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INFLUENCE OF WELFARE AMENITIES ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE. A CASE OF SELECTED HOTELS IN BUSIA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of welfare amenities on employees' performance in selected hotels in Busia County. Data was collected from managers/supervisors, cooks and housekeeping staff. The study adopted a correlational design to examine the association between employee welfare and employee performance in the hospitality industry. This was then approached through purposive sampling technique .One hundred and fifty four questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in which one hundred and fifty were returned dully filled with a response rate of 94%. Data was analyzed using SPSS software, Version 27. A combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques was applied to ensure a comprehensive interpretation of the collected data. The findings of this study provided sufficient evidence that employee welfare amenities significantly impact employee performance. However, provision of adequate working space (as an amenity) did not show any statistically significant effect on revenue growth. Employers should therefore provide protective clothing, adequate restrooms, clean water amongst other welfare amenities to their staff to achieve higher performance of their employees.

KEY WORDS: *Welfare, Amenities, Employees, Performance, Hotels,*

INTRODUCTION

Welfare amenities have proved to contribute greatly to good performance of employees in any given organization. Employee welfare is aimed at enhancing the quality of life in terms of physical, mental and social wellbeing leading to job satisfaction. The International Labor Organization (ILO, 2018), refers welfare as a range of services, facilities, and amenities that are provided within or near workplaces to create a healthy, comfortable, and supportive environment that promotes employee well-being and morale.

According to Hughes and Ferrett (2016), welfare facilities include essential provisions such as access to clean drinking water, adequate heating and lighting, changing areas, seating arrangements where necessary, dining and rest areas, and first-aid facilities. They further posit that these provisions are crucial in maintaining employees' health and comfort, thereby contributing to job satisfaction that leads to overall productivity.

Welfare programs are also known to play a critical role in fostering a harmonious workplace by improving productivity, ensuring employee satisfaction, and strengthening interpersonal relationships within an organization (Cole, 2019). A well-structured welfare system not only benefits employees but also contributes to the organization's long-term success by creating a motivated and engaged workforce.

Employee Welfare and Productivity

Employee productivity can be enhanced through measures directed towards their health, safety, and welfare (Tiwari, 2014). The implementation of different welfare programs by an organization has an immediate positive impact on the employee's health, mental and physical well-being, attention, morale, satisfaction and overall productivity, leading to an increase in the performance. Harika (2019) argues that the presentation of these activities to employees is crucial for their success. Welfare policies grounded in idealistic morality and human values should provide a comprehensive range of services aimed at enhancing employees' well-being and quality of life. These policies should include access to medical facilities to ensure workers receive proper healthcare, as well as the provision of sanitary conditions to maintain hygiene and prevent workplace-related illnesses. Adequate housing for employed workers should also be considered to promote a stable and comfortable living environment (Harika, 2019)

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Employees' Challenges to Productivity

Employees face significant risks due to inadequate protective clothing, which compromises their health and increases their vulnerability to occupational illnesses such as flu, chest pains, and respiratory infections. The absence of proper protective gear exposes them to hazardous work environments, where they may come into contact with harmful substances, extreme temperatures, or airborne contaminants. Hughes and Ferrett (2016) posit that prolonged exposure to such conditions heightens the risk of workplace injuries and contributes to chronic health problems that can affect employees' long-term well-being. This results to employees' increased visits to workplace clinics and healthcare facilities. This, in turn, results in higher absenteeism rates as affected employees take time off for treatment and recovery. Alli (2018) highlights that the reduction in active work hours disrupts workflow efficiency, lowers productivity levels, and places additional strain on the remaining workforce, who may need to compensate for absent colleagues. Furthermore, frequent health-related absences contribute to increased operational costs for employers, including medical expenses, compensation claims, and potential declines in overall workplace morale (International Labour Organization, 2019).

Welfare Initiatives and Productivity

To mitigate these risks, organizations must prioritize the provision of adequate protective clothing, rest rooms and personal protective equipment (PPE) suited to specific workplace hazards. Implementing strict adherence to occupational health and safety (OHS) regulations, conducting regular safety training, and ensuring routine equipment inspections can significantly reduce workplace risks (World Health Organization ,2015). By fostering a safe and healthy work environment, employers can enhance employee well-being leading to job satisfaction, minimize absenteeism, and sustain higher levels of productivity and operational efficiency. Furthermore, the lack of protective clothing negatively impacts employee morale, as workers may feel undervalued or unsafe in their work environment. This, in turn, reduces their motivation and willingness to perform their duties effectively. A demoralized workforce is less productive, leading to inefficiencies and potential disruptions in operations due to dissatisfaction. As Katsuro et al. (2017) highlight, ensuring that employees are adequately protected with proper clothing and equipment is essential for maintaining workplace efficiency, safeguarding health, and enhancing productivity. The multiple welfare initiatives provided by the company will directly influence employees' well-being, physical and mental capacity, alertness, morale, and general effectiveness, which will result in increased output (Waititu, Kihara & Senaji, 2017).

Waititu et al. (2017) suggest that the full implementation of welfare programs in contemporary workplaces can lead to expected benefits such as enhanced employee performance due to good health, job satisfaction, improved morale, reduced stress and burnout among employees, and an overall increase in organizational productivity. According to Keitany (2014), implementing employee welfare programs boosts an organization's productivity, encourages motivation, and fosters strong organizational relationships, all of which help to keep the workplace peaceful and keep employees on board for a longer period of time.

According to Weldon and Muathe (2014), the implementation of employee welfare programs in modern workplaces can result in various benefits, such as improved employee productivity due to good health, higher morale, reduced stress and burnout among employees, and increased productivity of the organization.

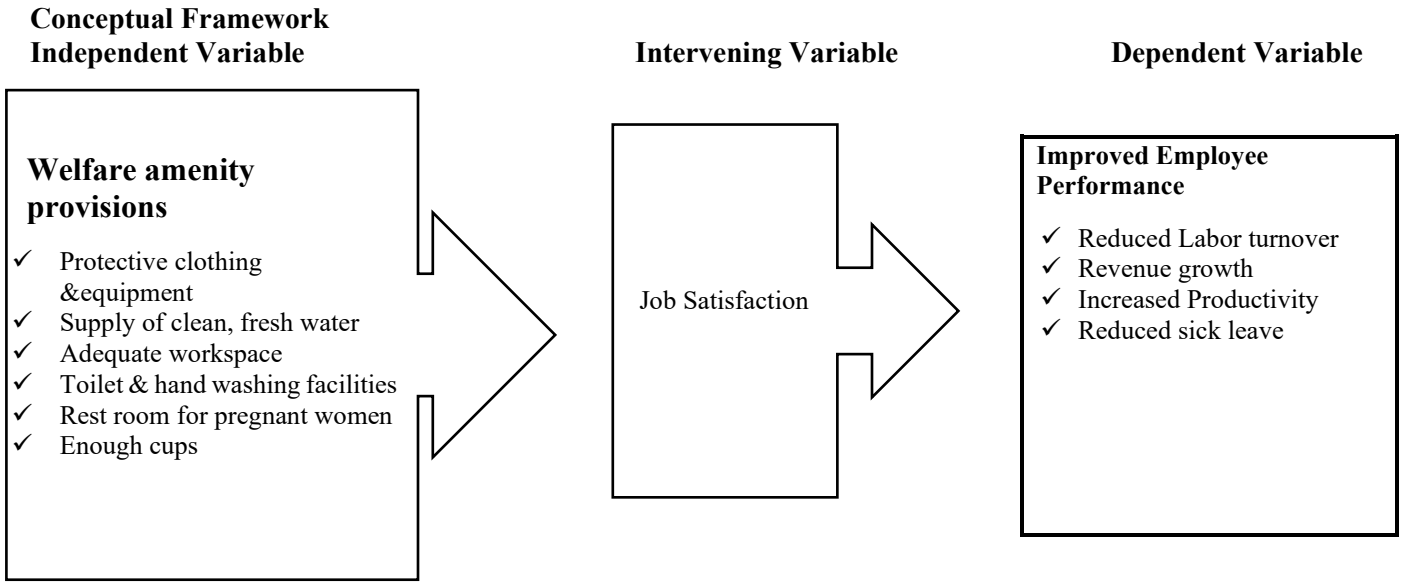


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework. Source: Author (2023)

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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a correlational design to examine the association between employee welfare and employee performance in the hospitality industry. The design was particularly suitable as it allowed for the exploration of these relationships without manipulating any variables, ensuring an objective assessment of existing workplace dynamics (Orodho, 2013).

Target Population

This study focused on managers and supervisors, who play a crucial role in implementing employee welfare programs and training, as well as cooks in the food and beverage sector and housekeeping staff in selected hotels across Busia County. By targeting this population, the study aimed to comprehensively evaluate employee welfare, within the hospitality industry.

Table 1: Target population

Category of staff	Target population	Sample size	Percentage (%)
Hotel Managers/supervisors	50	21	13.6%
Food & beverage staff (cooks)	100	67	43.5%
Housekeeping staff	100	66	42.9%
Total	**250**	**154**	**100%**

Source: Author (2023)

Sampling Procedures and Techniques

To identify the study sites, purposive sampling was utilized. This method allowed the researcher to deliberately select hotels that aligned with the study's objectives, ensuring the inclusion of establishments that provided relevant insights into occupational health and safety practices.

To ensure a diverse and representative sample of hotel employees, probability sampling techniques were applied. Stratified sampling was first used to categorize participants into distinct subgroups based on department (food and beverage or housekeeping) and job designation (managers/supervisors, cooks, and housekeepers). This approach ensured adequate representation of different employee cadres, enhancing the validity and reliability of the study.

Within each stratum, simple random sampling was then employed to select participants.

Sample Size

The sample size of seven hotels out of the 14 establishments were selected representing 50% of the total (7/14 × 100 = 50%). These were the hotels that were ready to give out information. These were also hotels that offered amenities to their employee making them suitable for the study.

The sample size of respondents was established using Sample size table based on the Yamane

Formula (1967). With a Confidence Level of 95% and P=0.5, the ±5% precision level was chosen to ensure a high level of accuracy in the results, given the manageable size of the Population. The sample size was 154 (Table 1).

Construction of Research Instruments

Questionnaire was constructed based on the study objective which was to examine the influence of welfare amenities on staff performance. Instructions for completing individual sections appeared at the beginning of the questionnaire. The questionnaire had structured questions inform of a Likert scale that ranging from 1-5. 5- Strongly agree, 4 – Agree, 3 – Neutral, 2 – Disagree and 1 strongly disagree.

Testing for Validity and Reliability

Validity

In this study, content validity was employed to determine whether the research instrument effectively captured important aspects of welfare amenities in the hospitality industry. To establish content validity, the study relied on expert evaluations from the hotel management experts. This rigorous validation process enhanced the accuracy and reliability of the study, making the findings more applicable to real-world settings.

Reliability

The reliability of respondents' answers to all the items were measured using Cronbach alpha (measure of internal consistency). This was done to determine whether all responses given were consistent.

The results are indicated in table 2.

Table 2: Test of Reliability

Scale	Cronbach Alpha	Items
Welfare amenity provision and employee performance	0.848	6
Employee Performance Indicators	0.782	4
Average (Scale)	**0.815**	**10**

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The average Cronbach Alpha value, 0.815 indicates that the tool was informative sufficient in collecting the required information. This was greater than the minimum 0.6.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Quantitative primary data was collected using questionnaires that were filled by managers/supervisors, cooks and housekeeping employees whereas secondary data was obtained from journals and internet.

The method of 'Drop and Pick' was employed, where the researcher dropped the self-administered questionnaire to respondents in the two departments (housekeeping and food and beverage) of these hotels. The researcher instructed respondents on how to complete the surveys and the deadline for filling them. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a consent letter.

Data Analysis techniques and procedures

Data analysis for this study was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software, Version 27. Descriptive techniques was applied to ensure a comprehensive interpretation of the collected data. The results were presented in form of bar charts and tables to enhance data visualization and interpretation. Inferential statistical methods were also utilized to establish relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Specifically, the Chi-Square test was employed to determine the significance of associations between categorical variables, helping to assess whether the observed relationships were statistically meaningful. This analytical approach allowed the researcher to draw valid conclusions and provide evidence-based recommendations based on the study's findings. By integrating both descriptive and inferential statistics, the study ensured a rigorous examination of data patterns, trends, and correlations, contributing to the overall reliability and validity of the research outcomes

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Response Rate

Table 3: Response Rate

Instrument	Number Targeted	Actual Number received	Percentage Response rate
Questionnaire	154	150	94.7%

The study attained a response rate of 94.7%, with only four questionnaires not returned by respondents. As noted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), a response rate of 70% or higher is deemed excellent for survey research. This high response rate ensures the adequacy of the data for analysis and interpretation, thereby enhancing the reliability and generalizability of the findings. Consequently, the results effectively capture the perspectives of the target population

Welfare Amenity Provisions and Employee Performance

i. Provision of protective Clothing and Equipment

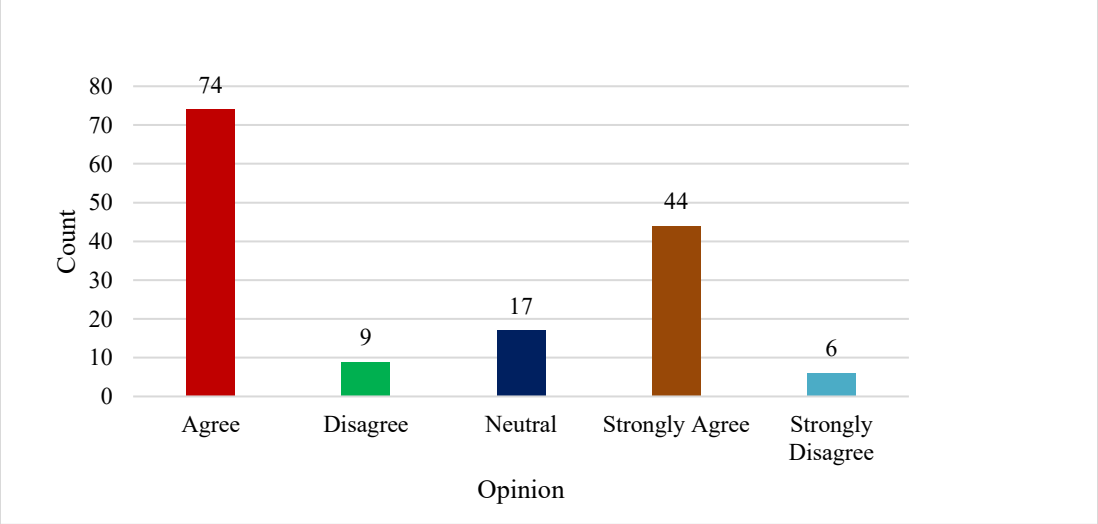


Figure 2: Provision of protective Clothing, Rest rooms & Hand washing Facilities, cups and other Equipment

The majority of respondents indicated that they were provided with protective clothing, rest rooms with hand washing facilities, cups and other equipment with 74 (49.3%) respondents agreeing and 44 (29.3%) strongly agreeing. This suggests that a significant proportion of employees felt adequately equipped with the necessary protective gear. However, a small number of respondents 6 (4%) strongly disagreed, indicating that some employees may have experienced inconsistencies or gaps in the provision of protective equipment. These findings highlight the general availability of protective measures while also pointing to

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the need for further assessment to ensure uniform distribution and accessibility for all employees.

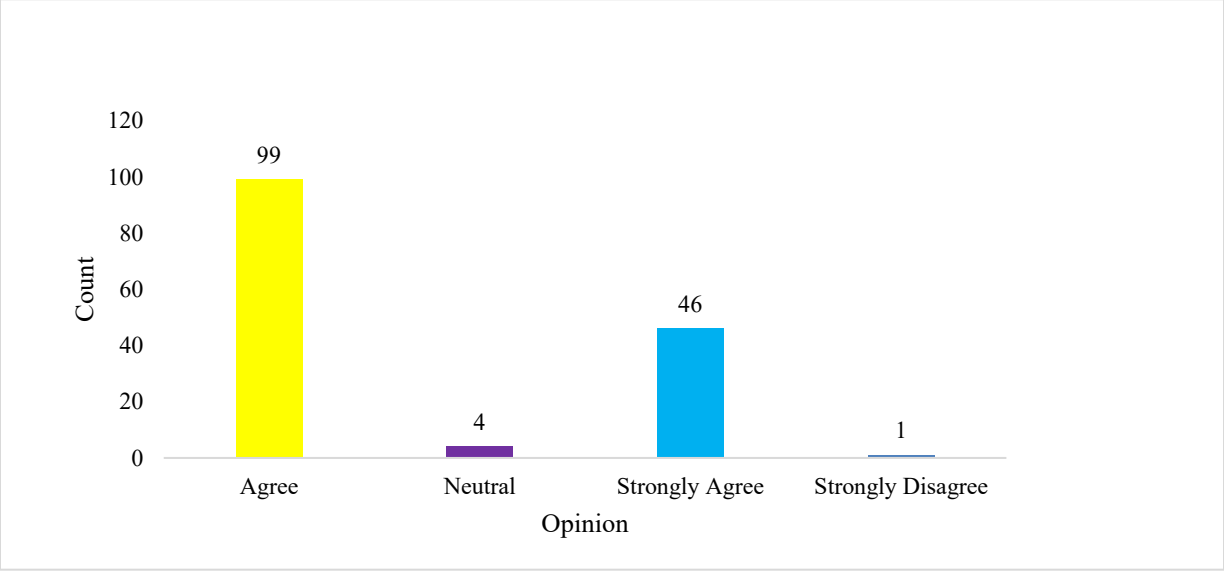


Figure 3: Provision of Clean, Fresh, Wholesome Drinking Water

From the figure above, most respondents (99) agreed and strongly agreed (46) that they are provided with clean, fresh wholesome drinking water. Only 1 respondent strongly disagreed.

The correlation between Provision of Clean, Fresh, Wholesome Drinking Water and employees' performance was guided by the following null hypothesis;

H_{01} there is no significant relationship between clean water provisions and employee sick leave.

Table 4: The association between Provision of Clean Water and Employees Sick leave

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.948[a]	12	.045
Likelihood Ratio	16.475	12	.170
Linear-by-Linear Association	.028	1	.868
N of Valid Cases	150		

To understand how provision of clean water influences the employee's health and corresponding sick leaves frequency, a chi-square test of independence was fitted. From the results, majority of the employees who agreed that they are provided with clean drinking water also agreed that there have been reduced cases of sick leave in their working areas. From the chi-square results, the corresponding chi-square value was 20.948; with a p-value is 0.045, less than alpha value 0.05. Therefore, the study reveals that by providing employees with clean water, this improves their health status, thereby reducing frequency of sick leaves significantly.

Adequate Working Space

Similarly, out of the total employees and managers surveyed, majority 130 (87%) agreed and strongly agreed that they were provided with clean water for drinking. Only 5 (3%) out of total respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed to the statement.

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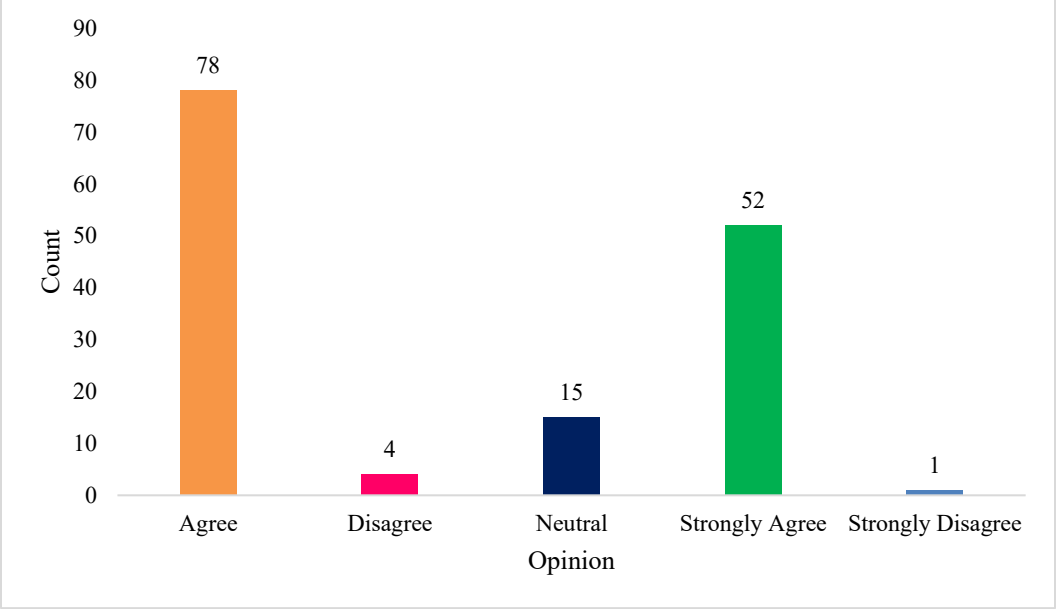


Figure 4: Adequate Working Space Provided

Majority of the employees included in the study agreed that they were provided with adequate working space. Only a few stated that their working space was inadequate.

An association between adequate working space and increased revenue growth was also sort using the following null hypothesis;

H_{01} there is no significant relationship between working space and revenue growth

Table 5: Association between Adequate Working Space and Increased Revenue Growth

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	11.264[a]	16	.793
Likelihood Ratio	12.880	16	.681
N of Valid Cases	150		

From the above table, p-value is 0.793, greater than alpha value 0.05. This implies that provision of adequate working environment in these hotels does not necessarily lead to increased revenue growth.

DISCUSSION

The majority of 118 (78.6%) indicated that they were provided with protective clothing, adequate rest rooms with hand washing facilities, cups and other equipment. Provision of employees welfare amenities make them willing and open to accomplishing their jobs. This leads to higher growth in productivity which leads to improved performance (Raziq and Maulabakhsh, 2015). Provision of adequate welfare amenities is also related to increase of workers confidence and morale which leads to positive work environment (Hanifeez *et al.,* 2019).Positive work environment leads to improvement in work performance

The researcher also sort to find out the association between provision of clean drinking water and reduction of sick leave. Clean water remains a necessity in any working place including hotels. To understand how provision of clean water influences the employee's health and corresponding sick leaves frequency, a chi-square test of independence was fitted. From the results, majority of the employees who agreed that they are provided with clean drinking water also agreed that there have been reduced cases of sick leave in their working areas. From the chi-square results, the corresponding chi-square value was 20.948; with a p-value is 0.045 < alpha value 0.05. Therefore, the study revealed that by providing employees with clean water, this improves their health status; thereby reducing frequency of sick leaves significantly which in turn increases productivity. This means the null hypothesis is rejected. These findings are consistent with Tiwari's (2014) study on employee welfare activities and their influence on employee efficiency at Rewa. Tiwari concluded that management should prioritize the provision of adequate facilities to employees to enhance productivity, job satisfaction, performance levels, and overall organizational profitability. Ensuring that employees receive adequate protective clothing and supportive equipment not only contributes to their safety and well-being but also fosters a more motivated and efficient workforce, ultimately benefiting the organization's operational success.

The researcher also wanted to establish whether adequate working space led to increased revenue growth. Majority of the respondents agreed that they were provided with adequate

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working space. Only a few stated that their working space was inadequate. From the findings, p-value was 0.793 > than alpha value 0.05. This implies that provision of adequate working space in these hotels does not necessarily lead to increased revenue growth. This means that there is no relationship between the two, hence null hypotheses was accepted. This aligns with Vischer (2005) who asserts the working space can be used to modify employees' behavior but can also involve pitfalls including territoriality and disturbed productivity. However the study of Augustine (2014) pointed to positive influence of workspace provision relating to mood, engagement performance and productivity of employees. His study was echoed by Shellenberger (2011) who also found out that working space had great impact on increased employee productivity which leads to increased revenue.

In general, the findings of this study provided sufficient evidence that employee welfare amenities significantly impact employee performance. Welfare amenities, such as clean drinking water, sanitary restrooms, well-ventilated working spaces, medical support services, and recreational facilities, contribute to the physical and mental well-being of employees. Organizations that invest in employee welfare tend to experience higher job satisfaction, increased retention rates, and improved motivation levels, all of which contribute to higher productivity and service delivery. Employees who feel valued by their employers are likely to exhibit higher levels of engagement, commitment, and loyalty, reducing turnover and associated recruitment costs. Workplace welfare amenities are critical in ensuring employee well-being, reducing absenteeism, and promoting job satisfaction, all of which enhance employee performance and contribute to overall organizational success.

CONCLUSIONS

The study examined the relationship between welfare amenities and employee performance. The study showed that a significant proportion of employees (78.6%) felt adequately equipped with the necessary protective gear. The findings also indicated that the provision of clean water had a significant impact on reducing sick leave (p-value = 0.045), suggesting that improved hygiene and hydration positively influenced employee health and attendance, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. However, the availability of adequate working space did not show a statistically significant effect on revenue growth (p-value = 0.793), implying that other factors might have a stronger influence on financial performance, this lead to acceptance of the null hypothesis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- All hotels should provide adequate personal protective equipment, clean wholesome water to their employees.
- Wellness programs which include counselling services which can improve emotional resilience

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