

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE ON WOMEN ACADEMIC CAREER GROWTH IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

In the past, women were confined to their husband's home taking care of household responsibilities but with the advent of industrialization, women role has drastically increased. This new roles creates an imbalance in one domain. The study investigated work life balance among female academicians in selected universities in Kwara state. The populations of female lecturers were 204 out of which 135 sample size. A structured Questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection. The findings of this study discovered that 1) the relationship between management support and women career advancement is significant since alpha level of 0.05 is greater than the p-value of 0.000 2) the relationship between childcare and working mother's commitment is significant since alpha level of 0.05 is greater than the p-value of 0.000 3) the correlation co-efficient gives ($r=0.792$) meaning that there is a perfect positive relationship between flexible workings hours and job engagement of working mother. The special findings of the research are that majority of the female lecturers of selected universities in Kwara don't have career plans and career orientation. This study recommend the use of paternity leave by spouse immediately affect their wives gives birth to increase spouse support, increase managerial/organizational support in term of implementing work life balance policies, provision of childcare facilities at the work place would help working mothers put their mind at rest and improve their commitment, implementation of flexible working to increase their engagement and commitment to the organization.

Keywords: Work-life balance, women, academic career, duration of work, family size, paternity leave

Introduction

Issues connected to work life balance (WLB) is a topical issue for both workers and business organizations. A large chunk of WLB studies are greatly focus in Anglo or Western nations and become more intensified in 1960s when women entry into career job grown significantly (Naithani, 2010; Zheng, Molineux, Mirshekary & Scarparo, 2015). In particular, the phenomenal social change occasioned by industrial revolution has seen a huge switch of work and family setting. (Rapoport & Rapoport, cited in Ismail, & Chrystinne, 2018). The traditional role of women has generally been viewed to be predominantly domestic activities such as child upbringing, cooking, and

running errands among others. Due to this perspective, very few women had access to qualitative education currently, the viewpoint is dramatically changing and women are now actively engaging in career related job, propelling the need for work life balance among career women (Delina Raya, 2013; Arafatu & Khadiza, 2015).

The choice of working career has resulted into some sort of pressure and many working mothers are now struggling to balance their career as well as their responsibilities as a mother (Ahmand, 2008; Maiya & Bagali, 2014). Work life imbalance of women employee could lead to low productivity, negative effect on child caring, less satisfaction from job, health disorder or illness, conflict with family members, leaving the job, absenteeism, behaviour disorder etc (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Inadequate or unsatisfactory WLB has been extensively reinforced and has been recognized as one of the major issues that can prompt physical and psychological complications. Inter-role engagement often emanate when employee experience conflicting roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The major purpose of this study is to examine work life balance and career growth among female academicians in selected Universities within Kwara state.

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

A number of theories have been advanced by scholars to underpinned studies connected to WLB. Three of such studies: compensation theory, spill overs theory and work/family border theory underpinned this study. According to Lambert (1990), the compensation theory advocated that employees attempt to make up for the inadequacy of satisfaction in one context (job or home) by seeking more satisfaction in other related engagement (Lambert, 1990). According to this theory, employee may lessen participation in the displeasing context and raise association in a possibly sustaining area. The spillover theory contends that the most cherished assessment of association between job and family is connected to WLB. This theory suggested that workforces bring their emotions, job attitudes, abilities and behaviours that they launch at work into their family domain (Kelly & Voydanoff, 1985; Piotrkowski & Crits-Christoph, 1981) and vice-versa (Belsky, Perry-Jenkins, & Crouter, 1985; Crouter, 1984). According to Xu (2009), the resulting outcomes, spillover may be positive or negative. Positive spill over indicates some degree of satisfaction and accomplishment in one context while negative spill over may bring about complications and despair in one context may result into some of emotion. Clark (2000) promoted the work/family border theory. As advocated by this theory, each of worker's job roles takes place within a precise context of life, and these spheres are disconnected by limits that may be physical, time-based, or mental. Thus, the preciousness of the limits between employee's job and family will impact the degree of engagement between these contexts (Bellavia & Frone, 2005).

Work Life Balance: An Overview

The notion of WLB is a comprehensive and complicated and has been defined as a sociological research which instigates around 1950s. Caplow (1954) viewed WLB as work association with the resolve of individual respect in the context of allocation of social freedoms. Work-life balance as a concept has been explained by diverse scholars applying different dimensions. Work life balance originated from previous studies on women having numerous roles (Shobitha & Sudarsan, 2014). Work life balance is the degree to which a person is similarly involved in – and similarly fulfilled with – his or her job role and family role (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw 2003; Pillinger, 2001; Adeeba & Feza, 2015). Scholar like Guest, (2002) outlined three major issues that affect work life balance, the ones that focus on the progress at work which might be seen as triggering the challenges of work life imbalance, those relating to life outside job which can be seen as penalty of work life imbalance and the ones about individuals and personal existence.

Studies have been carried out work life balance and it consequences on personal and working capability of women. Lakshmi and Goliath (2012) conducted a study that examined the influence of WLB on women's performance and job attitude. The study reported that marital status, length of working period, job flexibility, family size, and level of child care involvement are the predominant issues that influence WLB of women employee. Prabha and Nirmala (2016) reported that most married women are working for their financial need and for their family support and most has been stated that they are missing to take care of their children personally. The research suggested that aggressive behaviour exhibited by married women employees can be avoided by conducting work life balance programs. Anju (2014) carried out a comparative study in India to investigate the impact of work life balance on working women. The study documented significant dissimilarity in workers perception concerning child care access, working schedule, and employee assistance program as a critical factors that are relevant to work life balance.

The general aim of such working time policies is to strike a balance between employment and domestics commitments that is equitable and beneficial to both employer and employee.

Work life balance refers to the struggle that many faculty members face, but female professors with family obligations are more likely to face a work-family conflict. Typically, the “life” part of work life balance refers to personal obligations (car maintenance or doctors' appointments), hobbies (stamp collecting or knitting) or other recreational activities (playing basketball or attending concerts), and non-work associations (family and friends) or social groups. (Rouda, 1995).

Greenhaus, Chen, & Powell (2009) identified three key aspect of work life balance namely, time balance, involvements balance, and satisfaction balance. Time balance refers to equal time being given to both work and family roles; Involvement balance refers to equal levels of psychological involvement in both work and family roles; Satisfaction balance refers to equal levels of satisfaction in both work and family roles. Therefore, in order to achieve a work-life balance these components should be considered. Guest, (2002) developed three broad sets of overlapping influences that affect work life balance, those concerned with the developments at work that might be seen as causing the problem of work life imbalance, those relating to life outside work that might be viewed as consequences of work life imbalance and those concerning individuals and their lives outside work that give rise to the need to address the challenges of work life balance.

Partner support, colleague support and job resources are positively associated with the work life balance where as unfair criticism at job is negatively associated with the work life balance. The variables partner support, childcare responsibilities, elder dependency and colleagues support have different effect when analysed by male and female employees (Noor, Shamim & Shahibzada, 2012). Women perceive gender role attitude and spill over between work and family roles as the most important factors affecting their career followed by other four factors namely:

- 1) Harmony in home and office.
- 2) Organizational support.
- 3) Family expectation.
- 4) Parenting effect and professional skills (Sandhu & Mehta, 2006).

Methods

This study is quantitative in nature using primary data gathered through a survey questionnaire. For the purpose of this research, descriptive survey design was adopted. Using descriptive design allows details and factual information to collected and analysed. This study focused on selected universities in Kwara State. The selected universities include University of Ilorin, Landmark University, kwara State University and Al-Hikmah University. The female lecturers of these universities in kwara state constituted the population of the study. These universities were chosen because it gives detailed analyses from federal, state and private institution. Using only a federal or state or private university will make the study narrow and conclusion made would not be general. Furthermore, the same location was chosen so that there would be decisive analyses and conclusion because using different location can affect the outcome of the research. The study population of this research study consists of female lecturers of University of Ilorin, Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State University and Landmark University with a total population of 204.

Table 1: Study Population

Institution	Population
University of Ilorin	80
Kwara State University	54
Landmark University	40
Al-Hikmah	30
TOTAL	204

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2018

The sample size is 135 using Taro Yemane. From the computation, 135 questionnaires were distributed to the participants using multistage sampling technique. The total of 135 was distributed among the Universities using proportionate stratified sample which is based on the proportion of their population, 54 questionnaires to University of Ilorin female lecturers, 35 questionnaires to kwara State University, 26 questionnaires to Landmark University, 20 questionnaires to Al-Hikmah University and this is based on simple random sampling.

Table 2: Sample Size Estimation

Institution	Sample Estimation	Allocated Questionnaires
University of Ilorin	$80/204 \times 135$	54
Kwara State University	$54/204 \times 135$	35
Landmark University	$40/204 \times 135$	26
Al-Hikmah University	$30/204 \times 135$	20
Total		135

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2018

The study adopted simple random sampling approach. It is the purest form of probability sampling. All member of the population has an equal chance of selection into the sample. Primary data was gathered using questionnaire as instrument of data collection. Hypotheses testing were done with simple linear regression and correlation. For question one, two and regression analysis was used while correlation was used to analyse research question three.

Test of Hypotheses and Results

Hypothesis One

There is no significant impact of management support on women career advancement.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.793 ^a	.628	.625	1.17896

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	293.720	1	293.720	211.316	.000 ^a
	Residual	173.745	125	1.390		
	Total	467.465	126			

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

Table 5: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.883	.364		-2.424	.017
	Management support	1.197	.082	.793	14.537	.000

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

The coefficients of independent variable indicated that management support (1.197) has a strong effect on women career advancement. From the results of hypothesis testing ($R = .793$, $r^2 = .628$, $F = 211.316$, $p < 0.01$). The result of hypotheses testing concerning the first hypothesis revealed R^2 value of 63%. This implies that 63% of women career advancement is affected by management support while the remaining 37% of the women career advancement may be affected and determined by other unexplained factors such as work life balance policies and work related seminars among others.

The coefficients of independent variable indicated that management support (1.197) has a strong effect on women career advancement. The Decision rule: therefore, is that the null hypothesis which stated that "there is no significant impact of management support on women career advancement" is rejected.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant influence of childcare support service on mother's commitment

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.895 ^a	.800	.799	.88054

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

Table 7: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	388.688	1	388.688	501.311	.000 ^a
	Residual	96.918	125	.775		
	Total	485.606	126			

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

Table 8: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.136	.215		.633	.528
	Childcare support service	1.123	.050	.895	22.390	.000

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

From the results of hypothesis testing ($R = .895$, $r^2 = .800$, $F = 501.311$, $p < 0.01$). The result shows the R^2 which is the coefficient of determination which is 80%. The results from hypothesis two indicated that the value of R^2 is 80%. This implies that 80% of mother's commitment (dependent variable) is affected by childcare (independent variable) while the remaining 20% of the mother's commitment may be affected and determined by other unexplained factors. The coefficients of independent variable indicated that childcare support service (1.123) has a strong effect on mother's commitment. The Decision rule: therefore, is that the null hypothesis which stated that "there is no significant influence of childcare on mother's commitment" is rejected.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between flexible working hours and job engagement of working mothers

Table 9: Correlations

		Flexible working hours	Job engagement of working mother
Flexible working hours	Pearson Correlation	1	.792**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	127	127
Job engage of working mother	Pearson Correlation	.792**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	127	127

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2018

Findings from testing of hypothesis three depicts strong positive association between flexible working hours and job engagement of working mothers. The correlation is significance at .000 is less than the alpha level of .01, Decision rule: the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant relationship between flexible working hours and job engagement of working mothers is REJECTED and the alternate hypothesis is therefore accepted. Job engagement will invariable lead to employee growth on the job. This signifies that there is a relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficient gives ($r=0.792$) meaning that there is a perfect positive relationship between flexible working hours and job engagement of working mothers. This implies that the rate of job engagement of working mothers will increase by approximately 79% with increase in flexible working hours.

Discussion

This study examined WLB on women academic career growth in selected universities in Kwara state, Nigeria. For hypothesis one the null hypothesis which states “There is no significant impact of managerial support on women work life balance” is rejected. There is a significant impact of managerial support on women work life balance. The respondent agreed that they receive managerial support from their supervisors and colleagues at work. Having supportive supervisors and co-worker has proved to be an essential ingredient for a successful work life balance. For hypothesis two the null hypothesis which states “There is no significant influence of childcare on working mother's commitment” is rejected. There is a significant influence of childcare on working mother's commitment, child care after the commitment of working mothers especially when the kids are still young and growing up. Childcare facilities can solve the challenges they face in terms of improving their commitment when they know that their kids are not far away. For hypothesis three the null hypothesis which states “There is no significant relationship between flexible working hours and job engagement of working

mother's" is rejected. Hence, this implies that there is a significant relationship between flexible working hours and job engagement. The perfect positive relationship between flexible working and job engagement shows that women will like to have control over their time. Having control over their time gives them a sense of involvement and fulfilment which enables them to concentrate on the job. Flexible working can serve as a motivational tool to encourage women to move the academic cadre.

Conclusion

The objective of the study was to find out the impact of work life balance on women academic career growth in selected universities in Kwara state. This study revealed that work life balance is essential for women academic career advancement as stated in hypothesis one and for this reason a great concern should be given to work life balance policies in the institutions. Work life balance policies can serve as a motivational tool to increase the commitment of women in academics. Female lectures of the institutions have work life as a result of the managerial support but not from their institutions in terms of policies.

Female lecturers of the selected universities in Kwara state have made allowances for family and childcare in planning their career goals and objectives. Their cultural belief that women should be reserved compared to men in working sector is a major setback in their career orientation. Majority of the respondent believed that flexible working will improve engagement in their jobs. Flexible working involves employee have control over their and choosing a suitable time to work. As most respondent believed that the welfare of their kids is affecting their commitment flexible working can close the gap by improving their engagement on the job. Choosing their time will give them a feel of participation/ involvement which enables them to commit to the job. This study has established within the limits of available data, that work life balance has a direct relationship women academic career growth.

The study has therefore proffered the following recommendations for better performance.

1. Managerial support in terms of awareness programs, making work life balance policies available, periodic seminars and conferences for women work life available to women working in their organisation will lead to women career advancement. Career counselling and mentorship should be implemented towards career development has this will enhance women career growth.
2. Organisation should establishing day care and nurseries homes within the work environment will help put their mind at rest while working. When mothers know that their children are not far from them they work more.

Working more improve their engagement and commitment to the organisation.

3. Work life balance is built around flexibility, that is making adjustment when necessary between the two domains work and life. There are many policies for flexible working which includes periodic working from home, part time working etc. Implementing flexible working will not only benefit the women but the organisation in terms of commitment, improved productivity, job engagement etc.

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