

Effects of Work life Balance on Employees' Performance in Institutions of Higher Learning. A Case Study of Kabarak University

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ABSTRACT

Work-life balance is basically the positive relationship between work and other equally important activities in life which include family, leisure, personal development and community development issues. The relationship cannot be clearly defined and varies from person to person according to their life demands. Work life balance is intended to allow employees greater flexibility in their working patterns so that they can balance what they do at work with the responsibilities and interests they have outside work. The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of work life balance on employees performance. The unit of study was Kabarak University which is private Chartered University in Nakuru County. The main objective of the study was to analyze the effects of work life balance on employee performance in Kabarak University. The specific objectives were to establish the effects of work-family priorities conflict on employees' performance, establish the effects of employee assistance programs affect employees' performance. The research used descriptive technique, specifically case study. The method used to collect data was primary method. Primary data was gathered through structured questionnaires. The target population of the study was 244 from which a sample size of 70 was determined. Data was analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS). The data was presented in table format where percentages were presented. To determine if the independent variables influence the dependent variable Chi-square tests was done. The study revealed that work family priorities conflict affected the performance of employees. The study, therefore, concluded that work life balance is an important aspect of work and family which should be embraced to improve employees performance. The study therefore recommended that organization should come up with ways of balancing what employees do in their jobs and how they cater for their family needs to reduce the imbalance and thus improve their performance. It is expected that the study will be utilized by the Human Resource Department of Kabarak University to understand the effects of work life balance on the performance of employees.

Keywords: Work life Balance, Employees' Performance, work-family priorities conflict, employee assistance programs

1.1 Background

Do we live to work or we work to live? Research has shown that work and home (or family) are the two most important domains in the life of an employed individual (Kofodimos, 1993; Lewis and Copper, 1995; Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003). While some may argue that we realize ourselves through work being able to self-actualise attaining unto the very zenith of our chosen career, a truly all encompassing self actualisation however, will integrate both our work and life (family, personal life, community service). When an individual is thus employed in an organisation, he does not give up his life in exchange for work rather he attempts to maintain a balance between them. This balance is necessary for a healthy life. work-life balance means bringing work, whether done on the job or at home, and leisure time into balance to live life to its fullest. It doesn't mean that you spend half of your life working and half of it playing; instead, it means balancing the two to achieve harmony in physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Concern about integrated work-life balance emerged in the 1970's, when more women entered the work-place. At this point the matter was seen as women's problem and social problem. In the late 1980's human resource practitioners presented this area of employment policy as a potential business issue (Frame and Hartog, 2003). Social forces have altered the needs of both employees and employers.

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In the past, two-parent households typically supplied a male to the workforce and a female caregiver to the home. Today, the number of traditional two-parent households has decreased. Extended families are often too geographically dispersed to help with child and elder-care and the costs of preparing children for professional success and nursing infirm have increased sharply. As a result, employees' family-related financial, temporal and social burdens have increased dramatically (Greenblatt, 2002).

Competing and multi-faced demands between work and home responsibilities have assumed increased relevance for employees in recent years, due in large part to demographic and workplace changes, such as: a greater numbers of women in the workforce (dual-career couples), transformation in family structures (a rise in the number of single parents), a growing reluctance to accept the longer hours culture, the rise of the 24 per 7 society, and technological advancements. In response to these changes and the conflict they generate among the multiple roles that individuals occupy, organizations are increasingly pressured to design various kinds of practices, intended to facilitate employees' efforts to fulfill both their employment related and their personal commitments. The way of how work-life balance can be achieved and enhanced is an important issue in the field of human resource management and has received significant attention from employers, workers, government, academic researchers, and the popular media. (McPherson and Reed 2007, 13).

Inadequate work life balance is a problem that poses a big risk to workers well being, their performance as well as the organizational performance. Many employees often have difficulties in attempting to balance employment responsibilities with their social life. Given the benefits of work-life balance practices and the potential to help improve employee job performance in terms of increased organizational commitment, job satisfaction, reduction on the turnover rate, ECO Bank has introduced programs to assist the employees in achieving a balanced work life which include; flexible working hours, employee assistance programs and leave programs. However there is no study which has been carried out to determine the success of the work-life balance programs at the bank. It is against this background that the study sought to determine the effects of organizational work-life balance programs on employee job performance at ECO Bank Kenya. (Kamau, et al. 2013).

Despite the popularity of work-life conflict as a topic of academic and practitioner debate, and the mounting prevalence of work-life balance practices (a.k.a. family-supportive or family-friendly policies) in organizations around the world (Kersley et al., 2005;), research on the organizational effects of such practices is not well integrated. Today, work-life balance have become the subject of wide disciplines ranging from psychology to sociology, from management of human resources to organizational behavior. The reason for such interest is due to the fact that almost everyone has a problem of work-life balance. Competing and multi-faced demands between work and home responsibilities have assumed increased relevance for employees in recent years, due in large part to demographic and workplace changes, such as: a greater numbers of women in the workforce (dual-career couples), transformation in family structures (a rise in the number of single parents), a growing reluctance to accept the longer hours culture, the rise of the 24 per 7 society, and technological advancements. In response to these changes and the conflict they generate among the multiple roles that individuals occupy, organizations are increasingly pressured to design various kinds of practices, intended to facilitate employees' efforts to fulfill both their employment related and their personal commitments. The way of how work-life balance can be achieved and enhanced is an important issue in the field of human resource management and has received significant attention from employers, workers, government, academic researchers, and the popular media.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Inadequate work life balance is a problem that poses a big risk to workers well being, their performance as well as the organizational performance. Many employees often have difficulties in attempting to

balance employment responsibilities with their social life. Competing demands between work and home have assumed increased relevance for employees in recent years, due to demographic and workplace changes such as rising numbers of women in the labour force, an ageing population, longer working hours, and more sophisticated communications technology enabling near constant contact with the workplace. In response to these changes and the conflict they generate among the multiple roles that individuals occupy, organizations are increasingly pressured to implement work practices intended to facilitate employees' efforts to fulfill both their employment-related and their personal responsibilities. The way of how work-life balance can be achieved and enhanced is an important issue in the field of human resource management and has received significant attention from employers, workers, government, academic researchers, and the popular media. Kabarak University is not an exception and it is against this background that the researchers felt that a research on effects of work life balance on employees performance at Kabarak University would be of essence.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aimed at achieving both the general objective and the specific objective.

1.3.1 General Objective

The General objective was to explore the effects of work-life balance on employees performance in institutions of Higher Learning, Kabarak University as a case.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To establish the effects of work-family priorities conflict on employees performance in Kabarak University.
- ii. To determine how employee assistance programs affect employees performance in Kabarak University.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

- i) **H₀₁**: work-family priorities conflict does not significantly affect employee performance in Kabarak University.
- ii) **H₀₂**: employee assistance programs in Kabarak University does not significantly affect the performance of employees.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Results of this study will be utilized by Kabarak University Administration and Human Resource Departments to establish the effects of work life balance on the performance of employees. The study will help employees to understand matters of work life balance and how it affects or affected them either positively and negatively. Scholars of Human Resource Management will gain insight into effects of work-life balance and how it affects the performance of their organizations.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research focused on the effects of work life balance on the performance of employees of Kabarak University. There were a total of 244 employees. Participants were selected from both the teaching and non-teaching staff. The sample of the study comprised of 70 respondents.

1.6 Limitations of the study

Some respondents were reluctant to give confidential information which was vital for the study. The Researcher assured the employees that the information given would be treated with confidentiality and would not use the information for other purposes but for the research. Some respondents were slow in filling and returning the questionnaires.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the information from other researchers who have carried out their research in the same field of study. The specific areas covered here are: theoretical review, theoretical framework, conceptual review, conceptual framework, summary of literature review and research gaps of effects of work-life balance on the performance of employees.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Work life balance is an area of increasing importance to both employees and employers. Employees need it to balance work and non-work roles and employers require it to increase productively and reduce cost (Abbott & De Cieri, 2008). The drivers for work life balance can be attributed to changes in the demographic distribution of the labour force, technological advancement and the 24/7 opening hour's culture in Morden society (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Kalliath & Brough, 2008). While there is no consistent definition of work-life balance, there are some consistent themes which have emerged these include: employees achieving an acceptable balance between their work and personal lives, employers work initiative which would aid improve employees productivity providing a range of targeted work-life initiatives that enhance firm performance and not result into considerable increase in cost to the employers (De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit, 2005).

Work-life balance involves proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) on the one hand and "life" (Health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development) on the other. Related, though broader, terms include "lifestyle balance" and "life balance". Work-life balance, in its broadest sense, is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or 'fit' between the multiple roles in a person's life. Kossek & Ozeki (1998). Observing the day to day lives of many employees, two main issues to be addressed to achieve work life balance are time and stress. Managing these two variables is the secret of a perfect work life balance. Thus formula of work life balance: Work life balance= Time management + Stress management. As derived by Gupta and Sharma (2013).

From the very beginning it is important to understand that work-life balance does not mean to devote an equal amounts of time to paid work and non-paid roles; in its broadest sense, is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or 'fit' between the multiple roles in a person's life. Although definitions and explanations may vary, work-life balance is generally associated with equilibrium between the amount of time and effort somebody devotes to work and personal activities, in order to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life. (Clarke, et al 2004, 121). To understand work-life balance, it is important to be aware of the different demands upon us and our personal resources- our time and our energy- that we can deploy to address them. With this awareness, we are able to review and value the choices we have in terms of how we allocate our precious resources. Such conscious decision-making provides a sense of control over our working arrangements in order to better accommodate other aspects of our lives, while still benefiting the organizations. Kumar and Mohd (2014) says that Work life balance is about people having measure of control over when, where and how they work. There is a view that work-life balance only in the framework of what the company does for the individual.

2.3 Importance of work-Life Balance

Organizations can implement various work-life balance initiatives that may assist employees to better balance their work and family responsibilities, gain improvements in well-being and provide organizational benefits. There are a large variety of family friendly policies which include but are not limited to the following: Flexible working hours, job sharing, part-time work, compressed work weeks,

parental leave, telecommuting, on-site child care facility, (Hartel et al 2007). In addition, employers may provide a range of benefits related to employees' health and well-being, including extended health insurance for the employee and dependents, personal days, and access to programs or services to encourage fitness and physical and mental health. Still, other practices may support children's education, employees' participation in volunteer work, or facilitate phased retirement. These additional practices fall outside the scope of our current paper, but can be viewed as supporting employees' health, well-being, and work-life balance.

Flexi time allows employees, to determine (or be involved in determining) the start and end times of their working day, provided a certain number of hours is worked. This can allow them to meet family or personal commitments/emergencies (enable employees to respond to both predictable and unpredictable circumstances), during the day or to reduce their commuting time by starting and ending work before or after the rush hour. (Kumar and Mohd, 2014)

Telecommuting: It is becoming more and more common for people to do at least some of their regular work from home instead of going into the office. This type of arrangement is often called 'telework' or 'telecommuting' and can be advantageous for employees by allowing them: to organize their work day around their personal and family needs; to decrease work-related expenses; to reduce commuting time; and to work in a less stressful and disruptive environment. It may also help to accommodate employees who, because of particular disabilities, are unable to leave home. The fact that employees who telework can use this added flexibility to capitalize on their personal peak productivity periods can also favourable influence a company's bottom line. Despite these benefits and the attention that telecommuting has attracted in the media, very few collective agreements contain telework provisions. The paucity of telework clauses is partly due to the fact that not all occupations are amenable to such an arrangement. Moreover, employers may be concerned by the initial implementation costs, potential legal liabilities, and difficulties in supervising and appraising the performance of teleworkers. Trade-Unions may disapprove of work-at-home clauses if they perceive them as leading to greater isolation of employees, reduced job security and promotion opportunities, and diminished health and safety protection. (Naktiyok and Iscan, 2003).

Compressed Work Weeks: A compressed work week is an arrangement whereby employees work longer shifts in exchange for a reduction in the number of working days in their work cycle (e.g. on a weekly or biweekly basis). This can be beneficial for employees in terms of additional days off work (e.g. longer weekends allowing "mini vacations") and reduced commuting time, whereas employers can extend their daily operating hours, with less need to resort to overtime. Compressed work week arrangements may be particularly useful for employees who wish to reduce the number of days per week spent at work, but who cannot financially afford to decrease their working hours. Compressed work weeks are often initiated by the employee, but sometimes the employer may initiate the option to improve operational efficiency, to maximize production (reduced daily start up costs) or to establish longer business hours which can enhance customer service. Common arrangements for a forty hours work week are working ten hours per day, four days a week; working an extra hour a day with one day off every two weeks; or working an extra half hour a day and having one day every three or four weeks off. (Yeandley et al, 2002).

Part-Time Work: Part-time arrangements can also allow people with health problems, disabilities or limited disposable time (e.g. students) to participate in the labour force, develop their skills and obtain work experience. Finally, they can facilitate re-entry into the workforce for those who have had career breaks — particularly mothers (or fathers) who have stayed at home to raise their children — or provide a gradual exit for employees nearing retirement. From the employer's point of view, the use of part-time

workers, where feasible, can help maximize the use of human resources and increase operational flexibility, by providing additional coverage during peak periods. Part-time employment can also be considered unsatisfactory for those employees who would prefer working longer hours to increase their income, thereby ensuring a higher standard of living for their families. The European Working Conditions Survey found that 85% of those working less than 30 hours per week were satisfied with their work–life balance. Furthermore, part-time workers and those working less than 35 hours a week reported the lowest levels of both physical and psychological health problems. Part-time work is one strategy frequently used by workers who wish to better balance their work and family life. Part-time work should be promoted in more, higher-level occupations, for instance, Daimler Chrysler in Germany promotes part-time work in leading positions in the company. (Clarke, et al, 2004)

Job sharing is an arrangement which allows two (or sometimes more) employees to jointly fill one fulltime job, with responsibilities and working time shared or divided between them. Job sharing may be appropriate where opportunities for part-time jobs or other arrangements are limited. Apart from the obvious advantage of allowing employees more time for other commitments, including family responsibilities, job sharing also facilitates the development of partnerships, where job sharers can learn from each other while providing mutual support. It can benefit employers as well by improving staff retention, increasing productivity and combining a wider range of skills and experience in a single job. In some cases, such an arrangement can also provide additional coverage during busy periods, while ensuring continuity of coverage when one partner is on sick leave or holidays. For business with substantial numbers of administrative, maintenance or customer-facing employees, offering flexible working conditions can be problematic. Where the hours of work are customer-driven, organizations face limitations on flexibility for employees, but this is when family-friendly programs such as child care would be of most benefit. A positive example of childcare support is Star City Casino in Sydney that provides a 24-hour childcare facility Management believes this has helped both staff and the organization, as evidenced by the lowest staff turnover rate of any casino in Australia. (Australia Government Website, 2005).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The Demand–Control Model by Karasek (1979) points out that job demands and job control jointly predict the occurrence of individual mental strain. Based on comparative empirical findings, the causal relationship between job characteristics and strain outside the work-sphere is furthermore essential to the model. Karasek (1979) however implicitly acknowledged a wider range of demands and resources. Accordingly, the JobDemands–Resources Model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001) claims that demands and resources determine job-related stress. Although the Job Demands–Resources Model exclusively refers to work-related demands and resources – given the bi-directional nature of work–family conflict – a conflict occurs if demands from the family and/or the work sphere compete with and exceed individual resources.

According to Greenhaus and Parasuraman (1999), a high level of involvement in unpaid work leads to a high level of conflict in paid work. Similarly, previous research revealed that children in the household – inducing higher family demands – are associated with a higher level of conflict (Crompton and Lyonette, 2008; Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999), particularly for women (Hennig et al., 2012). Martinengo et al. (2010) reveal that younger children – who demand more time – are predictors of family to-work conflict. As women still tend to be more responsible for childcare than men (Sayer, 2010), regardless of hours worked in paid employment, they work a second shift at home (Asher, 2011; Hochschild, 2003). Thus, household and family responsibilities are family demands which potentially increase the family-to-work conflict. The work-related demand that is most often discussed is the number of working hours, possibly causing work-to-family conflict.

Long working hours limit the time resources for one's private life (Chung, 2011; Golden and Wiens-Tuers, 2006; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001), while shorter working hours and parttime employment might contribute to a better work-life balance (Bonney, 2005; Crompton and Lyonette, 2008). In a European comparative study, Fahlén (2012) discovers that shorter working hours reduce conflict in both directions; that is, home-to-work and work-to-home. Related to high work demands, job position/level (Crompton and Lyonette, 2008; Steiber, 2009; Tausig and Fenwick, 2001) and educational level (Hofäcker and König, 2013; Jacobs and Gerson, 2004) were also found to increase work-life conflict. Downloaded from wes.sagepub.com at Kabarak University Library on July 1, 2015 4 Work, employment and society An essential aspect of Karasek's (1979) Demand-Control Model is that control may buffer job demands.

Along the same line of reasoning, Bakker and Demerouti (2007), Bakker and Geurts (2004), Demerouti et al. (2001), Parasuraman et al. (1996) and Pocock (2005) interpret individual temporal, spatial and organisational control over the work sphere as a job resource. Relating individual control to work flexibility, Hill et al. (2008: 152) defined workplace flexibility as 'the ability of workers to make choices influencing when, where, and for how long they engage in work-related tasks'. Thus, individual flexibility can be seen as a job resource since flexibility allows control over devoting resources to one or the other life spheres. This in turn decreases the likelihood of negative interference. Control in this context can have a buffering effect on job-related demands such as long working hours.

2.5 Conceptual Review

2.5.1 Work Family Conflict and Family Life Balance

Work and family are most important parts in human life that are not easily separated. When trying to balance between the work and family, the employees often end with conflict and dilemma in giving priority to both career and family. The incompatible of demand between career and family seem to create a personal pressure to the employees. More often than not, conflict tends to create pressure to the employees as they try to balance the two roles that need to be performed simultaneously. The last decades have seen dramatic changes in family life, including increases in dual-earner households and single-parent families as well as greater numbers of employed adults who are also caring for elderly or infirm relatives (Neal & Hammer, 2007), that mean many employees are simultaneously juggling paid work and unpaid family work.

Work-family conflicts are a common source of stress and have been linked to employees' health and family functioning, as well as labor market decisions and fertility decisions (Gornick & Meyers, 2003). Stress has the implications for the individual as well as the organization and it can no longer be considered merely as the individual manager's problem (Menon and Akhilesh, 2007). It is now generally accepted that prolonged or intense stress can have a negative impact on an individual's mental and physical health. When trying to balance work and family responsibilities, many workers experience conflict between these two roles (Day and Chamberlain, 2006). Work – family conflict has been defined as a mutual compatibility between the demands of the work role and demand of the family role. Juggling work and family responsibilities is a common experience for many employees. Although engaging in both work and family roles can have positive effects for individuals, but if workers are unable to balance the responsibilities associated with both roles, the potential for conflicts between roles increases (Frone, Russell and Cooper, 2010).

In the work setting, (Rees, 2005) found that women encounter more stress as compared to men. The main reason is women have to balance their responsibilities towards their work and family. While Carnicer et al., (2004) have found that gender is not a significant variable to explain work-family conflict. As the

consequences of work – family conflict, De Janasz (2007), found that the conflict of work and family may lower job satisfaction and it may decrease the organizational commitment. In order to overcome the work – family conflict, Boyar et al (2008) suggested that organizations can work to reduce work family conflict by adopting family-friendly programs that help employees balance work and family demands. Specifically, their study implies that organizations should find ways to hold constant or reduce perceptions of work and family demand, along with other direct antecedents of work interfering with family and family interfering with work.

2.5.2 Employee Assistance Programs

Employee assistance program can be defined as work-based intervention program designed to identify and assist employees in resolving personal problems (e.g., marital, financial or emotional problems; family issues; substance/alcohol abuse) that may be adversely affecting the employee's performance. Employee assistance program plans are usually 100% paid by the employer and can include a wide array of other services, such as nurse lines, basic legal assistance and referrals, adoption assistance or assistance finding elder care services. Employee assistance services can be made available to not only the employee but also to immediate family members or anyone living in their home. (SHRM, 2015). Employers are recognizing that a wholistic approach to wellness results in a happier, more productive employee. According to the Employee Assistance Professionals Association, an employee assistance program "utilizes specific core technologies to enhance employee and workplace effectiveness through prevention, identification, and resolution of personal and productivity issues.

An employee assistance program, typically consists of a group of professionals, such as lawyers, therapists, counselors and financial experts, who contract with an employer to provide advice and guidance to employees. EAPs help them address personal, non-work issues, and concerns that could possibly affect their work life. Employee assistance programs (EAPs) began in the 1940s by providing employee services that primarily focused on the affect of alcohol use and abuse on job performance. Over time, this emphasis was broadened to include other personal issues that negatively affect job performance. Tremendous growth in EAP services began in the early 1970s. During that period, EAPs helped employers address a growing list of employee concerns and proactively deal with workplace problems that could lead to violence, physical and mental health issues or declining morale among workers. Today, the vast majority of Fortune 500 companies offer EAPs that deliver a variety of health and productivity services to improve organizational performance, as well as assist individual employees and their dependents. (Attridge, 2005).

Worsening health status and stagnating productivity are major concerns of large employers nationwide. Some employers are experiencing alarming increases in absence rates due to the growing number of claims for short- and long-term disability and Family Medical Leave (FML). 2 Stress is a major concern for employers and managers, and mental health and substance-use conditions continue to be a leading cause of illness and lost productivity for most employers. According to Roman (2005), factors such as mental health conditions, sleep problems, mental health stigma and substance use and abuse affect business performance by reducing productivity and increasing both planned and unplanned absences. Many of these factors are either preventable or modifiable. While stress is known to affect productivity, few employers have found successful strategies to reduce the negative effects of chronic stressors. Many employees experience damaging levels of stress due to problems they experience in their home or work lives.

Today's workforce faces many new causes of stress, including the economy, long commutes, the time and energy required to care for ailing parents or young families and the availability of new technologies that blur the line between work and home. Furthermore, common behavioral health conditions such as

depression can negatively affect productivity. Depression itself can be life-threatening, but it may also increase an individual's risk for developing common medical conditions such as heart disease. Two decades of research show that persons with depression are at a greater risk for developing heart disease than healthy persons. Left untreated, depression may have a negative impact on comorbid (co-occurring) disease outcomes and reduce an individual's ability to comply with treatment. (Rees, 2005).

Financial Problems Financial problems affect people in various walks of life. Not only is the family life effected but financial problems affect productivity in the job market also. A worker with financial problems experiences lack of concentration resulting in poor quality or quantity of work, fatigue due to stress, becomes more accident prone and exhibits higher grievance rates (Bailey, 1986). Lower output and the tendency to default requires companies to spend more in the way of transactions, benefit costs, and medical costs. Estimates of the effects of financial problems have been based on records of the numbers of people in the workforce who have sought employee counseling, and the percentage of these who had financial problems. Cambridge (2005) suggests that 10% is a conservative estimate of the proportion of employees in the workplace with financial difficulties affecting productivity. This estimate comes from a company providing well above national average pay and benefits. Another research report was that personal financial problems affected nearly one-third of America's corporate workforce performance (Hendrix *et al.*, 2007). The relative importance of financial problems contributing to lowered productivity can be documented by its rank with other problems of those who seek counseling. The disentanglement of financial problems from other problems is difficult. One such report of those who had problems with alcohol or drug affecting productivity, related problems were financial - 35%, legal - 55%, worker compensation claims - 12%, and accident or sickness claims - 14% (Cambridge, 2005).

2.5.3 Worklife Balance and Employee Performance

Interference between work and non-work responsibilities has a number of negative outcomes that have been well established in the literature. In terms of job attitudes, employees reporting high levels of both work-to-life and life-to-work conflict tend to exhibit lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Behavioural outcomes of both directions of conflict include reduced work effort, reduced performance, and increased absenteeism and turnover (Greenhaus, Collins, Singh, & Parasuraman, 1997). Both work-to-life and life-to-work conflict have also been associated with increased stress and burnout cognitive difficulties such as staying awake, lack of concentration, and low alertness, and reduced levels of general health and energy. While the majority of work-life balance research focuses on employees' family responsibilities, there are also a number of studies that recognize commitments to friends and community groups, expanding the affected population to virtually all employees (Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). The implications for organizations are clear: work-life conflict can have negative repercussions for employee performance.

According to the business case as espoused by many firms and government bodies, these costs to organizations can be avoided by implementing programs to help employees manage their work-life conflict (Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006). This view proposes that work-life balance practices will assist employees in balancing their work and family demands, which can in turn lead to enhanced employee productivity and significant business improvements. By enabling employees to schedule their time in order to better balance competing demands from work and from home, and by helping employees to procure third-party assistance with caregiving responsibilities, such practices are intended to reduce or eliminate levels of work-life conflict, and thereby augment employee performance and organizational effectiveness.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework is a visual diagram that captures the main things to be studied that is the key factors, concepts, or variables and the presumed relationships among them. The Conceptual framework assisted the Researcher in developing an understanding of the situation under investigation. The research project utilized conceptual framework illustrated in fig. 2. 1.

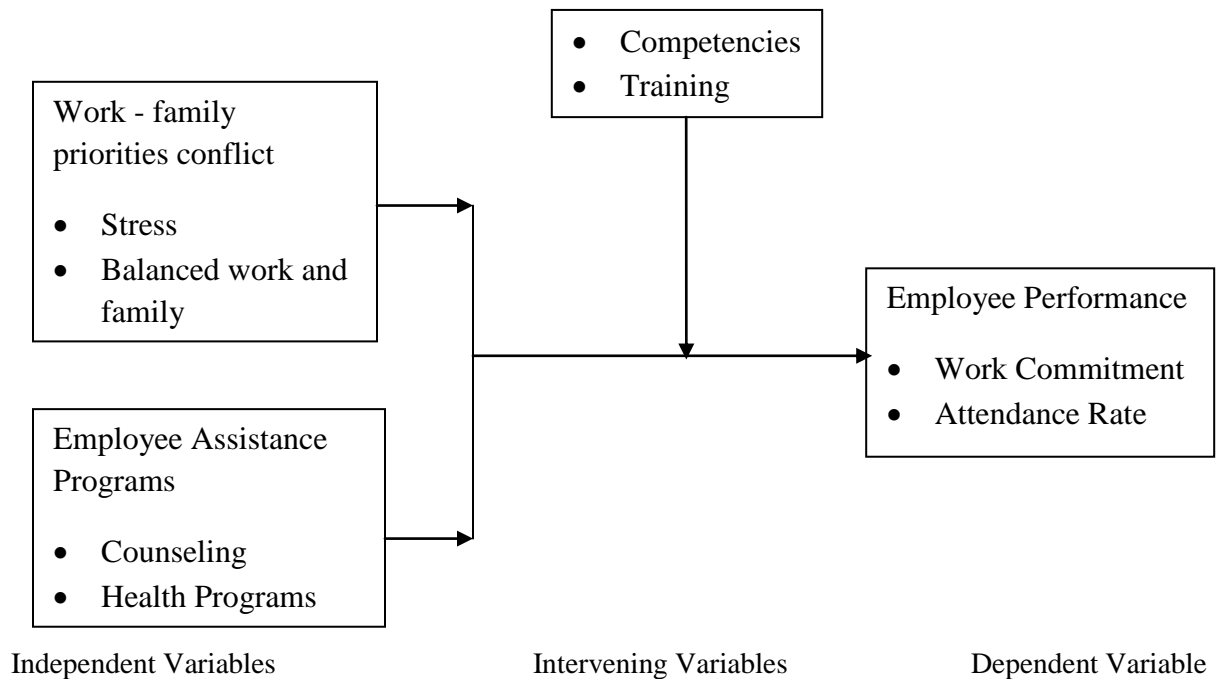


Fig. 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Employee performance was conceptualized as being dependent variable. The Effects like work-family priorities conflict and employee assistance programs were conceptualized as the independent variables. This means that employee performance and work life balance play a key role in the employees working life. Also work-family priorities conflict and employee assistance programs affect the employee performance.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter gives summary information regarding the methodologies and procedures that were adopted and used in the study. It describes the research design, target population, sample design, data collection procedures and methods that were utilized for analyzing the data.

3.2 Research Design

The research technique that was used was descriptive design and specifically case study. A descriptive research design was considered as the appropriate research design since it was a more appropriate strategy for answering research questions which the researcher have no control over the events. Descriptive technique was used because it enables to acquire a lot of information of the area under study, descriptions were used as an indirect test of a theory or model and some behaviors or situations could not be studied in any other way. Descriptive studies present data in a meaningful form thus help to understand the

characteristics of a group in a given situation. The study was conducted at the Kabarak University, Main Campus located along Eldama Ravine road near Kambi Ya Moto Centre.

The approach that was used was quantitative approach. The quantitative approach involved the generation of data which was subjected to rigorous analysis in formal and rigid format.

The methodology that was used to collect data was by use of both primary and secondary data collection methods. Primary data was gathered directly from respondents and for this study the Researcher used a questionnaire. This helped the researcher to obtain first hand information from the respondents.

3.3 Target Population

The research targeted the employees of Kabarak University. The total population was 244 employees which constitute the teaching and non-teaching staff.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

To determine a sample the formula below was used. The rationale for using this formula was because the population was 244.

$$S = N/[1+N(e)^2]$$

where N = target population of 244; S = sample size; e = level of significance of 10%

$$S = 244/[1+244(0.1)^2] = 70$$

The research adopted simple random sampling technique. One of the advantage about simple random sampling is the ease of assembling the sample. It is also considered as a fair way of selecting a sample from a given population since every member is given equal opportunities of being selected. This ensured that the study obtained a representative sample. The Researcher drew a sample of 70 respondents. This represents 28.6% of the population of staff of Kabarak University, Main Campus. Kothari (2004) explains that a representative sample was one which was at least 10% of the population thus the choice of 28.6% is considered as representative of the population.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

In this research, primary data was collected through administration of a questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into various sections to adequately cover the objectives of the study. It further consisted of close ended and structured questions. The structured questions provided a set of answers from which the respondents chose the appropriate answers. Bryman and Bell (2003), explains that a self administered questionnaire is the only way to elicit self report on people's opinion, attitudes, beliefs and values.

3.6 Pilot Testing

The Researcher carried out a pilot study to enhance the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. The Researcher selected a pilot group of 6 from St. Pauls University, Limuru which was an organization that had similar groups of employees to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire. The pilot data was not be included in the actual study. The pilot study allowed for pre-testing of the research instrument. The clarity of the instrument items to the respondents was established so as to enhance the instrument's validity and reliability

3.6.1 Reliability of the Questionnaire

According to Walliman, (2001), reliability refers to the consistency of measurement and is frequently assessed using the test-retest reliability method. Reliability is increased by including many similar items on a measure, by testing a diverse sample of individuals and by using uniform testing procedures.

3.6.2 Validity of the questionnaire

According to Somekh and Cathy (2005) validity is the degree by which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure. Content validity which was employed by this study was a measure of the degree to which data collected using a particular instrument represents a specific domain or content of a particular concept. The pilot questionnaires were analysed using cronbach's alpha, where $\alpha = 0.81$ was obtained as shown in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Cronbach's Alpha Table

Variables	No.	Cronbach α
Work life priorities conflict	7	0.79
Work life assistance programs	8	0.81
Employees performance	7	0.82
Reliability coefficient		$\alpha = 0.81$

Since all the Cronbach's Alpha values were greater than 0.7, then the test items were found to be valid for the study. Therefore the questionnaire was adopted for the study. The pilot study enabled the Researcher to be familiar with research and its administration procedure as well as identifying items that required modification. The results helped the Researcher to correct inconsistencies which arose from the instrument, which ensured that it measured what is intended.

3.7 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The Researcher perused completed questionnaires to document analysis recording sheets. Data coding was done by the use Microsoft excel office and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Quantitative method of data analysis was emphasized through the use of descriptive statistics. The information was displayed by use of tables.

3.7.1 Data Analysis

Quantitative data collected by using a questionnaire was analyzed by the use of descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft office excel. Descriptive statistics involves the process of transforming a mass of raw data into tables and charts with frequency distribution and percentages which are vital in making sense out of data Descriptive statistics employed were: frequencies, percentages and statistical mean. Inferential statistics used was chi square. The results were then presented in tables for better understanding.

3.7.2 Data Interpretation

Data was presented by calculating percentages, means and frequencies. The information was then displayed by use of tables. This was done by tallying up responses, computing percentages of variations in response as well as describing and interpreting the data in line with the study objectives and assumptions through use of SPSS and Microsoft Excel 2007. The results were then interpreted in order to draw conclusions and recommendations. The advantage of using the means was its use in summarizing the essential features of a series and in enabling data to be compared. It was also a stable measure of central tendency.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter contains data gathered from the field, its analysis and presentation. This establishes the purpose of the research and hence finds the effects of work life balance on the performance of employees of Kabarak University. This was achieved through data that was collected from employees of Kabarak University, Institution of Higher learning within Nakuru County. The sample size was 70 respondents. Out of the 70 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 63 (90%) questionnaires were correctly filled

and returned. This enabled the researcher to proceed with analysis of data since the return rate of 90% was above what is recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) of at least (70%).

4.2 Research Findings

4.2.1 Work Family Priorities Conflicts

A number of issues were raised concerning work family priorities conflicts and the responses were as in table 4.0 below:

Table 4.1 Work and family priorities conflict

	5	4	3	2	1
work-life /work-family conflict is an important source of stress and family conflict	42.9%	42.9%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%
Work family conflicts is linked labour market decisions	15.9%	66.7%	9.0%	7.0%	0.5%
Work outcomes like labour dissatisfaction, high turnover intention and low productivity and lack of commitment are related to misplaced work family priorities	49.2%	36.5%	3.2%	11.1%	0.0%
Balanced Work – Family Priorities lead to a motivated workforce and high employee morale	61.92%	30.2%	4.8%	1.6%	1.6%
Work life conflict is a major source of stress to me	17.5%	52.4%	7.9%	17.5%	4.8%
Work-life/Work family impairs my overall well-being	12.7%	33.3%	12.7%	33.3%	7.9%
Work life takes all the time during the day that I do not have time for my family	31.7%	11.1%	19.0%	19.0%	19.0%

Key: 5=strongly agree; 4=agree; 3=neutral; 2= disagree; 1= strongly disagree

Table 4.1 shows that employees at 42.9% strongly agreed and 42.9% agreed that worklife/work family conflict was an important source of stress and family conflict. 4.8% strongly disagreed and 4.8% disagreed while 4.8% were neutral to this notion. 66.7% of the respondents agreed, 15.9% strongly to the fact that work family conflicts is linked to labour market decisions, while 7% disagreed and a negligible 0.7% strongly disagreed while 9% were neutral to this fact. 49.2% of the employees strongly agreed and 36.5% agreed to the issue of work outcomes like labour dissatisfaction, high turnover intention and low productivity and lack of commitment being related to misplaced work family priorities, 11.1% disagreed, while 3.2% were neutral. 62.9% and 30.2% strongly agreed and agreed respectively to the fact that balanced work – family priorities as leading to a motivated workforce and high employees morale, while 1.6% strongly disagreed and 1.6% disagreed, however, 4.8% were neutral to this notion. On the issue of work life conflict being a major source of stress, 17.5% strongly agreed and 52.4% agreed to this issue while 17.5% disagreed and 4.8% strongly disagreed, 7.9% were neutral to this issue. There was a tie between those who agreed and disagreed to the notion that worklife/work family conflict impaired their overall well being at 33.3%, however, 12.7% strongly agreed to this fact and 7.9% strongly disagreed to the notion, 12.7% were neutral. 31.7% strongly agreed and 11.1% agreed that worklife takes all the time during the day that they do not have time for their families, 19.0% strongly disagreed and 19% disagreed to this, 19% were neutral.

These findings are in agreement with Neal and Hammer (2002) who says that the incompatible of demand between career and family seem to create a personal pressure to the employees. More often than not,

conflict tends to create pressure to the employees as they try to balance the two roles that need to be performed simultaneously.

Table 4.2 Employee Assistance Programmes

	5	4	3	2	1
Health programs keeps me contributing at work	39.7%	33.3%	11.1%	12.7%	3.2%
Support in family situation increases my loyalty to the company	44.4	30.2%	11.1%	11.1%	3.2%
Availability of physical fitness programs has improved my performance at work	14.3%	52.4%	17.5%	15.9%	0%
Counseling enables me to carry out assignments with expected degree of independency and efficiency	15.9%	54.0%	9.5%	20.6%	0%
Health programs generally improves my attendance rate	27.0%	41.3%	11.1%	12.7%	7.9%
Presence of financial arrangements with financial institutions makes me to be more committed to my work	31.7%	42.9%	14.3%	6.3%	4.8%
Counseling services has enabled me to successfully manage life challenges	36.5%	27.0%	17.5%	12.7%	6.3%

Key: 5=strongly agree; 4=agree; 3=neutral; 2= disagree; 1= strongly disagree

Table 4.2 above shows that 39.7% of employees strongly agreed and 33.3% agreed that health programs helped them to contribute to their work, while 12.7% disagreed and 3.2% strongly disagreed to this issue. 11.1% of the employees were neutral. 44.4% of the employees strongly agreed and 30.2% agreed to the fact that support in family situation increases their loyalty to the company and 11.1% disagreed and 3.2% strongly disagreed to this fact, only 11.1% were neutral. 52.4% of the employees agreed that availability of physical fitness programs has improved their work performance at work, 14.3% strongly agreed, while 15.9% disagreed and 17.5% were neutral with this statement. 54.0% of the employees agreed and 15.9% strongly agreed that counseling enabled them to carry out their assignments with expected degree of independency and efficiency, 20.6% disagreed and 9.5% were neutral about this. On health programs improving attendance 41.3% agreed and 27% strongly agreed, 12.7% disagreed and 7.9% strongly disagreed to this, 11.1% of the employees were neutral. 42.9% and 31.7% of the employees agreed and strongly agreed respectively that presence of financial arrangement with financial institutions made them more committed to their work 6.3% disagreed and 4.8% strongly disagreed, 14.3% of the employees were neutral. 36.5% and 27% strongly agreed and agreed to the fact that counseling services has enable them to successfully manage life challenges while 12.7% disagreed and 6.3% strongly disagreed to this issue, 17.5% of the employees were neutral.

These findings are in agreement with Attridge (2005) who says vast majority of companies offer employee assistance programs that deliver a variety of health and productivity services to improve organizational performance, as well as assist individual employees and their dependents.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

Chi-square tests were conducted to determine the relationship between test and critical values. The chi-square test values obtained were compared with the critical value (the 0.05 level of significance). The null hypothesis was rejected if the test statistic was greater than the critical value.

Table 4.3 Work/family priorities conflict and employee performance

	Test value	df	Critical value

1.	Work-life /work-family conflict is an important source of stress and family conflict	54.8	4	9.49
2.	Work family conflict is linked to labour market decisions	59.2	3	7.81
3.	Work outcomes like labour dissatisfaction, high turnover intention, and low productivity and lack of commitment are related to misplaced work family priorities	34.9	3	7.81
4.	Balanced work family priorities lead to a motivated workforce and high employee morale	87.2	4	9.49
5.	Work life conflicts is a major source of stress to me	45.3	4	9.49
6.	Work life and wok family conflict impairs my overall well-being	19.1	4	9.49
7.	Work life a lot of my time during the day that I do not have enough time for my family	19.1	4	9.49

Chi-square tests were carried out on the research issues put forward which were all related to the employee performance and as can be seen from table 4.3 above at 0.05 significant level, issues raised on the work /family priorities conflict rejected the null hypothesis that work/family conflicts does not significantly affect the performance of employees at Kabarak University. These issues included: work-life /work-family conflict is an important source of stress and family conflict; work family conflict is linked to labour market decision; work outcomes like labour dissatisfaction, high turnover intention, and low productivity and lack of commitment are related to misplaced work family priorities; balanced work family priorities lead to a motivated workforce and high employee morale; work life conflicts is a major source of stress to me. Since the test statistic values were greater than the critical values the H_0 was rejected and therefore, the H_1 that work life/family priorities conflicts affect the performance of employees in Kabarak University was retained.

Table 4.4 Employee Assistance Programs and Employee Performance

		Test Value	df	Critical value
8.	Health programs keeps me contributing at my work	30.8	4	9.49
9.	Support in family situation increases my loyalty to the company	35.9	4	9.49
10.	Availability of physical fitness programs have improved my performance at work	25.3	3	7.81
11.	Counseling enables me to carry out assignments with expected degree of independence and efficiency	29.7	3	7.81
12.	Health programs generally improves my attendance rate	24.5	4	9.49
13.	Presence of financial arrangements with financial institutions makes me to be more committed to my work	32.8	4	9.49
14.	Counseling services has enabled me to successfully manage life challenges	35.0	4	9.49

Chi-square tests were carried out to test the H_0 hypothesis which stated that employee assistance programs have no significance influence on employees performance in Kabarak University. H_1 states that employee assistance programs have significant influence on employees performance. All the employee assistance programs issues raised i.e. health programs keeps me contributing at my work; support in

family situation increases my loyalty to the institution; availability of physical fitness programs have improved my work performance; counseling enables me to carry out assignments with expected degree of independence and efficiency; health programs generally improves my attendance rate; presence of financial arrangements with financial institutions makes me more committed to my work and counseling services has enabled me to successfully manage life challenges. At 0.05 significance level the test statistic value at 3 and 4 degrees of freedom was greater than critical value and thus the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the H_1 hypothesis that employee assistance programs had a significant influence on employees performance was retained.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the summary of findings; conclusion and recommendations of the information collected and thus give viable suggestions and recommendations to the problem or the research questions which drove this research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This section gives a summary of findings on the objectives of the study as obtained from the research findings and discussion.

5.2.1 Work Family Priorities Conflict

The employees of Kabarak University were faced with some challenges concerning their work and family priorities conflict. The following are summaries of responses on various issues: when asked whether work/family conflict was an important source of stress and family conflict 42.9% strongly agreed, 42.9% agreed, only 4.8% disagreed to this notion. On whether work family conflicts is linked to labour market decisions, 66.7% strongly agreed only 7% disagreed to this fact. When asked whether work outcomes like labour dissatisfaction, high turnover intention and low productivity and lack of commitment are related to misplaced work family priorities, 49.2% of the employees strongly agreed and 36.5% agreed. On whether balanced work – family priorities as leading to a motivated workforce and high employees morale, 62.9% strongly agreed and 30.2% agreed only 1.6% disagreed to this notion. Asked if work life conflict was major source of stress, 17.5 % strongly and 52.4 % agreed to this issue while 17% disagreed to this issue. There was equal responses among the employees on issues of work life/work family conflict impaired their overall well being and productivity and lack of commitment being related to misplaced work family priorities 40% agreed and 40% disagreed.

On the relationship work family priorities conflict a chi-square test was conducted at 0.05 significance. The test statistic value was greater than the critical value and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. It was therefore concluded that work life priorities conflict affected employees in Kabarak University.

5.2.2 Employee Assistance Programs

The following are summaries of responses on various issues regarding employee assistance programs put forward to the employees: Asked whether health programs helped them to contribute highly to their work 39.7% and 33.3% respectively of the employees strongly agreed and agreed to the issue 12.7% disagreed. Asked if support in family situations increased their loyalty to the company 44.4% of the employees strongly agreed and 30.2% agreed only 11.1% disagreed to this fact. On whether availability of physical fitness programs had improved their work performance 52.4% of the employees agreed while 15.9% disagreed. When asked if counseling enabled them to carry out their assignments with expected degree of independence and efficiency 54.0% of the employees agreed while 20.6% disagreed. Asked if health programs improved attendance rates of the employees 68.3% either agreed or strongly agreed while 12.7% disagreed. 74.6% of the employees felt that presence of financial arrangement with financial institutions makes them more committed to their work 6.3% disagreed to this notion. 63.5% strongly

agreed and agreed to the fact that counseling services had enable them to successfully manage life challenges while 12.7% disagreed to this issue.

On the relationship between employee assistance programs and employee performance chi-square tests were conducted at 0.05 significance level. The test statistic was greater than the critical value and thus the null hypothesis was rejected. The study therefore, concluded that that employee assistance programs influenced performance of employees in Kabarak University.

5.3 Conclusion

The study sought answers to the following hypothesis: Work-family priorities conflict does not significantly affect employee performance in Kabarak University; Employee assistance programs in Kabarak University does not significantly affect the performance of employees. The objectives of the study were met and relationship between the independent and dependent variables determined. The following are the conclusions of study per objective:

The employees of Kabarak University concurred that work and family priorities conflicted and this affected their performance. The employees generally felt work life/family conflict was an important source of stress and family conflict, work family conflicts is linked to labour market decisions, work outcomes like labour dissatisfaction, high turnover intention and low productivity and lack of commitment are related to misplaced work family priorities, balanced work – family priorities leads to a motivated workforce and high employees morale, work life conflict was major source of stress, work life/work family conflict impaired their overall well being and productivity and lack of commitment being related to misplaced work family priorities. Kabarak University has put in place some employee assistance programs which include the provision of health services, counseling services, financial assistance from financial institutions and physical fitness program. It was concluded that these employee assistance programs helped the employees to improve their performance and well being.

5.4 Recommendations

Kabarak University should endeavour to create a balance between work and family. It is recommended that it should adopt such measures as flexible working arrangements and also telecommuting where employees can work from home so that they can have time to cater for the family issues. Kabarak University should also come up with a policy of other paid leave arrangements apart from annual leave so that employees with urgent family needs can benefit from the leave. Other Institutions of Higher learning is Kenya should also consider to put these measures into place. Kabarak University should continue with the employee assistance programs such as counseling services, health services, physical fitness facilities and financial assistance services from financial institutions. The University should also consider other programs such as, Day care for employee's young children, facilities for old parents care, workable employee welfare to support employees in times of need. Institutions both private and public should put a policy in place employee assistance programs to ensure that their employees continue being productive.

5.5 Areas for Further Study

The study recommends that the following follow-up researches be done:

A study to determine how employee welfare programs can enhance organizational productivity. A study to determine the influence of flexible working options on employee performance in Institutions of Higher Learning in Nakuru County. A Case Study of Kabarak University.

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