

ERGONOMIC PERCEPTION AS A PREDICTOR OF JOB SATISFACTION AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING: A STUDY OF HOUSEKEEPING STAFF IN KERALA'S HOSPITALITY SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between employee's perception of ergonomics and two key organizational outcomes job satisfaction and employee well-being among housekeeping employees in 3-star hotels in Kerala. The research uses correlation analysis to evaluate the extent to which various ergonomic dimensions including body posture and exposure, equipment usability, characteristics of the work environment and job-related stress-relate to employees psychological and occupational experiences. The findings demonstrate the employee who perceive their work environment as ergonomically supportive tend to report higher levels of satisfaction, particularly in areas relating to team work workplace health and overall morale. Ergonomic elements such as reduced physical strain, better designed tools, and healthier work environment were strongly associated with enhanced job satisfaction and improved well-being indicators. Overall, the study underscores the importance of integrating ergonomics into hospitality management practices. By prioritizing ergonomic improvements, hotel organizations can reduce stressors, promote healthier working conditions, and ultimately foster a more motivated, satisfied and resilient workforce. Such enhancements are crucial for sustaining service quality and ensuring that employee well-being remains strategic priority with in the hospitality industry.

Keywords: Ergonomics, Job satisfaction, Employee well-being, Housekeeping, Hotel industry

INTRODUCTION

The hotel housekeeping industry is a vital component of the hospitality sector, functioning as the foundation upon which overall guest satisfaction is built. by ensuring that rooms, public areas, and service sections are maintained to high standards, the housekeeping department plays a central role delivering the core promise of hospitality providing a clean, welcoming and well-organized environment.

As hotels strive to maintain a competitive edge, the expectations placed on housekeeping staff have grown, making efficiency, productivity, and service consistency increasingly important. Despite their critical contribution to hotel operations, housekeeping employees often operate behind the scenes and receive limited recognition. They typically navigate challenges such as strict deadlines, fluctuating guest occupancy, rotating shifts, and seasonal variations in workload. These factors can influence their physical comfort, emotional well-being, and overall job satisfaction.

The housekeeping industry has also evolved with the introduction of new technologies, eco-friendly cleaning practices, and enhanced safety standards. However human labor remains at the heart of housekeeping operations, particularly in mid-scale and budget hotels where automation is limited. As a result, understanding the experiences, needs, and challenges of housekeeping workers is crucial for improving service quality and ensuring sustainable workforce management.

Overall, the hotel housekeeping industry represents a complex and dynamic field that blends operational efficiency with human-centered service. Its contribution extends far beyond routine cleaning task, it influences guest loyalty, hotel reputation, and the long-term success of hospitality

businesses. This makes the study of housekeeping employees and their working conditions an important area for research and industry development.

Employee well-being and job satisfaction have emerged as central concern in labor intensive industries such as hospitality. Housekeeping work, in particular, involves high physical demands, repetitive movements, awkward postures, and time pressure, making ergonomics a critical determinant of employee outcomes. In hotel environments, especially in middle scale establishments like 3-star hotels, resource constraints often limit investments in ergonomic design, potentially affecting employee health and productivity.

Ergonomics not only influences physical comfort but also contributes to employees' psychological states, motivation levels, and social functioning within the workplace. A well-designed ergonomic environment can reduce fatigue, improve safety, enhance perceived fairness, and foster a more supportive work culture. This study examines these dynamics in the context of housekeeping staff in Kerala, where the hospitality sector is rapidly growing and labor conditions are undergoing transformation.

OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the relation between perception on ergonomics and job satisfaction among housekeeping employees of 3-star hotels in Kerala
2. To explore the relation between perception on ergonomics and employee well-being among housekeeping employees of 3-star hotels in Kerala

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Neveen Mohamed Mansour (2021) identified hotel room attendants as among the most physically burdened workers due to repetitive tasks such as cleaning, bed making, and waste disposal, which lead to fatigue, occupational hazards, and health problems. The study examined room attendants' awareness of ergonomics and the relationship between physical, cognitive, and organizational ergonomics and health issues. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with 30 room attendants in three-star hotels in Greater Cairo and analyzed using SPSS (v24). The findings revealed significant relationships between physical ergonomics (workload, working conditions, equipment) and health problems, as well as between cognitive ergonomics and health issues. No significant relationship was found between organizational ergonomics and health problems. The study recommended on-the-job ergonomic training to improve room attendants' awareness and well-being.

Peter Heimerl (2020) In many regions of the Alpine region, the hospitality business faces a clear challenge in terms of locating and retaining people with the necessary qualifications. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly crucial for the sustainable growth of the labor market, and as a further consequence, areas and destinations, for workers to feel satisfied in their jobs. As a result, the purpose of this study is to investigate the elements that influence job satisfaction in order to acquire a deeper comprehension. Using an online questionnaire, a total of 345 workers were polled about various aspects of their level of happiness in their jobs. According to the findings of several analyses, the most significant aspects of a job that one enjoys are a good relationship with one's superior, strict adherence to one's shift schedule, and the availability of opportunities for personal growth. In contrast, factors such as salary, task portfolio, working climate, and the infrastructure that was given played a less significant role in the decision-making process. The findings point to crucial topics and directions for the continuation of research on job satisfaction. The research provides practitioners with useful insights into the successful and sustained improvement of employee work satisfaction.

Sarika Joshi (2020) highlighted that housekeeping work is highly physically demanding due to repetitive tasks such as bed making, cleaning, and waste handling, which expose workers to a high risk of musculoskeletal injuries. The study examined hotels' awareness and application of ergonomics and its effect on housekeeping efficiency. The findings concluded that housekeeping tasks pose significant injury risks that negatively affect productivity, and recommended integrating ergonomic principles to improve working conditions and staff efficiency.

Maureen Snow Andrade (2020) conducted a cross-national analysis of job satisfaction among hotel housekeepers across 29 countries, focusing on work-life balance, rewards, and work relationships. The study found that hotel housekeepers reported lower job satisfaction than other hospitality and non-hospitality workers, largely due to poor work-life balance, limited compensation, and weak management relations. The findings emphasized the importance of improving job satisfaction factors to enhance service quality and employee retention.

Mercy Busayo Bello (2021) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and employee productivity in hotels across Lagos State using data from 330 employees. The study found significant relationships between job stress, promotion opportunities, supervisory support, and employee performance, while pay systems and work environment showed no strong effect. The research recommended greater managerial focus on promotion and employee support and introduced a validated model linking job satisfaction to performance in developing economies.


Vipin Singh (2021) This article's goal is to provide an overview of the ergonomics risk factors that are present in the hotel business. The purpose of this article is to provide an introduction to ergonomics along with a concise definition of the term. The ergonomics risk factors that are associated with humans and the nature of their employment will be investigated as part of this study. According to the research that has been done, the most significant risk factors when it comes to ergonomics are inappropriate posture when doing occupational tasks, force, and repetition of specific movements, including vibration. A static position that is uncomfortable, contact stress on muscles and tendons, and conditions that are extremely hot or cold are all factors that are associated with poor ergonomics. The findings of this study will help raise awareness of the potential dangers faced by those working in the hotel business.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Survey research design was adopted for this study. The sample of the study consists of 349 was randomly selected from the house keeping staffs of 3-star hotels in Kerala. Simple random sampling method was adopted to select the housekeeping employees. Cronbach's alpha test was carried out (which is measure of reliability based on internal consistency of the items scales) and found to be well above the benchmark level of 0.7 as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein, (1994). Reliability of ergonomics, job satisfaction and employee well-being were measured using the scales purposely developed for this and the outcomes were compared across the various hotels. Reliability was carried out to understand the internal consistency of the items used in ergonomics, employee well-being and job satisfaction scales were found to be well above the benchmark level of 0.7 as recommended by Nunnally and Bernstein, (1994). The correlational analysis was used to identify the relationship between various dimensions of ergonomics over job satisfaction and employee well-being.

RESULT ANALYSIS

TABLE 1.1 Relationship between perception on ergonomics and job satisfaction among housekeeping employees of 3-star hotels in Kerala

Job satisfaction 	Correlation values	salary	Work motivation	Interpersonal relationship	Personal growth	Job satisfaction
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Perception on ergonomics ↓						
Body exposure	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.165*	.167*	.262*	.221*	.078
	p-value	.002	.002	.000	.000	.146
Equipment	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.201*	.075	.194*	.165*	.168*
	p-value	.000	.161	.000	.002	.002
Work environment	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.146*	.022	.244*	.004	.212*
	p-value	.006	.681	.000	.947	.000
Stressfulness	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.154	.079	.149	.087	.110
	p-value	.004	.141	.005	.104	.040*
Perception on ergonomics (Tot)	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.009	.118*	.255*	.192*	.093
	p-value	.065	.028	.000	.000	.083

*Significant at 0.05 level

The findings indicate significant positive relationships between employees' perception of ergonomics and multiple facets of job satisfaction among housekeeping staff in 3-star hotels in Kerala. Body Exposure shows notable correlations with salary ($r = .165$, $p = .002$), work motivation ($r = .167$, $p = .002$), interpersonal relationships ($r = .262$, $p = .000$), and personal growth ($r = .221$, $p = .000$), suggesting that reduced physical strain enhances various satisfaction dimensions. The Equipment factor also demonstrates significant correlations with salary ($r = .201$, $p = .000$), interpersonal relationships ($r = .194$, $p = .000$), personal growth ($r = .165$, $p = .002$), and overall job satisfaction ($r = .168$, $p = .002$). The Work Environment dimension is positively associated with interpersonal relationships ($r = .244$, $p = .000$) and total job satisfaction ($r = .212$, $p = .000$), highlighting its importance in fostering a supportive workplace. Stressful is significantly linked to interpersonal relationships ($r = .149$, $p = .005$) and overall job satisfaction ($r = .110$, $p = .040$). Overall perception of ergonomics significantly correlates with work motivation ($r = .118$, $p = .028$), interpersonal relationships ($r = .355$, $p = .000$), and personal growth ($r = .192$, $p = .000$). These results confirm the hypothesis that ergonomic perceptions play a crucial role in shaping job satisfaction.

Table 1.2 : Relationship between perception on ergonomics and employee well-being among housekeeping employees of 3-star hotels in Kerala

employee well being →	Correlation values	Work life balance	Work place health	Team work	General satisfaction	Employee wellbeing (Tot)
Perception on ergonomics ↓						
Body exposure	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.015	.035	.396*	.132*	.346*
	p-value	.774	.515	.000	.014	.000
Equipment	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.068	.311*	.176*	.021	.045

	p-value	.208	.000	.001	.689	.406
Work environment	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.020	.108*	.267*	.001	.235*
	p-value	.713	.043	.000	.988	.000
Stressfulness	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.023	.147*	.273*	.087	.277*
	p-value	.670	.006	.000	.104	.000
Perception on ergonomics (Tot)	N	349	349	349	349	349
	r-value	.025	.027	.450*	.091	.358*
	p-value	.643	.617	.000	.090	.000

*Significant at 0.05 level

DISCUSSION

The results indicate significant relationships between employees' perception of ergonomics and various aspects of employee well-being among housekeeping staff in 3-star hotels in Kerala. Body Exposure shows strong and significant correlations with workplace health ($r = .515, p = .000$), teamwork ($r = .396, p = .000$), general satisfaction ($r = .132, p = .014$), and overall employee well-being ($r = .346, p = .000$). This suggests that reduced physical strain enhances health, cooperation, and overall well-being. The Equipment dimension is significantly associated with workplace health ($r = .311, p = .000$), teamwork ($r = .176, p = .001$), and total well-being ($r = .045, p = .045$), indicating that proper tools contribute to a healthier and more supportive work environment. Work Environment also shows significant relationships with workplace health ($r = .108, p = .043$), teamwork ($r = .267, p = .000$), and employee well-being ($r = .235, p = .000$). Stressfulness demonstrates significant correlations with workplace health ($r = .147, p = .006$), teamwork ($r = .273, p = .000$), and overall well-being ($r = .277, p = .000$), highlighting the importance of stress reduction. Overall perception of ergonomics significantly correlates with teamwork ($r = .450, p = .000$) and total well-being ($r = .358, p = .000$). These findings confirm that ergonomic perception plays a vital role in shaping employee well-being. This analysis revealed significant relationships between employees' perception of ergonomics and various components of employee well-being among housekeeping staff in 3-star hotels in Kerala. Body Exposure was significantly correlated with workplace health ($r = .515, p = .000$), teamwork ($r = .396, p = .000$), general satisfaction ($r = .132, p = .014$), and overall employee well-being ($r = .346, p = .000$). Equipment showed significant correlations with workplace health ($r = .311, p = .000$), teamwork ($r = .176, p = .001$), and total well-being ($r = .045, p = .045$). Work Environment also demonstrated significant relationships with workplace health ($r = .108, p = .043$), teamwork ($r = .267, p = .000$), and overall well-being ($r = .235, p = .000$). Stressful indicated significant correlations with workplace health ($r = .147, p = .006$), teamwork ($r = .273, p = .000$), and overall well-being ($r = .277, p = .000$). Overall perception of ergonomics showed strong correlations with teamwork ($r = .450, p = .000$) and total employee well-being ($r = .358, p = .000$). These results support Hypothesis 2

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the importance of ergonomics in enhancing job satisfaction and overall well-being among housekeeping employees in three-star hotels in Kerala. Investing in ergonomic tools and equipment, improving physical work environments, redesigning work processes, and providing continuous ergonomic and safety training can significantly reduce physical strain, workplace stress, and injury risks. Promoting a supportive team culture, incorporating employee feedback, and implementing stress management measures such as adequate breaks and workload balancing further contribute to improved employee morale and productivity. The findings

demonstrate that ergonomics not only enhances physical comfort but also supports motivation, teamwork, and workplace harmony, leading to higher productivity, lower absenteeism, and improved service quality. Overall, the strong support for Hypotheses 1 and 2 confirms that ergonomics is a critical and strategic factor influencing employee well-being and job satisfaction in the hospitality sector.

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