International Journal of Scientific and Management Research



Volume 07 Issue 12 (December) 2024 ISSN: 2581-6888

Page: 21-35

Relationship Between Work Life Balance Programs and Employee Retention in Consultancy Companies in Kenya: A Study of Consulting Firms in Nairobi County

Polycap Odhiambo^{1*}, James Gitari² & Lucinda Mugaa³

- ¹Master's Student, Cooperative University of Kenya
- ²Chief of Department School of Business and Economics, Cooperative University of Kenya
- ³Dean of Students, Cooperative University of Kenya, **Kenya**
- *Corresponding Author Polycap Odhiambo

DOI - http://doi.org/10.37502/IJSMR.2024.71202

Abstract

This study evaluates the relationship of work-life balance programs on employee retention within consultancy firms in Nairobi County, Kenya, focusing on firms primarily engaged in labor outsourcing. The objectives include examining the effects of wellness programs, hybrid working models, parental leave, and medical schemes on employee retention. The target population consists of 809 employees from four consulting firms in Nairobi. Using the census sampling method and Yamane formula, a sample size of 267 was determined, with 274 respondents participating. Data was collected through a structured quantitative survey and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multilinear regression via the Jamovi analysis system, validated using Microsoft Excel. The study identified significant correlations between work-life balance programs and employee retention, providing insights for developing strategies to enhance employee well-being and organizational performance. This research contributes to academic literature and the development of tailored work-life balance programs in Kenya.

Keywords- Work-life balance, employee retention, consultancy firms, wellness programs, hybrid working models, parental leave, medical schemes.

1. Introduction

Work-life balance has gained significant attention globally due to its profound effect on employee well-being, job satisfaction, organizational effectiveness, productivity, and employee retention. Employees spend much of their waking hours at work with an average of around 8-9 hours per day and 48 hours per week. It is estimated that the average person will spend one-third of their life at work. That's roughly 90,000 hours at work over your lifetime (Maria Van Deman, 2023). Work life balance is the art of balancing work and personal obligations (hobbies, family, etc.), i.e., balancing work and personal life (Ehiedu and Imoagwu, 2022). It is a mix of religion, leisure, and work-life, according to Ola, John, Simeon, and Mutiu (2019). All the above definitions emphasize that an employee must establish a balance and lack of establishing an equilibrium between work and personal life tends to develop stress in one or both areas (Werner, 2021).

In the 21st century, organizations globally have recognized the importance of integrating worklife balance programs to maintain a competitive edge and foster a supportive work environment. According to the International Labour Organization (2021), the increasing demands of the modern workplace have heightened the need for effective work-life balance strategies to reduce burnout and enhance job satisfaction. Companies in developed economies, such as the United States and European Union, have pioneered the implementation of flexible working hours, remote working options, and wellness programs to support their employees' well-being and productivity (Zaman et. al., 2021). A study by Aruldoss et al. (2021) emphasizes that work-life balance programs not only improve employees' quality of life but also contribute to organizational loyalty and reduced turnover rates in companies in India. These findings are corroborated by multiple multinational companies like Microsoft, Google, Toyota, CISCO, and Tesla, which report significant improvements in employee retention and overall organizational performance post-implementation of comprehensive work-life balance initiatives (Brown & Taylor, 2023). The pressure to meet demanding work expectations while managing personal and family responsibilities has led to increased stress, burnout, low levels of job satisfaction, and reduced employee retention (Irawanto, 2021). A study conducted in Malaysia by Terng & Ahmad (2021) revealed that employee performance is positively associated with various human resource management strategies, including training and development, compensation and benefits, performance appraisal, and work-life balance. Reports by PwC (2020), the World Health Organization (2022), Brough et al. (2020), Wood (2020) and Varga (2021) emphasize the importance of workplace wellness programs in reducing stress and improving employee health outcomes.

From an African context, the adoption of work-life balance programs has been slower compared to the developed world, yet it is gaining momentum (Ogomegbunam, 2023). The African Union's Agenda 2063 underscores the need for a holistic approach to employee wellbeing, recognizing the critical role of work-life balance in sustainable development and economic growth (AU Commission, 2021). Despite the challenges posed by limited resources and varying socio-economic conditions and cultural norms, several African countries have made strides in integrating work-life balance initiatives into their corporate cultures. A study by Ganiyu (2020) highlights the challenges and effectiveness of work-life balance programs in the manufacturing industry in South Africa. Nwagbara (2020) shares insight into the plight of Nigerian women caused by work-life imbalance. Ajayi (2024) reviews the employee wellbeing initiatives and how they support combating employee burnout in the IT industry in Nigeria. Employees are expected to put in long hours due to client demands, leading to burnout, reduced productivity, and negatively affecting their work-life balance. This highlights the influence that misalignment in work-life balance can have on individuals who are expected to be both providers and nurturers (Amah, 2021).

In Kenya, a rapidly developing country in East Africa, work-life balance has become a pressing concern. The local scenario presents unique challenges, such as cultural norms, societal expectations, and organizational policies that may hinder the achievement of work-life balance (Muasya, 2023). Employees in Kenya face the dilemma of juggling work responsibilities with family obligations, including caring for children and elderly family members (Akinyi, 2022). The struggle to balance these demands often results in increased stress, decreased job satisfaction, reduced productivity, and reduced employee retention. Rapid urbanization, technological advancements, and changing demographics have influenced work dynamics and employee expectations (Kabui, 2023). As the country experiences economic growth and increased job opportunities, the demand for work-life balance programs becomes more

pronounced (Kamwenji et al., 2023). Organizations are realizing the importance of attracting and retaining talented employees by offering flexible work arrangements, childcare support, and other work-life initiatives. However, there is a need to assess the effectiveness of these programs in the Kenyan context. Studies such as the one conducted by Chebet (2023) on work-life balance in the context of employee performance in TransNzoia County contribute to the understanding of local trends and the importance of addressing work-life concerns in Kenya. Despite the growing recognition of the importance of work-life balance, many organizations still struggle to provide comprehensive programs that meet the diverse needs of their employees. Striking a balance between the demands of work and personal life remains a challenge for both employers and employees in Kenya (Orwa, 2023).

Creating a beneficial work-life balance can lead to improvements in overall well-being which includes one's physical, mental, and emotional health. 72% of employees believe a healthy work-life balance is crucial. 78% of women say this balance is essential to career choices, compared to 67% of men. 25% of employees say they never or rarely take days off from work. 62% say they check work email outside of work hours. 77% of employees noted that they have experienced burnout at their current job. 61% of employees say that a negative work-life balance will stop them from taking a job offer (Geoff Whiting, 2024). The problem addressed in this study is the need to evaluate the effects of work-life balance programs on employee retention. In today's fast-paced and demanding work environment employees face challenges in balancing their professional responsibilities with personal and family commitments. This imbalance can lead to negative consequences, such as increased stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction, ultimately affecting employee retention rates. Work-life balance programs have emerged as a potential solution to mitigate these issues, aiming to create an environment that supports employees in effectively managing their work and personal lives. However, there is a need to assess the effectiveness of these programs in promoting employee retention (Mathew 2021).

Several studies have highlighted the importance of work-life balance in relation to employee well-being and retention. Turley et al (2022) emphasize the relevance of work-life balance in career decision-making, indicating its effect on employee retention. Managers and top-level authorities are constantly met with the issue of retaining employees, and there is a wealth of evidence that worldwide, retention of skilled employees has been of serious concern to managers in the face of ever-increasing high rate of employee turnover.

Furthermore, Gragnano (2020) highlights the relationship between work-family balance and mental health, underscoring the potential influence of work-life balance programs on employee well-being. These findings emphasize the need to evaluate the effects of work-life balance programs on employee retention. The role of organizational support in promoting work-life balance and its effect on employee retention cannot be understated. Arpino (2020) highlight the significance of workplace social support in mitigating work-family conflict, emphasizing the role of organizational support in promoting work-life balance. Insight is also given into the relationship between work-supportive family environments, family-supportive supervision, and employee well-being, further underscoring the importance of supportive organizational environments in fostering work-life balance and, consequently, employee retention. These findings highlight the need to assess the effectiveness of work-life balance programs in organizations and their effect on employees.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute to both academic research and practical implications for organizations, not only in Kenya but regionally and globally. From an academic perspective, evaluating the effects of work-life balance programs on employee retention adds to the existing body of knowledge on work-life balance, as well as the broader fields of organizational behavior and human resource management. By examining the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention, this study can provide empirical evidence and insights into the effectiveness of such programs, contributing to the theoretical understanding of work-life balance and its effect on employee retention.

Additionally, from a practical standpoint, the findings of this study can inform organizations' decision-making, and policies related to work-life balance initiatives. Understanding the effects of these programs on employee retention can help organizations develop and implement more effective work-life balance strategies that align with employee needs and preferences. The study can guide organizations in designing comprehensive work-life balance programs that address specific challenges faced by employees, ultimately enhancing their work experiences and overall satisfaction. This, in turn, can lead to increased employee retention rates, reduced turnover costs, and improved organizational performance.

Furthermore, the study's significance extends to its potential effect on employee well-being and work-life integration. Effective work-life balance programs can contribute to creating a supportive work environment that recognizes and accommodates the diverse needs of employees, fostering their overall well-being and satisfaction. This study has the potential to shed light on the specific factors within work-life balance programs that are most influential in promoting employee retention. Organizations can leverage these insights to design targeted interventions that prioritize employee well-being and improve work-life integration, creating a positive and productive work environment.

Lastly, the significance of this study lies in its applicability to the Kenyan context, contributing to the understanding of work-life balance issues specific to this country. Kenya, like many other countries, faces unique challenges and societal norms that influence work-life balance practices. Exacerbated by the current economic situation in the country, the study could not be more cognizant and relevant to the hardworking Kenyan working population. By conducting the study in Kenya, the findings will provide valuable insights and recommendations tailored to the local context, supporting organizations in developing culturally appropriate work-life balance programs and strategies. This localized approach is crucial in addressing the specific needs and concerns of Kenyan employees and promoting sustainable work-life balance practices in the country.

The scope of this study focuses on examining the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention within consultancy companies operating in Nairobi County in Kenya, specific focus on four consulting firms. The study aims to explore the extent to which work-life balance initiatives, such as wellness programs, hybrid working, parental leave and wellness schemes, influence employees' decisions to remain with their respective consultancy firms. The research encompassed a comprehensive analysis of the types of work-life balance programs implemented by the firms, the employees' perceptions of their effectiveness, and the correlation between program utilization and employee retention.

2. Materials and Methods

The literature review reveals several gaps justifying the need for this study on the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention in consultancy firms in Nairobi County. While global studies extensively document the positive impacts of work-life balance programs on employee well-being and retention, there is a notable scarcity of research focusing on the unique social, economic and cultural contexts of developing countries, particularly in Africa. Specifically, the adoption and effectiveness of such programs in Kenyan consultancy firms remain underexplored. Existing studies primarily emphasize developed western economies, leaving a gap in understanding how work-life balance initiatives can be tailored to fit the distinct needs of African and Kenyan employees. Additionally, the literature lacks comprehensive insights into the specific components of work-life balance programs—such as wellness programs, hybrid working arrangements, parental leave, and medical schemes—and their individual and combined effects on employee retention within the consultancy sector. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of work-life balance programs in enhancing employee retention in Nairobi's consultancy firms, thereby contributing to both academic knowledge and practical human resource management strategies in the Kenyan context.

The independent variables are wellness programs, hybrid working programs, parental leave and medical scheme. The dependent variable is employee retention. The diagram shows that the study is aimed at highlighting the relationship between all the independent variables and the dependent variable.

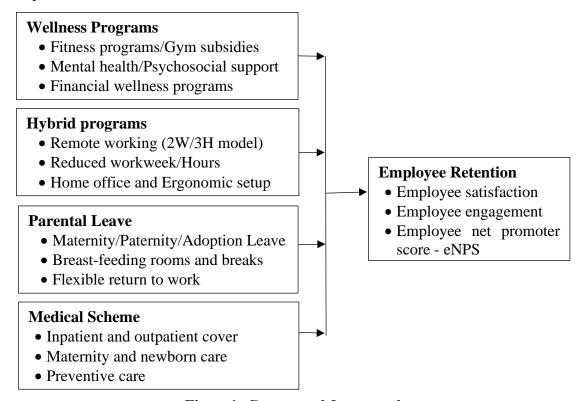


Figure1: Conceptual framework

Wellness programs include:

- Fitness programs/Gym subsidies. Physical fitness financial assistance or support for employees.
- Mental health/Psychosocial support. This includes confidential counseling services for employees.
- Financial wellness programs. These are guidance and resources to improve financial literacy and management e.g., trainings, access to financial institutions levied by the company e.g., banks, Saccos (Savings and Credit Cooperative) etc.

Hybrid programs include:

- Remote working (2W/3H model). This is where staff choose two days to work from the office and 3 days to work from home, allows employees autonomy over their working days.
- Reduced workweek/Hours. The company support staff to either work four days a week i.e., Monday-Thursday or there is a no-meetings rule on Friday.
- Home office and Ergonomic setup. The company facilitates the home office setup and provides them with ergonomics trainings to improve posture and reduce long-term physical strain.

Parental leave includes

- Maternity/Paternity/Adoption leave. This allows parents the time and opportunity to recover, adjust and bond with their child.
- Breast-feeding rooms and breaks. The company ensures that they have breastfeeding spaces and breaks at work for return-to-work mothers.
- Flexible return to work. This is a cushion post maternity leave through gradual hybrid placement to support adjustment back to work.

Medical scheme includes

- Inpatient and outpatient cover. Inpatient covers support with hospitalization charges. Outpatient covers support with hospital visits cost for employees.
- Maternity and newborn care. Maternity costs are incurred in pre-natal and during the delivery while newborn care is crucial once the baby is born.
- Preventive care. This is coverage for preventive services like vaccinations, screenings, and check-ups for employees. This is important for early detection and care of chronic diseases that can be huge financial burdens to employees.

Employee retention rates are measured through employee satisfaction ratings that are extracted from surveys, feedback mechanisms and exit interviews. Employee engagement is the emotional and psychological commitment employees have towards their organization, driving them to contribute enthusiastically to its goals, stay motivated, and go beyond their basic job responsibilities to achieve success. Employee net promoter score (eNPS) measures how likely employees are to recommend your company as a place to work to their social circles that is their family members and their friends.

This study employs a survey research design to evaluate the impact of work-life balance programs on employee retention within consulting firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. Survey research is instrumental in capturing a snapshot of a population's perspectives, as highlighted

by Yusoff et al. (2021). This methodology allows for the systematic, anonymous, and convenient collection of data, supporting quantitative analysis through statistical tools. The target population comprises 809 employees from four consulting firms, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention.

A census sampling strategy was employed to enhance precision in measuring the population. This method ensures accurate representation and equal chances for individuals within each stratum, maintaining the integrity of the sample (Johnson, 2019). The sample size, determined using the Yamane formula, resulted in 274 employees, ensuring a representative cross-section of the target population. Data was collected through a structured quantitative survey questionnaire, capturing employees' perceptions and experiences regarding work-life balance initiatives.

The questionnaire, divided into five sections corresponding to the research objectives, pursued an in-depth investigation into the dynamics of employee retention. These objectives included understanding the effects of wellness programs, hybrid working initiatives, parental leave, and medical schemes on employee retention. The preference for structured questionnaires stems from their objectivity, as they center on information, aligning with the research goals (Waworuntu, et al., 2022). Noteworthy advantages of employing questionnaires include the elimination of bias, confidentiality assurance, and the capacity to accumulate data from a broad and diverse spectrum, essential for a case study.

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics with the help of the Jamovi data analysis tool, enabling the researcher to achieve the study objectives. The findings were presented using tables, frequencies, and percentages. Regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention in consulting firms in Nairobi County. Regression helps to quantify relationships between independent and dependent variables, highlight key drivers, and determine model fit. The study applied the following regression model:

 $ER = \beta 0 + \beta 1X1 + \beta 2X2 + \beta 3X3 + \beta 4X4$

Where ER = Employee Retention

 $\beta 0$ = Intercept or the Correlation constant

 β 1, β 2, β 3, β 4, β 5 = Coefficients

X1 = Wellness programs

X2 = Hybrid working program

X3 = Parental leave

X4 = Medical scheme/cover

A pilot study was conducted involving randomly selected sample respondents who were not part of the final sample. Conducting a pilot study serves several critical purposes, including testing the research instruments to ensure questions are clear, understandable, and relevant to the study objectives (O'Neil 2022). This helps identify ambiguities or errors that could impact data quality. Additionally, it assesses the reliability and validity of the data collection tools,

ensuring consistent measurement of the intended variables (Clarke, 2019). The meticulous approach to reliability aligns with established research practices, assuring the trustworthiness of the conclusions drawn from the gathered data (Kumar, 2019). Ethical considerations were upheld throughout the research, including obtaining permission from the Cooperative University of Kenya School of Business and Economics and seeking consent from respondents to collect the necessary data. The researcher is dedicated to safeguarding the confidentiality and privacy of all collected data, limiting access to authorized personnel only, and using the data exclusively for academic purposes (Nii & Ogbewe, 2023).

3. Results

The data analysis for this study was conducted using Jamovi software, with further validation using Microsoft Excel's data analysis tools. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and their participation in various work-life balance programs. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and multiple regression, were employed to examine the effects of wellness programs, hybrid working models, parental leave, and medical schemes on employee retention.

The study achieved a response rate of 102.6%, with 275 respondents completing the survey out of an expected 268. This high response rate enhances the study's robustness and validity, as response rates above 70% are generally regarded as excellent for representativeness (Lindemann, 2021). The gender distribution of respondents showed that 63.87% were male and 36.13% were female, reflecting the gender composition within consulting firms in Nairobi County. This suggests a need for greater gender inclusivity in such firms to provide deeper insights into the unique challenges faced by women in this sector.

Reliability tests were conducted to ensure the consistency of the data collection tools. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency, with a score of 0.9579 indicating very high reliability. This high reliability score confirms that the survey items exhibit strong internal consistency, minimizing measurement errors and boosting the overall credibility of the research findings (Ahmed et al., 2022).

The analysis of wellness programs revealed a mean score of 3.546, with 37% of female and 46% of male employees agreeing that the programs are sufficient and influence their decision to remain with the company. However, 29% of female and 19% of male employees disagreed. Hybrid working programs had a mean score of 3.389, with 41% of female and 46% of male employees agreeing that these programs are sufficient and influence their retention. Parental leave had a mean score of 3.876, with 62% of female and 59% of male employees agreeing that the leave policies are sufficient and influence their decision to stay. Medical schemes had a mean score of 3.879, with 62% of female and 56% of male employees agreeing that the schemes are sufficient and influence their retention. Employee retention had a mean score of 3.85, with 59% of both female and male employees agreeing that they are satisfied and engaged at their workplace.

Correlation analysis showed that gender has a low positive correlation with employee retention (r=0.1014). Wellness programs have a moderate positive correlation with employee retention (r=0.5720) and a strong positive correlation with hybrid working programs (r=0.7095). Hybrid working programs have a moderate positive correlation with employee retention (r=0.5802) and a strong positive correlation with parental leave (r=0.6938). Parental leave has a moderate

positive correlation with employee retention (r=0.5962) and a strong positive correlation with medical schemes (r=0.7268). Medical schemes have the strongest positive correlation with employee retention (r=0.6393).

The multiple regression analysis indicated a strong positive correlation between the observed and predicted values of the dependent variable, with a Multiple R of 0.7167. The model explains 51.37% of the variation in the dependent variable, with a low standard error of 0.6641 suggesting a better fit. This comprehensive analysis provides valuable insights into the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention in consultancy firms in Nairobi County.

The ANOVA analysis revealed a high F-statistic (56.62), indicating that the independent variables are jointly significant in explaining employee retention. The P-value (4.914*10-40) is much less than 0.05, confirming the regression model's statistical significance. The intercept (β 0) has a coefficient of 0.8170, with a t-Stat of 3.770 and a P-value of 0.0002, indicating it is statistically significant.

Gender has a coefficient of 0.1847, a t-Stat of 2.257, and a P-value of 0.0248, showing it significantly influences employee retention. Wellness Programs (WPs) have a coefficient of 0.1918, a t-Stat of 3.169, and a P-value of 0.0017, indicating a strong and significant effect on retention. Hybrid Working Programs (HWPs) have a coefficient of 0.092, a t-Stat of 1.45, and a P-value of 0.147, suggesting a weak and non-significant effect. Parental Leave (PL) has a coefficient of 0.1946, a t-Stat of 2.379, and a P-value of 0.018, indicating a significant impact. Medical Schemes (MS) have the strongest effect with a coefficient of 0.3011, a t-Stat of 4.799, and a P-value of 2.647*10-6, showing a highly significant positive impact on employee retention.

The regression equation is Employee retention = 0.817 + 0.1918X1 + 0.0923X2 + 0.1946X3 + 0.3011X4.

4. Discussion

This study aimed to evaluate the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention within consultancy firms in Nairobi County, Kenya. The study targeted four consulting companies whose primary revenue source is labor outsourcing. The target population was 809, with an estimated sample size of 267. However, the actual sample included 274 respondents, resulting in a response rate of 102.6%. Of the respondents, 36.13% were female, and 63.87% were male. Four independent variables were measured, each with three components:

- 1. Wellness programs: fitness programs/gym subsidies, mental health/psychosocial support, and financial wellness programs.
- 2. Hybrid working programs: remote working (2 days in the office and 3 days working from home), reduced workweek/hours, and home office & ergonomic setup.
- 3. Parental leave: maternity/paternity/adoption leave, breastfeeding breaks & rooms, and flexible return to work.
- 4. Medical schemes: inpatient and outpatient cover, maternity and newborn care, and preventive care.

Employee retention, the dependent variable, was measured using metrics of employee satisfaction, employee engagement, and employee net promoter score.

Although not one of the independent variables, gender analysis showed it significantly influences employee retention. The results indicated that wellness programs are statistically significant and positively influence employee retention. Hybrid working programs also showed a positive correlation with employee retention. However, multiple regression analysis revealed that hybrid working programs are not statistically significant, suggesting they do not significantly influence employee retention in this model. Parental leave demonstrated a moderate positive correlation with employee retention and was statistically significant, indicating it impacts employee retention. Medical schemes had the strongest positive correlation with employee retention. Multiple regression analysis showed that medical schemes had the strongest effect among the independent variables, meaning they are highly statistically significant and have a significant positive impact on employee retention. This supports Bharath (2023), who highlighted the importance of benefits beyond paychecks in boosting employee retention.

The findings from this study reveal several key insights into the relationship between work-life balance programs and employee retention in consultancy companies in Nairobi County, Kenya. Firstly, gender, while not a primary independent variable, shows a statistically significant impact on employee retention, suggesting that gender plays a modest but notable role in retention. Wellness programs exhibit a positive and statistically significant influence on retention, indicating a strong correlation with employee retention. Conversely, hybrid working programs, while showing a positive correlation, are not statistically significant in the regression analysis. This suggests that hybrid working does not significantly influence retention in this context. Parental leave demonstrates a moderate positive correlation and a statistically significant impact on retention, highlighting its importance in fostering employee retention. Medical schemes have the strongest correlation with employee retention and a highly significant p-value, underscoring their critical role in retaining employees.

Some of the recommendations form the study are that to improve employee retention, consultancy companies in Nairobi County should implement gender-specific strategies, such as gender sensitivity training and mentorship programs. This could involve creating more inclusive work environments and addressing any gender-specific challenges that may affect employee satisfaction and retention. Enhancing wellness programs with mental health support, fitness initiatives, and stress management workshops can also boost employee retention. Optimizing hybrid working arrangements by combining them with flexible hours and remote work resources, along with clear communication, can help. Companies might need to combine hybrid working with other retention strategies to see a more substantial effect. Expanding parental leave policies to be generous and flexible for both parents, and providing additional support for returning parents, is crucial. Companies should consider providing adequate parental leave to support employees with families, which can enhance loyalty and reduce turnover. Strengthening medical schemes to cover a wide range of health services, including preventive care and mental health support, is essential. The strong correlation between medical schemes and retention indicates that comprehensive medical benefits are crucial for retaining employees. Companies should ensure that their medical schemes are competitive and meet the needs of their employees to maintain high retention rates. Regular employee feedback and engagement through surveys and feedback sessions should inform policy decisions, while offering clear career progression paths and professional development opportunities can further enhance retention.

There are suggestions for future studies or research. This study showcased four independent variables; future research could explore more areas to enhance employee retention strategies in consultancy companies. Investigating gender-specific factors can help develop targeted strategies that address unique challenges faced by different genders. Longitudinal studies on wellness programs would provide insights into their long-term impact on employee well-being and retention. Exploring various hybrid working models and diverse parental leave policies could identify the most effective approaches. Researching the relationship between comprehensive medical schemes, their long-term effects, and employee health outcomes can further inform policy decisions. Considering cultural factors within Nairobi County and Kenya in general would provide a more nuanced understanding of local dynamics. Comparative studies across different industries could identify best practices and innovative approaches for enhancing employee retention in consultancy companies.

Declaration of Interest Statement

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented in any other university for award of any other degree.

Disclosure Statement

The author(s) declares no financial interests, commercial relationships, professional affiliations, or legal obligations that could be perceived as influencing the research presented in this manuscript.

References

- 1) Ahmad, R., Nawaz, M. R., Ishaq, M. I., Khan, M. M., & Ashraf, H. A. (2023). Social exchange theory: Systematic review and future directions. Front. Psychol, 1-13. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1015921.
- 2) Ahmed, V., Olanipekun, A., Opoku, A., & Sutrisna, M. (2022). Understanding reliability in research. In Validity and Reliability in Built Environment Research (pp. 3-15). Routledge.
- 3) Ajayi, F. A., & Udeh, C. A. (2024). Combating burnout in the IT Industry: A review of employee well-being initiatives. International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences, 6(4), 567-588.
- 4) Akinyi, E. (2022). Influence of employee breaks on employee motivation in Rongo university, Kenya.
- 5) Amah, O. E., & Ogah, M. (2021). Work-life integration in Africa: A multidimensional approach to achieving balance. Springer Nature.
- 6) Arpino, B., & Luppi, F. (2020). Childcare arrangements and working mothers' satisfaction with work–family balance. Demographic Research, 42, 549-588.
- 7) Aruldoss, A., Kowalski, K. B., & Parayitam, S. (2021). The relationship between quality of work life and work-life-balance mediating role of job stress, job satisfaction and job commitment: evidence from India. Journal of Advances in Management Research, 18(1), 36-62.
- 8) AU Commission. (2021). Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. African Union.

- 9) Bharath, M. (2023). Something beyond paycheque to boosting employee retention: evidence from a South Indian hospital. Vilakshan-XIMB Journal of Management, 20(1), 114-129.
- 10) Brough, P., Timms, C., Chan, X. W., Hawkes, A., & Rasmussen, L. (2020). Work–life balance: Definitions, causes, and consequences. Handbook of socioeconomic determinants of occupational health: From macro-level to micro-level evidence, 473-487.
- 11) Chebet, L. N., & Awino, M. (2023). Effect of Work life balance on Employee Performance in Trans Nzoia County Government, Kenya. Journal of Business, Economics and Management Research Studies, 1(1), 1-8.
- 12) Clark, L. A., & Watson, D. (2019). Constructing validity: New developments in creating objective measuring instruments. Psychological Assessment, 31(12), 1412–1427. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1037/pas0000626.
- 13) Ehiedu, V., & Priscilla, I. C. (2022). Effect of corporate diversification strategies on the financial performance of industrial goods in Nigeria. International Journal of Applied Research in Social Sciences, 4(8), 293-305.
- 14) Ganiyu, I. O., Fields, Z., Atiku, S. O., & Derera, E. (2020). Measuring the effectiveness of work-life balance strategies in the manufacturing sector. SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 18(1), 1-10.
- 15) Geoff, Whitting (2024). Work-Life Balance Statistics for 2024: A Global Perspective. https://hubstaff.com/blog/work-life-balance-statistics/
- 16) Gragnano, A., Simbula, S., & Miglioretti, M. (2020). Work-life balance: weighing the importance of work-family and work-health balance. International journal of environmental research and public health, 17(3), 907.
- 17) International Labour Organization. (2021). The Future of Work: A Global Perspective on Work-Life Balance.
- 18) Irawanto, D. W., Novianti, K. R., & Roz, K. (2021). Work from home: Measuring satisfaction between work-life balance and work stress during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Economies, 9(3), 96.
- 19) Johnson, A. H., & Cook, B. G. (2019). Preregistration in single-case design research. Exceptional Children, 86(1), 95-112.
- 20) Kabui, P. N. (2023). Work Life Balance And Employees'job Performance In Commercial Banks In Nyeri County, Kenya (Doctoral Dissertation, Kenyatta University).
- 21) Kamwenji, R. W., Ngugi, P. K., & Kamaara, M. (2022). Work-Life Balance Benefits and Employee Performance in the State Corporations in Kenya. Human Resource and Leadership, 2(1), 38-46.
- 22) Kumar, R. (2019). Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- 23) Lindemann, M. (2021). Slow History. The American historical review, 126(1), 1-18.
- 24) Maria Van Deman (2023). https://officeinsight.com/concurrents/the-90000-hour-challenge-finding-our-why-in-the-daily-grind. (November, 2023).
- 25) Mathew, O., Jeremiah, K. M., & Ursulla, O. (2021). Influence Of Work-Life Balance Practices On Teachers'levels Of Job Satisfaction In Public Secondary Schools In Nairobi, Kenya. Journal of Pedagogy, Andragogy and Heutagogy in Academic Practice, 2(2), 79-97.

- 26) Muasya, G. (2023). Traditional and Contemporary Perspectives of Work-Life Balance Research and Practices: A Case of Kenya. In Work-Life Balance in Africa: A Critical Approach (pp. 87-108). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- 27) Nii Laryeafio, M., & Ogbewe, O. C. (2023). Ethical consideration dilemma: systematic review of ethics in qualitative data collection through interviews. Journal of Ethics in Entrepreneurship and Technology, 3(2), 94-110.
- 28) Nwagbara, U. (2020). Institutions and organisational work-life balance (WLB) policies and practices: Exploring the challenges faced by Nigerian female workers. Journal of Work-Applied Management, 12(1), 42-54.
- 29) Ogomegbunam, O. A. (2023). Work-Life Balance Practices And Employees' performance: A Correlational Survey Of Commercial Banks In Delta And Bayelsa States, Nigeria. International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research, 5(3), 158-174.
- 30) Ola, O. O., John, W. O., Simeon, O. A., & Mutiu, O. A. (2019). Impact of work life balance on the social life of workers living in Lagos metropolitan borders. Annals of Contemporary Developments in Management & HR (ACDMHR) Vol., 1, 50-59.
- 31) O'Neill, B. (2022). Sample size determination with a pilot study. PLoS One, 17(2), e0262804.
- 32) Orwa, P. A. (2023). Relationship between work-life balance practices and employee performance in Homa bay county teaching and referral hospital, Kenya (Doctoral dissertation).
- 33) PwC. (2020). The Future of Remote Work.
- 34) Terng, L. C., & Ahmad, N. (2021). The Relationship Between Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Performance. Research In Management Of Technology And Business, 2(1), 123-136. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.30880/rmtb.2021.02.01.009
- 35) Turley, R., Roberts, S., Foster, C., Warner, N., El-Banna, A., Evans, R., ... & Scourfield, J. (2022). Staff wellbeing and retention in children's social work: Systematic review of interventions. Research on Social Work Practice, 32(3), 281-309.
- 36) Varga, S., Mistry, T. G., Ali, F., & Cobanoglu, C. (2021). Employee perceptions of wellness programs in the hospitality industry. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 33(10), 3331-3354.
- 37) Waworuntu, E. C., Kainde, S. J., & Mandagi, D. W. (2022). Work-life balance, job satisfaction and performance among millennial and Gen Z employees: a systematic review. Society, 10(2), 286-300.
- 38) Werner, S., & Balkin, D. B. (2021). Strategic benefits: How employee benefits can create a sustainable competitive edge. The Journal of Total Rewards, 30(1), 8-22.
- 39) Wood, J., Oh, J., Park, J., & Kim, W. (2020). The relationship between work engagement and work—life balance in organizations: A review of the empirical research. Human Resource Development Review, 19(3), 240-262.
- 40) World Health Organization. (2022). WHO guidelines on mental health at work. World Health Organization.
- 41) Yusoff, M. S. B., Arifin, W. N., & Hadie, S. N. H. (2021). ABC of questionnaire development and validation for survey research. Education in Medicine Journal, 13(1).

42) Zaman, S. S. Y. K., Arokiasamy, L., & Abd Hamid, Z. (2021). A study on factors influencing employee retention in the pharmaceutical industry in Malaysia. Electronic Journal of Business and Management, 6(1), 81-89.

Tables

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of individual wellness program questions.

Description	Qn 1	Qn 2	Qn 3	Qn 4	Qn 5	Qn 6
Mean	3.197	3.106	3.682	4.131	3.690	3.471
Standard Error	0.088	0.088	0.081	0.068	0.076	0.077
Median	3.5	3	4	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	5	5	4	4
Standard Deviation	1.449	1.455	1.344	1.121	1.259	1.276

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of individual hybrid working program questions.

Description	Qn 7	Qn 8	Qn 9	Qn 10	Qn 11	Qn 12
Mean	3.544	3.865	3.018	3.325	3.230	3.354
Standard Error	0.093	0.083	0.088	0.087	0.088	0.0844
Median	4	4	3	4	4	4
Mode	5	5	2	4	4	4
Standard Deviation	1.541	1.377	1.449	1.445	1.453	1.3968

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of individual parental leave questions.

Description	Qn 13	Qn 14	Qn 15	Qn 16	Qn 17	Qn 18
Mean	4.464	4.026	3.639	3.423	3.901	3.803
Standard Error	0.043	0.054	0.077	0.076	0.06	0.068
Median	5	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	5	4	5	4	4	4
Standard Deviation	0.716	0.887	1.274	1.256	0.988	1.125

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of individual medical scheme questions.

Description	Qn 19	Qn 20	Qn 21	Qn 22	Qn 23	Qn 24
Mean	4.088	3.777	3.945	3.785	3.869	3.810
Standard Error	0.061	0.068	0.06	0.067	0.068	0.068
Median	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4	4	4	4
Standard Deviation	1.009	1.128	0.995	1.103	1.128	1.126

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of individual employee retention questions.

Description	Qn 25	Qn 26	Qn 27
Mean	3.606	3.993	3.953
Standard Error	0.066	0.056	0.058
Median	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4
Standard Deviation	1.095	0.934	0.954

Table 6: Correlation among the variables.

Variable	Gender	WPs	HWPs	PL	MS	ER
Gender	1					
WPs	0.0747	1				
HWPs	-0.0038	0.7095	1			
PL	-0.0026	0.4719	0.6938	1		
MS	-0.0320	0.5698	0.5728	0.7268	1	
ER	0.1014	0.5720	0.5802	0.5962	0.639	1

Table 7: Regression statistics

Multiple R	0.7167
R Square	0.5137
Adjusted R Square	0.5046
Standard Error	0.6441
Observations	274

Table 8: ANOVA analysis

ANOVA	Df	SS	MS	F	Significance F
Regression	5	117.4488	23.4898	56.6151	4.91425E-40
Residual	268	111.1940	0.4149		
Total	273	228.6427			

Table 9: Multilinear regression results

Variables	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	0.8170	0.2167	3.7704	0.0002
Gender (M)	0.1847	0.0818	2.2572	0.0248
WPs	0.1918	0.0605	3.1695	0.0017
HWPs	0.0923	0.0552	1.6737	0.0954
PL	0.1946	0.0818	2.3793	0.0180
MS	0.3011	0.0627	4.7994	2.6472E-06