

WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAMS AND EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN KILIFI COUNTY ASSEMBLY, KENYA

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**International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration
(IAJHRBA) | ISSN 2518-2374**

Received: 15th September 2025

Published: 4th October 2025

Full Length Research

Available Online at: https://iajournals.org/articles/iajhrba_v5_i1_266_283.pdf

Citation: Mgoriama, S. K., Ng'eno, W. K. (2025). Workplace wellness programs and employee motivation in Kilifi County Assembly, Kenya. *International Academic Journal of Human Resource and Business Administration (IAJHRBA) | ISSN 2518-2374*, 5(1), 266-283.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effect of workplace wellness program on employee motivation in Kilifi County Assembly, Kenya, focusing on recreational program and financial wellness programs. Low levels of motivation among public servants, including those in Kilifi County Assembly, were attributed to a lack of investment in workplace wellness initiatives. The primary objectives of the research were to assess the impact of these programs on employee motivation using the theory of self-determination. The study employed a descriptive research design, targeting a population of 133 employees with a sample size of 54 respondents, representing 40% of the target population. Stratified sampling was used, and the primary data collection tool was a questionnaire, which was distributed and collected using a drop-off and pick-up method. A pilot test of the research instrument was conducted with six respondents in the Lamu County Assembly.

The gathered data underwent inferential statistical analyses, with results presented in tables, figures, and pie charts. The findings revealed that recreational programs significantly enhanced employee motivation by fostering teamwork, reducing stress, and improving workplace culture. Although drug and substance abuse cessation programs promoted healthier lifestyles, their direct impact on motivation was less pronounced. Correlation and regression analyses confirmed the critical role of recreational while the influence of cessation programs was more limited. The study concluded that workplace wellness programs were vital for enhancing employee motivation and recommended enhancing recreational activities, integrating cessation programs with broader wellness initiatives, and expanding financial wellness strategies.

Keywords: Recreational Programs, Drug and Substance Abuse Cessation Programs and Employee Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, workplace wellness programs have evolved into all-inclusive programs aimed at improving employee health, productivity, and motivation. These programs frequently consist of employee support programs, exercise centers, mental health resources, and preventive health screenings. Berry et al. (2020) claim that the focus on well-being stems from the understanding that contented and healthy workers boost output, lower absenteeism, and save money on healthcare over the long run. The adoption of workplace wellness initiatives in developed countries is indicative of a broader movement toward holistic workplace well-being, which recognizes the importance of employees to the success of the company (Cvenkel, 2020). These initiatives create a supportive atmosphere for mental and emotional health in addition to improving physical health, which makes the workforce more resilient.

Workplace wellness initiatives are becoming more popular in developing countries like Brazil and India as businesses realize how important employee motivation and health are. These programs frequently cover a wider range of health concerns, such as nutrition, maternal health,

and infectious diseases (Weziak-Bialowolska *et al.*, 2020). Businesses are coming to understand that economic growth depends on having a healthy workforce, and wellness initiatives help create a more engaged and effective staff. A paradigm shift in organizational thinking is shown in the increasing adoption of workplace wellness initiatives in developing countries, which recognize the critical role that employee well-being plays in boosting motivation and productivity (Sorensen *et al.*, 2021). In line with the particular socioeconomic difficulties that these areas experience, these initiatives go beyond conventional health treatments to address a broader range of health issues, including infectious diseases, maternal health, and nutrition (Weziak-Bialowolska *et al.*, 2020).

As businesses realize the direct connection between worker well-being and overall productivity, workplace wellness initiatives are becoming more and more significant in Asian countries. In nations like Singapore, South Korea, and Japan, the importance of creating a healthy workplace has increased. According to Le *et al.* (2020), workplace wellness initiatives in these Asian countries frequently target certain health issues that are common in the area, such as stress reduction, preventative healthcare, and work-life balance initiatives. As the business environment in Asia changes, businesses are coming to understand that spending money on the motivation and well-being of their employees not only increases output but also supports the organization's resilience and long-term success.

Workplace wellness is becoming a focal point in Africa as businesses understand how it shapes and influence the motivation of employees as well as the organizational success. Countries like Nigeria, Ghana, and Ethiopia are witnessing the integration of wellness programs into corporate cultures (Van *et al.*, 2020). Unique health challenges in Africa, such as infectious diseases and access to healthcare, contribute to the design of targeted wellness interventions to address specific regional needs. Workplace wellness is emerging as a central concern for businesses, recognizing its profound influence on employee motivation and the overall success of organizations. As the corporate landscape evolves, companies are recognizing that investing in the well-being of their workforce yields substantial returns, not only in terms of productivity but also in fostering a positive organizational culture and attracting top talent (Batool *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, the implementation programs for wellness within a workplace in Africa shows a shift towards a more holistic approach to employee welfare, encompassing mental, physical and emotional wellness.

In Sudan, workplace wellness programs are emerging as a recognized and crucial component of organizational strategies targeted at improving employee health and motivation. As the nation focuses on economic development and the growth of its workforce, there is an increasing realization that a healthy and motivated workforce is pivotal for sustained productivity. Workplace wellness programs in Sudan may address a range of health concerns, including access to healthcare resources, mental health support, and efforts to promote a positive work environment (Abu-Agla, 2020). As Sudan navigates its economic landscape, the integration of wellness programs reflects a global trend where nations, regardless of their developmental status, prioritize the holistic well-being of their workforce for enhanced workplace performance and overall societal progress.

Within the East African region including Tanzania, and Uganda, workplace wellness programs are gaining traction. Organizations in these countries are increasingly implementing programs that focus on both physical and mental well-being. Health screenings, fitness challenges, and mental health support are becoming common features of workplace wellness strategies (Muthuri *et al.*, 2020). Collaborations with local health authorities and community engagement are key components of these programs. By forging partnerships with relevant stakeholders, organizations can leverage local expertise and resources to develop contextually relevant wellness programs that resonate with the diverse needs of their workforce (Bryant, 2024). The approach of collaboration fosters ownership and inclusivity over and above enhancing the effectiveness of wellness programs within the broader community. As workplace wellness continues to gain prominence in the East Africa region, businesses are poised to gain through a healthier, happier, and more engaged workforce, contributing to overall socio-economic development and prosperity in the region.

In Kenya, a pivotal player in the East Africa (EA) region, workplace wellness programs continue to align with the country's economic growth trajectory. Organizations across key cities such as Nairobi, Mombasa, and Kisumu are increasingly recognizing the correlation between a healthy workforce and enhanced productivity. These programs are specifically tailored to address prevalent health challenges in the Kenyan workforce, ranging from communicable diseases to lifestyle-related issues, as highlighted by Bosire *et al.* (2021). Kenyan companies are investing in wellness programs that not only mitigate health risks but also promote a positive work culture, as part of a holistic approach to the well-being of the employees.

The commitment to workplace wellness in Kenya extends beyond individual organizations, with the government and industry associations actively playing a role in promoting these programs as a strategic imperative (Muthuri *et al.*, 2020). Recognizing the impact of a healthy workforce on the nation's economic development, the Kenyan government has advocated for the integration of wellness programs in both private and public sectors. The proliferation of workplace wellness programs in county governments further shows the widespread acknowledgment of their significance in fostering a thriving and resilient workforce across diverse sectors in Kenya. This collective effort reflects the global trend where nations recognize the vital role of employee well-being in achieving sustained economic progress and overall societal advancement (Queen *et al.*, 2019).

In Nakuru, a key urban centre in Kenya, workplace wellness programs are becoming integral to the local business landscape, aligning with the broader national trend. As the county capital of Nakuru County, the city plays a crucial role in the economic development of the region. Organizations in Nakuru are recognizing the significance of employee health and motivation in contributing to both individual and collective success. Workplace wellness programs in Nakuru address health challenges specific to the local workforce, creating tailored programs that consider the unique needs of the community (Githatu, 2022). This local focus reflects a commitment to fostering a positive work environment that transcends urban and rural

boundaries, contributing to the overall well-being of Nakuru's workforce and contributing to the economic growth of the region.

Kilifi county government is one of the authorities that has invested in workplace wellness program. This public enterprise has taken a holistic approach to wellness whereby it has focused its efforts on the physical wellness through facilities such as gymnasiums. This county government has also ventured into emotional/personal wellbeing by allowing some of the employees to have flexible working hours, among other programs (Sospeter & Onkware, 2023). The study sought to examine whether these programs contribute to employee motivation.

Employee Motivation

According to Girdwichai and Sriviboon (2020), employee motivation involves the psychological processes that energize, direct, and sustain employees' behaviour towards accomplishing tasks and fulfilling organizational objectives. Kuswati (2020) defines employee motivation as the observable actions and behaviours demonstrated by individuals within the workplace that indicate their level of engagement, effort, and commitment towards their job responsibilities. Employee motivation is also conceptualized as a set of strategies, policies, and practices implemented by employers to foster a positive work environment conducive to inspiring and empowering employees (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Within the context of workplace wellness, employee motivation involves several key elements and this include health and well-being programs, work-life balance, job engagement and fulfilment, along with supportive work environment (Yousaf, 2020). Under health and well-being programs, employee motivation is linked to the availability and effectiveness of wellness programs. Contentment arises when employees have access to programs promoting physical and mental health.

Wellness programs that allow flexibility, remote work options, and support for personal commitments are factors influencing motivation (Muwanguzi *et al.*, 2022). On the aspect of job engagement and fulfilment, employee motivation is intertwined with job engagement and fulfilment. Opportunities for skill development, career advancement, and meaningful work contribute to a sense of accomplishment. Employee motivation in this study will be measured using the metric of retention and turnover rates. Higher retention rates and lower turnover are often associated with a satisfied and engaged workforce. This can be attributed to the workplace wellness program, which this study seeks to determine whether these two relate.

Workplace fitness and exercise programs encourage physical activity among employees. These may include on-site fitness classes, gym memberships, or organized group activities like walking or running clubs (Cheon *et al.*, 2020). The aim of such programs is to promote physical health, reduce sedentary behaviours, and enhance overall fitness levels among employees. On the other hand, nutrition education programs provide employees with information and resources to make healthier food choices. Healthy eating activities may involve workshops, seminars, or the promotion of nutritious food options in workplace cafeterias (Wolfenden, & Yoong, 2021). The objective of nutrition education programs is to improve dietary habits, raise awareness about nutrition, and support healthier food choices.

Statement of the Problem

There are notably low levels of employee motivation in Kilifi County government, contributing to widespread dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and disengagement among employees. This lack of motivation can be attributed to the absence of workplace wellness programs. Kilifi County Assembly has been grappling with these issues, as reflected in their position in the Infotrak (2019) report, where they were ranked 11th in the Consolidated MCA's approval rating. Additionally, a survey conducted by the Kilifi Human Resource Office (2022) revealed that 65% of county employees reported feeling demotivated at work, and 58% admitted to frequently considering absenteeism due to workplace dissatisfaction. Furthermore, the same survey indicated that only 20% of employees felt engaged in their roles, highlighting a significant disengagement problem. The absence of workplace wellness programs has led to 72% of employees reporting high stress levels and 60% experiencing burnout (KIPPRA, 2023). The employees are struggling with their well-being, making it difficult for them to effectively advocate for the rights of the electorates.

Previous studies, such as those by Afif *et al.* (2023) and Nor *et al.* (2023), focused on general factors affecting employee motivation without specifically addressing the role of workplace wellness programs. This current study targeted to fill this gap by examining the effects of workplace wellness programs on employee motivation in the specific context of Kilifi County Assembly. By focusing on this unique setting, the research sought to deepen the understanding of the challenges and dynamics affecting employee motivation within the county assembly structure.

Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following specific objectives

1. To determine the effects of recreational programs on employee motivation in Kilifi County Assembly, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

An overview of the theoretical and empirical studies on workplace wellness programs and employee motivation is elucidated. A conceptual model illustrates the association between the independent and dependent variables are also presented. The literature review is summarized below.

Theoretical Review

The study was anchored on the theory illustrated below:

Theory of Self Determination

In 1985, psychologists Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan put out the notion of self-determination, which states that people have inherent psychological demands for relatedness, competence, and autonomy. When these requirements are satisfied, people are more likely to feel motivated, healthy, and able to perform at their best. This theory has significantly contributed to our understanding of human behavior and motivation, serving as a framework

for various psychological studies and interventions aimed at promoting positive outcomes in individuals' lives.

However, despite its contributions, the theory of self-determination has faced criticism for its limited consideration of cultural diversity. Critics argue that the theory's development within a Western cultural context may lead to overlooking variations in cultural values, norms, and social structures that influence individuals' perceptions and satisfaction of psychological needs. This constraint emphasizes the significance of taking cultural elements into account when comprehending human motivation and behavior, prompting academics and practitioners to embrace a more culturally attuned approach when applying the theory.

Furthermore, another criticism revolves around the theory's potential overemphasis on autonomy as a universal psychological need. In certain cultural contexts or interpersonal relationships, prioritizing autonomy may clash with communal or collective values, creating tensions between individual autonomy and social interconnectedness. Recognizing and addressing these tensions is crucial for a more nuanced understanding of human motivation across diverse cultural settings, prompting researchers to explore the interplay between autonomy and social connectedness in shaping individuals' well-being.

Additionally, critics contend that the theory of self-determination tends to neglect the influence of external factors on individuals' motivation and behaviour. By focusing primarily on internal psychological processes, the theory may overlook the impact of social, economic, and environmental factors that constrain individuals' ability to fulfil their psychological needs. This highlights the importance of considering broader contextual factors, such as systemic inequalities and institutional barriers, in understanding and addressing motivational challenges faced by individuals in various settings. Integrating external factors into the theoretical framework can enhance its applicability and effectiveness in promoting well-being and optimal functioning among diverse populations. This theory was used to link the recreational programs and its effects on employee motivation. Recreational programs offer employees the freedom to choose activities they enjoy (autonomy), allow them to develop new skills (competence), and promote social interaction with colleagues (relatedness). By meeting these psychological needs, recreational programs enhance intrinsic motivation among employees in Kilifi County Assembly.

Empirical Literature

Empirical Review

This section covers a review of literature outlining previous studies that were done per each study objective. This can be presented as follows.

Recreational Programs and Employee Motivation

Bocean *et al.* (2023) employed a quantitative survey using structured questionnaires administered to employees before and after the implementation of recreational programs. The survey assesses changes in motivation levels, job satisfaction, and perceived well-being. The study targeted employees from various organizations in Nairobi, including government offices,

private companies, and non-profit organizations. The study found a significant increase in employee motivation levels following the implementation of recreational programs. Participants reported higher job satisfaction, improved morale, and better overall well-being. This research had a methodological gap in that it used a quantitative survey to assess changes in motivation levels, job satisfaction, and perceived well-being before and after the implementation of recreational programs. However, the current study employed a mixed-methods, combining surveys, interviews and focus groups. This allowed for a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms driving the observed changes in motivation and well-being among County Assembly employees.

Strassburger *et al.* (2023) conducted qualitative interviews with employees participating in recreational programs to explore their experiences, perceptions, and the impact of these programs on their motivation. The target population for this research included employees from the tourism industry in Brazil. Qualitative analysis revealed that recreational programs provided employees with opportunities for relaxation, socialization, and stress relief. Participants expressed increased motivation, job satisfaction, and a sense of belonging within their organizations. The evident gap in this research is on the contextual relevance. This study focused on the tourism industry in Brazil, which may have different cultural, organizational, and structural dynamics compared to County Assemblies in Kilifi County, Kenya. The current study will fill in this gap by providing insights specifically tailored to the context of County Assemblies, taking into account their unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities.

Zhao *et al.* (2024) did a longitudinal study conducted over six months, tracking changes in motivation levels among employees before, during, and after participating in recreational programs in China. Information was gathered by means of questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and meetings with focus groups. People working for different Chinese government agencies, universities, and businesses made up the study's target demographic. The study found a sustained improvement in employee motivation over the study period, with participants reporting increased engagement, productivity, and job satisfaction attributed to regular participation in recreational activities. The evident gap between this study and the current study is on cross-cultural comparison. Even though both studies examined the impact of recreational programs on employee motivation, the cultural context and organizational settings differ between China and Kenya. The current study could contribute to the literature by comparing the findings with those from Zhao *et al.* to identify similarities, differences, and potential cultural factors that influence the effectiveness of workplace wellness programs across diverse contexts.

Employee Motivation

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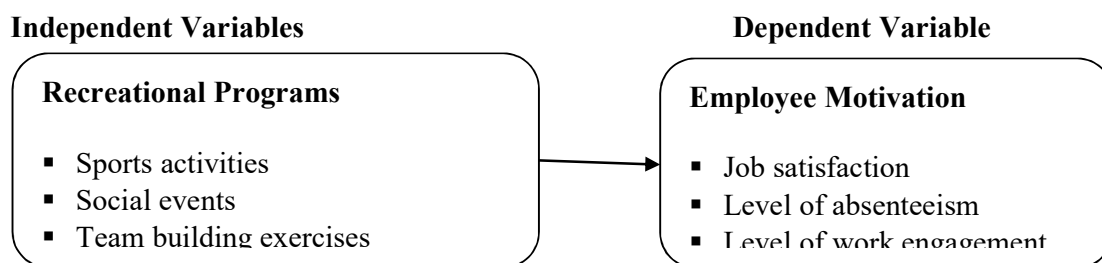
practices implemented by employers to foster a positive work environment conducive to inspiring and empowering employees (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). Within the context of workplace wellness, employee motivation involves several key elements and this include health and well-being programs, work-life balance, job engagement and fulfilment, along with supportive work environment (Yousaf, 2020). Under health and well-being programs, employee motivation is linked to the availability and effectiveness of wellness programs. Contentment arises when employees have access to programs promoting physical and mental health.

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Conceptual Framework

This research, just like any other research, has both the independent and the dependent variables. The main independent variable in this research is workplace wellness programs, its sub-variables and respective components are recreational programs (sports activities, social events, team building exercises) drug and substance abuse cessation programs (awareness campaigns, counselling sessions, support groups). On the other hand, the independent variable is employee motivation. Employee motivation in this research is represented by job satisfaction, level of absenteeism and level of work engagement.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design, utilizing questionnaires to gather participants' thoughts, ideas, and insights. A key advantage of this approach was its capacity to examine study variables in their natural state without manipulation, which was essential to the research objectives. To ensure robust findings, this study integrated both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the research outcomes. The target population comprised of 133 employees at the Kilifi County Assembly inclusive of Clerk 1, deputy clerk 1, directors 5, principal officers 11, and others 115 (Kilifi County, 2024). To determine a representative sample, the study employed a stratified sampling technique to select participants. The research applied the formula proposed by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), which recommends a sampling range of 10% to 40% for populations under 10,000. Adopting the upper threshold of 40%, the study selected a total of 54 employees from the Kilifi County Assembly as respondents.

To collect data, the study adopted a structured questionnaire as the primary data collection tool, ensuring alignment with the research objectives. The instruments were tested in Lamu County through a pilot study to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of the research methodology. Six employees from the Lamu County Assembly were selected to participate in this preliminary assessment. The pilot findings indicated that the questionnaire was effective, with questions clearly articulated and relevant to the research goals. Based on participant feedback, minor refinements were made to improve question clarity and optimize data collection. The results confirmed the instrument's reliability and suitability for deployment in the main study.

Visual representations such as figures, tables, and charts accompanied the results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the acquired data. The quantitative data collected were analysed using SPSS version 26, and the conclusions were displayed as frequencies and percentages. Additionally, hypothesis testing and the degree of correlation were determined through regression analysis.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The study sampled 54 respondents and feedback received from 42 respondents which formed the basis of the analysis. This translated into a response rate of 77.8% and a non-response rate of 22.2%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), suggests that a response rate of 50% may be considered sufficient while an RR of 60% is considered favourable. Thus, the response rate of 77.8% obtained in this study was appropriate and acceptable for the investigation. Data on distribution of the respondents in terms of their sex indicated that 22 (52.4%) of the total respondents were male while the remaining 20 (47.6%) were female. The observed near parity in gender participation ensured that the perspectives and experiences of both male and female employees was adequately captured hence contributing to an in-depth understanding of the impact of workplace wellness programs on employee motivation.

Descriptive Statistics

Recreational Programs and Employee Motivation

The outcome of the analysis on the effects of recreational programs within the Kilifi County assembly are shown in Table 1. From the analysis, 28.6% of the respondents noted that recreational programs enhanced staff improved morale at work. An equal percentage (28.6%) of the respondents noted that such programs had the additional effect of better overall wellbeing and higher job satisfaction. This implied that respondents widely recognized multiple benefits of the recreational programs, with morale improvement being a significant outcome. Better overall well-being was also a notable response, representing 26.2% of the total, highlighting the programs' positive impact on employees' general health and satisfaction. A small portion of the respondents (11.9%) chose none of the above, implying that some the employees did not perceive these programs as impactful. A paltry 4.7% were of the view that recreational programs had the effect of higher job satisfaction, which may indicate that while job satisfaction is influenced, other benefits may be more pronounced.

Table 1 Effect of recreational programs

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Improved morale	12	28.6
Better overall well-being	11	26.2
Higher job satisfaction	2	4.70
All of the above	12	28.6
None of the above	5	11.9
Total	42	100

Source: Research Data (2024)

The foregoing discussion reveals that recreational programs have a wide range of benefits to employees with improved morale and overall well-being being particularly prominent. These findings are in agreement with reports by Akmal et al (2012) and Mercanoğlu *et al* (2023) who observed that recreational programs enhanced job satisfaction and improved employee productivity at the workplace.

The investigation on the extent of employee participation and active social engagement revealed that up to 81% of the staff participated in the existing recreational programs at the Kilifi County as illustrated in the pie chart in Figure 4.1. This indicates a positive reception and active involvement in the facilities provided. However, 19% of the respondents (8) indicated that there was no increase in participation, suggesting that there may be barriers or gaps preventing full engagement. The mean and standard deviation regarding the two statements under recreational programs were calculated and tabulated below in line with the five-point Likert Scale and are shown in Table 4.4

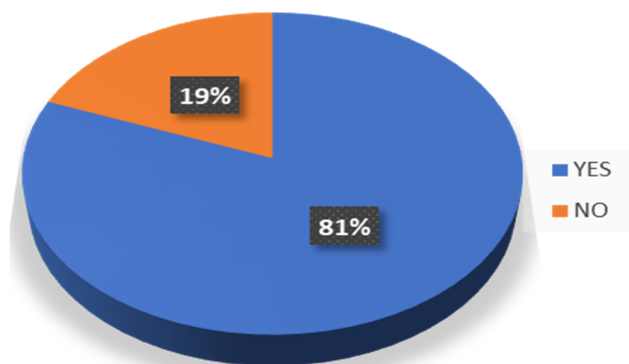


Figure 1. Increased staff participation and social engagement in recreational facilities.

Source: Research Data (2024)

Table 2 Recreational programs responses

Recreational Programs	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Recreational programs are associated with greater job satisfaction, lower stress levels, and stronger bonds with colleagues.	42	3.83	1.248
Assembly provides employees with opportunities for relaxation, socialization, stress relief, and enhanced a sense of belonging within their organizations.	42	3.62	1.306

Source: Research Data (2024)

The descriptive statistics revealed key insights into employees' perceptions of recreational programs and their influence on motivation within the county assembly. The findings indicate that these programs are positively associated with higher job satisfaction, reduced stress levels, and improved interpersonal relationships among staff, as confirmed by the mean score of 3.83 (SD = 1.248). Furthermore, respondents acknowledged that recreational initiatives provide opportunities for relaxation, socialization, stress relief, and a sense of belonging, as per the mean score of 3.62 (SD = 1.306). These results are consistent with reports by Suwal and Uprety (2023) and Osborne and Hammoud (2017) in which the authors reported a positive relationship between recreational activities and overall staff performance. Moreover, the findings of this study also revealed some variations in perceptions regarding the benefits derived from recreational programs. These variations in perception were linked to individual differences or contextual factors.

A significant proportion of respondents agreed that recreational programs enhance motivation by fostering a sense of community, promoting work-life balance, and improving overall job satisfaction. Many noted that these initiatives facilitate informal interactions, helping to resolve workplace misunderstandings and strengthen collegial relationships. Additionally, respondents highlighted that recreational activities alleviate the monotony of routine tasks, reduce stress, and boost morale—factors that ultimately contribute to increased productivity. Similar sentiments were echoed in Grant & Parker, 2022 in which the authors emphasized a balance between work and recreational activities in alleviating monotony originating from and repetitive tasks at the workplace.

Moreover, employees emphasized that recreational programs cultivate teamwork, collaboration, and a cohesive workplace culture. Several respondents reported feeling more valued and less prone to burnout, underscoring the role of such initiatives in enhancing overall well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Moreover, these programs were seen as instrumental in balancing work and personal responsibilities, which is critical for sustaining a healthy and motivated workforce (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

While some respondents noted that the effectiveness of recreational programs may depend on workplace culture and implementation strategies, the majority affirmed their significant positive impact on motivation and engagement. Lastly, by fostering interpersonal connections, mitigating stress, and cultivating a supportive work environment, recreational programs are crucial for enhancing employee satisfaction and productivity within the county assembly (Kreiner *et al.*, 2015).

Inferential statistics

Correlation analysis

This analysis presents a detailed evaluation of the relationships between the workplace wellness programs and employee motivation in Kilifi County Assembly, Kenya, in alignment with the objectives of the study. Firstly, the analysis revealed a positive correlation between recreational programs and staff motivation ($r = 0.858$, $p < 0.05$), implying that recreational programs play a substantial role in enhancing employee motivation. This supports the first objective, highlighting the importance of such programs in boosting workplace morale and productivity. Secondly, the analysis revealed a weak relationship between drug and substance abuse cessation programs and staff motivation ($r = 0.240$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting a minimal impact in this area. This indicates that while these programs are relevant, they might not be as influential in driving employee motivation as other factors, addressing the second objective with nuanced findings.

The study also revealed a positive relationship between recreational programs and employee motivation ($B = 0.382$, $\beta = 0.492$, $p < 0.02$), confirming their substantial impact in enhancing employee well-being. This observation agrees with Bocean *et al.* (2023), who found increased motivation, job satisfaction, and well-being following the implementation of recreational programs. However, Bocean's study employed a quantitative-only approach, whereas the current research integrates qualitative insights for a deeper understanding of the mechanisms driving these outcomes, addressing a methodological gap.

Table 4:1: Correlation analysis

		Correlations		
		RP	D&SACP	EM
RP	Pearson correlation	1	0.174	0.858**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.271	0
	N	42	42	42
EM	Pearson Correlation	0.858**	0.24	1.0
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.127	
	N	42	42	42

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

KEY

RP - Recreational Programs; EM - Employee Motivation

Source: *Research Data (2024)*

Similarly, Strassburger *et al.* (2023) found recreational programs beneficial for stress relief and socialization in the Brazilian tourism industry. However, differences in cultural and sectoral dynamics between Brazil and Kilifi County necessitate localized insights, as provided by the current study. Zhao *et al.* (2024) also reported sustained improvements in motivation linked to recreational activities in China, but cross-cultural differences highlight the unique contribution of the current study in tailoring recommendations for the Kenyan context. Moreover, Bruhn *et al.* (2023) demonstrated the role of recreational programs in fostering community and work-life balance in Sweden's equine sector, further validating the global relevance of recreational programs while emphasizing the need for contextual adaptation, as done in this study.

Sospeter and Iteyo (2023) found qualitative evidence of improved motivation and well-being among employees in Mombasa after completing cessation programs. However, their focus was narrower compared to the broader workplace wellness context examined in the current study, highlighting the need for comprehensive strategies. Similarly, Valente *et al.* (2023) observed sustained motivation improvements in Kisumu, but the geographical differences between Kisumu and Kilifi show the importance of local context in interpreting program effectiveness. Lastly, Ghodse and Galea (2023) and Kun *et al.* (2023) demonstrated the benefits of cessation programs in Europe and India, respectively, yet their sectoral and cultural focus differs from the county assembly setting, further validating the unique contributions of the current study.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The study concludes that employee motivation in Kilifi County Assembly is influenced by recreational programs, drug and substance abuse cessation programs. Recreational programs were found to enhance motivation by fostering teamwork, reducing stress, and promoting a sense of belonging, which contributes to improved productivity and job satisfaction. While their effectiveness may vary based on individual perceptions, these programs help in creating a cohesive workplace culture. Similarly, drug and substance abuse cessation programs contribute to healthier lifestyles and better focus among employees, though their direct impact

on motivation appears limited. Their effectiveness can be enhanced by integrating them with other wellness initiatives and providing tailored support to address employee needs comprehensively.

Recommendation of the Study

Ultimately, this study proposes policies meant to improve employee motivation and well-being by addressing key factors such as recreational engagement and substance abuse prevention. These recommendations are designed to guide organizations in creating supportive work environments that foster productivity, job satisfaction, and long-term employee retention. By implementing targeted interventions, employers can mitigate workplace stressors, enhance morale, and cultivate a healthier, more motivated workforce. The following policy suggestions are grounded in the study's findings and aim to provide actionable strategies for sustainable organizational success.

Policy Recommendations

The study recommends that Kilifi County Assembly establish policies to enhance the integration and sustainability of wellness programs aimed at improving employee motivation. Policies should prioritize the diversification of recreational programs, ensuring they accommodate diverse employee preferences through team-building exercises, wellness-focused activities, and stress-relief initiatives. To encourage participation, flexible scheduling and clear communication strategies should be formalized. Additionally, policies should mandate the integration of drug and substance abuse cessation programs into a broader wellness framework, emphasizing tailored support services, awareness campaigns, and partnerships with external experts or rehabilitation centers. Financial wellness programs should also be institutionalized, with policies supporting saving schemes, financial assistance, and continuous program evaluation to address employee financial concerns comprehensively.

To translate policy into practice, the Kilifi County Assembly should take actionable steps to enhance the effectiveness of its wellness programs. Regular feedback mechanisms should be implemented to customize recreational and financial wellness programs to employees' evolving needs. For recreational programs, the assembly can introduce varied activities and team-building exercises while addressing barriers to participation through inclusive planning and flexible schedules. Drug and substance abuse cessation programs should incorporate counselling, early intervention services, and stigma-reduction strategies. Expanding financial wellness initiatives through workshops, personalized financial planning tools, and one-on-one consultations will empower employees to manage their finances better.

The findings of this study contribute to existing theories on workplace motivation by highlighting the importance of wellness programs as multifaceted tools for enhancing employee motivation. Future research should explore the interplay between recreational, substance abuse cessation, and financial wellness programs to provide a comprehensive understanding of their collective impact on employee well-being and productivity. Theoretical models should incorporate the role of contextual factors, such as organizational culture and employee demographics, to explain variations in program effectiveness. These insights can

inform the development of more holistic and adaptable motivational frameworks applicable to diverse workplace environments.

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