

Physical Workplace Environment as a Predictor of Employee Performance in Public and Faith-Based Hospital Mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya: A Mixed-Methods Study

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Abstract

The quality of mortuary service depends in part on the conditions under which staff work, but there are few references concerning the roles of physical work environment and mortuary service quality. This study explored the correlation between physical working environment and employee performance at public and faith-based hospital mortuaries located in Kiambu County, Kenya. Guided by Job Demands-Resources theory and the SERVQUAL model, the research adopted a pragmatist mixed-methods cross-sectional method involving descriptive and explanatory features. A census approach was used in targeting staff in hospital mortuaries, and the article isolates the physical-workplace-environment pathway from a broader thesis on occupational health and safety environment and employee performance. Of the questionnaires issued, 42 valid responses were returned and analysed. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and simple linear regression, while open-ended responses were coded thematically to contextualize the quantitative results. Physical workplace environment recorded a composite mean of 5.56 (SD = 1.67) and employee performance recorded a composite mean of 6.55 (SD = 0.85). Correlation analysis revealed that physical workplace environment predicts employee performance positively and significantly ($r = 0.389$, $p = 0.011$). A regression showed the physical workplace environment to significantly predict employee performance ($B = 0.172$, $\beta = 0.389$, $t = 2.670$, $p = 0.011$), explaining 15.1% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.151$; $F(1, 40) = 7.127$, $p = 0.011$). The results show that a better layout of workspace configuration, ventilation, equipment, lifting support, working surfaces and working condi-

tions are associated with stronger employees' performance in mortuary operations. Physical workplace environment is found to be a direct and important performance condition of the hospital mortuary. It advises investment for targeted attention to mortuary infrastructure, preventive maintenance, ventilation, refrigeration reliability, and safe handling support. The cross-sectional self-report design is acknowledged as a limitation because the main predictor and outcome measures were reported by the same respondents at one time point.

Keywords

Physical Workplace Environment, Employee Performance, Occupational Health and Safety Environment, Hospital Mortuaries, Kiambu County, Kenya

1. Introduction

The study was anchored in the Job Demands-Resources theory and the SERVQUAL model. Job Demands-Resources theory explains that adequate job resources support motivation and performance, whereas poor working conditions create demands that increase strain and reduce output (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In mortuary settings, adequate space, ventilation, equipment, and working materials function as important job resources because they support safe, efficient, and orderly handling of the deceased. When these resources are inadequate, work becomes more physically demanding and less efficient. SERVQUAL was applied to the service-delivery dimension of employee performance, rather than to the direct measurement of external client satisfaction. Accordingly, the employee-performance items captured timeliness, procedural reliability, accuracy, dignity in handling the deceased, legal compliance, error reduction, teamwork, and the use of feedback. In this way, SERVQUAL guided the operationalization of employee performance by linking internal task performance to the reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and dignity of mortuary service delivery (Park & Choi, 2020; Zhenjing et al., 2022).

The empirical rationale for focusing on workplace conditions is also supported by broader organisational and health-sector evidence. Work-environment conditions have been linked to employee job satisfaction, productivity and performance across banking, manufacturing and general workplace settings (Agbozo et al., 2017; Mathews & Khann, 2016; Massoudi & Hamdi, 2017). In health-service contexts, occupational health and safety measures, perceived job satisfaction, employee well-being, training and engagement have likewise been associated with employee performance and related work outcomes (Ahmad & Sattar, 2017; Gbadago et al., 2017; Guest, 2017; Sendawula et al., 2018).

The mortuary context requires particular attention because the physical environment is inseparable from handling systems, exposure risks, refrigeration, ventilation and dignified service delivery. Prior mortuary-focused studies have docu-

mented occupational hazards, difficult work conditions and the lived experiences of mortuary attendants in African settings (Dartey et al., 2021; Litana & Kapambwe, 2017; Nakakuwa et al., 2024). Kenyan evidence further shows that mortuary work-environment factors influence job satisfaction among mortuary staff (Ogira et al., 2023), while local reporting on mortuary stench in Gatundu illustrates the public relevance of ventilation and infrastructure control (Kamau, 2023). Technology-oriented work on remote-controlled mortuary systems also underscores the importance of equipment and handling support in reducing operational strain (Ochudang, 2020).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Design

This article was developed from a broader thesis on occupational health and safety environment and employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya. It focuses specifically on the relationship between the physical workplace environment and employee performance. For this reason, the analysis used bivariate correlation and simple linear regression, rather than a full multivariable model with controls for role, facility type, workload, or staffing level. The study adopted a mixed-methods cross-sectional design with both descriptive and explanatory elements. A pragmatist approach guided the design, allowing the study to combine statistical evidence with staff experiences of mortuary working conditions. The quantitative data tested the association between physical workplace environment and employee performance, while the qualitative responses explained how staff experienced space, ventilation, equipment, and other physical conditions in their daily work.

2.2. Study Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County. The target population comprised staff directly involved in mortuary operations and related support roles, including managers, pathologists, public health officers, administrators, records officers, receptionists, morticians, hearse crew, and drivers. Because the study population was small and specialised, a census approach was used. The valid respondent profile was dominated by morticians, who constituted 36 of the 42 valid responses, while managers and administrators each accounted for two responses, and records officers and hearse crew each accounted for one response. The accessible fieldwork frame comprised public and faith-based hospital mortuaries, with 35 staff in public hospital mortuaries and 21 staff in faith-based hospital mortuaries. The anonymized dataset used for article analysis did not retain a facility identifier for each respondent; therefore, facility distribution is reported using the accessible sampling frame rather than respondent-level counts per mortuary. This limitation is acknowledged when interpreting possible within-facility dependence. As shown in **Table 1**, the respondent profile and accessible facility distribution provide the basis for interpreting the sample composition.

Table 1. Respondent profile and accessible facility distribution.

Profile dimension	Category	Frequency/ Frame count	Percentage/ Share	Source/Note
Respondent role	Mortician	36	85.7%	Valid responses, n = 42
Respondent role	Manager	2	4.8%	Valid responses, n = 42
Respondent role	Administrator	2	4.8%	Valid responses, n = 42
Respondent role	Records Officer	1	2.4%	Valid responses, n = 42
Respondent role	Hearse crew	1	2.4%	Valid responses, n = 42
Respondent role	Total	42	100.0%	Valid responses
Facility distribution	Public Level 5 mortuaries	25	44.6%	Kiambu, Thika and Gatundu Level 5 hospital mortuaries
Facility distribution	Public Level 4 mortuaries	10	17.9%	Tigoni, Kihara and Kigumo Level 4 hospital mortuaries
Facility distribution	Faith-based mortuaries	21	37.5%	PCEA Kikuyu, Mary Help of the Sick, St. Matia Mulumba and Nairobi Adventist Hospital-Gachie
Facility distribution	Total accessible sampling frame	56	100.0%	Ten mortuaries where access was granted

Source: Study data and accessible fieldwork frame, 2026. Note: respondent roles are based on the 42 valid questionnaires; facility distribution is based on the accessible sampling frame because respondent-level facility identifiers were not retained in the anonymized article dataset.

2.3. Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Data were collected using a self-administered semi-structured questionnaire. The quantitative component consisted of closed-ended Likert-scale items used to measure the study constructs numerically. The final instrument used a seven-point response scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree. Both physical workplace environment and employee performance were self-rated by the same respondents at the same point in time. This provided coherent respondent-level data for testing Objective One, but it also introduced the possibility of common-method and social-desirability bias. The qualitative component consisted of open-ended items that allowed respondents to explain physical workplace challenges, operational constraints, and possible areas for improvement. All 42 valid cases contained responses to the physical-workplace-environment open-ended item and were therefore included in the qualitative strand. This design made it possible to establish not only whether physical workplace environment influenced employee performance, but also how that influence was experienced in daily mortuary work.

2.4. Measures and Operationalization

This article focuses on two constructs: physical workplace environment and employee performance. Physical workplace environment was operationalised through workspace and layout, ventilation, furniture and equipment, and working surfaces. In the final instrument, the scale comprised seven items covering layout

safety, adequacy of space, ventilation, availability of personal protective equipment, availability of tools, lifting support, and safety of working surfaces. Employee performance was measured through effectiveness, efficiency, and service delivery. SERVQUAL informed the service-delivery aspect of this operationalization by directing attention to reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and dignity in mortuary service processes. In the questionnaire, the construct was captured through nine items covering work accuracy, adherence to legal and procedural requirements, timeliness, dignified handling of remains, teamwork, error reduction, and improvement through feedback. Higher scores reflected more favourable workplace conditions or stronger employee performance.

2.5. Pilot Study

The questionnaire was pilot tested before the main survey at Murang'a Level 5 Hospital Mortuary. Ten questionnaires were used in the pilot. The pilot was intended to identify ambiguity, improve clarity, test practicality, and strengthen internal consistency before the main fieldwork. Pilot respondents were excluded from the final study.

2.6. Validity and Decision Criteria

Validity was addressed in two ways. First, content validity was established through expert review by the academic supervisors to ensure that the instrument reflected the study objectives, constructs, and analytical focus. Second, construct validity was assessed empirically using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic and Bartlett's test of sphericity. KMO values of about 0.60 or above were treated as acceptable, while a statistically significant Bartlett's test indicated sufficient shared variance among the items. On that basis, the physical workplace environment scale showed good construct adequacy (KMO = 0.777), and the employee performance scale also met the acceptable threshold (KMO = 0.612). Both Bartlett's tests were statistically significant. These results supported retention of both scales for analysis.

2.7. Reliability and Decision Criteria

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and corrected item-total correlations. In line with the study methodology, alpha values of 0.70 or above were treated as acceptable, values from 0.60 to 0.69 as marginal, and values below 0.60 as weak. Corrected item-total correlations of about 0.30 or above were treated as evidence that items moved in the same direction as the scale as a whole. In the final dataset, physical workplace environment recorded Cronbach's alpha of 0.790, while employee performance recorded 0.764. Both scales were therefore considered sufficiently reliable for inferential analysis.

2.8. Data Collection Procedure

Formal data collection began after the researcher obtained an introductory letter from Kenyatta University, obtained approval through the Kenyatta University

Centre for Research Ethics and Safety, secured the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation research license No. NACOSTI/P/25/4183085, and obtained permission from participating hospitals. Eligible respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and gave informed consent before completing the questionnaire. Participation was voluntary, confidentiality was assured, and only validly completed responses were retained for analysis.

2.9. Data Preparation and Composite Scoring

The final dataset contained 42 valid cases. Screening confirmed that there were no duplicate cases, no out-of-range responses in the quantitative items, and no missing values that materially affected the closed-ended analysis. The analysis used construct-level composite scores. Although the methodology chapter proposed harmonic means for occupational health and safety constructs, the final thesis tables reported composite values in arithmetic mean form, and the inferential analysis was conducted on the cleaned composite dataset used for final model estimation. For this article, physical workplace environment and employee performance were therefore treated as continuous composite scores derived from their respective questionnaire items.

2.10. Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative data were analysed thematically. All 42 open-ended responses on physical workplace conditions were read closely. The researcher conducted initial open coding by identifying repeated references to space, ventilation, equipment, lifting support, refrigeration, maintenance, safety, and workflow. Similar codes were then grouped into recurring categories and condensed into themes relevant to the physical workplace environment. The final themes were reviewed against the original responses and the quantitative descriptive results to ensure that the interpretation remained grounded in the data. The main themes included weak lifting and transfer support, equipment shortages, unreliable refrigeration, constrained workspace, ventilation concerns, and maintenance problems. The qualitative strand did not replace statistical testing. It was used to deepen interpretation by showing how physical conditions shaped safety, workflow, comfort, and service delivery in mortuary operations.

2.11. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise ratings on physical workplace environment and employee performance. Means were used to indicate central tendency, while standard deviations showed dispersion around the mean. This stage established the general condition of the physical workplace environment before inferential testing.

2.12. Diagnostic Tests and Decision Criteria

Before inferential analysis, the study assessed whether the data were suitable for

ordinary least squares regression. Linearity and model specification were assessed using the Ramsey RESET test, with $p > 0.05$ taken to indicate no serious specification problem. Residual normality was assessed using the Shapiro-Wilk test, with $p > 0.05$ preferred, supported by skewness and kurtosis checks. Multicollinearity was assessed using variance inflation factor and tolerance, with $VIF < 5.0$ and tolerance > 0.20 treated as acceptable. Homoscedasticity was assessed using the Breusch-Pagan-Godfrey test, with $p > 0.05$ treated as evidence against serious heteroscedasticity. Independence of errors was assessed using the Durbin-Watson statistic, with a value close to 2.0 treated as acceptable. Outliers and influential observations were assessed using Cook's distance and studentized residuals, with Cook's $D < 4/n$ and $|\text{studentized residual}| < 3$ used as reference thresholds. The final diagnostic review indicated that the model was suitable for OLS estimation, with only mild departures that did not invalidate inference.

2.13. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the direction and strength of the association between physical workplace environment and employee performance. Because both constructs were analysed as continuous composite variables, Pearson's r was appropriate. The decision rule was simple: if the p -value for the correlation coefficient was below 0.05, the relationship was treated as statistically significant. A positive coefficient indicated that better physical workplace conditions were associated with better employee performance.

2.14. Bivariate Regression Model

Objective One was tested using a simple linear regression model in which employee performance was regressed on physical workplace environment:

$$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PWE + \varepsilon$$

where EP denotes employee performance, β_0 is the intercept, β_1 is the regression coefficient for physical workplace environment, PWE is the physical workplace environment score, and ε is the error term. In this model, β_1 represents the expected change in employee performance associated with a one-unit change in physical workplace environment. A positive β_1 indicates that improvement in the physical workplace environment predicts improvement in employee performance. The model was deliberately bivariate because this article reports the Objective One pathway from the wider thesis; it was not intended to estimate a fully adjusted causal model. The coefficient was treated as statistically significant if $p < 0.05$. Model fit was assessed using the F-statistic and R^2 .

2.15. Test of Hypothesis

The article tested the following null hypothesis:

H_{01} : Physical workplace environment does not significantly influence employee

performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya.

The hypothesis was tested first through correlation analysis and then through bivariate regression. The decision criterion was $p < 0.05$. If the p-value for the correlation coefficient or the regression coefficient for physical workplace environment was below 0.05, H_{01} was rejected. If the p-value was 0.05 or above, H_{01} was not rejected. In the wider thesis, the hypothesis for Objective One was rejected, indicating that better physical workplace conditions were associated with stronger employee performance.

2.16. Methodological Limitations Relevant to This Article

Three limitations should be considered when interpreting the results. First, both physical workplace environment and employee performance were measured using the same self-administered questionnaire completed at one point in time; therefore, common-method bias and social-desirability bias cannot be ruled out. Second, the article intentionally used bivariate regression to isolate the Objective One pathway from the wider thesis, and the estimates were not adjusted for role, facility type, workload, staffing level, or other organizational factors. Third, staff working in the same mortuary may share similar physical conditions, meaning that within-facility dependence may exist. The anonymized dataset used for this article did not retain respondent-level facility identifiers, so clustering by mortuary could not be modelled. These limitations mean that the findings should be interpreted as evidence of a statistically significant association and predictive pathway rather than as a fully controlled causal estimate.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Findings

The descriptive results for physical workplace environment and employee performance using 42 valid responses are presented in **Table 2**. Both constructs were rated as favorable overall. Overall physical workplace environment reported a composite mean of 5.56 (SD = 1.67), whereas for employee performance, a higher and more consistent composite mean of 6.55 (SD = 0.85) was also obtained. This suggests that the physical environment of the workplace was generally favourable for respondents but was reported by them as weaker and less uniformly compared to performance by employees. In the construct of the physical workplace environment, most significant was the presence of personal protective equipment, with the highest mean. Safe work layout and movement, suitable working space and ventilation were also positively rated. Nevertheless, lifting support and transfer support achieved the lower average and most variation, which implies that this was the weakest and least consistent element of the physical work environment in each of the mortuaries. Tool availability and working surface condition were rated positively, but not strongly. The descriptive pattern therefore suggests that the physical environment was supportive overall but uneven in some core operational

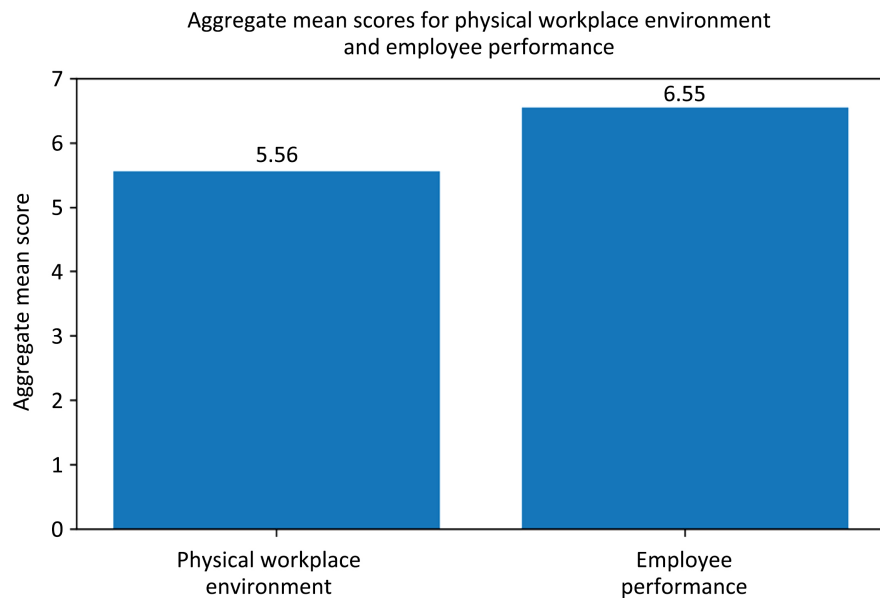
areas. Respondents also rated the physical workplace environment positively (mean = 5.56 with a standard deviation of 1.67 on 7-point scale). However, as this mean is above the midpoint, it means that overall, this reflects a favourable view of the physical conditions of mortuary work. The standard deviation therefore suggests that these conditions are not experienced consistently across facilities. At item level, adequate personal protective equipment had the highest mean ($M = 6.19$, $SD = 1.31$), indicating that PPE was the most durable element of the physical work environment. In layout, the workplace was very well rated as well ($M = 5.76$, $SD = 1.43$), indicating that respondents viewed the layout of mortuary as a support to safe and efficient movement. Sufficient workspace ($M = 5.60$; $SD = 1.58$), ventilation ($M = 5.50$; $SD = 1.67$), tools and instrument availability ($M = 5.43$; $SD = 1.61$), and the working surfaces ($M = 5.40$; $SD = 1.74$) were also rated above the middle point, again indicating a fairly positive (if not pristine) work environment. The item reporting the least favourably was the availability of lifting and transfer equipment ($M = 5.02$, $SD = 2.09$). Besides having the lowest mean, this was also the item that demonstrated the highest variation in which the manual handling support was distributed, leading to the conclusion that the equipment's availability was not equivalent in all mortuaries sampled. At the same time, although the physical work environment tended to support work overall, major weaknesses persist in those aspects closely tied directly and operationally to safety, fatigue reduction, or workflow efficiency. Employee performance items were more closely grouped. The strongest-rated areas were dignity in handling the deceased, adherence to identification procedures, legal compliance, and teamwork. Tendencies to rate timeliness, processing accuracy, and error reduction highly were also highly rated. The lower mean for improvement using client feedback suggests a weaker feedback loop with regard to the other performance items; however, the overall rating was still rated positively. Overall, the descriptive results suggest that staff indicated good performance despite a number of some physical workplace conditions being far from ideal. Employee performance was rated more strongly and more consistently than the physical workplace environment. The dependent variable reported an aggregate mean score of 6.55 and standard deviation of 0.85, reflecting a relatively high overall score of performance with modest variability between respondents. The most prominent among those were the following: respecting the deceased with dignity ($M = 6.81$, $SD = 0.40$), respect for identification ($M = 6.79$, $SD = 0.42$), cooperation ($M = 6.76$, $SD = 0.69$), and law compliance ($M = 6.74$, $SD = 0.50$). All this clearly reveals a high level of ethical practice, procedural adherence, and teamwork. The other measures received positive evaluations too for service delivery on time ($M = 6.52$, $SD = 0.74$), minimisation of errors by checking ($M = 6.52$, $SD = 0.86$), processing accuracy ($M = 6.43$, $SD = 0.83$) and minimisation of client time delays ($M = 6.33$, $SD = 0.95$). One of the lowest ratings on the performance item was the implementation of client feedback for improvement ($M = 6.07$, $SD = 1.47$), which further indicates that improvement through feedback is weaker than more procedural aspects of work. At the descriptive level,

there are, generally speaking, two associated patterns. Two: Employee performance was reported as relatively high in all sites. Secondly, while the overall workplace environment was consistently good, a more discontinuous, uneven pattern manifested particularly in terms of infrastructure and handling support. This trend suggests that mortuary staff were maintaining good performance despite a number of limitations in particular areas of the physical work environment. This interpretation is also elaborated upon in the qualitative and inferential analyses. The strongest physical dimension was PPE provision, while the weakest was lifting and transfer equipment. Item-level descriptive statistics are given in **Table 2**; and the overall comparison between independent and dependent variables is presented in **Figure 1**.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for physical workplace environment (PWE) and employee performance (EP).

Measure	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Interpretation
PWE1: Workplace layout is safe and allows efficient movement	5.76	1.43	2	7	Positive
PWE2: Sufficient space to accommodate the volume of work	5.60	1.58	1	7	Positive
PWE3: Mortuary is adequately ventilated	5.50	1.67	1	7	Positive
PWE4: Adequate personal protective equipment is provided	6.19	1.31	1	7	Strong positive
PWE5: Necessary tools and instruments are available	5.43	1.61	1	7	Positive
PWE6: Adequate lifting and transfer equipment is provided	5.02	2.09	1	7	Moderate positive
PWE7: Working surfaces are safe, durable, and in good condition	5.40	1.74	1	7	Positive
PWE Composite	5.56	1.67	3.29	7.00	Positive
EP1: Procedures for identification of the deceased are followed	6.79	0.42	6	7	High
EP2: Legal requirements are adhered to	6.74	0.50	5	7	High
EP3: Client delays are minimized	6.33	0.95	3	7	High
EP4: Processing accuracy is high	6.43	0.83	4	7	High
EP5: Services are delivered on schedule	6.52	0.74	4	7	High
EP6: The deceased are treated with dignity	6.81	0.40	6	7	High
EP7: Teamwork is effective	6.76	0.69	3	7	High
EP8: Errors are minimized through checks	6.52	0.86	3	7	High
EP9: Client feedback is used for improvement	6.07	1.47	1	7	Positive
EP Composite	6.55	0.85	5.22	7.00	High

Source: Study data, 2026.



The aggregate mean scores show that employee performance was rated higher and more consistently than the physical workplace environment. Physical workplace environment remained positive overall, but the gap between the two constructs suggests that strong performance was being maintained under less evenly supportive physical conditions.

Figure 1. Aggregate mean scores for physical workplace environment and employee performance.

3.2. Qualitative Results on Physical Work Environment and the Performance of Employees

Results based upon the open-ended responses on the physical workplace conditions are given in **Table 3**. The survey had found that, overall, there were certain issues under which physical workplace environment influenced employees' performance. Among the major themes were equipment and tools, ventilation, space and layout, personal protective equipment and safety conditions, maintenance and infrastructure, lifting and transfer support and refrigeration capacity. Themes reveal that, for respondents, the physical workplace environment was not an abstract condition but a lived environment that facilitated safe and effective mortuary provision, which was perceived by them either as the physical setting or limitation to safe and efficient workplace work. The most evident qualitative issue was the supply of tools, equipment and operational support. Respondents connected insufficient tools to delays, inefficiency, and physical strain. Ventilation also emerged as a prominent aspect, particularly as related to comfort and adaptability of the workspace. Movement and task flow and coordination were frequently referred to as impacted by space and layout. In contrast, lifting support and refrigeration were mentioned less frequently but when necessary they were identified as essential for safe body handling and continuity of service. The qualitative results indicated that employees performed well in work-oriented activities and that the physical environment of the workplace directly influenced employees' work. Respondents associated physical environment with workflow, safety,

comfort, and service quality. Although some considered the mortuary environment feasible and supportive some reported tangible limitations such as absence of tools, poor lifting assistance, minimal refrigeration capacity, inadequate space, limited air circulation, and variable availability of protective equipment. These accounts suggest that, beyond being a good safety environment, the quality of physical conditions were critical to the ability to carry out ordinary tasks. Refrigeration and freezer area were also very visible figures from the accounts. Respondents deemed these facilities essential for preservation, continuity of workflow, and orderly processing of cases. Inadequate or unreliable cold storage had therefore been referred to as a direct bottleneck to the effective delivery of services. Other factors were space, layout, and ventilation. Space and a good physical layout were linked to safer movement, better organisational layout and better task co-ordination. By comparison they found tight, inadequate ventilation and cramped rooms to be associated with discomfort and strain. Lifting and transferring support was one of the most prominent concerns. Respondents repeatedly mentioned insufficient manual handling equipment, fatigue, slow flow of work and difficulty with difficult tasks. There was a dual response to the quality of PPE and overall safety: while some staff were happy that they received protective gear in the environment, others indicated inadequate equipment made their exposure in regular work more likely. Respondents also acknowledged late repairs, unfinished replacement of run-down equipment and inadequate infrastructure improvements. These accounts suggest that performance constraints are not caused by resource shortages only, but also by weak maintenance systems and slow operational support. Ultimately, the more qualitative evidence revealed that physical work environment that allowed safe, orderly and efficient work practices led to better employee performance, as opposed to employees forced to work around shortages, poor infrastructure and demanding physical conditions with little in the way of staff support. One significant observation in the qualitative responses was that staff did not attribute physical working conditions to performance. Rather, they connected them directly with workflow, dignity of service, staff fatigue and reliability of operations. It strengthens the notion that physical working environment in mortuary context is the performance system itself.

Table 3. Qualitative theme matrix for physical workplace environment.

Theme	Summary of what respondents reported	Implication for performance
Equipment, tools and support	Adequate tools improved workflow, while shortages caused delays and inefficiency.	Better tools support smoother and faster task execution.
Ventilation and air quality	Ventilation affected comfort, suitability of the work environment, and ease of performance.	Poor airflow weakens comfort and work conditions.
Space, layout and movement	Adequate space supported safe movement and coordination, while cramped rooms disrupted workflow.	Better layout improves safety and efficiency.

Continued

PPE and safety conditions	Some respondents reported adequate PPE, while others cited supply gaps and exposure concerns.	Safety protection supports continuity and confidence in work.
Maintenance and infrastructure	Delayed repairs and ageing facilities weakened efficiency and everyday operations.	Infrastructure reliability supports consistent performance.
Lifting and transfer support	Lack of lifting aids increased strain, fatigue, and difficulty in demanding tasks.	Weak handling support constrains safe and efficient work.
Refrigeration/freezer capacity	Some facilities reported unreliable or inadequate refrigeration.	Poor refrigeration disrupts operations and service continuity.

3.3. Integrated Qualitative and Quantitative Findings on Physical Workplace Environment and Employee Performance

The combined quantitative and qualitative findings, as shown in **Table 4**, demonstrates strong convergence. Quantitatively, the physical workplace environment was rated positively overall, but with wider variation than employee performance. Qualitatively, respondents identified specific weaknesses in equipment, lifting support, infrastructure, ventilation, and refrigeration. So the two strands told exactly the same story: mortuary staff were performing strongly, but the physical conditions supporting that performance were uneven. The common areas of greatest convergence were lifting and handling support. Quantitatively, this was the lowest-rated physical item. Qualitatively, it was viewed as a direct cause of fatigue and operational difficulty. PPE also showed convergence but in a more mixed form. It was the strongest-rated quantitative item, but qualitative responses indicated that

Table 4. Joint display integrating physical workplace environment (PWE) and employee performance (EP) findings.

Key quantitative result	Qualitative explanation	Integration	Meta-inference
PWE composite mean indicates a positive but less consistent environment.	Respondents identified uneven equipment, ventilation, space, and maintenance.	Convergence	Physical support exists, but not evenly across sites.
PPE is the highest-rated physical item.	Some respondents still reported supply gaps.	Complement	PPE is a relative strength, but provision is not fully uniform.
Lifting and transfer support is the weakest physical item.	Staff described strain and difficulty where lifting aids were lacking.	Convergence	Handling support is a key weakness affecting safe performance.
Employee performance composite is high and more stable than PWE.	Respondents linked performance to effort despite physical constraints.	Complement	Strong performance is being sustained under uneven physical conditions.
Layout, space, and ventilation are rated positively overall.	These were linked to safer movement, coordination, and work comfort.	Convergence	Better physical organisation supports workflow and service quality.

provision was not equally reliable in all facilities. The overall pattern of layout, space, ventilation, tools, and surfaces followed a similar general pattern: they were viewed positively overall, but their practical adequacy varied across mortuaries.

The combined results demonstrate a good fit between qualitative and quantitative evidence on the contribution of the physical workplace environment to employee performance. Quantitatively, employee performance was rated higher and more consistently than the physical workplace environment. Qualitatively, employees described performance as being shaped by their work environment, including access to equipment, adequacy of space, ventilation, manual handling support, and the condition of infrastructure. In sum, the evidence indicates employee performance remained strong—even though the physical support that underpinned that performance was not universally reliable across facilities. The integrated pattern holds particularly true for PPE, layout, and space, on which both strands of evidence were broadly positive. At the same time, the two datasets aligned in identifying lifting and transfer support, ventilation, tools, and infrastructure as more uneven areas. The qualitative narratives serve to illuminate descriptive statistics by illustrating how these physical conditions influenced movement, comfort, safety, fatigue, and the execution of routine tasks. The integrated evidence suggests that the physical workplace environment created an essential operational context for performance in hospital mortuaries. Supportive environments facilitated smoother workflow and safer execution of duties, while weaknesses in equipment, infrastructure, and workspace arrangements were practical obstacles to efficient performance.

The integrated findings indicate that the physical workplace environment was not only associated with employee performance at a general level. It influenced the practical conditions under which performance was achieved. Staff maintained high performance, although the qualitative evidence indicated this was often the case despite, rather than because of, consistently supportive physical work conditions.

3.4. Diagnostic Testing Results

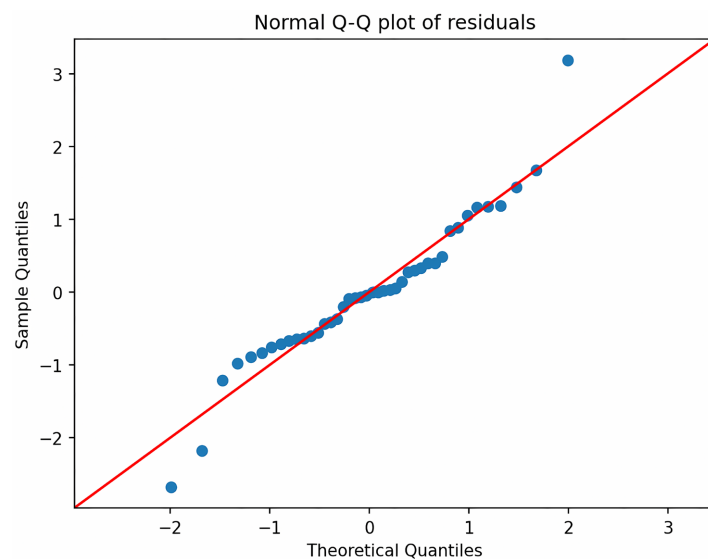
Before inferential analysis, diagnostic tests were conducted to assess whether the data were suitable for regression modelling. The wider employee performance model met the main conditions for linear regression with acceptable caution. Linearity and general model specification were supported by the RESET result. Residual normality was broadly acceptable under the Shapiro-Wilk test, although mild tail heaviness was noted. Multicollinearity was not a concern, and the homoscedasticity results did not indicate a strong violation. Taken together, the model was retained as usable for OLS estimation.

Before the inferential analysis, diagnostic tests were conducted to determine whether the data met the basic requirements for regression modelling. **Figures 2-5** present the graphical evidence on residual normality, residual spread, influential cases, and linearity, while **Table 5(a)** and **Table 5(b)** summarize the corresponding numerical diagnostic results.

Table 5. (a) Preliminary diagnostic test summary; (b) Influence diagnostics summary.

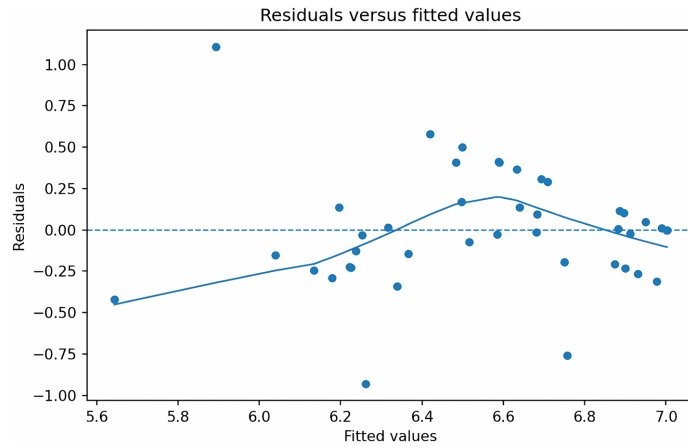
(a)				
Assumption/Test	Statistic/Threshold	Result	Decision	Implication
Normality of residuals	Shapiro-Wilk $p > 0.05$	$W = 0.954, p = 0.092$	Accept	Residual normality broadly satisfied
Linearity/specification	RESET $p > 0.05$	$F = 0.742, p = 0.395$	Accept	No strong specification problem
Multicollinearity	VIF < 5.0	Max VIF = 2.976	Accept	No multicollinearity concern
Homoscedasticity	BP $p > 0.05$	$LM = 10.995, p = 0.051$	Review, but acceptable	No strong evidence of violation
Independence of errors	Durbin-Watson approx. 2.0	DW = 1.561	Accept	No serious autocorrelation
(b)				
Indicator	Threshold	Observed result	Decision	
Cook's distance	$< 4/n$	Max = 0.879; 5 cases above threshold	Review with care	
Studentized residuals	$ r < 3$	1 case above threshold	Review with care	

For the physical workplace environment pathway specifically, the Q-Q plot shown in **Figure 2** suggested that residuals followed the normal line reasonably well, with only modest tail departures. The model was therefore treated as adequate for inferential testing. The broader diagnostic conclusion was that the linear model remained usable, with no serious multicollinearity concern, no strong evidence of model misspecification, and no strong evidence of a major homoscedasticity problem.



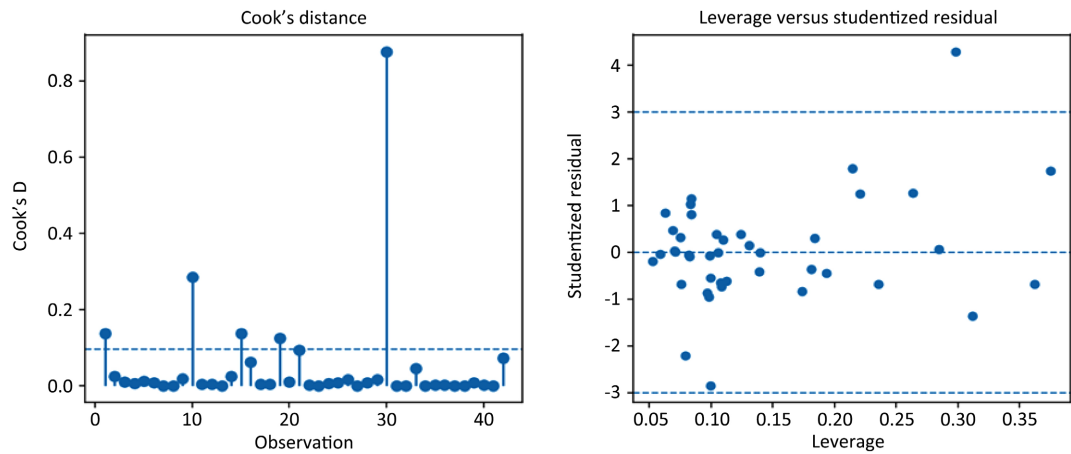
The Q-Q plot shows that the residuals followed the normal reference line reasonably well, with only modest departures at the tails. This supports the decision to retain the linear model for inferential analysis.

Figure 2. Normal Q-Q plot of regression residuals.



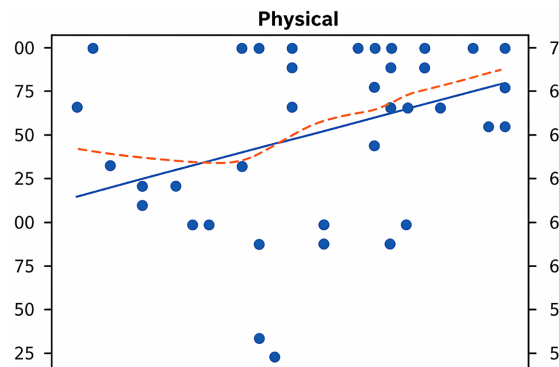
The residual pattern shows no severe systematic distortion. Although mild curvature is visible, the spread remains broadly acceptable for OLS interpretation.

Figure 3. Residuals versus fitted values.



The influence diagnostics show that a small number of observations merit review, but none was sufficiently extreme to justify automatic exclusion from the analysis.

Figure 4. Influence diagnostics.



The fitted and smoothed lines indicate an overall positive association between predictor scores and employee performance. The pattern supports use of a linear specification with ordinary caution.

Figure 5. Linearity check of predictor scores versus employee performance.

3.5. Inferential Analysis of Physical Work Environment and Performance Indicators on Employee Work

An inferential analysis was performed to assess whether the physical workplace environment was significantly associated with the employees' performance of public- and faith-based hospital mortuaries personnel in Kiambu County, Kenya. Composite scores were calculated from the 7 physical workplace environment and 9 employee performance items. First, Pearson's Product-Moment correlation coefficient was used to examine how the bivariate relationship was oriented, their size, and statistical significance. Then, simple linear regression was made using the Ordinary Least Squares methodology to assess whether the physical workplace environment has predictive power on employees' performance. So, an inferential analysis was used to conduct a test whether physical workplace environment positively or negatively affected employee performance. The direction and strength of the relationship were assessed by a bivariate correlation. Secondly, a simple regression model estimated the direct influence of physical workplace environment on employee performance. The hypothesis tested here is that physical workplace environment does not impact employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya.

3.5.1. Correlation Analysis

The bivariate correlation between physical workplace environment and employee performance is shown in **Table 6**. Analysis indicated that the study demonstrated a positive and significant interaction between the two variables ($r = 0.389$, $p = 0.011$). That means mortuaries who reported better physical workplace conditions also often reported higher employee performance. The relationship was small but statistically significant. In real terms, findings also indicate that better layout, ventilation, equipment and handling support are correlated with the service quality, effectiveness and efficiency. Objective One aimed to determine the correlation with physical workplace environment and organizational employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County. The correlation results indicate that the two variables had a positive and significant relationship ($r = 0.389$, $p = 0.011$, $n = 42$). This shows that the degree of physical organizational environment ratings was positively associated with employee performance. And while this relationship is modest, the cause is apparent and meaningful. In pragmatic terms, the results indicate that employees in mortuaries with safer design, improved area, increased ventilation, appropriate PPE, dependable tools, lifting and transfer assistance and improved working surfaces were more likely to report better performing in accuracy, timeliness, teamwork, legal compliance and respectful use of the deceased. We note that the outcome indicated that the physical environment in which the workers work was not a mere background detail. And in a study setting, it did have a measurable correlation with employees' performance. The Pearson correlation in **Table 6** shows there is a relationship between the physical environment of the mortuary and staff performance that is significant but

moderate in magnitude. Suggestion would be that measures geared to improve physical work environment should improve on employees as well and improve mortuary service quality overall.

Table 6. Correlation between physical workplace environment (PWE) and employee performance (EP).

Variables	n	Pearson r	p-value	Direction	Significance	Interpretation
Physical workplace environment and employee performance	42	0.389	0.011	Positive	Significant at 5% level	Better physical workplace conditions were associated with higher employee performance.

3.5.2. Regression Analysis

A simple linear regression model was derived to assess if physical workplace environment significantly predicted employee performance, dependent on employee performance and predictor by physical workplace environment. It indicated that physical workplace environment had a positive, statistically significant effect on employee performance ($B = 0.172$, $\beta = 0.389$, $SE = 0.064$, $t = 2.670$, $p = 0.011$). This implies that a one-unit increase in the physical workplace environment score led to a 0.172-unit increase in employee performance. The objective one also wanted to establish how well the physical workplace environment was a predictor of employees' performance. Hence simple linear regression analysis with 42 valid items was carried out and was estimated through the Ordinary Least Squares. The model summary shows that $R = 0.389$ and $R^2 = 0.151$, which indicates that the physical workplace environment accounted for 15.1% of the employee performance variation. While this doesn't account for all of the differences, it is more than adequate in that it demonstrates that physical working condition plays an important role in the performance context (both in mortuary settings). This adjusted R^2 of 0.130 further showed that the model kept its explanatory power when the sample size and model simplicity are taken into account. Based on ANOVA results, we find that the regression model was statistically significant, $F(1, 40) = 7.127$, $p = 0.011$. Hence, the regression equation gave a better fit to the data than a model with no predictor which verifies that the physical environment in the workplace had a significant contribution of predicting employee performance. Coefficients results confirm the significance of the physical workplace environment in predicting employee performance. The results in a one-unit increase in the physical workplace environment score led to a 0.172-unit increase in employee performance, specifically, performance increased by 0.172-units in those of the physical workplace environment score ($B = 0.172$, $SE = 0.064$, $t = 2.670$, and $p = 0.011$). The standardised coefficient (Beta = 0.389) further suggests a moderate, but statistically significant positive effect of moderate magnitude. These findings indicate that the physical workplace environment provided a statistically significant positive relation with employees' performance. A positive coefficient indicates that better physical conditions were related to better performance outcomes. Practically, this leads to the conclusion that better layout and space and

ventilation and equipment and lifting supports and work surfaces should mean mortuary staff can do their tasks better. The regression equation was:

$EP = 5.597 + 0.172 (PWE)$. where EP indicates employee performance, 5.597 is the intercept, and 0.172 is the slope towards the physical workplace environment. The model accounted for 15.1% of variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.151$), and the size of the overall model was significant ($F = 7.127, p = 0.011$). It means that physical work environment was not just closely related to employee performance, but also had a significant predictive ability. The basic linear regression model was performed to perform the regression analysis:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \epsilon$. where: Y = Employee performance; X = Physical workplace environment; β_0 = Intercept; β_1 = Slope coefficient; ϵ = Error term. Then from the output of the regression, the whole estimated regression equation was:

$\hat{Y} = 5.597 + 0.172X$. where: \hat{Y} = Predicted employee performance; 5.597 = Constant intercept; 0.172 = Regression coefficient for physical workplace environment; X = Physical workplace environment score. Put simply, the estimated regression equation might be written as:

Employee Performance = 5.597 + 0.172 (Physical Workplace Environment). We have thus that by keeping other factors equal in the simple model, a one-unit increase in the physical workplace environment score was associated with a 0.172-unit increase in staff members' performance. The full model summary, ANOVA, and coefficient estimates are presented in **Table 7**.

Table 7. Regression results for physical workplace environment (PWE) predicting employee performance (EP).

Section	Statistic	Value
Model summary	R	0.389
	R Square	0.151
	Adjusted R Square	0.130
	Std. Error of the Estimate	0.452
ANOVA	F Statistic	7.127
	df	1.40
	Sig.	0.011
Coefficients	Constant	5.597
	Unstandardized B	0.172
	Std. Error	0.064
	Standardized Beta	0.389
	t	2.670
	Sig.	0.011

3.5.3. Decision to Test the Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was that physical workplace environment has no significant effect on employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya. The null hypothesis was rejected due to a positive and statistically significant regression coefficient for physical workplace environment ($p = 0.011$). This result illustrates that physical workplace environment significantly influenced employee performance across the mortuaries that were sampled here. This implies further strengthening of their physical conditions of work will undoubtedly elevate operational efficiency, service quality, and the dignity of mortuary services. Objective One hypothesis test was made using the regression results of regression already presented on effect of physical workplace environment on employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya. Null hypothesis was explained as follows:

H_{01} : The physical workplace environment does not significantly influence employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya.

This hypothesis was decided based on the estimated probability value and the regression coefficient. So based on this result, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected. This confirms that adequate statistical evidence existed to suggest that the physical environment of the workplace significantly influences the performance of employees in the mortuary setting. So, in practical terms, it means that the quality of the physical conditions under which mortuary staff is working does impact employee performance in part. The hypothesis test overall concludes that the physical work environment is not only a background condition for mortuary activities but actually serves as a contributing factor for employee performance. Such findings underline the importance of supporting physical conditions within public and faith-based hospital mortuaries, incorporating appropriate space, the right layout, good ventilation, and adequate equipment that promote work effectiveness. The final decision for H_{01} is summarized in **Table 8**.

Table 8. Hypothesis decision for H_{01} .

Hypothesis	Key evidence	Decision	Implication
H_{01} : Physical workplace environment has no significant effect on employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya.	$\beta = 0.389$, $B = 0.172$, $p = 0.011$	Reject H_{01}	Strengthening physical workplace conditions is likely to improve employee performance.

4. Discussion

Data analysis reveals that physical workplace environment is a significant predictor of employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya. Stronger employee performance was found among mortuaries with good physical environments. The effect was modest but positive and

statistically significant. This means that physical workplace environment matters, but it's not the only thing that affects performance. Descriptive, qualitative, and inferential findings are also consistent. Employees were given high ratings, yet there was less of a uniform physical support for effective performance. As a result, staff were quite strong, but not always in the same supportive material conditions.

The interpretation is deliberately bounded. The model tests the physical workplace environment pathway only, and the results should not be read as a full explanation of employee performance. Other factors such as staffing levels, workload, role differences, organizational support, and facility-level conditions may also shape performance. Because respondents were drawn from mortuary units that may share common physical conditions, possible within-facility dependence remains a limitation, especially since the dataset used for article analysis did not retain facility identifiers for each respondent.

The descriptive findings indicate the pattern of that relationship. Personal protective equipment, workspace configuration, and overall space availability were rated positively. These dimensions indicated that some rudimentary physical supports were present across many mortuaries. Meanwhile, lifting and transfer support, maintenance, and infrastructure reliability became weak areas as well. Qualitative evidence further elucidated this trend. Insufficient tools, lack of lifting support, poor ventilation, insufficient refrigeration, and maintenance delays in the workplace were associated with fatigue, work slowdown, and operational stress by respondents. The implications are evident. The physical environment of a workplace does not only affect performance or its content—it also determines ways in which mortuary work can take place.

These results match well with Job Demands-Resources theory. That view holds that job resources provide motivation and performance, and that failures in those resources cause strain and limit output. For example, working workspace, ventilation, equipment, PPE, and safe working surfaces were used as job resources in the current study since they allowed a more fluid move throughout the body, safe handling of tools and equipment during tasks. In contrast, poor lifting support, equipment shortages, and maintenance delays served as job demands because they added effort, delayed routine work, and subjected staff to unnecessary physical strain. These results thus corroborate that central JD-R proposition (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), where there is adequate work resource availability and weak work resource deficiency, performance increases.

The findings also agree with the service-quality logic of SERVQUAL. Employee performance in this study was manifested in effectiveness, efficiency, and service delivery. That said, those outcomes depend at least in part on the circumstances of the work that gets carried out. In mortuary practices, physical conditions influence speed, accuracy of procedures, continuity of operations, and dignified management of the deceased. The high scores for dignity, identification process, teamwork, and legal compliance indicate that the staff were upholding high performance expectations. Nonetheless, the qualitative results suggest that maintaining

those standards became harder in areas with weak physical supports. Thus, the physical workplace environment not only determines occupational safety, but also the quality and reliability of service delivery (Park & Choi, 2020; Zhenjing et al., 2022).

The results are in line with previous evidence indicating physical workplace conditions affect employee outcomes. They support Rahman et al. (2024), Hamidi et al. (2020), and Meulensteen et al. (2017), who all concluded that physical work conditions affect productivity; and finally, they also support the evidence of Mas-soudi and Hamdi (2017). They found that the work environment influences productivity and that while behavioral factors are stronger in a work setting, this still pales in comparison against work environments in general. The present study builds from this literature to establish a direct and concrete relationship between physical environment at work and performance in a specialised healthcare support setting. In contrast to previous studies which took place in office space, banking, hotel, or general administrative settings, in this study on hospital mortuaries, work involved a heavy reliance on layout, safe handling systems, ventilation, refrigeration, and reliable tools. That context may shed light on why physical conditions were so important.

This evidence base also clarifies why the current article treats the physical workplace environment as more than a background facility variable. Studies in non-mortuary workplaces show that physical conditions can shape satisfaction and productivity (Agbozo et al., 2017; Mathews & Khann, 2016), while health-sector studies show that occupational health, safety, training and engagement conditions are connected to performance outcomes (Ahmad & Sattar, 2017; Gbadago et al., 2017; Sendawula et al., 2018). Mortuary-specific evidence adds the contextual mechanism: attendants face distinctive hazards, emotional and physical demands, and work-environment constraints that affect safety, workflow and dignity of service (Dartey et al., 2021; Litana & Kapambwe, 2017; Nakakuwa et al., 2024; Ogira et al., 2023).

The findings are also consistent with Nadia and Fathurahman (2018), who examined relationships among the physical working environment, employee well-being and employee commitment in hospital management. Although their outcome emphasis was not employee performance directly, their evidence is relevant because mortuary work links worker safety, fatigue, commitment and service reliability within the same operational environment. The present study therefore extends that hospital-management evidence by demonstrating a direct, statistically significant association between physical workplace conditions and employee performance in mortuary operations.

A useful contribution of the study is that it demonstrates why the physical workplace environment had a significant but moderate, rather than large, impact. The findings indicate that staff were maintaining high performance in part through effort, teamwork, and procedural discipline while physical support was variable. This sheds some light on why employee performance and the physical environ-

ment were rated higher than either condition alone. Practically speaking, mortuary staff seem to be compensating for a few material weaknesses. That is the pattern of resilience and risk, because it also shows both. It shows commitment, operational discipline, but also suggests that strong performance may be predicated on conditions that might not be 100% reliable. In the end, it is going to be difficult to sustain such a reward without the workplace physical environment improving in the long run itself as well.

The present study also considers several gaps in the literature. The first is by extending evidence relating to physical workplace environment to an under-researched area. Mortuary work continues to be less researched than health-related duties despite its functional relevance. Second, it employs a more comprehensive and holistic view of the physical setting of the workplace. Previous studies have mainly focused on narrower indicators like lighting, temperature, noise or standard facilities. The present research explored workspace and layout, ventilation, furniture and equipment, and working surfaces and then linked these factors to actual operational complaints from the staff. Third, descriptive, qualitative, and inferential evidence is combined throughout the study. That makes the findings stronger not just because the relationship is significant, but also how physical conditions influence everyday work in reality.

Read in conjunction, the results illustrate that physical workplace environment is not an add-on phenomenon to mortuary practices. It is a condition of direct performance of all these resources. If more physical support is available the better performance of employees results. Where infrastructure, equipment and handling support is weaker, workflow is harder and performance more vulnerable. Consequently, the evidence provides one clear conclusion: enhancing the physical workplace environment is likely to enhance employee performance at the hospital mortuaries.

4.1. Policy Implications

Policy implications are clear. Mortuary unit physical conditions should be viewed as a workforce performance issue, not as a facility matter. Employee performance is found to be improved where mortuary spaces are safer, better equipped, easier to navigate, and operationally more reliable. Therefore, attention should be placed on the weakest points of the study, specifically lifting and transfer support, maintenance systems, ventilation consistency, refrigeration reliability, and tool and equipment adequacy. These are not cosmetic questions. They help to decrease physical strain, enhance workflow, and bolster the circumstances necessary for an accurate, timely, and dignified delivery of service. At institutional level, hospital administration, county health departments, and faith-based hospital leadership should lay down clearer minimum standards for mortuary facilities and operational support. These standards shall include the layout of the workspace, ventilation, equipment availability, safe working surfaces, refrigeration functionality, and manual handling support. That also means mortuary operations become embedded as part of

routine maintenance planning, and not performed in the event of emergencies and replacement of equipment that's worn out. No such systems mean staff must maintain performance based on effort and the need to adapt by themselves, which the present results indicate is inefficient and unsustainable. A better physical work space is thus likely to increase staff safety, promote continuity and quality of workflow as well as quality of service.

4.2. Research Implications

The study will be of significance to research on occupational health and safety environment and employee performance. First, it strengthens the argument that the physical environment of the workplace be established as a separate and analytically meaningful predictor of employee performance, particularly in specialised health-service environments. Much of the previous research focused on offices, hotels, banks, factories, and general health facilities. The recent results show that mortuary settings should require attention because physical conditions depend so much on workflow, handling systems, refrigeration, safety, and service continuity. It extends the reach of the current literature on the workplace environment to a category of knowledge relatively overlooked by most other areas in society. Second, the study also allows for a wider operationalisation of physical workplace environment than that in previous work. Instead of a range of more specific indicators, such as lighting, noise, or temperature alone, the present work considered the workspace and layout, ventilation, furniture and equipment, and working surfaces. The results imply that these dimensions do provide better evidence for performance analysis in mortuary practice as they represent actual material conditions under which work is carried out. This will be clinically useful in the future, when additional studies are needed to specifically look at occupational health and safety in high-risk and infrastructure-dependent environments. Third, this research demonstrates the importance of integrating descriptive, qualitative, and inferential evidence in workplace studies. The quantitative results indicated that there is a significant relationship between physical workplace environment and employee performance and the qualitative results clarified how the relationship actually worked. This dual design produced a more comprehensive explanation than any single strand could deliver. Such mixed methodological research approaches would be advantageous for mortuary work and similar specialised health settings where we have trouble quantifying the day-to-day conditions of work with numerical measurements alone.

4.3. Practical Implications

The implications are immediate in reality. Mortuary staff will work better if they are able to carry out day-to-day tasks in a supportive and organised manner within the physical environment. From a practical perspective, this translates to improvements in layout, space, ventilation, equipment, safe working surfaces, and lifting support are all expected to promote good workflow, decrease fatigue, and promote

work consistency. Hence, hospitals should approach physical workplace improvement as part of the service-performance management rather than as a separate maintenance problem in isolation. Findings also suggest particular focus areas for practice. It is their duty as managers to make sure lifting and transfer equipment is functional, ventilation and refrigeration systems are working, that essential tools are always available, and that repair and replacement efforts are timely. These were the places where physical support remained the lowest and where problems of operation most likely occurred. They may be addressed to make daily mortuary work safer and more efficient. Further, the findings imply that robust performance in mortuary units should not be reliant on the resilience of staff. Employees were sustaining high performance albeit uneven physical support, the study found. Although this betrays commitment and procedural discipline, it is also a gesture of vulnerability. Performance based on adaptation to adverse environments may not be sustainable. As such, practical improvement necessitates more than just dedicated personnel, but instead work environments that consistently enable the work they're required to do. In this regard, the article also aligns with mortuary-technology arguments that equipment and handling innovations can reduce manual strain and improve operational control (Ochudang, 2020).

5. Conclusion

The physical work environment has a definite and statistically significant effect on employee performance in public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County, Kenya, as inferred from this study. There is no controversy over its relevance. What is more important is the adequacy, reliability, and day-to-day operation of the physical conditions in which mortuary staff work. The results indicated that the physical workplace environment contributed positively ($p < 0.05$) to employee performance, but only to a moderate extent. This implies that workers had been generally maintaining excellent performance despite varied physical support. Additionally, in practical terms, the evidence indicates that a physical workplace environment helps to influence performance more when it is conducive to practicing mortuary care. The strongest physical dimensions in the present study included personal protective equipment, overall physical layout of workspace as well as available space. The weaker areas included lifting and transfer support, maintenance, ventilation consistency, refrigeration reliability, and some equipment conditions. The real issue for mortuary management is therefore not whether physical organisation matters, but how to plan, maintain and optimise conditions in a manner which contributes both to their reliability and functionality, as we see in practice. The study thus provides evidence for the conclusion that the physical and functional environment of an organisational workplace does not remain peripheral for mortuary operations. It is a specific performance condition. Mortuary personnel perform better when the work environment is a better place, which is safer—more prepared, easier to access, reliable operationally. Workflow is harder and performance is more fragile when infrastructure, equipment, and

handling support are weak. More than simply complying with procedures, therefore, it is necessary to enhance performance of mortuary. It necessitates strengthening the physical systems by which mortuary work is done.

Areas for Future Research

Future research should examine physical workplace environment and employee performance using longitudinal designs in order to capture change over time and provide stronger causal evidence. This would help determine whether improvements in workspace, equipment, ventilation, maintenance, and handling support produce sustained gains in employee performance rather than short-term effects.

Further studies should also incorporate more objective performance and workplace-condition indicators, such as turnaround time, refrigeration downtime, equipment availability records, error rates, absenteeism, incident reports, and service complaints, in order to complement perceptual measures. Such evidence would strengthen the empirical basis for assessing the operational value of physical workplace environment in hospital mortuaries.

In addition, future research could extend the analysis to other healthcare and public-service settings, including private hospitals, county referral facilities, forensic pathology units, and mortuaries in other counties, to determine whether the same physical workplace constraints persist across institutional contexts. Comparative studies across sectors and facility types would help clarify the extent to which the present findings are specific to public and faith-based hospital mortuaries in Kiambu County or reflect broader workplace-performance dynamics in specialised health services.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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