27, SD=0.919) and 62.7% refuted that safety training is regularly availed to all employees and they had no access to recreational facilities such as gym, swimming pool with a mean of 2.09 and SD of 0.919.

These findings closely aligned with similar studies by Kitali (2021); Ng'eno (2020); Muriuki (2018) and Muthoki and Were (2017) which found that employee wellness programs improved efficiency of workers, resulted in satisfaction with their work, and produced healthy, committed, engaged, devoted, and driven workers. A study by PwC (2019) found that employees who have access to on-site recreational facilities were more likely to be engaged in their work while those denied access were more likely to be dissatisfied and disengaged. With an average mean of 2.09, employees indicated that they had no access to recreational facilities. These findings were similar with a study by Mungaine (2017) who established that majority of the respondents were not allowed to use recreational facilities and were not given time off for exercise or gym training paid by the organization. Kumar et al., (2020) emphasized that lack of access to recreational facilities and lack of time to relax led to absenteeism, medical expenses and staff turnover.

4.6.3 Leave Programs

The third objective of the study was to investigate the effect of leave programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This objective was measured using the following indicators; annual leave, emergency leave and dependent care leave. The study sought to find out whether the leave programs were practiced and how they impacted employee engagement. Descriptive results for this objective are illustrated in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for Leave Programs

Statements on Leave Programs	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M	SD	CV %
I am allowed to take my annual leave as I plan it.	0	12.5	6.6	15.7	65.2	4.34	1.054	24.29
Staff leave arrangements are well structured.	0	12.2	0	9.4	78.4	4.54	.993	21.87
My off days are not disrupted by calls from work.	0	13.5	4.7	75.5	6.3	3.75	.766	20.43
I am allowed to take unpaid leave when need arises.	0.9	21.9	6.9	8.2	62.1	4.08	1.285	31.50
I am given time off to attend to critical matters and personal emergencies.	6.3	65.8	6.0	18.8	3.1	2.47	.970	39.27
I am allowed to take dependent care leave.	81.5	12.5	6.0	0	0	1.24	.552	44.52
I am happy with the amount of time for non-work activities.	56.4	6.0	6.0	28.2	3.4	2.16	1.429	66.16
I find it easy to balance between work and family.	62.7	19.1	0	18.2	0	1.74	1.135	65.23
Leave programs offered have increased my commitment.	3.8	15.7	6.0	62.1	12.5	3.64	1.012	27.80
Average						**3.11**	**1.022**	**37.90**

With a mean of 4.54 and standard deviation of 0.993, 78.4% of the respondents agreed that staff leave arrangements were well structured. 75.5% indicated that their off days were not disrupted by calls from work (M=3.75, SD=0.766). 62.1% agreed that they were allowed to take leave when need arises (M=4.08, SD=1.285 and leave programs offered have increased their commitment (M=3.64, SD=1.012). On the contrary, 81.5% indicated that they were not allowed to take dependent care leave (M=1.24,

SD=0.552), 65.8% were not given time off to attend to critical matters and personal emergencies (M=2.47, SD=0.970), 62.7% struggled to find a balance between work and family (M=1.74, SD=1.135) and 56.4% were not pleased with the amount of time for non-work activities (M=2.16, SD=1.429). The overall mean of 3.11 and standard deviation of 1.022 implied that leave programs in five-star hotels were satisfactory and the coefficient of variation of 37.90% suggested that leave programs were a good contributor to employee engagement.

Similarly, Okemwa, Atambo, and Muturi (2016) found that taking time off from work has a positive impact on an employee's mental health, reduces work-related stress, and increases commitment. Further, Mogeni (2020) and Mungaine (2017) established that providing leave programs helped employees manage their work-family obligations better, improved their emotional well-being, decreased presentism, improved commitment and ultimately increased employee retention. These results were in tandem with Okemwa (2022) that leave arrangements significantly improve employee commitment given that they lead to renewed interest and vitality to deliver services. The results also affirm the work of Kabui (2023) who found that organizations that provided leave for their employees had more committed employees which had led to achievement of the organizational objectives hence the vice versa is the same. On the contrary, poor leave management leads to absenteeism, which can reduce productivity and cause disruptions at work (Begall et al., 2020).

4.6.4 Employee Assistance Programs

The study sought to assess the effect of employee assistance programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This objective was measured using the following indicators; medical insurance, counselling, and training. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement about employee assistance programs in five-star hotels in Kenya as a measure of employee engagement. Descriptive results are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Assistance Programs

Statements on Employee Assistance Programs	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M %	SD %	CV %
The medical cover offered by the employer is satisfactory.	6.3	56.1	6.0	28.2	3.4	2.66	1.060	39.85
The medical expenses of my nuclear family are covered by the employer.	62.4	28.5	0	6.3	2.8	1.59	.980	61.64
The hotel offers favourable counselling services to all employees.	62.7	25.1	0	9.7	2.5	1.64	1.057	64.45
Counselling on stress management helps me to get better results.	18.8	62.7	0	15.7	2.8	2.21	1.014	45.88
The organizational culture encourages employees to prioritize personal well-being.	52.4	0	0	39.5	8.2	2.51	1.607	64.02
Training is regular and enhances service delivery.	8.8	31.3	0	50.8	9.1	3.20	1.225	38.28
I have the training I need to offer great customer experience.	12.5	0	0	65.5	21.9	3.84	1.152	30.00
Conflict management sessions boost my level of commitment.	0	25.4	0	62.4	12.2	3.61	.996	27.59
Employee assistance programs have improved my efficiency.	9.4	21.6	3.1	4.7	61.1	3.87	1.531	39.59
Average						**2.79**	**1.180**	**45.70**

With a mean of 3.84 and standard deviation of 1.152, 65.5% of the respondents agreed that they had the training they needed to offer great customer experience and 62.4% indicated that conflict management sessions offered have boosted their level of efficiency (M=3.61, SD=0.996). 62.7% disagreed that five-star hotels offered favourable counselling services to all employees and counselling on stress management has helped them to get better results (M=1.64, SD=1.057). 62.4% reported that the medical expenses for their nuclear family were not covered by the

employer (M=1.59, SD=0.980). 56.1% disagreed with the statement that the medical cover offered by the employer was satisfactory (M= 2.66, SD=1.060) and 52.4% refuted that the organizational culture encourages employees to prioritize employee wellbeing (M=2.51, SD=1.607). The overall mean of 2.79 and standard deviation of 1.180 suggested that the employee assistance programs offered in five-star hotels were not satisfactory.

These results were in alignment with the study by Ng'eno (2020) which established that counselling programs help employees overcome daily challenges that could affect their productivity and lack of counselling will have negative impact on the efficiency and productivity of workers. In addition, (Ng'eno, 2020) established that employee assistance programs are beneficial to organizations as they reduce absenteeism, reduce Medicare expense, and improve productivity of the employees. Joseph et al., (2018) asserted that if not addressed, employee stress often results in organizational problems, including reduced morale and employee performance, frequent absenteeism, poor employee and customer relations, high turnover rates, accidents and injuries, disability and excessive healthcare costs. Wang et al., (2022) emphasized that employee assistance programs are valuable resources that help employees cope with work-related stress and employee general health.

4.6.5 Organizational Support

Organizational support was the moderating variable in this study. It was conceptualized into three components: leadership, fairness and communication. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following items measuring organizational support. The responses are indicated in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Support

Statements on Organizational Support	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M %	SD %	CV %
My supervisor provides impartial guidance.	0	20.1	6.0	62.7	11.3	3.65	.925	25.34
I get enough support from my supervisors.	0	16.3	0	62.7	21.0	3.88	.923	23.79
Recognition would make me more committed.	0	28.2	1.6	63.9	6.3	3.48	.971	27.90
Fairness and justice at my workplace inspire me.	2.2	28.2	0	63.3	6.3	3.39	.918	27.08
I feel respected and valued at my workplace.	1	27	2.2	69.2	0	3.43	1.034	30.15
The management offers constant feedback.	6.0	53.3	0	31.3	9.4	2.85	1.201	42.14
My supervisor communicates candidly and consistently.	3.1	21.9	5.3	64.9	4.7	3.46	.986	28.50
The organizational culture creates the right work environment to thrive and be effective.	6.3	32.9	0	48.3	12.5	3.28	1.221	37.23
Average						**3.43**	**1.022**	**30.27**

69.2% of the respondents indicated that they felt respected and valued with a mean of 3.43 and standard deviation of 1.034. 64.9% agreed that their supervisors communicated candidly and consistently (M=3.46, SD=0.986), 63.9% conveyed that recognition would make them more committed (M=3.48, SD=0.971), 63.3% agreed that fairness and justice at their workplace inspired them (M=3.39, SD=0.918), 62.7% of the respondents agreed that, they got enough support from their supervisors (M=3.88, SD=0.923) and also received impartial guidance (M=3.65, SD=0.925) while 48.3% agreed that the organizational culture created the right work environment to thrive and be effective (M=3.28, SD=1.221). 53.3% disagreed with the statement that the management offered constant feedback (M=2.85, SD=1.201). The average mean of 3.43 and standard deviation of 1.022 implied that organizational support was satisfactory.

The findings revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that they were receiving organizational support as indicated by an aggregate mean of 3.43. The average standard deviation of 1.022 indicated variation in responses among the respondents while the coefficient of variation of 30.27% implied that employees considered organizational support as a good factor contributing towards their engagement. Rockstuhl et al., (2020) emphasized that organizational support lowers work-related stress, burnout, and withdrawal while increasing trust, satisfaction with work, commitment, and mental well-being. This informs that when employees experience supportive managers, open and efficient communication, and fairness and justice, they feel obligated to put more effort in exchange for greater assistance (Rou, 2018). The same perspective is supported by Zheng and Wu (2018) who found that organizational support promotes the employees' sense of obligation to increase their commitment to the organization and achieve organizational goals, it leads to positive work attitude, performance and positively influences mental health.

4.6.6 Employee Engagement

This section provides descriptive results on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Employee engagement was measured in terms of job satisfaction, commitment of workers and efficiency in the use of resources and time management. The responses are indicated in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Engagement

Statements on Employee Engagement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	M %	SD %	CV %
I am proud of the work that I do.	1.6	18.8	0	63.9	15.7	3.73	.991	26.57
I am enthusiastic about my job.	6.3	15.7	0	62.7	15.4	3.65	1.108	30.36
I feel happy when am working intensely.	0.6	15.7	0	64.9	18.8	3.86	.924	23.94
I am committed to my work.	8.2	31.7	0	60.2	0	3.12	1.111	35.61
I feel full of energy while at work.	1.6	28.2	0	62.7	7.5	3.46	1.030	29.77
My job inspires me and I love it.	0	17.2	0	62.7	20.1	3.86	.934	24.20
I am a good time keeper.	0.9	21.9	0	64.6	12.5	3.66	.987	26.97
I utilize the resources at my workplace effectively.	0	11.3	2.2	62.7	23.8	3.99	.845	21.18
Average						**3.67**	**.991**	**27.33**

With a mean of 3.99 and standard deviation of 0.991, 62.7% indicated that they utilized resources at the workplace effectively while 62.7% felt inspired by their job with a mean of 3.86 and SD=0.934. 64.9% agreed that they felt happy when working intensely (M=3.86, SD=0.924). 64.6% were good time keepers (M=3.66, SD=0.987), 63.9% were proud of their work (M=3.73, SD=0.991), were enthusiastic about their job (M=3.65, SD=1.108), felt full of energy while at work (M=3.46, SD=1.030) and 60.2% agreed that they were committed to their work (M=3.12, SD=1.111). These findings implied that employees were moderately engaged in five-star hotels.

Osborne and Hammoud (2017) affirm that the management's capability to leverage employee engagement strategies is essential in an organization. When employees are

highly engaged, Kumar and Pansari (2015) asserted that organizations experience customer satisfaction, profitability, job satisfaction, decreased absenteeism, improved quality, increased retention and productivity. This emphasizes the need to improve on practices that can enhance engagement. However, respondents reported that they were constantly looking for other jobs and some were even looking for opportunities in other industries. Further, Osborne and Hammoud (2017) added that employee engagement matters to both the employee as well as the organization and its a critical element in maintaining the organization's vitality, survival, and profitability. Shantz et al., (2016) and others, argue that employee engagement not only improves output but also contributes to employees' well-being.

4.7 Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative content analysis is a research method that involves systematically interpreting text data through coding and identifying themes or patterns (Kuckartz, 2019). In this study, the researcher employed content analysis due to the presence of open-ended questions in the questionnaire. This approach enables the researcher to explore social realities in a subjective yet scientific way, addressing some limitations of quantitative analysis that might overlook feelings, emotions, and subjective responses typical in social studies (Schreier, Dahl, Janssen, Whittal & Stamann, 2020).

4.7.1 Flexible Work Arrangements

The respondents were asked to suggest measures that can be adopted to improve flexible work arrangements in five-star hotels in Kenya. 72% of the respondents indicated that five-star hotels in Kenya should establish clear policies that outline expectations for flexible working, including availability, communication, and performance metrics. Further, 80% suggested that there was need for five-star hotels to provide the necessary tools and technology to facilitate remote work, such as collaboration software, secure VPN access, and project management tools. 62% of the managers indicated that they should be trained on leading remote teams, focusing on trust-building, communication, and performance management in order to improve the effectiveness of flexible work arrangements. 28% recommended that five-star hotels should create channels for employees to provide feedback on flexible work arrangements in order to ensure continuous improvement.

4.7.2 Corporate Wellness Programs

The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of corporate wellness programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Respondents were requested to propose measures that could be implemented to enhance these wellness programs in five-star hotels in Kenya. 54% of the respondents indicated that five-star hotels should conduct surveys or focus groups to identify employee wellness needs and preferences so that they provide relevant programs that address the needs of workers. 78% suggested that five-star hotels should also allow employees to utilize recreational facilities such as the gym and swimming pools. 62% of the respondents recommended that five-star hotels should implement a system of rewards and incentives for participation in wellness programs, such as; gift cards, or wellness related prizes. 52% of the respondents proposed they should be offered access to mental health support, including counselling services, and allowed to attend workshops on stress management techniques.

In majority of the five-star hotels sampled, there was no counselling department which meant employees would rely on their friends or managers whenever they had a challenge. 37% of the respondents further reported that five-star hotels in Kenya should organize seminars on issues such as nutrition, fitness, and work-life balance to promote continuous learning and engagement. 62% recommended that five-star hotels should host friendly competitions, encourage participation among employees and communicate through use of newsletters, intranet, or meetings to promote wellness initiatives, share resources, and celebrate successes within the program.

4.7.3 Leave Programs

The study aimed to identify measures that can be implemented to enhance leave programs in five-star hotels. 76% of the respondents suggested that five-star hotels should introduce a variety of leave programs such as paid time off, sick leave, family leave, and mental health days, as it will allow employees to choose what best suits their needs. In the hotel industry, majority of the employees are compensated on a commission basis, making them reluctant to take unpaid leave due to the potential reduction in their earnings. Furthermore, 51% of the respondents reported that leave policies should be clearly communicated and easily accessible to all employees through the hotel website or handled directly by the human resource manager. 26% of

the respondents conveyed that five-star hotels should actively encourage employees to utilize leave programs offered by sending reminders and normalizing the conversation around taking time off to recharge and prevent burnout. In addition,72% of the respondents urged five-star hotels to implement a leave donation system where employees can donate unused leave days to colleagues in need, fostering a supportive work culture.

4.7.4 Employee Assistance Programs

The study sought to establish measures that can be adopted to improve employee assistance programs in five-star hotels. 80% of the respondents suggested that the medical cover should be expanded to include nuclear family members. This would help in addressing employee needs and also motivate them to continue working in five-star hotels. 54% of the respondents noted that employee assistance programs can be promoted through regular communication, such as newsletters, workshops, and informational sessions, to ensure employees are aware of the available resources and how to access them. Similarly, 38% of the respondents urged five-star hotels to align employee assistance programs with other wellness initiatives, such as stress management workshops or health screenings, to create a holistic approach to employee well-being and regularly solicit feedback from employees about the employee assistance programs and make adjustments based on their needs and preferences to enhance the program's effectiveness. In addition, five-star hotels were urged by 60% of the respondents to ensure employee assistance programs offer a wide range of services, including mental health support, financial counselling, legal advice, and wellness resources, making it easy for employees to get the help when needed.

4.7.5 Organizational Support

The study aimed to identify measures that can be implemented to enhance organizational support in five-star hotels. 42% of the respondents indicated that five-star hotels should establish transparent communication channels where employees feel comfortable sharing feedback, ideas, and organizational policies are well-defined and clearly communicated, allowing employees to understand their rights and responsibilities. 61% of the respondents also mentioned that investing in professional development programs, workshops, and training sessions can help them grow their skills and advance their careers. 49% of the respondents revealed that organizational

support can be enhanced through incentive programs to recognize and reward employee achievements, fostering a culture of appreciation and motivation. 53% of the respondents urged managers to pair employees with mentors or coaches to provide guidance, support, and career development, helping them navigate their professional paths.

63% of the respondents conveyed that leaders and managers should be approachable and available for one-on-one discussions, fostering trust and collaboration within the organization. Besides, 55% of the respondents suggested that five-star hotels should foster an inclusive workplace culture by promoting diversity initiatives and ensuring all employees feel valued and respected. Similarly, 54% of the respondents recommended that five- star hotels should organize regular team-building exercises to strengthen relationships among colleagues and enhance teamwork and collaboration.

4.8 Factor Analysis

To further ascertain construct validity, factor analysis was conducted using principal component analysis. This test aimed to compute the factor loading for each indicator used to measure the study variables. Mabert, Soni, and Venkataramanan (2018) suggested that factor loading with Eigen values larger than 0.5 should be extracted, and coefficients less than 0.49 should be removed from the matrix because they are insignificant. Items in the component matrix with factor loadings greater than 0.5 on any of the retrieved principal components are considered important and preserved for further analysis (Kassambara, 2017).

4.8.1 Factor Analysis for Flexible Work Arrangements

Factor analysis was performed using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The factors were extracted using the Kaiser Criterion, with Eigen values of at least 1 indicating a unique factor.

Table 4.11: Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigen values				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sum of Squared Loadings[a]
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	
1	5.110	56.777	56.777	5.110	56.777	56.777	
2	1.989	22.097	78.873	1.989	22.097	78.873	
3	.803	8.919	87.792				
4	.549	6.094	93.887				
5	.196	2.180	96.067				
6	.126	1.401	97.468				
7	.110	1.228	98.696				
8	.076	.846	99.542				
9	.041	.458	100.000				

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

The findings showed that only two out of the nine factors were extracted based on Kaiser's criterion. The first and second components extracted had Eigen values greater than 1.0. The first two factors explained 78.873% of the total variance in flexible work arrangements data which suggested that the items used in the questionnaire reliably captured the underlying constructs of flexible work arrangements.

Table 4.12: Flexible Work Arrangements Component Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
FWA1	.658	-.678
FWA2	.808	-.449
FWA3	.735	-.639
FWA4	.892	.176
FWA5	.862	.260
FWA6	.678	.467
FWA7	.640	.533
FWA8	.722	.531
FWA9	.744	-.193

a. 2 Components extracted

All the nine items under flexible work arrangements had a factor loading that was greater than 0.5 on either of the two factors and therefore all the items were accepted and retained for analysis.

4.8.2 Factor Analysis for Corporate Wellness Programs

Factor analysis was performed using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The factors were extracted using the Kaiser Criterion, with Eigen values of at least 1 indicating a unique factor.

Table 4.13: Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigen values				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.155	39.432	39.432	3.155	39.432	39.432
2	2.294	28.675	68.108	2.294	28.675	68.108
3	.994	12.425	80.533	.994	12.425	80.533
4	.709	8.864	89.396			
5	.404	5.050	94.447			
6	.214	2.676	97.122			
7	.163	2.035	99.157			
8	.067	.843	100.000			

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

Kaiser's criterion was employed to extract the first, second, and third principal components from a set of eight. The first three main components explained 80.533%

of the total variance in the data on corporate wellness programs which inferred that the items used in the questionnaire reliably captured the underlying constructs of corporate wellness programs.

Table 4.14: Corporate Wellness Programs Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
CWP1	.504	-.684	-.077
CWP2	-.562	.714	.039
CWP3	.913	.293	-.008
CWP4	.420	-.586	.069
CWP5	.823	.444	.005
CWP6	.066	-.095	.997
CWP7	.248	.804	.024
CWP8	.911	.182	-.012

a. 3 Components extracted

All the eight items under corporate wellness programs had a factor loading that was greater than 0.5 on any of the three factors and therefore all the items were accepted and retained for analysis.

4.8.3 Factor Analysis for Leave Programs

Factor analysis was performed using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The factors were extracted using the Kaiser Criterion, with Eigen values of at least 1 indicating a unique factor.

Table 4.15: Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigen values				**Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings**		
Component	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	4.653	51.701	51.701	4.653	51.701	51.701
2	2.042	22.684	74.384	2.042	22.684	74.384
3	.940	10.439	84.824	.940	10.439	84.824
4	.607	6.741	91.565			
5	.329	3.656	95.221			
6	.187	2.076	97.297			
7	.132	1.464	98.761			
8	.066	.735	99.496			
9	.045	.504	100.000			

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

Only the first three of the nine potential elements in this construct were extracted because their eigenvalues were larger than 1.0. The findings implied that these factors accounted for approximately 84.824% of the total variance in the leave programs data. This implied that the items used in the questionnaire reliably captured the underlying constructs of leave programs.

Table 4.16: Leave Programs Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	**2**	**3**
LP1	.967	-.002	-.069
LP2	.873	-.234	.274
LP3	.779	-.254	.370
LP4	.845	.225	-.382
LP5	.204	.878	.318
LP6	-.857	.257	-.263
LP7	-.575	-.451	.537
LP8	.026	.911	.295
LP9	.725	-.038	-.175

a. 3 Components extracted

All the nine items under leave programs had a factor loading that was greater than 0.5 on any of the three factors and therefore all the items were accepted and retained for analysis.

4.8.4 Factor Analysis for Employee Assistance Programs

Factor analysis was performed using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The factors were extracted using the Kaiser Criterion, with Eigen values of at least 1 indicating a unique factor.

Table 4.17: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.904	43.376	43.376	3.904	43.376	43.376
2	2.321	25.787	69.163	2.321	25.787	69.163
3	1.210	13.447	82.610	1.210	13.447	82.610
4	.409	4.547	87.157			
5	.359	3.986	91.144			
6	.273	3.034	94.177			
7	.230	2.559	96.736			
8	.179	1.985	98.721			
9	.115	1.279	100.000			

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

Kaiser's criterion was employed to extract the first, second, and third principal components from a set of nine components. The first three main components explained 82.610% of the total variance in the data on employee assistance programs. This demonstrated that the items used in the questionnaire reliably captured the underlying constructs of employee assistance programs.

Table 4.18: Employee Assistance Programs Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
EAP1	-.609	.119	.723
EAP2	.108	.887	-.140
EAP3	.253	.877	-.142
EAP4	.428	.766	.106
EAP5	.831	-.127	-.134
EAP6	.829	-.260	-.142
EAP7	.661	.025	.694
EAP8	.834	-.028	.334
EAP9	.875	-.280	-.071

a. 3 Components extracted

All the nine items under employee assistance programs had a factor loading that was greater than 0.5 on any of the three factors and therefore all the items were accepted and retained for analysis.

4.8.5 Factor Analysis for Organizational Support

Factor analysis was performed using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The factors were extracted using the Kaiser Criterion, with Eigen values of at least 1 indicating a unique factor.

Table 4.19: Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigenvalues				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.112	63.894	63.894	5.112	63.894	63.894
2	1.124	14.044	77.938	1.124	14.044	77.938
3	.740	9.248	87.186			
4	.524	6.548	93.734			
5	.318	3.979	97.713			
6	.090	1.121	98.834			
7	.066	.824	99.658			
8	.027	.342	100.000			

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

Only the first two of the nine potential elements in this construct were extracted because their eigenvalues were larger than 1.0. The results inferred that these factors accounted for approximately 77.938% of the total variance in organizational support data.

Table 4.20: Organizational Support Component Matrix

	Component	
	1	2
OS1	.800	.354
OS2	.415	.731
OS3	.956	.105
OS4	.955	.037
OS5	.950	-.130
OS6	.503	-.479
OS7	.933	-.064
OS8	.667	-.449

a. 2 Components extracted

All the eight items under organizational support had a factor loading that was greater

than 0.5 on either of the two factors and therefore all the items were accepted and retained for analysis.

4.8.6 Factor Analysis for Employee Engagement

Factor analysis was performed using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA). The factors were extracted using the Kaiser Criterion, with Eigen values of at least 1 indicating a unique factor.

Table 4.21: Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigenvalues				Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
Component	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**	**Total**	**% of Variance**	**Cumulative %**
1	5.246	65.569	65.569	5.246	65.569	65.569
2	1.289	16.107	81.676	1.289	16.107	81.676
3	.678	8.480	90.157			
4	.297	3.711	93.867			
5	.193	2.418	96.286			
6	.142	1.776	98.062			
7	.087	1.086	99.147			
8	.068	.853	100.000			

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis

Kaiser's criterion was employed to extract the first and second principal components from a set of eight components. The first two main components explained 81.676% of the total variance in the data on employee engagement.

Table 4.22: Employee Engagement Component Matrix

	Component	
	1	**2**
EE1	.870	-.368
EE2	.851	-.292
EE3	.761	-.385
EE4	.529	.751
EE5	.760	.469
EE6	.921	.149
EE7	.883	-.250
EE8	.837	.227

a. 2 Components extracted

All the eight items under employee engagement attracted a factor loading that was

greater than 0.5 for the first component and therefore all the items were accepted and retained for analysis.

4.9 Diagnostic tests

4.9.1 Normality Test

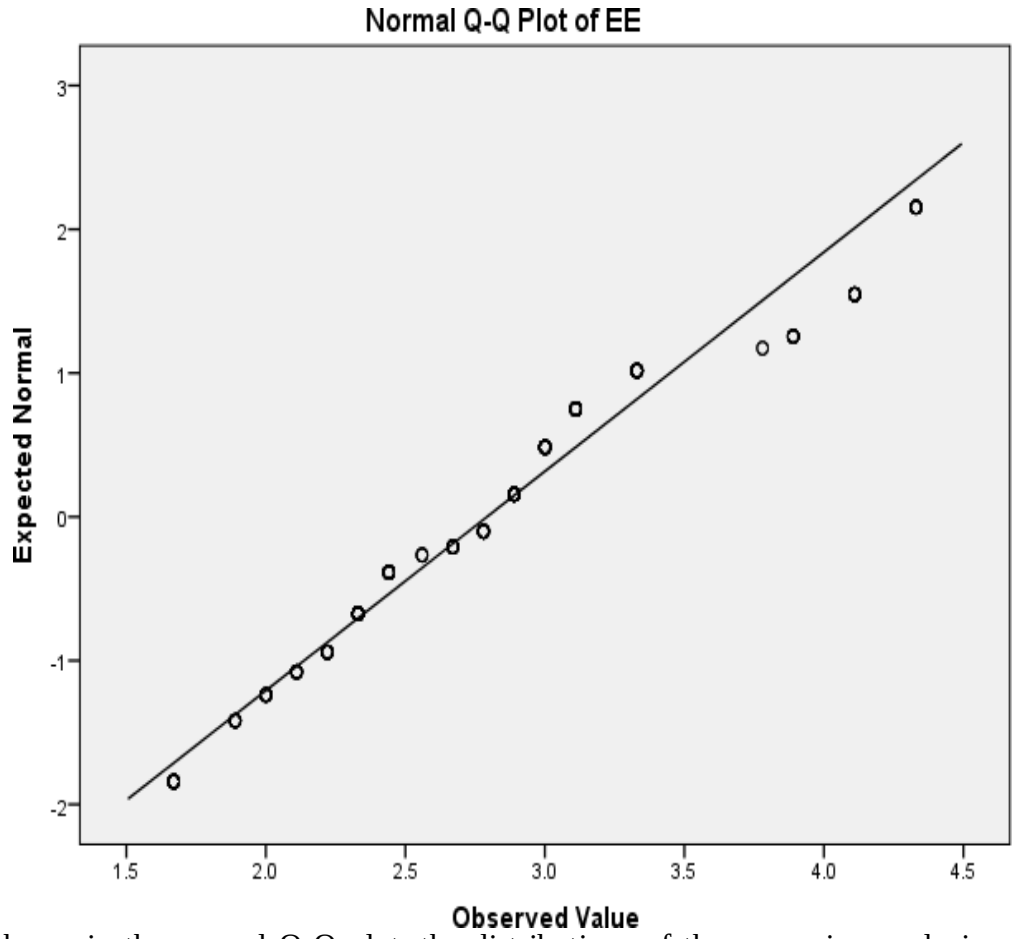
Normality tests are conducted in order to establish whether study variables exhibited normal distribution as theorized in the assumptions of the classical regression model. This study used some of the recommended statistical techniques used in measuring normality of the distribution of variables such as Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a] and Shapiro-Wilk test (Cavus, Yazici & Sezer, 2021).

Table 4.23: Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**	**Statistic**	**df**	**Sig.**
EE	.374	319	.142	.690	319	.081

If the statistic falls between zero (0) and one (1) and the p-values are greater than 0.05, it suggests that the data is normally distributed (Cavus et al., 2021). The results obtained in Table 4.23 indicated that Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z was 0.374 (p-value=.142) while Shapiro-Wilk Z was 0.690 (p-value=.081); since the p-value was greater than 0.05, this showed that the data was normally distributed. This implied that the assumption of normality of the distribution of the variables was not violated. In other words, all the variables were normally distributed, thus satisfying the requirements of normality of the distribution.

Figure 4.1: Normality Plot for Employee Engagement



As shown in the normal Q-Q plot, the distributions of the regression analysis are normally distributed. Referring to the Q-Q plot, the data points are tightly close to the diagonal line which is the requirement for the data to be normally distributed.

4.9.2 Multicollinearity Test

The purpose of conducting multicollinearity test is to ascertain the existence of significant inter correlations amongst the independent variables of a regression model. As such, multicollinearity has been widely termed as a situation where two or more independent variables in a given statistical model are linearly related (Akintunde et al., 2021). Matthew, Chama and Agog (2022) contend that multicollinearity refers to existence of significant linear relationship between two or more predictor variables in a regression model. Variance inflation Factor (VIF) is used in measuring multicollinearity where a threshold of VIF <5 suggests absence of evidence of multicollinearity while VIF above 5 is usually regarded as evidence of Multicollinearity (Akintunde et al., 2021).

Table 4.24: Multicollinearity Test Results

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	**VIF**
(Constant)		
Flexible work arrangements	.353	2.832
Corporate Wellness Programs	.445	2.248
Leave Programs	.397	2.084
Employee Assistance Programs	.219	4.133
Organizational Support	.305	3.274

Multicollinearity test results yielded VIF values between 2 and 4 which suggests that these findings were within the accepted range. This was an indication of absence of multicollinearity in the predictors of the regression model. Obaid and Ali (2022) recommended that the VIF ≤ 10, or a tolerance ≥ 0.1 as a threshold to imply absence of multicollinearity. A tolerance statistic of less than 0.20 shows presence of multicollinearity. Tolerance values were above the acceptable cut off of 0.2. This implied that the multicollinearity assumption was not violated, which improves the predictive performance of the regression model.

4.9.3 Linearity Test

Linearity test determines whether the relationship between the independent and dependent variable displays a linear relationship (Wang et al., 2023). This study used the significance of deviation from the linearity test to ascertain whether the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement was linear.

Table 4.25: Test for Linearity using Significance Deviation

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups (Combined)	197.005	55	3.582	399.393	.000
Linearity	136.524	1	136.524	152.833	.000
Deviation from Linearity	60.481	54	1.120	124.884	.146
Sig.	2.359	209	.009		
Total	**199.363**	**319**			

The findings in Table 4.25 indicated that the significant value for the deviation from linearity was 0.146 which was greater than 0.05. This confirms that all the independent variables were linearly related to the dependent variable. This shows that linearity was confirmed for the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement.

4.9.4 Autocorrelation Test

The residuals of the fitted regression model were subjected to serial correlation test to ascertain whether they exhibited characteristics of autocorrelation from one residual to the next. Elhawwa (2022) contend that autocorrelation in regression models can be checked using Durbin-Watson statistic. This prompted Durbin-Watson tests to be conducted in order to ascertain autocorrelation of the residuals. Positive autocorrelation is indicated by a value close to 0, non-autocorrelation is shown by a value close to 2, and negative autocorrelation is indicated by a value close to 4.

Table 4.26: Durbin-Watson Test for Autocorrelation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.919[a]	.844	.842	.31455	1.903

From the findings, the value of the Durbin-Watson statistic, *d* (4,314) = 1.903, which was consistent with the recommended range. The rule of thumb indicates that Durbin-Watson values close to 2 imply no significant autocorrelation therefore acceptable. These findings suggest lack of statistical significance in the autocorrelations of the residuals thus, making the model fit to describe the relationship between the study variables.

4.9.5 Test of Heteroscedasticity

Belkania and Karimov (2018) define heteroscedasticity as a situation where the residuals of regression models have changing variance. Breusch-Pagan test was implemented to test for heteroscedasticity. The Breusch-pagan test generates chi-square values and significant values. A p-value < 0.05 indicates heteroscedasticity, whereas a p-value > 0.05 indicates no heteroscedasticity. The current study therefore adopted this test in order to make an inference regarding the presence or absence of heteroscedasticity in the residuals of the multiple regression models that sought to

establish the joint effects of work life balance practices on employee engagement of the selected five-star hotels.

Table 4.27: Breusch Pagan Test

Test	Chi-square value	Sig.
Breusch-Pagan	2.751	.362

The findings indicate that Chi-Square was 2.751 and a p-value of 0.362 which is greater than the chosen significance level of p-value = 0.05. This therefore indicated that the distribution of the residuals did not have equal variance. This study concluded that homoscedasticity was present in the model, inferring that there was no heteroscedasticity. The model was therefore deemed fit on account of constant variance of the residuals, which rendered work life balance practices as significant predictors of employee engagement in the selected five-star hotels.

4.10 Inferential Analysis

Inferential analysis was conducted in order to examine the nature and strength of the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement. This was achieved through use of major analytical models—correlation analysis, regression analysis and ANOVA.

4.10.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis shows the strength of relationship between dependent and independent variables (Abdul-Hameed & Matanmi, 2021). Pearson correlation was applied to determine the degree of association between the predictor variables of the study with the dependent variable. Pearson correlation coefficients have values ranging from -1 to +1 with negative figures indicating negative correlation and positive figures showing positive correlation. Pearson coefficient $r < 0.3$ shows weak correlation, Pearson coefficient $0.3 > r < 0.5$ shows moderate correlation while Pearson coefficient $r > 0.5$ shows strong correlation. The correlation coefficient measures the strength of linear relationship between two variables of interest (Cooper & Schindler, 2020) and it indicates that when r approaches +1 or -1, then the strength of association between the two variables under consideration is strong. Results are presented in table 4.28.

Table 4.28: Correlation Analysis Matrix

	Employee Engagement	Flexible Work Arrangements	Corporate Wellness Programs	Leave Programs	Employee Assistance Programs
Flexible Work Arrangements	.846** .000	1			
Corporate Wellness Programs	.812** .000	.509** .000	1		
Leave Programs	.828** .000	.711** .000	.714** .000	1	
Employee Assistance Programs	.709** .000	.790** .000	.502** .000	.794** .000	1
Organizational Support	.870** .000	.629** .000	.645** .000	.813** .000	.732** .000

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As observed in Table 4.28, all the work life balance practices had a positive and significant correlation with employee engagement. The findings inferred that improving work life balance practices would significantly enhance employee engagement.

4.10.1.1 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Engagement

The results in the correlation matrix Table 4.28 revealed that the correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement was positive and significant (r= 0.846, n=319, p=.000, 2-tailed). These findings suggested that an increase in flexible work arrangements would result to an increase in employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Further, the results denote that when employees are provided with flexible work arrangements such as flextime, remote working and job sharing, they will be more engaged. These findings were in alignment with Afwande and Kiiru (2023) who found a strong correlation between work flexibility and employee engagement with Pearson r value of 0.712. In addition, the study stated that offering flexible schedules can help organizations retain valuable employees and may also

assist the organization in attracting more top-tier talent.

4.10.1.2 Corporate Wellness Programs and Employee Engagement

The relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya was found to be positive and highly significant with a correlation coefficient (r= 0.812, n=319, p=.000, 2-tailed). This result indicated that an improvement in corporate wellness programs resulted in a substantial increase in employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The findings also confirm that a decrease in corporate wellness programs would substantially reduce employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Similarly, Muriuki (2018) found that corporate wellness programs increase employee engagement which leads to higher productivity and work life balance. This was indicated by a Pearson correlation of 0.977 which implied that there was a strong, positive and significant correlation. A good wellness program can help increase employee productivity by ensuring employees stay emotionally and physically healthy thus high morale, involvement and retention as health outcomes.

4.10.1.3 Leave Programs and Employee Engagement

In the correlation analysis between leave programs and employee engagement the study found a correlation coefficient (r=0.828, n=319, p=.000, 2-tailed). Since the $p<0.05$, the correlation was positive and significant and hence an increase in leave programs would result to increased employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Consequently, lack of leave programs would decrease employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This correlation shows a good and significant relationship. These findings compare with those by Okemwa, Atambo and Muturi (2016) who found a positive correlation between staff leave arrangements and commitment among the nurses in public hospitals as indicated by the positive value of the Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.627. The positive correlation implied that if leave arrangements were adequate, levels of commitment amongst the employees would improve significantly which therefore impacts employee engagement.

4.10.1.4 Employee Assistance Programs and Employee Engagement

Similar findings were established in the relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya with correlation coefficient (r=0.709, n=319, p=.000, 2-tailed). The positive correlation implied that if all employee assistance programs were enhanced in terms of accessibility, the level of employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya would significantly improve. These results suggested that employee assistance programs are one of the significant components in raising the level of employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings concurred with those of Afwande and Kiiru (2023) who established a significant relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement with a correlation coefficient of 0.830 and further added that employee assistance programs lower absenteeism, workers' compensation claims, health-care costs, accidents, and grievances. As per Matula (2023), when employees feel supported and cared for by their organization through employee assistance programs, it enhances their engagement, job satisfaction, and overall productivity, leading to a more positive and fulfilling work experience.

4.10.1.5 Organizational Support and Employee Engagement

In the correlation between organizational support and employee engagement within five-star hotels in Kenya, the results showed that organizational support has a positive linear relationship with employee engagement (r=0.870, n=319, p=.000, 2-tailed). Since the value of $p < 0.05$, the findings indicate a significant correlation and implied that an increase in organizational support would lead to an increase in employee engagement. In this study organizational support was used as a moderating variable. These findings were in tandem with Wafula, Kadima and Mukanzi (2021) who established that organizational support has a positive and significant correlation with employee engagement as shown by the results (r=0.706 and p= .000). The study further argued that, employees with high organizational support feel more comfortable and less constrained by their jobs, such that they are more likely to help others and be proactive in their jobs. A high level of managerial support motivates employees to contribute their best towards achieving organizational goals and are more involved in their work (Wafula et al., 2021).

4.10.2 Hypothesis Testing

To achieve the objectives of the study, simple linear regression was conducted. The strength of the regression model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2) and p-value. The study used ANOVA to test the fitness of the model and regression coefficients were assessed to measure the effect of independent variables.

4.10.2.1 Test of Hypothesis One

The first objective of the study was to examine the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using the following hypothesis:

H_{01}: There is no statistically significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.29: Model Summary of Flexible Work Arrangements

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.846[a]	.715	.714	.42327

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements

The results revealed a coefficient of determination of 0.715, indicating that 71.5% of the variance in employee engagement can be explained by flexible work arrangements. However, the remaining 28.5% is explained by other factors not considered in this study. These findings were in tandem with Karori (2023) who established that flexible working schemes explain 20% of the variance in employee engagement.

Table 4.30: ANOVA of Flexible Work Arrangements

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	142.569	1	142.569	795.758	.000[b]
	Residual	56.794	317	.179		
	Total	**199.363**	**318**			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements

The findings demonstrated that the regression model is statistically significant ($F=795.758$, $p<0.05$). This implied that flexible work arrangements have a significant

effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings concurred with Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) who found that working flexibility gives employees job autonomy to manage their schedules, increases organizational pride, job satisfaction and engagement.

Table 4.31: Coefficients of Flexible Work Arrangements

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	.820	.104		7.902	.000
Flexible Work Arrangements	.894	.032	.846	28.209	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

From the analysis, the constant term of β_0=0.820 implied that if flexible work arrangements are held constant, employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya would increase by 0.820. The regression coefficient for flexible work arrangements was (β_1=0.894, $p<0.05$). This inferred that for every unit increase in flexible work arrangements, employee engagement is predicted to increase by 0.894 units. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. Further, the calculated t-value was 28.209, which was greater than the critical t-value of 1.968 at $\alpha = 0.05$ (two-tailed) with 317 degrees of freedom therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. These findings demonstrated that flexible work arrangements positively contribute to employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Similarly, these results resonate with Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) who established that flexible work arrangements enhance employee engagement through improved performance, discretionary effort, customer satisfaction, talent retention, increased commitment and competitive advantage. Further, Ohunakin et al., (2018) revealed, that if a business supports flexible work schedules, employee morale will increase and they will be inspired to work every day. On the contrary, Willett, LaGree, Warner, Brian Houston and Duffy, (2024) established that higher levels of employee use of flexible work arrangements is associated with less flourishing at work and job engagement. These findings by Willett et al., (2024) implied that flexible work arrangements can have negative effects if used excessively and this calls for

involvement of the management in order to enhance the effectiveness of these practices. The regression model obtained from the output was;

$$EE = 0.820 + 0.894FWA$$

4.10.2.2 Test of Hypothesis Two

The second objective was to determine the effect of corporate wellness programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using the following hypothesis:

H_{02}: There is no statistically significant relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.32: Model Summary of Corporate Wellness Programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.812[a]	.660	.659	.46259

a. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs

The results indicated a coefficient of determination of 0.66, implying that changes in corporate wellness programs accounted for 66% of the variance in employee engagement. However, the remaining 34% is explained by other factors not considered in this study. These findings were consistent with Kumar et al., (2020) who found a significant relationship between employee wellness programs and employee engagement.

Table 4.33: ANOVA of Corporate Wellness Programs

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1	Regression	131.529	1	131.529	614.651	.000[b]
	Residual	67.835	317	.214		
	Total	**199.363**	**318**			

Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement
Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs

The F-test was significant as indicated by an F-statistic of 614.651 with a corresponding p-value of .000, indicating statistical significance at the 5% level. These findings suggested that there was a significant relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement. These results aligned with Kitali (2021) who

established that employee wellness programs resulted in employee satisfaction with their work, and produced healthy, committed and engaged workers.

Table 4.34: Coefficients of Corporate Wellness Programs

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	.801	.182		4.401	.000
Corporate Wellness Programs	1.439	.058	.812	24.810	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EE

The constant term had a regression coefficient of β_0=0.801 which implied that, holding corporate wellness programs constant would increase employee engagement by 0.801. Corporate wellness programs had β_1=1.439, t=24.810, p<0.05. This implied that corporate wellness programs had a significant effect on employee engagement and for every unit increase in corporate wellness programs, employee engagement would increase by 1.439 units. The calculated t-value was 24.810, which was greater than the critical t-value of 1.968 at $\alpha = 0.05$ (two-tailed) with 317 degrees of freedom therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. These findings were in agreement with similar studies by Muriuki (2018) and Saks (2022) which revealed that effective wellness programs enhanced employee engagement. Further, there was a higher likelihood of job satisfaction among the employees, have a positive attitude towards work, willingness to go the extra mile for their employers, feel confident about their physical health, and engaged. The regression model obtained from the output was;

$$EE = 0.801 + 1.439CWP$$

4.10.2.3 Test of Hypothesis Three

The third objective was to investigate the effect of leave programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using the following hypothesis;

H_{03}: There is no statistically significant relationship between leave programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.35: Model Summary of Leave Programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.828[a]	.686	.685	.44450

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leave Programs

The model produced a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.686, indicating that leave programs explained 68.6% of the variance in employee engagement among five-star hotels in Kenya. The remaining 31.4% can be linked to other factors not included in this model. These findings echo Okemwa, Atambo, and Muturi (2019) who established that 39.3% of the variance in employee engagement can be explained by staff leave arrangements.

Table 4.36: ANOVA of Leave Programs

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	136.730	1	136.730	692.019	.000[b]
	Residual	62.633	317	.198		
	Total	**199.363**	**318**			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leave Programs

The findings demonstrated that the regression model is statistically significant ($F=692.019$, $p<0.05$). This implied that leave programs have a significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These results validate the sentiment that leave programs give employees an opportunity to release stress, create a balance between work and family activities, improve employee morale, engagement and retention (Okemwa, Atambo & Muturi, 2019).

Table 4.37: Coefficients of Leave Programs

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	1.040	.181		5.755	.000
Leave Programs	1.561	.058	.828	26.306	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EE

The coefficient estimate of the constant term was $\beta_0=1.040$ which implied that, if leave programs were held constant, employee engagement would increase by 1.040 units. The findings pointed out that leave programs had a regression coefficient ($\beta_1=1.516$, $t=26.306$, $p<0.05$). This implied that there was a significant relationship and for every unit increase in leave programs, employee engagement increases by 1.516 units. Since the p-value was less than 0.05 and the calculated t-value of 26.306 was greater than

the critical t-value of 1.968 at $\alpha = 0.05$ (two-tailed) with 317 degrees of freedom, the null hypothesis was rejected. Further, the findings revealed that leave programs positively contribute to employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings were in tandem with Mogeni (2020) and Mungania (2017) who asserted that, providing leave helped employees manage their work-family obligations better, improved their emotional well-being, decreased presentism, improved commitment and ultimately increased employee retention. Similarly, Okemwa (2022) revealed that leave arrangements significantly improve employee commitment given that they lead to renewed interest and vitality to deliver services and reduce work-related stress. The results also affirm the work of Kabui (2023) who found that organizations that provided leaves for their employees had more committed employees which had led to achievement of the organizational objectives. The regression model obtained from the output was;

$$\boldsymbol{EE = 1.040 + 1.561LP}$$

4.10.2.4 Test of Hypothesis Four

The fourth objective was to assess the effect of employee assistance programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using the following hypothesis;

H_{04}: There is no statistically significant relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.38: Model Summary of Employee Assistance Programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.709[a]	.502	.500	.55960

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs

The findings revealed an R^2 value of 0.502 which inferred that 50.2% of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to employee assistance programs. However, the remaining 49.8% is explained by other factors not considered in this study. These findings concurred with Karori (2023) who established that employee assistance programs explain 5.7% of the variance in employee engagement.

Table 4.39: ANOVA of Employee Assistance Programs

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	100.093	1	100.093	319.628	.000[b]
	Residual	99.270	317	.313		
	Total	**199.363**	**318**			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement
b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs

The results from ANOVA showed that the effect of employee assistance programs on employee engagement is significant (F=319.628, p<0.05). This implied that employee assistance programs have a significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Similarly, (Okemwa, 2022) established a positive and significant relationship between the effectiveness of employee assistance programs and the level of engagement.

Table 4.40: Coefficients of Employee Assistance Programs

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	1.279	.137		9.317	.000
Employee Assistance Programs	.855	.048	.709	17.813	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

The constant term had a regression coefficient of $\beta 0$=1.279 which implied that, holding other factors constant would increase employee engagement by 1.279. Employee assistance programs had ($\beta 1$=0.855, t=17.813, p<0.05). The calculated t-value was 17.813, which was greater than the critical t-value of 1.968 at $\alpha = 0.05$ (two-tailed) with 317 degrees of freedom therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. These findings suggested that employee assistance programs had a significant effect on employee engagement and a unit increase in employee assistance programs would increase employee engagement by 0.855 units. Further, the findings demonstrated that employee assistance programs positively contributed to employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These results were in alignment with Ng'eno (2020) who established that employee assistance programs improved attendance rates, lowered absenteeism, fostered positive working relationships between management and employees, enhanced social welfare, and relieved stress, enabling employees to

consistently contribute to the organization. Wang et al., (2020) emphasized that employee assistance programs were valuable resources that helped employees cope with work-related stress and employee general health. The findings imply that effective employee assistance programs help employees overcome daily challenges that could affect their productivity and efficiency at work. The regression model obtained from the output was;

$$EE = 1.279 + 0.855EAP$$

4.10.3 Multiple Regression Analysis

The study sought to examine the effect of work-life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using multiple regression analysis. Work-life balance practices were collectively examined to determine their combined effect on employee engagement. This relationship was tested as indicated in the following regression model:

$$\gamma = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon \quad \text{.....(1)}$$

Where

Y = Employee Engagement

β_0= constant coefficient (Y intercept)

β_1 - β_4= regression coefficient for the independent variables

X_1 = Flexible Work Arrangements

X_2 = Corporate Wellness Programs

X_3= Leave Programs

X_4 = Employee Assistance Programs

ε = error term

Table 4.41: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.919a	.844	.842	.31455

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs and Employee Assistance Programs

The results revealed a very strong and positive correlation between work- life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya (R=0.919). This strong correlation suggested that work-life balance is a robust predictor of employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Further, the R^2 of 0.844 inferred that flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs and employee

assistance programs jointly explained 84.4% of the variance in employee engagement while the remaining 15.6% of the variance in employee engagement could be accounted for by other factors not considered in this study. These findings were in agreement with Afwande and Kiiru (2023) who established that work-life balance practices accounted for 73.5% of the variance in employee engagement.

Table 4.42: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	168.296	4	42.074	425.247	.000[b]
Residual	31.067	314	.099		
Total	**199.363**	**318**			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs and Employee Assistance Programs.

The regression results showed that the predictor variables jointly had a significant effect on the dependent variable, with ($F= 425.247$, $p<0.05$). This implied that the model used was appropriate. These findings were in agreement with Opoku et al., (2023) who also established that there was a significant relationship between work-life balance and employee engagement.

Table 4.43: Coefficients

Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
(Constant)	1.008	.150		6.734	.000
Flexible Work Arrangements	.496	.055	.470	9.063	.000
Corporate Wellness Programs	.710	.059	.401	12.010	.000
Leave Programs	.327	.088	.179	3.720	.000
Employee Assistance Programs	.045	.057	.037	.790	.030

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

The findings indicated that flexible work arrangements had (β=.496, p=.000), corporate wellness programs had (β=.710, p<0.05), leave programs had (β=.327, p<0.05) and employee assistance programs had (β=.045, p=.030). These results implied that, there was a significant relationship between flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and employee engagement. The regression model obtained from the output was;

Employee Engagement=1.008+ 0.496 *FWA*+ 0.710 *CWP*+ 0.327 *LP*+ 0.045*EAP*.

For the standardized coefficients, a one standard deviation increase in flexible work arrangements (β=.470, p=.000), is associated with a 0.470 standard deviation increase in employee engagement implying that the relationship was positive and statistically significant. Corporate wellness programs had (β=.401, p=.000) which inferred that it was associated with 0.401 increase in employee engagement and the relationship was significant but less influential than flexible work arrangements. Leave programs had (β=.179, p=.000) and employee assistance programs had (β=.037, p=.030) which demonstrated that a one standard deviation increase in leave programs and employee assistance programs leads to a 0.179 and 0.037 SD increase in engagement, respectively.

Compared to other work-life balance practices examined, flexible work arrangements emerged as the most influential factor in enhancing employee engagement. This

suggests that employees place a particularly high value on having flexibility over their working hours. In the context of five-star hotels in Kenya, where operations are often fast-paced and schedules rigid, the strong contribution of flextime to engagement suggests a critical opportunity for HR managers to implement remote working, flextime and job sharing fully as they may significantly boost employee morale, commitment, and overall productivity. From a theoretical perspective, it supports the social exchange theory which posits that resources like flexible work arrangements make employees feel valued and cared for which as a result makes them feel obligated to reciprocate through productive behaviour.

Based on the findings, there is a significant relationship between work life balance and employee engagement. The crucial role of work-life balance in enhancing employee engagement has also been emphasized by other researchers (Riaz, Ahmed, & Ali, 2021; Katili, Wibowo & Akbar, 2021). A healthy work-life balance improves organizational and financial outcomes, lowers the likelihood of employee turnover, fosters psychological ownership in workers, inspires workers to meet company objectives, and fosters engagement and commitment within the firm (Katili et al., 2021). Additionally, work-life balance fosters both corporate success and employee job performance (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020). When workers meet their household needs and workplace expectations, they are more engaged to their work (Riaz et al., 2021). According to previous studies, employees will be more receptive to the company's values and exhibit more loyalty if it can offer them a variety of support measures to help them attain work-life balance (Liu et al., 2022). Work life balance generally reduces turnover intentions while increasing work consciousness, organizational commitment, job happiness, and quality of life (Hasan, Jawaad & Butt, 2021).

4.10.4 Moderating effect of Organizational Support

The study sought to examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The moderating effect of organizational support was guided by the following null hypothesis;

H_{05}: There is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

In order to test whether organizational support moderated the relationship between flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and employee engagement, three models were developed;

Model 1: $Y= \beta 0 + \beta 1X1+ \varepsilon$

Model 2: $Y= \beta 0+ \beta 1X1+ \beta ZZ+ \varepsilon$

Model 3: $Y= \beta 0+ \beta 1X1+ \beta ZZ+ \beta 1ZX1*Z+ \varepsilon$

Table 4.44: Model Summary for the moderating effect of organizational support on flexible work arrangements

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of The Estimate	R Square Change
1	.846[a]	.715	.714	.42327	.715
2	.886[b]	.784	.783	.36876	.069
3	.926[c]	.858	.857	.29989	.074

a. Predictors (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements
b. Predictors (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support
c. Predictors (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support, Interaction between Flexible Work Arrangements and Organizational Support
d. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient of determination was 0.715 indicating that flexible work arrangements explained 71.5% of the variance in employee engagement. In Model 2, the moderator was introduced in the model and there was a notable R^2 change of 6.9% translating to an R^2 of 0.784. These findings implied that organizational support enhanced the explanatory power of flexible work arrangements therefore 78.4% of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to flexible work arrangements. In Model 3, the interaction variable was investigated and the R^2 changed to 0.858, recording an increase of 7.4%. These findings inferred that organizational support adds value to the model and moderates the association between flexible work schedules and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Similarly, Willet et al., (2024) established organizational support offered in form of high-quality leaders and communicative support was linked to increased job engagement and flourishing

at work.

Table 4.45: ANOVA for the moderating effect of organizational support on flexible work arrangements

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	142.569	1	142.569	795.758	.000[b]
	Residual	56.794	317	.179		
	Total	199.363	318			
2	Regression	156.391	2	78.196	575.020	.000[c]
	Residual	42.972	316	.136		
	Total	199.363	318			
3	Regression	171.035	3	57.012	633.946	.000[d]
	Residual	28.328	315	.090		
	Total	199.363	318			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements

c. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support

d. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support, Interaction between Flexible Work Arrangements and Organizational Support

The findings in the three models suggest significant relationship as indicated by Model 1 (F=795.758; $p<0.05$), Model 2 (F=575.020; $p<0.05$) and Model 3 (F=633.946; $p<0.05$). There was a significant increase in the computed f-statistic while the p-value was less than 0.05 across all the models. These findings implied that, flexible work schedules and employee engagement are significantly related in five-star hotels in Kenya before and after inclusion of the moderating variable and the interaction variable.

Table 4.46: Regression coefficients for the moderating effect of organizational support on flexible work arrangements

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	.820	.104		7.902	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements	.894	.032	.846	28.209	.000
2	(Constant)	.550	.094		5.836	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements*	.376	.058	.356	6.443	.000
	Organizational Support	.560	.056	.556	10.082	.000
3	(Constant)	-4.452	.399		11.147	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements	2.591	.180	2.452	14.397	.000
	Organizational Support	1.889	.114	1.878	16.638	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements* Organizational Support	.578	.045	3.331	12.761	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient estimate of the constant term was β_0=0.820 which implied that, if flexible work arrangements were held constant, employee engagement would increase by 0.820. The findings pointed out that flexible work arrangements had β_1=0.894, t=28.209, p<0.05. This inferred that the regression coefficient was significant and there was a 0.894-unit increase in employee engagement for each unit increase in flexible work arrangements. In Model 2, the moderating variable was introduced and there was a significant effect of flexible work arrangements (β=.376, p<0.05) and organizational support (β=560, p<0.05) on employee engagement. In Model 3, the interaction variable was investigated and findings revealed a positive and significant effect on employee engagement arising from the interaction between

flexible work arrangements and organizational support (β=0.578, t=12.761, p<0.05). After moderation, the regression models become:

Model 1: $EE = 0.820 + 0.894FWA$

Model 2: $EE = 0.550 + 0.376FWA + 0.560OS$

Model 3: $EE = -4.452 + 2.591FWA + 1.889OS + 0.578FWA * OS$

Based on the findings, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study concludes that organizational support has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings resonate with Wang et al., (2020) who found that employee dedication and performance at work are enhanced by organizational support, which also has a favourable effect on employee output. It has also been demonstrated that employees' cognitive and affective assessments of their organization are improved when they receive organizational support (Rasool, Wang, Tang, Saeed & Iqbal, 2021). These results suggested that when employees receive organizational support through practices such as effective communication, good leadership and fairness, they will be more dedicated and committed to accomplishing an organization's aims and objectives.

Table 4.47: Model Summary for the moderating effect of organizational support on corporate wellness programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	.812[a]	.660	.659	.46259	.660
2	.930[b]	.864	.864	.29243	.204
3	.937[c]	.878	.877	.27763	.014

a. Predictors (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs
b. Predictors (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs, Organizational Support
c. Predictors (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs, Organizational Support, Interaction between Corporate Wellness Programs and Organizational Support
d. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the R^2 was 0.660 which inferred that, corporate wellness programs accounted for 66% of the variance in employee engagement. Model 2 recorded an R^2

of 0.864 pointing out that there was an increase of 20.4% upon introduction of the moderating variable. This signified that corporate wellness programs and organizational support explained 86.4% of the variance in employee engagement. Model 3 indicates an R^2 of 0.878 which suggested that corporate wellness programs explained 87.8% of the variability in employee engagement after inclusion of the moderating and the interaction variables. There was also an increase of 1.4% when the interaction variable was included in Model 3. The findings hinted that organizational support adds value to the model and moderates the relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in selected five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.48: ANOVA for the moderating effect of organizational support on corporate wellness programs

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	131.529	1	131.529	614.651	.000[b]
	Residual	67.835	317	.214		
	Total	199.363	318			
2	Regression	172.340	2	86.170	1007.652	.000[c]
	Residual	27.023	316	.086		
	Total	199.363	318			
3	Regression	175.084	3	358.361	757.163	.000[d]
	Residual	24.280	315	.077		
	Total	199.363	318			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs

c. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs, Organizational Support

d. Predictors: (Constant), Corporate Wellness Programs, Organizational Support, Interaction between Corporate Wellness Programs and Organizational Support

The results from the three models indicate a strong relationship, as demonstrated by Model 1 ($F=614.651$; $p<0.05$), Model 2 ($F=1007.652$; $p<0.05$), and Model 3 ($F=757.163$; $p<0.05$). From Model 1 to 3, there was a notable increase in the computed

F-statistic, and the p-values remained less than 0.05 across all the models. These results suggested that there is a significant relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya, both before and after the inclusion of the moderating and interaction variables. Regression coefficients are presented in table 4.9.

Table 4.49: Regression Coefficients for the moderating effect of organizational support on corporate wellness programs

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	.801	.182		4.398	.000
	Corporate Wellness Programs	1.439	.058	.812	24.792	.000
2	(Constant)	.744	.115		6.463	.000
	Corporate Wellness Programs* OS	.763	.048	.431	15.891	.000
		.595	.027	.592	21.846	.000
3	(Constant)	3.45	1.467		7.394	.000
	Corporate Wellness Programs	1.65	9.157	.936	10.569	.000
	Organizational Support	1.64	7.178	1.637	9.244	.000
	CWP*OS	.339	.057	1.430	5.966	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the constant term had a regression coefficient of β_0=0.801 which indicated that, holding corporate wellness programs constant would increase employee engagement by 0.801. Corporate wellness programs had β_1=1.439, t=24.792, $p<0.05$. This suggested that corporate wellness programs had a significant effect on employee engagement and for every unit increase in corporate wellness programs, employee engagement would increase by 1.439 units. In Model 2, the moderating variable was introduced in the model and findings revealed that corporate wellness programs

(β=0.763, t=15.891, p<0.05) together with organizational support (β=0.595, t=21.846, p<0.05) have a significant effect on employee engagement.

In Model 3, the interaction between corporate wellness programs and organizational support had a significant effect on employee engagement (β=0.339, t=5.966, p<0.05). These findings suggested that all coefficients are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, implying that all the predictors have a significant effect on employee engagement. The study concluded that organizational support has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. In a similar study, Munyiri (2023) established that, management's support, involvement, and direction were essential to the uptake of the wellness initiatives owing to the benefits these programs bring to an organization. After moderation, the regression models become:

Model 1: $\boldsymbol{EE = 0.801 + 1.439CWP}$

Model 2: $\boldsymbol{EE = 0.744 + 0.763CWP + 0.595OS}$

Model 3: $\boldsymbol{EE = 3.451 + 1.659CWP + 1.647OS + 0.339CWP * OS}$

Table 4.50: Model Summary for the moderating effect of organizational support on leave programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	.828[a]	.686	.685	.44450	.686
2	.894[b]	.799	.798	.35577	.113
3	.908[c]	.825	.823	.33323	.026

a. Predictors (Constant), Leave Programs

b. Predictors (Constant), Leave Programs, Organizational Support

c. Predictors (Constant), Leave Programs, Organizational Support, Interaction between Leave Programs and Organizational Support

d. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient of determination was 0.686 indicating that leave programs explained 68.6% of the variance in employee engagement. In Model 2, the moderator was introduced and there was a notable R^2 change of 11.3% translating to an R^2 of 0.799. These findings implied that organizational support enhanced the explanatory power of leave programs therefore 79.9% of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to leave programs. In Model 3, the interaction variable was introduced to the model and the R^2 changed to 0.825, recording an increase of 2.6%. These findings inferred that organizational support adds value to the model and moderates the relationship between leave programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.51: ANOVA for the moderating effect of organizational support on leave programs

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	136.730	1	136.730	692.019	.000[b]
	Residual	62.633	317	.198		
	Total	199.363	318			
2	Regression	159.367	2	79.683	629.552	.000[c]
	Residual	39.997	316	.127		
	Total	199.363	318			
3	Regression	164.385	3	54.795	493.454	.000[d]
	Residual	34.979	315	.111		
	Total	199.363	318			

The results from the three models indicate a strong relationship, as demonstrated by Model 1 (F=692.019; $p<0.05$), Model 2 (F=629.552; $p<0.05$), and Model 3 (F=493.454; $p<0.05$). Across all the models, the p-values remained below 0.05. These results suggested that there is a significant relationship between leave programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya, both before and after the inclusion of the moderating and interaction variables.

Table 4.52: Regression Coefficients for the moderating effect of organizational support on leave programs

Coefficients						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	1.040	.181		5.755	.000
	Leave Programs	1.516	.058	.828	26.306	.000
2	(Constant)	.362	.153		2.361	.019
	Leave Programs*	.654	.079	.357	8.253	.000
	Organizational Support	.582	.044	.579	13.373	.000
3	(Constant)	4.182	.586		7.135	.000
	Leave Programs	2.028	.217	1.108	9.326	.000
	Organizational Support	1.815	.188	1.805	9.662	.000
	Leave Programs* Organizational Support	.428	.064	1.894	6.722	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient estimate of the constant term was β_0=1.040 which implied that, if leave programs were held constant, employee engagement would increase by 1.040. The findings pointed out that leave programs had a regression coefficient (β_1=1.516, t=26.306, p<0.05). This implied that there was significant relationship and for every unit increase in leave programs, employee engagement increases by 1.516 units. In Model 2, the moderating variable was introduced and there was a significant effect of leave programs (β=.654, p<0.05) and organizational support (β=.582, p<0.05) on employee engagement. In Model 3, the interaction variable was investigated and findings revealed a positive and significant effect on employee engagement arising from the interaction between leave programs and organizational support (β=0.428, t=6.722, p<0.05). After moderation, the regression models become:

Model 1: $\boldsymbol{EE = 1.040 + 1.516LP}$

Model 2: $\boldsymbol{EE = 0.362 + 0.654LP + 0.582OS}$

Model 3: $\boldsymbol{EE = 4.182 + 2.028LP + 1.815OS + 0.428LPOS}$

Table 4.53: Model Summary for the moderating effect of organizational support on employee assistance programs

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	.709[a]	.502	.500	.55960	.502
2	.876[b]	.767	.766	.38305	.265
3	.900[c]	.810	.808	.34692	.043

a. Predictors (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs
b. Predictors (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs Organizational Support
c. Predictors (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs, Organizational Support, Interaction between Employee Assistance Programs and Organizational Support
d. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the R^2 was 0.502 which inferred that, employee assistance programs accounted for 66% of the variance in employee engagement. Model 2 recorded an R^2 of 0.767 pointing out that there was an increase of 26.5% upon introduction of the moderating variable. This implied that employee assistance programs and organizational support explained 76.7% of the variance in employee engagement. Model 3 indicated an R^2 of 0.810 which suggested that employee assistance programs explained 81% of the variance in employee engagement after inclusion of the moderating and the interaction variables. There was also an increase of 4.3% when the interaction variable was included in Model 3. The findings suggested that organizational support adds value to the model and moderates the relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in selected five-star hotels in Kenya.

Table 4.54: ANOVA for the moderating effect of organizational support on employee assistance programs

ANOVA[a]						
Model		**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1	Regression	100.093	1	100.093	319.628	.000[b]
	Residual	99.270	317	.313		
	Total	199.363	318			
2	Regression	152.998	2	76.499	521.371	.000[c]
	Residual	46.366	316	.147		
	Total	199.363	318			
3	Regression	161.453	3	53.818	447.176	.000[d]
	Residual	37.910	315	.120		
	Total	199.363	318			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs

c. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs, Organizational Support

d. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Assistance Programs, Organizational Support, Interaction between Employee Assistance Programs and Organizational Support

The results from the three models indicate a strong relationship, as demonstrated by Model 1 (F=319.628, p<0.05), Model 2 (F=521.371, p<0.05), and Model 3 (F=447.176, p<0.05). Across all the models, the p-values were less than 0.05. These results suggest that there is a significant relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya, both before and after the inclusion of the moderating and interaction variables.

Table 4.55: Regression Coefficients for the moderating effect of organizational support on employee assistance programs

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std. Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	1.279	.137		9.317	.000
	Employee Assistance Programs	.855	.048	.709	17.878	.000
2	(Constant)	.534	.102		5.250	.000
	Employee Assistance Programs*	.188	.048	.156	3.918	.000
	Organizational Support	.760	.040	.756	18.989	.000
3	(Constant)	3.794	.525		7.233	.000
	Employee Assistance Programs	2.240	.249	1.855	9.010	.000
	Organizational Support	1.858	.136	1.847	13.668	.000
	Employee Assistance Programs* Organizational Support	.519	.062	2.615	8.382	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the constant term had a regression coefficient of β_0=1.279 which implied that, holding other factors constant, employee assistance programs would increase employee engagement by 1.279. Employee assistance programs had β_1=0.855, t=17.878, p<0.05. This suggested that employee assistance programs had a significant effect on employee engagement and a unit increase in employee assistance programs would increase employee engagement by 0.855 units. For Model 2, the moderating variable was introduced in the model and findings revealed that employee assistance programs (β=0.188, t=3.918, p<0.05) together with organizational support (β=0.760, t=18.989, p<0.05) have a significant effect of employee engagement. In Model 3, the interaction between employee assistance programs and organizational support had a

significant effect on employee engagement (β=0.519, t=8.382, p<0.05). These findings suggested that all coefficients are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, implying that all predictors have a significant effect on the dependent variable. After moderation, the regression models become:

Model 1: $\boldsymbol{EE = 1.279 + 0.855EAP}$

Model 2: $\boldsymbol{EE = 0.534 + 0.188EAP + 0.760OS}$

Model 3: $\boldsymbol{EE = 3.794 + 2.240EAP + 1.858OS + 0.519EAPOS}$

Overall Moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in Kenya.

The study conducted Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR) analysis in order to determine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The moderating model tests whether the prediction of a dependent variable (Y), from an independent variable (X), differs across levels of a moderating variable (Z). Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR) analysis was done in three steps. The following models were used to examine the moderating effect of organizational support; In the first step, the main effects of work life balance practices and organizational support were estimated using regression (equation 2):

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_Z Z + \varepsilon$

In the second step, the interaction variable was added to equation 3:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_Z Z + \beta_{1Z} X1*Z + \beta_{2Z} X_2*Z + \beta_{3Z} X_3*Z + \beta_{4Z} X_4*Z + \varepsilon$

Where:

Y = Employee Engagement

β_0 = constant coefficient

β_1 - β_4 = regression coefficient for the independent variables

β_{1Z} -β_{4Z} = estimates of the population regression coefficient for the product term (X*Z)

Z = Organizational Support (Moderating Variable)

β_Z = estimate of the population regression coefficient for Z

ε = error term

The fifth objective of the study was to examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using the following hypothesis:

H_{05}: There is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Moderated Multiple Regression (MMR) analysis consisted of three models. In Model 1: work life balance practices were regressed against employee engagement, in Model 2: the moderator was introduced into the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement while in Model 3: the interaction variable was regressed against the moderator, independent and dependent variables.

Table 4.56: Model Summary for Overall Moderated Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	.919[a]	.844	.842	.31455	.844
2	.936[b]	.876	.874	.28073	.032
3	.975[c]	.951	.950	.17701	.075

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs, Employee Assistance Programs.
b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs, Employee Assistance Programs and Organizational Support.
c. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs, Employee Assistance Programs, Organizational Support and interaction between Work Life Balance Practices and Organizational Support.
d. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient of determination was 0.844 which denoted that work life balance practices explained 84.4% of the variance in employee engagement. In Model 2, after inclusion of the moderating variable, there was a notable R^2 change of 3.2% and the coefficient of determination was 0.876 which implied that, organizational

support enhanced the explanatory power of flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and accounts for 87.6% of the variability in employee engagement. In Model 3, the inclusion of the moderating variable together with the interaction variable on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement recorded an R^2 change of 7.5% which translates to a coefficient of determination of 0.951. These findings implied that organizational support adds value and moderates the relationship between flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and employee engagement. An R^2 of 0.951 translates to an increment of 7.5%.

Table 4.57: ANOVA for Overall Moderated Regression Analysis

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	168.296	4	42.074	425.247	.000[b]
	Residual	31.067	314	.099		
	Total	199.363	318			
2					443.325	.000[c]
	Regression	174.695	5	34.939		
	Residual	24.668	313	.079		
	Total	199.363	318			
3	Regression	189.681	9	21.076	672.638	.000[d]
	Residual	9.682	309	.031		
	Total	199.363	318			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs and Employee Assistance Programs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs, Employee Assistance Programs and Organizational Support

c. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Corporate Wellness Programs, Leave Programs, Employee Assistance Programs, Interaction between Work life balance Practices and Organizational Support.

d. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the findings indicated that the F-statistic was 425.247 with a p-value of .000. This hinted that there was a significant relationship between work life balance

practices and employee engagement. In Model 2, the moderating variable was investigated and there was a notable change in F-statistic (F=443.325, p=.000). These findings inferred that organizational support had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement. Model 3 investigated the interaction between work life balance practices and employee engagement. Findings revealed that F-statistic increased to 672.638 with a p-value less than 0.05 which suggested a significant relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement.

Table 4.58: Regression Coefficients for Overall Moderated Regression Analysis

Coefficients[a]						
Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**	**t**	**Sig.**
		B	**Std Error**	**Beta**		
1	(Constant)	1.008	.150		6.734	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements	.496	.055	.470	9.063	.000
	Corporate Wellness Programs	.710	.059	.401	12.010	.000
	Leave Programs	.327	.088	.179	3.720	.000
	Employee Assistance Programs	-.045	.057	-.037	-.720	.030
2	(Constant)	.871	.134		6.473	.000
	FWA	.168	.061	.159	2.762	.006
	CWP	.684	.053	.386	12.954	.000
	LP	.124	.082	.068	1.523	.003
	EAP	.035	.051	.029	.677	.001
	OS	.406	.045	.404	9.011	.000
3	(Constant)	6.204	.369		16.811	.000
	FWA	1.757	.179	1.663	9.805	.000
	CWP	1.87	3.144	1.057	12.969	.000
	LP	3.07	9.262	1.683	11.761	.000
	EAP	3.28	6.207	2.721	15.877	.000
	OS	1.90	7.129	1.896	14.785	.000
	FWA*OS	.394	.048	2.273	8.197	.000
	CWP*OS	.415	.050	1.750	8.316	.000
	LP*OS	.855	.075	3.786	11.351	.000
	EAP*OS	.806	.055	4.060	14.617	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

Model 1, work life balance practices were jointly analyzed together in a multiple linear regression. The findings indicated that flexible work arrangements had (β=.496, p=.000), corporate wellness programs had (β=.710, p=.000), leave programs had (β=.327, p=.000) and employee assistance programs had (β=-.045, p=.030). These results implied that, there was a significant relationship between flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, and employee engagement.

In Model 2, the moderating effect of organizational support was introduced and the findings revealed that, flexible work arrangements had (β=.168, p=.006), corporate wellness programs had (β=.684, p=.000), leave programs had (β=.124, p=.003) and employee assistance programs had (β=.035, p=.001). These results inferred that after inclusion of the moderating effect, flexible work arrangements, leave programs, corporate wellness programs and employee assistance programs positively influence employee engagement.

In Model 3, the moderating effect of organizational support and the interaction between work life balance practices and organizational support were investigated. The results pointed out that the interaction between; flexible work arrangements and organizational support had (β=.394, p=.000), corporate wellness programs and organizational support had (β=.415, p=.000), leave programs and organizational support had (β=.855, p=.000) and employee assistance programs and organizational support had (β=.806, p=.000). These findings suggested that there was a positive significant effect on employee engagement arising from the interaction between work life balance practices and organizational support. The overall regression model becomes;

Model 1: $EE = 1.008 + 0.496FWA + 0.710CWP + 0.327LP - 0.045EAP$

Model 2: $EE = 0.871 + 0.168FWA + 0.684CWP + 0.124LP + 0.035 + 0.406OS$

Model 3: $EE = 6.204 + 1.757FWA + 1.873CWP + 3.079LP + 3.286EAP + 1.907OS + 0.394FWAOS + 0.415CWPOS + 0.855LPOS + 0.806EAPOS$

The study hypothesized that there is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The effect of the moderator was

measured by the interaction effect between work life balance practices and organizational support. The findings in Model 3 indicated that the interaction between work life balance practices and organizational support had a significant effect on employee engagement hence moderation was supported. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study concludes that organizational support has a statistically significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements, corporate wellness programs, leave programs, employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

Organizational support has been linked in earlier research to increased job performance, commitment, and job satisfaction (Rasool et al., 2021). Additionally, it is critical for attaining corporate objectives, minimizing work-family spillover, and maintaining work-life balance. Employees' positive perceptions of their company are greatly influenced by organizational support (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021). Employee engagement is boosted by workers' positive perceptions of the company's support (Rasool et al., 2021). An excellent leader will provide clear direction and advice to employees, making them feel like an integral part of the organization (Somers, Birnbaum & Casal, 2021). Supervisors can ensure the survival and growth of a business by providing essential resources and information, which in turn motivates employees and instils a sense of obligation and dedication (Charoensukmongkol & Phungsoonthorn, 2021). Support from supervisors is especially crucial for maintaining workers' psychological health and job morale. Workers are more likely to perform well if they feel their managers and supervisors are interested in supporting their private and professional lives (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

4.11 Chapter Summary

Chapter four presented the findings and discussion of the results. Descriptive statistics showed the extent to which various work life balance practices were implemented and the general level of employee engagement. Factor analysis validated the structure of the constructs, while multiple regression analysis revealed significant positive relationships between specific WLB practices and employee engagement. The qualitative responses reinforced the quantitative findings by highlighting employee perceptions and experiences regarding WLB practices. The discussion compared the study’s findings with existing literature, confirming or challenging previous research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of work-life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The summary of the findings is provided in line with each objective and hypothesis. This summary is based on the descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, the study assessed the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement, determined the effect of corporate wellness programs on employee engagement, investigated the effect of leave programs on employee engagement, and assessed the effect of employee assistance programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Further, the study examined the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The summary for the major findings are illustrated in the following sections:

5.1.1 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Engagement

The first objective of this study was to evaluate the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This objective was measured using the following indicators; Remote working, Flextime and Job sharing. The descriptive results revealed that flexible work arrangements availed within five-star hotels in Kenya were favourable. The respondents indicated that they were allowed to exchange shifts, job sharing helped them to cope with work demands, they could comfortably adjust their work schedules for personal commitments, working hours were flexible, complementary schedules improved their job satisfaction and flextime served as a source of motivation. However, findings showed that the employees lacked necessary tools to work effectively from different locations and they were dissatisfied with the remote working availed.

Inferential analysis revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement ($r=0.846$, $p=.000$). Further, flexible work arrangements accounted for 71.5% of the variance in employee engagement. Organizational support had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement as it recorded an R^2 change of R^2 change of 6.9% translating to an R^2 of 0.784.

5.1.2 Corporate Wellness Programs and Employee Engagement

The study sought to determine the effect of corporate wellness programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The study also tested the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Indicators of this objective included; safety programs, screening programs and recreational facilities. Descriptive statistics revealed that, screening programs improved health of employees, sensitization on health hazards reduced accidents at the workplace, wellness programs offered met the needs of workers and promote engagement, health education was provided to all employees and health screening was regularly availed by the hotels. However, respondents also reported that their work does not allow time for exercise, safety training was not regularly availed and majority of the employees were denied access to recreational facilities such as gym, swimming pool.

Findings from correlation analysis showed that there was a positive and highly significant correlation between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya ($r= 0.812$, $p=.000$). These results suggested that increasing corporate wellness programs would result to improved employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Similarly, multiple regression analysis revealed that corporate wellness programs accounted for 66% of the variance in employee engagement. The ANOVA results had significant F-value while coefficients were supported by observed t-value which were significantly different from zero and greater than the critical t-value. This indicated that there was a significant relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya and the null hypothesis was rejected. Introduction of organizational support as a moderator into the relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement resulted to an R^2 change of 20.4% which implied that organizational support moderates and adds value to the relationship.

5.1.3 Leave Programs and Employee Engagement

This study sought to investigate the effect of leave programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The hypothesis posited that there is no statistically significant relationship between leave programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The results for descriptive analysis revealed that staff leave

arrangements were well structured, off days were not disrupted by calls from work, employees were allowed to take leave when need arises and leave programs offered have increased their commitment. In contrast, employees were not allowed to take dependent care leave, they were not given time off to attend to critical matters and personal emergencies, they struggled to find a balance between work and family and they were not pleased with the amount of time for non-work activities.

The findings from the inferential analysis showed that there was a positive and significant correlation between leave programs and employee engagement (r=0.828, p=.000). These results implied that if five-star hotels in Kenya could increase leave programs, it would automatically result to increased employee engagement. Further, regression analysis revealed that leave programs explained 68.6% of the variance in employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The ANOVA results gave an observed F-value which was significantly different from zero at the given degrees of freedom and greater than the critical F-value. This was also the same finding on the beta value for the relationship with an observed t-value's coefficient that was significantly greater than the critical t-value. This suggested that leave programs had a significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya and hence the null hypothesis for this variable was rejected. Organizational support was introduced as a moderator into the relationship between leave programs and employee engagement. It resulted to an R^2 change of 11.3% which inferred that it enhanced the explanatory power of leave programs and added value to the relationship between leave programs and employee engagement.

5.1.4 Employee Assistance Programs and Employee Engagement

This study sought to assess the effect of employee assistance programs on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The hypothesis suggested that there is no statistically significant relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Descriptive statistics indicated that employees received necessary training to offer great customer experience, conflict management sessions offered boosted their level of efficiency. Nonetheless, respondents reported that five-star hotels did not provide favourable counselling services to all employees, counselling on stress management was not availed, medical expenses for their nuclear family were not covered by the employer, the medical cover

offered by the employer was not satisfactory and the organizational culture was not favourable. These findings demonstrated that despite the relevance of employee assistance programs, these programs were not satisfactory within five-star hotels in Kenya.

Inferential analysis results revealed that there was a positive and significant correlation between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya ($r= 0.709$, $p=.000$). These findings suggested that, if all employee assistance programs were enhanced in terms of availability and accessibility, the level of employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya would significantly improve. Multiple regression analysis showed that employee assistance programs accounted for 50.2% of the variance in employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The ANOVA results also gave an observed F-value that was significantly different from zero at the given degrees of freedom and was greater than the critical F-value and the observed t-value for the coefficient was significantly greater than the critical t-value indicating that there was a significant relationship between employee assistance programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya, therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. Organizational support led to an R^2 change of 26.5% which implied that it moderated the relationship between EAP and employee engagement.

5.1.5 Moderating Effect of Organizational Support

This study sought to examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The study hypothesized that there is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Before the test for moderation, descriptive analysis was done to rate the opinions of employees on organizational support. The descriptive statistics revealed that, respondents felt respected and valued, supervisors communicated candidly and consistently, recognition would make employees more committed, fairness and justice at their workplace inspired them, supervisors provided impartial guidance and enough support and the organizational culture created the right work environment to thrive and be effective. Nevertheless, the management failed to offer constant feedback. The average mean of 3.43 implied that organizational support five-star hotels in Kenya

was favourable and satisfactory.

The findings from inferential analysis showed that organizational support had a positive and significant correlation with employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya based on the Pearson Correlation Coefficient of 0.936, p=.000. Similarly, in the moderated multiple regression inclusion of organizational support improved the explanatory power of work life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya based on the R^2 change of 2.5% resulting to a coefficient of determination of 87.6%. Correspondingly, based on the ANOVA results, the F-value observed was significantly different from zero at the given degrees of freedom and was greater than the critical F-value. This indicated that there was a significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings illustrated the presence of moderation effect of organizational support therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that there is a positive relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Further, work-life balance practices accounted for 84.4% of the variance in employee engagement while the remaining 15.6% of the variance in employee engagement could be accounted for by other factors not considered in this study. Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were made:

5.2.1 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Engagement

The comprehensive analysis, including descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression results, consistently demonstrated a significant and positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Within the domain of flexible work arrangements, the study highlights their substantial effect on employee engagement. The positive perceptions of employees toward various flexible working arrangements reflect their potential to enhance work-life balance, autonomy, and job satisfaction. The strong correlation and regression outcomes further underscore the significance of flexible working schemes in cultivating higher employee engagement, leading to improved overall organizational

performance and employee wellbeing. In line with these findings, the study therefore concluded that flexible work arrangements have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

5.2.2 Corporate Wellness Programs and Employee Engagement

The descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression results consistently indicate a significant and positive relationship between corporate wellness programs and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Moving to the realm of corporate wellness programs, the study emphasizes their positive impact on employee engagement. The evident satisfaction among employees with the quality and variety of wellness programs, as well as the programs' contributions to their physical well-being, amplifies the significance of recreational facilities, health screenings and safety training in creating a more engaged workforce. Such initiatives not only improve employees' health and reduce stress but also foster a sense of collaboration and well-being, thereby positively influencing their overall engagement. This study therefore concluded that corporate wellness programs have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

5.2.3 Leave Programs and Employee Engagement

The study established that provision of leave was important to employees as it allowed them to spend time with their families and they were also able to address other personal commitments and responsibilities. As a result, employees were more committed which led to achievement of the organizational objectives. It was also noted that employees who took up leave programs were more refreshed after their return and hence were seen more dedicated to their jobs. The availability of leave programs increased engagement, job satisfaction and retention of employees and ultimately employee job performance. The findings of this study indicated that leave programs have a positive and significant relationship with employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. This study therefore concluded that leave programs have a positive and significant influence on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

5.2.4 Employee Assistance Programs and Employee Engagement

The study's comprehensive analysis sheds light on the pivotal role of employee assistance programs in enhancing employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

The findings revealed that employee assistance programs have not been effectively implemented yet they positively influence employees' mental well-being, job satisfaction, and overall performance. The significant correlations and regression results underscore the crucial contribution of employee assistance programs to boosting employee engagement, ultimately enhancing the organization's overall productivity and well-being. Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that employee assistance programs have a positive and significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

5.2.5 Moderating Effect of Organizational Support

This study examined the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Findings conveyed that supervisor support enhances the psychological, physical, and general well-being of the workforce. Social support from supervisors and managers enhance organizational effectiveness by positively impacting employees' job satisfaction and engagement. Further, findings showed that supervisors' cordial support and personal effectiveness positively and substantially enhance employee performance. An organizational culture embedded with fairness and justice is positively associated with trust, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Based on these findings, organizational support has been found to be a significant moderator in the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Therefore, this study concluded that organizational support moderates and adds value to the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

5.3 Recommendations

This section provides the recommendations for the study both for improvement and for future research.

5.3.1 Recommendations for Policy and Practice

This section focuses on suggestions for improvement that five-star hotels in Kenya can adopt. Given the significant and positive relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement, labour policies in Kenya should be revised to formally recognize and support flexible work models, incorporate guidelines encouraging the integration of wellness programs in HR practices, develop policy

reforms that strengthen the enforcement and expansion of leave entitlements in Kenya's labour laws and enforce the need for policy frameworks that promote mental health and psychosocial support services in the workplace particularly within the hospitality industry. Through these guidelines, the government of Kenya can promote a more engaged, productive, and satisfied workforce. Further, existing HR policies should be reviewed to ensure they are comprehensive, flexible, and responsive to the needs of workers. Favourable policies regarding remote working and access to recreational facilities would enhance employee engagement by improving employee well-being, reducing burnout, and creating a supportive work environment that fosters loyalty, overall organizational productivity and job satisfaction. Recommendations are based on the specific objectives of the study.

5.3.1.1 Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Engagement

From the findings, the study established that five-star hotels have flexible work arrangements while majority of the employees were required to report to work in person on a daily basis. This study therefore recommends that, five-star hotels should establish clear guidelines and expectations for employees opting for remote working. There should be open and effective communication to ensure that both employees and supervisors understand the boundaries, deadlines, and the availability of team members. The study also established that employees lacked the necessary tools and support to work effectively from different locations therefore this study recommends that five-star hotels should provide necessary resources to facilitate remote working and offer training to employees and managers on effective remote collaboration and time management. Regular check-ins and evaluations can help monitor the effectiveness of these arrangements and make necessary adjustments based on feedback. Flexibility should be balanced while maintaining a sense of community and connection among team members, possibly through periodic in-person meetings or virtual teambuilding activities.

5.3.1.2 Corporate Wellness Programs and Employee Engagement

The study established that employees were not allowed use to recreational facilities such as gym, swimming pools available in the hotels. Only managers could access these facilities on weekends. Five-star hotels in Kenya should prioritize the accessibility and convenience of recreational facilities to make participation easier for all

employees. They should also focus on diversifying the available wellness programs to cater to a broader range of employee preferences. Regular surveys or focus groups can help to gauge employee interests and preferences, guiding the selection of appropriate wellness programs. Health screening should be regularly conducted and sensitization on health hazards should be optimized to reduce accidents at the workplace. The study findings indicated that the nature of work does not give employees adequate time to exercise or for relaxation activities. In order to enhance employee engagement, five-star hotels should develop policies and work schedules that allow employees free time to rest and also exercise. Collaborating with health experts or fitness professionals can enhance the quality of these programs and provide personalized guidance to employees.

5.3.1.3 Leave programs and Employee Engagement

The study found that employees struggled to find a balance between work and personal life. The study therefore recommends that five-star hotels in Kenya should develop more leave programs such as paid time off, dependent care leave, study leave, sick leave and family leave. Through these leave arrangements, employees will be able to take care of their family needs and have enough time for their non-work activities. Further, the study established that employees were allowed to take unpaid leave but majority of them were reluctant. Lack of paid leave opportunities has an effect on their performance as the employees who are not given paid leave are likely to use the leave time to get profitable activity and not to relax or attend to their family. Allowing employees to go for leave translates to happy employees who are more engaged, motivated, productive and contribute to the company's success. This study therefore suggests that five-star hotels should provide paid time off to the workers. Leave programs also improve work-life balance and promote good physical and mental health in the workplace by minimizing stress, and reducing accidents.

5.3.1.4 Employee Assistance Programs and Employee Engagement

From the findings, the medical cover provided in five-star hotels only covers the employee whilst the medical expenses of their nuclear family were not covered. This study recommends expansion of medical insurance to cover their immediate family members. For the enhancement of employee assistance programs, it is recommended that five-star hotels in Kenya should continue investing in the effectiveness and

accessibility of these programs and implementing regular trainings to ensure that employees perceive employee assistance programs as genuinely supportive. Findings also indicated that majority of the five-star hotels were not offering counselling services to the employees therefore this study recommends establishing a counselling department within the hotels and strengthening the counselling services will allow employees to seek assistance whenever they have challenges and this will help in addressing mental health issues and stress management. Regular assessments of the impact of EAPs on overall well-being and work performance should be conducted, and adjustments made based on employee feedback to ensure continuous improvement.

5.3.1.5 Organizational Support and Employee Engagement

The findings of this study revealed that employees were not receiving constant feedback on their performance therefore this study suggests that five-star hotels in Kenya should develop more programs to ensure that employees constantly receive feedback on time. Five-star hotels should provide training for leaders to develop their skills in empathy, conflict resolution, and effective communication which will enhance their ability to support their teams. Respondents indicated that recognition would make them more committed therefore five-star hotels should develop structured recognition programs to celebrate employee achievements and contributions, both individually and as teams. Further, five-star hotels should ensure employees have access to the necessary tools, technology, and resources to perform their jobs effectively and encourage an open-door policy where employees feel comfortable discussing issues affecting them with the management.

5.3.2 Recommendations for Further Research

While this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between work-life balance practices and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya, there is need for further research to explore the generalizability of these findings to other sectors such as health, education, manufacturing, agriculture and retailing or in different contexts such as a different country. Secondly, future studies should consider other determinants of employee engagement in five-star hotels such as effect of rewards, leadership, knowledge management or organizational culture on employee engagement. Future research should also explore comparative studies to determine the

magnitude of the effect of work life balance practices on employee engagement of different firms. This study relied on questionnaires to collect data at one point in time. This tendency leads to the limitation of common method variance. In self-reporting it is very easy for respondents to give false information about the data being sought. Self-report measures are not very reliable as they suffer from the problem of a social desirability effect on participants who may choose to give an ideal response instead of the truth, and hence reporting falsely. Future studies should apply other methods of data collection such as interviews and focus groups.

Research is always associated with costs in terms of time and resources. Due to these constraints this study could not exhaust all the factors that contribute to employee engagement. The study found that work life balance practices explain about 84.4% of variance in employee engagement meaning that there are other factors not considered which could influence employee engagement. These factors need to be brought out so that human resource managers can use a blend of components to stimulate employee engagement which is a vital factor for improved organizational performance. The study only used organizational support as the moderating variable. There are other moderators and mediators that could be included in future studies to establish a firm relationship between work life balance practices and employee engagement. As work life balance practices continue to evolve, further studies are required to understand the long-term impact and best practices for maximizing employee engagement and productivity in remote work settings particularly in the service industry. Future research should explore the role of technology in supporting work life balance practices and strategies to mitigate the challenges associated with work life balance practices.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Introductory Letter to the Respondents

Christine Syombua Kathukya,
Department of Human Resource Management,
Murang'a University of Technology,
P.O BOX 75-10200,
Murang'a, Kenya.
November, 2023.

Dear Respondent,
I am a student at Murang'a University of Technology pursuing PhD in Human Resource Management. I am presently researching **WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN FIVE-STAR HOTELS IN KENYA.** Kindly fill out the attached questionnaire.

The data you voluntarily provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and the final results will be communicated in a general manner without mentioning individuals. Am looking forward to your positive feedback. Thank you in advance.
Yours sincerely,

Christine Syombua Kathukya,

Appendix 2: Questionnaire Introduction

This questionnaire is divided into four short sections that should take only a few moments of your time to complete. The purpose of this research is to examine the effect of work-life balance practices on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Please note this is an academic exercise and all the information you give will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Kindly respond by ticking the appropriate box or filling in your answers in the blank spaces provided. Your assistance in this will be highly appreciated.

SECTION A: Demographic profile

[**Instruction:** Please tick where appropriate]

1. In which department are you working?

2. What is your gender? **Male [ ]** **Female [ ]**

3. Age in years **20 - 29 [ ]** **30 - 39 [ ]** **40 - 49 [ ]** **50 and above [ ]**

4. What is the highest level of education you have attained? **Master's Degree [ ]** **Bachelor's Degree [ ]** **Diploma [ ]** **Certificate [ ]** **others [ ]**

5. Number of years worked in this hotel?

Less than 1 year [ ] 1 – 5 years [ ] 6– 10 years [ ]Over 10 years [ ]

6. Marital status **Single [ ] Married [ ] Others [ ]**

7. Do you have children? **Yes [ ] No [ ]**

8. What is your position in this organization? **Manager [ ] Supervisor [ ] Support staff [ ]**

SECTION B: WORKLIFE BALANCE PRACTICES

1. Flexible Work Arrangements

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by indicating with a [√] in the appropriate box.

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. Working hours in this hotel are flexible.					
2. Employees can comfortably adjust their work schedule for personal commitments.					
3. Remote working has increased my satisfaction with work.					
4. Flextime motivates me to continue working in this organization.					
5. Working from home has increased my work-life balance and thus engagement.					
6. Job sharing helps me to cope with work demands.					
7. Employees are allowed to exchange shifts.					
8. Employees have the necessary tools to work effectively from different locations.					
9. Flexible work arrangements available have increased my job satisfaction thus engagement.					

a. Suggest four measures that can be adopted to improve flexible work arrangements in your workplace.

i……..

ii……..

iii……

iv……

2. Corporate Wellness Programs

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by indicating with a [√] in the appropriate box.
5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. The hotel provides health education to all employees.					
2. Employees have access to the recreational facilities.					
3. Health screening is regularly availed by the organization.					
4. Sensitization on health hazards has reduced accidents at the workplace.					
5. My work allows time for exercise or relaxation activities.					
6. Safety training is regularly availed to all employees.					
7. Screening programs provided improve the health of the workers.					
8. Wellness programs offered meet the needs of workers and promote engagement.					

a. Suggest four measures that can be adopted to improve corporate wellness programs in your workplace.
i……..
ii……..
iii……
iv…….

3. Leave Programs

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by indicating with a [√] in the appropriate box.
5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. I am allowed to take my annual leave as I plan it.					
2. I find it easy to balance between work and family.					
3. Staff leave arrangements are well structured.					

4. I am given time off to attend to critical matters and personal emergencies.					
5. My off days are not disrupted by calls from work.					
6. I am allowed to take dependent care leave.					
7. I am happy with the amount of time for non-work activities.					
8. I am allowed to take unpaid leave when need arises.					
9. Leave programs offered have increased my commitment.					

a. Suggest four measures that can be adopted to improve leave programs in your workplace.

i.…….

ii.……

iii.……...

iv.……..

4. Employee Assistance Programs

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by indicating with a [√] in the appropriate box.

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. The medical cover offered by the employer is satisfactory.					
2. The medical expenses of my family are covered by the employer.					
3. The hotel offers favourable counselling services to all employees.					
4. I have the training I need to offer a great customer experience.					
5. Training is regular and enhances service delivery.					
6. Conflict management sessions boost my level of efficiency.					
7. Counselling on stress management helps me to get better results.					
8. The organizational culture encourages employees to prioritize personal well-being.					
9. Employee assistance programs have improved my efficiency.					

a. Suggest four measures that can be adopted to enhance employee assistance programs in your workplace.
   i……..
   ii…….
   iii……
   iv……

SECTION C: ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by indicating with a [√] in the appropriate box.
5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. My supervisor provides impartial guidance.					
2. My supervisor communicates candidly and consistently.					
3. The management offers constant feedback.					
4. The organizational culture creates the right work environment to thrive and be effective.					
5. Recognition would make me more committed.					
6. Fairness and justice at my workplace inspire me.					
7. I get enough support from my supervisors.					
8. I feel respected and valued at my workplace.					

a. Suggest four measures that can be adopted to improve organizational support in your workplace.
   i……..
   ii……..
   iii……
   iv……

SECTION D: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements by indicating with a [√] in the appropriate box.
5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Neutral 2 = Disagree 1 = Strongly Disagree

Statement	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**
1. I am proud of the work that I do.					
2. I am enthusiastic about my job.					
3. I feel happy when am working intensely.					
4. I am committed to my work.					
5. I feel full of energy while at work.					
6. My job inspires me and I love it.					
7. I am a good time keeper.					
8. I utilize the resources at my workplace effectively.					

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix 3: List of Five-Star Hotels in Kenya

Villa Rosa Kempinski
Radisson Blu Hotel

Hemingways Nairobi

The Sarova Stanley

The Boma Nairobi

Sankara Nairobi

Nairobi Serena Hotel

Tribe Hotel

Dusit D2

Crowne Plaza Nairobi Airport

Giraffe Manor

Fairmont The Norfolk

PrideInn Paradise

Leopard Beach Resort & Spa

Hemingways Watamu

Diani Reef Beach Resort & Spa

Swahili Beach Resort

Medina Palms Suites & Villas

Enashipai Resort & Spa

Lake Elementeita Serena Camp

Mara Serena Safari Lodge

Cottars Ninenteen Twenties Safari Camp
Olere Mara Kempinski
Panari Resort, Nyahururu
Segera Retreat Lodge

Source: Tourism Regulatory Authority (2023)

Appendix 4: Approval of research proposal and supervisors

C3

DEAN, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & ECONOMICS
MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
06 JUN 2024
RECEIVED
P. O. Box 75-10200, MURANG'A

MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Office of the Director, Postgraduate Studies

E-mail: bps@mut.ac.ke
Website: www.mut.ac.ke

P.O. Box 75-10200
Murang'a, Kenya

Ref: MUT/ARP/PGS/19/2020 /VOL.1

Date: 6th June 2024

DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
MURANG'A UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY
06 JUN 2024
P. O. Box 75 - 10200, MURANG'A
Tel: 0771463515, Email: info@mut.ac.ke

Ms. Christine Syombua (BE503/5713/2021)

School of Business and Economics
Murang'a University of Technology,
P.O. Box 75-10,200
Murang'a.

Dear Ms. Syombua,

RE: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND SUPERVISORS

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies on 15th May, 2024 considered and approved your Doctoral research proposal entitled ***"Work-life balance practices and employee engagement in the hospitality industry: A case of Five-star hotels in kenya"*** and appointed the following as supervisors:

1. Dr. Grace Mwangi – Murang'a University of Technology
2. Dr. Monah Maundu - Murang'a University of Technology

You may now proceed with your data collection subject to obtaining research permit from NACOSTI, if required. You should also begin consulting your supervisors and submit through them quarterly progress reports to the Director Postgraduate Studies through your CoD and School Dean. Progress Reports forms can be accessed in the Student Portal.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe deadlines. The guidelines on Postgraduate supervision can be accessed in the post graduate Handbook.

Your responsibilities as a student will include, among others;

i. Maintain regular consultation with your supervisor(s), at least once a month
ii. Submit quarterly reports on time, through your supervisors, CoD, Dean and to the Director of Postgraduate Studies;
iii. Ensure quality work all through;

C3

iv. Present your research findings at 2-3 seminars/conferences prior to thesis examination.

v. Publish one article from your research findings in a refereed journal prior to thesis examination.

For any further clarification please contact the undersigned.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Geoffrey Muchiri, PhD
Director, Postgraduate Studies
GM/PIM

Copy to:

1. Registrar, Academics, Research and Students Affairs
2. Dean, School of Business and Economics

Appendix 5: NACOSTI Research Permit

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **835757**

Date of Issue: **03/July/2024**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Miss.. CHRISTINE SYOMBUA KATHUKYA of Murang'a University of Technology, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kilifi, Kwale, Laikipia, Mombasa, Nairobi, Nakuru, Narok on the topic: WORK-LIFE BALANCE PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: A CASE OF FIVE-STAR HOTELS IN KENYA. for the period ending : 03/July/2025.

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See overleaf for conditions

Appendix 6: Publications

This thesis has produced the following publications;

Kathukya, C. S., Mwangi , G., & Maundu, M. (2025). FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, A CASE OF FIVE-STAR HOTELS INKENYA. *African Journal of Emerging Issues*, *7*(7), 1–21.

Kathukya, C. S., Mwangi, G., Maundu, M. (2025). An Assessment of Corporate Wellness Programs on Employee Engagement in Five-Star Hotels in Kenya. *Journal of Human Resource Management*, *13*(2),3647. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.jhrm.20251302.12.