

**EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND PERFORMANCE OF COMMERCIAL STATE CORPORATIONS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA****¹ Abdirahman Dekow Salah, ² Dr. Kepha Ombui Andrew-Phd, ³ Dr. Noor Ismail Shale-Phd**¹ Masters of Science Degree in Human Resource Management of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology^{2,3} Lecturer, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology**ABSTRACT**

This study sought to examine the effect of employee relations on the performance of state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya. The study was guided by the following specific objectives: to establish the effect of training and development on the performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya and to evaluate the effect of work-life balance on the performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya. For this study, a descriptive research design was utilized. The unit of analysis was 46 commercial state corporations while the unit of observation was the management employees working in the commercial state corporations. The study therefore targeted a total of 276 respondents comprising of 46 top managers, 92 middle level managers and 138 lower-level managers. The sample for this study was arrived at using the Slovin's sample size determination formula for categorical data. Stratified random sampling is the technique that was applied in selecting the sample of 163 respondents for this study. This study used semi-structured questionnaires. The main aim of the pilot test is to test how reliable the data collection tool is. A total of 16 respondents participated in the pilot test which represented 10% of the target population. The findings were presented in tables. Construct validity results show that the indicators of the independent and dependent variables are valid since they meet the recommended threshold of an AVE of 0.5. Reliability results show that all the variables had Cronbach alpha values above 0.7 supporting the reliability of the measures. The findings revealed that all four variables significantly contribute to the performance of commercial state corporations, with work-life balance having the strongest impact ($\beta = 0.338$), followed by training and development ($\beta = 0.307$). The study concludes that enhancing these aspects of employee relations is crucial for improving commercial state corporations' outcomes. To this end, it is recommended that commercial state corporations align training programs with organizational goals and support flexible work arrangements to foster a motivated and productive workforce. These initiatives are essential for sustaining and enhancing the performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya.

Key Words: Employee Relations, Training and Development, Work-Life Balance Performance, Commercial State Corporations

Background of the Study

Organizations cannot perform better and achieve its objectives if there is a bad relationship between employees and employer, therefore it is very important for managers to create and maintain good relationship with their employees. Effective employee and management relationship is vital to the workplace whether at the time of recruitment, during an employees' tenure or at the time of separation (Rose, 2019). Good employer-employee relations is essential to the organization because it inspires employees to work better and produce more results (Burns, 2019). The application of human relations in managing human resource is critical in today's business competitive environment (Christen, Iyer & Sober man, 2019). Factors such as job satisfaction are achieved when there isa great working relationship between labour and management (Jane & Samwel, 2018).

Employee relations refer to the management and maintenance of the employer-employee relationship. Effective employee relations strategies aim to foster a positive work environment, enhance employee satisfaction and engagement, and address conflicts and issues that arise in the workplace (Bockerman, & Ilmakunnas, 2022). Performance management also plays a significant role. Regular performance reviews and feedback help employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement. A fair and transparent performance management system aligned with organizational goals can drive better performance and job satisfaction (Ackers, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

Commercial State Corporations in Kenya are formed by the government to meet both commercial and social goals. They exist to correct market failures, to exploit social and political objectives, provide education, health, redistribute income and develop marginal areas (Ingavo & Moronge, 2019). Despite several efforts by the government to restructure them to enhance performance, the corporations have over the years performed dismally partially due to bad governance, political interference and lack of corporate culture (Mose, 2020). This is evidenced by the unsatisfactory performance contracting results by the majority of these corporations ((Linyiru & Ketyenya, 2019). The poor performance represents a drain on the exchequer and results into non delivery on intended services which has a negative effect on the welfare of Kenyan Citizens (Ingavo & Moronge, 2019).

According to the Public Service Commission evaluation report of 2019, the citizen satisfaction index for public service delivery stood at 42.6%. This index incorporates citizen perceptions on availability and quality of basic services, including health, education, security, water and sanitation, and the quality of the administration of justice, among others. The lowest rating was on the quality of the administration of justice with a score of 20%. Ileri (2020) posits that the challenges facing these corporations include politicization of the appointment process, corruption, impunity and mismanagement of assets. They are also faced with management-based issues that hinder productivity and performance of employees and the organization as a whole (Kabiru, Theuri & Misiko, 2019). Their operations are characterized by loss, fraud and theft which hinder improved and sustained performance and service delivery (Ingavo & Moronge, 2019). These corporations are therefore under increasing pressure to increase efficiency and have improved service delivery (Obudo & Wario, 2020). Research has shown that employee relations influence organization performance.

Various studies have been conducted on employee relations and organization performance. For instance; In Pakistan, Chaudhry, Sohail and Riaz (2023) examined on the impact of employee relation on employee performance in hospitality industry. In Nigeria, Ugoani (2021) investigated on managing employee relations and its effect on organizational success. Ngari and Agusioma (2020) researched on the influence of employee relations on organization performance of private universities in Kenya and Ngui (2022) investigated on the relationship between employee relations strategies and performance of commercial banks in Kenya. However, none of these studies focused on performance of state corporations in Nairobi city

county, Kenya. To fill the highlighted gaps, the current study sought to examine the influence of employee relations on performance of state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine effect of employee relations on performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To establish effect of training and development on performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya
- ii. To evaluate effect of work-life balance on performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical review

Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, developed by Schultz (1961) and extended by Becker (1964), posits that the knowledge, skills, and abilities of employees can be enhanced through education and training. This theory revolutionized the understanding of labor economics by recognizing that employees are not merely costs to be minimized, but valuable assets that can significantly contribute to the productivity and success of an organization. Schultz (1961) introduced the idea that investments in education and training increase the productive capabilities of individuals, thus benefiting both the individual and the organization. Becker (1964) further expanded this theory by differentiating between general and specific human capital, emphasizing that both types of skills can enhance employee productivity.

According to Human Capital Theory, investments in employee education and training are akin to investments in physical capital, such as machinery and equipment. These investments yield returns in the form of increased productivity, innovation, and competitive advantage (Becker, 1964). This perspective shifts the view of employees from being mere labor costs to being integral components of an organization's value creation process. As such, organizations that prioritize the development of their human capital are more likely to thrive in competitive environments. Pope (2016) supports this view, arguing that employees, through their enhanced capabilities, can make essential contributions to the organization, ensuring its survival and success in a highly competitive market.

The components of human capital include intellectual capital, social capital, and organizational capital. Intellectual capital refers to the knowledge and skills that employees possess, which can be developed through continuous learning and professional development. Social capital pertains to the relationships and networks that employees build within and outside the organization, facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing. Organizational capital encompasses the institutional knowledge, culture, and practices that support employee development and utilization of their skills (Pope, 2016).

Human Capital Theory is particularly relevant in the context of evaluating the effect of training and development on the performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Training and development programs are essential for equipping employees with the latest skills and knowledge, thus enhancing their productivity and the overall performance of the organization. By investing in human capital, commercial state corporations can ensure that their employees are well-prepared to meet the challenges of a dynamic and competitive environment. This, in turn, leads to improved organizational outcomes, such as higher efficiency, innovation, and profitability.

Despite its robust framework, Human Capital Theory has faced several critiques. One major criticism is that it often assumes that all investments in human capital will yield positive

returns, which may not always be the case. Factors such as the quality of education and training, the relevance of the skills acquired, and the ability of the organization to effectively utilize these skills can significantly influence the outcomes of such investments (Marginson, 2019). Additionally, the theory has been critiqued for not adequately addressing the disparities in access to education and training opportunities, which can lead to unequal benefits across different groups of employees (Goldin, 2016).

Another critique is that Human Capital Theory tends to focus predominantly on the economic returns of education and training, potentially overlooking other important aspects such as employee well-being, job satisfaction, and personal development (Livingstone, 1997). Furthermore, while the theory emphasizes the value of investing in human capital, it may not fully account for the complexities of measuring the returns on such investments, given the diverse and intangible nature of skills and knowledge.

Therefore, Human Capital Theory provides a valuable framework for understanding the importance of investing in employee education and training to enhance organizational performance. In the context of commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, Kenya, this theory underscores the critical role that training and development play in equipping employees with the skills necessary to navigate and excel in a competitive environment. By recognizing employees as valuable assets and investing in their continuous development, organizations can achieve sustainable growth and competitive advantage.

Boundary Theory

Boundary Theory, developed by sociologist Nippert-Eng (1996), offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals manage the boundaries between their work and personal lives. This theory is particularly relevant in today's fast-paced and interconnected world, where the lines between professional and personal spheres are increasingly blurred. Boundary Theory explores the strategies people use to either separate (segment) or blend (integrate) these two domains, providing valuable insights into achieving a harmonious balance between work and personal life (Nippert-Eng, 1996).

The core principle of Boundary Theory revolves around the concepts of segmentation and integration. Segmentation refers to the extent to which individuals maintain distinct boundaries between their work and personal lives. High segmenters create clear, rigid separations, ensuring minimal overlap between work-related tasks and personal activities. This approach can help individuals reduce role conflict and stress, as they can fully disengage from work during personal time and vice versa. However, excessive segmentation might lead to challenges in transitioning between roles and could potentially reduce flexibility and responsiveness to work demands (Nippert-Eng, 1996).

Conversely, integration refers to the blending of work and personal roles, where high integrators allow for more fluid and overlapping boundaries between the two domains. Integrators might, for instance, handle personal tasks during work hours or engage in work-related activities at home. This approach can provide greater flexibility and allow for more seamless transitions between work and personal life. However, it might also lead to increased role conflict and difficulties in completely disengaging from work, potentially causing stress and burnout (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000).

Boundary Theory provides a nuanced perspective on how individuals navigate the complex interplay between their professional and personal lives. By examining the strategies used to manage these boundaries, the theory highlights the importance of finding an optimal balance that suits individual preferences and circumstances. This balance can significantly impact overall well-being, job satisfaction, and performance. For organizations, understanding these dynamics is crucial for designing policies and practices that support employees in managing their work-life boundaries effectively (Clark, 2000).

Critiques of Boundary Theory often focus on its applicability in diverse cultural and organizational contexts. Some critics argue that the theory may not adequately account for variations in boundary management preferences and practices across different cultures and industries (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2009). Additionally, the theory's emphasis on individual strategies may overlook the structural and organizational factors that influence boundary management, such as company policies, technological advancements, and societal norms (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). Despite these critiques, Boundary Theory remains a valuable framework for exploring the complexities of work-life balance.

In the context of evaluating the effect of work-life balance on the performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, Kenya, Boundary Theory provides a robust analytical lens. Employees in these organizations often face significant challenges in managing their work and personal responsibilities due to demanding work schedules, limited resources, and high expectations. By applying Boundary Theory, researchers can assess how different boundary management strategies affect employee well-being and performance. For instance, understanding whether employees prefer segmentation or integration can inform the development of work-life balance initiatives that cater to diverse needs and preferences (Nippert-Eng, 1996). Moreover, insights from Boundary Theory can guide the implementation of flexible work arrangements, supportive workplace policies, and programs that promote a healthy work-life balance. These initiatives can help reduce stress, enhance job satisfaction, and improve overall organizational performance (Ashforth et al., 2000). This study therefore guided the study in evaluating the effect of work-life balance on performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya.

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework shows the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The independent variables are training and development, and work-life balance while the dependent variable is performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya. Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework for this study.

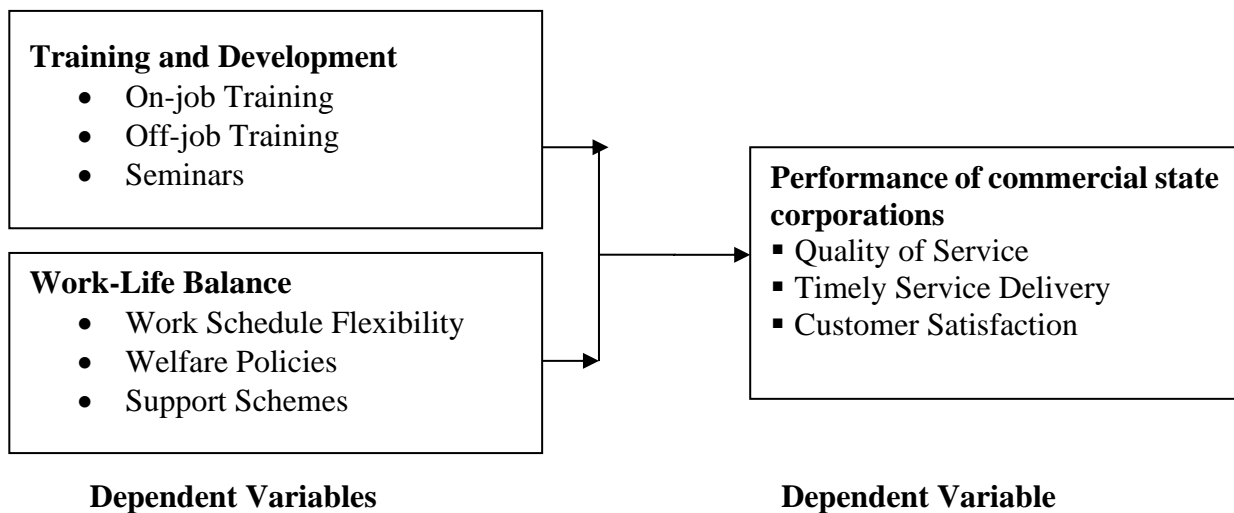


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

Training and Development

Training and development are fundamental aspects of human capital development, focusing on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and competencies of employees. Effective training programs are associated with improved employee performance, higher job satisfaction, and increased organizational productivity (Noe et al., 2017). For commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, continuous training and development are essential to maintaining a competitive workforce capable of adapting to changing market conditions and technological advancements. On-job training provides employees with practical experience and skills development within their work environment, promoting immediate application and relevance (Kim & Ployhart,

2018). Off-job training involves training activities conducted outside the workplace, such as workshops or educational courses, which can offer broader learning experiences and new perspectives (Li, Kim, & Zhao, 2017). Seminars are specialized training sessions that focus on specific topics or skills, providing employees with intensive knowledge and networking opportunities. These diverse training methods ensure comprehensive employee development, enhancing their capabilities and performance. For commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, continuous training and development are essential to maintaining a competitive workforce capable of adapting to changing market conditions and technological advancements.

Recent research highlights the importance of tailored training programs that address specific organizational needs. According to Kim and Ployhart (2018), targeted training initiatives that align with organizational goals and employee career aspirations lead to more significant improvements in performance outcomes. Additionally, Li, Kim, and Zhao (2017) argue that training that incorporates both hard and soft skills is crucial for fostering innovation and enhancing organizational performance. This dual approach ensures that employees are not only technically proficient but also possess the interpersonal skills necessary for effective collaboration and problem-solving.

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is increasingly recognized as a critical determinant of employee well-being and organizational performance. It refers to the ability of employees to manage their work responsibilities alongside their personal lives effectively. Achieving a healthy work-life balance is associated with reduced stress, increased job satisfaction, and enhanced productivity (Kalliath & Brough, 2018). For commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, promoting work-life balance can lead to a more motivated and committed workforce. Work schedule flexibility allows employees to have control over their working hours and conditions, helping them balance their professional and personal commitments (McCarthy, Darcy, & Grady, 2020). Welfare policies are organizational policies aimed at ensuring the health and well-being of employees, such as health insurance, parental leave, and wellness programs. Support schemes include various support mechanisms provided by the organization, such as childcare services, mental health support, and employee assistance programs. These initiatives can lead to a more motivated and committed workforce, ultimately enhancing organizational performance. For commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, promoting work-life balance can lead to increased productivity, lower turnover rates, and enhanced employee engagement (Haar et al., 2018).

Recent literature underscores the importance of organizational policies that support work-life balance. According to McCarthy, Darcy, and Grady (2020), flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting and flexible working hours, are effective in helping employees achieve a better balance between work and personal commitments. Moreover, a study by Haar et al. (2018) highlights that work-life balance initiatives positively correlate with employee engagement and organizational loyalty, ultimately driving better performance outcomes. For state corporations in Nairobi, implementing policies that facilitate work-life balance can enhance employee well-being and improve overall organizational efficiency.

Performance of Commercial State Corporations in Nairobi City County, Kenya

The performance of commercial state corporations can be evaluated through various metrics, including quality of service, timely service delivery, and customer satisfaction. These metrics provide a comprehensive view of how well these corporations are meeting their operational goals and fulfilling their obligations to stakeholders. Quality of service refers to the standard of services provided by the corporation, which directly impacts customer satisfaction and organizational reputation. High-quality service is characterized by reliability, responsiveness, and professionalism. Reliability pertains to the corporation's ability to consistently provide dependable and accurate services. Responsiveness involves the willingness and ability to help customers and address their needs promptly. Professionalism reflects the competence,

courtesy, and credibility of the service providers (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 2018). High-quality service is essential for maintaining customer trust and loyalty, which are critical for the long-term success of any organization. Recent research by Zeithaml, Bitner, and Gremler (2020) confirms that perceived service quality significantly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty, which in turn affects organizational performance.

Timely service delivery is another crucial metric for evaluating the performance of commercial state corporations. It involves providing services within the promised timeframes, reducing delays, and ensuring efficiency in operations. Timely service delivery meets customer expectations, thereby enhancing their satisfaction and trust in the organization (Choi & Rungtusanatham, 2019). Delays in service delivery can lead to customer dissatisfaction, loss of business, and damage to the corporation's reputation. Efficient time management and streamlined processes are necessary to achieve timely service delivery. For instance, a study by Zhang, Van Donk, and Van der Vaart (2019) highlights that organizations with efficient service delivery systems tend to have higher customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer satisfaction is a measure of how well the services provided by the corporation meet or exceed customer expectations. It is a critical indicator of the corporation's ability to deliver value to its customers. High levels of customer satisfaction are associated with repeat business, positive word-of-mouth, and overall organizational success (Oliver, 2020). Customer satisfaction can be influenced by various factors, including service quality, timely delivery, and the overall customer experience. A study by Verleye, Gemmel, and Rangarajan (2019) demonstrates that satisfied customers are more likely to engage in repeat purchases and recommend the organization to others, contributing to sustainable growth and competitive advantage.

For commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County, focusing on these performance metrics can lead to enhanced service delivery, improved customer relations, and sustainable growth. These corporations operate in a competitive environment where the quality of service, timely delivery, and customer satisfaction are crucial for maintaining their market position and achieving long-term success. By prioritizing these performance metrics, commercial state corporations can ensure they meet the needs and expectations of their customers, thereby fostering loyalty and trust. This approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also contributes to the overall reputation and sustainability of the organization.

Empirical Review

Training and Development

Noe et al. (2017) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the impact of training and development on organizational performance. The study used a quasi-experimental design with pre- and post-training assessments. The population included employees from Fortune 500 companies. A sample of 1,000 employees was selected using random sampling. Data were collected through surveys and performance metrics before and after training interventions. Statistical analysis included paired t-tests and regression analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs. Their findings indicated that organizations that invest in continuous training programs see improvements in employee skills, job performance, and overall productivity. On-the-job training and formal education programs were particularly effective.

Kim and Ployhart (2018) utilized a mixed-methods design to explore the effects of staffing and training on firm productivity and profit growth. The study population comprised multinational corporations. A sample of 600 employees was selected using stratified random sampling. Quantitative data were collected through surveys, while qualitative data were gathered through interviews with HR managers. Data analysis involved structural equation modelling and thematic analysis. The study concluded that strategic training initiatives significantly enhance employee capabilities, leading to better job performance and increased organizational profitability.

Odhong, Were, and Omolo (2019) conducted a descriptive study to assess the impact of training and development on employee performance in the Kenyan manufacturing sector. The population included employees from manufacturing firms in Nairobi. A sample of 400 employees was selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Their research demonstrated that well-structured training programs improved employee skills and competencies, leading to higher productivity and job satisfaction.

Gichuhi, Abaja, and Ochieng (2018) utilized a case study design to investigate the effect of training on organizational performance in the Kenyan hospitality industry. The population comprised employees from leading hotels in Nairobi. A sample of 200 employees was selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through surveys and interviews, and analysed using content analysis and descriptive statistics. The study found that both on-job and off-job training significantly enhanced employee performance, resulting in improved service quality and customer satisfaction.

Njenga and Mugambi (2020) employed a cross-sectional survey design to examine the role of training and development in the performance of public sector organizations in Kenya. The population included employees from government agencies in Nairobi. A sample of 500 employees was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected through questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study revealed that continuous professional development and capacity-building initiatives were crucial in enhancing employee skills and organizational efficiency.

Kinyua and Mwangi (2019) conducted a descriptive study to explore the impact of training programs on the performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi. The population consisted of employees from selected state corporations. A sample of 300 employees was selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research indicated that organizations that invested in regular training and development initiatives experienced higher levels of employee performance, innovation, and service delivery.

Work-Life Balance

Kalliath and Brough (2018) conducted a longitudinal study to examine the impact of work-life balance policies on organizational performance. The study used a quasi-experimental design with pre- and post-implementation assessments. The population included employees from various multinational corporations. A sample of 1,000 employees was selected using random sampling. Data were collected through surveys and organizational performance metrics before and after implementing work-life balance initiatives. Statistical analysis included paired t-tests and regression analysis. Their study found that organizations that support work-life balance through flexible work arrangements and supportive policies experience higher employee satisfaction and productivity.

McCarthy, Darcy, and Grady (2020) utilized a cross-sectional survey design to examine the effectiveness of work-life balance initiatives in multinational corporations. The population consisted of employees from global firms. A sample of 800 employees was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected through online questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and structural equation modeling. The research indicated that flexible work schedules, welfare policies, and support schemes significantly enhance employee well-being and organizational performance.

Haar et al. (2018) conducted a comparative study across seven cultures to study the outcomes of work-life balance on job satisfaction, life satisfaction, and mental health. The population included employees from different cultural backgrounds. A sample of 1,200 employees was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected through surveys and analyzed using hierarchical regression analysis to test the proposed model. The findings suggested that

work-life balance initiatives positively impact employee engagement and performance, leading to better organizational outcomes.

Mwangi and Mburugu (2019) employed a cross-sectional survey design to investigate the impact of work-life balance on employee performance in the Kenyan banking sector. The population included employees from major banks in Nairobi. A sample of 500 employees was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The study found that flexible work arrangements and supportive workplace policies significantly improved employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

Njeri and Kamau (2018) used a descriptive research design to assess the effect of work-life balance on the performance of public sector organizations in Kenya. The population comprised employees from government agencies. A sample of 400 employees was selected using simple random sampling. Data were collected through surveys and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The research demonstrated that welfare policies and support schemes were crucial in enhancing employee well-being and productivity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study, descriptive research design was utilized. The target population will comprise of 46 commercial state corporations in Nairobi City County (SCAC, 2019). The unit of analysis was therefore be the 46 commercial state corporations while the unit of observation was the management employees working in the commercial state corporations. The study therefore targeted a total of 276 respondents comprising of 46 top managers, 92 middle level managers and 138 lower-level managers. The sample for this study was arrived at using the Slovin's sample size determination formula for categorical data. Therefore, sample size was 163 respondents. Stratified random sampling is the technique that was applied in selecting the sample of 163 respondents for this study. This study used semi-structured questionnaires to collect the primary data for the study.

Quantitative and qualitative data was generated from the closed-ended and open-ended questions, respectively. Before the data could be analyzed, the researcher ensured the data was checked for completeness, followed by data editing, data coding, data entry, and data cleaning. Inferential and descriptive statistics were employed for analysis of quantitative data with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 28). Descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean (measure of dispersion), standard deviation, and percentages were used. Inferential data analysis was conducted by use of Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Out of the 260 questionnaires distributed (after excluding the 16 pilot respondents), 207 were returned, yielding a response rate of 79.8%. This response rate is considered excellent based on the criteria provided by Mugenda and Mugenda (2008), which suggests that a response rate of 70% and above is ideal for analysis and reporting.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the respondents' levels of agreement with various statements related to the study's objectives. A 5-point Likert scale was used where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=moderate, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the study variables: training and development,

and work-life balance. The mean values reflect the average level of agreement with the statements, while the standard deviations indicate the variability of responses. A mean value of 1-1.4 was strongly disagree, 1.5-2.4 disagree, 2.5-3.4 neutral, 3.5-4.4 agree and 4.5-5 strongly agree. On the other hand, a standard deviation greater than 1.5, suggests that the responses were more diverse, with a wider range of scores across the participants.

Training and Development

The first objective of the study was to establish effect of training and development on performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya. Respondents therefore gave their level of agreement with various statements on Training and development. Table 1 presents findings obtained.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Training and Development

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
On-job training programs are effective in improving employee performance	4.205	0.789
Off-job training programs are relevant and beneficial	4.169	0.795
Seminars and workshops contribute to employee skill development	4.189	0.790
Training programs are aligned with organizational goals	4.174	0.797
Continuous learning opportunities are provided for career growth	4.198	0.790
Aggregate Score	4.187	0.792

From the findings, respondents generally agreed that on-job training programs are effective in improving employee performance (M= 4.205, SD= 0.789); that off-job training programs are relevant and beneficial (M= 4.169 SD= 0.795); that seminars and workshops contribute to employee skill development (M= 4.189, SD= 0.790). They also agreed that training programs are aligned with organizational goals (M= 4.174, SD= 0.797); and that continuous learning opportunities are provided for career growth (M= 4.198, SD= 0.790). These results indicate that training programs are well-aligned with organizational goals and effectively contribute to employee skill development, which in turn enhances organizational performance.

The finding that training and development significantly impact organizational performance, reflected in a mean score of 4.187 and a standard deviation of 0.792, is strongly supported by existing literature. Noe et al. (2017), in their longitudinal study of Fortune 500 companies, demonstrated that continuous training programs lead to significant improvements in employee skills, job performance, and overall productivity, underscoring the importance of ongoing development initiatives in driving organizational success. Similarly, Kim and Ployhart (2018) found that strategic training initiatives in multinational corporations significantly enhance employee capabilities, resulting in better job performance and increased organizational profitability. Both studies highlight the crucial role of well-structured training and development programs in improving organizational outcomes, consistent with the current study's findings.

Respondents were further asked their opinion on how training and development influence the performance of commercial state corporations. Respondents expressed strong support for continuous learning opportunities and the alignment of training programs with organizational goals. Many respondents appreciated the training programs offered by their organizations but also pointed out areas for improvement. One respondent commented, "*The training programs are beneficial, but they need to be more tailored to our specific roles to have a greater impact.*" Another respondent emphasized the importance of career growth, stating, "*Continuous learning opportunities are essential for career advancement and job satisfaction.*" Several respondents also highlighted the value of both on-the-job and off-the-job training. They noted that practical, hands-on training is particularly effective in enhancing their skills and job performance. As one respondent shared, "*Workshops and seminars are great, but nothing beats the learning we get from real work experiences.*" The responses suggest that while current training and development efforts are appreciated, there is a need for more customized and role-specific training to maximize their effectiveness.

Work-Life Balance

The second objective of the study was to evaluate effect of work-life balance on performance of commercial state corporations in Nairobi city county, Kenya. Respondents gave their level

of agreement with various statements on work-life balance. Table 2 presents summary of the findings obtained.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Work-Life Balance

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
Work schedule flexibility is provided to employees	4.165	0.795
Welfare policies support employee well-being	4.142	0.811
Support schemes are available for employees' personal needs	4.156	0.802
Work-life balance initiatives improve employee satisfaction	4.159	0.803
Employees are encouraged to maintain a healthy work-life balance	4.149	0.806
Aggregate Score	4.154	0.803

Respondents generally agreed that work schedule flexibility is provided to employees (M= 4.165, SD= 0.795); that welfare policies support employee well-being (M= 4.142, SD= 0.811); that support schemes are available for employees' personal needs (M= 4.156, SD= 0.802); that work-life balance initiatives improve employee satisfaction (M= 4.159, SD= 0.803); and that employees are encouraged to maintain a healthy work-life balance (M= 4.149, SD= 0.806). The results suggest that work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible work schedules and support schemes, contribute positively to employee satisfaction and overall organizational performance.

The finding that work-life balance significantly influences the performance of commercial state corporations, with an aggregate mean score of 4.154 and a standard deviation of 0.803, is well supported by existing literature. Kalliath and Brough (2018), in their longitudinal study, demonstrated that organizations that implement work-life balance policies, such as flexible work arrangements, experience higher employee satisfaction and productivity, which directly contribute to improved organizational performance. Similarly, Mwangi and Mburugu (2019) found in their cross-sectional survey of the Kenyan banking sector that flexible work arrangements and supportive workplace policies significantly enhance employee satisfaction and organizational outcomes. Both studies highlight the critical role of work-life balance initiatives in driving employee well-being and performance, which aligns with the current study's findings, emphasizing the importance of such policies in fostering a productive and motivated workforce within commercial state corporations.

Respondents were further asked their view on how work-life balance influence the performance of commercial state corporations. Work-life balance emerged as a significant concern for many respondents, with flexible work arrangements and supportive policies being frequently mentioned as factors that contribute to employee satisfaction and organizational performance. One respondent remarked, "*Having the flexibility to manage my work and personal life makes me more productive and less stressed.*" Another respondent shared, "*Supportive policies, like leave and wellness programs, show that the organization cares about our well-being.*" Several respondents also pointed out that work-life balance initiatives lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and reduced burnout. As one respondent put it, "*When my work-life balance is respected, I'm happier and more engaged at work.*" They suggested that work-life balance is not only important for individual well-being but also plays a crucial role in enhancing overall organizational performance by fostering a more motivated and engaged workforce.

Performance of Commercial State Corporations in Nairobi city county, kanya

The study examined the overall performance of commercial state corporations in relation to the variables studied. Table 3 presents summary of the findings obtained.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Performance of Commercial State Corporations

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
The quality of service provided is high	4.178	0.816
Services are delivered in a timely manner	4.164	0.820
Customer satisfaction levels are high	4.181	0.814
Employee engagement positively impacts organizational performance	4.174	0.809
Training and development programs enhance employee productivity	4.184	0.810
Effective conflict resolution improves organizational efficiency	4.169	0.818
Work-life balance initiatives contribute to overall performance	4.183	0.811
Aggregate Score	4.176	0.812

Respondents generally agreed that the quality of service provided is high (M= 4.178, SD= 0.816); that services are delivered in a timely manner (M= 4.164, SD= 0.820); that customer satisfaction levels are high (M= 4.181, SD= 0.814); and that employee engagement positively impacts organizational performance (M= 4.174, SD= 0.809). Respondents were also in agreement that training and development programs enhance employee productivity (M= 4.184, SD= 0.810); that effective conflict resolution improves organizational efficiency (M= 4.169, SD= 0.818); and that work-life balance initiatives contribute to overall performance (M= 4.183, SD= 0.811). The findings indicate that the performance of commercial state corporations is significantly influenced by employee engagement, training and development, conflict resolution, and work-life balance.

The finding that there is a strong positive relationship between the overall performance of commercial state corporations and the variables studied, with an aggregate mean score of 4.176 and a standard deviation of 0.812, is strongly supported by existing research. Mwangi and Kinyua (2019), in their case study of state corporations in Kenya, found that employee engagement and training programs are significantly correlated with improved organizational performance metrics such as service quality, customer satisfaction, and financial outcomes. Similarly, Kinyua and Mwangi (2019) demonstrated in their descriptive study that regular training and development initiatives lead to higher levels of employee performance, innovation, and service delivery, which directly enhance organizational performance. Both studies underline the importance of the variables examined—employee engagement, training, conflict resolution, and work-life balance—in driving the success of state corporations, reinforcing the current study's finding of a strong positive relationship between these factors and organizational performance.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to measure the strength and direction of the relationships between the study variables. The relationship was considered to be small if $\pm 0.1 < r < \pm 0.29$; medium if $\pm 0.3 < r < \pm 0.49$; and strong if $r > \pm 0.5$. The results are in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis

	Performance	Training & Development	Work-Life Balance
Performance	Pearson Correlation 1 Sig. (2-tailed) N 105		
Training and Development	Pearson Correlation .781** Sig. (2-tailed) .000 N 207	1 207	
Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation .795** Sig. (2-tailed) .000 N 207	.487 .098 207	1 207

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

The relationship between training and development and organizational performance is also strong and positive, with a Pearson correlation value of 0.781 and a p-value of 0.000. This high correlation indicates that effective training and development programs are strongly linked to enhanced organizational performance. The statistical significance (p-value of 0.000) suggests that this relationship is not due to random chance. The implication is that organizations investing in continuous learning and tailored training programs can expect significant gains in employee skills and competencies, which directly contribute to improved productivity and overall organizational success. This finding is consistent with Odhong, Were, and Omolo (2019), who demonstrated that well-structured training programs significantly improved employee skills and competencies, leading to higher productivity and job satisfaction in the Kenyan manufacturing sector.

The analysis reveals a very strong positive relationship between work-life balance and organizational performance, with a Pearson correlation value of 0.795 and a p-value of 0.000. This high correlation value indicates that work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible work arrangements and supportive policies, are strongly associated with improved organizational performance. The p-value of 0.000 confirms the statistical significance of this relationship, suggesting that when employees maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life, they are more satisfied, engaged, and productive, which ultimately enhances organizational outcomes. This finding aligns with Njeri and Kamau (2018), who demonstrated that welfare policies and support schemes are crucial in enhancing employee well-being and productivity, positively impacting the performance of public sector organizations in Kenya.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5: Beta Coefficients of the Study Variables

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.156	0.119		9.711	0.000
Training and Development	0.307	0.050	0.331	6.141	0.000
Work-Life Balance	0.338	0.049	0.349	6.898	0.000

Training and development have a beta coefficient of 0.307, and a t-value of 6.141, significant at the 0.000 level. This indicates that a one-unit increase in training and development is associated with a 0.307-unit increase in organizational performance. The strong positive impact of training and development underscores its importance in enhancing employee capabilities, which in turn drives organizational success. This aligns with Gichuhi, Abaja, and Ochieng (2018), who found that both on-job and off-job training significantly enhance employee performance, leading to improved service quality and customer satisfaction in the Kenyan hospitality industry.

Work-life balance has the strongest influence on organizational performance, with a beta coefficient of 0.338, and a t-value of 6.898, significant at the 0.000 level. This suggests that a one-unit increase in work-life balance is associated with a 0.338-unit increase in organizational performance. The significant positive impact highlights the importance of work-life balance initiatives in enhancing employee satisfaction and productivity, which in turn drives overall organizational success. This is consistent with McCarthy, Darcy, and Grady (2020), who found that flexible work schedules, welfare policies, and support schemes significantly enhance employee well-being and organizational performance in multinational corporations.

Regression Equation

Based on the regression analysis, the following equation represents the relationship between the independent variables and organizational performance:

Performance = 1.156 + 0.307 (Training and Development) + 0.338 (Work-Life Balance)

Conclusions

The study also concludes that training and development are critical to improving the performance of commercial state corporations. Well-structured training programs, whether on-the-job or off-the-job, that align with organizational goals, contribute significantly to enhancing employee skills and competencies. These improvements in employee capabilities lead to better job performance and overall productivity, which in turn positively impact the organization's performance. Continuous learning and tailored training initiatives are essential for sustaining this positive impact.

The study concludes that work-life balance has the most substantial influence on the performance of commercial state corporations. Initiatives that support flexible work arrangements and address employees' personal needs are crucial for enhancing job satisfaction and reducing burnout. When employees can maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life, they are more engaged, motivated, and productive, leading to improved organizational outcomes. Thus, prioritizing work-life balance initiatives is key to fostering a motivated and high-performing workforce.

Recommendations

Commercial state corporations should focus on enhancing their training and development programs by ensuring they are aligned with organizational goals and tailored to the specific needs of different roles within the organization. On-job training should be emphasized, as it provides practical, hands-on experience that is directly applicable to the employees' work. Off-job training, such as seminars and workshops, should be periodically reviewed and updated to ensure relevance to current industry trends and practices. Corporations should also promote a culture of continuous learning by providing employees with opportunities for career growth and development. Regular assessments of training programs should be conducted to evaluate their effectiveness and make necessary adjustments to maximize their impact on employee performance.

To enhance work-life balance, commercial state corporations should implement and expand flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting, flexible hours, and compressed workweeks. These arrangements can help employees better manage their personal and professional responsibilities, leading to increased satisfaction and productivity. Supportive welfare policies, such as health and wellness programs, should be strengthened to address the personal needs of employees and promote their well-being. Corporations should also provide support schemes, such as childcare services and mental health resources, to assist employees in managing their work-life balance effectively. Regular assessments of work-life balance initiatives should be conducted to ensure they are meeting the needs of employees and contributing to overall organizational performance.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Further research could replicate this study in different sectors or regions. Additionally, future studies could investigate the role of emerging technologies in enhancing these variables' effectiveness in improving organizational performance. Qualitative research could also be conducted to gain deeper insights into the challenges and successes experienced by organizations in managing these aspects of employee relations.

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