Dual-Career Couples: Implications for Work-Life Balance and Human Resources Management

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Abstract
The phenomenon where husbands and wives are engaged in secular work (dual-career couples) appears to be very common now in Nigeria. This study examined the work-life balance (WLB) of dual-career couples (DCCs) across selected government organisations in Edo State, Nigeria.
The survey method was used in the study and consequently two hundred and twenty-two (222) respondents who have spouses that also work, either in the same or in different organisations, were sampled using Taro Yamani sampling technique from a population of 500 couples build up using Snowball method. Four administrators in the focused organisations were also included as participants. The questionnaire for measuring WLB developed by Robinson was adopted, adapted and used to collect quantitative data from the respondents. This was supported by one-on-one in-depth interview. The data collected were analyzed using frequency tables, percentage, mean scores, mean scores ranking, correlation and relative importance index.
Among other things, study findings showed that women are not only highly educated now but they also occupy senior positions in the workplace and this has given rise to presence of large numbers of DCCs. DCCs experience work-life balance problems but this is more acute for the DCCs who work in different organisations. Other findings are: while majority of DCCs who work in the same organisations live in the same households the reverse is the case for DCCs who work in different organisations. The organisations are yet to imbibe the philosophy or work-life balance.

Keywords: Work, life, Work-life balance, Dual career couple, Human resource management

INTRODUCTION
1.1   Background to the Study. The practice where husbands and wives now do secular jobs is known as dual-career couples (DCCs), two income families, interlocking career, linked lives (Abele and Volmer, 2013 and Anwar, Hasnu and Janjua, 2013). In the last two decades in Nigeria, it is no longer uncommon to find couples working for employers, sometimes in the same organisations. We now have couples who are bankers, lecturers, medical doctors, and pastors, etc.

While the practice has some advantages to the couples and society in general, researches have shown that it has impacted the family structure and workings negatively (Raporport and Rapoport, 1969 and Anwar, Hasnu, and Janjua, 2013). One of the areas that the impact has been very pronounced is in the aspects of work-life.

Balancing work and family responsibilities has become very difficult for workers these days particularly for DCCs who have three careers to manage; one at home and two at work (Anwar, Hasnu and Janjua, 2013). Consequently, organisations, through their human resources managers, have started integrating the issues of WLB balances into their human resource management processes. As a result, some organisations now have WLB programmes.

1.2   Statement of the Problem.   The negative impact of DCCs on families and society are very many. For example, husbands and wives now leave home for work very early in the morning and come back late because of the long hour culture in Nigeria and bad roads which lead to traffic grid-lock for hours, particularly in some big cities in Nigeria.

Kwakpovwe (2015) captured the problem this way when he asserted that husbands and wives now leave home to work very early in the morning and come back late at night. as a result, the responsibilities of running the family have been bequeathed to house-helps, extended families, relations etc, According to Kwakpovwe (2015), this has not only made our children lose the parental bounds that ought to exist between children and parents but has also *turned our children to intellectual criminals.*

Furthermore, it can also be observed that most working class couples do not live in the same household these days. Either one of the spouses work and live in Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt or other major cities, the other is doing so in another city or state. Consequently, the absentee-partner (Guest, 2002) is always taking permission from work and always travelling to see the family.

Lastly, it does appear also that organisations in Nigeria are yet to buy into the concepts and philosophy of WLB and hence they do not appear to have work options and policies that aids WLB. Rather, they practice it on ad hoc basses. This research was therefore conceived to, amongst other things, study the impact of DCCs on WLB and possible implications for human resources management.

1.4 Research Questions.
The following research questions guided the study:
1) What is the proportion of DCCs couples to the staff strength of the case study organisations?
2) How many of these career couples live in the same households?
3) Do these working class couples experience work-life balance problems?
4) Does this working arrangement influence the choice of the numbers of children in dual-career homes?
5) Do the focused organisations have work-life balance programmes?

1.5   Objective of the Study.
The broad aim of this study amongst other things was to evaluate the WLB of our respondents who have partners that also work and provide answers to the research questions above using selected couples who work in some organisations in Edo State, South-South Nigeria as case study.

1.6   Significant of the Study.
This study will be significant to the individual, organisations, the academia and society at large. For individuals, couples who are already in dual-career homes and those

who intend to pursue professional careers and family simultaneously will be aware of the managerial issues surrounding DCCs.

For organisations, it will be significant for human resources managers because managing workforce in organisations require a constant balancing between meeting the strategic needs of the organisations and the aspirations of people in the workplace (Rao, 2007). Furthermore, organisations are becoming more aware of workers living in dual-career constellations and the necessity to support them in their professional and personal lives (Schiebinger, Henderson, & Gilmartin, S. K. 2008). Equally, how employees feel about their work-life-balance is a critical factor in performance, engagement and retention; employees with good work-life-balance work 21 per cent harder (Robinson, 2000).

At the academic level, the study will be significant because advances in work and career research have shifted emphasis from the analyses of the career path of individual to the interlocking career paths of working couples that have three careers to manage - one at home and two at work (Moen and Sweet, 2002, Moen & Han, 2001 and Anwar, *et al*, 2013). Many disciplines such as business, psychology, sociology, economics, accounting, gerontology, nursing, social works, law and human resource management have examined the issues of WLB and DCCs in developed countries (Torrington, Hall & Taylor, 2008).

1.7   Operational Definition of Terms.   The following terms were used in the study as follows:

i)   **Work** is the occupation for which the participants in this study are engaged in and are paid for. Exerting oneself by doing mental or physical work for a purpose or out   of necessity (earning wages for survival among others); proceeding towards a goal or along a path or through an activity with the aim of earning a pay for sustenance (Anwar, *et al*, 2013).

ii)   **Life** as used in this study indicates the non-work roles carried out by our respondents and this covers all activities directed towards satisfying personal or family interests. It also covers any unpaid activities or commitments that do not attract any monetary compensation such as social works, membership of tribal or landlords' associations, religious position in the church, volunteerism, etc.

iii)   **Dual-career Couples** are our respondents who work and who have spouses that work as well.

1.8   Limitation of the Study.

The first limitation of this study is the fact that it focused on two sectors (education and health) alone and within the same geographical location. Moreover, not all the DCCs in the sectors were reached because the focus organisations do not have record of DCCs in their organisations and the ones sampled may have been biased in their responses to questions in the questionnaire and interview.

LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1   Introduction: The review started with theoretical and conceptual frameworks that underpinned the study and concluded with some empirical review of the subject matter of interest.

2.2   Theoretical Frameworks: There are many theories of DCCs and WLB. However three of them that are relevant to the study are discussed below.

2.2.1 Economic Theory of the Family (e.g., Becker, 2001; Blossfeld & Drobnic, 2001) argued that partners in dual career homes bring together their individual resources with the aim of maximizing their joint economic utility. According to this view, households will maximize their shared resources when both partners engaged in and specialize in activities in which they are highly qualified (Bernadi, 1999). Furthermore, the theory posits that when both partners are highly educated the highest joint economic utility will be achieved when both partners work full-time in career oriented jobs.

The theory also holds that from the societal perspective it is wise to transform the money invested in both partners' education and training into full paid work. Choosing the dual-career part also increases flexibility in times of economic insecurity which can be regarded as highly adaptive strategy (Oppenheimer, 1997). That is, if one of the partners (temporarily) loses his/her job, there is still some family income to rely on.

2.2.2 Gender Equity Theory. Citing Meuser (2003); Boehnke (2009) and Abele (2009), Apostal and Helland (1993) opined that gender equity approaches argue that gender equality is highly valued (especially by women) in modern western societies and that in dual career homes, there is a good chance that the roles of men and women in such partnerships are characterized by gender equality.

2.2.3 The Scarcity Hypothesis by Sieber. According to Babatunde (2013), the empirical propositions of Sieber (1974) centered on the fact that antecedents surrounding the availability of time, resources, energy within each role are finite and limited to meet the increasing high insatiable demands of DCCs.

Other theories are Inter-role conflict theory (Greenhause & Beutell, 1985), integration theory (Clark, 2000), spillover theory (Rothbard & Dumass, 2006), segmentation theory (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000), etc.

2.3 Conceptual Frameworks. The two key words in the study are dual-career couples and work-life balance. These are conceptualized below.

2.3.1 Dual-Career Couples (DCCs). The phenomenon were husbands and wives engaged in regular and full time employment is known as DCCs, two-income families, linked couples, inter-locking career couples, etc (Kanter, 1977; Lockwood, 2003 and Anwar et al, 2012). According to Abele and Volmer (2013), the term DCCs is relatively new partnership where both partners in the same household are highly educated, work full time in a demanding job with high upward career orientation and family concerns to address. These authors further noted that whereas the phenomenon of DCCs has been observed for a long time, the advantages and challenges it posed for couples themselves and society at large has made the concept to become contemporary issue of discuss. For Boehnke (2007), DCCs are husbands and wives who are highly educated with or without children, who work in a challenging job; live together in the same household for at least five years.

Furthermore, Rapoport and Rapoport (1969) who were couples themselves and the first to research the phenomenon defined it as families where both partners pursue professional jobs and also have their family aspirations to fulfill. In this study, we used the term to refer to our respondents who have spouses that also work either in the same organisations with them or in different organisations.

2.3.2 Work-life Balance. The term *work-life balance* (WLB) is a construct used to describe the ability of employees or workers to maintain a balance as much as possible between personal life and professional duties. According Duxbury and Higgins (2001), WLB preaches that work duties should not interfere seriously with personal or family responsibilities. Work duty according to them, mean the occupation or activities for which a person is engaged in or exerting oneself by doing mental or physical work for the purpose of earning money to solve personal problems.

The *Businessdictionary.com* described WLB as when the amount of time an employee spend doing his/her job compared with the amount of time he/she spent with the family, leisure, social or religious lives are equal to some extent. For Igbinomwahia, Iyayi and Iyayi (2012), WLB is all about finding the right balance between one's work and one's life responsibilities and about feeling comfortable with both work and non-work commitments. WLB is concerned with managing the time and energy workers spent at work and at home (Ojo, Falola & Mordi, 2012). Furthermore, Torrington, et al (2008) noted that the practice of WLB is a balancing act which is difficult to achieve and it is achieved when an individual rights to fulfilled life *inside a*nd *outside* paid employment are accepted and respected by employers as norm to the mutual benefits of the individual, organisations and society at large.

2.4 Work-life Balance Programme. As recognition of the need for employees to balance work roles and life responsibilities as much as possible, organisations have responded with various work options or schedule that employees can select from in order to juggle their personal and professional lives with little conflicts. Work-life balance programmes are those institutional and procedural arrangements as well as formal and informal practices that makes it easier for employees to manage the often conflicting world of work and non-work life (Terrington *et al,* 2008).
Some work options that are available in some organisations are working part-time, term-time working, unpaid leave, flexi-time, job share, sabbaticals, compressed week, self-rosting, working from home, annual hour, shift swapping, job share, informal flexibility (Torrington *et al,* 2008).

2.5 Empirical Review. According to Abele and Volmer (2013), Rapoport and Rapoport (1969), who were couples themselves were the first to observed and study the phenomenon of DCCs. They interviewed 16 working class families to investigate whether these couples experience specific challenges and dilemmas from their life styles as well as how they cope with them. Rapoport and Raporport found five forms of dilemmas which are: (1) overload dilemmas. (2) Normative dilemma, (3) personal dilemma, (4) dilemma of identity, and (5) social network and role cycling dilemma.

According to Rapoport and Rapoport, overload dilemma refers to the issue that working couples have less time and fewer resources for housework and other responsibilities. Normative dilemma arose from discrepancies between personal and social norms. Working mothers were particularly confronted with the social norm expecting mothers to stay at home and take care of their children. Identity dilemma concerned the switch between different role requirements. For example, women reported that they would switch roles by showing aggressive behaviours when necessary at work and caring behaviours when required at home.

Social network dilemmas were also reported. Time constraints kept DCCs from frequent interactions with relatives and friends. Moreover, friendships with couples with different role arrangements become difficult because they triggered the normative dilemma. Furthermore, participant reported choosing friendship very carefully and with couples who shared their values and life styles (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969).

Based on the pioneer study of Rapoport and Rapoport, later researches focused on DCCs' work-to-family and family-to-work challenges and crossovers (Almeida, Wethington & Kessier, 1989; Bronet, Dew & Parkinson, 1990). Some of the later studies are discussed below:

Citing America Labour Force Statistics (2010), Abele and Volmer (2009) showed that about (5-10)% of female employees leave their jobs for family or personal reasons while Home and Grifet (1995) indicated that 33% of women quit their jobs' to devote more time to their families. Also, Women have been noted to miss many good job opportunities because of family concerns (Anwar et al, 2013).

In the area of working and well-being, it has been established that combining work duties and family responsibilities generally facilitates the wellbeing of men but women who work full-time experience less anxiety and depression and better physical health than full-time housewives. This is because their husbands are more involved with caring for their children (Barnett & Rivers, 1996; Repetti, Mathews & Waldron, 1989; and Wethington & Kessier, 1989). Work for DCCs also serves as buffer for the stresses in the home, as they have a network of social relations and opportunities for meaningful engagement and success that are not available to those who are not employed (Barnett & Hyde, 2001).

The impact of DCCs on the traditional division of labour at home where men are seen as the sole bread winners and women as housekeepers has also been studied too. Moen and Yu (2000) and Clarkberg and Moen (2001) noted that with the rising number of women in the workforce, men's hour on the job and women's hours at home continue to perpetuate a neo-traditional division of labour for most. However, Milkie, Sayer, and Robinson (2000) study showed that women today perform less housework than previous generations, and men perform more household chores than their predecessors - all because women are in employment.

Prioritizing careers: Whose career takes priority in homes where both couples work? Deutch and Saxon (1998) study appear to answer this question when they assert that despite the fact that most adult women now work for pay, traditional gender role schemas still hold sway when DCCs are forced to make a choice between career of the husband and career of the wife. They found that the husband's career is more often given priority over the wife's. It was also established that men are more likely than women to relocate the family for their jobs and relocation often comes at a cost to the wife who is at risk of being unemployed following such a move (LeClere & McLaughlin, 1997 and Bielby & Bielby, 1992).

RESEARCH DESIGN
3.1   Research Design:
The survey method was used in the study and consequently, 222 staff of the selected organisations who have working spouses were sampled using Taro Yamani (1961) sampling technique cited in Saunder, Lewis and Thornhill (2009) from a population of 500 couples build up using *Snowball* method. Four administrators in the focused organisations were also included as participants.

The *statement* for measuring work-life balance of employees developed by Robinson (2000) was adopted for the study. The statements are, because of work: family is missing out long hours of my time, relationship with partners is suffering, I take work home most weekends, am concern that my personal and home responsibilities are suffering, I feel work is taking too much of my time, I some time feel too tired after work for family issues, finding time for hobby/leisure/friend is difficult., forgetting about work is not easy, no time to exercise and care for work for health, I feel I have good work-life balance, am not able to get most work done each day, and I feel I have control over how and when to work. Each of this

statement is provided with responses that are weighted as weighted as follows: Not true at all (1), rarely true (2), sometime true (3), occasionally true (4), true (5), often true (6), strongly true (7).

Furthermore, the questionnaire was served on some of the respondents and Cronbach's Alpha correlation method was used to test the reliability. It was found to be reliable at 0.6175. The questionnaire was also supported with an in-depth one-on-one interview with some of the dual-career couples and the administrators.

3.2   Method of Data Collection

We personally distributed some of the questionnaire in one of the selected organisations while research assistants did so in other participating organisations. For the interviews, we arranged and conducted it. The first categories of respondents interviewed were the administrators. Thereafter, DCCs - five each in two of the selected organisations - were interviewed to share with us their experiences as workers who have spouses that also work. With the permission of all the interviewees, the interviews were recorded with one of the researchers' *Infinix Note 2* Android phone.

4.0   DATA ANALYSES AND PRESENTATION

4.1   Analyses and Results. The analyses started with the educational background of the respondents and the positions they occupy in the workplace. This was followed by the research questions.

4.2   Educational Qualifications. The educational profiles of the respondents are shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Educational Qualifications of Respondents

Dual-Career Couples	Qualification						Total
	Ph.D.	**Master/ MBBS**	**B.Sc./ HND**	**ND**	**O'Level**	**Pry 6**	
Male	-	15	14	46	20	7	101
Female	7	11	19	47	30	6	121
Total	**7**	**26**	**33**	**93**	**50**	**13**	**222**

As shown in the table, seven females have Ph.Ds while the males have none; but while 15 males have master's degrees; this was 11 for females. As for first degrees and Higher National Diplomas (B.Sc/HND), females (19), males (14). Furthermore, almost equal numbers of males (46) and females (47) have National Diplomas (NDs). As for ordinary level, 20 males have it while this is 30 for females. Lastly, seven males and six females have primary six certificates respectively.

From the analyses, females are now competing with men in terms of education. For example, seven females in the study hold PhD degrees while the men have none. Also, though men with master's degree are more, the females with first degrees are more in number when compared with men that have first degrees. This statistics may not be unconnected with the present situations where more females than ever before are pursuing higher education in tertiary institutions (Obasi, 2007).

4.3   Occupation of Senior Positions in the Workplace. Table 4.2 show respondents (male and female) who occupy senior positions in the workplace.

Table 4.2 Occupation of Senior Positions

DCCs with spouse	Category		Total
	Senior Position	Junior Position	
Male	80	30	110
Female	79	33	112
Total	**159**	**63**	**222**

As revealed in the Table, 80 males and 79 females occupy senior positions in their workplaces. As for junior positions, these were 30 for males and 33 females respectively. From the analyses, just like males, females occupy both senior and junior positions in the workplace which appears to correlate with the findings in respondents' educational backgrounds that showed females are catching up with men (if not more) in terms of educational qualifications. This statistics is likely to be on the upward trend as more and more females graduate from tertiary institutions and join the labour force.

4.4. Proportion of DCCs in Relation to Staff Strength: As shown in Table 4.3, the interview with the administrators revealed that all the administrators were able to state the

Table 4.3. Composition of Staff in Terms of Males, Females and DCCs in the Focused Organisations

Organisation	Total number of staff	Male	Female	DCCs
Polygate	587	-	-	?
Asobrick	2,067	989	1,078	?
Maingate	3,583	2,112	1,471	?
Bridgehead	2,147	1,401	746	152

Note: Organisations' names are pseudonyms total number of staff in their organisations. Equally, for the exception of one organization, they also know the compositions of their staff in terms of males and females. However, it is only one of the organisations (Bridgehead) that know the number of couples working for her. It has 152 couples, which is about seven per cent out of total staff of 2,147.

This indicates that these organisations are yet to compile the number of DCCs in their establishment as in advanced economies where researches on DCCs have been carried out (see Rapoport and Rapoport, 1969 and Anwar, *et al,* 2013).

4.5 Number of DCCs that Live in the Same Households. Table 4.4 showed the number of DCCs that Live in the same and in different households.

Table 4.4: Number of DCCs that Live in the Same and in Different Households

Item	Number that Live in the same household	Percentage	Number that Live in Different households	Percentage	Total
DCCs with Spouse in the Organisation	**80**	**71**	**32**	**29**	**112**
DCCs with spouse in different Organisations	26	24	84	76	110
Total	**106**	**100**	**116**	**100**	**222**

From the table, 80 or 71% of DCCs who work in the same organisations live in the same households. The remaining 32 or 29% stay apart on account of work. But for DCCs working in different organisations, it is only 26 or 24% of them live in the same households while 84 or 76% percent do not lived in the same households.

4.6   Analyses of Answers to Questionnaire Items by DCCs in the Same Organisations:
Table 4.5a and 4.5b analysed the responses of DCCs working in the same organisations.

Table 4.5a   Analyses of Responses to Questionnaire items by DCCs in Same Organisations

Variables	Not True at all (1)	Rarely true (2)	Sometimes true (3)	Occasionally true (4)	True (5)	Often true (6)	Strongly true (7)	N	Total	Mean	RI.I
1. Family is missing out long hours of my time	4	3	3	6	49	17	28	110	586	5.33	0.76
2. Usually work long hours	16	4	6	12	24	13	35	110	533	4.85	0.69
3. Relation with partner is suffering	6	2	3	10	49	9	31	110	575	5.23	0.75
4. Finding time for hobby/ friends, leisure is	16	2	6	20	28	11	27	110	513	4.66	0.67
5. Work is taking too much of my time	13	5	4	7	34	19	28	110	543	4.94	0.71
6. Concerns that my personal and home responsibilities are suffering	11	2	2	8	39	23	25	110	561	5.10	0.73
7. Able to get most work done	37	4	22	6	14	17	10	110	377	3.43	0.49

each day

8.No time to exercise and care for health	25	7	12	10	13	19	24	110	462	4.20	0.60
9. I have good work life balance	24	8	16	6	13	22	21	110	456	4.15	0.59
10. Control over and when to work	29	12	12	8	13	16	20	110	422	3.84	0.55
11. Sometimes feel too tired for family issues	14	3	12	12	18	24	27	110	527	4.79	0.68
12. Taking work home most weekends	3	8	5	12	36	20	26	110	564	5.13	0.73
13. Forgetting about work is difficult	16	5	12	5	25	28	19	110	508	4.62	0.66

Table 4.5a shows the responses of DCCs in the same organisations to each of the questionnaire items. For instance, the responses to the first statement: *family is missing out long hours of my time* shows that 4 respondents ticked, *Not true at all;* 3 ticked, *Rarely true;* 3 says *Sometime true;* 6 responded, *Occasionally true.* Furthermore, 49 said *true;* 17 ticked *often true* and 28 said, *strongly true.* When the weight assigned to each of the responses were used to multiply the frequencies and summed up, the total was 586 with a mean of 5.33 which also ranked number one. The relative importance index (RI.I) of this statement is 0.76. These operations were carried out on all the other statements as shown above.

Furthermore, for better understanding, the number of respondents (N), the weighted totals for each of the statement in the questionnaire, their mean scores (Mean) and relative importance index (RI.I) were expunged and presented in table 4.5b after ranking.

Table 4.5b: Mean Scores, Mean Score Ranking and RI.I

Variables	N	Total	Mean	Mean Response Ranking	RI.I
Family is missing out long hours	110	586	5.33	1	0.76
Relation with partner is suffering	110	575	5.23	2	0.75
Taking work home most weekends	110	564	5.13	3	0.75
Concerns that my personal and home responsibilities are suffering	110	561	5.10	4	0.73
Work is taking too much of my time	110	543	4.94	5	0.71
Usually work long hours	110	533	4.85	6	0.69
Sometime feel too tired for family issues	110	527	4.79	7	0.68
Finding time for hobby/leisure friend is Difficult	110	513	4.66	8	0.67
Forgetting about work is difficult	110	456	4.62	9	0.66
No time to exercise and care health	110	462	4.20	10	0.60
I have good work-life balance	110	456	4.15	11	0.59
Control over and when to work	110	422	3.84	12	0.55
Not able to get most work done each day	110	377	3.43	13	0.49

From the Table 4.5b, the mean responses to all the statement as well as their relative importance index were ranked. For example, the statement, *family is missing out long hours of my time* ranked first; *relation with partner is suffering* ranked second; *taking work home to do most weekend* ranked third … and *able to get work done each day* ranked last, thirteenth.

4.7: Analyses of Answers to Questionnaire Items by DCCs in Different Organisations.

Table 4.6a and 4.6b analysed the responses of respondents with partners in different organisations.

Table 4.6a   Analyses of Responses to Questionnaire items by DCCs in Different Organisations

Variables	Not True at all (1)	Rarely true (2)	Sometimes true (3)	Occasionally true (4)	True (5)	Often true (6)	Strongly true (7)	N	Total	Mean	RI.I
1. Family is missing out long hours of my time	4	3	6	8	32	18	41	112	615	5.49	0.78
2. Usually work long hours	17	7	6	14	39	12	17	112	491	4.38	0.63
3.Relation with partner is suffering	7	4	3	7	32	10	49	112	615	5.49	0.78
4.Finding time for hobby/friends, leisure	10	3	5	19	36	12	27	112	548	4.89	0.70
5.Work is taking too much of my time	12	3	6	8	36	18	29	112	559	4.99	0.71
6.Concerns that my personal and home responsibilities are suffering	9	3	2	7	29	21	41	112	607	5.42	0.77
7. Able to get most work done each day	30	6	18	9	15	21	13	112	424	3.79	0.54
8.Take time to exercise and care for health	28	7	9	10	22	21	15	112	450	4.20	0.57
9. I have good work life balance	23	5	15	7	27	23	12	112	463	413	0.59
10. Control over and when to work	30	11	11	8	23	16	13	112	419	3.74	0.53
11. Sometimes feel too tired for family issues	12	4	13	19	27	20	17	112	509	4.54	0.65
12. Taking work home most weekends	4	5	6	17	27	17	36	112	589	5.26	0.75
13. Forgetting about work is difficult	18	5	15	6	21	19	28	112	512	4.57	0.65

The N, Total, Mean, Mean response ranking and RI.I are again extracted from Table 4.6a to form Table 4.6b.

Table 4.6b: Mean Scores, Mean Scores Ranking and RI.I

Variables STOP	N	Total	Mean	Mean Response Ranking	RI.I
Family is missing out long hours	112	615	5.49	1	0.78
Relation with partner is suffering	112	615	5.49	1	0.78
Concerns that my personal and home responsibilities are suffering	112	607	5.42	2	0.77
Taking work home most week end	112	589	5.26	3	0.75
Work is taking too much of my time	112	559	4.99	4	0.71
Finding time for hobby/leisure friend is Difficult	112	548	4.89	5	0.70
Forgetting about work is difficult	112	512	4.57	6	0.65
Sometime feel too tired for family issues	112	509	4.54	6	0.65
Usually work long hours	112	491	4.38	8	0.63
I have good work-life balance	112	463	4.13	9	0.59
No time to exercise and care Health	112	450	4.02	10	0.57
Not able to get most work done each day	112	424	3.57	11	0.54
Control over and when to work	112	419	3.74	12	0.53

For the responses of DCCs who have spouses that work in different organisations, Table 4.6a showed the computation of their responses to each of the *statement.* Again, the N, Total, Mean and relative importance index of these responses were expunged and presented in Table 4.6b after ranking them.

It is interesting to note that: *family is missing out long hour of my time* and *relationship with partner is suffering ranked first* simultaneously with mean score of 5.49 and RI.I of .0.78

Furthermore, when we calculated and compared the mean of the mean responses of both categories of respondents, the **mean of the mean scores** responses of DCCs in the same organizations were 4.7 while that of DCCs in different organisations was 4.6. the difference was .0.1 (ie, 4.7 – 4.6). This to us in this research, the difference of 0.1 is not statistically significant therefore there is no significant difference between the work-life balance challenges of DCCs in the same organisations and the one that work in different organisations.

4.7   Interview outcomes

From the interview we conducted with some of the DCCs, we deduced that couples who work for one employer enjoy significant measure of WLB than their counterparts who work for different employers. For example, DCCs who work for one employer reported that they drive together to and back from work most of the time; they said they are cautious of their behaviors in the workplace because they know their *spouses work around here*; they plan together financially because they know each other's salary and receive pay at the same time. Furthermore, they live in the same households and communicate a lot because they have much to talk about and when their spouses are discussing about work, they know what

he/she is talking about. Their circle of friends appears to be the same too. The only flip side is that they do encounter financial difficulties in time when salaries are delayed or not paid at all. One of them said they *pretend a lot at work* because sometimes they act as though all is well at home whereas there is serious quarrel at home.

However, our interactions with some of the DCCs who work in different organisations showed like the hard data, that most of them apart making them to run two homes with grave financial implications. Furthermore, because they live apart, extra-marital activity was reported. It also makes one of the spouses to always *travel to see the family.* It was also deduced that the responsibilities of taking care of the home is always on the shoulders of one spouse for DCCs who work for different employers. It is striking to note that all the female respondents whose husbands do not live with them in the same households groaned the absence of the emotional and psychological support of their husband particularly the companionship and protection given by a male spouse.

4.8 Organisations' Awareness about WLB. The research was also aimed at finding out the level of awareness and practice of WLB by leaders in the organizations studied. To do this, we asked the four Heads of Personnel Units (who we assumed to be organizational leaders) to tell us what they know about WLB. One of them had to say about work-life balance,

Is a motivational concept in personnel management. It has to do with providing facilities and equipping the workplace for the working comfort of employees as an addition or alternative to monetary reward.

When asked *how does his organization practice WLB?* This leader has this to say: *The institution has been doing its best to ensure that employees' work environment is conducive and comfortable.* When we probed further by asking, *Is that the only way?* He added: *The institution has a practice of promptly responding to requests or complaints from staff on WLB issues. For instance, when staff complains of lack of instructional material and facilities in the workplace, they are promptly provided by management.*

When we compared these responses to the operational definition of WLB in this research, they appear to fall short of the concept and idea of WLB. Also, his explanation on how it is practice does not also capture the practice of WLB.

In addition, two of the leaders responded that their organisations have nursery/primary and secondary schools to cater for the educational needs of their staff's children and wards. However, ironically they did not appear to know that such facilities are to enable staff experience work life balance! This school in our view was more of revenue generation venture than for staff welfare.

4.9 Discussion of Findings
Some of the important findings are discussed below:

From the background analyses, women are only at par with men in terms of educational qualifications but also they occupy senior positions like their male counterparts unlike in the past when the work arena was dominated by men.

This trend is likely to continue because at the moment there appear to be more females in tertiary institution in Nigeria. For example, Obasi (2007) has noted that there are over 400,000 female students across universities in Nigeria. According to him, females are more in these universities.

Secondly, the research showed there are large numbers of dual-career couples in the organisations studied because we were able to use the *snowball* method to identified 498 staff who have spouses that also work. While some of them have their spouses working with them in focused organisations, others have their spouses working in other establishments. The

phenomenon of dual-career couples in the country is likely increase in the near future given that highly educated women almost always live with partners who are educated as they are and who always work full-timer (Abele & Volmer, 2013).

Analytically, while majority (71%) of couples who work in the same organisations live in the same households, 84% of couples who work in different organisations live apart. If working class couples who stay together share households' responsibilities as evidenced by (Moen and Yu, 2000 and Clarkberg and Moen, 2001) studies, this finding therefore suggests that the responsibilities of taking care of the home fall on the shoulders of one of the spouses who work for different employers because most of them do not live in the same households.

Like in other countries dual-career couples are facing work-life balance challenges. As revealed in Tables 4.5 (a and b) and 5.6 (a and b), dual-career couples in the case study organisations are struggling with work-life balance difficulties but it appears to be more acute for the dual-career couples in different organisations. Furthermore, when the *mean* of the mean responses of both categories of the respondents were compared, there was no significant difference between the level of work-life balance difficulties of dual-career couples in the same organisations and the ones in different organisations. The difference between the mean of the *mean responses* was 0.1 point.

However, while the hard data did not show any significant difference between the mean of the means responses the interview outcomes showed that the dual-career couples working in different organisations lamented work-life balance challenges than their counterparts working in the same organisations.

From the interview responses, except for one organization, leaders in the case study organisations do not appear to know the number of couples who work in them. Furthermore, all the organizational leaders interviewed exhibited ignorance of the concept of work-like balance so it was therefore not surprising that there is no codified work-life balance programmes in these organisations.

4.10   Summary of Findings
The following are the major findings in this study:

1.   There appear to be more educated women than men just as women occupy senior positions like their counterparts in these organisations studied.

2.   About 80% of the DCCs who work in the same organisations live in the same households while about 84% of DCCs who work in different organisations live apart with tremendous effect of work-life balance..

3.   Statistically, there appear to be no difference between the work-life balances of couples who work in the same organisations but couples who work in different organisations lamented more work-life difficulties during interview with them – particularly the dual-career couples who live apart.

4.   Three of the focused organisations do not know the number of couples amongst their staff.

5.   The leaders in the organisations studied have only working knowledge of the concept of work-life-balance and therefore are yet to integrate work-life balance practices into their human resources processes.

4.11   Recommendations
Flowing from the findings of this study, we recommend the followings:

1.   The focused organisations have many highly educated, married female employees and most of them occupy senior positions.   Therefore, these organisations should come up with work-life balance programmes for their staff who have working partners too.

2. These organisations should encourage the employment of qualified couples because of the inherent advantages it portends for work-life balance and productivity.

3. Organisations should try to know the numbers of couples in their employment as well as their staff who have working partners as spouse. Efforts should be made to employ staff partners that are qualified.

4. These organisations should survey the work-life balance of their staff to know the hot buttons with a view to designing work-life balance programmes.

4.12 Recommendation for further study

This study is limited to selected government organisations in Edo in Sothern Nigeria because of lack of time and funds. We therefore suggest the survey could be nationwide conducted in at least one or two geographical zones.

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