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**DESIGNING A FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING SPA
EMPLOYEE'S WELLBEING IN NAIROBI KENYA**

Master thesis

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Pärnu 2024

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This Master thesis has been compiled independently. All works by other authors used while compiling the thesis as well as principles and data from literary and other sources have been referred to.



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INTRODUCTION

In the highly competitive spa and wellness sector, most of the spa businesses and centers concentrate their attention on customer service and satisfaction, whereas employee wellbeing as key success factors have only emerged recently. Employees' wellbeing is a past and current hot topic in organizations, consultancy, and academia (Wijngaards et al., 2022, p. 795). Pradhan and Hati (2022, p. 386) stress a greater need to investigate and comprehend the idea of employee wellbeing more comprehensively in organizations today. The wellbeing of employees directly impacts their productivity and the performance of the organization, as employees struggle with concentration, motivation, creativity, and job satisfaction that eventually affects the organization's performance. (Krekel et al. 2019, p. 24).

Frequent and close encounters between clients and personnel are crucial for achieving customer satisfaction in spa and wellness services. Employees act as brand ambassadors and deliver on the value by conveying a brand image to consumers. Academicians, researchers, and practitioners recognize the importance of employees in achieving exceptional service delivery and wonderful customer experiences. As a result, they have investigated several ways to improve and maintain employee wellbeing, engagement, and satisfaction. For example, as stated in Marshall (2020, pp. 221–222), many companies seek to increase employee commitment through employee wellbeing programs that may lower healthcare expenditures and employee costs, which in turn may affect productivity and boost the company's bottom line.

Studies conducted show that putting in place effective employee wellness programs helps firms achieve several goals, including increased employee engagement. Zhang (2018, p. 53) provides an example of how motivated employees can provide excellent customer service, as this raises the satisfaction and develops loyalty to the business. Additionally, the study emphasizes how businesses gain from offering employee wellbeing programs

because fit and healthy employees manage stress better, are more engaged and productive, and handle work-related stress better. But creating and implementing wellbeing initiatives can be difficult for corporations. Low participation rates are observed in several wellbeing initiatives. The study highlights that a mere 40% of employees who are aware of these initiatives claim to be active participants. According to Varga et al. (2021, p. 3331). Human resource managers should implement employee wellbeing programs and abide by the moral and legal requirements associated with implementing these wellbeing programs for employees as it has a considerable impact on workplace stress, turnover, and perceived organizational support.

According to Aryanti et al. (2020, p. 605) researchers are encouraged to review studies focusing on employee wellbeing because of progressive studies and findings continue being beneficial to both organizations and individuals in ensuring employees stay healthy and happy to work optimally. Pradhan and Hati (2022, p. 385) state that there is a lack of proper theoretical model and comprehensive tools that measure employee well-being at work. The need to measure employee wellbeing especially in the spa and wellness industry is due to the unique wellbeing challenges associated with the nature of their work that consists strenuous working conditions of heavy workloads, long shifts or schedules, high turnover, lack of enough manpower, high standards of performance low wages and poor work-life balance all which add to their stress levels and poor wellbeing. Service industry employees sometimes experience stressful interactions with customers, yet they are required to provide services with a smile and experience job satisfaction. Additionally, the hospitality industry has one of the highest incidences of alcohol abuse and reported rates of suicide among its workforces (Varga et al., 2021, p. 3332). However, irrespective of these recognized challenges, only limited studies have explored employee wellbeing within the spa industry, especially how to measure or determine the wellbeing of its employees. Wijngaards et al. (2022, p. 817) state that there is need for future researchers to better understand the factors that motivate and demotivate employees and then find an effective way to measure these factors of employee wellbeing.

In Kenya, salons and spas are classified as micro and small enterprises (MSEs). The spa and beauty industry has historically received poor perception and workers are seen as unskilled labourers who work in these establishments primarily as a last resort or

additional source of income rather than voluntarily. Despite the many difficulties they have at work, the employees are crucial to the provision of goods and services to a sizable portion of Nairobi's population. Salons and beauty spas have multiplied in most Nairobi County neighbourhoods in recent years. (Karuga et al., 2021, p. 96)

Based on the write up above, the research problem is that there is a lack of a suitable framework for evaluating employees' well-being in companies in the hospitality sector, and more specifically in the spa and wellness sector. Therefore, the goal of the master's thesis is to investigate the factors that impact employee wellbeing and develop a framework for assessing employee wellbeing, by offering recommendation to day spas in Nairobi, Kenya on how to evaluate and enhance employee wellbeing.

The following research questions were developed to investigate and offer suggestions for understanding and evaluating of employee wellbeing:

- What factors influence day spa employees' well-being in Nairobi Kenya?
- What is the need and opportunity in developing and implementing an Employee Wellbeing Metric Framework?

The literature review will explore the concept of employee wellbeing in general then the factors influencing it to begin the process of finding information to construct a framework. In addition to identifying factors affecting workplace wellbeing, the literature review will examine a theory and two models related to employee wellbeing. The nature of research and its techniques are covered in the empirical part of this thesis, which will describe and expand on the selected research methodology. It then describes the procedures for gathering data on employee well-being, with a particular emphasis on day spas the most popular kind of spas in Nairobi, Kenya that provide day spa services and thereafter provides a data analysis. The research's findings and analysis are presented in thereafter. The discussion of findings is presented, recommendations for a metric framework to evaluate employee wellbeing in Nairobi spa are made, some limitations of the study are outlined, and finally a conclusion. The master's thesis concludes with references, appendices, and an Estonian-language summary.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Concept of employee wellbeing and its place in wellness and spa industry

Wellbeing and wellness are two phrases that are frequently used interchangeably in dialogues about health and quality of life, but they have different meanings. Well-being, according to Kirsten et al. (2009, p. 5), is a more comprehensive state of general health and happiness that includes social, emotional, mental, and physical components. It includes the mind, emotions, spirit, meaning, behaviour, and a feeling of contentment, fulfillment, and purpose in life. However, according to this study, wellness is more about the harmony and balance of attaining wellbeing and maintaining health and fitness through activities such as diet, exercise, and illness prevention. Referencing Hettler (1984, p. 13), Gamby et al. (2021, p. 230) describe wellness as the proactive process of recognizing or being aware of the need to have a full and healthy existence and taking action to achieve this.

The term wellbeing is typically used to refer to both subjective and objective wellbeing. When developing models for evaluating wellbeing, Voukelatou et al. (2020 p. 279) suggested that both perspectives of these fundamental segments of wellbeing must be considered. One of the leading researchers about wellbeing, Ed Diener, has defined subjective wellbeing as the “belief that one's life is good, pleasant, and desirable regardless of how others might perceive it” (Diener, 2009, p. 1). In general, subjective wellbeing is divided into two parts: an emotional component that is defined as an individual's perceived view of their current life experience, and a mental component that is an assessment of one's life considering past experiences and current standards. Voukelatou et al. (2020 p. 280) states that subjective wellbeing centers on life satisfaction or pleasure, which are also known as hedonic accounts and are characterized by strong positive and low negative effects. According to Voukelatou et al. (2020 p. 279), defining

objective wellbeing has been said to be difficult, and most studies choose to study its characteristics rather than its definition. It is mostly viewed in terms of economic wellbeing, which considers monetary conditions and the general standard of life, it is characterized by factors like employment opportunities, income, and abilities to support oneself. Objective wellbeing forms what are known as flourishing accounts which refer to Aristotle's concept of eudaimonism (Gulliford et al., 2013, p. 290).

Employee wellbeing is defined as employees' entire mental, physical, emotional, and financial health and encompasses all actions taken by the employer and employees in collaboration to support and encourage the ability to work, including decisions made, access to tools and resources, safety, compensation, relationships with colleagues, and work hours (Sharan & Sumisha, 2022, p. 617). Three dimensions of employee well-being are psychological well-being (related to subjective experiences like satisfaction, purpose, growth), physical well-being (related to physical health, exercise, and diet), and social well-being (related to relational experiences at work like support, reciprocity, and cooperation) according to (Marín-García & Bonavía, 2021, p. 5822). This study goes on to acknowledge the interdisciplinarity that exists regarding the social, physical, and psychological aspects of well-being. "Workplace design, sanitary conditions, health and safety, productivity, psychological and social variables (such as stress at work, mental wellness, bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment), and environmental elements" are aspects also listed as the multidisciplinary aspects of employee wellbeing by Anttonen et al. (2008, p. 5). In addition to addressing the issues of employee well related to continuous developments of these multidisciplinary aspects, the study aims to evolve these multidisciplinary aspects to interdisciplinary action.

Aryanti et al. (2020, p. 605) states that a person's experiences at work have an impact on them both during and after work since employees dedicate around one-third of their time to their jobs, and some continue to work after hours. Poor employee wellbeing health workers may regularly contribute less to the company, be less productive, make poor decisions, and be more likely to miss work. Pradhan and Hati (2022, p. 387) explores service-based industry where the wellness and spa sector lie and explains how employees experience burnout and exhaustion due to labour-intensive work that involves unpredictable schedules, heavy workload, frequent interaction with customers, and

highly emotional labour. Employees are the foundation of any successful business, and their quality of life is impacted by their physical and mental health, which in turn affects the overall productivity of the company. Recognizing and supporting employee well-being benefits the firm since it is more economical for both sides to prevent poor wellbeing than to handle problems when they arise. (Sharan & Sumisha, 2022, p. 618).

According to the International SPA Association (2022a, p. 2), a spa is a place that offers a variety of professional spa services with the goal of revitalizing the mind, body, and spirit to enhance an individual's overall well-being. Most individuals worldwide find that wellness and spa services significantly improve their overall health, which is why the wellness and spa sector is growing rapidly (Cohen & Russell, 2008, p. 378). Wisnom and Gallagher (2018, p. 160) state that happy and motivated staff provide quality spa services; poor employee wellbeing has an impact on wellness and spa services and overall business success. Because of this, managers of wellness centers and spas should place great emphasis on evaluating and promoting staff wellbeing. Without them, an organization could not function. Every wellness and spa business relies heavily on its workforce, especially on healthy and happy workers. Cohen and Russell (2008, pp. 390–392) states that since a person spends more time at work than at home, the working environment is important to consider when choosing a place to work and can ultimately have an impact on their well-being. The study continues by suggesting that the spa industry needs to implement wellness programs in the same way that the corporate sector has done. These programs could involve tracking and evaluating employees' health, offering goods and services like organic food, yoga, and exercise classes, and, most importantly, the author encourages work environments that facilitate employees to interact and consider each other's overall health and well-being rather than just the work results. Lastly, based on their personal experience working in the industry, the writer of this thesis affirms that employees wellbeing is very essential in the wellness and spa industry and influences the work, its outcome, satisfaction of customer and success of the business.

1.2. Theoretical Framework – Models and theory

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a theoretical background for designing an employee wellbeing metric framework for spa employees. Existing literature suggests the use of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the PERMA model of well-being to assess different dimensions of employee wellbeing (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Seligman, 2018). This literature review will examine these models and existing employee wellbeing measurement tools or metrics to inform the designing of an employee wellbeing metric framework. Recent years have seen an increased acknowledgement of the significance of assessing employee wellness across different sectors.

The widely utilized Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model serves as a key theoretical framework in the field of employee wellbeing research. The JD-R theory was initially published in 2001 by Demerouti et al. (2001) to explain the reasons for burnout. Subsequently, it developed into JD-R model which explains how job demands refer to the physical, psychological, or organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort, can have negative effects on employee wellbeing: heavy workload, unexpected demands from clients and management, and time pressure are a few examples of job demands. While job resources are components of employment that aid in accomplishing work goals and that lessen job demands and foster personal development therefore promoting employee wellbeing. Some examples include prospects for career growth, the flexibility to work from home or the office, and the social support of your coworkers. Since then, the JD-R model has expanded significantly, and personal resources which are employees perceptions of the extent of control over their surroundings and personal demands which are standards that employees establish for their own conduct and performance to put effort into their task have been added to the model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017 p. 279).

The JD-R model is adaptable and capable of incorporating a broad range of job attributes. All job design theories operate under the basic assumption that specific physical, social, or psychological aspects of the work and the workplace environment have an impact on employees' well-being and may have an indirect impact on their behaviour, health, and productivity (Bakker et al., 2023, p. 32). This study explores the JD-R model in the more recent years goes on to state that businesses may influence employees' well-being, prevent

burnout, and maintain engagement by using career development, initiative-taking health management, and creative work design. The authors explore the evolution of the theory over the years since it was first coined and examine several subdivisions of the model that have emerged throughout time, including the work-home resources model, multilevel approaches to JD-R, and person-environment model. (Bakker et al., 2023, pp. 36–41)

The PERMA Model of Well-Being was developed by Martin Seligman in 2011 highlights five elements that contribute to overall well-being: Positive emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment (Seligman, 2011, p. 16). Seligman (2011, pp. 16–25), elaborates that happiness and satisfaction are the primary components of positive emotions, which are those that lead to feelings of joy, thankfulness, and contentment. Being completely engaged in activities that bring about significant fulfilment is the definition of engagement. Relationships highlight the need to build close connections with others to get and give emotional support and a sense of community. Finding meaning entails matching activities with values to achieve better fulfilment. Setting and achieving important goals that promote ability and satisfaction are the main components of accomplishment. Through the integration of these components, people can develop a thriving sense of well-being, which results in a more meaningful and balanced life. This model has been widely used to assess and measure employee well-being in various industries. Research (Kun et al., 2016, p. 61) has shown that incorporating the PERMA profiler into employee well-being measurement tools can provide a holistic understanding of employees' experiences and needs, leading to more targeted solutions and improvements in their overall well-being through motivation at work, energy in the organization, career planning and employee satisfaction.

The two-factor model of work motivation known as the Motivation-Hygiene theory was published by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman in 1959. They were influenced by Maslow's hierarchy of needs to define this theory which provided an illustration of two key elements influencing people's views on their jobs. These are factors in the workplace that cause satisfaction and positive attitude and factors that cause dissatisfaction or negative attitude (Galanakis & Peramatzis, 2022, p. 972). The two factor theory states that internal factors are the need for self-actualization or accomplishment and need for personal growth this become motivation factors and include achievement, recognition,

responsibility, advancement, and possibility for growth. External factors which are needed to avoid unpleasantness become the elements related to hygiene, such as job conditions, pay, supervisor-subordinate interactions, corporate policies, and interactions between employees (Galanakis & Peramatzis, 2022, p. 973). This theory has been extensively applied in studies on employee satisfaction, motivation, and wellbeing. Various sectors and professions might use different motivational and hygienic variables. Mitsakis and Galanakis (2022, p. 264) illustrate that motivation versus hygiene factors in the workforce continue to hamper many organizations globally affecting employee wellbeing and increasing employee turnover rate and burnout. In summary, the analysis of these models and theories—the motivation-hygiene theory, the PERMA model, and the JD-R model—provides important insight into the evolution of workplace satisfaction and productivity as well as highlights the multifaceted nature of employee wellbeing.

1.3. Factors influencing employee wellbeing

The work-life balance, job satisfaction, stress, burnout and workload, managerial support, and physical, psychological, and mental health are some of the factors that will be covered in this section of the thesis. It will also highlight some tools and metrics that have been developed or used to measure factors that influence employee wellbeing.

The balance between personal and professional obligations and responsibilities is referred to as work-life balance. The nineteenth-century push for a forty-hour work week, according to Brough et al. (2020, p. 1), highlighted the fundamental rights of human lives that comprised employment, leisure, family, and rest, this led to the development of the modern concept of work-life balance that is known today. Obrenovic et al. (2020, p. 13) evaluates the work-life balance and its impact on family and overall well-being and warrants further studies to investigate elements affecting job performance like behaviour, time, and energy. According to Bin Abu Bakar et al. (2021, p. 5641), employees have a major economic impact on both their organization and the country. However, many employees lack a work-life balance, and a large number experience anxiety, stress, and depression because of their workload and work environments. These factors influencing employee wellbeing have an impact on their health, happiness, and capacity to operate at their highest level both at work and in other facets of life. The hotel and spa sectors are

notable for their hard work environments, which have an adverse effect on the wellbeing of employees. A study by Leslie et al. (2019, pp. 72–73) claims that achieving a work-life balance is becoming an increasing social concern. Hence, a great deal of research has been done on the subject with most of it has been on behaviour and emotions rather than cognitive aspects. As a result, this research expands on and provides three more cognitive ideas to consider when evaluating work-life balance. It introduces three different kinds of work-life ideologies: segmentation, which views life and work as separate but interconnected, fixed pie, which views life and work are compatible and competitive of each, and work prioritization, which promotes either life or work.

The kind of help, direction, and guidance that managers offer to their employees is referred to as managerial or leadership support. Sartori et al. (2023, p.14) investigates the indirect relationships between turnover and perceived organizational support, it is demonstrated that support is a significant factor linked to positive attitudes toward the organization and in turn employee wellbeing. The findings of this study suggest that when employees feel their employer is very supportive, they feel more inspired to do their part to help the company thrive and stay working in the company longer. Furthermore, a study by Hämmig (2017, p. 393) examined the how forms of support from different networks and sources such family, friends, bosses, colleagues, the company itself impact overall physical, mental health as well as psychological or emotional and occupational well-being. Of all the support systems taken into account, the lack of support from one's supervisor or the absence of support by the organization was the most significant effect on health and well-being at work, especially in the event of any demands and issues at work (Hämmig, 2017, p. 401). Good leadership fosters a culture of support, trust, acknowledgement, and feedback while meeting the basic needs of employees for dignity, confidence, and a sense of belonging (Inceoglu et al., 2018, p.180). In examining the relationship between leadership behaviour and employee wellbeing, this study discovered that leaders who prioritize employee wellbeing rather than just job outcomes and accomplishments create and foster employee wellbeing. According to a study by Hauff et al. (2020, pp. 2115, 2117–2118), managers and leaders have a responsibility to share expectations for performance, influence working conditions, show concern for the welfare of their employees, foster a welcoming and encouraging work environment, and consider their needs and preferences. Support from managers helps employees meet work

requirements and improves performance. In addition to encouraging employees to take on additional responsibilities and duties, supportive leadership lowers their fear of failing and increases their sense of competence. The authors state that supportive leaders show consideration, help when required, recognize excellence in work, and provide constructive criticism. Unsupportive leadership on the other hand leaves workers feeling less driven and valued, increases task confusion, increases stress, and affects their well-being. According to this study's findings, job satisfaction and engagement are significantly impacted by employees' experiences with low managerial support, while these impacts are less pronounced when employees receive good managerial support.

The physiological and psychological reactions people have to excessive requirements or difficulties at work are referred to as stress levels. Stress levels can be especially high in the spa and wellness sector as workers handle high-pressure circumstances and constantly aim to give guests great experiences. Stress in the workplace is hard to prevent, but managers should try to create a more appealing work environment and lessen the demands that employees feel. Some jobs or tasks are more demanding than others and may result in higher levels of stress. Professional burnout and a loss of motivation can be caused by occupational stress (Aluculesei et al., 2015, pp. 4, 6–7). The Copenhagen Psychosocial Questionnaire (COPSOQ) explores stressor elements of work versus the consequence of those stressors on employees (Burr et al., 2019, p. 483). The current questionnaire in use which is the third version explores elements such as job demands, job organization and content, interpersonal relationships and leadership, work-individual interface, conflict and offensive behaviours, health and wellbeing, personality. Bekele et al. (2023, pp. 7–8) examined the applicability of the workplace stress scale. The study found that this tool was useful in evaluating work related stress in a hotel setting after assessing factors like work shifts, job control, social support, low pay, and workload which affect motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty. A study by Lin et al. (2022) shows how the the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) gauges an employee's extent of burnout, emotional weariness, sense of personal achievement, and detachment from work.

According to a study conducted by Prasad et al. (2020, p. 2), most of the working community experiences moderate to high levels of occupational stress and burnout. According to the study, stress at work causes burnout, low motivation, low performance

feeling, absenteeism, and a lack of interest in learning new things and coming up with new ideas all of which have are symptoms of poor wellbeing. The changes that stress causes are explained in more detail in a study by Schwepker et al. (2020, p. 146), which also breaks each change down into its component parts. Behavioural changes include eating disorders, drug abuse, and accident proneness; psychological changes include burnout and depression, and physical changes include illnesses like heart and liver disease and body aches like back and headaches. The author continues by saying that stress can result in bad habits like eating poorly, sleeping too much, smoking and drinking, and generally being unwell, all of which have an impact on the wellbeing of employees. Employee perceptions of stress and burnout in the workplace are gauged by the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). The PSS items measure the degree to which people feel that their lives are unpredictable, unmanageable, and overwhelming by asking them to rate how frequently they have experienced these feelings in the previous month (Cohen et al., 1994, p. 1). Over the years, this instrument has been extensively employed to evaluate stress levels in a variety of populations due to its demonstrated validity and reliability. It looks at a variety of topics, including dealing with irritations and emotions like being anxious, angry, or helpless over events in life.

Weiss (2002, as cited in Wijngaards et al., 2022, p. 802) describe job satisfaction as "a positive or negative perception of one's job or job situation". The study goes on to say that emotions and moods have an impact on wellbeing and job satisfaction. As per Adeniji (2009, as cited in Sudibjo & Sutarji, 2020, p. 2478), there exist five factors that have significance in enhancing job satisfaction: compensation, advancement, colleagues, supervision, and the actual job. The widely used Job Satisfaction Survey looks at job satisfaction, covering areas like pay, career opportunities, working conditions, and relationships with colleagues (Spector, 2022, pp. 16–17). The Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) was formulated and used by employee for self-assessment to measure their job performance, context performance and counterproductive behaviours performance (Koopmans et al., 2014, pp. 163–165; Ramos-Villagrasa et al., 2019, p. 197). Performance at work directly links to satisfaction as an individual with great job satisfaction will approach their task with positivity. If not, employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs will have a bad attitude about their job and role. The impact of a complete wellbeing program on employees' job satisfaction was examined by Marshall

(2020, p. 221). Two hundred employees of a hotel company who self-identified as wellbeing program participants or non-participants were among the survey respondents (Marshall, 2020, p. 231). The results of the study indicated that employees who participated in the wellbeing program had significantly higher levels of internal and external job satisfaction than those who were classified as nonparticipating. The study's conclusions provide companies with a means of improving employee levels of internal and external job satisfaction while also endorsing the idea of introducing or encouraging a wellbeing program in the workplace. According to the study's findings, participation in a wellbeing program significantly boosts employees' levels of internal and external job satisfaction.

Employees who are mentally and physically fit are crucial to the success of any organization because they accomplish more, while employees who are unfit or unhealthy contribute less. Employers must support their workers' physical, mental, and psycho-emotional needs since doing so promotes contentment, productivity, and overall wellbeing (Gadhavi et al., 2021, pp. 3–4). To increase employee's well-being in contemporary hotel environments, Torres, and Zhang (2021, p. 61) conducted a field study by introducing a technology-based wellbeing intervention. For a period of 14 days, they provided the participants with a wearable gadget called Fitbit to track their sleep and activity levels. Additionally, monitored their meals on computerized diaries. The study's conclusions showed a decline in total calorie consumption but an increase in physical activity and the consumption of healthful foods. Positive shifts in organizational commitment, work satisfaction, and employee involvement were also observed in the study. This shows how physical aspects such as exercise, sleep, and diet influence employee wellbeing.

A study by Rasool et al., (2021, p. 4-17) looked at and found how a toxic work environment affects psychological, physical, and mental well-being and therefore, employee engagement. According to this study, toxic work environments that include bullying and harassment cause stress, burnout, depression, and anxiety in employees. This study listed signs of poor mental health, such as anxiety disorders, as well as signs of physical sickness, such as weight increase or loss, body aches, and muscular aches, fatigue and depression as results that impact an individual's general well-being. A study

by Sharan and Sumisha (2022, p. 620), concludes that promoting health screenings to address any health issues, providing health insurance and gym memberships to employees to stay in shape, arranging for employee discounts at restaurants to ensure that they maintain healthy eating habits, and providing healthy meals at work are some of the ways to ensure and improve physical wellbeing. The study also suggests that to promote mental and psychological wellbeing, employers should introduce and facilitate the use of apps that promote mindfulness and meditation as a way for employees to manage stress. Additionally, employers should encourage employees to seek professional mental health services to address issues and lessen the stigma associated with seeking and needing psychological assistance.

The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index examines various facets of well-being, including daily emotions like happiness, smiles, sadness, worry, stress, and employee's perception if the organization cares for their wellbeing (Gallup, n.d.; Ray, 2022, pp. 245–246). Another tool, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), has been used in studies to measure positive aspects of mental health such as optimism, cheerfulness, relaxation, and positive results such self-acceptance, personal development, competence (Tennant et al., 2007, p. 3). The World Health Organization has created a tool to the well-being and employee health. The WHO-5 Well-being Index measures positive emotions and energy with five questions that assess the physical, psychological, and mental health of employees (Topp et al., 2015, p. 168). The relationship between health-related work benefits and employees' well-being, job satisfaction, and loyalty to their employer was studied by Gorgenyi-Hegyes et al. (2021, p. 55). 537 employees in Hungary provided replies for analysis in the study. The authors found that the mental and emotional health of employees significantly influences their overall well-being and that there was an increased sensitivity to wellbeing issues as during the pandemic employee wellbeing decreased. The studies and tools explored above lead us to the conclusion that physically, emotionally, and mentally fit employees are more likely to be highly motivated and capable of carrying out their jobs well. Furthermore, employees who are in good mental health are better able to manage stress at work and keep their interactions with coworkers favourable. On the other hand, psychological well-being includes feelings of acceptance, independence, and proficiency in the work environment, all of which boost the general state of well-being among employees.

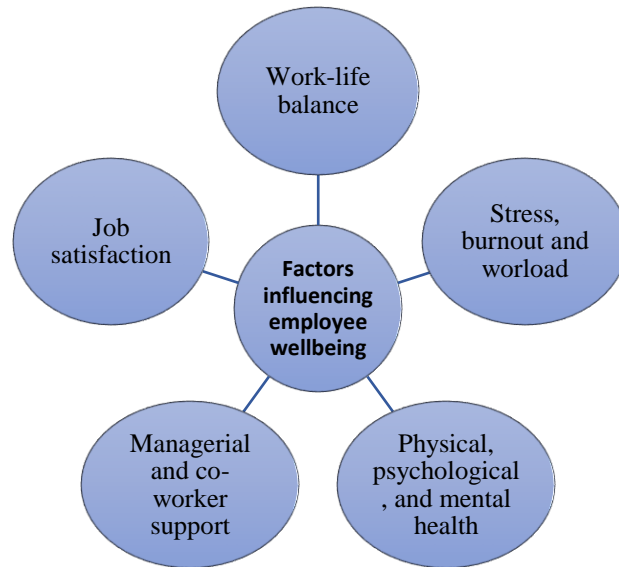


Figure 1. Illustrations of factors influencing employee wellbeing.

It is therefore essential to develop a metric framework for measuring employee wellbeing in the spa and wellness industries. Recent studies, like Pradhan and Hati (2022, p. 389), claim that this kind of tool enables businesses to evaluate various components of employee wellbeing, highlight areas in need of improvement, and come up with tailored interventions. Additionally, a metric framework offers an organized approach to assess the success or failure of current wellbeing initiatives and programmes. According to Spreitzer and Porath (2012), as cited in Pradhan & Hati, (2022, p. 390) the overall wellbeing of a company's employees is essential to its success and growth. Accordingly, the authors conclude that the concepts of employee well-being and general well-being must be distinguished because work environments differ significantly from everyday life conditions and because employee well-being has grown in importance as a field of study due to the direct effects of employment on employee growth, productivity, growth, and well-being.

The lack of defined tools and metrics unique to the spa and wellness companies presents an opportunity as well as a necessity for the development and implementation of an employee wellbeing metric framework. There is currently no equivalent indicator for employee well-being in Kenya, and academic study in this area is still behind. Although there are well-established scales and questionnaires as reviewed in all the literature above for assessing employee wellbeing, these metrics must be modified to fit the requirements

of spas and wellness employees. A holistic scale measure focusing on individual wellbeing along with the social context and work-related experience was created by Khatri & Gupta (2019, pp. 352-368). According to the study's findings, employees nowadays have ongoing challenges in their personal and professional lives, which can cause stress, frustration, and pressure to perform well everywhere. The author advised businesses to fund initiatives that include components that improve the well-being of employees. In order improve employees' wellbeing, the authors also recommended the necessity for wellbeing efforts that focus on allocating frameworks, guidelines, procedures, steps, responsibilities, and technologies. These programs would also improve overall well-being and assist in developing a healthy work environment.

Pradhan and Hati (2022, pp. 393–398) explored the development and validation of the Scale for the Measurement of Employee Wellbeing (SMEW) in the service industry sector where service employees face difficulties like demanding, versatile, productive multitasking and stressful job roles. Their findings indicated that the scale developed (SMEW) provided a comprehensive assessment of employee wellbeing and resulted in four main components to be measured, psychological, social, work, and subjective factors. Conditions specific to the service sector such the physical demands of providing spa services, stress and burnout, high turnover rates, and unstable work schedules, and poor physical and mental health are some of the factors that make it more difficult to measure and enhance spa employee wellness. Moreover, cultural variations, nation-specific labour laws, and the subjective nature of wellbeing present more opportunities for the development of a comprehensive metric framework for spa employees. In conclusion, an overview of wellbeing, employee wellbeing, and the significance of employee wellbeing in the wellness and spa sector are provided in this chapter. Subsequently, it offers a theoretical framework by discussing key theories and models related to the well-being of employees. Additionally, by carefully and methodically analysing previous study research on the elements influencing employee wellbeing in recent years, it examines the factors influencing employee wellbeing and provides empirical background knowledge. The need and opportunity for creating and implementing a framework for assessing employee well-being is finally presented.

2. EMPIRICAL PART

2.1. Research design and methodology

This study focuses on Nairobi, Kenya due to the lack of resources and previous research on employee wellbeing generally and how to assess and monitor the overall wellbeing of spa personnel. Most local spas in Kenya, where the spa culture is less well-known than in other nations, are medium-sized businesses that operate in the hospitality or tourism sector and go by the names beauty spas, beauty parlours, and beauty salons. The day spa employees in Nairobi, Kenya will be the primary subject of this thesis's investigation. The study's conclusions would be beneficial to a wide range of stakeholder groups, including specialists in the wellness and spa industries, staff members and management at spas, academics, and researchers. They will be able to make well-informed decisions about the general wellbeing of the employees in spas by providing them with a measurable framework and insights into the factors that affect employee well-being.

This chapter discusses research design, showing the steps the researcher takes to decide on study population sample size, data gathering tools, data collection processes, and data analysis methods. Primary and secondary research are the two main research strategies used in this study. A review of the literature served as the means of conducting secondary research in the previous chapter. The sort of study conducted, the research questions, the study's objectives, the study population, and the sampling strategy all influence the primary research design that is selected. The way these elements are combined affects the study design. (Majid, 2018, p. 1). Research can be broadly understood as the systematic process of investigating and interpreting data on a given issue with a view to expanding human understanding on an area of knowledge. The basic intention in social science research is to help the researcher answer pressing questions regarding a particular social problem. Hence, research methodology entails the general blueprint containing the techniques and procedures followed by the researcher to carry out the research process

(Kothari, 2004, p. 15). Research methodology outlines the guiding principles followed by the researcher to validate their hypothesis or arrive at a specific position on a research topic. The methodology for this study will incorporate a qualitative approach to evaluate factors impacting wellness among spa employees. Qualitative research collects data that analyses human experiences through the participants' words and how significant they perceive their experiences to be (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 6). The human experience is the center of the qualitative research design as the design allows the researcher to understand the different aspects of social experience (Patton, 2014, p. 20). According to Maxwell (2009, p. 221), qualitative research is a valuable methodology that enables researchers to investigate participants' events, situations, and actions, identify phenomena, influences and generate new ideas, and comprehend the process of how events occur in an in-depth and holistic manner. The nature of this thesis's study questions requires an investigation of individuals' subjective experiences and perceptions in the context of spa settings, which may be best documented via qualitative methodologies. Therefore, for this study, qualitative research will provide rich and detailed lived experiences and insights crucial for understanding the complex nature of wellbeing in the spa environment and the need for assessment and evaluation that can inform the design of a spa employees wellbeing framework.

Interviews, focus groups, the Delphi technique, and observation can all be used to collect qualitative data, allowing researchers to delve deeper into complex phenomena (Brown, 2018, pp. 95). Interviews are exchanges or interactions in which questions are posed in a structured, semi-structured, or unstructured format to obtain comprehensive replies to a topic. Face-to-face interviews, email interviews, phone interviews, and written interviews are the most frequent methods for gathering qualitative data (Brown, 2018, pp. 97–98). E-interviews are becoming increasingly popular in qualitative research due to their ease, cost-effectiveness, and capacity to engage with participants regardless of geographical location. These interviews enable in-depth investigation of participants' viewpoints, experiences, and emotions, resulting in rich data for analysis. In contrast, Brown (2018, pp. 99–101) suggests that the Delphi approach or focus groups may not be appropriate for this study since they rely on consensus building or group or panel dynamics, which may not sufficiently capture the individual experiences and perspectives of spa workers, which is the goal of this study. These two procedures are both time-consuming and need

a high degree of commitment and precision, which are not fit for the task at hand. Therefore, interviews are the method of choice for this study because they will allow for an in-depth exploration of participants' opinions and perspectives. The other methods of qualitative data collections do not suit the diverse work nature of the intended study population in terms of schedules and workload and will not ensure sufficient participation as interviews will. According to Smith and Sparkes (2016, p.107), online interviews are done utilizing computer-mediated communication. Such interviews, sometimes known as e-interviews, are used to collect data over the Internet unlike the traditional face to face or phone interviews. Online interviews are classified as synchronous or asynchronous, depending on how questions and answers are sent, received, and responded to. Synchronous communication involves real-time question-and-answer interaction, whereas asynchronous communication requires some wait between questions and responses. Online interviews are an ideal option when dealing with delicate themes since participants may be more inclined to share personal problems and feel more at ease discussing sensitive subjects in the comfort of their own surroundings. On the other hand, e-interviews do not capture all aspects of body language, social cues, or emotions. Asynchronous written e-interviews have been chosen as the main data collecting technique for this thesis. According to Hunt and McHale (2007, p. 1416), structured interviews can be either be a predetermined series of unchangeable questions or fixed questions with prompts that allow the interviewer to elicit more thorough responses. Therefore, the e-interviews for this study will include structured open-ended questions with prompts that will allow participants to freely express their thoughts and feelings and allow them to submit detailed responses at their own time in an asynchronous manner, eliminating the necessity for a face-to-face interview.

The act of choosing a portion of people or objects for research purposes from a broader group is referred to as sampling. According to Bhardwaj (2019, p. 158) obtaining a sample that is statistically representative of the population of interest is one of the goals of sampling in research to ensure that the conclusion and outcomes generated from the sample appropriately reflect the interactions that exist within the community. In research, sampling procedures fall into two main types, according to Stratton (2021, pp. 373–374). The first method is probability sampling, where each person in the target population has an equal chance of being chosen for the study. The second method is non-probability

sampling, in which study participants are chosen either by the researcher or of their own accord. This eliminates the possibility of every member of the target population taking part in the study. The results of this specific thesis will be applicable to only employees in the wellness and spa businesses under the assumption that the sample was representative of the entire population of spa employees across Nairobi city.

Population and sample size determination are key parts of qualitative research since they have a direct impact on the depth and breadth of the study's results. The goal of qualitative research is to gather in-depth insights that reflect the opinions and experiences of a smaller group of people, rather than statistical representativeness or generalizing findings to a wider population. As a result, the population and sample size must be carefully chosen and directed by the research questions and objectives. The sampling for a qualitative study is often characterized by characteristics related to the research topic, such as people with a certain experience, background, or perspective. Sampling in qualitative research is frequently non-random and may include purposeful sampling approaches to pick individuals who may give rich and diverse perspectives into the subject of the research (Bekele and Ago, 2022, p. 43). The phenomenology approach, which this study will use, is defined by Bekele and Ago (2022, p. 48) as the process by which the researcher obtains the main points of participants' descriptions of a phenomenon as they relate to human experiences. This process entails examining a limited set of topics to create meaningful patterns and linkages. The researcher puts aside their personal experiences during this procedure to comprehend the participants. Several studies have been cited in Bekele and Ago (2022, p. 48) to find the appropriate sample size for a qualitative study. First, Bernard (2013, pp. 190–192) supports that in a study of lived experience, 10–20 convenient or purposeful research participants are adequate to identify and understand the major or key themes. The second source Morse (2000, p. 5), recommends a minimum of 6 to 10 participants for phenomenological research. Alternatively, for a phenomenological study, Creswell (2016, p. 61) suggests doing five to twenty-five interviews. Therefore, in the context of this study, a purposeful sample size of 20 will comprise of spa employees from various spas, experiences, and perspectives to capture a varied variety of wellbeing views.

Another sampling method will also be considered in this study. According to Bhardwaj (2019, p. 161), convenience sampling is the process of choosing sample participants

depending on how easily the researcher can reach them. The individuals that the researcher selects are those who are easily reachable and available. Convenience sampling, which includes incorporating friends or relatives in a sample rather than focusing on unknown individuals, is a common method for overcoming various research-related limits (Taherdoost, 2016, p. 22). Because it is low-cost, effective, and simple to use according to Jager et al. (2017, p. 15), the method of convenience sampling will be suitable for this study. The thesis's author has experience working in Nairobi's spa and wellness sector and will use networks of former colleagues and beauty school classmates now working in various spas in Nairobi to complete the e-interview questions and gather information. To adequately achieve the study's primary purpose of examining the elements impacting staff well-being and to facilitate the author to develop and apply an employee wellbeing measuring framework, the research questions and literature review served as the foundation for the interview questions as outlined in Table 1 below. As a result, each question was created to directly address the research questions by providing background information of respondents' wellbeing working in the spa, and what their ideal environment and need for wellbeing framework in the industry is. Since the study used qualitative research methodology, as previously mentioned, it incorporated a variety of open-ended e-interview questions that might capture the thoughts and experiences of spa employees. Based on previously published scholarly research, these questions are specifically crafted to address aspects that are known to have a substantial impact on overall wellbeing, including job satisfaction, work-life balance, stress, burnout, workload, and managerial support, as well as physical, mental, and psychological wellbeing.

Table 1. Sources of the e-questions

Question	Category	Source
1–2	Background information	Author
3–5	Physical, Mental, Psychological Wellbeing	Chari, 2021; Tennant et al., 2007; Topp et al., 2015
6–8	Workload, stress, burnout	Burr et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2022; Prasad et al., 2020
9	Job satisfaction	Spector, 2022
10	Work life balance	Leslie, 2019
11	Managerial support	Hämmig, 2017
12-13	Is employee wellbeing prioritized in spa industry, unique challenges faced by employees	Author
14–15	Need for a framework (suggestions and ideal work environment)	Pradhan & Hati, 2022; Khatri & Gupta, 2019

More precisely, anonymous, self-evaluation-based e-interview questions (see Appendix 1) were distributed to the predetermined sample of twenty spa employees in Nairobi, Kenya for 10 days, from March 25 to April 3rd, 2024. The author of the thesis was unable to travel to the research country Kenya in this case, so this [Google form link](#) was shared via WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger to former coworkers and classmates that were chosen for the survey. Specific requirements for each participant in accordance with their purposeful sampling include working in a Nairobi, Kenya spa and having a professional and personal interest in contributing to the study on employee health to guarantee the validity of the data gathered. The researcher shared the questions with 20-day spa employees in Nairobi but only 18 successfully responded. Appendix 2 shows an elaborate outline of the demographic data of the respondents (R1–R18) that gave answers to the e-interview. The data was large and diverse enough to represent the quality of experiences that the study intended to analyze and draw findings from.

Alem (2020, p. 2) defines data as any digit, representation, image, or information stored that may be analyzed to provide a result, solution, or conclusion. This author goes on to say that data analysis entails turning unprocessed data into ideas and information that have value and can be assessed both statistically and qualitatively. Analyzing structured data to find underlying patterns or meanings is the process. This necessitates dissecting complicated elements into smaller, more interpretable parts and reconstructing them. This study relied on the thematic analysis method to analyze and interpret the data collected. According to Braun and Clarke (2012, p.58), thematic data analysis method finds, categorizes, analyses, and interprets patterns in qualitative data. It recognizes what is common in the way a topic is discussed or written about, and then makes meaning of those similarities in connection to the specific topic and research questions. Thematic analysis allows the author to analyze meaning and identify and code recurrent themes throughout the entire dataset or to delve deeply into one specific feature of a phenomena (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). The author coded the data and identified themes based on the different questions as outlined in the subsequent section of the paper. The researcher was able to identify important themes related to the factors influencing wellbeing and the findings gave significant insights to develop a framework to assess and evaluate the wellbeing of spa employees.

2.2. Results and Analysis

2.2.1. Effects of work on physical, mental, and psychological wellbeing

Nairobi's spa employees experience described common aspects of work that affect their physical health (see Table 2, p.27). Nine respondents (R1, R2, R5, R7, R10, R12- R14) mentioned that sleep quality was the most affected aspect of their lives. For example, R1 explained that "I normally get fatigued since I have 1 day off in a week and at times working for longer hours which lead to lack of enough sleep". R10 said "getting enough rest at night is crucial, although sometimes it can be a challenge after busy days as I feel overstimulated". Moreover, eight respondents (R1, R2, R5-R7, R14-R16) reported that day spa work caused them fatigue and loss of energy. R6 said that working days are long (12-hour shifts), it tires the body, leading to low energy and sometimes feeling unmotivated, and it gets harder to concentrate. Eight respondents also (R3, R4, R8, R10, R12, R15, R16, and R18) mentioned physical pain and strain. R10 reported that it can be physically demanding, especially during long shifts. Five respondents (R6, R7, R10, R11, and R18) associated their spa work with poor dietary habits. For instance, R6 explained that they snacked a lot in between clients to get enough energy and slept a lot any chance they got due to exhaustion. Only four respondents (R2, R9, R14, and R18) identified their general physical coping mechanisms. For instance, R9 said that "while the relaxing atmosphere and the opportunities to receive treatments like massages help me feel rejuvenated, the long working hours can make me feel physically tired". The last three respondents cited work schedule and demands as the part of their lives that spa work interfered with (R3, R9, and R14). R14 said that long standing hours, and lack of structured off days affects productivity. The data shows that Nairobi's spa employees are aware of the physical health challenges they face due to their work as day spa employees. What is more interesting is that the employees are keenly aware of the different ways in which they can cope with their physical health challenges since they must make ends meet in the fast-paced environment that is Kenya's capital city. Some of the coping strategies noted in the responses include eating healthily in the course of duty, exercising as much as they can, and trying as best they can to make up for lost sleep time.

Regarding effects of spa work on mental health, seven respondents reported that stress from clients had the biggest impact on their mental health (R1, R6, R9, R10, R14, R15, and R17). Four respondents (R3, R6, R9, R11) said team tension, and work-life imbalance was stated by one respondent (R1) (see Table 2 below). R10 noted that mostly irate clients take advantage and report negative comments, and the management doesn't care to do thorough research. Moreover, R9 responded that "I know that some people don't get along with each other well. They usually try to stay cordial but, on some days, you can tell that there is tension". Lastly, R1 reported that "I realized my life revolves around the spa, colleagues, and clients only. Like I don't have life outside the spa no connection with family and friends since am always busy and it's really disturbing my mind". The day spa employees adopted specific ways through which to tackle their mental health challenges. These include general "coping strategies, a positive work environment, self-care activities and mental health maintenance.". 12 respondents (R1, R4, R7, R9- R16, and R18) observed that they had developed general coping strategies to help them address their mental health. This was followed by five employees who supported a positive work environment (R3, R6, R9, R11, and R18) as a coping strategy. Five respondents also depended on self-care to protect their mental health (R2, R6, R8, R12, and R15). For example, R11 noted that during the massage sessions, they play relaxing music. Moreover, R3 responded that the spa provides a supportive work culture and access to some spa services for them to relax if needed. Lastly, R15 noted that they try their best to practice mindfulness and stress-relief techniques to manage any work-related anxieties or pressures. The responses show that Nairobi's day spa employees face mental health challenges at their places of work. However, most have developed the right strategies that help them cope with these difficulties regarding their mental health.

Table 2. Summary of main themes on physical, mental, and emotional health.

Category	Themes
Physical health	Fatigue and loss of energy, poor sleep quality, poor dietary habits, physical pain and strain, long working hours.
Mental health	Stress from clients, interpersonal relationships and team tension, work-life imbalance.
Psychological Wellbeing	Emotions-mentally drained, feeling satisfied, feeling happy, dislike, fulfilled, cheerful, energized, stressed.

12 respondents said that they were mentally drained (R1, R3, R4, R7, R9-R12, R14-R16, and R18). This was followed by 11 respondents who observed that they felt satisfied with their day spa jobs (R1, R3, R4, R6, R8, R10-R13, R16, and R18). Another seven respondents said that they felt satisfied with the way they interacted with and helped clients solve their problems (R1, R4, R6, R8, R10, R12, and R15). Five respondents reported that they were happy with the support they received from colleagues (R1, R4, R6, R9, and R13). It was clear that these emotional states generally depended on each day spa employee's specific circumstances at their current workplace at a given time, day, week, or month (see Table 2, above). For instance, R10 expressed their psychological drain by stating that they are currently feeling drained and that a dislike for their job is growing each day. On the other hand, feeling satisfied with the work came out in R12's statement that "I mostly feel fulfilled and cheerful in my job at the spa. There's a sense of satisfaction in helping clients feel pampered and confident". Another statement that specified happiness with helping clients solve their problems came from R8, who reported that they feel cheerful and energized mostly thus provide clients with a calm environment and helping them relax which is fulfilling. Lastly, R4 showed happiness with help from colleagues and said that they enjoy helping others, interacting with people, and gain a lot of energy from their colleagues. These statements show the employees' sense of maturity in accepting their own emotional states with their work on a given day. It is therefore evident that most positive emotions arise from the warm relationship the spa employees have with their colleagues and, but mostly with helping the clients. Based on the data above, it can be said that seeing clients leave the premises satisfied and happy is the single biggest contributor of job satisfaction to the Nairobi day spa employees. It is therefore not accidental that disagreements with some clients cause negative emotions to the spa employees. Overall, a day spa employee's emotional state seems to depend on the atmosphere at the workplace.

2.2.2. Causes of stress, burnout symptoms, and workload factors

The spa employees identified various causes of stress and some general ways on how they deal with these stressors (see Table 3, p.30). Seven respondents identified high client expectations as the leading cause of job stress or pressure (R2, R3, R5, R7, R10, R11, and R18). Seven respondents also cited poor management and leadership as the biggest cause

of pressure (R2, R3, R6, R7-R9, and R15). Six respondents singled out operational challenges as the key contributor to job stress (R1, R7, R9, R11, R16, and R18). Only three respondents cited work-life balance (R1, R4, and R8) and pressure to perform (R6, R9, and R11) respectively as their stressors at the workplace. The least stressor with two respondents was team tensions (R8 and R16). Poor day spa management and leadership and high expectations from the clients seemed to cause the employees the most stress. Respondent R2 complained that the most stressful thing is the high expectations at all times when both the clients and the owner of the spa put a lot of pressure. Further, respondent R3 echoed the same views on poor management in the statement that their main challenge was dealing with bosses who get angry over nothing, who favour some employees and like gossiping. Another respondent R1 stated that “not having free time over the weekend and I honestly don’t know how to deal with it because, being paid with commission you must work over the weekends since it’s the busiest”. But respondent R9 said that there is pressure to sell products while most customers do not usually want to spend any more money than they have already paid. The above challenges necessitated some coping strategies that three respondents adopted to counter the stressors (R6, R13, and R18). R6 noted that their stress level is quite high, but they have made it clear to themselves that if they get enough sleep at night and eat well, it is easier to cope. Similarly, R13 stated that “I rely on my training and remind myself of my passion for beauty and wellness. I also appreciate the support of my coworkers and manager who help in case of extra workload”. R18 explained that taking short breaks between appointments also helps alleviate stress. The responses point to chances that Nairobi’s day spa employees know how to navigate stress factors at work.

Nairobi’s spa employees acknowledged going through moments of burnout in the course of duty and experiencing various common symptoms (see Table 3 below). Nine respondents cited physical and emotional exhaustion as the most prevalent sign of burnout (R1, R2, R6-R8, R10-R12, and R17). Lack of motivation had six responses (R1, R4, R7, R9, R11, and R16). Headaches and insomnia recorded five responses (R2, R7, R10, R11, and R15). Irritability had three responses (R2, R5, R7), same as feeling stressed with three responses (R1, R4, R11). It is important to note that nearly all the employees recalled experiencing burnout. The respondents explained that these signs of burnout affected their work performance in different ways. R2 explained that “recently, it has been so

challenging I noticed that my body and mind were tired, I couldn't concentrate anymore, I was stressed and as a result my thoughts were more negative". In such cases, the employees must look for alternative ways of recharging. For their part, R11 noted that I think the physical demands of the job, long working hours, and the emotional labour of ensuring maximum clients' satisfaction can contribute to burnout in our field. The employee feels that the clients always want more and more, and yet there is pressure to cater to many clients. R7 recalled that "I felt like my head is going to explode and I feel like quitting the job immediately". On constant irritability, R5 observed that they have been burned out for like the last two years, depression, sadness, aggression being daily symptoms. The employees identified two causes of burnout. These are working long hours and high client volumes. Working for long hours with 8 responses was the major cause (R2, R5, R8, R9, R11, R13, R14, and R16). For instance, respondent R2 stated that the fact that the work felt like being on call almost 24/7 and the expectation that to be perfect in every way. This was followed by two respondents who identified high client volume as another cause of work burnout (R4 and R17). Respondent R17 remembered that burnout in the spa sector is fueled by long hours, lots of work in the weekend, and the pressure to meet client demands and to perform for business to earn well and get a good commission. Most of the responses show that constant burnout is a common experience in Nairobi's day spa work. The causes of burnout range from long working hours to client volumes. As a result, the employees have devised different ways to cope with the problem.

Table 3. Summary of main themes on stress, burnout, and workload.

Category	Main Themes
Stress	High expectations from clients, operational challenges, team tensions, work-life imbalance, and pressure to perform.
Burnout symptoms	Physical and emotional exhaustion, feeling stressed, irritability, lack of motivation, and headaches and insomnia.
Workload and work schedules	Handling client appointments-spa services, therapies, and treatments, greeting and welcoming guests, administrative tasks, additional duties as requested by the management.

Eight employees felt that handling client appointments brought the heaviest workload (R2, R5, R9, R10, R12, R14, R16, and R18). Six respondents identified administrative tasks as another weekly workload in the spa (R3, R6, R9, R11, R14, and R18). Four respondents identified greeting and welcoming guests (R1, R4, R7, and R17), another

four cited additional duties as requested by management (R2, R5, R9, R11) (see Table 3, above). Most of the respondents felt that the work sometimes overwhelmed them, but it was generally manageable. For example, R12 recalled that their workload mainly consists of managing appointments, leading staff meetings, and resolving client concerns. The response implies that although these are different tasks, the employee somewhat creative enough to manage them. Moreover, R6 explained that typical schedule involves appointments, administrative tasks, and client interactions. Respondent R4 noted that fortunately the manager is so thoughtful and gives break and space to take rest. The respondent is honest enough to acknowledge that the manager understands enough, and so the manager is part of the reason they are often able to do their tasks as required. On the overall manageability of the tasks, the respondents were almost equally split on whether the workload was manageable or demanding. 10 respondents noted that the workload was very demanding (R2, R5, R6, R8, R9, R11-R13, R15, R16, and R18). Eight respondents confirmed that the weekly workload was manageable (R1, R3, R4, R7, R9, R10, R14, R17). The results show that even though the employees complain of the workload, they confirm that they can generally handle the spa work. This means that the complaints are marginal, and the right interventions can help them handle their tasks even better.

2.2.3. Job satisfaction, perceived support, and work-life balance aspects

The day spa employees in Nairobi expressed different levels of satisfaction or lack thereof with their job (see Table 4, p.33). The highest number of respondents who were satisfied with their work at the Nairobi spas (9) liked their job because they loved helping the clients in the course of duty (R1, R3, R4, R6, R8, R9, R10, R13, and R16). For instance, R6 replied that they are generally satisfied and fulfilled by the work they do which is helping clients relax, rejuvenate, and alleviate pain. Four respondents replied that they were overall satisfied with all aspects of their spa job (R2, R4, R8, and R14). Respondent R3 noted that they enjoy creating an organized and structured environment. Another four respondents answered that they were satisfied with learning from colleagues and managers (R3, R6, R8, and R18). Respondent R18 cited that they are currently working with good people and that the boss is nice. Six respondents were dissatisfied with their job because of toxic colleagues (R1, R4, R6, R7, R9, and R13). For instance, R7 explained

that occasional conflicts with other staff were sources of frustration and made them dissatisfied with the spa job. Moreover, three respondents suggested that they were dissatisfied with their job because of difficult clients (R3, R6, and R10). Respondent R3 revealed that there are times when dealing with difficult clients or managing workload pressures can be challenging. Three respondents also said they were dissatisfied with their job due to overwork (R6, R10, and R17). R10 reported that they get overworked at times. The responses show that most employees in Nairobi's spas feel satisfied when they help clients. In the views of the respondents, it appears that this single reason overrides other negative aspects of the spas such as overwork and little pay. For instance, it is interesting that only two respondents mentioned feeling drained as one of the causes of their dissatisfaction with the day spa job in Nairobi.

The employees identified the different ways through which they strike a balance between personal and professional life as seen on Table 4 below. The data shows that seven employees engaged in activities to rewind and recharge (R2, R6, R8, R12, R15, R16, and R18). Six respondents said they utilized off days well (R1, R5, R7, R10, R13, R18). Another six respondents reported that they prioritized self-care and hobbies (R1, R2, R6, R9, R12, and R16) to balance between personal and professional life. Moreover, five respondents identified regular downtime for relaxation (R3, R6, R11, R16, and R18) while another five mentioned disengaging work from personal life (R3, R8, R13, R16, and R17). The above figures show how much the employees are aware of the need for them to balance personal and professional time. On activities to rewind and recharge, R16 notes that "I try to work out, chill out while am at home, go out with my friends and try to have social life as much as I can". Moreover, R10 stated that they try as much not to do a lot during the one-off day they have and switch into family bonding and activities to enjoy and unwind. On disengaging work from personal life, R16 confirms that "I make time for activities I enjoy outside of work, such as spending time with loved ones, pursuing hobbies, and engaging in relaxation techniques". As earlier noted, there is a sense in which the day spa employees in Nairobi are conscious of the importance of separating personal and professional time. The fact that all respondent figures are high shows the degree to which the employees try their best to maintain work life balance as the spa work can be very consuming with early and late hours, and few hours off per week.

Table 4. Summary of main themes on job satisfaction, support, and work-life balance.

Category	Main Themes
Job satisfaction	Overall satisfied, satisfied with creative aspects of work, satisfied with client feedback, satisfied with helping clients and satisfied with learning from colleagues and managers. Dissatisfied with wages, overwork, difficult clients, toxic colleagues, and feeling drained.
Work life balance	Engaging in activities to unwind and recharge, utilizing off days well, disengaging work from personal life, prioritizing self-care and hobbies, and prioritizing downtime for relaxation.
Managerial support	Supportive managers, positive co-worker relationship, teamwork, and collaboration, and handling difficult situations at the workplace together.

Table 4 above features the themes on the kinds of support or encouragement they received from both managers and co-workers and how this impacted their work. Eleven respondents commented that they worked under supportive managers (R1, R4, R6, R7, R9, R10, R12, R15, R16, R17, and R18). Moreover, 10 respondents acknowledged that working in a supportive atmosphere both by the manager and other co-workers enhanced a positive co-worker relationship (R2, R3, R7-R9, R11, R12, R14, R16, and R18). R1 noted that the manager always appreciates their work and experience, and does role plays and practice sessions of some spa services and how to handle clients with employees. R9 said that they come together to solve a client’s problem with colleagues and this effort eases the load and stress. This respondent also suggested that most clients usually cooperate with the employees when they sense that the whole spa works as a team. The other themes stressed the importance of support to teamwork and collaboration, and to the recognition and appreciation of team members. Nine respondents confirmed that support encouraged teamwork and collaboration (R3, R5, R8, R10, R12, R14, R15, R16, and R17). For instance, respondents R10 noted that teamwork has really encouraged them at work and made it easier in communicating with each other politely and making everything run smoothly. Moreover, eight respondents reported that co-worker support encouraged an atmosphere of helping each other with workload or difficult situations (R1, R4, R6, R7, R9, R10, R12, and R18). Specifically, R4 explained that “if they see that a certain client is being rude to me, they try to stay in the same room as me. This makes me feel supported but lowers the risk of a conflict. If I have a lot of work cleaning up after a

client and they are on a break, they will help me. They might also fold and roll towels when an appointment is cancelled”. The number of respondents who commented on the value of managerial and co-worker support is generally high and suggests that the employees appreciate the importance and role that support, and encouragement plays in the work they do.

2.2.4. Prioritization of wellbeing and the unique challenges spa employees face

The respondents commented on the level of attention and awareness in the Kenyan spa industry in terms of looking after the wellbeing of the employees (see Table 5 below). Nine respondents were of the view that there was a general lack of care and support (R2, R3, R5, R7, R9, R10, R13, R16, and R18). For instance, R9 explained that employee wellbeing is not a big topic in the spa industry in their opinion stating that they know of very few spa owners who prioritize the wellbeing of their employees. Respondent R3 also observed that spa employees work very hard behind the scenes so the wellbeing should be considered. Seven respondents noted an increasing sense of awareness and attention on employee wellbeing in recent years (R1, R5, R7, R10, R12, R15, and R17). Specifically, R12 noted that employee wellbeing is increasingly recognized in the spa industry, but there’s still lots of room for improvement. Further, respondent R5 affirmed that “I have worked in the industry a few years and in the beginning, it was brutal no one cared if you made money for the business, nowadays its better a bit there is more awareness globally and people both employers and customers are mindful of like mental and emotional stuff”. Five respondents noted the impact of lack of regulations and standardization in the spa industry operation policies (R3, R5, R10, R11, and R12). The sense of neglect ends up causing harm to the spa employees. For example, R11 observed and commented that the culture is brutal and very client focused. Another five respondents stress the need for the government to recognize the challenges that the spa industry faces in Nairobi (R2, R8, R9, R13, and R18). Respondent R9 confirmed that the result of the industry culture is that there is a lot of staff turnover. Most people do not work in the spa industry for a long time. They often try to move to a different working environment. The foregoing comments point to the need for industry intervention on employee wellbeing in the Kenyan spa culture.

Table 5. Summary of main themes on prioritization of wellbeing and unique challenges

Category	Main Themes
Prioritized employee wellbeing of in spa industry	There is lack of care and support, there is need for increased awareness and attention, prioritization varies across spa establishments, lack of proper wellbeing impacts industry and employees, there are some efforts towards improvement, and there is recognition of challenges faced.
Unique challenges faced by employees	Physical strain and fatigue, emotional labour and stress management, job instability and turnover, lack of regulation and structure, negative client interactions and expectations, poor communication between staff and management, poor benefits and working conditions, unfair compensation structures, lack of support from the government, and psychological and mental effect on employees.

The respondents then commented on the unique challenges that affected the wellbeing of spa employees in Nairobi as seen on Table 5 above, and how these could be addressed. The top unique challenge was physical strain and fatigue with nine respondents (R3, R4, R5, R9, R11, R13-R15, and R16). Respondent R11 said that spa jobs are physically very demanding. Spa staff stand on their feet for most of the day and use their body muscles during every treatment. Most tasks are very repetitive. This takes a toll on our bodies. Injuries are common. On top of that, the constant interaction with clients is emotionally demanding too. Eight respondents highlighted the challenge of emotional labour and stress management (R1, R2, R5, R9, R10, R13, R15, and R16). For instance, R5 notes that a lot of emotional labour is involved in providing personalized customer service because spa employees often need to manage client expectations, handle complaints, and maintain a calm and professional demeanour, which can be draining over time. The emotional part of the employee’s life needs constant support because it is the basis for all the other aspects of work that the employee performs at work. Any neglect of the employee’s emotional makeup affects the physical aspect as well. Moreover, R16 observes that “as spa workers are in close contact with people, they interact a lot and must find solutions when needed, I think (from my own experience) that emphasis must be put on employee wellbeing”. A running theme throughout the respondents’ comments on the mental and emotional aspects of the job has been clients’ expectations. It is possible that more research might be needed to decode exactly what these expectations really are in the context of spa work. For instance, R10 specified that they would like to get more

training on how to deal with demanding or difficult clients. What these responses do not unpack is how to define a demanding or difficult client in the context of spa work. The better question to ask is what they are demanding of the employee that is so emotionally draining.

2.2.5. Suggestions on a suitable framework and ideal work environment

The respondents commented on their views of an appropriate framework for evaluating the wellbeing of day spa employees in Nairobi (see Table 6, below). Five respondents said workload management and breaks (R1, R5, R10, R14, and R17). R5 explained “that check the number of hours we work, how often we get breaks (and what we do during those breaks), how we get treated by clients, if we get contacted when we are not working, get enough feedback, if we get compensated fairly (pay and benefits), the management style of the manager and owner, training on handling difficult client, support for boundary-setting towards clients, analysis of turnover rates and reasons for leaving”. The comment is comprehensive on the kind of details a good framework for evaluating spa employees’ wellbeing should be. Moreover, R10 noted that workload management, stress levels, job satisfaction, physical health indicators, and access to support resources. There were four preferred components of an appropriate framework with four respondents each. These are setting up good standards (R2, R4, R11, and R15), compensation and benefits (R3, R7, R11, and R12), channels for professional development (R3, R6, R10, and R14), and communication and feedback (R1, R2, R8, and R15). For instance, R1 reported that taking time to have briefs especially before handling clients and doing the same before closing for the day just to understand and review challenges of the day would be a good way to enhance communication and feedback. Moreover, R11 recommended that the framework should include good commissions and pay to compensate long hours and motivate. The spa employees expect that these components of the appropriate framework would address their most pressing needs. The least commented on themes are the need for a good work-life balance with three respondents (R9, R14, and R18) and employee morale with three respondents (R2, R8, and R15). These results show that all the themes identified form a good basis for developing a suitable framework to evaluate day spa employee wellbeing in Nairobi.

Table 6. Summary of main themes on suitable framework and ideal work environment

Category	Main Themes
Ideal work environment	Compensation and benefits, employee wellbeing and support, work-life balance, supportive management and teamwork, professionalism and respect, adequate staffing and workload management, career development and opportunities, positive work environment, break and relaxation spaces, and communication and feedback mechanisms.
Suggestions for a framework	Regulation and industry standards, compensation and benefit, workload management and breaks, mental health support, professional development and opportunities, communication feedback mechanisms, work-life balance, and employ satisfaction and morale.

The sampled respondents also commented on their idea of a perfect work environment in a Nairobi spa establishment (see Table 6 above). 12 respondents stated their ideal as employee wellbeing and support (R1, R2, R3, R5, R6, R8, R10, R11, R13, R14, R15 and R17). For instance, respondent R5 comments that a perfect work environment in the spa industry would prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of employees and have a culture of support. The response is in recognition of the fact that performance depends on the employee's overall health. Moreover, R10 notes that in their ideal work environment includes providing adequate breaks between appointments, offering resources for physical and mental health support, fostering a culture of collaboration and support among staff members, and recognizing and rewarding employee contributions. 10 respondents said an ideal would be fair competitive compensation and benefits (R1, R3, R4, R6, R8, R10, R11, R14, R15, and R17). For example, R8 suggests an environment where an employee is well appreciated and rewarded. Another 10 respondents also mentioned supportive management and teamwork (R3, R5, R8, R9, R10, R12, R13, R16, R17, and R18). Specifically, R15 elaborately explained their ideal included a listening manager/employer, a relaxing and pleasant atmosphere should, having enough rest and positive energy to help in providing high quality service, friendly work environment where customers will also be more satisfied because of the positive energy of the staff. Taking all this together, the author notes the comprehensive nature of the components the employees wish for as a perfect spa work environment and it shows the gaps that require interventions and recommendations to enhance the work environment of spa employees.

2.3. Discussion and Recommendations

The varied responses by day spa employees in Nairobi enabled the study to adequately address the research questions and helped the author adequately explore employee wellbeing perceptions of day spa work in Nairobi. Based on the respondents' experiences, the study noted the following important characteristics of employee wellbeing in the spa industry in Nairobi. Different factors such as fatigue and energy, sleep quality, dietary habits, physical pain, and strain, impacted Nairobi's day spa workers' physical health and therefore affected the employees' general performance at the workplace. These coincide with the studies by Torres, and Zhang (2021, p. 61) who investigated sleep quality, physical activity, and dietary needs as aspects of physical health that are mostly affect employee wellbeing. The aspects that affected employees' mental health were stress from clients, interpersonal relationships, team tensions, and work-life imbalance. Rasool et al., (2021, pp. 4,17); Gorgenyi-Hegybes et al. (2021, p. 55) reinforced the view that the employees' mental health was a sensitive and central determinant of their performance. These factors support the studies by showing that toxic work environment from stress and work relation tensions rank highly as leading causes of mental health distress among employees. The analysis also confirmed that day spa workers' emotional wellbeing is important to their performance at the workplace. The different factors that influence employees' emotional health include positive or negative emotions, feeling of mental drain or physical exhaustion, and client interaction outcomes influenced emotions such as satisfaction, feeling competent, cheerful, or stressed if interaction was negative etc. These possible indicators had already been identified in past studies by Ray (2022, pp. 245–246), Tennant et al., (2007, p. 3) and Topp et al., (2015, p. 168).

The findings revealed that factors responsible for causing high stress levels were management and leadership issues, high expectations from clients, operational challenges, and team tensions. High customer expectations were singled out as the chief cause of stress to Nairobi's day spa employees. These stressors agree with the findings of the studies by (Burr et al., 2019, p. 483) whose tool measure elements of stress and their consequences on employees. The study showed that there are different prevalent signs of burnout among the employees of Nairobi's day spas. These signs include physical and emotional exhaustion, feeling stressed, irritability, lack of motivation, headaches, and

insomnia. The study noted that burnout had the ability to drain an employee and slow down their performance and productivity at work. This was supported by similar findings in studies by stress Aluculesei et al., (2015, pp. 4, 6–7) and Prasad et al. (2020, p. 2) that concluded how stress and burnout lead to lack of motivation, low performance, lack of interest and absenteeism. The identification of physical and emotional exhaustion as the most prevalent sign of burnout among spa employees had been pointed out in the study by Schwepker et al. (2020, p. 146) who concluded that these factors also lead to poor health habits. The study showed the extent to which day spa employees in Nairobi had varied and unpredictable weekly workloads. These include handling client appointments and performing spa services, greeting, and welcoming guests, administrative tasks, additional duties as requested by the management, cleaning, and sanitation, looking for customer and retail sales. The findings revealed that Nairobi's day spa employees did not specialize in the duties they carried out but kept switching from one to another during the workday. The findings are supported by Bekele et al. (2023, pp. 7–8) who examined how work shifts, job control, and workload affect motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty at work.

The study showed that there were different levels of job satisfaction in Nairobi's day spa industry. They include overall satisfied, satisfied with creative aspects of work, satisfied with client feedback, satisfied with helping and satisfying clients, and satisfied with learning from colleagues and managers. The analysis identified helping and satisfying clients as the leading reason for day spa employees' job satisfaction and agrees with the findings of the study on Nairobi's spas by Karuga (2022, p. 31) which found out that employee-customer relationship influences day spa business performance. The findings also align with those from studies by Koopmans et al., (2014, pp. 163–165) and Ramos-Villagrasa et al., (2019, p. 197) who noted that performance at work directly links to satisfaction. The study determined that Nairobi's day spa employees adopted specific strategies that helped them ensure effective work life balance. These are activities to unwind and recharge, utilizing off days well, disengaging work from personal life, prioritizing self-care, and hobbies, and having regular downtime for relaxation. The study found out that the day spa employees were often willing to change a given strategy depending on whether it worked for them or not. The findings are like those in studies by Obrenovic et al. (2020, p. 13) and Leslie et al. (2019, pp. 72–73) who investigated how

work life balance has an impact on employee's health, happiness, and capacity to operate at their highest level both at work and in other facets of life.

This study also sought to explore the nature of the day spa work environment in Nairobi regarding general support from the manager and colleagues. This was in recognition of the fact that the work environment varies from one establishment to another, and that it determines employee performance. Some of the answers that came up include supportive manager, positive co-worker relationship, teamwork, and collaboration, and handling difficult situations together. The analysis identifies supportive managers and colleagues as a defining characteristic of day spa work in Nairobi's spas and agrees with the findings of the study by Inceoglu et al. (2018, p. 180) that noted how good leadership fosters a culture of support, trust, acknowledgement, and feedback and Hämmig (2017, pp. 393–401) showed how support from different networks and sources such family, friends, bosses, colleagues, the company itself impact overall employee well-being. Hauff et al. (2020, pp. 2115, 2117–2118) also noted that managerial support helps employees meet work requirements and improves performance. The study finally seeks to understand the unique challenges of day spa employees in Nairobi. This was because there might be challenges that are specifically found in Nairobi, given that all countries have their own historical and socio-cultural contexts that define them. The themes that emerged were physical demands and fatigue, emotional labour and stress management, job instability and turnover, lack of regulation and structure, client interactions and expectations, poor communication between staff and management, poor benefits and working conditions, unfair compensation structures, lack of support from the government, and psychological effect on employees. After identifying unique challenges, the author also sought to investigate the ideal work environment for employees in Nairobi's day spas. This was intended to complement the framework to be developed for employee wellbeing in the day spa industry. The employees said their ideal work environment included compensation and benefits, employee wellbeing and support, work-life balance, supportive management and teamwork, professionalism and respect, adequate staffing and workload management, career development and opportunities, ergonomic and safe workplace, positive work environment, break and relaxation spaces, and communication and feedback mechanisms.

Developing a framework is the main agenda of this thesis and it will be used to evaluate and address the wellbeing challenges that exist in the spa industry. The main suggestions for a framework that emerged from the analysis include regulation and industry standards, compensation and benefit, workload management and breaks, mental health support, professional development and opportunities, communication feedback mechanisms, work-life balances, and attention to satisfaction and morale. These findings support the need for a framework as supported by studies such as like Pradhan & Hati (2022, pp. 389-398) and Khatri & Gupta (2019, pp. 352-368) which elaborated the need and development of wellbeing measurement tools that enables businesses to evaluate various components of employee wellbeing, highlight areas in need of improvement, and come up with tailored interventions for challenges influencing employee productivity and performance. These suggestions together with the unique challenges identified and what the spa employees think an ideal environment should be form the basis of the recommendations outlined next which act as the framework developed for Nairobi spas to use to enhance employee wellbeing. The study recommends the following comprehensive framework to evaluate and improve employee wellbeing:

- Day spa managers should prioritize physical health of spa employees to promote performance by guaranteeing that their staff members get the best sleep possible and minimize physical strain while working. Additionally, to promote their physical health and welfare, they should make sure that workers have access to healthcare benefits and undergo routine check-ups.
- To improve the psychological and mental well-being of their staff, day spa managers should investigate strategies to control the stress and emotional labour that come with having high expectations from clients. To reduce stress, one strategy is to assist and encourage staff members to be upfront with clients about any difficulties they may be having. Another is to support staff members in seeking out mental health resources and assistance, such as therapy, meditation, and mindfulness, and to help them set clear expectations with clients prior to spa services.
- Spas should minimize the amount of labour assigned to staff members each week, simplify the weekly timetable, and limit the physical toll that long hours have on workers' bodies to lower the burnout rate. Workload management and breaks, together

with ensuring that there are adequate personnel to prevent overwork and burnout, are some ways to handle the physical demands and weariness of employees. Provide adequate breaks for employees and make use of efficient scheduling strategies to distribute the workload evenly across the employees.

- Given that every employee reported working up to 10–12 hour shifts each day, six days a week, with little time for relaxation each day and just one day to fully decompress, spa management should prompt staff to strike a balance between their personal and professional lives by providing additional hours off days. This would guarantee that the employees engage in activities that help them recharge and rewind.
- A transparent and equitable compensation framework that recognizes employees' efforts should be implemented by the spa industry to assess and enhance wages and compensation factors. To keep salaries in line with standards and the cost of living, it should also work with the government to periodically examine and adjust compensation.
- To boost staff retention, Nairobi spas should offer possibilities for professional growth and progress. They should also think about conducting exit interviews to ascertain the causes of employee turnover and put plans in place to deal with problems that are found. These will lessen the industry's high turnover rates.
- Despite the customer is always right culture, it is also advised to create policies that put employee well-being ahead of urgent customer wants in the effort to strike a balance between business and employee needs and guarantee a safe and long-lasting work environment.
- Spas in Nairobi stand to gain a great deal by providing ongoing training and development opportunities for staff members, as well as chances for advancement and specialization. They should also offer resilience-building courses or tools to assist staff in effectively managing stress, adjusting to change, and recovering from setbacks.
- To enhance employee well-being and morale, Nairobi day spas should build staff rooms and relaxation areas with amenities for rest and renewal during breaks. These areas should be cozy and welcoming.
- Spa management should set up frequent avenues for staff to provide effective feedback, such as anonymous suggestion boxes and feedback sessions. They should

also actively listen to employee feedback and make the necessary changes to resolve problems, improve wellbeing, and working conditions.

- Another metric would be to develop a fair and transparent performance review system based on clear criteria and objectives, followed by the acknowledgment and reward of great performance through incentives, bonuses, or other kinds of recognition to motivate staff and foster an excellence culture.
- A safe working environment for employees should be ensured by providing health and safety protocols, protective equipment, and resources to mitigate risks associated with spa services, as well as ergonomically designed workstations that prevent injuries and promote physical wellbeing.
- Spas should continue with managerial support to employees since this is one reason the employees felt encouraged at the workplace. The co-workers should also be urged to continue helping one another and peer support networks so that staff members may help each other out emotionally, exchange stories, and build a feeling of community. Another recommendation is to provide training for managers and staff on the importance of employee wellbeing and its impact on business success.
- Since most employees cited overall satisfaction with their job and especially with feeling purposeful for helping and satisfying clients as the leading cause of their job satisfaction, spa establishments should continue to foster encouraging this atmosphere.
- The final recommendation is to create and implement employee wellness programs in Nairobi spas that are specifically tailored to the needs of spa staff members. These programs should include stress management workshops, financial planning, budgeting, and saving workshops to help staff members manage their finances and lessen the stress that comes with money matters, as well as educational sessions on meal planning and nutrition, conflict resolution training, and effective communication techniques to help staff members resolve interpersonal conflicts and uphold positive working relationships with clients and colleagues. These kinds of employee wellness initiatives develop a comprehensive strategy to promote employees' well-being, contentment, and career development.

By implementing these framework recommendations, spa establishments in Nairobi will tackle key challenges related to factors influencing employee wellbeing, such as physical,

mental, and psychological wellbeing, work-life balance, stress, burnout, and workload, support systems, wages and compensation, high turnover rates, expectations from staff and establishing priorities, staffing, professional growth, comfortable working and relaxation spaces, feedback systems, and performance assessment. This study highlights the need for industry-wide regulations and governmental support.

The current study had a few limitations that future research on the state of the Nairobi day spa industry could help address in addition to these important findings. First, the day spa industry in Nairobi varies widely across establishments and what happens in one might not necessarily be the case at a higher or lower-level establishment. This is due to Nairobi having an interesting colonial historical context which might be said to influence the character of the spa services. The influence of class is determined by the relationship a specific region has with the history of colonial settlement. For instance, northern Nairobi is much wealthier than the other regions because it was home to colonial white settlement before independence. To that extent, the day spa establishments in the region are likely to offer more high-end services to a much different clientele who give spa employees unique work experiences and challenges than day spas in other regions of Nairobi. This reality lacks in the data collected for the current study. Lastly, and as observed earlier, the use of written e-interviews method to collect data prevented the researcher from asking important follow-up questions, for instance, the exact meaning of respondents' answers such as "very high client expectations" as one of the most prevalent sources of employee frustration in their roles. The researcher feels that future studies could find out more concerning these generic explanations from Nairobi's day spa employees on their experiences and perceptions of the work they do.

CONCLUSION

The master's thesis sets out to achieve two important objectives. First was to investigate some of the factors that impact employee wellbeing in the Nairobi day spa industry. Second was to develop a framework for assessing employee wellbeing in Nairobi's day spa by offer possible recommendations to day spas in Nairobi, Kenya, on how best to evaluate and enhance employee wellbeing in their establishments. The research questions what factors influence day spa employees' well-being in Nairobi Kenya? And what is the need for developing and implementing an Employee Wellbeing Metric Framework? guided the direction of the study. The suggestions to the questions were to be achieved through specific research tasks. The first task was to compile previous and existing literature on employee wellbeing, identifying, and exploring relevant components affecting wellbeing of employees. The second was to use qualitative research method, conduct written e-interviews to gather data on the experiences, challenges, and perceptions of wellbeing in the Nairobi day spas. The third task was to analyze the results collected to identify collaborating factors affecting the day spa employee wellbeing, the need for a wellbeing framework and deduce potential metrics and suggestions for the framework. Lastly, make to specific recommendations as the wellbeing framework for evaluating and enhancing the overall wellbeing of Nairobi's day spa staff and improving spa industry practices.

The literature review explored the concept of employee wellbeing and identified the factors that influence it to begin the process of finding suggestion to construct the framework. The literature review explored theories and models relevant to the employee wellbeing such as the Job Demand-Resources (JD-R) theory, Motivation-Hygiene also known as Two Factor theory and the PERMA model. The nature of research and its techniques were discussed in the empirical part of this thesis, which described qualitative research as the selected methodology. The study relied on Google Form questionnaires

as a tool for collecting data. Based on responses from 18 employees, the data was then analyzed using thematic analysis to obtain findings.

The findings of the study show that high customer expectations and emotional labour, long work hours and workload, tensions in the spa, business and customer need put above employee needs, low wages, high turnover, and the lack of spa industry regulations in Kenya, were the main factors influencing wellbeing of Nairobi's day spa employees. The analysis showed that demanding customers take a toll on spa employees' physical, mental, and emotional health. One possibility is that customers often misconstrue the actual intentions of Nairobi's day spa employees within the context of other pleasure professions that are available in the city. The negative impact of client demands on the health of day spa employees shows in terms of heightened fatigue and lack of energy, poor sleep quality, unhealthy dietary habits, physical pain and strain, stress, burnout, poor coping mechanisms in Nairobi's day spa workers. Therefore, Nairobi's day spa employees find themselves in a situation whereby they must balance between keeping their jobs and dealing with emotional labour, stress, and burnout.

The study also revealed that lack of regulations from the government go hand in hand with challenges the employees face and the need for increased awareness and attention to improve the impact of the industry on employees. The study highlighted the fact that the work is highly client-focused, and the management mostly neglects the needs of the spa employees in pursuit of business success. Interestingly, the study shows that spa managers always give the needed support to the employees, and complications only arose in cases where the interests of clients overshadow employees needs and capabilities or false accusations of incompetence or expression of dissatisfaction were raised. Another prevailing issue was of poor remuneration in terms of compensation and commissions, as the structure in most spas is commission based and most businesses take the higher percentage. This causes the employees to work more for less, decreasing morale and motivation and causing high turnover in such for better pay and benefits to make ends meet in the tough economic times.

Moreover, the study showed that Nairobi's day spa employees rely on different strategies to help them cope with the challenges of their work. The stressed employees engage in activities to unwind and recharge as well as utilize their off days well. They also

disengage work from personal life and prioritize self-care and hobbies in addition to creating regular downtime for relaxation. All these modern coping strategies paint a picture of streetwise and well-informed employees who understand contemporary strategies of dealing with the daily challenges of day spa work. Based on this fact, perhaps the management of day spa establishments in Nairobi should consider granting employees more regular off days for rewinding and recharging as a way of optimizing employee performance at the workplace. A unique and important revelation in the study is that employee job satisfaction is only marginally tied to financial reasons such as compensation and growth. It is interesting that the employees of Nairobi day spas find most fulfilment in helping their clients meet their needs such as beauty, relaxation, or rejuvenation that took them to the spa in the first place. The study found that the day spa employees are generally satisfied with the creative aspects of work, satisfied with positive client feedback, and satisfied with learning from other colleagues and managers. The fact that spa employees felt more fulfilled when they help clients than with anything else might point to the fact that the employees are professional and purposeful in their work even though public perception and social stigma often wants to paint a markedly different picture of the services in the spa industry in Kenya. This is due to Kenya remaining a largely conservative country toward the spa and wellness culture.

Lastly, the findings have varied benefits to the academia, the spa businesses, and the Kenyan government. Academic knowledge on the nature of the Kenyan spa industry has generally not grown at the same pace as the industry itself has in the country, and yet Kenya remains one of Africa's leading tourist destinations. The framework developed ought to apply to the spa industry in general as well as academia. It is possible that the recommendations of this study will help Nairobi's spa owners know how best to approach some of the challenges they and their employees face in the industry and open effective channels of communication between the business owners themselves, the management, clients, and employees. Most importantly, the findings of the study might prove useful to the Kenya government in terms of putting in place institutional measures that make Nairobi's day spa industry vibrant, honourable, and rewarding.

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Appendix 1. E-Interview questions.

I. What is your age and gender?

II. What is your current job position in the spa? How long have you worked in the spa?

1. How does your work at the spa affect your physical health (for example with diet, sleep, exercise, fatigue, energy etc.)?

2. How does your work at the spa affect your mental health (your overall feelings and thoughts)? Any specific habits or routines you follow for mental wellbeing?

3. How do you feel emotionally in your job at the spa? (for example, cheerful, good spirits, energy, drained, dislike etc.)

4. What stresses or pressures you out the most at work in the spa industry? How do you deal with that stress or pressure?

5. Have you ever experienced feelings of burnout at work? What signs did you notice, and what factors do you think lead to burnout in the spa sector?

6. How does your typical workload and schedule on an average day or week at the spa look? Do you think it's manageable for your overall wellbeing?

7. How satisfied are you with your job at the spa? What parts of your work make you happy or unhappy?

8. How do you manage to balance your personal and professional life? Could you describe how you maintain work life balance while working in the spa industry?

9. Describe how you have ever felt supported or encouraged by your managers, or coworkers? What effect did this help have on your wellbeing at work?

10. How much do you think employee wellbeing in the spa industry is prioritized or cared for? How does it impact the industry's culture and working environment in the spas?

11. What unique challenges do you think affect spa employee's wellbeing compared to other industries? How can these challenges be addressed?
12. What should a good framework (checklist) for evaluating employee wellbeing in the spa industry include, based on your knowledge and experience?
13. Describe your idea of a perfect work environment that supports employee wellbeing in the spa industry. What would it look like?

Appendix 2. Demographic data of respondents

Code	Gender	Age	Job position	Experience
R1	Female	28	Beautician	5 years
R2	Female	29	Spa attendant	3 years
R3	Female	46	Assistant manager & Spa therapist	13 years
R4	Male	30	Therapist	4 years
R5	Female	27	Esthetician	4 years
R6	Female	24	Beauty therapist	4 years
R7	Male	31	Massage therapist	6 years
R8	Female	32	Spa manager	5 years
R9	Female	33	Front desk receptionist	5 years
R10	Male	37	Spa manager	12 years
R11	Female	28	Spa receptionist/attendant	4 years
R12	Male	40	Spa manager	8 years
R13	Female	28	Nail technician	5 years
R14	Male	26	Massage therapist	3 years
R15	Female	26	Spa receptionist	3 years
R16	Male	28	Nail & brow technician	6 years
R17	Female	40	Spa owner	15 years
R18	Female	26	Beauty therapist	5 years

RESÜMEE

RAAMISTIKU KUJUNDAMINE SPAATÖÖTAJATE HEAOLU HINDAMISEKS KEENIAS NAIROBIS

Lilian Wakonyo Muita

Puuduvad spetsiifilised mõõdikud töötajate heaolu hindamiseks spaasektoris, eriti Keenias. Kuigi töötajate üldise heaolu hindamiseks kogu maailmas on olemas väljakujunenud kaalud ja küsimustikud, tuleb neid mõõdikuid muuta, et need sobiksid spaade ja heaolu töötajate nõuetega. Uurimisprobleem seisneb selles, et puudub sobiv raamistik töötajate heaolu hindamiseks majutussektori ettevõtetes, täpsemalt spaa - ja heaolusektoris. Seetõttu on käesoleva magistritöö eesmärgiks uurida töötajate heaolu mõjutavaid tegureid ning töötada välja raamistik töötajate heaolu hindamiseks, pakkudes soovitusi Keenias Nairobi toimuvatele spaadele, kuidas hinnata ja parendada töötajate heaolu. Töötajate heaolu mõistmiseks ja hindamiseks väljatöötatud uurimisküsimused on järgmised: millised tegurid mõjutavad päevaspaa töötajate heaolu Nairobi Keenias; milline on töötajate heaolu metroovõrgustiku arendamise ja rakendamise vajadus?

Kirjanduse ülevaates uuriti töötajate heaolu mõistet ja selgitati välja tegurid, mis mõjutavad seda, et alustada meetermõõdustiku koostamiseks vastuste leidmise protsessi. Kirjanduse ülevaates uuriti ka seonduvaid teooriaid, mis olid uuringu jaoks asjakohased ja sisaldavad Demand–Resources (JD–R) teooriat, motivatsiooni-hügieeni, mida tuntakse ka kahe faktoriteooriana. Need kombineeriti JD–R ja PERMA mudeliga, et hinnata töötajate heaolu. Seejärel kasutati uuringus kvalitatiivseid uurimismeetodeid, kogudes teadmisi kaheksateistkümnepäeva spaatöötajate kohta Nairobi e-küsimuste kaudu Google'i vormi lingis nende kogemuste, väljakutsete ja arusaamade kohta töökohal valitsevast heaolust. Teemaatilise andmeanalüüsi käigus ilmnis mitu võtmetegurit, mis mõjutavad töötajate heaolu, sealhulgas kõrged klientide ootused, emotsionaalne tööjõud, pikad töötunnid, suur töökoormus, madalad palgad, äri - ja kliendivajadused, mis ületavad

nende vajadusi, suur käive ja tööstussektori eeskirjade puudumine. Nende väljakutsete tulemuseks olid mitmesugused teemad nagu väsimus, stress, halb uni ja toitumine ning füüsiline pinge, ärrituvus, motivatsioonipuudus, kehv tulemuslikkus ja pinged töötajate hulgas. Vaatamata kõigile neile avaldasid kõik vastajad üldist rahulolu töö üle ja tunnevad end eriti eesmärgipäraselt, kui rahuldavad kliente ja rahuldavad nende vajadusi ootuspäraselt. Enamik vastajaid väljendas ka toetavaid juhte ja kolleege, kes soovisid head sotsiaaltöökeskkonda.

Leidude põhjal pakuti välja soovitud nende teguritega tegelemiseks ja töötajate heaolu parandamiseks. Need soovitud hõlmasid rutiinsete kontrollimiste läbiviimist, piisavate puhkepauside ja puhkepäevade pakkumist, teraapia ja meditatsiooni soodustamist, paremat palka, paremat ajakava ja piisavat personali, koolitus - ja arenguvõimaluste pakkumist, tõhusate tagasiside - ja preemiasüsteemide loomist, turvalise ja ergonoomilise töökeskkonna tagamist ning töötajate heaolu algatuste ja programmide juurutamist. Kokkuvõttes saavutas uuring oma eesmärgid ja annab väärtuslikke ülevaateid nii töötajatele, juhtkonnale kui ka akadeemilistele ringkondadele Keenia spaatööstuses. Päevakeskuste töötajate ees seisvate väljakutsetega tegeledes pakuvad tulemused praktilisi juhiseid töötajate heaolu parandamiseks, tootlikkuse ja tulemuslikkuse tõstmiseks ning kokkuvõttes klientide üldise spaakogemuse parandamiseks.

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