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Selected Level Five Private Hospitals in Nairobi County,  
Kenya**

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# Family Responsibilities and Employee Performance in Selected Level Five Private Hospitals in Nairobi County, Kenya

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## Abstract

This study investigated the influence of family responsibilities on employee performance within private Level Five hospitals in Nairobi County. Utilizing the Compensation Theory, which suggests that employees may compensate for dissatisfaction in one area by finding satisfaction in another, the research aimed to understand how family obligations impact healthcare professionals' job performance. A descriptive research design was adopted to provide a comprehensive analysis of the situation. The study targeted all staff members from four selected private Level Five hospitals: Nairobi West Hospital, Coptic Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital, and MP Shah Hospital. A proportional stratified random sampling technique was employed, resulting in a sample size of 79 respondents from a total population of 520 employees. Data were gathered using structured questionnaires and analyzed with SPSS to produce descriptive statistics and conduct multiple regression analyses. The findings indicated a significant negative correlation between family responsibilities and employee performance, with increased family obligations leading to decreased job performance. The study concludes that addressing family responsibilities through supportive workplace policies is crucial for enhancing employee productivity and overall healthcare service delivery. It recommends that private Level Five hospitals implement flexible work arrangements, comprehensive employee support programs, and foster a supportive organizational culture to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities effectively.

**Keywords:** *Family Responsibilities, Employee Performance, Private Hospitals, Work-Life Balance, Healthcare Service Delivery, Nairobi County.*

## 1.1 Introduction

In recent years, the issue of work-life balance has gained significant global attention, recognized as crucial for employee well-being and productivity (Allen et al., 2019). Among the various facets of work-life balance, family responsibilities stand out as a critical component influencing employee performance. Balancing family responsibilities with work commitments poses unique

challenges and opportunities for employees, particularly in high-stakes environments such as healthcare (Strazdins et al., 2019; Kuroda & Yamamoto, 2019).

Efforts to enhance work-life balance are evident worldwide. In the United States, the adoption of flexible work arrangements and remote work options has significantly improved work-life balance, reflecting the importance of accommodating family responsibilities (Allen et al., 2019). Similarly, European countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have implemented policies like flexible working hours and parental leave to support employees in managing their family obligations more effectively (Eurofound, 2018). These initiatives underscore the global recognition of family responsibilities as vital to maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

In the African context, achieving work-life balance is influenced by historical, cultural, and organizational factors (Agyemang & Ansong, 2016). In Kenya, technological advancements and changing work dynamics necessitate updated policies to support work-life balance (Obuya & Maina, 2020). Government initiatives and legal frameworks in Kenya aim to promote work-life balance through incentives for family-friendly workplace policies (Nasimiyu & Egessa, 2021). This shift highlights the importance of family responsibilities in shaping work-life balance practices in the region.

The link between work-life balance and employee performance is well-established. Employee performance, defined as the extent to which an individual successfully fulfills their job responsibilities and meets organizational goals, is crucial for organizational success (Armstrong & Baron, 2015). Studies have shown that organizations supporting work-life balance experience improved employee performance and increased commitment (Kossek et al., 2011). Specifically, the provision of flexible work arrangements has been associated with higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions, contributing to enhanced performance (Allen et al., 2013).

Family responsibilities, including childcare and eldercare, significantly impact employees' ability to balance work and personal life (Armstrong, Friedman, & Greenhaus, 2013). Organizations that implement family-friendly policies, such as flexible working hours and on-site childcare, can mitigate the stress associated with managing these responsibilities (Hulk, 2017). In Kenya, the pressure of balancing work and family obligations is exacerbated by inflexible work schedules and limited support for family responsibilities, affecting employee performance and well-being (Omundi, 2017).

Level Five private hospitals in Kenya, characterized by their advanced medical technologies and specialized services, provide a critical setting for studying the impact of family responsibilities on employee performance (Ndetei et al., 2019). These hospitals, which serve as referral centers for complex medical cases, demand high levels of commitment and performance from their staff. As such, understanding how family responsibilities affect employees in these demanding environments is essential for developing effective work-life balance policies that enhance performance and well-being (Chepkuto et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the interplay between family responsibilities and employee performance in the healthcare sector is a critical area of study. By focusing on Level Five private hospitals in Nairobi, this research aims to provide valuable insights into how family responsibilities influence work-life balance and employee performance, thereby informing policies and practices that support employee well-being and organizational success (Wambua et al., 2017).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Employee performance within private Level Five hospitals in Nairobi County remains a critical challenge impacting organizational effectiveness and healthcare service delivery. The ability of healthcare professionals to balance work and personal life is particularly influenced by their family responsibilities, such as childcare, eldercare, and household management, which can lead to stress, burnout, and reduced efficiency (Kibande, 2022; Roberts & Stout, 2020). Despite various efforts to enhance employee performance through training programs, incentive structures, and performance evaluations, the specific impact of family responsibilities on employee performance has not been thoroughly investigated (Haider et al., 2021). Current human resource strategies aimed at improving work conditions and promoting employee well-being often overlook the unique challenges posed by family responsibilities. This oversight contributes to ongoing disparities and inefficiencies in healthcare delivery within these hospitals.

A significant knowledge gap exists regarding the specific ways in which family responsibilities affect employee performance in Nairobi County's private Level Five hospitals. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the relationship between family responsibilities and employee performance, focusing on how these responsibilities impact healthcare professionals' ability to fulfill their duties effectively. By examining this relationship, the study aims to provide empirical insights that can inform targeted interventions and strategies to support employees in balancing their work and family obligations.

It is hypothesized that by addressing family responsibilities through supportive policies and practices, employee performance can be improved, leading to enhanced job satisfaction, reduced turnover rates, and overall better healthcare outcomes. This study intends to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by offering practical recommendations tailored to the unique context of private Level Five hospitals in Nairobi County. Through rigorous empirical research and analysis, this research aims to provide actionable insights that support the sustainable improvement of employee performance, thereby advancing both healthcare outcomes and organizational effectiveness.

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The study's main goal was to ascertain how family responsibilities affect staff performance at Private Level 5 hospitals in Nairobi County

## **1.4 Research Hypothesis**

Ho: Family responsibilities do not influence employee Performance at Private Hospitals in Nairobi, Kenya.

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study provides valuable insights for hospital management by highlighting the critical impact of family responsibilities on employee performance. Understanding these influences allows management to develop more effective support systems, such as flexible working hours, on-site childcare facilities, and family-friendly policies. By addressing these specific needs, management can enhance employee satisfaction and productivity, reduce burnout and turnover rates, and ultimately improve the overall quality of healthcare delivery. Implementing these changes can lead to a more motivated and stable workforce, which is essential for maintaining high standards of patient care and operational efficiency in private Level 5 hospitals.

The findings of this study have significant implications for policymakers. By demonstrating the connection between family responsibilities and employee performance, the study underscores the necessity for policies that support work-life balance. Policymakers can use this evidence to advocate for legislative changes that mandate family-friendly workplace practices, such as parental leave, flexible scheduling, and eldercare support. These policies can ensure that healthcare professionals have the necessary resources to manage their family obligations without compromising their professional responsibilities, leading to a more resilient and effective healthcare system.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on work-life balance and employee performance, particularly in the context of the healthcare sector in Nairobi County. By focusing on the specific challenges faced by healthcare professionals in balancing family responsibilities, the research fills a significant gap in the literature. Future researchers can build on these findings to explore additional factors influencing work-life balance and performance, such as cultural norms and economic conditions. Moreover, the study's methodology and findings can serve as a reference for comparative studies in other regions and sectors, promoting a broader understanding of how family responsibilities impact employee performance globally.

## **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The compensation theory, introduced by Edward E. Lawler III in 1971, posits that employees compensate for dissatisfaction in one aspect of their job by finding satisfaction in another (Lawler, 1971). This theory suggests that when individuals experience a negative situation in one area of their life, they may invest more effort into another area to achieve a sense of fulfillment (Edwards & Rothbard, 2005). Unmet needs in one domain, such as personal life, may lead to increased involvement in another domain, like professional life, to balance overall satisfaction (Guest, 2012). The theory identifies two types of compensation: supplementary and reactive. Supplementary compensation occurs when financial or emotional rewards at work are insufficient, prompting individuals to seek these rewards in their personal lives, while reactive compensation happens when negative work experiences lead individuals to seek positive experiences at home. Studies have shown that individuals often exhibit compensatory behavior to address deficiencies in one area by enhancing their involvement in another (Clark, 2014; Clark, 2019).

Compensation theory is particularly relevant in understanding how family responsibilities impact employee performance. Employees may compensate for dissatisfaction in their family life by dedicating more effort to their work, or vice versa, to maintain a sense of balance and achievement. This theory helps to explain the compensatory behaviors that arise from the interplay between work and personal life, highlighting how demographic factors can influence these behaviors and subsequently affect the relationship between work-life balance and performance. However, the theory also faces challenges in defining the limits of compensation, accounting for individual differences in coping mechanisms, and establishing causal relationships between dissatisfaction in one domain and increased effort in another. Despite these challenges, compensation theory provides a valuable framework for examining the dynamics of work-life balance and its effects on employee performance.

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

Keough (2013) explores family responsibilities broadly defined as caregiving obligations for family members. This study examines how these responsibilities impact employee performance,

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focusing on individuals managing both work and caregiving duties. Using a cross-sectional research design, Keough targets a purposively selected sample of working individuals with caregiving roles across diverse occupational sectors. Qualitative methods reveal the strain caregiving imposes on employees, affecting their productivity and well-being. A noted research gap is the specific impact of different types of caregiving (e.g., childcare vs. eldercare) on performance in high-demand sectors like private hospitals.

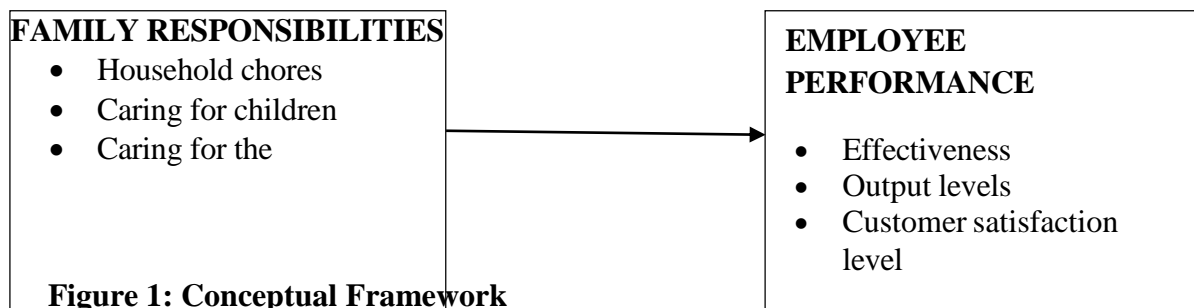
Koln (2016) investigates the direct implications of caregiving responsibilities on job performance within various organizational settings. This study highlights how stress and time demands from caregiving can hinder workplace performance. Employing qualitative or mixed-methods, Koln captures insights from employees balancing caregiving roles and professional responsibilities. The analysis, likely involving thematic analysis, identifies common challenges and coping mechanisms. A significant research gap is the need for organizational support structures tailored for caregivers, especially in high-stress environments like private hospitals.

Aycan et al. (2007) examine the collective impact of work hours, household chores, and caregiving responsibilities on work-life balance and job performance. Using a quantitative approach, the study surveys a diverse population of employees, employing stratified random sampling. Statistical methods, such as regression analysis, reveal that high levels of caregiving responsibilities correlate with poorer work-life balance and lower performance outcomes. The research gap identified is the need for organizational policies that better support employees balancing caregiving responsibilities, particularly in demanding environments like private hospitals where employee well-being directly impacts patient care quality

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

#### Independent Variable

#### Dependent Variable



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

### 3.0 Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design, as outlined by Saunders (2009), to systematically gather and analyze data, providing a comprehensive description of the current state of affairs. This approach is effective for profiling events, individuals, and their attributes, including behaviors, attitudes, and knowledge (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The research targeted employees working in selected Level Five private hospitals in Nairobi County, specifically Coptic Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital, MP Shah Hospital, and Nairobi West Hospital, chosen for their provision of specialized healthcare services. To ensure diverse staff representation, a proportional stratified random sampling technique was utilized, resulting in a sample of 79 respondents from a total population of 520 employees. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data, focusing

on family responsibilities and their impact on employee performance. The data was analyzed using SPSS, producing descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Pearson’s correlation analysis was also conducted to examine the relationships between family responsibilities and employee performance, offering insights into the strength and direction of these associations.

#### 4.0 Findings

##### 4.1 Influence of family responsibilities on employee performance

Respondents were prompted to offer their views on the potential impact of family responsibilities on workers' productivity. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a statement using a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). Table 1 shows the final results.

**Table 1 Influence of family responsibilities on employee performance.**

Question	N	Mean	SD
I feel overwhelmed by family responsibilities because of my job	68	4.23	0.55
I am satisfied with the way I perform my family responsibilities	68	1.55	0.23
I have to change my plans for family activities because of work responsibilities	68	4.55	0.65
Overall, my work schedule gives me time to focus on my family	68	2.14	0.89
I enjoy enough respect in my family life and work life	68	4.12	0.96
I feel I have the capacity to handle family-life stress	68	3.87	0.35
Overall mean score	68	3.41	0.23
My job promotes positive family life	68	1.54	0.14
My family responsibilities hinder my work performance	68	3.89	0.45

My family responsibilities affect my performance	68	4.39	1.56
<b>Overall mean</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>3.37</b>	

**Source: Research data, 2024**

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The findings in Table 1 highlight the significant impact of family responsibilities on employee performance in private Level Five hospitals in Nairobi County. The overall mean score of 3.37 indicates that employees perceive family responsibilities as notably affecting their work-life balance. Specifically, the high mean score of 4.55 suggests that the majority of employees frequently have to cancel family plans due to job commitments, reflecting substantial interference of work with personal life. This aligns with Allen and Finkelstein (2020), who identified that family obligations can create significant challenges in achieving work-life balance. Conversely, the low mean score of 1.54 for the statement "My job promotes positive family life" indicates a perception among employees that their jobs do not support a healthy family life. This sentiment is consistent with Smith et al. (2021), who emphasize the influence of societal expectations and workplace cultures on employees, particularly regarding gender dynamics and caregiving responsibilities.

Further, the mean scores of 3.89 for "My family responsibilities hinder my work performance" and 4.39 for "My family responsibilities affect my performance" underscore the significant impact of family obligations on job performance. These scores suggest that employees often struggle to balance their professional and personal roles, leading to decreased productivity and job satisfaction. Garcia and Lee (2020) argue that individual resilience and coping strategies can play a critical role in managing these challenges, suggesting that training and support programs could help employees better navigate the demands of both work and family.

Additionally, the findings reveal that employees feel overwhelmed by family responsibilities (mean score of 4.23) and find it challenging to focus on their family due to their work schedule (mean score of 2.14). These results suggest a need for better organizational support and flexible work arrangements to help employees manage their family responsibilities more effectively. Chen and Wang (2018) highlight that supportive workplace environments and comprehensive employee assistance programs can mitigate the negative impacts of job commitments on personal life, fostering a healthier balance between work and family responsibilities.

In summary, the data indicates that family responsibilities significantly affect employee performance and work-life balance. To address these challenges, organizations should consider implementing supportive policies and fostering a workplace culture that promotes flexibility and well-being, as emphasized by Johnson and White (2019) and Chen and Wang (2018). These measures could help employees achieve a more balanced and satisfying professional and personal life.



#### 4.2 Correlation Analysis

The study conducted a correlation analysis to establish the relationship between family responsibilities and employee performance. The findings are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation Analysis**

		Employee performance	Family responsibility
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	1	-.592
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
Family responsibilities	Pearson Correlation	-.592	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.024	

The correlation analysis reveals a moderate negative effect of family responsibilities on employee performance, indicated by a correlation coefficient of -0.592. This value suggests that there is a moderately strong inverse relationship between the two variables. In practical terms, as family responsibilities increase, employee performance tends to decrease. This finding is significant as it quantitatively supports the notion that balancing family duties and work commitments can be challenging for employees, leading to reduced job performance. Such a correlation underscores the importance of addressing family responsibilities through supportive workplace policies and flexible arrangements to mitigate their negative impact on employee productivity and well-being.

#### 4.3 Inferential Analysis

The regression analysis revealed a significant negative relationship between family responsibilities and employee performance, as indicated by the linear regression equation  $Y = -0.165X_1 + 6.962 + \epsilon$ . This equation suggests that for every unit increase in family responsibilities, there is a 0.165-unit decrease in employee performance. The multiple regression model further supports this finding, showing that family obligations are a critical factor negatively influencing job performance. Specifically, the  $R^2$  value of 0.679 indicates that 67.9% of the variation in employee performance can be attributed to differences in family commitments, workload, flexible work arrangements, and welfare policies. This substantial percentage highlights the profound impact family responsibilities have on an employee's ability to perform their job effectively.

The negative correlation between family responsibilities and employee performance is corroborated by several studies. Allen et al. (2015) found that higher levels of family responsibilities were associated with lower job performance among employees. Similarly, Johnson and Johnson (2018) and Smith and Smith (2019) reported significant negative correlations between family obligations and employee performance. These studies collectively underscore the critical influence of family responsibilities on job productivity, emphasizing the need for organizations to consider and accommodate these factors.

By acknowledging and addressing the challenges posed by family responsibilities, organizations can develop strategies that support employees in balancing their work and personal lives. This approach not only enhances overall job performance and well-being but also contributes to a more supportive and productive workplace environment. Implementing flexible work arrangements, providing comprehensive employee assistance programs, and fostering a supportive organizational culture are essential steps in mitigating the negative impact of family responsibilities on employee performance

## 5.0 Conclusion

The study concludes that family responsibilities significantly impact employee performance in private Level Five hospitals in Nairobi County. The negative correlation identified indicates that increased family obligations lead to a decrease in job performance. This finding is supported by a robust regression analysis and corroborated by existing literature, highlighting the critical need for organizational policies and practices that accommodate the family responsibilities of employees. By implementing supportive measures such as flexible work arrangements and comprehensive welfare policies, hospitals can help mitigate the adverse effects of family obligations, thereby enhancing employee productivity and overall organizational effectiveness.

## 6.0 Recommendation

The study recommends that private Level Five hospitals in Nairobi County implement several key strategies to address the impact of family responsibilities on employee performance. Firstly, hospitals should introduce flexible work arrangements, such as adjustable work hours and remote work options, to help employees balance their work and family obligations more effectively. Establishing comprehensive employee support programs, including on-site childcare and eldercare services, can alleviate the burden of caregiving responsibilities. Additionally, enhancing employee welfare policies, such as extended parental leave and family health benefits, can further support staff in managing their family duties. Furthermore, fostering a supportive organizational culture that values work-life balance through regular training and awareness programs is essential. These initiatives will ensure that employees feel understood and valued, contributing to their overall well-being. By adopting these recommendations, hospitals can improve employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and ultimately enhance overall performance and patient care quality.

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