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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE STRESSORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF COMMERCIAL BANKS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the relationship between employee counselling and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and to establish the relationship between employees financial stress and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya. The study was guided by Workplace stressors Theory and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory. This research adopts a descriptive cross-sectional survey approach. The target population of this study comprised of employees of 42 listed Commercials Bank in Kenya. These employees consisted of senior management team, middle-level managers as well as managers at functional level. The researcher used purposive sampling technique to select 384 respondents. The study collected both primary and secondary data. This study used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyses the quantitative data. The Data that was collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as mode, median, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as multiple regressions was employed to study the causal relationship among all the variables in the model. This research revealed strong, positive relationships between effective employee counselling and improvements in financial stress management, working conditions, and influential role model leaders, all exhibiting high statistical significance ($p<0.001$) and robust correlation coefficients (exceeding 0.760); it demonstrated similar connections between optimal work environments and reductions in financial stress, increased utilization of employee counselling services, and inspiring leadership styles (correlation coefficients > 0.598, $p<0.001$), indicating that focusing on these factors can enhance efficiency within modern workspaces globally. A notable, positive association was discovered between financial stress and organizational success in Kenyan commercial banks ($r=0.653$, $p<0.001$), suggesting complex interactions influenced by elements like regulatory compliance, competition, and strategic investment decisions; lastly, substantial links emerged between solid workplace relationships and decreased strain resulting from favorable interpersonal bonds, highlighting the importance of nurturing supportive connections and offering accessible counselling resources to mitigate detrimental effects arising from adversarial economic situations.

Key Words: Workplace Stressors, Employee Counselling, Employees Financial Stress and Organizational Performance

Background of the study

Workplace stressors significantly impact the performance of employees and the overall organizational efficiency in commercial banks in Kenya. Key stressors include high workload, inadequate staffing, stringent regulatory requirements, technological changes, and customer service pressures. These factors contribute to employee burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased productivity, which in turn affect organizational performance.

Studies have highlighted the negative effects of excessive stress on employee well-being, leading to increased absenteeism, high turnover rates, and lower productivity. For instance, a study by Mwangi (2023) noted that employees under high stress are less likely to engage in proactive and innovative behaviors, which are critical for the dynamic banking sector in Kenya. Providing adequate support systems, such as counseling services and stress management programs, has been shown to mitigate the adverse effects of workplace stress. According to a report by the Kenya Institute of Management (2023), banks that implement comprehensive employee support programs experience better performance outcomes.

The rapid adoption of new technologies in the banking sector can be both a source of stress and a tool for performance improvement. Research indicates that banks investing in training programs to help employees adapt to technological changes see improved performance metrics (Omondi, 2023). Additionally, a positive organizational culture that promotes work-life balance and recognizes employee contributions can reduce stress levels and enhance performance. In a study by Njoroge (2023), it was found that banks with a supportive culture reported higher employee morale and better financial performance.

The competitive and highly regulated banking environment in Kenya adds to the stress levels of employees. Effective leadership and strategic management practices are crucial in navigating these challenges and maintaining high performance levels (Kariuki, 2023).The relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance in Kenyan commercial banks is complex and multifaceted. Addressing these stressors through supportive policies, technological training, and positive organizational culture can lead to improved employee well-being and enhanced organizational performance.

Statement of the Problem

Workplace stressors have become a significant concern in the commercial banking sector in Kenya, impacting employee performance and organizational efficiency. High workload, inadequate staffing, stringent regulatory requirements, technological changes, and customer service pressures are prevalent stressors that contribute to employee burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased productivity. These stressors, if not managed effectively, can lead to significant declines in organizational performance.

Recent statistics underscore the severity of this issue. According to a survey by the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) in 2023, approximately 70% of employees in the banking sector reported experiencing high levels of stress due to workload and customer service demands (Central Bank of Kenya, 2023). Furthermore, a study by Mwangi (2023) revealed that 65% of bank employees felt that inadequate staffing and increased job demands adversely affected their job performance and overall job satisfaction.

The impact of these stressors on organizational performance is profound. For instance, the Kenya Bankers Association (KBA) reported in 2023 that banks with high levels of employee stress experienced a 15% decline in productivity and a 20% increase in employee turnover rates (Kenya Bankers Association, 2023). This high turnover not only disrupts operations but also incurs substantial recruitment and training costs, further straining the financial resources of these institutions.

Technological changes, while beneficial in enhancing operational efficiency, have also been identified as a source of stress. Omondi (2023) noted that 60% of employees in commercial banks reported stress related to adapting to new technologies, with 45% indicating that inadequate training exacerbated their stress levels. This technological stress hampers employees' ability to perform optimally, thereby affecting the overall performance of the banks.

Moreover, the stringent regulatory environment in which Kenyan banks operate adds another layer of stress. Kariuki (2023) highlighted that 55% of banking employees found regulatory compliance requirements to be a significant stressor, leading to increased work pressure and reduced efficiency. The relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance in Kenyan commercial banks is critically important. Addressing these stressors through effective support systems, comprehensive training programs, and fostering a positive organizational culture is essential for enhancing employee well-being and improving organizational performance.

Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by general and specific objectives.

General Objective

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya.

Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

i. To establish the relationship between employee counseling and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya.
ii. To establish the relationship between employees financial stress and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya.

Theoretical Framework

Workplace stressors Theory

Workplace stressors Theory has emerged as a pivotal framework for understanding effective leadership in modern organizations, particularly in dynamic sectors like banking. This theory, as expounded by Bass and Riggio (2021), emphasizes the leader's role in inspiring and motivating followers by creating a compelling collective identity and fostering a deep sense of purpose. In the context of Kenyan commercial banks, workplace stressors has been shown to be particularly effective in navigating the challenges of a rapidly evolving financial landscape. A study by Ochieng and Wanjala (2022) found that bank managers who embodied workplace stressors principles were more successful in implementing technological changes and adapting to new regulatory requirements, largely due to their ability to articulate a clear vision and inspire employee buy-in.

Central to the effectiveness of workplace stressors is the establishment of strong interpersonal bonds between managers and their subordinates. This is achieved through a combination of effective coaching, mentoring, and role modeling. Kimani et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive study across multiple Kenyan banks and found that managers who actively engaged in these practices fostered higher levels of staff loyalty, motivation, and job satisfaction. Notably, their research indicated that employees under transformational leaders were more likely to go above and beyond their job descriptions, contributing to a more dynamic and innovative work environment. This finding is particularly significant in the banking sector, where customer service quality and product innovation are critical differentiators in a competitive market.

The impact of workplace stressors extends beyond immediate employee satisfaction to tangible organizational outcomes. A longitudinal study by Mutua and Ngui (2024) tracked the performance of several Kenyan commercial banks over a five-year period and found a strong correlation between workplace stressors practices and key performance indicators. Banks with higher scores on workplace stressors metrics consistently outperformed their peers in areas such as customer satisfaction, new product development, and overall profitability. Furthermore, Njoroge and Karanja (2023) observed that these banks were more resilient during economic downturns, attributing this to the higher levels of employee engagement and the innovative problem-solving culture fostered by transformational leaders. These findings underscore the critical importance of cultivating workplace stressors skills among bank managers as a strategic imperative for long-term organizational success in the Kenyan banking sector.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory

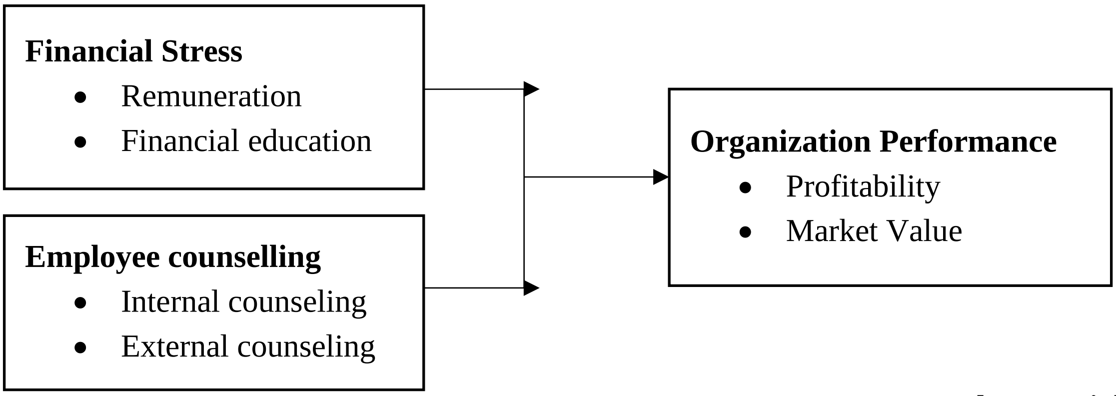
According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, self-actualization is the pinnacle of human needs, emerging only after basic needs such as physiological requirements, safety, love/belonging, and esteem have been fulfilled (Maslow, 1943). Self-actualization represents the realization of an individual’s full potential and is characterized by personal growth, self-fulfillment, and peak experiences. Counseling plays a crucial role in helping employees address personal issues that might impede their progression through these levels, particularly as they strive for self-actualization. By providing support for psychological barriers such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and career stagnation, counseling aids employees in overcoming obstacles that hinder their overall development (Corey, 2016).

Effective counseling enhances mental health and builds resilience by equipping employees with coping skills and strategies to manage stress and emotional difficulties (Greenberg, 2017). This support not only addresses immediate personal challenges but also fosters a more positive outlook and greater optimism among employees. As individuals gain better control over their mental health and emotional well-being, they become more focused, energized, and adaptable in their roles. This improvement in psychological well-being contributes to a more engaged and motivated workforce, which is essential for personal and professional growth (Luthans & Youssef, 2007).

The benefits of counseling extend to improved job satisfaction, increased commitment, and enhanced organizational citizenship behaviors, all of which contribute to superior firm performance (Robinson & Judge, 2017). When employees feel supported and are able to fulfill their higher-order needs, their overall productivity and contribution to the organization increase. This alignment between individual fulfillment and organizational goals results in a more productive, committed, and satisfied workforce, ultimately benefiting the organization's performance and success (Maslow, 1943; Corey, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a model of presentations where a researcher conceptualizes or presents the relationships between variables in a study (Swanson, 2017). A conceptual framework provides knowledge that is relevant and important to the study’s problem statement and research questions (Gaotlhobogwe, 2017). The conceptual framework in figure 2.1 illustrates the relationship between the variables of the study.



Dependent Variable

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework Source: Researcher (2024)

Financial Stress

Financial stress arises when employees face difficulties in managing their personal finances, which often leads to decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates (Mugambi & Wanjohi, 2020). In commercial banks, where precision and attention to detail are paramount, financially stressed employees may underperform, affecting overall operational efficiency. Moreover, financial stress often leads to cognitive overload, making it harder for employees to focus on tasks or adhere to compliance standards, which can increase the risk of costly errors or non-compliance with regulatory requirements.

Providing employees with financial literacy programs can equip them with the tools to manage their finances effectively, reducing stress and enhancing their performance at work (Kariuki & Kioko, 2021). Many Kenyan commercial banks have begun to recognize the importance of financial education in their employee wellness programs, as financial stress not only impacts individual well-being but also organizational performance. Educated employees are likely to make better financial decisions, thus lowering the chances of financial stress and enabling them to focus more on their professional responsibilities.

Remuneration is another crucial factor influencing financial stress and, subsequently, workplace stress. Fair and competitive pay structures can alleviate financial concerns among employees, contributing to higher job satisfaction and motivation (Njiru & Njoroge, 2021). In the Kenyan banking sector, where employees often work under pressure due to demanding targets, inadequate remuneration can amplify stress levels, leading to reduced performance and higher attrition rates. On the contrary, banks that provide adequate remuneration see better employee retention, engagement, and overall productivity, which positively impacts organizational performance.

Addressing financial stress through initiatives like financial education and appropriate remuneration is vital for improving both employee well-being and organizational outcomes in Kenyan commercial banks. Studies have shown that financial literacy programs and fair compensation structures not only reduce workplace stress but also enhance employee focus, efficiency, and loyalty (Mutua & Musyoki, 2020). Therefore, commercial banks should integrate these measures into their overall risk management and human resource strategies to mitigate workplace stressors and improve organizational performance.

Employee Counselling

Employee counseling is a critical intervention in managing workplace stress and improving organizational performance in commercial banks in Kenya. Counseling programs provide employees with a platform to express their concerns, receive guidance, and develop coping mechanisms for dealing with stressors such as high workloads, financial pressures, or interpersonal conflicts (Mutua & Kariuki, 2020). In the fast-paced environment of Kenyan banks, employees often face immense pressure to meet targets, which can lead to emotional strain and decreased productivity. Counseling services help employees manage these challenges, thereby reducing absenteeism and enhancing overall performance.

A key benefit of employee counseling is its ability to address mental health issues, which are often exacerbated by workplace stress. When employees have access to counseling, they are more likely to manage stress effectively, preventing burnout and maintaining high levels of job performance (Kariuki & Mwangi, 2020). In commercial banks, where precision and focus are critical, ensuring employees' mental well-being can directly impact the bank's operational efficiency. Counseling services also help employees develop resilience, enabling them to handle future stressors better and contribute to long-term organizational success.

Employee counseling also plays a significant role in improving workplace relationships, which are often strained by stress and pressure. When employees experience unresolved conflicts or feel unsupported by management, their performance and job satisfaction decline (Wambua & Njoroge, 2020). Counseling provides a neutral space where employees can address these issues, leading to improved communication, better teamwork, and a more harmonious work environment. This, in turn, positively impacts organizational performance by fostering a supportive culture that promotes collaboration and problem-solving.

Implementing employee counseling programs in Kenyan commercial banks is essential for reducing workplace stressors and enhancing organizational performance. By addressing mental health concerns, improving employee relationships, and equipping staff with tools to manage stress, counseling contributes to a healthier, more productive workforce (Mutua & Kariuki, 2020). As workplace stress is a major factor affecting performance in the banking sector, counseling services should be integrated into the banks' broader strategy for managing human resources and improving operational outcomes.

Empirical Literature Review

A study by Kariuki and Mwangi (2020) investigated the relationship between financial stress and job performance in the Kenyan banking sector. They found that financial stress among employees, resulting from inadequate remuneration and personal financial struggles, has a direct negative impact on job satisfaction and performance. The authors recommend that banks should offer competitive compensation and financial literacy programs to help employees manage personal financial issues, which in turn would reduce workplace stress and enhance organizational performance.

Wachira and Njuguna (2020) explored the role of employee counseling in reducing workplace stress and its effect on performance in the banking sector. They found that banks offering counseling services saw a marked improvement in employee mental health, leading to enhanced job performance. Counseling provided employees with coping strategies to deal with both work-related and personal stressors, resulting in lower turnover rates and higher productivity. This study supports the integration of mental health support services as part of a broader strategy to manage workplace stressors.

A comparative study by Mureithi and Nyaga (2021) focused on remuneration as a critical factor in workplace stress and performance. The study revealed that employees who perceived their remuneration as fair and competitive were less likely to experience financial stress and more motivated to perform well. In contrast, those who felt underpaid reported higher levels of stress, leading to poor performance and disengagement. The authors argue that equitable remuneration structures are essential for reducing stress and enhancing organizational performance in the banking sector.

Kimani and Kariuki (2020) analyzed the impact of financial education on workplace stress in Kenyan banks. Their study showed that financial education programs significantly reduced financial stress among employees, enabling them to focus more on their work. The study suggests that banks should implement financial literacy programs as part of their employee wellness initiatives, as this would not only improve employee well-being but also enhance job performance and overall organizational success.

Empirical studies consistently show that workplace stressors, such as financial stress, poor working conditions, inadequate remuneration, and strained workplace relationships, negatively impact organizational performance in commercial banks. However, interventions like employee counseling, financial education, improved working conditions, and fair remuneration can effectively mitigate these stressors and improve organizational outcomes (Mutua & Kariuki, 2020; Wachira & Njuguna, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of comprehensive stress management strategies in enhancing employee well-being and boosting organizational performance in the banking sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research adopts a descriptive cross-sectional survey approach to assess the current public perception regarding the extent to which leadership influences participation in addressing societal challenges. A descriptive cross-sectional design is particularly useful in this context because it allows for the collection of data at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the relationship between leadership and community involvement in societal issues. As outlined by Creswell and Creswell (2020), such a method is ideal for capturing attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions from a wide population, enabling researchers to analyze patterns and trends without manipulating variables. This approach is effective for understanding the broader public's views on leadership's role in addressing challenges such as poverty, corruption, and governance.

Ethridge's (2014) characterization of descriptive design underscores its suitability for this study by emphasizing its focus on identifying, describing, or explaining a situation as it exists. The use of a cross-sectional survey allows for gathering quantitative data that reflects public opinion and how leadership actions influence the willingness of individuals to engage in societal problem-solving. By capturing responses from a representative sample of the population, this method provides insight into both leadership effectiveness and public engagement levels. Additionally, by applying structured questionnaires, this study ensures that data is gathered systematically and objectively, thereby supporting the reliability of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2020).

Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the survey aligns with the goal of identifying current trends in leadership and societal participation. It also provides the flexibility to analyze various demographic variables, such as age, gender, and education, to determine whether these factors influence perceptions of leadership's role in societal change. The descriptive survey design enables researchers to establish correlations between leadership behaviors and public involvement without making causal inferences, offering a foundation for future research to delve deeper into the dynamics of leadership in societal issues (Ethridge, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2020).

Target Population

According to Lewis (2015), a population is defined as the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects the researcher wishes to generalize the results of the research. A population includes all elements that meet certain criteria for inclusion in a research study.A population is a complete set of individual cases or objects with some common observable characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Population also refers to the larger group from which the sample is taken (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). It is the entire set of individuals or objects sharing some common characteristics as defined by the sampling criteria established for the study (Marshall & Rossmnn, 2014).

Yin (2017) describes a population as the set of sampling units or cases that the researcher is interested in. Creswell and Poth (2011) observed that a population is the total collection of elements about which one wants to make inferences on. A study population is the people or individuals that meet the researcher's operational definition of the target population. These scholars agree that a target population is the whole set of units from which the survey data is to be used to make inferences. The target population of this study comprised of employees of 42 listed Commercials Bank in Kenya. These employees consisted of senior management team, middle-level managers as well as managers at functional level.

Sampling Frame

According to Neumann (2013), a sampling frame is a list of all those within a population who can be sampled. A sampling frame is the source material or device from which a sample is drawn. Sampling is a process of selecting several individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of characteristics in the entire group (Stevens, 2012). Any statement made about a sample should also be true of the population. In this study, the sampling frame is a list of managers in 42 listed Commercials Bank in Kenya.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The researcher used purposive sampling which is a type of probability sampling method in which sample members from a larger population are selected according to a random starting point but with a fixed, periodic interval (the sampling interval). Purposive sampling ensures that all respondents have equal chances of participating in the study (Alston & Bowles, 2019). Our target population in this study is less than 10,000, thus the sample of 384 can be adjusted as follows using the following formula suggested (Yamane, 1967) provides a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes. This formula was used to calculate the sample sizes. A 95% confidence level and P =0.5 are assumed for the equation. Based on the theoretical assumption that the distribution is assumed to be normally distributed with a sample size of above 30 objects, the sample size was determined using Bell, Brymann and Harley (2018) sampling frame for large population number, that is more than 1000 objects, it is recommended that the Sample Size (n) = z^2pq/e^2

$= (1.96)^2(0.5)(0.5)/(0.05)^2 = 384$

Where z= 1.96, p = 0.5, q = 0.5 and e = 0.05

Data Collection Instrument

The study collected both primary and secondary data. Primary data was used in this study because the selected respondents was able to evaluate the study variables. A total of 384 questionnaires was disbursed which has both open-ended and closed questions. Open-ended questions provides the opportunity for self-expression openly and honestly. They allow the respondents to give their ideas, concerns & feelings (Gregor &Hevner, 2013). The secondary data was collected from the journals, books and published academic references. The researcher will synthesized knowledge from comprehensive literature such as published works, policy papers and reports relevant to the study topic and the specified period under investigation. Document analysis was used to gather background information by reviewing literature relevant to the study such as books and journals, Government publications, Counties strategic plans and other relevant documents from authoritative sources on the topic under study.

Pilot testing

Before a survey is carried out all aspects of the questionnaire as a survey instrument should undergo a pilot test (Yin, 2017). Pre-testing enables the researcher to modify and remove ambiguous items on instruments (Lune & Berg, 2016). A pilot test is conducted to detect weaknesses in design, instrumentation and to provide proxy data for selection of probability sample. Pilot test enables one to identify and eliminate any problems that may exist in a questionnaire (Best & Kahn, 2016) and examine the reliability and validity for measures used in the questionnaire (Yin, 2017). A pilot study is conducted with 4% - 10% of the sample population (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Thus, the pilot study will comprise of 38 respondents that is 10% of the sample size. During pre-testing, the researcher will hold thorough discussions on questionnaires with 38 respondents in order to identify flaws, limitations, or/and other weaknesses in the research instrument so as to allow revisions and or adjustments in good time prior to conducting field work.

Data Analysis and Presentation

This study used both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyses the quantitative data. The Data that was collected was analysed using descriptive statistics such as mode, median, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as multiple regressions was employed to study the causal relationship among all the variables in the model. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003),multiple regression analysis attempts to determine whether a group of variables together predict a given dependent variable and in this way attempts to increase the accuracy of the estiminate. The use of multiple regression is preferred due to its ability to show whether there is a positive or a negative relationship between independent and dependent variables(Mason, Lind& Marchal,1999).In addition, the study used bivariate regression analysis and moderated multiple regression to analyse the association between independent, moderating and dependent variables. Descriptive statistics describe and summarize the data in a meaningful way using charts, tables and bars while inferential statistics draw conclusions on the analyzed data thus helping in generalization. Therefore, pie charts will form part of the analysis for presentation of results. Predictions based on the results of the analysis was made and the results generalized on the population of study given that the test sample is part of the population.

To draw conclusions on the objectives of the study and test hypotheses, statistical models was fitted for the specification function showing the relationship on moderating effect of

Governance structure on workplace stressors and performance in devolved governments in Kenya. Bivariate regression models was fitted to determine the relationship between each independent variable and Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya. Bivariate models consider the relationship between two variables at a time without considering the combined joint relationships.

$SD = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$……………………………………………Equation (1)

$SD = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$……………………………………………Equation (2)

The multiple regression model is given by the equation below;
X1 = Employee Counseling
X2 = Employees Financial Stress

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter looks at the findings of the research together with their discussions. Inferential and descriptive statistics have been employed in the analysis of data. Descriptive statistics such as means, percentages, and inferential statistics like multiple regression and correlation. The study's main objective included examining the relationship between relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya.

Financial Stress

To obtain information about the first independent variable Financial Stress , several statements were asked and the respondents required to provide feedback on a likert scale of one (1) to five (5), for 1 being strongly disagree, 2 being disagree, 3 being neither agree nor disagree, 4 being agree and 5 being strongly agree to the statements. On the statement "higher financial literacy correlate with better financial decision-making and reduced stress levels in the banking sector" 5.6% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, 23.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 33.78% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 13.1% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.78 and standard deviation 0.739. On the second statement "There is a relationship between the level of financial education and the ability to manage personal financial pressures among employees in Kenyan banks?" 19.1% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 41.0% of the respondents agreed to the statement while 38.9% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 4.21 and standard deviation 0.741. On the statement "Salary increment or stagnation play a role in the financial stress experienced by employees in Kenyan banks, 2.8% disagreed with the statement, 38.6% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 32.3% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 26.3% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.82 and standard deviation 0.885. Regarding the statement "Irregular or delayed remuneration contribute to financial stress in the banking sector", 13.1% strongly disagreed to the statement, 10.4% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, 23.9% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 35.5% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 17.1% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.33 and standard deviation 1.337.

On the statement "Employer-provided financial education programs are effective in alleviating financial stress among banking employees." 8.4% strongly disagreed to the statement, 23.9% disagreed to the statement, 23.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 31.1% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 13.1% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.17 and standard deviation 1.178. On the statement "Irregular and delayed remuneration contribute to financial stress in the banking sector." 8.0% strongly disagreed to the statement, 23.9% disagreed to the statement, and 26.3% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 33.5% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 8.4% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.10 and standard deviation 1.105.

Table 1: Financial Stress Frequencies

Financial Stress	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.
Higher financial literacy correlate with better financial decision-making and reduced stress levels in the banking sector	-	5.6	23.5	337.8	13.1	3.78	.739
There is a relationship between the level of financial education and the ability to manage personal financial pressures among employees in Kenyan banks	-	-	19.1	41.0	38.9	4.21	0.741
Salary increment or stagnation play a role in the financial stress experienced by employees in Kenyan banks.	-	2.8	38.6	32.3	26.3	3.82	.885
Irregular or delayed remuneration contribute to financial stress in the banking sector.	13.1	10.4	23.9	35.5	17.1	3.33	1.337
Employer-provided financial education programs are effective in alleviating financial stress among banking employees.	8.4	23.9	23.5	31.1	13.1	3.17	1.178
Irregular and delayed remuneration contribute to financial stress in the banking sector.	8.0	23.9	26.3	33.5	8.4	3.10	1.105

Employee Counseling

To obtain information about the first independent variable Employee Counseling, numerous statements were asked and the respondents required to provide feedback on a likert scale of one (1) to five (5), for 1 being strongly disagree, 2 being disagree, 3 being neither agree nor disagree, 4 being agree and 5 being strongly agree to the statements. On the statement "Access to internal counseling services affect employee stress levels and overall well-being in Kenyan commercial banks" 2.8% strongly disagreed to the statement, 2.0% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, 13.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 51.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 29.9% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 4.04 and standard deviation 0.875. Regarding the statement "Employees utilize internal counseling services to address personal and work-related challenges, and how does this affect their engagement at work", 8.0% strongly disagreed to the statement, 18.7% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, 16.3% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 51.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 5.2% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.27 and standard deviation 1.177.

On the statement " There is relationship between the use of external counseling services and the reduction of workplace absenteeism due to stress or mental health issues", 2.8% strongly disagreed to the statement, 12.4% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 56.6% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 28.3% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 4.08 and standard deviation 0.809. On the statement "External counseling programs contribute to improved employee coping mechanisms for handling work-life balance challenges" 2.8% strongly disagreed to the statement, 25.5% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 337.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 13.9% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.80 and standard deviation 0.780. On the statement "The provision of external counseling services impact employee perception of organizational care and commitment to their well-being" 10.4% strongly disagreed to the statement, 14.3% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, 26.7% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 37.5% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 11.2% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.25 and standard deviation 1.150. On the statement "External counseling support affect the mental health and emotional resilience of employees" 2.8% strongly disagreed to the statement, 8.0% of the respondents disagreed to the statement, 35.9% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement, 47.8% of the respondents agreed to the statement whereas 5.6% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement, with a mean of 3.45 and standard deviation 0.830.

Table 2: Employee Counseling Frequencies

Employee Counseling	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
Access to internal counseling services affect employee stress levels and overall well-being in Kenyan commercial banks	2.8	2.0	13.5	51.8	29.9	4.04	0.875
Employees utilize internal counseling services to address personal and work-related challenges, and how does this affect their engagement at work	8.0	18.7	16.3	51.8	5.2	3.27	1.177
There is relationship between the use of external counseling services and the reduction of workplace absenteeism due to stress or mental health issues	2.8	-	12.4	56.6	28.3	4.08	0.809
External counseling programs contribute to improved employee coping mechanisms for handling work-life balance challenges	2.8	-	25.5	337.8	13.9	3.80	0.780
The provision of external counseling services impact employee perception of organizational care and commitment to their well-being	10.4	14.3	26.7	37.5	11.2	3.25	1.150
External counseling support affect the mental health and emotional resilience of employees.	2.8	8.0	35.9	47.8	5.6	3.45	0.830

Inferential Statistics

Both correlation and regression analyses were performed to find out the degree of relationship between the variables and the contribution of independent variables towards the dependent variable for correlation and regression respectively.

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis identified the existence or otherwise of relationship between organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and all the other variables. Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used, the correlation coefficient (r) was used to establish whether there was linear relationship between the variables of interest in the study. The coefficient of determination (r^2) was used to check for goodness - of - fit. The value of r ranges between -1 and +1, r = 0 implies no correlation, r = 1 means perfect correlation.

Correlation analysis for Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya

From table 3 below, there is a positive significant relationship between Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and Financial Stress. The Pearson's correlation coefficient was 0.653, p-value <0.001. This implied that 65.3% of Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya is explained by Financial Stress. Likewise, there was a strong positive significant relationship between Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and Working Conditions , with a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.763 and a p-value<0.001, implying that 76.3% of Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya is explained by Working Conditions . Between Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and Employee Counseling the Pearson's correlation coefficient was 0.800 and a p-value <0.001, which implied a strong positive significant relationship. The results imply that 80.0% of Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya is explained by Employee Counseling.

Congruently, the correlation coefficient between Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and Workplace Relationships was 0.700 and p-value < 0.001 respectively, implying a high positive significant relationship between the two variables, implying that 70.0% of Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya is explained by Workplace Relationships .

Table 3: Correlation matrix for Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya' variable

Correlations						
		Y	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4
Y	Pearson Correlation	1	.653**	.763**	.800**	.700**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0	0
	N	337	337	337	337	337

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

Correlation analysis for Financial Stress

Table 4 below shows that there were strong positive significant relationships between Financial Stress and all other independent variables and the moderating variables. The correlation coefficients were 0.598, 0.780, 0.617, and 0.540, all with p-values less than 0.001.

Table 4: Correlation matrix for Financial Stress variable

Correlations						
		Y	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4
X_1	Pearson Correlation	.653**	1	.598**	.780**	.617**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0	0
	N	337	337	337	337	337

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

Correlation analysis for Employee Counseling

From table 5 below, it is shown that there were strong positive significant relationships between Employee counseling variable and Financial Stress, Working Conditions, Workplace Relationships. The correlation coefficients were 0.780, 0.804, and 0.760 all with p-values less than 0.001. This implied that 78.0% of Employee Counseling was explained by Financial

Stress, 80.4% of Employee Counseling was explained by Working Conditions, and 76.0% of Employee Counseling was explained by Workplace Relationships

Table 5: Correlation matrix for Employee Counseling variable

Correlations						
		Y	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4
	Pearson Correlation	.800**	.780**	.804**	1	.760**
X_3	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0		0
	N	337	337	337	337	337

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

Summarized correlations for all variables

Table 4.13 below depicts a summary of correlations of all the variables.

Table 4:6: Correlation matrix for all variables

Correlations						
		Y	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4
	Pearson Correlation	1				
Y	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	337				
	Pearson Correlation	.653**	1			
X_1	Sig. (2-tailed)	0				
	N	337	337			
	Pearson Correlation	.800**	.780**	.804**	1	
X_2	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0		
	N	337	337	337	337	

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

Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression Coefficients of the Study Variables

This regression equation model was used to fit the regression coefficient.

$Y= \beta 0+ \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_3 X_3+ \varepsilon$. Where, Y= Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya, β_0= constant (coefficient of intercept), X_1= Financial Stress s; X_2= Employee Counseling; ε = error term.

From the findings presented in table 4.19 below, the following regression equation was fitted;

Multiple regressions

$Y= 1.347 + 0.347 X_1 + 0.338 X_2$

Observing the equations, it can be noted that when all the other variables (Financial Stress and Employee Counseling) remain at constant zero, a constant value of 1.347 was held by the Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya.

The results depict workplace stressors significantly impacting Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya (β=0.347, p=0.001). These results insinuate that Financial Stress is significantly influences Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya in a positive way. Meaning, a unit rise in workplace stressors leads to a rise in Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya, by 0.347 units.

The study found that Employee Counseling has an influence on Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya (β=0.279, p=0.013). As a result, a unit rise in Employee Counseling lead to a 0.279 unit rise in the Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya. The study's findings support Maki's (2012) finding that there is a positive significant relationship between Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya and Employee Counseling.

Table 4.19: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.347	0.258		5.221	.000
Financial Stress	0.347	0.103	0.439	3.369	.001
Employee Counseling	0.279	0.108	0.327	2.583	.013

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational performance of commercial banks in Kenya

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Employee Counseling

The data demonstrates strong, positive, and statistically significant relationships between Employee Counseling and key workplace stressors dimensions, including Financial Stress**,** Working Conditions, and Idealized Influence. With correlation coefficients exceeding 0.760, these relationships indicate a robust connection, suggesting that effective employee counseling is closely aligned with improvements in financial stress management, working conditions, and the influence of leaders who serve as role models. The p-values, all less than 0.001, further confirm the statistical significance of these relationships, meaning the observed correlations are unlikely to be due to chance. This implies that organizations that prioritize employee counseling are more likely to see positive outcomes in leadership effectiveness, employee well-being, and overall work environment quality.

Financial Stress

This study reveals that there is a statistically significant and positive relationship between financial stress and organizational performance in Kenyan commercial banks, indicated by a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.653$ and a p-value of $p < 0.001$. Although higher financial stress generally has negative consequences on organizations, these findings suggest that certain underlying factors—such as regulatory compliance, market competition, and strategic investments—might contribute to improved performance despite heightened financial stress. These results emphasize the importance of striking a balance between regulation and growth, fostering adaptability and resilience among bank leaders, and pursuing targeted research to better understand the complexities surrounding financial stress and organizational success in the Kenyan commercial banking landscape.

Conclusion

This research revealed strong, positive relationships between effective employee counseling and improvements in financial stress management, working conditions, and influential role model leaders, all exhibiting high statistical significance ($p<0.001$) and robust correlation coefficients (exceeding 0.760); it demonstrated similar connections between optimal work environments and reductions in financial stress, increased utilization of employee counseling services, and inspiring leadership styles (correlation coefficients > 0.598, $p<0.001$), indicating that focusing on these factors can enhance efficiency within modern workspaces globally. A notable, positive association was discovered between financial stress and organizational success in Kenyan commercial banks ($r=0.653$, $p<0.001$), suggesting complex interactions influenced by elements like regulatory compliance, competition, and strategic investment decisions; lastly, substantial links emerged between solid workplace relationships and decreased strain resulting from favorable interpersonal bonds, highlighting the importance of nurturing supportive connections and offering accessible counseling resources to mitigate detrimental effects arising from adversarial economic situations.

Recommendations

For HR professionals and decision-makers, consider investing in building harmonious workplaces by cultivating strong relationships, promoting team spirits, and facilitating easy access to confidential counseling resources. Doing so may help reduce emotional exhaustion stemming from unfavorable economic scenarios. Encouraging helpful connections among coworkers creates conducive environments for idea sharing, problem solving, and mutual assistance, making burdensome tasks and unpleasant surroundings easier to handle. Moreover, open communication channels allow employees to voice concerns and receive appropriate guidance, potentially ameliorating harmful impacts brought about by financial distress.

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