

## **FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, A CASE OF FIVE-STAR HOTELS IN KENYA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:** This study examined the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

**PROBLEM STATEMENT:** Within the last five years, hotels in Kenya have recorded an employee turnover rate of more than 50% suggesting dissatisfaction and disengagement. Consequently, this leads to poor productivity and poor customer interactions within the hotels.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:** The study used a descriptive design, stratified proportionate sampling, and positivism as its research philosophy. A sample of 369 employees was obtained using Slovin's formula. Questionnaires were adopted in collection of primary data. SPSS version 24 aided in regression and correlation analysis.

**RESULTS:** The study found that flexible work arrangements positively contributed to employee engagement and explained 71.5% of the variance in employee engagement. Further, the findings indicated that organizational support adds value and moderates the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement.

**CONCLUSION:** The study concludes that there is a significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The study recommends that five-star hotels in Kenya should provide necessary tools, resources and technology to promote use of flexible work arrangements.

**Keywords;** *Flexible work arrangements, Remote working, Flextime, Job sharing Employee engagement.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Employee engagement has long been a critical challenge for organizations, as scholars and global managers alike recognize its multifaceted nature and its profound impact on business success (Zenger & Folkman, 2017; Faridullah, 2024). Defined as a positive attitude marked by enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption (Sihag, 2021), engagement extends beyond mere job satisfaction to include emotional commitment and cognitive awareness (Bhowal & Saini, 2019; Albro & McElfresh, 2021). Engaged employees are not only attached to their work and confident in their skills but also find it enjoyable, leading to higher productivity and organizational harmony (Tkalac, 2021; Heslina & Syahrini, 2021; Abbas & Zhiqiang, 2020). This engagement is fostered when employees' basic needs are met, they feel a sense of belonging, and have opportunities for growth and contribution (Tensay & Singh, 2020).

Flexible work arrangements allow employees to adjust their work time frames, hours, and locations and have garnered significant attention globally (Orishede & Ndudi, 2020). The 2024 World at Work Report reveals that 80% of businesses worldwide now offer flexible work schedules. Major corporations like Google, Apple, Oracle, Microsoft, Ford, Amazon, Facebook, and others have widely adopted these practices. In Kenya, prominent organizations such as Safaricom Limited, Strathmore University, EPRA, Coca-Cola, University of Nairobi, Nairobi Serena Hotel, Radisson Blu Hotel, United Nations Embassy, UNEP, and Britam have also embraced flexible work arrangements (Mutuku & Makhamara, 2022). This is explained by the quick changes in the workplace as well as other demographic characteristics like age and gender, which have made it harder for people to successfully balance their personal and professional life. The common flexible work arrangements include flextime, telecommuting, job sharing, remote working, and compressed workweeks (Weideman & Hofmeyr 2020). Employee motivation and morale are enhanced by these arrangements, which are seen as showing concern and trust (Beigi, Shirmohammadi & Stewart, 2018).

The level of employee engagement in Kenya is 17% which is lower than that of countries like Uganda (18%), Tanzania (24%), the Republic of Congo (30%), and Mali, which topped the rank with 47%. Additionally, it is lower than 20% of the Sub-Saharan region and the global average of 23% (Gallup, 2023). About 31% of Kenyan employees surveyed by Gallup reported daily stress, while 25% reported daily anger as a major issue affecting their engagement. Employees in the hotel industry struggle with work flexibility, high

work pressure, long and irregular working hours (Adebayo and Ibrahim, 2023). Further, prioritizing customer needs in the hotel sector is taking precedence over employee wellbeing which has a negative effect on their health and work performance (Adebayo and Ibrahim, 2023). Previous studies have shown that flexible schedules reduce employee burnout, decrease stress, increase organizational commitment, increase productivity and employee retention, save on cost, lead to a more satisfied and engaged workforce (Peters & Blomme, 2019).

### **Statement of The Problem**

The hospitality industry is a major pillar in the economic development of Kenya as it contributes to 11% of Kenya's GDP and employs 18% of the Kenyan workforce (PwC, 2019). Keeping employees engaged with their assigned tasks has become one of the biggest problems in the modern workplace (Satya, Supriadi, Setiadi & Desmintari, 2022). Engagement of workers has a significant impact on performance, enhances productivity, innovation, organizational efficiency, advances customer relationship management and overall business success (Sjahrudin, Sari & Hakiki, 2024). Disengagement of workers manifests in high absenteeism, poor customer interactions, failure to meet targets, accidents and costs the world economy \$8.8 trillion which accounts for 9% of its total GDP (Gallup, 2023). Despite the relevance of employee engagement, the State of the Global Workplace 2023 report indicated that only 17% of Kenyan workers are engaged while 83% are disengaged.

Within the last five years, hotels in Kenya have recorded an employee turnover rate of more than 50% suggesting dissatisfaction and disengagement (Kobia, 2021). As a result, low engagement has led to poor productivity, high pressure on employees, poor customer service, high recruitment and training costs. This negatively affects customer satisfaction and overall success of hotels (Adebayo & Ibrahim, 2023). Flexible work arrangements have been linked with reduced absenteeism, turnover, burnout, stress, improved mental health as well as increased productivity, creativity, innovation, job satisfaction, loyalty, retention, engagement, and overall work-life balance (Weideman & Hofmeyr, 2020). Most studies done in Kenya on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement have focused on parastatals, commercial banks, hospitals and non-governmental organizations and overlooked five star hotels (Mungania, 2017; Okemwa, 2022; Muriithi, 2023; Opuko & Munjuri, 2017). Therefore, this study endeavored to examine the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya to fill the gaps.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To examine the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.
2. To assess the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

### **Research Hypotheses**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Literature Review**

Social Exchange Theory (SET), proposed by Homans (1958), posits that human interactions are fundamentally based on a subjective evaluation of costs and benefits, with reciprocal exchanges creating obligations. This theory is particularly relevant in understanding the employer-employee relationship, where employees are more likely to reciprocate positive organizational actions, such as the provision of flexible work arrangements, with increased engagement and commitment (Kakar et al., 2022; Berkery et al., 2017). Empirical studies have consistently shown that flexible work schedules enhance employee commitment and satisfaction (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Tsen et al., 2022; Okemwa, 2022; Onken-Menke et al., 2018). However, critics argue that SET does not adequately address perception errors, lacks theoretical precision, and fails to clearly distinguish between behavioral actions and inactions (Attia & Hadi, 2020; Stafford & Kuiper, 2021). Despite these criticisms, SET provides a robust framework for understanding how flexible work arrangements can foster higher levels of employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

### **Empirical Review**

In numerous empirical studies, the nexus between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement has remained at the forefront. In a UK manufacturing company, Juvonen (2019) established that flexible working increased employee engagement by enabling workers to focus more intently on their work, they felt more motivated, productive, and trustworthy. Gasic and Berber (2021) investigated how flexible work schedules affected employee engagement and uncovered that they improved worker

satisfaction and decreased the likelihood of employee turnover. Ivanauskaite (2015) examined the correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in Lithuania, Europe. Findings revealed that having access to flexible schedules increased organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and employee engagement. In India, GP and Justus (2021) discovered that majority of working parents believed that having flexible schedules helped them better balance their work and personal lives and allowed them to focus on taking care of their children, their studies, and their general well-being. In a similar study, Ugargol and Patrick (2018) indicated a positive correlation between flexible work schedules and employee engagement within IT companies in Bengaluru, India.

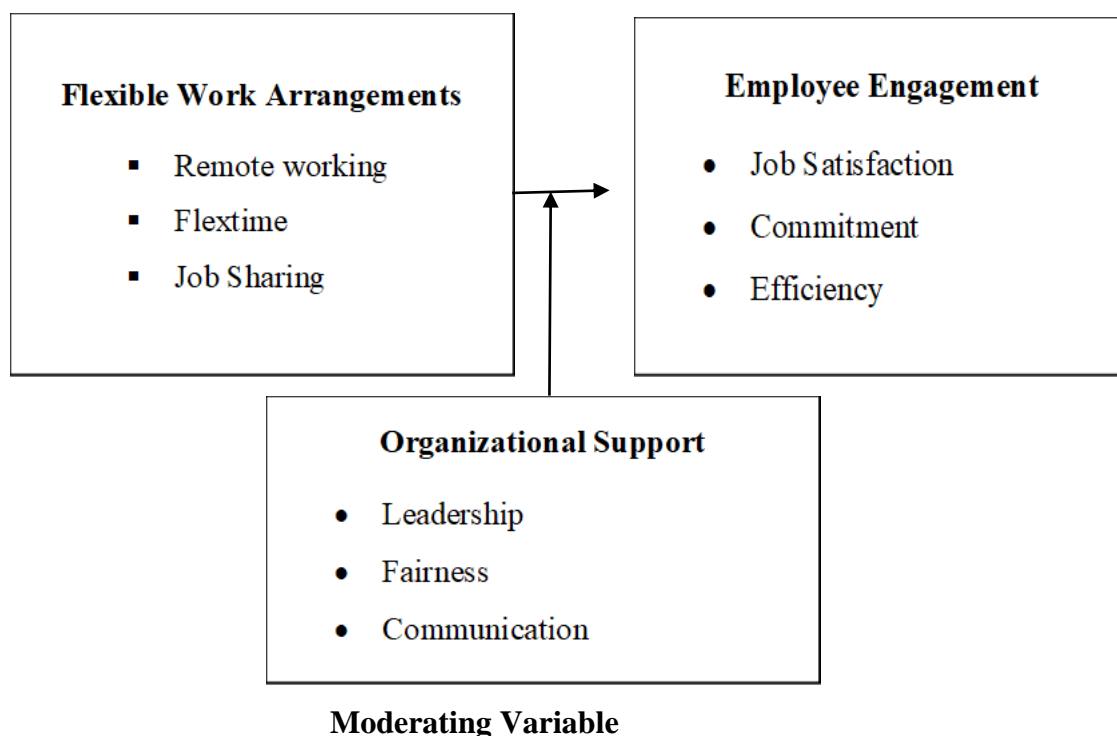
In Pakistan, Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) corroborated that with the help of flexible work arrangements, employees can successfully juggle their work and personal commitments. Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) demonstrated that flexible work arrangements had a favorable effect on employee well-being, enhanced work-life balance, reduced costs, and addressed employee needs in South Africa. Umukoro, Egwakhe and Akpa (2020) linked benefits like work-life balance, employee well-being, employee engagement, and productivity with flexible work arrangements in Nigeria. In Kenya, Okemwa (2022) confirmed that employees who have more autonomy over their work arrangements are more engaged, committed, and satisfied with their jobs. Muriithi (2023) showed that employees with hybrid work arrangements have greater flexibility in where and when they perform their activities, which can enhance their well-being, flexibility, autonomy, and work-life balance. Opuko and Munjuri (2017) discovered that the elements of flexible work arrangements had a significant impact on job performance.

## Conceptual framework

The relationships between the variables are shown clearly in this conceptual framework.

### Independent Variable

### Dependent Variable



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**

## Research Methodology

This study, guided by positivism, aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of reality through a descriptive research design (Coleman, 2019; Agapito, 2023). It targeted 25 five-star hotels in Kenya, with a unit of observation comprising 4,857 employees. Stratified proportionate random sampling and Slovin's formula were used to select a sample of 369 respondents. The study employed structured questionnaires, pre-tested for validity and reliability using Cronbach's alpha, and utilized both descriptive and inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analyses, to measure relationships and test hypotheses.

Stepwise regression was guided by the following models;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_z Z + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_z Z (\beta_1 X_1 * Z) + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

Where:

$Y$  = Employee Engagement

$\beta_0$  = constant coefficient (Y intercept)

$\beta_1$  = regression coefficient for the independent variable

$\beta_Z$  = estimate of the population regression coefficient for Z

$X_1$  = Flexible Work Arrangements

$Z$  = Organizational Support (Moderating Variable)

$\varepsilon$  = error term

## Results and Discussions

### Descriptive Analysis

This section delves into the descriptive statistics of flexible work arrangements and their perceived effect on employee engagement within five-star hotels in Kenya. The findings provide insights into the effectiveness of these practices in enhancing job satisfaction, employee engagement and work-life balance.

#### Flexible Work Arrangements

The analysis examines various aspects of flexible work practices, such as remote working, job sharing, and flexible working, to understand how these arrangements are received by employees. The findings on flexible work arrangements are detailed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Flexible Work Arrangements**

Statements on Flexible Work Arrangements	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std Dev	CV %
Remote working has increased my satisfaction with work.	9.7	58.0	3.1	25.4	3.8	2.55	1.086	42.59
Employees have the necessary tools to work effectively from different locations.	6.9	62.7	0	30.4	0	2.54	0.999	39.33
Working from home has increased my work life balance.	0	68.0	3.1	28.8	0	2.61	.904	34.64
Working hours in this hotel are flexible.	0	20.1	6.0	59.9	14.1	3.68	.951	25.84
Flextime motivates me to continue working in this hotel.	25.1	10.0	1.9	63.0	0	3.03	1.318	43.50
Employees can comfortably adjust their work schedule for personal commitments.	4.7	17.2	2.8	62.7	12.6	3.61	1.058	29.31
Job sharing helps me to cope with work demands.	1.6	15.7	0	78.4	4.4	3.68	.845	22.96

Employees are allowed to exchange shifts.	0	13.2	3.1	83.7	0	3.71	.687	18.52
Complementary schedules have increased my job satisfaction.	3.1	31.4	7.8	48.6	9.1	3.29	1.099	33.40
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.19</b>	<b>0.994</b>	<b>32.23</b>

83.7% of the respondents indicated that employees were allowed to exchange shifts, 78.4% agreed that job sharing helped them to cope with work demands and 62.7% affirmed that employees could comfortably adjust their work schedules for personal commitments. In regard to flexible schedules, the findings revealed that provision of flextime motivated them to continue working in five-star hotels as indicated by 63%, 59.9% of the respondents confirmed that working hours in five-star hotels were flexible and 48.6% acknowledged that complementary schedules have improved their job satisfaction thus engagement. However, 68% disagreed that working from home has increased their work life balance, 62.7% refuted that they had the necessary tools to work effectively from different locations while 58% disagreed that remote working has increased their job satisfaction.

### Organizational Support

This section examines the level of organizational support perceived by employees in five-star hotels in Kenya. The analysis focuses on various aspects of support, including guidance from supervisors, recognition, fairness, and communication. The findings reveal how these elements contribute to employee satisfaction and engagement, highlighting the importance of a supportive organizational culture in fostering a positive work environment.



**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Support**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>on</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std</b>	<b>CV</b>
<b>Organizational Support</b>		<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>		<b>Dev</b>	<b>%</b>
My supervisor provides impartial guidance.		0	20.1	6.0	62.7	11.3	3.65	.925	25.34
I get enough support from my supervisors.		0	16.3	0	62.7	21.0	3.88	.923	23.79
Recognition would make me more committed.		0	28.2	1.6	63.9	6.3	3.48	.971	27.90
Fairness and justice at my workplace inspire me.		2.2	28.2	0	63.3	6.3	3.39	.918	27.08
I feel respected and valued at my workplace.		1	27	2.2	69.2	0	3.43	1.034	30.15
The management offers constant feedback.		6.0	53.3	0	31.3	9.4	2.85	1.201	42.14
My supervisor communicates candidly and consistently.		3.1	21.9	5.3	64.9	4.7	3.46	.986	28.50
The organizational culture creates the right work environment to thrive and be effective.		6.3	32.9	0	48.3	12.5	3.28	1.221	37.23
<b>Average</b>							<b>3.43</b>	<b>1.022</b>	<b>30.27</b>

69.2% of the respondents indicated that they felt respected and valued, 64.9% agreed that their supervisors communicated candidly and consistently, 63.7% conveyed that recognition would make them more committed, 63.3% agreed that fairness and justice at their workplace inspire them, 62.7% of the respondents affirmed that, their supervisors provided impartial guidance and enough support while 48.3% expressed agreement that the organizational culture created the right work environment to thrive and be effective. 53.3% disagreed that the management offers constant feedback.

### **Employee Engagement**

This section presents the descriptive statistics for employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The analysis examines various statements related to employees' pride, enthusiasm, happiness, commitment, energy levels, inspiration, time management, and effective resource utilization. The findings provide a comprehensive overview of the employees' overall engagement levels and highlight key areas where engagement is particularly strong.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Employee Engagement**

<b>Statements on Employee Engagement</b>	<b>SD %</b>	<b>D %</b>	<b>N %</b>	<b>A %</b>	<b>SA %</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>CV %</b>
I am proud of the work that I do.	1.6	18.8	0	63.9	15.7	3.73	.991	26.57
I am enthusiastic about my job.	6.3	15.7	0	62.7	15.4	3.65	1.108	30.36
I feel happy when am working intensely.	0.6	15.7	0	64.9	18.8	3.86	.924	23.94
I am committed to my work.	8.2	31.7	0	60.2	0	3.12	1.111	35.61
I feel full of energy while at work.	1.6	28.2	0	62.7	7.5	3.46	1.030	29.77
My job inspires me and I love it.	0	17.2	0	62.7	20.1	3.86	.934	24.20
I am a good time keeper.	0.9	21.9	0	64.6	12.5	3.66	.987	26.97
I utilize the resources at my workplace effectively.	0	11.3	2.2	62.7	23.8	3.99	.845	21.18
<b>Average</b>						<b>3.67</b>	<b>.991</b>	<b>27.33</b>

64.9% agreed that they felt happy when working intensely, 64.6% were good time keepers, 63.9% were proud of their work, 62.7% were enthusiastic about their job, felt full of energy while at work, they felt inspired by their job and utilized resources at the workplace effectively. 60.2% agreed that they were committed to their work.

### **Qualitative Analysis of Flexible Work Arrangements and Organizational Support**

The respondents were asked to suggest initiatives that can be adopted to enhance flexible work arrangements in five-star hotels in Kenya. 80% proposed that the five-star hotels should provide collaboration software, technology, VPN access and project management tools to facilitate remote work. 72% of the respondents indicated that five-star hotels need to formulate policies for flexible working. Additionally, 62% of the managers reported that they needed training on leading remote teams. 48% of the respondents expressed agreement that five-star hotels should establish channels through which employees can give feedback on flexible working practices. To enhance organizational support, 63% indicated that managers should be present and supportive, 61% suggested that professional development programs would boost their career growth, 55% recommended that five-star hotels should promote a more inclusive workplace culture, 54% hinted at scheduling periodic team-building events and 49% recommended giving incentive programs.

### Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis examines the relationships between flexible work arrangements, organizational support, and employee engagement. The results indicate significant positive correlations, suggesting that these factors are interrelated and contribute to higher levels of employee engagement.

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis of Flexible Work Arrangements and Employee Engagement**

		<b>Employee Engagement</b>	<b>Flexible Work Arrangements</b>	<b>Organizational Support</b>
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	1	.846**	.870**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	319	319	319
Flexible Work Arrangements	Pearson Correlation	.846**	1	.881**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	319	319	319
Organizational Support	Pearson Correlation	.870**	.881**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	319	319	319

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

The findings established a positive, moderate and significant correlation between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement at ( $r = 0.846$ ,  $p = .000$ ). These results suggest that an increase in flexible work arrangements would automatically lead to an increase in employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Further, the results denote that when employees are provided with flexible work arrangements such as flextime, remote working and job sharing, they will be more satisfied, committed, efficient and engaged. These findings were in alignment with Afwande and Kiiru (2023) who found a positive correlation between work flexibility and employee engagement with Pearson  $r$  value of 0.712. Further, the results revealed that organizational support has a positive and significant correlation with employee engagement at  $r = 0.870$ ,  $p = .000$ . These findings compare with those by Wafula, Kadima and Mukanzi (2021) who established that there was a significant positive link between organizational support and employee engagement at ( $r = 0.706$  and  $p = .000$ ).

### Regression Analysis

Regression analysis measures the strength of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The study sought to examine the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya using the following hypothesis:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

**Table 5: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.846 <sup>a</sup>	.715	.714	.42327

a. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements

The results revealed a coefficient of determination of 0.715, indicating that 71.5% of the variation in employee engagement can be explained by flexible work arrangements.

**Table 6: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	142.569	1	142.569	795.758	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	56.794	317	.179		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>199.363</b>	<b>318</b>			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements

The findings demonstrated that the regression model is statistically significant ( $F=795.758$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This inferred that flexible work arrangements have a significant effect on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings concur with Aziz-Ur-Rehman and Siddiqui (2019) who found that working flexibility gives employees job autonomy to manage their schedules, increases organizational pride, job satisfaction and engagement.

**Table 7: Regression Coefficients**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	.820	.104		7.902	.000
Flexible Work Arrangements	.894	.032	.846	28.209	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

From the analysis, the constant term of  $\beta_0 = 0.820$  implied that if flexible work arrangements are held constant, employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya would increase by 0.820. The regression coefficient for flexible work arrangements was ( $\beta_1=0.894$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). This suggested that for every unit increase in flexible work arrangements, employee

engagement is predicted to increase by 0.894 units. Since the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected. These findings demonstrated that flexible work arrangements positively contribute to employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Similarly, these results resonate with Weideman and Hofmeyr (2020) who established that flexible work arrangements enhance employee engagement through improved performance, discretionary effort, customer satisfaction, talent retention, increased commitment and competitive advantage. Further, Ohunakin et al., (2018) revealed, that if an organization supports flexible work schedules, employee morale will increase and they will be inspired to work every day. On the contrary, Willett, LaGree, Warner, Brian, Houston and Duffy, (2024) established that higher levels of employee use of flexible work arrangements is associated with less flourishing at work and reduced job engagement. These findings implied that flexible work arrangements can have negative effects if used excessively and this calls for involvement of the management in order to enhance effectiveness of these practices. The regression model obtained from the output was;

$$EE = 0.820 + 0.894FWA$$

### **Moderating effect of Organizational Support**

The study sought to examine the moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya and it was guided by the following null hypothesis;

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no statistically significant moderating effect of organizational support on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya.

**Table 8: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	.846 <sup>a</sup>	.715	.714	.42327	.715
2	.886 <sup>b</sup>	.784	.783	.36876	.069
3	.926 <sup>c</sup>	.858	.857	.29989	.074

- a. Predictors (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements
- b. Predictors (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support
- c. Predictors (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support, Interaction between Flexible Work Arrangements and Organizational Support
- d. Dependent variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient of determination was 0.715 indicating that flexible work arrangements explained 71.5% of the variation in employee engagement. In Model 2, the

moderator was introduced in the model and there was a notable  $R^2$  change of 6.9% translating to an  $R^2$  of 0.784. These findings demonstrated that organizational support enhanced the explanatory power of flexible work arrangements therefore 78.4% of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to flexible work arrangements. In Model 3, the interaction variable was investigated and the  $R^2$  changed to 0.858, recording an increase of 7.4%. These results inferred that organizational support adds value to the model and moderates the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. Similarly, Willet et al., (2024) established organizational support offered in form of high-quality leaders and communicative support was linked to increased job engagement and flourishing at work.

**Table 9: ANOVA**

		ANOVA <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	142.569	1	142.569	795.758	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	56.794	317	.179		
	Total	199.363	318			
2	Regression	156.391	2	78.196	575.020	.000 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	42.972	316	.136		
	Total	199.363	318			
3	Regression	171.035	3	57.012	633.946	.000 <sup>d</sup>
	Residual	28.328	315	.090		
	Total	199.363	318			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements

c. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support

d. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible Work Arrangements, Organizational Support, Interaction between Flexible Work Arrangements and Organizational Support

The findings in the three models suggest significant relationship as indicated by Model 1 ( $F=795.758$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), Model 2 ( $F=575.020$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and Model 3 ( $F=633.946$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). There was a significant increase in the computed f-statistic while the p-value was below 0.05 across all the models. These findings hinted that, flexible work schedules and employee engagement are significantly related in five-star hotels in Kenya before and after inclusion of the moderator and the interaction variables.

**Table 10: Regression Coefficients**

		Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.820	.104		7.902	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements	.894	.032	.846	28.209	.000
2	(Constant)	.550	.094		5.836	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements*	.376	.058	.356	6.443	.000
	Organizational Support	.560	.056	.556	10.082	.000
3	(Constant)	4.452	.399		11.147	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements	2.591	.180	2.452	14.397	.000
	Organizational Support	1.889	.114	1.878	16.638	.000
	Flexible Work Arrangements* Organizational Support	.578	.045	3.331	12.761	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

In Model 1, the coefficient estimate of the constant term was  $\beta_0=0.820$  which implied that, if flexible work arrangements are held constant, employee engagement would increase by 0.820. The findings pointed out that flexible work arrangements had  $\beta_1=0.894$ ,  $t=28.209$ ,  $p<0.05$ . This indicated that the regression coefficient was significant and there is a 0.894-unit increase in employee engagement for each unit increase in flexible work arrangements. In Model 2, the moderating variable was introduced and there was a significant effect of flexible work arrangements ( $\beta=.376$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and organizational support ( $\beta=.560$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) on employee engagement. In Model 3, the interaction variable was investigated and findings revealed a positive and significant effect on employee engagement arising from the interaction between flexible work arrangements and organizational support ( $\beta=0.578$ ,  $t=12.761$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). After moderation, the regression models become:

Model 1:  $EE = 0.820 + 0.894FWA$

Model 2:  $EE = 0.550 + 0.376FWA + 0.560OS$

Model 3:  $EE = 4.452 + 2.591FWA + 1.889OS + 0.578FWA * OS$

Based on the findings, the null hypothesis was rejected and the study concludes that organizational support has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between flexible work arrangements and employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These findings resonate with Wang, Zaman, Rasool and Amin (2020) who found that employee commitment and performance at work are enhanced by organizational support, which also has a favorable effect on employee output. It has also been demonstrated that employees' cognitive and affective assessments of their organization are improved when they receive organizational support (Samma, Zhao, Rasool, Han & Ali, 2020). These results suggested that, when employees receive organizational support through practices such as effective communication, good leadership and fairness, they will be more dedicated and committed to accomplishing an organization's goals and objectives.

## **CONCLUSION**

The objective of this study was to examine the effect of flexible work arrangements on employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. The study findings established that five-star hotels had adopted flextime and job sharing while remote working was a challenge. The study concludes that flexible work arrangements positively and significantly enhance employee engagement in five-star hotels in Kenya. These arrangements explain a substantial portion of the variance in engagement, reinforcing their importance. Additionally, organizational support plays a crucial role by moderating and strengthening this relationship, highlighting the combined impact of flexible practices and organizational supportive on employee engagement.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommends that five-star hotels in Kenya should provide resources and training for remote working, develop employee-driven flexible work arrangements, and establish clear guidelines for flextime, remote working, and job sharing. These measures can enhance employee engagement and productivity. The study relied on questionnaires to collect data which are highly associated with response bias. Future studies can employ other tools in data collection. Further research is needed to explore the applicability of these findings in other sectors such as health, education, manufacturing, agriculture, and retailing.

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