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**UNIVERSITY**

**EFFECTS OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT ON HOSPITALITY EMPLOYEES IN 5-STAR HOTELS IN NAIROBI**

**MERCY CLARE WANJIRU**

**A research project proposal submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of a degree, Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management, School of Tourism and Hospitality**

**NOVEMBER 2020**

## **DECLARATION**

This research project is my ORIGINAL work and has not been presented for a degree to any other University.

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Student name: **MERCY CLARE WANJIRU**

Student number: **101220**

This project has been submitted for review with my approval as University Supervisor.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisors Name: **Mr. Collins Haggai**

Lecturer: School of Tourism and Hospitality,

Strathmore University.

## **ABSTRACT**

In the traditional family set up, women were required to stay at home and nurture the family while the husbands were meant to work and provide for the family. That has since changed due to major economic and social transformations. These changes have increased women in the workplace holding high positions too.

Work-family occurs when the demands of the workplace make it difficult to fill the demands of the family and vice versa. The hospitality industry is very demanding. Shift schedules in the hospitality sector are countercyclical to shift schedules of other industries creating a conflict for the employees and their families.

I would like to examine the effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi. From the findings of my research, I will be able to formulate possible strategies for industry consideration to counteract the effects and ensure that the employees can have a balance between work and family.

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

**Figure 2.1** – Conceptual framework

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**WFC:** Work-family conflict

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. Background of The Study**

Work-family conflict(WFC) refers to the extent to which demands of the workplace make it difficult to fulfil the demands of the family and vice versa (Magnini, 2009). Personnel in the hospitality industry opt to commute to reduce time spent away from their families. Shift schedules in the hospitality sector are countercyclical to shift schedules of other industries. This means that the busiest shifts are often when most people are off from work (Magnini, 2009).

Recent research shows that employees in the service sector are likely to experience work-family conflict. It is because customer contact jobs are often very intense and stressful which in most cases the employees carry these to their homes. A lot of research on WFC has been undertaken in the last decade due to the imbalance caused on employees' lives as well as a threat posed to organizations(Alsam et al., 2013)

In the past few years, the family structure has undergone tremendous changes due to major economic and social transformations (Choi & Kim, 2012). These changes have since influenced an increase of women in social participation, increased numbers of dual-income couples and single-parent homes (Choi & Kim, 2012). The decrease in traditional single-earner families means that responsibilities for work, housework and childcare are no longer confined to traditional gender role. These changes have created conflicts between family and work(Anafarta, 2011).

Work-family conflicts lead to other organizational problems such as low performance, job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, high turnover rate, organizational commitment (Namasivayam & Mount, 2004). The impacts on individuals are drinking problems, poor personal relations, exhaustion, work depression, anxiety and other physical problems (Anafarta, 2011).

This research will mainly focus on the effects of WFC on hospitality employees such as long working hours, job satisfaction and social- relationships. The findings will help in formulation possible solutions to strike a balance between work, family, and organization for a better and fulfilling coexistence.

## **1.2.Problem Statement**

The hospitality industry is characterized by long working hours and different shift schedules. This means that an employee might be required to be at work during a time that traditionally is known for family time.

Balancing between work and family has proven to be a challenge. Often one ends up being neglected which leads to the work-family conflict. Most employees are affected negatively, and it is manifested in reduced productivity in their jobs, unmotivated employees, and in some cases turnover intentions.

In this study, I seek to study the effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi. From the findings, I will develop recommendations that the industry players can adopt to reduce or completely manage the effects of work-family conflict.

## **1.3.Primary objective**

To analyse the effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5- star hotels in Nairobi.

## **1.4.Secondary objectives**

- i.** To evaluate the effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi.
- ii.** To analyse the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels.
- iii.** To analyse the effect of long working hours on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi.

## **1.5.Research Questions**

- i.** How does work-family conflict affect hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi?
- ii.** How does work-family conflict relate to job satisfaction in hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi?
- iii.** How do long working hours affect hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi?

## **1.6.Scope of The Study**

The study will focus on 5-star hotels in Nairobi. The findings will be generalised to give a possible picture of the hospitality industry in Kenya. This will also present a chance for future research on the subject.

### **1.7. Significance of The Study**

The study aims at analyzing the effect of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi. The study focuses on understanding the work-family conflict and family-work conflict.

The formulated strategies will aid in striking a balance between work and family for the employees in the industry. Finding the balance will as well guarantee job satisfaction and life balance.

The study will help hotels know how best to deal with work-family conflicts among its employees to ensure they reduce the negative impacts that may affect the organization negatively. The findings of this study will also help future researchers who would like to pursue the subject further

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1. Effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi.**

Work-family conflict(WFC) is a concept where the negative interactions between work and family appear on an employee taking on too many responsibilities at work and home(Choi & Kim, 2012). Researchers have since found that WFC is generated by 2-way effects i.e., work-family conflict and family-work conflict.

Work-family conflict occurs when pressure from the workplace causes an imbalance in the family life of the employees. This is when there are too many responsibilities from the workplace and brought home suppressing the time spent by the family causing stress. These issues bring out psychological and physical problems (Alsam et al., 2013). Family-work conflict (FWC) as stated by Alsam et al., (2013) comes around when an employee finds it difficult to meet the requirements of work role due to family role.

According to Magnini, (2009) WFC can be categorised as either internal or external conflict. External conflict happens when participation in one role precludes attendance of activity in another role. Some possible signs of external conflicts include decreased employee performance, lateness, absenteeism, physical problems, poor personal relations, and fatigue. Internal conflict is an internally generated psychological preoccupation with one role while trying to participate in another role. Signs of internal conflicts include stress, short temperament, withdrawal, anxiety, depression, panic attacks and job dissatisfaction.

Work-family conflict can further be categorised as time-based- when time devoted to one role makes it difficult to participate in another role. An example is when work competes for an individual's time leading to time constraints. Behaviour-based when behaviours of one role are incompatible with the behavioural norms of another role. For instance, a hotel manager is expected to be aggressive and logical at work and affectionate and emotional to the family, but these roles can easily be interchanged. The last category is strained-base where strain generated in one role leads to unsuccessful participation in another role(Magnini, 2009). Hospitality employees are more susceptible to strain-based conflict due to the high-stress levels associated with the industry.

An increase in dual-earner families has seen employees prone to stresses from work-family conflicts. Most workers are spending more time at work to earn more money to sustain their choice of lifestyle. The hospitality industry is characterised by low wage levels, late hours, long hours, and other stressors such as difficult guests. these makes employees vulnerable to the effects of WFC(Namasivayam & Mount, 2004).

The hospitality industry is labour intensive. For hotels to meet the demands they opt to hire labour paid on an hourly basis which translates to less pay during low seasons of the hotel. This

situation pushes employees to sacrifice family time working to meet work responsibilities resulting in stress and WFC(Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016)

## **2.2.Job satisfaction and its relationship to Work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels.**

Job satisfaction can be defined as a psychological response, a pleasurable or positive emotional state that results from appraisal of one's job(Mark, C. & William, H., 2008). Some researchers have since found out that factors which influence a person's job satisfaction are whether the job is compatible with the employee's other important aspects of life such as family. Work-family conflict arises when the job is not compatible with a stable family life that can lead to less job satisfaction(Mark, C. & William, H., 2008).

Job satisfaction has hypothetically associated with customer satisfaction (Choi & Kim, 2012). Service moods and attitudes directed to customers will in most cases exhibit job satisfaction. As stated by Choi & Kim (2012), employees on a higher level of job satisfaction will provide greater service performance on their job.

According to Namasivayam & Mount (2004), research has shown a relationship between organizational commitment and WFC. Turnover intentions are less likely to be there in employees that are strongly committed to there organizations. (Namasivayam & Mount, 2004) defined *affective commitment* as to the extent to which an individual identifies with an organisation. In situations where there is WFC, individuals may reduce their levels of affective commitment to their organizations.

Work-family conflict can be considered as a role stressor. Many studies are linking WFC (role stressor) to job satisfaction. This role stressor is presumed to cause negative attitudes towards a job. According to (Spector et al., 2007) WFC has been linked to job satisfaction and turnover intentions since employees view leaving the job as a coping mechanism.

In a study conducted by (Choi & Kim, 2012) WFC was found to negatively impact job satisfaction. The major conflict was time-based as many responders record that time lowered their job satisfaction. This is supported by the nature of the hospitality industry where employees have long working hours, shift work, year-round business and restricted weekend or holiday closing. Studies conducted in the past have demonstrated that WFC has a greater effect on job satisfaction on hospitality employees.

In a study conducted by (Deery, 2008), job dissatisfaction was found to be experienced when there is a conflict between work and life/family in an employee and most cases founded a basis of employee's turnover intentions in an organization.

Work-family conflict reduces job satisfaction and consequently reduces the job performance of an employee(Ahmad, 2008). He proposed a need to reduce work-family conflict and reduce the negative consequences arising from the conflict.

### **2.3. Effects of Long-working Hours on Hospitality Employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi.**

Recent studies have indicated that long working hours, duty and heavy workload have a direct influence on work-family conflict (Anafarta, 2011). The hospitality industry is characterised by long working hours and shifts that interferes with conventional time set to be spent with family and friends.

Working on holidays and having split-shifts in the industry has become a problem for employees in the industry. Employees end up feeling like the work is too much. At times they have to work overtime (Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016). This has led to work-family conflict and family-work conflict and in turn increased employee turnovers intentions who opt to join other industries that are more flexible and compatible with husband/wife, kids and friends (Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016).

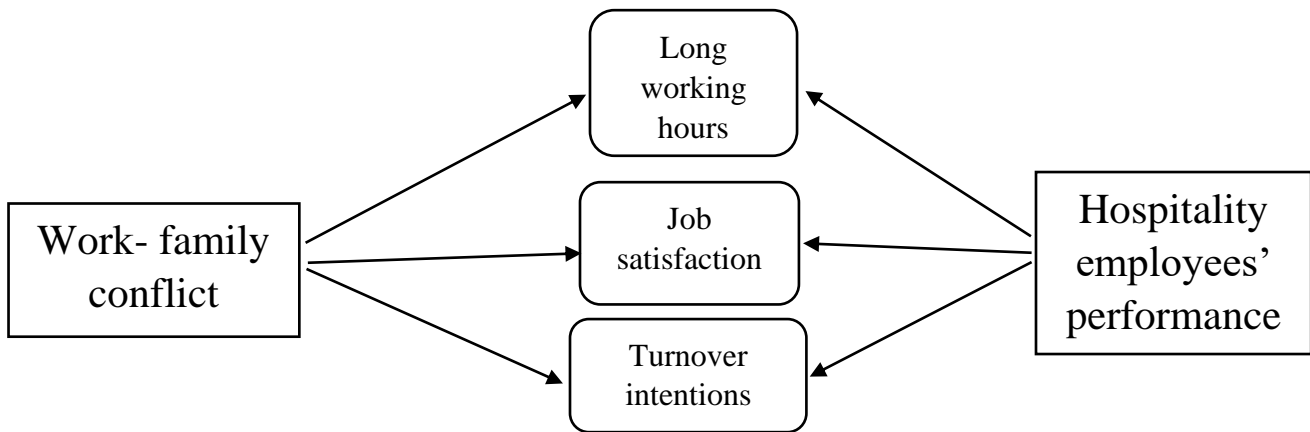
Irregular work schedules are also experienced in the industry which makes it hard to balance/match time with family members and friends. The industry is not as predictable and stable as other industries such as having to come and leave work at the same time every day. It becomes hard then to match 'free time' with that of family or friends creating a conflict (Zhao & Ghiselli, 2016)

Long working hours have a negative influence on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been linked to work-family conflict (Namasivayam & Mount, 2004). It is believed that job satisfaction is related to customer satisfaction (Choi & Kim, 2012). Staff on a higher level of job satisfaction will most likely exhibit greater service standards and performance in their workplace.

Long- working hours in the hospitality industry means long on-feet hours. This can be associated with occupational diseases such as varicose veins, back pains, and leg pains. Fatigue is also a common effect of long- working hours. After a shift, an employee may be exhausted that they are not able to attend to other family roles and in turn creating a conflict.

#### 2.4. Conceptual Framework

Work-family conflict is the independent variable. This is because hospitality employees' performance does not depend on work-family conflict. Job satisfaction and long working hours are dependent on the WFC effect on hospitality employees. The relationship between the independent and dependent variable is shown below in figure 2.1



*Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework*

*Source: Author (2020)*

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Research Design

A research design is the set of methods and procedures used in collecting and analysing measures of the variables specified in the research problem. The study will use a descriptive research design to achieve the objectives of this research.

Descriptive research is a quantitative description technique that seeks to answer questions about real-life situations. The design will help in-detailed analysis of data collected. It is appropriate since it will offer ideas for further probe and research and help in formulating recommendations.

#### 3.2. Population and Sampling

A population is a complete set of elements with a specialized set of characteristics where the sample of the study will be drawn from. This study targets 5-star hotels in Nairobi. There are 11 5-star rated hotels in Nairobi.

A sample is a subset of a population of the study. The importance of sampling is to conclude a population by observing only a sample of the population. The study will target employees in main departments in the hotels which are front office, food and beverage, housekeeping, and management departments. The sampling technique used will be a probability sampling technique specifically the simple random selection process where every element has an equal chance of being selected.

To determine the sample size the formula developed by (Israel, 2012) will be used:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

where  $N = \text{population}$

$e = \text{margin of error (0.05)}$

<i>Star category</i>	<i>Number of hotels</i>	<i>Sample size</i> $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$
5-star hotels	11	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>

Figure 3.1- sample size

Source: Author (2020)

Due to the constraints caused by the current pandemic in the world, data collection will be done in 5 hotels. This will be done in adherence to Ministry of Health guidelines.

#### 3.3. Data Collection Methods

The main data collection method used will be a questionnaire. A questionnaire is a written series of questions seeking to gather information from the respondent (C.R. Kothari, 2018).

Questionnaires are very economical in terms of finances, time, and efficient way of obtaining data from a large sample focusing on research objectives.

Total confidentiality will be upheld in administering the questionnaire to reduce chances of biases in data collection. It will be self-administered to ensure complete confidentiality. The questionnaire consists of both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

To facilitate a smooth collection of data, a pilot study will be done to assess the questions and necessary corrections made before the main study. A letter from Strathmore will be attached to the questionnaire as an introduction to the study.

### **3.4.Data Analysis**

Once the data collection process is completed, data analysis will begin. The data will be recorded and analysed using descriptive statistics. SPSS (statistical package for the social sciences) software will be used to generate quantitative reports presented in tables, pie charts, and figures.

### **3.5.Research Quality**

It is commonly referred to as the scientific process that encompasses all aspects of the study, that is, the match between methods and questions, measurement of outcomes and protection against bias in data collection. Four aspects determine the quality of research: relevance, credibility, legitimacy, and effectiveness.

Relevance in the significance or importance of the research project's objectives, process, and findings to the problem context. The questions in the questionnaire will be confined by the objectives of the study and ensure the findings are bias-free for the study to remain relevant.

Credibility refers to whether the research findings are strong, and the knowledge produced is trustworthy. High-quality research is authoritative, transparent, defensible, believable, and rigorous. This will be preserved by demonstrating that the data are adequate, with well-presented methods and logical interpretations of the findings.

Legitimacy means whether the research process is perceived as fair and ethical by end-users. To ensure the legitimacy of this study, there will be appropriate inclusion and consideration of diverse values and interests, ethical and fair representation of all involved in the study.

The last aspect is the effectiveness. It can be defined as how the research contributes to positive change in the study. At the end of the study, recommendations will be made that the key players in the industry can adopt to solve problems that may arise.

### 3.6. Ethical Issues in Research

The following will be considered during the collection of data; the researcher will not be subjected to any harm, there will be dignity for the participants, full consents will be obtained from the participant before the data collection, there is the protection of the privacy of the participant and confidentiality. The research also has no deception of the research objective and questions. The research avoids biases of the primary data presentation and findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the analysed data in both quantitative and qualitative forms. A total of 45 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents using google forms. They were all filled and returned to the researcher bringing the research rate to 100%. It was then concluded that the study was successful.

#### 4.1. Gender of respondents.

The respondents were required to indicate their gender. Figure 4.1 below shows that 44% were male and 56% were female.

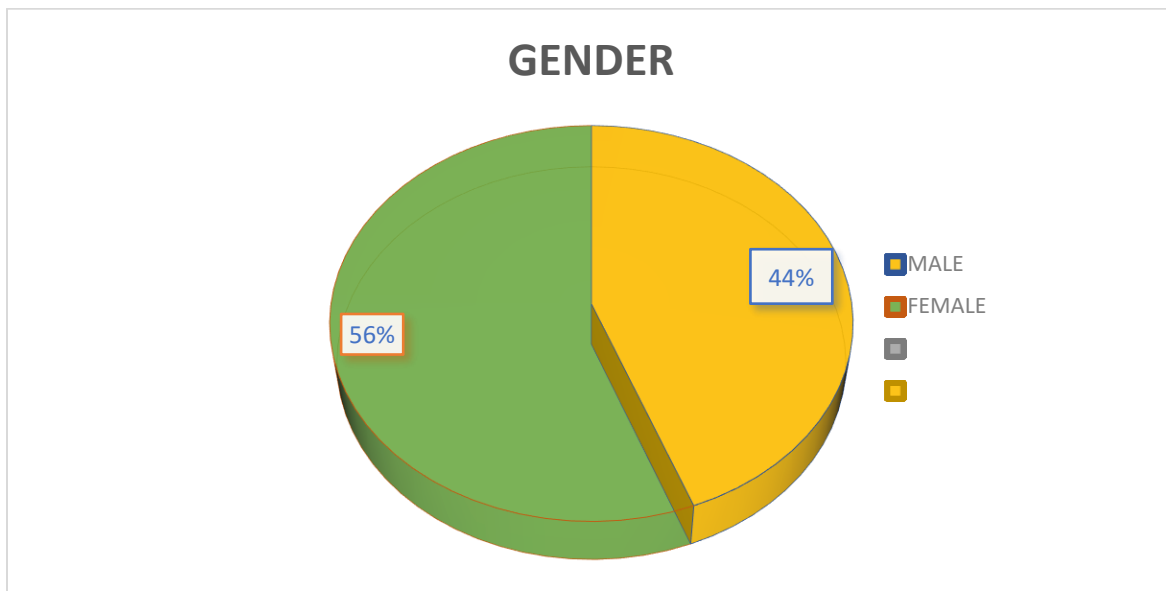


Figure 4.1 Gender of respondents

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.2. Marital status of respondents

Figure 4.2 below represents the marital status of the respondents. 61% were single, 28% married, 10% divorced and 1% engaged.

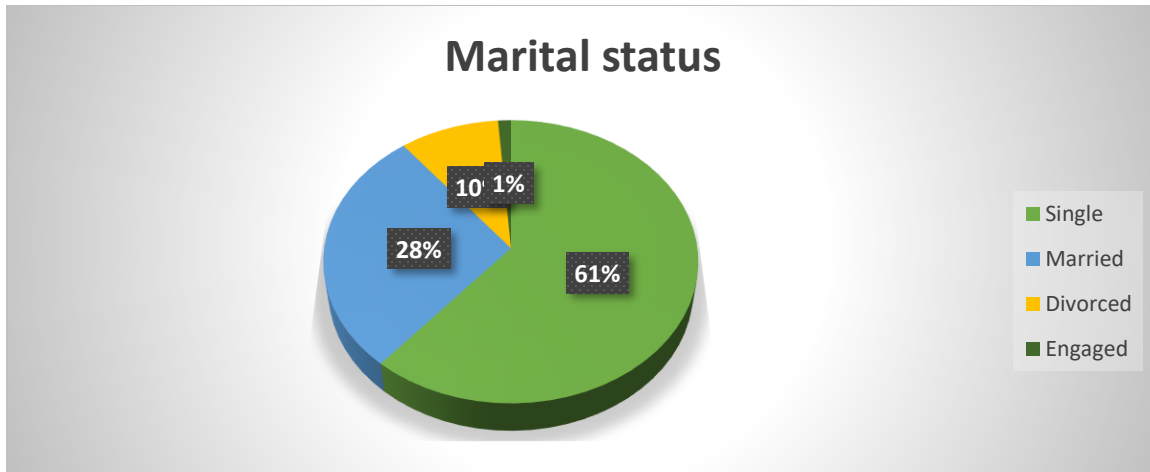


Figure 4.2 Marital status of respondents

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.3. Age of the respondents

Figure 4.3 below shows the age brackets of the respondents. 18 respondents are between ages 21-25, 8 respondents were between 26-30, 6 of the respondents were between ages 31-35, 8 were between 36-40, 2 respondents were 41-45 and only 1 respondent was between 46-50 age bracket.

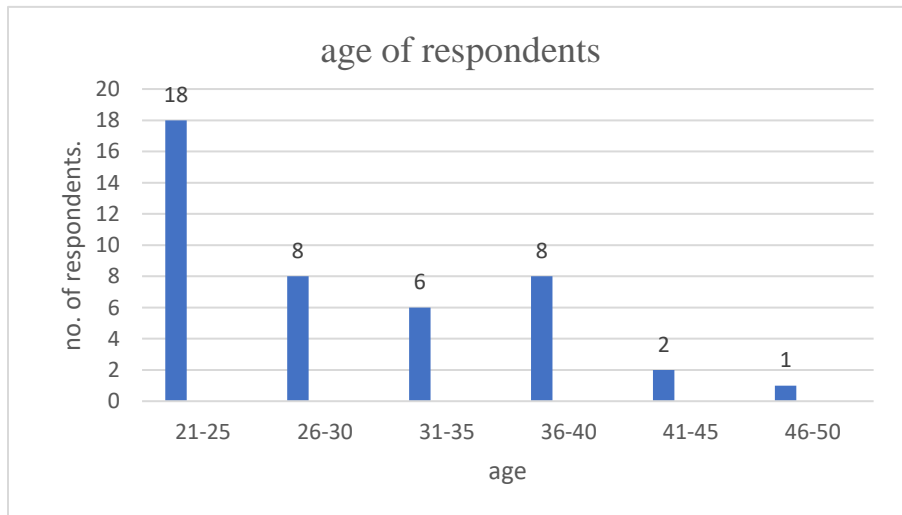


Figure 4.3 Marital status of respondents

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.4. Education background

Figure 4.4 indicates the education background of the respondents. Those with high school certificate were 7%, 35% had collage diploma, 51% had degrees, 7% had masters and none had a PhD.

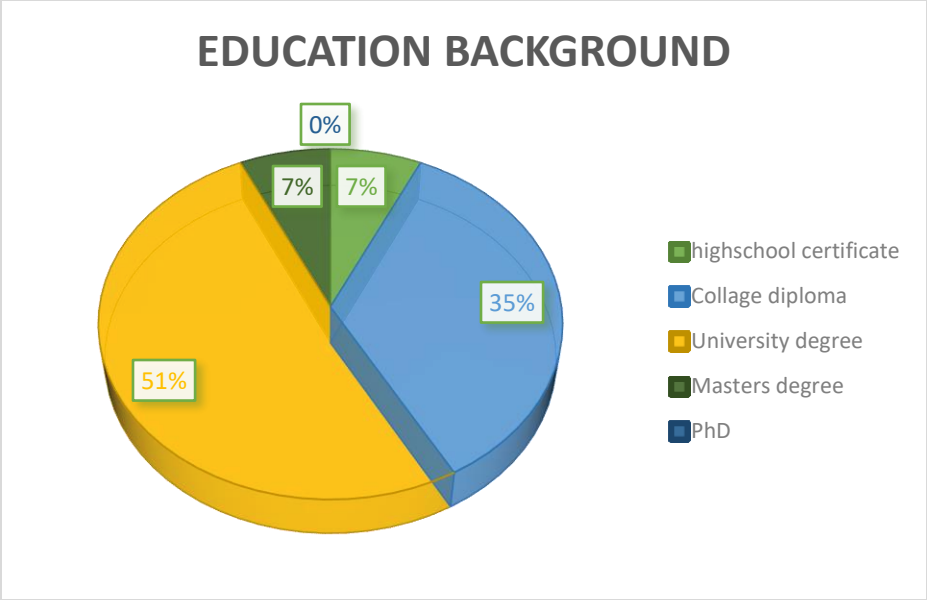


Figure 4.4 Education background

Source: Author (2021)

**4.5.Name of department**

The figure below shows the names of the departments that the respondents belong to. 10 respondents were in housekeeping, 8 were in management, 7 in kitchen, 7 in food and beverage service, 5 in front office and 6 were in maintenance.

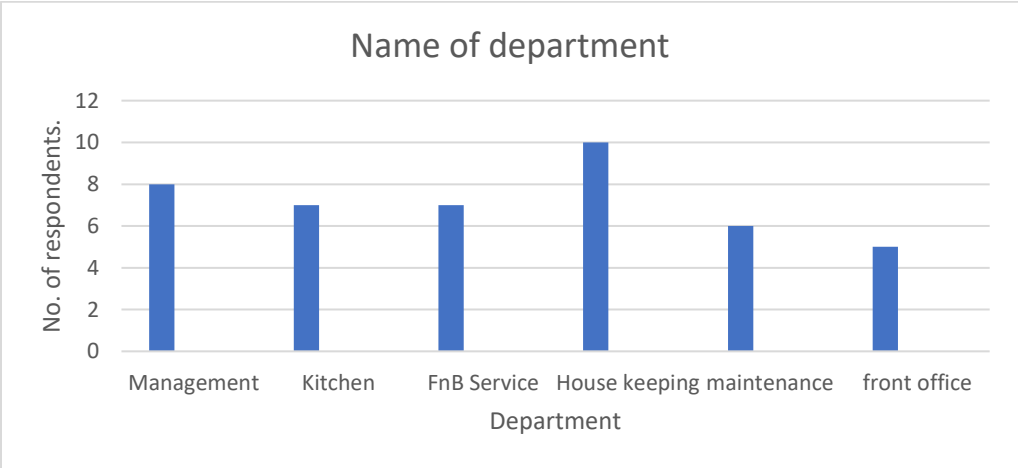


Figure 4.5 Marital status of respondents

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.6.Length of time worked in the industry

Figure 4.6 shows the length of time the respondents have worked in the industry.

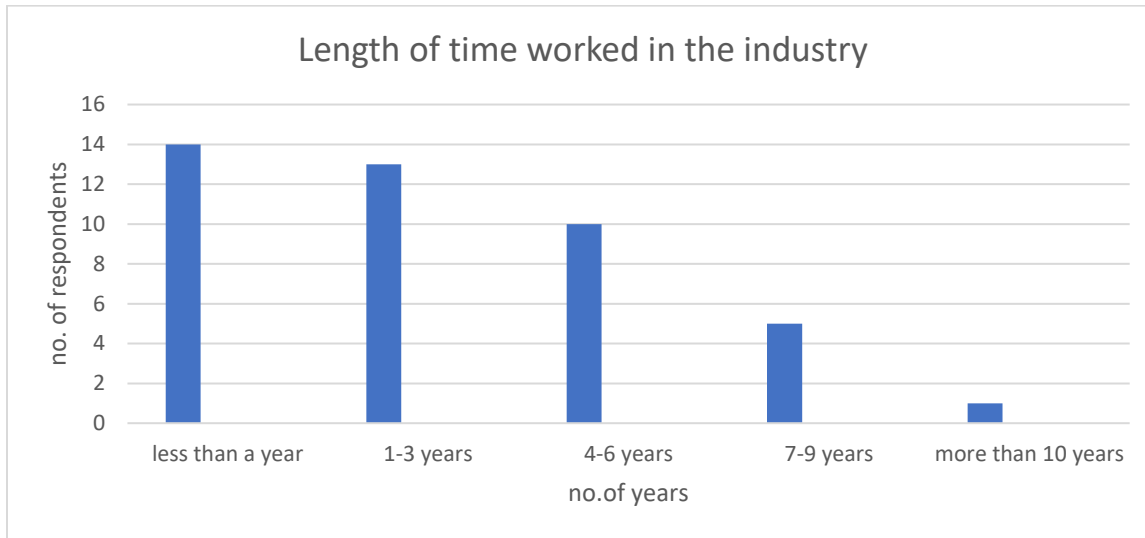


Figure 4.6 Marital status of respondents

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.7.Working hours per week

Figure 4.7 shows number of working hours of the respondents. 70% of the respondents work for 41-50 hours, 12% work for more than 50 hours a week, 9% works for 31-40 hours and another 9% for 21-30hours.

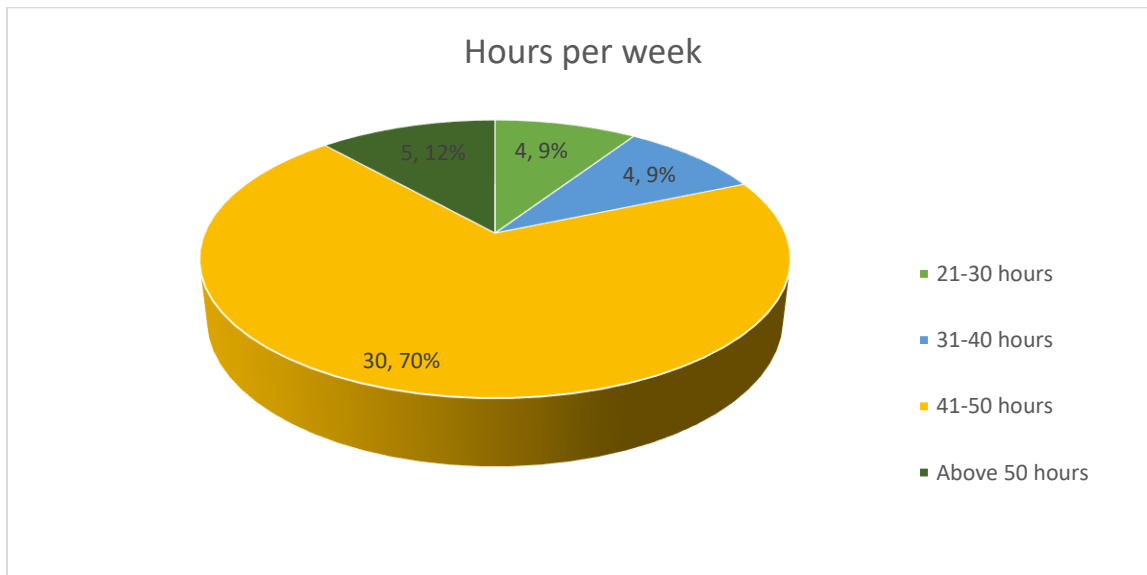


Figure 4.7 Marital status of respondents

Source: Author (2021)

#### **4.8. Work-family conflict occurs when work interference with family life.**

As presented in figure 4.8, a majority of 81.4% strongly agreed that work-family conflict arises when work interferes with family life and a minority of 2.3% strongly disagreed.

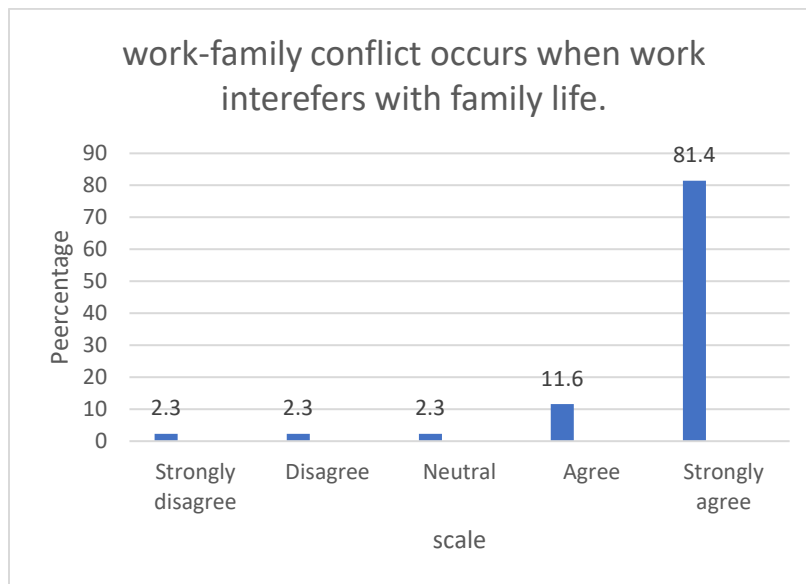


Figure 4.8 work-family conflict occurs when work interferes with family life

Source: Author (2021)

#### **4.9. Work-family conflicts experienced by respondents working in the industry.**

- Long working hours, impromptu calls to report to work especially during off days/leave days.
- Irregular working schedules, split shifts and on holidays
- Sudden, frequent family emergencies that employees use as an excuse to leave work on short notice.
- Emotional stability managing expectations on both ends.
- misunderstandings in the family, hardships in parenting, lack of sufficient time to spend with family
- Responding to emails and calls after working hours, overtime, or emergency night duty.
- Poor relations, anxiety, depression, short temperament, fatigue, and job stress.

- Missing important family events, family occasions, Lack of personal time, Strained family/friends' relations.

#### 4.10. Effects of work-family conflict experienced by the respondents.

Figure 4.9 indicates the percentages of different effects of work-family conflict. Fatigue had the highest of 74.4%, many respondents reported to experience lateness by 55.8%. Poor personal relations had 53.5%. Respondents reported relatively low percentage of short temperament, anxiety, and depression.

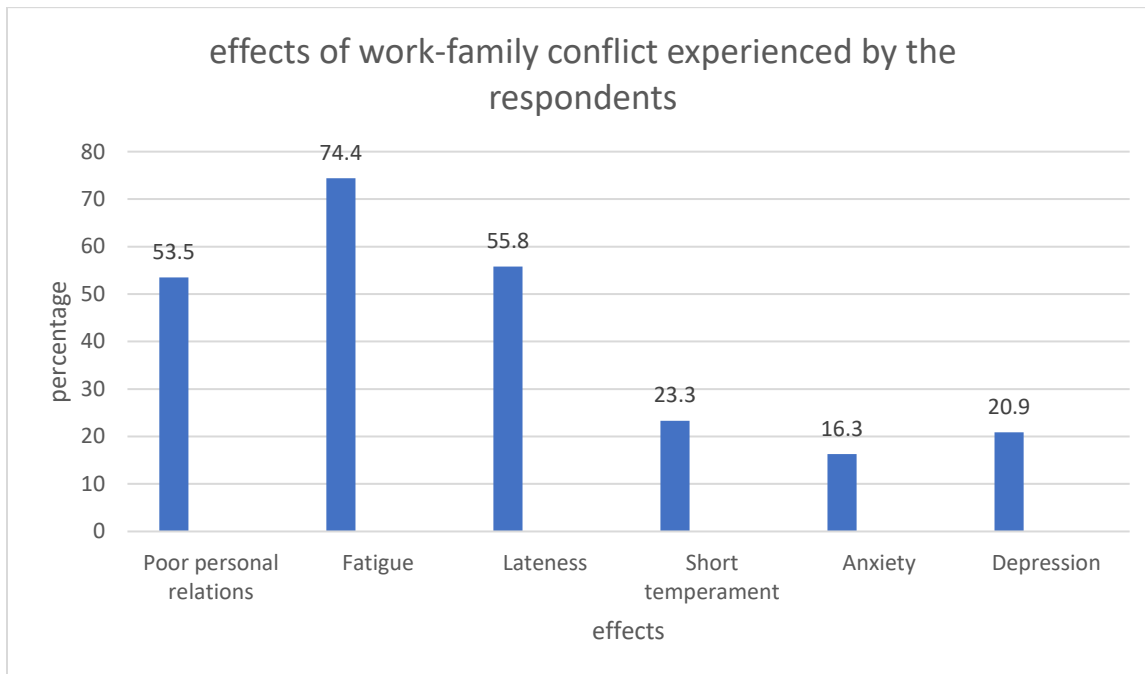


Figure 4.9 Effects of work-family conflict experienced by respondents.

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.11. Work-family conflict as a role stressor and leads to job dissatisfaction.

69.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that work-family conflict is a role stressor that can lead to job dissatisfaction. 23.3% agreed, 4.7% were neutral and 2.3% strongly disagreed.

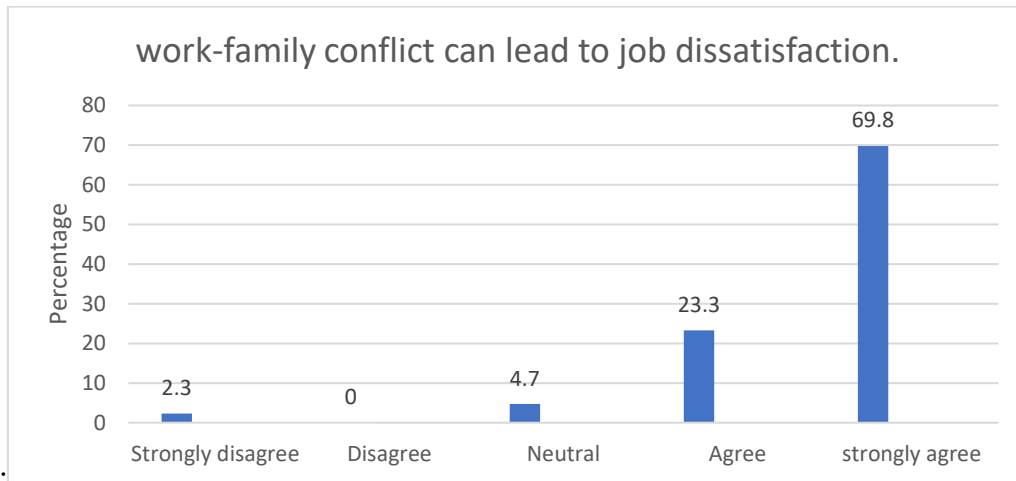


Figure 4.10 work-family conflict can lead to job dissatisfaction

Source: Author (202)

#### 4.12. Job satisfaction

The respondents were required to indicate whether they have realised job satisfaction. 34.9% indicated YES, 32.6% NO, and 32.6% indicated a MAYBE.



Figure 4.11 Job satisfaction

Source: Author (2021)

**4.13. Factors that may have lowered Job satisfaction.**

Long-working hours had the highest effect on low job satisfaction with 67% as indicated in figure 4.12 below. Working on weekends and holidays affected job satisfaction by 65.1%. low wages had 37.2%, year-round business with 20.9% and split shifts affects job satisfaction by 11.6%.

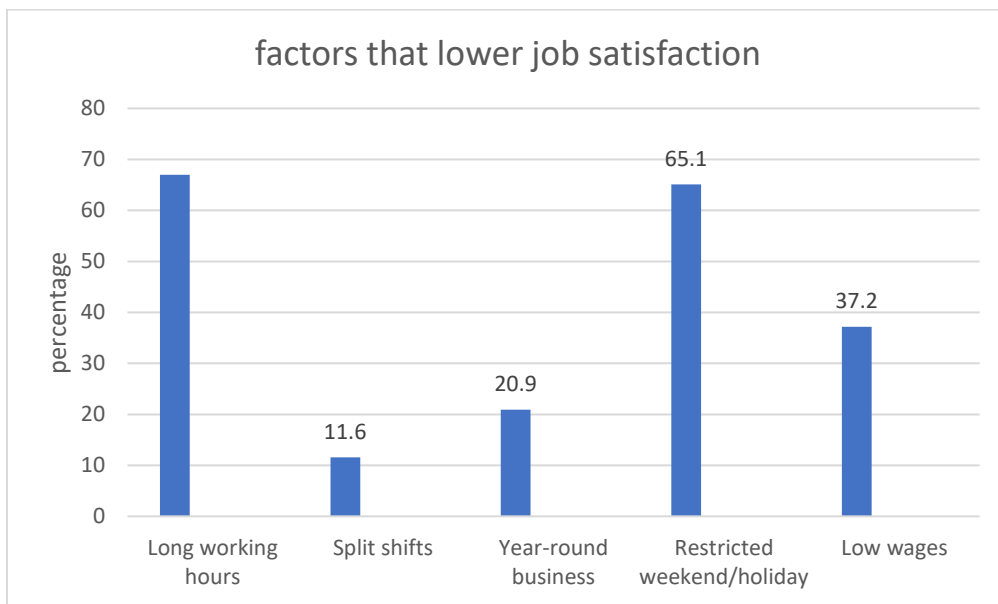


Figure 4.11 factors that lower job satisfaction.

Source: Author (2021)

**4.14. Long-working hours interference with family time.**

56% of the respondents strongly agreed that long-working hours interferes family time. 26% agreed while 4% disagreed with long-working hours interfering with family time. 14% of the respondents were neutral. The data is represented in the figure 4.12 below.

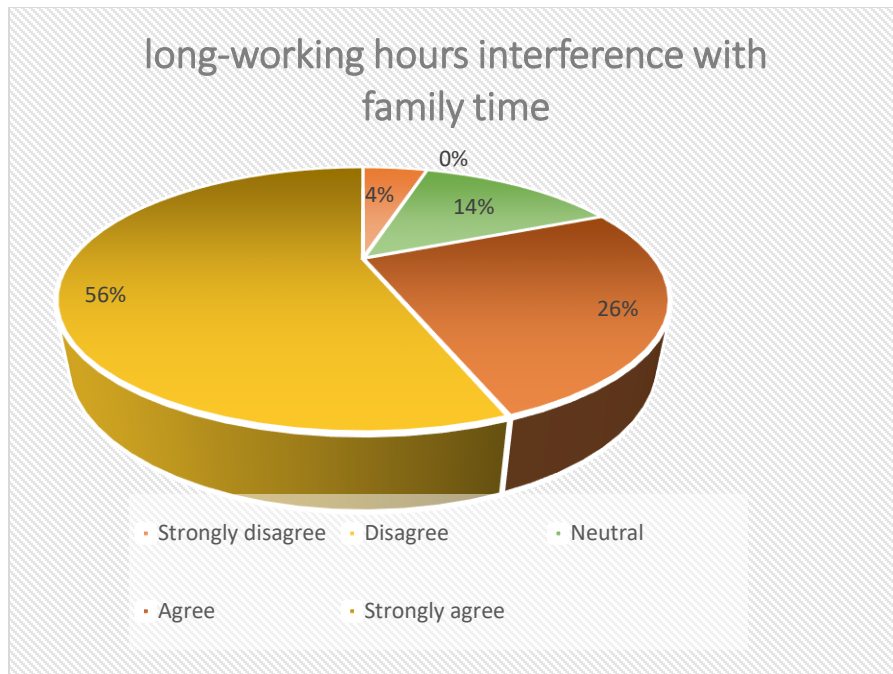


Figure 4.12 Long-working hours interference with family time.

Source: Author (2021)

#### 4.15. Characteristics of Hospitality industry

In figure 4.13 below, 72.1% of the respondents reported to working on holidays and overtime. 39.5% reported to have worked for double shifts while 27.9% had done split shifts before.

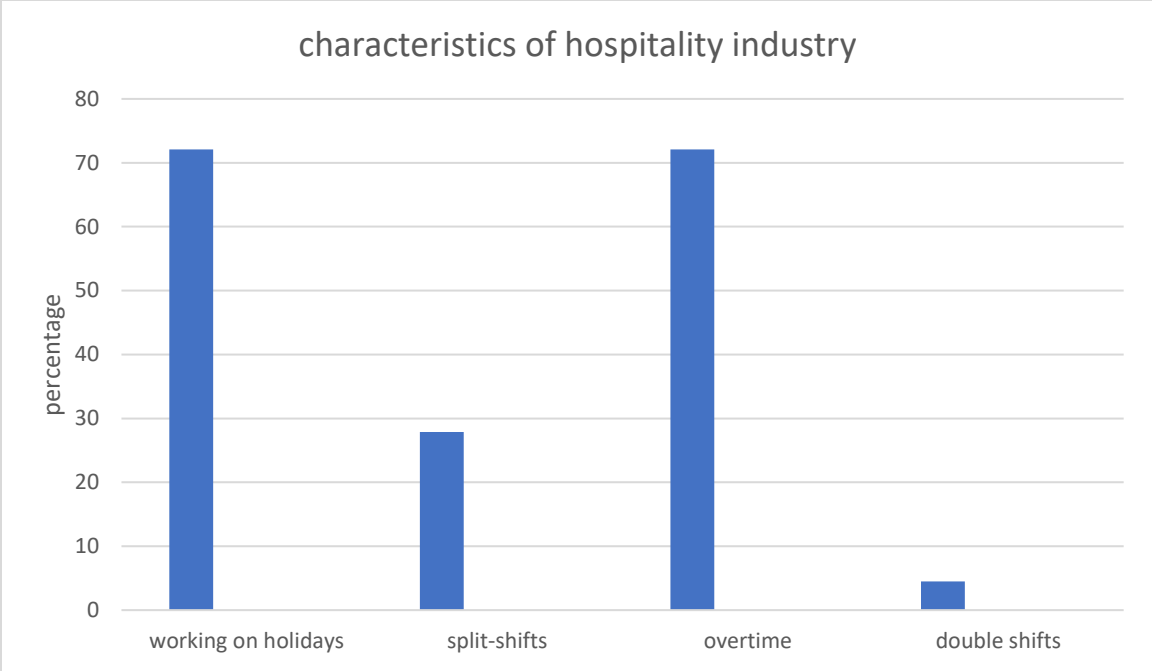


Figure 4.13 Characteristics of hospitality industry

Source: Author (2021)

**4.16. Turnover intentions**

The respondents were required to indicate whether they have had any turnover intentions before due to work-family conflict. 49% of the respondents recorded to have had turnover intentions, 21% no intentions and 30% recorded to maybe have intentions.

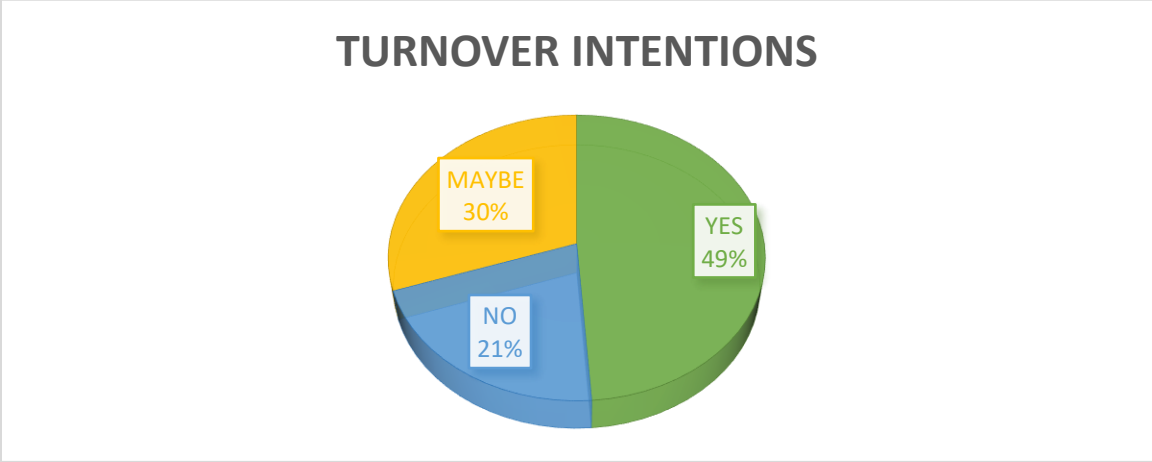


Figure 4.14 Turnover intentions

Source: Author (2021)

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0. Introduction

This chapter presents the discussions, conclusions, and recommendations of this study – Effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees in 5-star hotels in Nairobi.

#### 5.1. Effects of work-family conflict on hospitality employees

According to the study, 81.4% of the respondents said that work-family conflict interferes with the conventional time set for family and friends. The conflicts recorded were missing out on important aspects of family, misunderstandings at home, among others. Fatigue was recorded as the biggest effect on hospitality employees. This therefore shows that work-family conflict has negative effect on hospitality employees.

#### 5.2. Job satisfaction and its relationship to work-family conflict

From the study, 69.8% of the respondents agreed that work-family conflict was a role stressor that lowered job satisfaction. Long-working hours and restricted weekends and holidays were the major contributors to job dissatisfaction in this study. This shows the direct relationship between job satisfaction and work-family conflict.

#### 5.3. Effects of long-working hours on hospitality employees.

Long-working hours is one of the major characteristics of the hospitality industry. 56% of the respondents agreed to the interference of the conventional time set for family time by the long hours spent at work. Split shifts, working on weekends and holidays working overtime and double shifts contributed to the work-family conflicts experienced by the employees clearly showing direct effects on employees. This has led to turnover intentions as indicated by 49% of the respondents.

#### 5.4. Recommendations.

After successful completion of the study, the following recommendations can be useful to the industry players in cushioning the effects caused by work-family conflict.

Hotels should ensure to have enough staff for every section in all departments. This way working hours can be strictly followed through efficient change of shifts. There will be no requests for overtime or reasons for longer working hours. When one shifts end, there will be sufficient staff to cover the tasks of that shift.

I advocate for more awareness on work-family conflicts in the industry. Leaders should be trained on how to deal with employees' needs and create policies by company to emphasize on work-life balance. An employee should not have to justify their need for some time off if it does not get in the way of their performance. A workforce that is happy makes the workplace a better place.

Regulate working hours to 8hours per day and ensuring that employees at least have days off work. Leave days should be adhered to so that the employees can have ample time to spend with their families. Understanding the employees challenges regarding work-family conflicts will aid in reducing the effects of work-family conflict. Availability of counselling services on premises should be considered encourage the employees to take care of their mental health.

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