

Assessment of Work-Life Balance and Employees Job Performance in Oil Servicing Companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria

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Abstract

This study was aimed at assessing work-life balance and employees' job performance in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Population of this study was 1.350 senior staff in the selected companies. Thirty (30%) of the population which is 405 was chosen as the sample size of the study. The simple random sampling technique was adopted for the study. A structured questionnaire entitled "Work-Life Balance and Employees' Job Performance" (WBEJP) with a 4 point rating scale was designed. The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation, while a reliable coefficient value of 0.81 was adopted. The descriptive statistic of Mean scores was used to answer the stated research questions, while the inferential statistic of analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels. It was found that a significant difference exists between the opinions of staff on the influence of recreational activities on employees' productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region. Also, it was found that the opinions of staff do not differ on the influence of delegation of duties on employees' job commitment in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region. Finally, it was found that there is a significant relationship between the opinions of staff on the influence of part-time working on employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in Niger Delta Region. Therefore, it was recommended that future research is necessary to establish when and how family-work conflict impacts individuals' wellbeing in terms of work satisfaction and psychological health, and that employers could reduce family work conflict by introducing and elder care support.

Keywords: *Word-life balance, Job Performance, Employees, Oil Servicing Companies, Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.*

Introduction

Understandably today, any imbalance existing between firms, personal commitments and the inefficient management of life priorities may bring about serious consequences in each or all

of these domains. The consequences thereafter may generally lead to diminished job satisfaction, poorer productivity and performance, lower organizational commitment, inferior career ambitions and success, increased absenteeism and intention to leave, as well as job stress, employee burnout, poorer physiological and psychological health, and diminished performance in family as well as in personal life. Thus, work life balance (WLB) and staff commitment in oil servicing companies have come to be recognized as being vital for organizational growth. The effectiveness and importance of work-life balance of staff commitment and their parameters that influence WLB in modern work and life settings cannot be over emphasized in this era of acutely competitive academic environment and dwindling skilled manpower combined with ever increasing costs of employment (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000).

In the oil sector today, work-life balance practices are deliberate organizational changes in programs or organizational culture that are designed to reduce work-life conflict and enable staff to be more effective at work and in other roles. The transition from viewing work-life balance practices solely as a means of accommodating individual staff with care giving responsibilities to recognizing their contributions to their organizational performance and staff engagement is an important paradigm shift that is very much “in process competing and multi-faced demands between work and home responsibility have assumed increased relevance for staff in recent years, due in the large part to demographic and workplace changes, such as: a greater number 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, and technological advancement such as industry 4.0 and digitization processes. In response to the changes and conflict they generate among the multiple roles that individuals play, 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 (Wayman, 2010).

The method in which work-life balance can be achieved and enhanced is an important issue in the industrial sector and has received significant attention from employers, workers, government, academic researchers, and the popular media. (McPherson & Reed, 2007). In order to encourage the implementation and improvement of such practices this paper addresses the following questions: What does work-life practice mean? Why do organizations apply work-life practices? What is the effectiveness of these practices? Why do not work-life practices really work? What are the challenges for research and for the practice in the future based on the subject matter?

In recent time, the workforce in our society has undergone acute change as a result of nationwide recession. The economic downturns recently and increased competition among industries have put pressure on organizations to perform, and on staff to increase their productivity. Organizations try to deal with these tough economic times by cutting down on their expenditures, decreasing staff levels and increasing workload for the remaining employees (O’ Connell, Russell, Watson & Byrne, 2010). The wellbeing of many workers who kept their employment can be negatively affected by job insecurities (Scherer, 2009). Many individuals feel under pressure to work longer hours to keep their jobs (Wayman, 2010) and to meet their family expenses (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). This study recognizes that the main causes of WLB amongst industrial staff are excessive working hours, increased work load and a lack of work schedule flexibility. Despite a number of studies conducted on WLB and workers wellbeing in the Niger Delta region; there still seems to be little research assessing the influence of WLB on the wellbeing of employees’ job performance. The

purpose of this study therefore is to evaluate the influence of work-life balance and employees' job performance in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Various activities that are meant help better manage their work and non-work times are called in the literature as work-family policies, family –friend or [family-responsive policies]. In recent years, the term “work-life balance” has replaced what used to be known as “work-f”. According to Clarke, Koch, and Hill (2004), this semantic shift arises from a recognition that childcare is by no means the only important non-work responsibility and the issue can be applied to any non-paid activities or commitments and to a diverse range of employees such as women, men, parents and non-parents, singles and couples. Other life activities that need to be balanced with employment may include study, travel, sport, voluntary work, personal development, leisure or eldercare and child-care, respectfully.

From the very beginning it is important to understand the work-life balance does not mean to devote an equal amount of time to paid work and non-paid roles; in its broadest sense, it is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement of ‘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).

To understand work-life balance, it is important to be aware or the different demands upon us and our personal resources our time and our energy- that we can deploy to address them. Various studies have indicated that staff that have some control over their working environment often are said to suffer less stress-related ill-health, with clear implications for the concept of work-life balance.

Jim Bird, CEO of Work –life balance.com asserted that work-life balance is a meaningful achievement and enjoyment in everyday life. Furthermore opined

that to achieve better work-life balance, each individual needs to work faster and smarter in order to get his task accomplished and on time. Apparently, the common way companies can assist in facilitating work-life balance for their staff is by work-life practices that are usually associated with flexible working hours and reductions in working time or family-friendly policies. This is so because if many companies have extensive work-life program, most of them also may not yet have changed their organizational cultures to support staff as well as managers who want to use work-life options. However, Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux, and Brinley (2005) posit categorically that organizations can implement the various work-life balance initiatives that may assist their staff to better balance their work and family responsibilities, gain improvements in well-being and provide organizational benefits. There are large variety of family friendly polices which include but are not limited to the following: recreational activities, delegation of duties, part-time work, compressed work weeks, parental leave, telecommunication, on-site child care facility, (Clarke, et’ al, 2004). 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.

Moreover, many staff may be connected by the initial implementation costs, potential legal liabilities, and difficulties in supervising and appraising the performance of other staff. Although, firms may disapprove of work-at-home clauses if they perceive them as leading to greater isolation of staffs, reduced job security and promotion opportunities, and diminished health and safety protection.

In another context, 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

(example, on a weekly or biweekly basis). This can be beneficial for employees in terms of additional days off work (example, 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 arrangement 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 startup 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 of four weeks off (Delery & Doty, 1996).

It imperative on the part of researcher to assert that traditional human resource management approach to enhancing workers performance has centered on the evaluation of previous performance and the allocation of reward. That is, rewards were provided in exchange for performance. It is inevitable that workers performance improvement is something of direct interest only to management. Performance therefore becomes stereotyped as something of no intrinsic interest to the person doing the work. Performance is a reward. There are many small initiatives every day that help to improve workers performance. It is critical that the organization selects the most useful measure of performance for the organization as a whole and for the individuals within it. Single measures are unlikely to be sufficiently robust. Kaplan and Norton (1992) argue convincingly that the mix of measure which an organization should use to assess its workers performance should be based around four different perspectives.

Lazar and Osolan (2010) assert that part-time in the working arrangement can also allow people with health problems, disabilities or limited disposable time (example, 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 (Yeandle, Crompton, Wigfield, & Dennett, 2002).

Research Questions: The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- 1) To what extent do recreational activities influence employees’ productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?
- 2) To what extent does delegation of duties influence employees’ commitment in oil servicing in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?
- 3) To what extent does part-time work influence employees’ task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels.

Ho1: There is no significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of recreational activities on employees' productivity in oil companies in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria

Ho2: There is no significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of delegation of duties on employees' commitment in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Ho3: there is no significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of part-time work on employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of this study was 1,350 staff which consists of 450 staff in Total Nigeria Plc, 450 staff in Atlantic Mediterranean Oil Services Limited, 450 staff in Anadrill Schlumberger Nigeria Limited, all in Rivers State. Thirty (30%) (which is 405 employees) of the population was used as the sample size based on a simple random sampling technique. A structure questionnaire entitled work-life Balance and Employees job performance (WBEJP) with a four point rating scale was designed. The instrument was validated by two experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation, while a reliability coefficient value of 0.81 was adopted. The descriptive statistic of Mean scores or averages was used to answer the stated research questions, while the inferential statistic of Analysis of variance was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extend do recreational activities influence employees productivity in oil servicing companies in Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean analysis of the extent to which recreational activity influence employees productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	VGE	GE	ME	LE	Total	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Recreational activities improve employees' output at workplace.	195	90	70	50	405	2.90	Accepted
2	Improve work-life is dependent on recreational activities.	185	100	80	40	405	2.90	Accepted
3	Recreational activities enhance employees performance and involvement at work place and at home	150	135	30	90	405	2.80	Accepted

Source: Survey Data, 2018.

The mean score of 2.90 implies that recreational activities improve employees' output at workplaces. The mean score of 2.90 implies that improved work-life is not dependent on

recreational activities, while the mean score of 2.80 implies that recreational activities enhance employees' performance and involvement at work places and at homes.

Research Question 2: To what extent does delegation of duties influences employees' commitment in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Table 2: Mean analysis of the extent to which delegation of duties influence employees commitment in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	VGE	GE	ME	LE	Total	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Delegation of duties improves staff commitment at work and at home	180	105	75	45	405	3.10	Accepted
2	Delegation of duties enhance staff commitment office duties	190	95	80	40	405	3.10	Accepted
3	Delegation of duties helps staff to work towards varied personal life adjustment at work place	160	125	100	20	405	3.0	Accepted

Source: Survey Data, 2018.

The mean score of 3.10 Implies the delegation of duties relieves the burden on staff at schools and homes the mean score of 3.10 implies that delegation of duties enhance staff creative ability, while the mean score of 3.10 means that delegation of duties helps staff to work towards varied personal life adjustment programs at work places.

Research Question 3: To what extent does part-time work influence employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean analysis of the extent to which part-time work influence employees task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

S/N	Questionnaire item	VGE	GE	ME	LE	Total	\bar{X}	Decision
1	Part time service assists staff in their completion at work.	155	130	80	40	405	3.0	Accepted
2	Part time work is efficiently essential for effective completion of assigned duties	160	125	60	60	405	2.90	Accepted
3	Effective work-life balance is motivated by part time activities	200	90	65	50	405	3.10	Accepted

Source: Survey Data, 2018.

The mean score of 3.0 implies that part time service assists staff in their task completion at work. The means score of 2.90 agrees that part time work is efficiently essential foe effective completion of assigned duties, while the mean score of 3.10 means that effective work-life balance is motivated by part time activities.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypotheses I: there is no significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of recreational activities on employees' productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria

Table 1: ANOVA for Ho1

	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.185	2	.592	1.824	.153
Within Groups	93.856	403	.325		
Total	95.041	405			

Source: SPSS version 22:

Decision:

Table 1 above shows that the difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of recreational activities on employees' job productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria is significant at 0.153, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significant. Thus the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of delegation of duties of on employees' commitment in oil companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria?

Table 2: ANOVA Ho₂

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.672	2	.336	1.089	.235
Within Groups	89.120	403	.308		
Total	89.791	405			

Source: SPSS version 22.

Decision:

Table 2 above shows that the difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of delegation of duties on employees' job commitment in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria is significant at 0.235. This is said to be greater than the 0.05 level of significance.

Thus the null hypothesis is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted.

Test of Hypothesis III: There is no significant difference between the opinions of staffs on the influence of part-time work on employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

Table 3: ANOVA for Ho₃

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Between Groups	.523	2	.261	.787	.191
Without Groups	95.981	403	.332		
Total	96.503	405			

Source: SPSS version 22:

Decision:

Table 3 above shows that the difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of part-time work on employees' task completion is significant at 0.191 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus the null hypothesis is hereby and the alternate accepted.

Discussion of Findings

One of the major findings of the study was that there is a significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of recreational activities on employees' productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. This implies that to understand work-life balance, it is important to be aware of the fact that recreational activities help to relieve one of his/her work stress. Apparently many today have chosen this as a conventional stress relieve strategy. Various studies have indicated that staff that have some form of control over their recreational activities often are said to suffer less stress-related ill- health, with clear implications for the concept of work-life balance can achieved and enhanced is an important issue in our society today, thus has received significant attention from employers worker, government, academic researchers, and the popular media (McPherson & Reed, 2007).

Also it was found that the opinions of staff do not differ on the influence of delegation of duties on employees' commitment in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. Many meet their family expense (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). This study recognizes that the main causes of poor WLB amongst company staff are excessive working hours and a lack of work schedule flexibility. From the very beginning it is important to understand that

work-life balance does not mean to devote an equal amount of time to paid work and non-paid role; in its broadest sense, it 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, 2004).

Finally, it was found that there is a significant difference between the opinions of staff on the influence of part-time work on employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. Part-time work arrangement can also allow people with health problems, disabilities or limited disposable time (example, students) to participate in the labor force, develop their skills and obtain work experiences. Thus they can facilitate re-entry into the workforce for those who have had career breaks particularly mother (or fathers) who have stayed at home to raise their children or provide a gradual exit for employees nearing retirement. Therefore, the use of part-time workers, where feasible, helps staff to maximize the use of human resources and increase operational flexibility by providing additional coverage during peak periods.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

Conclusively, the issues of commitment and motivation are central to work-life balance for staff performance as well as commitment to work. The study concluded that there is a significant difference between recreational activities and employees' productivity in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. The ability to achieve satisfying working experiences in all life domains enhances the quality of personal relationship and a range of organizational outcomes. The availability and use of work-life balance practices when provided in the context of supervisor and organizational support is said to reduce work-life conflict and increase positive appraisals of one's organization. Also delegation of duties is said to enhance employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria. These effects are often associated with employee attitudes such as increased job satisfaction and enhanced control over their work schedule. The result includes; reduce absenteeism, intent to turnover, job stress levels and work-life conflict and increased productivity. Finally, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between part-time working and employees' task completion in oil servicing companies in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.

From the above, the study recommends that future research is necessary to establish when and how family-work conflicts impact individuals' wellbeing in terms of work satisfaction and psychological health. Employers could reduce work-family conflicts by introducing childcare and eldercare support system/ programs. Organizations, managers and business owners should take those changing demographic characteristics into consideration in order to be able to develop and implement effective family-friendly initiatives which would reduce work-family conflicts, and improve work-life balance and the wellbeing of their employees generally.

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