



INFLUENCE OF WORK LIFE BALANCE ON PERFORMANCE AT EMBU LEVEL FIVE HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT

Organizations in modern day competitive world can only perform at optimal levels if each employee is committed to the organization's objectives and works as an effective team member. An inability to create a balance between work and personal life could affect employees' effectiveness and productivity in the workplace. As the nature of the workforce continues to diversify, it will become increasingly important for organizations to consider all the factors influencing their employees' ability to balance work and non-work commitments, and to find a way of incorporating them into their operating policies. Purpose of the study was to evaluate the influence of work-life balance on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital. This study was guided by the following specific objectives: to determine influence of work life balance policy on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital; to assess the influence of child care services support on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital; to evaluate influence of compressed work arrangement on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital; to examine influence of work schedules on staff performance at Embu Level Five Hospital. The research adopted a case study design to allow in depth data to be obtained. The target population were the 480 employees in the Embu Level Five Hospital. Stratified random sampling was used to draw a sample of 99 respondents from various departments. Data was collected using questionnaires and content analysis. Data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation, inferential analysis such as correlation, chi-square will be used. Data is presented using tables and figures. The researcher concluded that work life balance influences the performance at Embu Level Five Hospital. The study also concluded that compressed work schedules made employees to experience much stress. In order for the organization to improve and maintain good performance, it is very prudent that work life balance should well be addressed. This particular research work recommends that Embu Level five hospital to give proper attention to processes and procedures in the organization. These types of procedures include coming up with professional programs that focus on giving employee adequate skills on how to handle job related challenges resulting to improvement in performance.

Key Words: work-life balance, work life balance policy, child care services support

INTRODUCTION

According to Darcy et al. (2012) the human resources perspective of work-life balance has been summarized as any initiative that help employees to balance or experience more satisfaction in work and personal domains. 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. According to Alexandra, (2009), job stress is estimated to cost U.S. industry more than \$300 billion a year in absenteeism, turnover, and diminished productivity, medical, legal and insurance costs.

Clarke *et al.* (2004) referred to work-life balance as 'work-family fit' and to Voydanof, (2005) Work life balance represent a holistic person-oriented approach which brings about work-family fit. Work-life balance is vital for individuals' wellbeing, organizations' performance and a functioning society; this is according to Grady *et al.* (2008). The term Work-Life Balance is recent in origin, as it was first used in UK and US in the late 1970s' and 1980s' respectively. As explained by Lockwood, (2003) WLB as a notion began to be relevant in the United States in the 80's and 90's when companies began to implement WLB policies mainly in response to increasing workers' disregard towards their families as they focused on accomplishing organizational goals. According to 2010 National Health Interview Survey Occupational Health Supplement data 16% of US workers reported difficulty balancing work and family. The findings were more prevalent among workers aged 30-44.

work-life balance has become an increasingly elusive aspect to both employers and employees of most organizations. Where there is proper balance between work and life, employees tend to put in their best efforts at work, because they are happy and the family is too, hence performance to an organization (Bruck & Sutton, 2000). The most common approach is to view work-life balance practices through a business perspective, like offering these practices, organizations attract new members and reduce levels of work-life conflict. This can improve recruitment, retention, motivation and reduce work-life conflict, hence enhance organizational effectiveness, (Glass & Estes, 2011).

Work Life Balance (WLB) requires adoption of work arrangements that everyone- regardless of age, race, or gender can find a balance that enables them to combine work with their other responsibilities or aspirations. It should offer a wide range of options so that people can have more control and the freedom to choose what they believe is best for them within the constraints of the business. Hence, work life balance just as any other HR policy can be seen as a challenge for management as well as a source of competitive advantage, (Coff & Pfeffer, 2011).

Some of the aspects that prohibit achievement of a healthy WLB are excessive job demands and constraints brought about by competitive pressure for improved performance and cost effectiveness, rising household financial needs that necessitate overtime hours, full-time employment. According to Russell & coff, (2010) personal and societal consequences of failing to effectively meet one's major life or family responsibilities increases the stress levels, lower life satisfaction, increases family strife, violence and divorce, rising incidences of substance abuse among others.

A study by Harvard and McGill University researchers found that, the United States lags far behind compared to other wealthy countries when it comes to family-oriented workplace policies such as maternity leave, paid sick days and support for feeding. According to Jody Heyman, founder of the Harvard-based Project on Global Working Families and also a director of McGill's Institute for Health and Social Policy, commented that "more countries are providing the workplace protections that millions of Americans can only dream of". The U.S. has been a proud leader in adopting laws that provide for equal opportunity in the workplace, but

work/family protections are among the worst. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which represents the far majority of the world's most advanced economies; the United States is the only nation that does not guarantee its workers paid vacation. This observation is being shared by many people today and is considered by many experts to be indicative of the current climate.

Netherlands has adopted a policy to improve WLB for its citizens. For instance, flexible working time arrangements have been embraced and implemented. The Swedish government has taken the initiative to reduce WLC experienced mostly by women, by promoting men's participation in the upbringing of children. Parental leave encourages men to stay at home more with their new born babies, thus encouraging both parents to take care of their children. The Swedish welfare system includes an extensive child care system that guarantees a place in a public day care facility for all children up to and 6 years. Regardless of these measures, there are still problems. There is strong gender segregation in public service employment (health, education and child care). Women rather than men reduce their working hours after child birth and the long period of leave taken (or reduced working hours) do not help female career progression. As a result, pay differences remain significant and are not narrowing. Due to the development of telecommunication, more Swedish are used to working from home.

French government instituted a policy that allowed employees to disconnect from work when they are not in office in the year 2017 in an attempt to control actual hours worked. According to a 2015 survey from Expedia.com American employees take about 73% of their allotted vacation time while German and French workers take nearly all of their vacation time they are allowed. OECD report indicated that French worked an average of 1,482 hours a year as compared to American whose hours were 1,790.

Rajesh & Dabhade, (2013) researched on Work life balance amongst the working women in public sector banks: a case of State Bank of India and their finding was that employers are investing in work - life balance, but the solutions offered are not always compatible with employees' needs. A Study conducted in India by Dev, (2012) indicates that work life balance significantly correlated with job satisfaction and performance. Fatima & Sahibzada, (2012) in advancing Dev, (2012) findings, indicates that female employees in India are more in need of facilities such as flexi time, job sharing and child care if they are to be committed to their work. In developing countries, a research done in Pakistan by Nadeem & Abbas, (2009), indicate that job performance at the top level management has negative correlation with family to work. In Africa WLB has received less attention and is seen as a foreign idea from the Western countries, but over the year advanced management and studies are beginning to emerge discussing the relevance and challenges of Work Life Balance practices in developing nations. A study carried out in Nigerian bank employees, about their cultural perception and knowledge of WLB. The findings brought about views relating to role conflict situations rather than desired expectations of balance between domains. This can be as result of challenging macro environmental conditions entrenched in so many social-economic environments in most African countries.

A study conducted in Nigeria by Mordi, (2011), employees suffer WLC. Lack of jobs and overwhelming working environment force them to disrupt their families for the sake of their growth and profitability of the organization. In a South African study that examined the relationship between work-family conflict and job performance, Patel *et al* (2006) revealed a growing conflict between work and life. However, women were the most affected as demands for home life and responsibilities clashed with their commitment to work compared to their male counterparts. Ibiyinka et al. (2014) studied work life balance policies and practices: case study of Nigerian university students and the results was that the female students had difficulties when balancing the multiple demands of work and other domains.

In Kenya, Muinde, (2012) researched on the extent to which work-life balance practices have been adopted in flower firms in Naivasha, and found out that some practices were adopted moderately. Njenga, (2010) researched on the effect of work-life balance policies on women retention in United Nations Development Program, in Kenya.

Otieno, (2010) conducted a study on the influence of work-life balance on job satisfaction and commitment of women employees of commercial Banks in Kenya. The studies however, have only proved the impact of work-life balance practices in relation to one aspect.

The health landscape in Africa has been transforming gradually since independence which was attained by most African countries about 50 years ago. However, the continent is still dogged by many challenges like underfunding among others, this is according to World Health Organization (WHO), (2011).

In sub-Saharan Africa an average, one health care person serves 8,000 people. The worst affected countries are Malawi where the worker-to-population ratio is one to 50,000 people compared to the minimum acceptable care level of one per 5,000. A comparison of these figures with the ratios in developed countries (the UK, for example, has over 100 times workers and health care givers per population than in Africa.

These aspects have made the African continent to perform poorly as compared to the other continents in the world. Kenya has also been struggling with similar challenges as the number workers in health care providers cannot be compared to the number of clients they serve especially government facilities.

WLB strategies should be more than simply a reactionary measure designed to satisfy an increasingly demanding workforce. Society and the working world have changed significantly, and businesses are continually adapting their working practices accordingly. According to Reamer, (2015) being reactive leads to loss of touch with what's really important, thus, failure to operate at peak capacity besides causing stress. Taking time and effort to plan ahead and anticipate what employees may request, makes the firm to be better prepared to juggle multiple tasks and schedule time. Employers are precipitated to consider the practices of creating a flexible, supportive environment, engaging employees and maximizing organizational performance. Work-life programs have formed a critical management tool for the organizations as they strive to maintain an excellent and engaged workforce.

According to Miller, (2016) work-life programs offered to employees may include dependents care, work flexibility among others. When implemented according to today's best practices, work-life programs can demonstrate significant benefits for organizations, employees and communities at large and ultimately improve performance. Given the benefits of WLB practices and its potential to improve employees' job performance in terms of increased organizational commitment, job satisfaction, reduction on the turnover rate, its application cannot be overemphasized. According to Bloom et al. (2011) based on the premise that work-life balance practices are clearly beneficial for business performance it is prudent to conclude that every single firm should implement them.

A study by Osoian *et al.* (2009) exposed how introducing work-life practices impact the company in different ways, such as improved work performance, reducing direct and indirect costs related to absenteeism, costs related with the loss and replacement of valuable employees, customer satisfaction and organizational productivity, thus overall performance.

Employee engagement perspectives may arise based on the notion that work-life initiatives reduce stress, increase personal and team resilience. According to Ollier-Mallatere, (2010) work life practices enables employees to cope with growing pressures from fast-paced environmental change in ways that are sustainable. Both the high performance and the engagement views are grounded on assumptions of beneficial effects from integrating work-life initiatives with internal

organizational or external environmental systems.

However, customer's satisfaction and overall organizational performance can be affected by various factors such as lack of motivation, lack of necessary skills, poor remuneration of employees', lack of goal clarity, feedback, working environment, organization's policies, managerial support and work schedule among others. According to Bloom *et al.* (2011) some aspects may impact on performance either positively or negatively depending on how an organization embraces them, concepts like work life balance, managerial support, work scheduling and compressed work schedules plays a crucial role in employee's performance and ultimately, organizational performance.

Implementing Work-life balance initiatives can serve as a tool to retain key employees.

Formulating and implementing policies that ensure employees' well-being is taken care of comprehensively is a sure way of retaining the employees' and the same can trickle down to the customer. Work life balance policies, flexible work schedules, child care services among others can enhance not only employees' psychological and physiological health but that of their families and thus, reduce the possible work life conflicts that may arise (Giancola, 2010).

Flexible Work schedules, teleworking and virtual arrangements, reduced workloads or other non-traditional work arrangements; occupational safety and health initiatives may reduce job and family stress, formal policies on absenteeism, vacations, and sick time that support work – life needs; and enhanced childcare benefits may go a long way in reducing WFC.

The Embu Level Five Hospital has been grappling with a perennial shortage of staff; and strikes by the medical staff, in the month of February 2016 and the most recent one in July 2016. It is also situated along the busy Nairobi-Meru high way and therefore receives emergencies like people who have been involved in accidents, people who have consumed illicit brews just to give a few examples. During such periods the paramedics who are officially on leave and on off-duty are recalled back and expected to assume normal duties regardless of their personal or family obligations this has led to an intrusion of private time as no proper program is in place of how they can recover their time later. This study will be seeking to establish the influence of work life balance at Embu Level 5 Hospital guided by the following objectives, work life balance policy, work schedules, child care services and compressed work schedule.

Statement of the Problem

Inadequate work life balance has been seen to pose a big risk to worker's well-being and overall performance of organizations. Employees' often have difficulties in balancing employment responsibilities with their personal and social life. According to Higgins *et al.* (2010) conflict between work and family roles have been seen to lower the quality of both work and family life resulting to turnover among other negative aspects, hence, poor organizational performance. Employees who experience a lack of balance between their home and work lives are less productive, less satisfied with their jobs, and more likely to leave their organizations than are employees who experience a sense of balance (Noor, 2011). Balanced employees tend to be motivated and less stressed out at work, which thereby increases company performance and reduces the number of conflicts among coworkers and management.

In an environment where there is high level of competitive pressure stemming largely from efforts to deliver quality service, the weight of this on employees' is enormous as explained by (Uzoech & Babatunde, 2012). Understaffing in health care providers may lead to poor or delayed service delivery, work back log, long queues, and dissatisfied customers. A hospital may fail to attract new clientele or penetrate certain market segments for instance the civil servants may prefer to seek services in private hospitals where queues are not as long, this can stagnate the public hospital on its growth track and with it suffer opportunity costs and lose credibility. ,

According to Chinchilla & Leon,(2011) implementing policies on WLB has the potential to satisfy personal, family needs and help organization to retain talent and hold more creative, healthier and happier workforce, hence performance. According to Rennar & Hank, (2007) managerial support is necessary to reduce the gap between what is planned and what actually occurs. Tariq et al. (2012) argues that work- life balance is both important for the organization and for its employees' especially in this dynamic environment.

Organizational goals and particular provision of health services may be threatened or hampered by inadequate human resources and this situation is compounded by the loss or lack of both essential and beneficial health care providers such as medical doctors, engineers, academics, nurses, technicians, administrators and managers (Dassin, 2015).

The health sector in general has been grappling with a perennial shortage of staff; and strikes by the medical staff, for instance medical staff at Embu level 5 hospital went on strike in the month of February and also in July 2016. The fact that it situated along the busy Nairobi-Meru high way has made it to be a convenient health provider to accident victims, it thus receives emergencies cases. During such periods the paramedics who are officially on leave and on off-duty are recalled back and expected to assume normal duties regardless of their personal or family obligations. This has led to an intrusion of private time hence, lack of work family balance due to inadequate flexibility that can allow them to recover their time later.

WFB views a person and the environment in a constant relationship where independent identities are lost in favor of a new condition/state. The person in the family environment and the same person in employment, this is a dynamic, mutually reciprocal, bi-directional relationship. What happens in one environment can be a consequence of, or antecedent to what happens in the other environment. This implies that two environments are joined together; failure to understand how the situation affects individual performance or choices has led to lack of job satisfaction and therefore, intentions to quit.

Despite the positive effect work life balance may bring to the organizations, there are significant gaps between the premise of work–life initiatives and the reality. Few studies have been done to establish the influence of work life balance policy work schedules, compressed work and child care services on performance. This study therefore, seeks to determine the influence of these variables on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate influence of work-life balance on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital.

Specific Objectives

- i. To determine influence of work life balance policy on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital.
- ii. To assess the influence of child care services, support on performance at Embu Level Five Hospital.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

Performance is usually influenced by various theories which have been developed by different scholars and authors. Though all the theories are necessary this study will be guided by Spill over theory, compensation theory and border theory since they seem to greatly influence work life balance and organizational performance.

Spill over Theory

Spillover theory was developed by an English economist Alfred Marshall in 1890; however, it has continuously been reviewed by other authors. Morris & Madsen, (2007) indicate that experiences resulting from spillover manifests as either positive or negative. According to Zedeck, (1992) it is concerned with transmission of states from one domain of life to another.

According to Riordan, (2013), a common dilemma for many people in this case is how to manage all the competing demands in work and life and avoid letting any negative effects of work spill over into their personal lives. In addition, the spillover of negative aspect of work into an employee's personal life can lead to job exhaustion, disruption of relationships with family and friends, loss of enjoyment and increased stress.

When employees struggle to balance their work and family life there is negative spill over (Gryzwacz & Carson, 2009). This study will apply the spill over theory in the case of Embu Level Five Hospital to establish the influence of work life balance on organization performance. The study will find out the influence of work schedules both daily and weekly on organizational performance through customer satisfaction and revenue generation. The spillover model states that work and life are interdependent and therefore, influence each other. Spillover is seen as a process whereby experiences in one role affect experiences in the other, rendering the roles more similar (Rothbard & Dumas, 2009). According to Morris & Madsen, (2010) the experiences resulting from spillover can manifest themselves as either positive or negative, it is concerned with transmission of states from one domain of life to another. This process takes place at an intra-individual level but across different domains. If flexibility occurs, it enables individuals to separate work and family responsibilities in time and space leading to a positive spill, a healthy element in achieving healthy work life balance.

The work family conflict (WFC) results from situations where pressure related to the work-role have unfavorable impact on the family or self. When organizations fail to recognize the impact of the work domain on the family domain and insists on regular work schedules with expectations that employees will perform regardless of family situation, then there is no sensitivity to family interests. Theoretically, spillover is perceived to be one of two types: positive or negative. Spillover considers multidimensional aspects of work and family relationship. Positive spillover refers to fact that satisfaction and achievement in one domain may bring along satisfaction and achievement in another domain. According to Xu,(2009) Negative spillover on the other hand refers to the fact that problems and despair in one domain may bring along the same emotion into another domain.

Spill-over is thus a process whereby experiences in one role affect experiences in the other, rendering the roles more alike. Research has examined the spill-over of mood, values, skills and behaviors from one role to another, although the most of this research has focused on mood spill-over. The experiences coming out from spill-over can manifest themselves as either positive or negative (Morris and Madsen, 2008). A recommendation by Munn, (2013) relating to the view that work-life is a "system in which each part of work and life is interdependent with the other parts of the system Munn, (2013) suggests that employees, organizations and government are linked though work-life balance, work-life schemes and work-life arrangements and found that work-life balance policies clearly had an encouraging consequence for the employee and the organization. Gunnigle *et al.* (2011) suggest that tension exists between both areas of work and life and most research is centered on this pressure which results in stress.

Many studies have shown that job demands for example: a high workload and emotionally demanding customers) have a negative impact on employee well-being whereas job resources for instance, social support, performance feedback, task identity) have a positive impact, particularly

on employee engagement (Bakker, 2011; Bakker & Demerouti, 008). However, less attention has been paid to possible consequences of the work environment for those with whom employees frequently interact – their intimate partners.

Spillover is a within-person, across domains transmission of strain from one area of life to another. Previous research has primarily focused on how reactions experienced in the work domain are transferred to and interfere with the non-work domain for the same individual. For example, an employee may experience a time-based conflict between work and private life when work overload results in overwork at the expense of leisure time. Similarly, a worker may experience a strain-based work-family conflict when confronted with something unfair during the day at work, about which he or she continues worrying during the evening at home. Many studies have found evidence for spillover effects (Amstad, & Semmer, 2011).

Compensation Theory

Compensation theory was developed by Adler, (1907) in his attempt to describe the relationship between the feeling of weakness and attempts to compensate for it elsewhere. It was again reviewed in the late 1980's and the early 1990's describing the behavior of employees in pursuing alternative rewards in the other sphere.

The theory refers to the efforts aimed at countering negative experiences in one domain through increased efforts for positive experiences in another domain (Schultz & Higbee, 2010). This study will seek to understand the staff compensation practices in Embu level hospital and establish the influence of compensation on employee retention.

Compensation theory recognizes that there is an influence between work and family. If the health facility can provide child care services and support, employees can be able to concentrate with their work as they are sure their children are either within reach or are well taken care of. A study by Piotrkowski, (2009) focused mainly on the negative effect of family life and work life, another version of compensation theory proposed by Lambert, (2010) recognized the positive effect of work and family along with its negative effect on the work-family relationships. Compensation theory may also refer to the efforts intended at countering negative experiences in one domain through increased efforts for positive experiences in another domain.

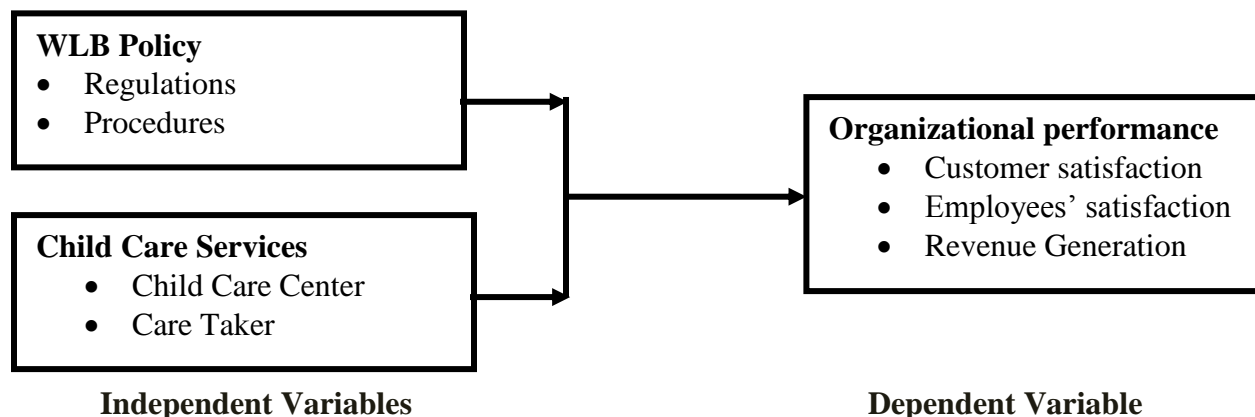
According to Champoux, (2012) a person may respond to dissatisfaction in one domain by Pursuing rewards in the other domain experiences that may fulfill the person's desires. Compensation theory of work life balance describes the efforts intended at countering unconstructive experiences in one domain through increased efforts for optimistic experiences in another domain. Reactive compensation represents individuals' efforts to redress negative experiences in one role they are performing by pursuing positive experiences in the other role. In compensation efforts are intended at countering negative experiences in one domain through increased efforts for positive experiences in another domain. An example would be a dissatisfied worker focusing more on family than work, thus reallocating human resources (Edwards & Rothbard,2009). The compensation theory refers to an attempt of making up for shortcomings or deficits in one role through higher involvement in another role. These deficiencies could be the demands or satisfactions that can be fulfilled in another role (Guest,2012). For example, an individual is highly engaged in the work life because of some negative experiences in the non-work life. The sense of doing something Worthwhile and gaining positive energy in non-work life is achieved through higher engagement at workplace and having time for resting. By overcommitting employees with work related issues may interfere with their other engagements like family, personal and social issues hence, affecting their work life balance.

Clark, (2010) also found a compensatory relationship between work and life roles for employed

people. In a work environment it is impossible to have an employee who is separate from personal life; aspects. Thus an organization should see the employees as a whole. This means they should be allowed to attend to personal issues/ family issues.

Conceptual Frame Work

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between the independent variables; policy, child care services, compressed work schedule and work schedules and the dependent variable;



Work Life Balance Policy

According to Taylor, (2008) the quality of working life is related to the basic extrinsic job factors of wages, hours and working conditions and the intrinsic job motivation, job satisfaction and happiness. People at work are therefore entitled to be treated as full human beings with personal needs, hopes and anxieties.

Williams *et al.* (2010) considers work-life balance as a broad concept including proper prioritizing between "work" (career and ambition) on the one hand and "life" (Health, pleasure, leisure, family and spiritual development) on the other. Sustainable high-performance work practices have been presented as key to enhancing performance and improving the quality of work, hence, raising general economic performance (Belt & Giles, 2009). The issue of work-life balance has developed out of demographic and social changes that have resulted in a more diverse family/work models. Supporting work-life balance is seen as a way of attracting and retaining the labor force needed to support economic wellbeing.

This study in the area of work-life balance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment aimed at demonstrating the links between these factors (Giles, 2009). Supportive management is crucial in ensuring uptake of family friendly policies and practices like child care facilities, flexible work schedules among others. The presence of supportive Managers and organizational climates may help in reducing work-life conflict (Benson, 2005; Premeaux et al.2007). Work-life balance practices can broadly be categorized as those relating to time (flexi-time, compressed hours, annualized hours, part time working), those relating to the place (tele-working), and those related to the job (job re-designing and job sharing) and those relating to the benefits (leave provision, employee assistance programs, dependent care and wellness programs).

Work-Life Balance is about creating and maintaining supportive and healthy work environments, which will enable employees to have balance between work and personal responsibilities and thus strengthen employee loyalty and productivity. Numerous studies have been conducted on work-life balance. According to a major Canadian study conducted by Lowe, (2005), 1 in 4

employees experience high levels of conflict between work and family, based on work-to-family interference and caregiver strain. If role overload is included, then close to 60 percent of employees surveyed experience work-family conflict.

Child Care Services

Childcare is considered an essential support for parents' participation in paid work. According to section 2 of the Children Act a child is a person below the age of eighteen years. Article 5 of the 1981 ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention number 156 encourages the development and promotion of community services such as childcare and family services. Access to childcare support is an important factor in enhancing WLB especially among women in that it enables participation in the workforce while balancing family responsibilities. Childcare support may be in the form of pre-school supervision. However, a comprehensive childcare approach is one that encompasses support for children of all ages. This childcare support may be through, for example, providing workshops and other forums for new parents, and organizing family event days.

There are no special provisions in Kenyan law for corporate or state-provided childcare support for employees. However, some employers have internal policies and agreements that provide for childcare assistance. For example, Safaricom has a day-care Centre run by childcare professionals. In this way, employees can leave the children under the care of the professionals, proceed to work, and periodically check on them (Clive, 2013). Professional caregivers work within the context of a center-based care (including crèches, daycare, preschools and schools) or a home-based care (nannies or family daycare). The majority of child care institutions that are available require that child care providers to have extensive training in first aid and be certified. In addition, background checks, drug testing at all centers and reference verification are normally a requirement.

Empirical Review

Work Life Balance Policy and organization performance

Work-life balance policies define how the organization intends 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. It sets out guidelines on the specific arrangements such as flexible hours, special leaves, compressed work and childcare among others (Work and Family Act 2006).

Clive *et al*, (2013) study of the impact of WLB practices on employee performance at Safaricom Kenya found a strong relationship between the WLB practices and employee performance. Employees were motivated due to the childcare facilities available for working mothers, comprehensive medical cover and the existence of games and sporting facilities. Accordingly, the study recommends that all companies adopt proper WLB practices as a prerequisite to improving efficiency.

A study by Suifan, Abdallah and Diab, (2016) investigated how WLB impacts on turnover intent among Jordanian private hospitals. The main objective of the research was to ascertain the moderating role of work life conflict on the association between WLB and turnover intent. The findings from the study established that support from supervisors had significant inverse relationship turnover intent. On the other hand, job autonomy had an inverse relationship with turnover intent.

Muchiti (2015) examined how WLB affects the productivity of employees at Milimani Law courts in Kenya. Nairobi. The primary objective of the study was to ascertain the effect of WLB on worker productivity. The research design that was used to guide the research was a descriptive design. The target population consisted 200 employees who work at the Milimani Law Courts in Nairobi. A sample of 67 employees was obtained from the study population through probability sampling by way of stratified sampling. It was established that the explanatory variables of the study explained 77.10% of the variance on the productivity of employees at the Milimani Law courts in Nairobi. It was further revealed that flexible working schedule emerged the most important factor influencing the productivity of employees.

Case studies of four public sector agencies in Western Australia, Todd and Binns (2013) observed a substantial divide between policy and practice, with significant variation in employees' perceptions of accessibility and support across agencies. The survey concluded that employees were either uncomfortable or neutral about using work-life balance policies, including flexi-time or reduced schedules, due to differences in the attitudes of individual managers and issues such as staff shortages. Accessibility to part-time work and flexible scheduling was also perceived to conflict with operational and workload requirements, particularly in regard to employees involved in frontline service provision. Long hours and physical presence was expected, giving a barrier to the use of work-life initiatives.

Child Care Services and Organization Performance

Bianchi and Milkie, (2010) observed that childcare forms the basis of what much 'work-family' conflict is about – how to care for children adequately when parents need or want to work outside the home, Nowak *et al.* (2013) concluded that provision of onsite childcare facilities may overcome some of the substantial work-care challenges that prevented female health professionals in Western Australia from returning to work after maternity leave.

A US survey of university employees investigated the relationship between childcare use and work-family outcomes. Payne *et al.* (2012) and observed that employees with pre-school aged children who had access to high quality and convenient childcare had lower family-to-work conflict, and this in turn was associated with lower turnover intentions and increased worker wellbeing, Morrissey and Warner, (2011).

Managers and supervisors need to demonstrate their support in active and observable ways. The key here is that managers and supervisors must first be on board with implementation before they can support their employees.

According to Walter, (2010) a manager should have the ability to identify a team to spearhead implementation, this could comprise of heads of departments. They should come up with customized tactics for engaging and managing the process together with the supervisors, and then charge the positive group with leading change with their direct reports.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a case study approach. One of the most outstanding advantages of the case study is that it aids the understanding of a complex issue and can extend experience or add strength to what is already known from previous research (Saunders et al., 2009).

Target Population

According to Kombo and Tromp, (2010), a population is a well-defined group or set of people,

or items that are being investigated. The population of interest in this case was the employees of Embu Level Five Hospital whose total is 480(Hospital Records, 2016).

The study focused on the following department; administration, medical, laboratory, records, dental, optical, procurement, social worker's office, medical engineering, physiotherapy and public health. It also focused on the employees' cadre and their schedules. The study focused on all employees in all levels, departments and both genders.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Kothari (2004) notes that stratified random sampling is the process of selecting respondents using well defined strata, in this study, the departments formed the strata's. The respondents were chosen randomly. Hence all the subjects in the study had an equal chance of being selected. The sample for the study was 99 employees who were drawn from the target population of 480 employees; this represented 20% of the entire population as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). A 20% sample was considered to be representative because according to Kothari (2003) a representative sample is one that is at least 10% of the population of interest. However, Selltitz, Weightsaman and Cook as cited by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) argued that for greater accuracy in the findings, the number in each stratum should be based on the relative variability of the characteristic in the study rather than proportionate to the relative size of the group.

Data Collection Instruments

In order to obtain the necessary data for the study, a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents regarding work life balance policy with rules and regulations as the indicators, child care services with flexi-time and child care center as indicators.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection has been defined by Kothari (2004) as the process of acquiring subjects and gathering information needed for a study. The researcher sought approval from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. The researcher also wrote a letter to the Hospital administrator seeking permission to collect data at the health facility. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires.

A total of 99 questionnaires were administered to the respondents who had been informed by the researcher that the instrument was for research purpose only and that their responses was to be kept secret and confidential. The respondents were left with the questionnaire to fill at their convenient time. The researcher made subsequent visits and courtesy calls to remind the respondents to fill in the questionnaire thereby increasing the response rate.

Pilot Study

Before the research tool was finally administered to participants, a pilot study was carried out to ensure that the questions were relevant, clearly understandable and made sense. The exercise aimed at determining the validity and reliability of the research tools including the wording, structure and sequence of the questions. A 10 % of the sample size, 10 respondents, was used in the exercise as recommended by Mugenda and Mugenda (2009).

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION**Statistical Analysis on Work Life Balance Policy**

The study sought to establish the influence of work life balance on performance at Embu Level Five hospital. The analysis was based on descriptive statistics. The following shows the results obtained.

Table 1 Work life balance policy

	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)	Mean	Std. deviation
Work life balance policy available	3.3	1.1	32.2	35.6	27.8	3.8333	.96279
There is awareness of the policy		2.2	28.9	41.1	27.8	3.9444	.81228
Guidelines in the policy support work life balance		3.3	35.6	27.8	33.3	3.9111	.90745
Work life balance procedures have been communicated	1.1	1.1	30.0	40.0	27.8	3.9222	.85101
Top management adhere to the work life balance policy	1.1	2.2	30.0	32.2	34.4	3.9667	.91737

From the table 1, majority of the respondents (35.6%) disagreed that work life balance policy balance influenced the performance, a highest percentage 41.1% disagreed that awareness of the policy had influence on performance, 33.3% strongly disagreed that guidelines in the policy support work life balance influence performance, 40.0% disagreed that work life balance procedures have influence on performance, a highest percentage 34.4% strongly disagreed that top management adhere to the work life balance policy influence performance. In general from the analysis, work life balance policy had a measurable influence on performance of Embu level five hospital. Other descriptive from the analysis shows that work life balance policy had a mean of 3.8333% which represents the mean work life balance policy balance. Awareness of the policy had a mean of 3.9444% which represents mean awareness policy. Guidelines in the policy support work life balance had a mean of 3.9111% which represents the mean guidelines in the policy support work life balance. Work life balance procedures communication had a mean of 3.9222% which represents the mean work life balance procedures communication while top management adherence to the work life balance policy had a mean of 3.9667% which represents the mean top management adherence to the work life balance policy. The standard deviation for work life balance policy balance was 0.96279%, awareness of the policy was 0.81228%, Guidelines in the policy support work life balance was 0.812%, Work life balance procedures have communication was 0.85101% while top management adhere to the work life balance policy had a standard deviation of 0.91737. In addition, majority of the respondents suggested further sensitization and improvement on work life balance policy.

Statistical Analysis On Child Care Services Support On Performance

The study sought to establish the influence of child care services support on performance of

Embu Level five hospital. The analysis was based on descriptive statistics. The following shows the results obtained.

Availability of child care center statistics

The study sought to establish the respondents' response on child care center availability influence on performance. The results are presented as shown in the table 4.8 below.

As indicated in the table 2 below, majority of the respondents (30.0%) agree that child care center availability influence performance while minority (10.0%) strongly disagree that child care center availability influence on performance. This shows that majority of the respondents agree that child care center availability influences performance.

Table 2 Child care center is available

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	23	25.6	25.6	25.6
Agree	27	30.0	30.0	55.6
Neutral	18	20.0	20.0	75.6
Disagree	13	14.4	14.4	90.0
Strongly disagree	9	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Child care maintenance statistics

The study sought to find out the respondents' response on child care maintenance and its influence on performance. The descriptive statistics by the respondents was presented in the table 3 below.

The results in table 3 shows that majority of the respondents (37.8%) agree that child care maintenance influence performance while minority, 2.2% indicated that child care maintenance influenced project performance at on strongly disagreed response. The result shows that child care maintenance influences performance.

Table 3 Child care maintenance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	30	33.3	33.3	33.3
Agree	34	37.8	37.8	71.1
Neutral	20	22.2	22.2	93.3
Disagree	4	4.4	4.4	97.8
Strongly disagree	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Child care capacity statistics

The researcher sought to find out the respondents' response on capacity to which the child care Centre can accommodate children and space availability influence on performance. The following table 4 shows the results.

As indicated from the table 4 above, 32.2% (majority) agree that child care space capacity influence performance. In addition, 26.7% of the respondents strongly agree that space capacity influenced work life balance on performance. 14.4% and 4.4% of respondents were of the

opinion that space capacity had not influence performance by response of disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

Table 4. Child care has enough space for children

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	24	26.7	26.7	26.7
Agree	29	32.2	32.2	58.9
Neutral	20	22.2	22.2	81.1
Disagree	13	14.4	14.4	95.6
Strongly disagree	4	4.4	4.4	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Child care safety statistics

The study sought to establish the response by respondents in the study on child care safety for children influence on performance.

The results established that majority of the respondents (31.1%) agree that child care Centre is safe for children followed by the response of neutral (25.6%) while 21.1% strongly agree that child care Centre is safe for children and only 5.6% strongly disagree that child care Centre safety for children influence performance. The results show that majority of the respondents agree that child care Centre safety for children influences work life balance on performance

The results are as presented in the table 5 below.

Table 5 Child care Centre is safe for children

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	19	21.1	21.1	21.1
Agree	28	31.1	31.1	52.2
Neutral	23	25.6	25.6	77.8
Disagree	15	16.7	16.7	94.4
Strongly disagree	5	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

Child care taker statistics

The researcher sought to find out the respondents response to child care taker influence work life balance on performance of Embu level five hospital. The descriptive statistics of the analysis was presented as shown in the table 6 below.

The table 6 below shows that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that child care taker influence work life balance on performance as statistically revealed by 27.8% agree, 26.7% neutral response, 23.3% strongly agree. Only a small percentage of 18.9% of the respondents Disagree and 3.3% strongly disagree respectively

Table 6 Child care Centre has a care taker

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	21	23.3	23.3	23.3
Agree	25	27.8	26.7	50.0
Neutral	24	26.7	27.8	77.8
Disagree	17	18.9	18.9	96.7
Strongly disagree	3	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	90	100.0	100.0	

PEARSON CORRELATION

Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the degree or strength and direction of linear relationship among the variable. Linearity increases the predictive power of the model and the validity of the estimated coefficients. A correlation of $r > \pm 0.7$ implies that the variables are strongly related either positively or negatively. The study sought to determine the correlation between the variables in order to determine the strength and direction of the relation. A summary of the correlation coefficients for all the variables is shown in table 7.

Table 7 Correlation

	Work life balance policy	Child care services support	Compressed work arrangement	Work schedules
Work life balance policy	1	.919	.935	.960
Child care services support	.919	1	.922	.912
Compressed work arrangement	.935	.922	1	.937
Work schedules	.960	.912	.937	1

Results in the table indicates a strong positive relationship between child care services support and performance at Embu level five hospital with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.919. This implies that the higher the child care services support the better the performance of the public health facility.

The relationship between compressed work arrangement and performance at Embu level five hospital is strong as well and positive with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.935. This indicates that the higher the compressed work arrangement, the better the performance of Embu level five hospital.

Finally the results indicate a strong positive relationship between work schedules and performance at Embu level five hospital with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.960. This implies that the more the work schedules the better the performance of the Embu level five hospital.

Regression Analysis

The study sought to determine the cause-effect relationship between work life balance and organizational performance at Embu level five hospital.

Table 8: Strength of the model

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.939 ^a	.886	.875	.299	.394

From table 4.16, the value of R is 0.939 and R^2 is 0.886. An R^2 0.886 means that 88.6% of variations in organizational performance of Embu level five hospital are explained by changes in work life balance policy, child care services support, compressed work arrangement and work schedules on staff performance. The remaining 11.4% of variations in organization performance of Embu level five hospital is explained by other factors outside the model. This implies a moderate relationship between the variables hence the model is fairly reliable in predicting the changes in organizational performance at Embu level five hospital.

Table 9: Significance of the model

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	46.730	4	11.683	130.707	.00 ^b
	Residual	6.257	70	.089		
	Total	52.987	74			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance at Embu level Five hospital

b. Predictors: (Constant), work life balance policy, child care services support, compressed work arrangement and work schedules on staff performance

The results in table 9 indicates an F-test value of 130.707 with a P-value of $0.00 < 0.05$. This implies that the overall model is significant in explaining the variations in performance Organizational Performance at Embu level Five hospital.

Regression Analysis Model

In determining the cause-effect relationship between the dependent variable and the explanatory variables, the multiple regression model analysis was used. The regression coefficients were tested using t-test at the 5% level of significance. The results are presented in table 10.

Table 10 : Coefficient of variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95.0% Confidence Interval for B		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	.342	.110		3.104	.003	.122	.562
Work life balance policy	-.163	.112	-.235	1.448	.032	-.387	.061
Child care services support	.279	.082	.399	3.407	.001	.116	.443

From table 10, the constant is 0.342 implying that organizational Performance at Embu level Five hospital will increase by 0.342 units when work life balance policy, child care services support on staff performance are all held constant. The coefficients for work life balance policy, child care services support, compressed work arrangement and work schedules on staff performance are -0.163, 0.279, -0.139 and 0.671 respectively. Therefore the model is presented as follows

$$Y = 0.342 + (-0.163) X_1 + 0.279 X_2 + \varepsilon \text{ Where:}$$

Y = Organizational Performance at Embu level Five hospital

α = Correlation coefficient

β_1, β_2 and β_3, β_4 = Coefficients of determination of the independent variables

X_1 = Work life balance policy

X_2 = Child care services support

ε = Error term

Influence of work life balance policy on organizational performance at Embu level five hospital

The study sought to find out the influence of work life balance policy on organizational performance. In table 10, the coefficient of work life balance policy is -0.163 with P-value of $0.032 < 0.05$, implying that a unit rise in work life balance policy will result in change in

organizational performance by 0.163 units with all other variables being held constant. The results also means that the null hypothesis that work life balance policy has no relationship with organizational performance was rejected and concluded that there is statistically significant influence of work life balance policy on organizational performance at 5% level of significance. This may be attributed to the fact that public hospitals have really upgraded and expanded.

Influence of child care services support on organizational performance at Embu level five hospital

The study sought to establish the influence of child care services support on organizational performance. From table 10, the coefficient of child care services support is 0.279 with P-value $0.001 < 0.005$, implying that a unit change in child care services support will result in performance of organizational performance by 0.279 units with all other variables being held constant. The results also means that the null hypothesis that child care services support has no relationship with organizational performance was rejected and concluded that there is statistically significant effect of child care services support on organizational performance at 5% level of significance. This may be attributed to the fact that Embu level five hospital has really developed and increased.

Conclusion

The researcher concluded that work life balance influences the performance at Embu Level Five Hospital. The study also concluded that compressed work schedules made employees to experience much stress.

Recommendations of the study

In order for the organization to improve and maintain good performance, it is very prudent that work life balance should well be addressed. This particular research work recommends that Embu Level five hospital to give proper attention to processes and procedures in the organization. These types of procedures include coming up with professional programs that focus on giving employee adequate skills on how to handle job related challenges resulting to improvement in performance.

Suggestions for further research

The research only focused on employees in Embu level five hospital. The future research should focus on other level five hospitals like Thika Level 5 hospital, Nyeri Level 5 Hospital, among many other hospitals. The research only focused on the influence of work life balance on performance at Embu level five hospital, the subsequent research work should be done while considering the effect of work life balance on job satisfaction of employee in Embu level five hospital. The research also used stratified random sampling method to sample the population. This method is costly and time consuming. The subsequent research should consider using non-probabilistic type of sampling as it is less costly and time saving.

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