



HUMAN RESOURCE CAPACITY AND STAFF WELL-BEING IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Employee wellbeing is a one of the main concerns that contemporary businesses strive to address in order to keep healthy relationships and also keep their staff content and interested at the job. Organizations that have implemented health programs at work reported positive business results. For individuals, workplace well-being means a healthy and balanced life. Hybrid work is a flexible approach that combines working in an office environment and working from home. Hybrid work varies in flexibility and supports a variety of different work schedules. Organizations who use a hybrid work model can offer a better work-life balance to their employees. The study was anchored on theories namely; the network theory of well being and the planned theory of behavior. The study's objective was the effect of human resource capacity on staff-wellbeing in Non -Governmental Organizations. The study employed the cross - sectional survey research design. The study was carried out among senior management of four non-governmental organizations in Westlands as its target population. Data was collected using questionnaires containing both open and closed ended questions which were administered by the researcher through the drop and pick technique. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics as well as qualitative methods to address the open-ended questions. The study results revealed that the Human Resource Capacity had an effect on staff wellbeing within non-governmental organizations. The study therefore, recommends that The NGOs should allow the human resource managers the flexibility to come up with strategies regarding staff development, invest more in digital platforms and equipment to support their employees in remote working, strive to improve their work environments in order to improving how the employees feel about their physical environment and encourage the development of more staff friendly policies and practices that influence scheduling, follow up and tracking of all employees regardless of their locations.

Key Word: Human Resource Capacity, Role of Remote Working, Staff well-being

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INTRODUCTION

Bal and Bulgur (2023) note that the new generation employees especially prefer to work remotely. There are negative sides caused by remote working by employees. Doing the work with colleagues in the office environment with a single individual through the remote working system can affect the productivity and efficiency of the employees. The weakness in the communication networks of the employees with the remote working system affects the active expansion of the communication networks of the employees. In this case, employees may have to live a more isolated life with these models (Savić, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic period, from the moment it emerged, has led to changes in business/business models that progress in a routine order and continue within certain patterns (Espitia *et al.*, 2022; Madero Gómez *et al.*, 2022). These changes have primarily led to the transition to a flexible working system in the working models of organizations and have led to the emergence of remote working opportunities that enable employees to carry out their work processes and activities that they are obliged to carry out regularly in the workplace in environments outside the organization.

Karunarathne (2021) observes that the weaknesses of remote working are the decrease in communication, decrease in motivating factors, difficulties in the use of technological resources, inability to cooperate with other employees, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, low personal achievement factors in employees, and the inability to enrich the physical resources, cognitive resources and emotional resources of the employees. is the subject. At the same time, there are weaknesses such as the emergence of social loneliness and emotional deprivation, exposure to more working hours.

Workplace well-being refers to day-to-day responsibilities. It focuses on how employees feel about their work, their stress levels, expectations, relationships, and the work environment itself

(Cacoveanu, 2022). Employee well-being is always found to be strategically relevant to organizations and individuals and has developed into one of the focal areas of research in the study of organizations (Pradham & Hati, 2019). The typical person spends one quarter of their adult life at work, and for many, work is a key life pursuit. Feeling good and functioning well at work are therefore key components of a person's overall wellbeing. Experiencing a high level of wellbeing is associated with a range of positive organizational attitudes (Keeman *et al.*, 2017).

With continuous lockdowns and movement restrictions during the pandemic, employees had limited opportunities to spend their free time away from their home offices. As a result, many employees have worked more than the scheduled working hours agreed upon in their employment contracts, thus negatively impacting their well-being and productivity (Nemt, eanu & Dabija, 2023). Such work setting has negatively affected employees' stress and overall health (Como *et al.* 2021). Okoh and Onioride (2019) studied the need for capacity building in human resources management development in the Financial Institutions in Nigeria. The study revealed that capacity building enhanced the proficiency of the top management staff of the financial institutions under study. It also revealed that capacity building enabled the management staff to develop competencies and skills that can make them more effective and sustainable.

The remote working system ensures the organization employing it enjoys the special advantages that come with the remote working system (Trede *et al.*, 2019). These are accompanied by beneficial elements such as flexibility at work, reduced labor cost, more satisfaction on the part of workers, and better environmental experiences. According to Yang *et al.*, (2019), the hybrid arrangement in the workplace helps ensure that the employee or worker's productivity is adequately maximized. Furthermore, working from home benefits employees who need to travel to work and,

thus, saves time and reduces transportation costs, as well as employers who save money by saving facility costs (Barath & Schmidt, 2022).

A KPMG (2021) report on the future of work in Ireland showed that the shine of WFH had faded. Virtual fatigue, WFH burnout, and social withdrawal are drawing more than a few employees back to their former offices. They observed that this did not however, mean that WFH had lost its meaning. Evidence suggests that remote and remote working can have both positive and negative impacts on workers' health and wellbeing. Data from a study by Mutebi and Hobbs (2022) showed that in February 2022, almost half of those who worked from home in some capacity reported that it improved wellbeing (47%). Remote and remote working can improve wellbeing through decreasing time and money spent commuting, increasing flexibility in their working pattern or hours and improving work-life balance. Survey data suggest that a majority of workers have a preference for remote working in the future. UKHLS COVID-19 study data found that 88% of employees who worked at home in January 2021 would like to work at home at least sometimes once pandemic restrictions were fully lifted (Mutebi & Hobbs, 2022).

NGOs in Kenya have been the first line of response when Kenyans are faced by various humanitarian challenges. They play a significant role when the country faces natural and manmade humanitarian crises. This is evident from the work they do in arid areas, during floods, disease outbreaks and conflict and terrorist activities in the country. The environment in which humanitarian aid organizations operates in Kenya is highly unstable, with high probability of effect from political and military influences. The operation is further inefficient due to absence of joint planning and inter-organizational collaboration (Nyile *et al*, 2021).

According to Dufour *et al* (2018), there are several complex humanitarian challenges facing East Saharan Africa arising from famines, civil wars as well as natural disasters. The population is highly

prone to humanitarian calamities in comparison with the rest of the world. It also suffers from lack of national resources available to support people in times of humanitarian crisis, commonly known as coping capacity. In such circumstances, the international communities' chip in to support, manage, procure and distribute most important aids. Nonetheless, since many humanitarian aid organizations are always deployed during the crisis phenomenon, challenges of coordination of the efforts become a big issue. Poor coordination of relief efforts amounts to network congestion and the aftermath could pose a risk to the victims. Hence, the adoption of remote working systems helps solve such challenges

Capacity can be defined as the ability of human institutions and societies to perform successfully to identify and reach their goals and to change when necessary for sustainability, development and advancement purposes (Ubels *et al.*, 2010). Human resource capacity is an area that includes all areas related to staff management such as assessment of staff performance managing performance expectations program staffing, staff development salary and benefit administration and relevant policies and procedure. An important component of human resources is the area of volunteer management. This refers to the capacity of the organization to recruit, train, retain and reward volunteers (Okoh & Onioride, 2019).

Yamoah (2014) focused on the link between human resource capacity building and job performance using a literature review. Finding from the review indicated a strong link between human resource capacity building and employee job performance. It is hoped that this indication from the review would provide additional logical motivations for the continuing training and empowerment of employees.

Bhatt *et al* (2023) studied the impact of technology in HR practices on performance management in IT industry. They observed that Recruitment, talent management, compliance, payroll, performance management, employee engagement, and other

basic HR functions are being redefined by technology. Emerging technologies are also being used to broaden HR's responsibility and reorient it towards employee engagement and productivity. Their results showed that technology is very helpful for improving performance and aiding in data management but also presents some challenges due to constant technological change and the potential for data loss.

The findings by Griffin (2020) also showed that monitoring the activity is appropriate for HR, which is the ethical method for measuring employee activity, but from the employees' perspective, it appears that there is a lack of trust in the employees, which causes them to feel insecure and engage in unethical behaviour. It aids in knowing the productivity of employees at work and monitoring the same for performance management. The study's gap is having a policy for everyone because currently, all new generations know how to gather data without being discovered by the company.

Sahay (2022) noted that the year 2020 required organizations to employ technology which had an impact in both positive and negative ways. With the help of technology, HR used various new technologies to improve the organization's operations. This helped to understand the benefits and acceptance of technology in human resources as well as the challenges that HR faces. The study's gap was that organizations had all of the information on the ICT tools, but were concerned about losing their data and not having a backup of the same.

Karanja (2016) studied integration of ICT in human resource management: case of Kenyan Higher Education. Many of the higher educational institutions (HEIs) have been shown to experience a number of challenges in their quest to integrate ICTs in their management processes. The study concluded that integration of information solutions gives higher education institutions competitive advantages.

Reuben (2019) looked at influence of human resource development and ICT policy on organizational performance of telecommunications service providers in Kenya. A descriptive survey study design was used and stratified sampling technique applied. Data was collected quantitatively from UNITEL services limited staff using a questionnaire. A total of 40 staff was sampled with 33 questionnaires successfully being returned. The results findings established that on ICT Human Resource Development, above 48% of the respondents strongly agree that ICT good knowledge, experience in ICT, Adoption of new technology and induction of new employees enhances productivity. The study recommended that the organizations should come up with some policies that aims at training its staff to enhance their skills and competencies.

Balasubramanian (2023) assessed the role of ICT in strategic human resource management. It attempts to examine how HR professionals and managers in different organizations see the effects of HRIS on strategic HR tasks and job roles. The study reveals that the usage of HRIS plays a vital role in improving the professional standard of the employees irrespective of the size of the sector. The role played by HRIS helps to better perform the strategic HR tasks.

Statement of the Problem

Employee wellbeing has been a subject of interest to scholars. Ehrlich *et al* (2022) studied selected well-being interventions for remote-working employees and proposed techniques to boost subjective well-being (happiness). Sivaprakash and Venkatesh (2023) also looked at remote working and wellbeing of employees by comparing pre and post covid era. Wappula (2022) studied employee wellbeing and inequality in a remote working world noting that remote working had many upsides but was not accessible to everyone, which could bring out additional problems related to equality. Hardley *et al* (2023) assessed how co-working spaces impact employee well-being. Employees and employers

face a challenge regarding how to optimize hybrid work policies to maximize benefits for both sides.

Castaneda *et al* (2023) studied hybrid work model on employees work productivity through a review of literature. Saini and Roulet (2022) addressed relationship between remote working, employee wellbeing and effectiveness. They noted that while extensive research has been done to understand the relationship between employees' wellbeing and job-effectiveness, the research is limited and inconclusive for a remote-working context. Remote working was a choice rather than a necessity for employees, and was only practiced by those who preferred it. Thus, the existing literature is likely to be influenced by the disparities between those who regularly worked remotely and those who did it infrequently (Wang *et al*, 2021). This requires more exploration in order to come up with more elaborations of the relationships.

In Kenya, there have been limited studies on remote working as well as employee wellbeing. Ngeno and Muathe (2014) did a critical review of literature on employee wellness programs. Kitali (2021) studied employee wellness programs on employee commitment at KCB Bank, Njeri (2021) assessed workplace environment and employee performance while Muriithi (2023) looked at hybrid work arrangements on employee productivity at the Communications Authority of Kenya. The studies present a contextual and conceptual gap since they have hardly addressed themselves to Human Resource Capacity and well-being of staff despite literature suggesting that this can be a problem for both individuals and organizations. This is what the current study sought to fill.

Study objective: Establish the influence of human resource capacity on staff well-being in non-governmental organizations in Kenya

Hypothesis

H0₁: Human resource capacity does not significantly influence staff wellbeing in non-governmental organizations in Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

Theory of planned behavior

The theory of planned behavior (TPB), an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (2002a), made necessary by the original model's limitations in dealing with behaviors over which people have incomplete volitional control. As in the original theory of reasoned action, a central factor in the theory of planned behavior is the individuals' intention to perform a given behavior. Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior. As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance. According to the TPB, human behavior is guided by three kinds of considerations: beliefs about the likely consequences of the behavior (behavioral beliefs), beliefs about the normative expectations of others (normative beliefs), and beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede performance of the behavior (control beliefs).

The assumption is usually made that motivation and ability interact in their effects on behavioral achievement. Thus, intentions would be expected to influence performance to the extent that the person has behavioral control, and performance should increase with behavioral control to the extent that the person is motivated to try. Importantly, the TPB holds that cognitive antecedents of behavior are mediated by behavioral intent in that specific behaviors are more strongly related to behavioral intent than non-specific behaviors (Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen, 2002b).

The TPB is typically used to describe factors that lead to the volitional enactment of behaviors, for example interventions have been developed to help people lose weight (Schifter & Ajzen, 1985), promote healthy eating (Conner, Norman, & Bell, 2002; Povey, Conner, Sparks, James, & Shepherd,

2000), stop or prevent smoking (Godin, Valois, Lepage, & Deshamais, 1992; Harakeh, Scholte, Vermulst, de Vries, & Engels, 2004) and promote health behaviors (Conner & Sparks, 2005; McCaul, Sandgren, O'Neill, & Hinsz, 1993).

The enactment of discretionary workplace behaviors may be of particular importance in jobs that are service-based, are based on expert opinion and that require a high-degree of contextual judgment. This theory, therefore, explains the independent variables in this study. It elaborates that when hybrid work is adopted and planned well, employees have the benefit of determining the balance between their lives and work. This serves to create a renewed purpose for the workplace.

The Network Theory of Wellbeing

The network theory holds that a person is in the state of well-being if she instantiates a homeostatically clustered network of feelings, emotions, attitudes, behaviors, traits, and interactions with the world that tends to have a relatively high number of states that feel good, that lead to states that feel good, or that are valued by the agent or her culture.

A recent advance across several fields of psychology has been the introduction of the network approach (Fried *et al*, 2017). In network research, psychological phenomena are represented as networks, a complex organization of psychological characteristics that emerge from the mutual connections between the observable indicators that define them (e.g., items or subscales) (Borsboom &

Cramer, 2013). Rooting on the mutualism perspective, network models propose that psychological variables are mutually connected and reinforce one another, which forms a causally connected system (Borsboom, 2008).

A change that makes your life go better for you promotes your well-being; a change that makes your life go worse for you diminishes your well-being. The idea behind positive causal networks is that the features of someone’s life we appeal to in explaining her well-being - her committed relationship, friendships, exercise regimens, professional successes, her confidence and sense of mastery.

Felicity’s professional success leads her to acquire, maintain or strengthen other positive features of her person; and in turn these positive features help foster her professional success; and so on. These sorts of positive cycles are plausibly associated with many other components of people’s well-being. For example, Felicity’s optimism helps her overcome challenges and makes her more successful socially and professionally, and having success tends to bolster Felicity’s optimism (Seligman 1990).

The idea that positive causal networks exist is neither radical nor original. Psychologists have identified many instances of positive causal networks, though not under that description, and speculated about their general nature (Lyubomirsky *et al*. 2005). This theory is used in this study to explain employee wellbeing as the dependent variables.

Conceptual Framework

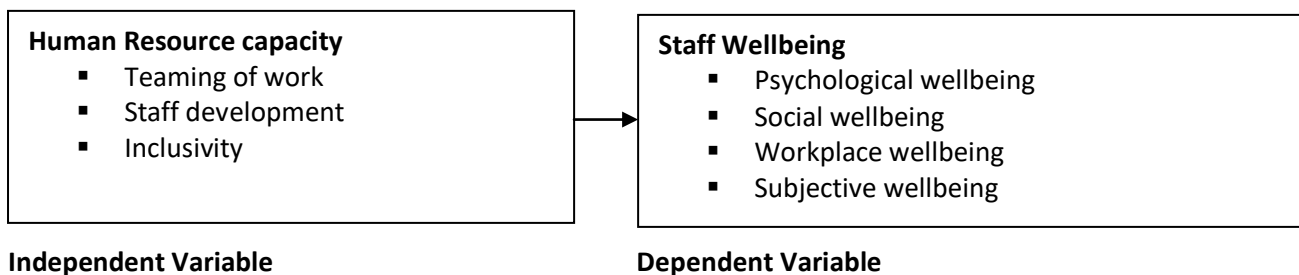


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: This research adopted the cross-sectional survey design which works on the assertion that data can be collected at one point in time from a sample selected to represent a larger population. In a cross-sectional study, the investigator measures the outcome and the exposures in the study participants at the same time. The researcher can study the association between these variables. It is also possible that the investigator recruits the study participants and examine the outcomes in this population. The researcher may also estimate the prevalence of the outcome in those surveyed.

Cross-sectional study designs is used for population-based surveys. The studies may also be used for estimating the prevalence and can usually be conducted relatively faster since they tend to be inexpensive. It was adopted in this study in order to establish relationships between the two sets of variables, the independent and dependent variables

Target Population: Cooper and Schindler (2011) observe that a population is the total collection of elements about which inferences can be made. Martínez-Mesa (2014) also describes it as the group of individuals restricted to a geographical region. This study was a survey of senior managers from four non-governmental organizations in Kenya.

Mugenda (2011) defines a research sample as a finite and representative number of individuals or objects in a population to be studied. Sampling enables the researcher to identify, select and gain access to the appropriate subjects (Mason, 2004). Through sampling the researcher reduces the amount of data to be collected by examining a subgroup of the total population (Saunders *et al* 2016). This study will sample the entire population from the 71 senior and middle level management employees of the four non-governmental organizations in Westlands as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003).

Research Instrument: The current research adopted questionnaires to collect primary data.

Questionnaires have been used by researchers before to collect data. Glasser and Strauss (2015) refer to questionnaires as being an imperative instrument in research. Researchers recommend that each item on the questionnaire be carefully developed to address a specific objective or research question (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The questions in the questionnaires were both structured and unstructured (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). Alternative answers may be provided for some questions while some items were closed ended to provide standardized data and increase the objectivity and validity of the study.

Pilot Test: In this study, validity; which measures the degree to which the results from data analysis represent the phenomenon under investigation (Cooper & Schindler, 2011) was adopted. Questionnaires were subjected to tests of their content validity to ensure that they are appropriately designed to measure the study variables. Content validity is based on the extent to which a measurement reflects the specific intended domain of content. To ensure content validity, discussions were held with experts during the questionnaire formulation stage to ensure the instrument includes adequate and representative set of items. Content validity measures the study objectives and wording of the instrument.

Data Analysis: The collected data was thoroughly examined and checked for errors and tabulated accordingly. The study used descriptive statistics to analyse the data to establish patterns, trends and relationships. Data was presented in frequency tables. The effect of human resource capacity on staff well-being, was established using linear regression analysis. The applicable regression model is shown below:

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where;

Y= Staff Well-being

α =constant

β_1 = parameter estimate

X_1 = Human Resource Capacity

ε is the error of prediction.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

The response rate for each respondent category is given in Table 4.1.

Table 1: Response Rate

Questionnaires issued	Returned	Percentage response (%)
71	67	94.36

Seventy-one questionnaires were administered to the respondents and sixty-seven were returned duly filled and useable for the study purposed. This represented a 94.3% response rate and acceptable for the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of over 50% is considered acceptable. The instrument response rate resulted from the self-administered method of administration of the instrument.

Descriptive Statistics for Human Resource Capacity

Human Resource Capacity

The first objective of the study was to establish how provision of remote working opportunities influenced the wellbeing of staff. The responses were rated on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from; 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The descriptive results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Results on Human Resource Capacity

Statement	SA Freq(%)	A Freq(%)	N Freq(%)	D Freq(%)	SD Freq(%)	Mean	Std. Dev
Our firm keeps remote teams engaged and productive through regular contacts and schedules	17(22)	55(70)	5(6)	2(3)	0	4.14	0.512
I feel that when i cannot work remotely (due to my role or personal circumstance) I become resentful.	26(33)	40(51)	7(9)	5(6)	1(1)	3.73	0.867
Technological support is available while working remotely	22(28)	42(53)	8(10)	5(6)	2(3)	3.2	0.942
Staff are expected to meet their responsibilities regardless of their work location	18(23)	45(57)	9(11)	5(6)	2(3)	3.3	0.874
i am concerned that I may not be committed when I work from home	21(27)	49(62)	6(8)	3(4)	0	4.11	0.671
Remote working is only applicable to roles that can suitably be performed away from the firm's offices	34(43)	34(43)	7(9)	4(5)	0	3.33	1.139
I worry about being seen as less valuable than my in-office peers and overlooked for job opportunities.	23(29)	43(54)	12(15)	1(1)	0	3.96	0.991
My employer provides support, incentives, and opportunities staff	17(22)	46(58)	13(17)	2(3)	1(1)	3.41	0.955
The managers ensure each employee's circumstances are taken into consideration no matter where they log-in, and that they are being considered equally when career opportunities arise	28(35)	30(38)	14(18)	6(8)	1(1)	3.9	0.72

The results in Table 2 indicates that the firm keeps remote teams engaged and productive through regular contacts and schedules to a very large extent as indicated by majority (mean = 4.14) of the respondents. The results also indicate that employees feel that when they cannot work remotely due to their roles or personal circumstances, they become resentful. (Mean = 3.73). They also agreed that the firm provide technological support to them while working remotely (mean = 3.2). The findings also suggest that staff are expected to meet their responsibilities regardless of their work location (mean = 3.3). Other findings suggest that employees were concerned that they may not be committed when working from home (mean = 4.11) and that remote working was only applicable to roles that can suitably be performed away from the firm's offices with a mean of 3.33. Majority of the respondents confirmed that they worry about being seen as less

valuable than their in-office peers and that, as a result, they would be overlooked for job opportunities (mean = 3.96). Most respondents (mean 3.41) agreed that their employer provides equivalent support, incentives, and opportunities to all staff to support remote working. Finally, the managers ensured that all their employee's circumstances were taken into consideration no matter where they logged-in, and that they equally considered them when career opportunities arose (mean = 3.9).

Inferential statistics

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis presented in Table 3 focuses on the relationship between Human Resource Capacity and Staff Wellbeing. The findings reveal significant correlations that highlight how these constructs may correlate with staff wellbeing.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

		Human Resource Capacity	Staff Well being
Human Resource Capacity	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	67	
Staff Well being	Pearson Correlation	.682**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	67	67

Findings showed that there is a strong positive correlation between Staff wellbeing and Human Resource Capacity, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.682 ($p < 0.01$). This suggests that higher levels of Human Resource Capacity are associated with improved Staff well-being, indicating that effective support and guidance can

significantly enhance staff well-being of Kenya Rural Roads Authority in Western Region, Kenya.

Analysis of linear regression;

Linear influence of Human Resource Capacity on Staff Well-being

This tested the direct influence Human Resource Capacity on Staff well-being as indicated in table 4.

Table 4: Direct influence of Human Resource Capacity and Staff Well-being

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.756 ^a	0.5613	0.4972	4.481349

a. Predictors: (Constant), HR capacity,

b. Dependent Variable: staff wellbeing

From table 4, shows that the relationship between the dependent variable and all the independent variables pooled together and had a model coefficient of determination, $R = 0.756$ which was higher than the zero order value in the table. independent variable could explain up to 56.1% of the variations in employee wellbeing. This indicates that the model could improve when more variables are incorporated when trying to analyze the influence of Human Resource Capacity on Staff Well-being. Hence the regression would be as follows;

$$(y = 2.25 + 0.445X_2$$

Where;

y = Staff well-being

X_2 = Human Resource Capacity

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The objective of the study was to establish how human resource capacity influenced staff wellbeing in Kenya. The descriptive results revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that the skills by both staff and managers had a huge impact on staff wellbeing. The results also revealed that the firms kept their remote teams engaged and productive through regular contacts and schedules. The correlation results showed that having human resources with the right skills and competences for remote working positively influenced staff wellbeing. This was also supported by the regression results which showed that HR capacity had a significant influence on wellbeing.

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Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that human resource capacity significantly influenced wellbeing of staff in non-governmental organizations in Westlands Town. Moreover, the strong and positive relationship implied that the firms had put considerable emphasis on capacity building to ensure staff wellbeing was upheld.

The firms should allow the human resource managers the flexibility to come up with strategies regarding staff development. The HR managers should also be allowed to consult with line managers so they can develop departmental strategies so as to create greater staff capacities for better execution of remote working. There is also need to engage stakeholders on staff capacity building process which must encourage participation by all those involved. If stakeholder is involved. If stakeholders are involved and share ownership in the process of development, they will feel more responsible for the outcome and sustainability of the development. Engaging stakeholders who are directly affected by the situation allows for more effective decision-making. It also makes development work more transparent.

Areas for further studies

Similar study can be done on other projects using similar variables, though using different methods.

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