

Influence of Physical Fitness Activities on Productivity of Hotel Managers: Perspective of Star Rated Hotels Within Mombasa County

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the extent to which participation in physical fitness activities found within health and fitness clubs in star rated hotels in Mombasa County enhanced manager's productivity. Though studies previously carried out concentrated on health benefits, nothing much has delved in productivity benefits, more so for hotel line managers. To address this gap, this study focussed on Hotel line managers found within the twelve star rated hotels within Mombasa County that have Health and Fitness Clubs. A cross sectional design was adapted. Since each star rated hotel has at least ten line managers, one hundred and twenty questionnaire were developed and subjected to the one twenty line managers. Both descriptive analysis and linear regression analysis, were used to analyse the resultant data to establish whether there was a significant difference between the physical fitness activities available in the hotels for the managers and their productivity. There was a high correlation between managers' physical activities and productivity ($R = 0.824$) which could be explained by 74.1% of the responses. The $P=0.026$ showed that there is a significant relationship between manager's participation in health and fitness activity and productivity in star rated hotels within Mombasa County. The regression equation; Managers' productivity = $21.864 + 0.712$ (managers' physical activity) shows that for every additional element of managers' physical activity, productivity would be expected to increase. As such line managers' participation in health and physical activities found within the star rated hotels could significantly boost their productivity. Other than bridging the research gap, the eventual results inform industrial policy makers on the need to either enlist line managers to wellness clubs or incorporate wellness clubs within the hotel premises for their use.

Keywords: Wellness clubs, physical fitness activities, productivity, Vroom's expectancy theory, line managers

INTRODUCTION

In the highly competitive hospitality industry, hoteliers and restaurant managers have for long focused on consumers (Zhang *et al.* 2018, Wang *et al.*, 2014). However consideration of managers as main success elements, has merely recently emerged as a centre of focus (Mirvis, 2012). Tsai *et al.* (2012), affirm that hospitality service inherently requires frequent and intimate interaction with customers. Managers through employees have a vital role in ensuring the attainment of customer satisfaction. Smith & Duffy (2013) and Zhang & Choi. (2014) agreed that firms need to enhance managers' commitment. This can be obtained through their optimal health which would be reflected in their balance of physical, spiritual, emotional, intellectual and social health.

According to United Nations Universal Declaration of Human rights (1948) and its follow-up; Sao Paulo

Declaration in Brazil (1998) ... 'every person has the right to rest and relaxation time; and ways in which it could be utilized' Evidently, this phenomena has been adopted and is increasing worldwide.

Kiruja and Mkuru (2013) and Soud (2014), posit that for any firm to achieve its objectives and goals, institutional success may rely greatly on the performance level of managers. Managers' performance is an ability (encompassing training, skills and resources required to perform a task) and motivation (an inward strength that drives an individual to achieve something) function. A good performance in a firm results in a more motivated manager that has the drive for higher productivity, commitment and drive. Hence results in firms that are effective, efficient, flexible, and profitable (Flippo, 2011; Soud, 2014).

The quality of human resource has an impact on the productivity of firms. Zhang (2018) asserts that, hotels struggle for excellence in customer service, a goal that is highly dependent on the managers' performance through their employees. In fact, Dessler (2003) emphasizes this by noting that achieving, talented and productive managers are the impetus of most firms, thus it is important that firms strive to motivate and to cling on them. Baker, et al. (2009a) and Zhang (2018) agree that hotel service manager's work in the ever changing work environment, which pose incredible challenges to their health and fitness, thanks to the shift work and long-time standing requirements, resulting in disrupted sleep patterns and mental stress (Stellman, 1999; Zhang, 2018). Despite this harsh working conditions, it is not clear how may still have time to participate in physical fitness activities and whether their participation may have an influence on their productivity. It was therefore imperative to adduce whether these manager's participation in physical health and fitness activities enhanced their productivity in star rated hotels. As such the hypothesis hereunder was set.

H₀ There is no significant relationship between manager's participation in health and fitness activity and productivity in star-rated hotels within Mombasa County So far empiric studies focusing on how staff participation in physical fitness activities to improve productivity in the hospitality industry are sparse.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

This study settled on Vroom's expectancy theory. According to Vroom, success and optimal performance for a firm depends on possessing key resources. It suggests that an individual's behaviour is formed not on objective reality but on his/ her objective perception of that reality that; effort will lead to effective performance, effective performance will in turn lead to rewards. Rewards in turn leads to satisfaction of goals. This stand-point assume that the desired outcome of managerial effort within the firm is to obtain a sustainable productivity, which, if attained, will allow the firm to earn above average returns.

Physical fitness programs have stirred the rapid growth of the health and fitness industry worldwide. One of its components, health and fitness tourism, has increasingly become an important economic and marketing strategy for hoteliers, resorts and tourist destinations to attract visitations. According to Henderson (2009), Petruzzelo, *et al.* (2010) and Woods *et al.*, (2011), understanding ones' motivation to be physically active is important. Being physically active is associated with a diverse health and psychological benefits including; a decreased risk of type II diabetes, heart disease and certain forms of cancers, (Kahn *et al.*, 2002; Lox *et al.*, 2010).

According to Chelladurai (2010) and George and Woods (2011), fitness organizations are chiefly concerned with offering services for customers who; seek to improve their health and fitness, engage in physical activity because of its intrinsic pleasure or combination of both. In fact, Spence and Lee (2003), contend that performing physical exercise and increased fitness may provide an individual with the advantage of achieving a greater state of physical well-being. This is in turn is likely to help one improve in performance. Hearst *et al.*, (2012) assert that lifestyle physical activity level improves the health of an individual with blood pressure. Tsuboi (2011) contends that participating in physical activity substantially contributes to a

boost in healthy behaviour such as; smoking cessation, disease and stress prevention, following a balanced diet, as well as maintaining emotional health.

In a work situation, this may minimise cases out absenteeism, increase work performance and workability (Pereira, Coombes, Comans & Johnston, 2015).

According to studies by Henderson, (2009), Petruzzelo, *et al.*, (2010), Woods *et al.*, (2011), and Amstrong, (2016), when an employee is rewarded, he is likely to increase his performance. However these studies centred on motivation within the office environment. Though additional studies related physical activities with performance (Candido *et al.*, 2019; Dogan, 2015; Grimani, *et al.*, 2019 Pereira *et al.*, 2015 and Stewart, *et al.*, 2013), none of them related to the hotel managers who work under unique circumstances that are highly demanding.

In their study, Grimani, *et al.*, (2019) compared sedentary life with work performance. They contended that a sedentary life had an influence on productivity absenteeism. Conversely, Pereira *et al.*, (2015) in their study on laundry workers and nurses observed that on-site workplace health enhancing physical activity programmes did not reduce the level of sick leaves. However, they established that participation in aerobics, strengthening and flexibility regimes improved work productivity for the same workers.

In the case of Candido *et al.*, (2019) they contend that activity based working yielded significantly higher satisfaction results on indoor environmental quality, perceived productivity and health, a situation that could be enhanced by office layout. Indeed Dogan (2015) and Steward *et al.* (2013) confirm that gym members' perceive that participation in physical activities may make them efficient, productive, increase control of their lives, amplify emotional resilience, physical and psychological fitness, hence build a better looking and better functioning body while make them present themselves more confidently in their workplace. Additionally, Coulson, McKenna and Field (2008) posit that individuals reported improvements in managing time demands, mental-interpersonal performance and in managing output demands. However all the above mentioned studies were for general staff in different fields.

Nazeer, Gill, Ilyas and Shoaib (2016); and Baro and Thapa (2017) have asserted that, physical well-being is part of overall health. Yasmeen & Muhammed (2016) observe that Physical fitness is a basic state of wellness and well-being that influences ones' capacity to perform aspects of sports, occupations and day to day movements. It should be noted that all the afore mentioned studies on physical activity and productivity we either carried out in hospitals, IT companies and among minorities in the work place. It was therefore interesting to asses whether the same would be the case for hotel managers specifically for star rated hotels found along Kenya's coast line, owing to the fact that they face unique work challenges not experienced in other work stations

Study Locale

The current study was carried out in Mombasa County, Kenya's renown vacation tourist destination. Mombasa is the smallest of the 47 counties in Kenya, It comprises of six sub-counties namely: Chngamwe, Kisauni, Nyali, Jomvu, Likoni and Mvita. It borders Kilifi County to the north and west, Kwale County to the south and the India Ocean to the east. It has a reverberant economy which includes varying hospitality amenities and beautiful beaches that make it a popular tourist destination in Kenya, (GOK, 2013). Out of the 18 star rated hotels in the region, twelve of them have fitness clubs set for their guests. While membership to these clubs is open to senior hotel managers, the rest of their staff do not enjoy this privilege.

METHODOLOGY

The respondents comprised managers working in the various departments in the selected hotels, who also

had membership in their respective health and fitness clubs.

Based on cross-sectional design, this study targeted all the 120 managers from all the departments using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire. A pre-test was carried out on managers in two selected star rated hotels with health and fitness clubs within Mombasa County that were not included in the actual study. Content validity was tested by two expert judges to be sure that the instrument measured what was intended while a test-retest was run to establish the reliability of the questionnaire. A coefficient of 0.929 was realised confirming consistency and precision of the questionnaire as being reliable .

RESULTS

Of the targeted 120 managers, the study attained a response rate of 82.50% which was considered as good. To determine the extent to which manager’s participation in physical activity enhanced their productivity in health and fitness clubs in star rated hotels, a likert scale of score 1-5, with 1 showing that the respondent strongly disagreed with the statement, while 5 being that they strongly agreed with the statement was used. Most respondents strongly agreed that participation in health and fitness activities improved their performance. The means ranged between 3.74 and 4.15 out of a possible score of 5. The standard deviations were low, indicating that the responses had a low variation. This means that most respondents tended to agree that they participated in activities that enhanced their health and fitness.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics on Physical Activities

	N	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Minimizes pains and injuries while at work	99	3.74	.131	1.306
improved on my muscle flexibility	99	4.02	.092	.915
repairing and curing stiff muscles	99	3.90	.114	1.129
enhance my free movement while on duty	99	3.82	.116	1.155
improve on my reflexes and alertness while working	99	4.02	.108	1.078
improved on my endurance during busy long days	99	4.06	.094	.935
improved on my physical performance while on duty	99	4.15	.105	1.044
improved on my physical fitness while on duty	99	4.07	.106	1.052
Valid N (listwise)	99			

From table 1, it is evident majority of the respondents reported improvement in their physical performance while on duty (80.8%; M= 4.15, SD=1.044); improvement in their physical fitness while on duty (76.7%,; M=4.07, SD=1.052); improvement in their endurance during busy long days (87.9%; M=4.06, SD=0.935). Their motivation to improve their physical performance while on duty was in tandem with Marie (2012), who noted that the historical role of health and fitness clubs is health restoration relaxation and feeling well. The service and treatment in health and fitness clubs may also vary but have a common goal to improve health and fitness.

The main elements of health and fitness clubs experience are relaxation, reflection, revitalization, rejuvenation and rejoicing. According to Vroom’s Model, the success and optimal performance of an individual depends on possessing key resources, which suggest that effort leads to optimal performance. This might then result in rewards, which in turn leads to satisfaction of goals. The basic idea of this view is

the assumption that the desired outcome of managerial effort within the firm is to obtain a sustainable performance and productivity, which if attained, will allow the firm to earn economic rents or above average returns.

To establish whether a relationship exists between the dependent and independent variable, a null hypothesis was tested;

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity in star-rated hotels within Mombasa County

A linear regression analysis was used. The overall idea of regression is to examine whether a set of predictor variables (independent variables) exist, and in which variables in particular are there significant predictors of the outcome variable. In what way are the significant predictors indicated by the magnitude and significance of the beta estimates impact the outcome variables.

The regression analysis is used to explain the relationship between one dependent variable and one or more independent variables. The Linear Regression was carried out through a model of $Y=a +B1X1+e$, where $Y=$ productivity, $a =$ constant/intercept, $B1=$ slope (beta coefficient for physical activity), $X1=$ physical activity and $e =$ error term. The first step enabled the researcher to formulate the model where the model variable X (independent variable, physical activity), had a causal influence on variable Y (dependent variable, manager’s activity). this implied that their relationship is linear.

The second step of Linear Regression Analysis was to fit the regression line. Mathematically least square estimation was used to minimize the unexplained residual. Lastly a test was made to establish whether the model and the estimated coefficients could be found in the general sample. Since the data was ordinal, it was converted to interval data by computing composite scores for both the independent and dependent variables to meet all the conditions necessary for linear regression analysis to be conducted. The linear regression analysis was conducted applying the model below: –

$$Y= a+ \beta_1X_1+e$$

Where;

$Y=$ Productivity

$a=$ Constant/ Intercept

$\beta_1=$ Slope (beta coefficient for physical activity)

$X_1=$ Physical activity

$e=$ error term

Table 2 The Model Summary of the Physical Activities

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.824 ^a	.750	.741	6.94406	.750	5.145	1	97	.026
Key. a. Predictors: (Constant), physical									
b. Dependent Variable: productivity									

Findings of the model summary of relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity (Table 2), where the health and fitness activity is the independent variable (predictor variable), was used to predict the dependent variable, (productivity of the hotel managers). The R value which in this case is 0.824 indicates a high degree of correlation between managers’ physical activity and productivity. The R², indicates that the total variation in the dependent variable (which in this case is productivity) can be explained by 74.1% of the independent variable (managers’ physical activity).

Table 3 represents the ANOVA of relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity.

Table 3 ANOVA Results on the Relationship in the Physical Activities

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	248.073	1	248.073	5.145	.026 b
	Residual	4677.342	97	48.220		
	Total	4925.414	98			
a. Dependent Variable: productivity						
b. Predictors: (Constant), physical						

The regression raw shows that “sig” =0.026 is less than 0.05. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was applied. The value of $P=0.026$ implies that the regression model significantly predicted the outcome variable. The data therefore had a good fit.

To establish the coefficients of relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity a coefficient test provides the regression equation was run. (Table 4)

Table 4. Coefficients of Relationship in the Physical Activities

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	21.864	3.058		7.151	.000
	physical	.712	.094	.724	2.268	.026
a. Dependent Variable: productivity						

The coefficients table provides necessary information to predict whether manager’s physical activity statistically contribute to the model (by looking at the “sig” column). From the table, the regression equation can be presented as: –

$$\text{Managers' productivity} = 21.864 + 0.712 (\text{managers' physical activity})$$

This regression equation shows that for every additional element of managers’ physical activity productivity

will be expected to increase as per the values indicated in the “B” column. Further, the low P value (0.026) implies that this finding can be generalized to the population from which the sample was drawn.

The findings from the regression analysis imply that manager’s participation in physical activity has a statistically significant influence on their productivity. Therefore, the null hypothesis;

H₀ There is no significant relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity in star-rated hotels within Mombasa County was rejected and the alternative

H_a There is a significant relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity in star-rated hotels within Mombasa County was retained.

The finding aver that there is a significant relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity in star rated hotels within Mombasa County.

DISCUSSION

The present study sought to establish whether there was a relationship between manager’s health and fitness activity they participated in and productivity in star-rated hotels within Mombasa County was rejected and the alternative based on Vroom theory of expectancy. It was carried out in Mombasa County, Kenya’s renown vacation tourist destination. It targeted the 120 managers working in the various departments in the selected hotels, who also had membership in their respective health and fitness clubs and participated in the various fitness activities there-in. A five point Likert scale questionnaire which had a coefficient of 0.929 was developed for this purpose.

The findings confirmed that a significant relationship existed between manager’s health and fitness activity and productivity in star rated hotels within Mombasa County. This is in congruence with previous studies on physical activity and productivity (Candido et al, 2019; Dogan, 2015; Grimani, Aboagye & Lusak, 2019 Pereira et al, 2015 and Stewart, Smith & Moroney, 2013), just like the present. Though a number of these studies related physical activities with performance (Candido et al, 2019; Dogan, 2015; Grimani, et al., 2019 Pereira et al, 2015 and Stewart, et al., 2013) none of them related to the hotel managers.

Among the variables adopted in the previous studies included; sedentary life with work performance (Grimani, et al., 2019), physical activity and sick leaves (Pereira at al, 2015), indoor environmental quality, perceived productivity and health (Candido et al, 2019) gym members perception of physical activities and increased control of life (Dogan, 2015), and relationship between physical activities and time demands, mental-interpersonal performance and in managing output demands.. Additionally, (Coulson, et al., 2008) However all the above mentioned studies were for general staff in different fields.

Managers play an important part in the seamless running of any organisation. For the hotel service managers, their task is more unique and demanding considering the shift work and long-time standing requirements. According to Stellman, (1999) and Zhang, (2018), this results in disrupted sleep patterns and mental stress. This in turn exposes them to incredible health and fitness challenges. However if they are given good care, they are likely to take good care of the organisation’s staff and guests in return. In turn, guests satiety is likely to be raised hence increasing the return rate. This is turn may make a good return to the firm. This study posits that availing physical activities to them, among other motivators, may not only help them improve on their physical performance and fitness but also on their endurance during busy and long work days.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hospitality employees have strong specific health and fitness needs, because of their challenging working conditions. This study recommends that hotel policymakers should enlist their line managers to wellness clubs or incorporate wellness clubs within the hotel premises.

This may help not only in enhancing productivity but also demonstrate that the hotels are interested in their employees.

This study found that there was a significant relationship between managers' participation in physical fitness activities and productivity in star-rated hotels within Mombasa County. Statistically, a significant relationship existed. Since it is only the managers who were targeted. It will be interesting to establish whether awarding all staff membership in physical fitness clubs could improve their productivity.

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