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Impact of Work Life Balance on the Psychological Wellbeing of Employees in the University of Cape Coast.

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of Work Life Balance (WLB) on the wellbeing of employees their gender differences in the University of Cape Coast.Descriptive survey method was adopted. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a total of 291 respondents from both the lecturing and administrative staff to respond to the questionnaire. Regression and independent sample t-test were used to analyse the data. The study found that there was a statistically significant difference in the work life balance of male and female participants with females having more difficulty with their work-life balance issues.The study also revealed that the work life balance of employees has a significant impact on employees' wellbeing. It was recommended that staff of the university who might be at risk of difficulties associated with their work life should take advantage the counselling and other psychological services offered by the counselling centre of the university.

Keywords: Work Life Balance, Psychological Wellbeing, Employees, Gender

Introduction

The origins of research on work life balance could be traced back to studies of women having multiple roles. This evidence is found in the work of Barnett and Baruch (as cited in Mukhtar, 2013) as they investigated the psychological distress connected to the balance of rewards and concerns generated by individual women's multiple roles as paid worker, wives and mothers. According to Perrons (as cited in Mukhtar, 2013) noted that, typically, many individuals assume balance as a gendered concept (Aburdene & Naisbitt, 1992; English, 2003; Stephens, 1994) that applies only to women. Recently, several studies have revealed that the construct applies to professionals of both genders and at various levels of their professional careers (Armour, 2003; Blair-Loy, 2003; Byalick & Saslow, 1993). Mukhtar (2003) noted that over the past two decades, various studies on work life balance practices have been conducted and have been discussed in publications representing a number of different academic disciplines – economics (e.g., Johnson & Provan, 1995; Whitehouse & Zetlin, 1999), family studies (Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001), gender studies (e.g., Wayne & Cordeiro, 2003), industrial relations (Batt & Valcour, 2003), information systems (Baines & Gelder, 2003; Frolick, Wilkes, & Urwiler, 1993), management (Konrad & Mangel, 2000; Perry-Smith & Blum, 2000), social psychology (Hegtvedt, Clay-Warner, & Ferrigno, 2002), and sociology (Blay-Loy & Wharton, 2002; Glass & Estes, 1997). The most common approach is to view work life balance practices through a business case lens: that is, by offering these practices, organisations attract new members and reduce levels of work life conflict among existing ones, and this improves recruitment and reduces work life conflict which enhance organisational effectiveness.

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Work life balance has been studied within the context of business, for-profit organisations (Blair-Loy, 2003; English, 2003; Stephens, 1994). Today, work life balance has become an increasingly pervasive concern to both employers and employees of most organisations. As a result, initiatives such as flexible working hours, alternative work arrangements, leave policies and benefits in lieu of family care responsibilities and employee assistance programmes have become a significant part of most of the company benefit programmes and compensation packages (Mukhtar, 2013).

The Dean of the Faculty of Education of UCC as reported in the Ghana News Agency (2011) noted that the norm for the student – teacher ratio according to the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE) should be 12:1 for the sciences and 18:1 for the humanities. However, available statistics at the University of Cape Coast show that on the average the ratio is as high as 30:1 for the sciences and 40: 1 for the humanities (*Ghana News Agency, 2011*). The University of Cape Coast has experienced increased enrolments from a figure of 155 in 1963 to 43,144 in 2013. This further increased to 74,720 in 2017 which has increased the student- lecturer ratio to 110: 1 which is far above the standards set by the NCTE (UCC Human Resource Management Unit, 2017). This situation has increased the workload of staff which calls for more time and energy. According to Hochschild (2007), jobs and families both demand enormous commitments of time and energy on the worker, especially during peak years of family formation and career growth. Less time spent at home which creates work family conflict and more time spent at work in an attempt to develop more job satisfaction creates a vicious cycle that is depleting family values and home lives. Since the staff of University of Cape Coast have demands both from work and non-work activities it is necessary to establish how these demands affect work life balance and entire wellbeing of staff.

The Impact of Work Life Balance on Psychological Wellbeing of Employees

Work life balance is an important topic in both professional business practice and academic research. The literature indicates a number of WLB definitions. Clark (2000) describes WLB as "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict". The focus on the domains of work and family is vital as family and work are regarded as the most important elements of everyone's life, and any competing demands from work and family life cause conflict and negatively affect the wellbeing of workers (Clark, 2000; Frone, 2000). Therefore, good WLB and wellbeing can be achieved when there is no role conflict, and when people are satisfied with their work and family roles (Clark,2000).The literature shows that common consequences of poor WLB are depression and distress, leading to lower productivity, poorer work quality, higher absenteeism and staff turnover (Seligman, 2011; Hill, 2005). A sample of academics in the UK felt they had little choice in working long hours, and over half reported that their personal lives suffered (Kinman & Jones, 2003).

According to Shankar and Bhatnagar (2010), to understand the need of work life balance, one first needs to understand work life imbalance, as with the understanding of the origin, causes and effects of this imbalance, the balancing act becomes easier. The corporate world of today is exceedingly demanding. The work culture varies from organisation to organisation. Today, the deadlines are getting tighter and an individual's job is not only to match that dead line but also to give quality output. Due to this work pressure it becomes exceedingly difficult to maintain a family life. It becomes very difficult to have the engagement of mind with the engagement of body. In every individual's life there are four stakeholders-own personalities, job, family and society (Gallinsky, 2005). It is very important to give equal importance to all the stakeholders. A person who is a workaholic and does not enjoy his or her family life cannot be termed a successful person. When a life encounters such imbalance then the peace and harmony of life vanishes and there is an adverse effect of it on the work life too. To avoid such a situation one should always try to avoid this imbalance in life. The transition from work life imbalance to work life balance has obvious benefits to an organisation and its employees (Collins, 2007).

At the organisational level, balanced nature of work increases productivity and efficiency of employees. Employees become more creative and derive more satisfaction from work. Better team work and communication offer a conducive working environment. This leads to enjoyment at work and increased passion for it. Stress levels from the employee decrease thereby helping an organisation to inherently develop a strong value system (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley, 2005).

Greenhaus and Powell (2006) believe that work life balance on an individual level can bring phenomenal changes in his or her life and can also heavily impact a society. A balanced work life is of advantage to an employee's health. Stress levels decline drastically to healthy levels. Individuals, derive more value from their work and from life that leads to greater satisfaction and is also seen as amode of self-actualization.

The employee can better understand the nature of his work life balance as work life balance can vary among individuals. It is at this point of time that an employee starts resting immense trust in the organisation and his commitment levels to the organisation increase. On the social front, the individual gains when relationships improve. The individual can now willingly devote more time and energy to his social commitments, which is also vital for a happy life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).Thus, WLB can bring a huge transformation at the organisational and individual levels. It helps an organisation to inherently build a strong value system, which is attributed to the work life balance enjoyed at the employee level. Consequently, the organisation does not have to impose a formulated framework of organisational values because they now become intrinsic to it. Collins (2007) suggests that at the individual level work life balance enjoys it success in addressing societal issues. It helps in healing a society of its problems such as increasing in fertility among working people, increasing number of divorcees and its adverse effect on children.

The study of De-Nobile and McCormick (2008) showed that age is related to the job satisfaction and work life issues of workers. In a similar vein, the study of Firebaugh and Harley (1995) showed that as age is related to job issues experienced by workers. In terms of the wellbeing of employees, the study of Iiacqua, Schumacher and Li (1995) revealed that demographic factors including age have little or no impact on job satisfaction. The implication is that the satisfaction of respondents at the workplace including their wellbeing does not depend on their age. Similarly, Raju and Rahamtulla (2007) found that age does not have a significant influence on adjustment and satisfaction.

Boohene, Charles and Agyemang (2012) studied a sample of 117 faculty members of All Nations University, Ghana and Loyola Institute of Technology and Science, India and found that one hundred and seven (107) agreed to being sometimes depressed as a result of their current work. One hundred and fifteen (115) respondents worried about their work either sometimes, often or always. Six (6) variables of work life balance programme and policy options namely annual leave and public holiday leave, flexible working hours, training leave, maternity leave, study/exam leave, and work place health promotion proved to be very important variables capable of ensuring productivity of faculty members in the study areas. Again, based on parametric testing using chi-square it was revealed that productivity of faculty members was dependent on work life balance programmes and policies and hence this further suggests a positive relationship between productivity and work life balance programmes and policies.

Work Life Balance and Gender

Over the last few decades, global demographic changes such as an increased participation of women in the work force, two-income households, single-parent families and elder care have resulted in increased challenges faced by workers who tried to balance demands of work and family life (Tennant & Sperry, 2003).These challenges and higher demands from work and family life have been found to have negative effects on the well being of workers and their families (Hochschild, 1997), and resulted in family work conflicts and work family conflicts (Aryee, Srinivas & Tan, 2005).

Ampah (2012) studied the work life balance of Ghanaian career women and found that the four major contributing factors that help career women balance work and family roles were external help, proper planning, good relationship with supervisors and employees, and finally the flexibility of their respective jobs. Under each theme, there were certain factors that helped them to achieve a balance in both spheres of their lives. Most of the women interviewed had flexible time schedules and they stayed longer at work when the need arose, and could also report late or early depending on the work load at work. The managerial position of most of these respondents allowed this flexibility of not having a fixed time to report or leave the office. It was also observed that all the women performed some domestic house chores such as cooking, washing, cleaning, and going to the market to buy food stuff for the family. On the other hand, most of them also had house helps who assisted in such chores. Some house chore such as cooking was entirely performed by the women and sweeping was mostly done by the house helps. Some women who had younger children also assisted their children with their homework, made sure their children and husbands were well fed before they go to school and work. Basically, the traditional role of a woman as perceived in the traditional Ghanaian society still exist and this feature is evident in how although these career women have their career, they still owe it to their family to perform their family roles.

In terms of the respondents' satisfaction with their level of balance at work and family roles, 74 percent of the women answered 'yes', 12 percent answered 'no' and finally 14 percent answered 'sometimes' (meaning these women were sometimes satisfied and other times not, depending on the pressure each sphere demands from her at a given time). The respondents who answered yes to being satisfied with their current balance at work and family roles believed that successful work life balance was a process which needed adjustments at every point in time when necessary. Therefore, for those who were not satisfied with their work life roles, they believed they could find factors such as changing their jobs to a more flexible one, get external help from family members and house help in order to have time and attend to their work and family responsibilities.

The Irish labour force has experienced a significant increase in female workers and two-income households (Grady, McCarthy, Darcy, & Kirrane 2008; Hilliard, 2007). Hilliard (2007) noticed that in the past three decades, Ireland experienced a significant increase in female workers staying in the paid work force after getting married or retuning to work after having children. This could be caused by changing attitudes of Irish people towards the traditional view of men being bread winners and women being housewives looking after children. Research shows that married women seem to work fewer hours than married men. Fine-Davis, Fagnani, Giovannini, Hojgaard and Clarke (2004) found that in Ireland fathers worked weekly 45 hours and mothers worked 32 hours. Recent statistics show that in 2011, 14.7 percent of married women worked 40 hours or more a week, compared with 44.5 percent of married men. Fine-Davis, McCarthy, Edge and O'Dwyer (2005) argued that men did not contribute as much time to household activities and child care as women, hence WLB initiatives seem to be used more often by women than by men.

Drew and Murtagh (2005) revealed that the greatest obstacle to achieving WLB is seen as the "long hours" culture in which availing oneself of flexible options (e.g. working from home/reduced hours/flexitime) is incompatible with holding a senior management post. Many of the senior men have followed the "breadwinner" model by being able to delegate family and caring activities to their wives. This option has not been possible for the majority of women in senior posts. Hence, men seek WLB to resolve commuting/working time issues. Women want to avail themselves of more flexible arrangements for family/quality of life reasons. Both men and women in senior management recognise that their own careers would be seriously jeopardised by taking up WLB arrangements.

In a 2001, survey conducted by the Radcliff Public Policy Center in the United States of America (USA), 82 percent of men and 85 percent of women in the USA placed family time at the top of their work life priorities. In the same year a study conducted by Rutgers University, USA and the University of Connecticut, USA indicated that 90 percent of working adults in the USA said they are concerned that they do not spend enough time with their families (Swift, 2002). Friedman and Greenhaus (2000) studied more than 800 business professionals considering values, work and family lives and found that, work and family, the dominant life roles for most employed men and women in contemporary society, can either help or hurt each other. Friedman and Greenhaus emphasized that conflict between work and family has real consequences and significantly affects quality of family life and career attainment of both men and women.

The study of Agarwal, Mishra, and Dixit (2015) showed that there is significant relationship between demographic variables and work life balance of employees. Agarwal, Mishra and Dixit found specifically that gender affects the work life balance of employees, concluding that balancing work and home life is difficult for women employees. Similarly, several studies such as that of Gutek, Searle, and Klepa (1991), Grzywacz and Carlson (2007), and Rajadhyaksha and Velgach (2009) have all showed that there is a gender difference in work life conflict with women having more issues than men. Gutek, Searle, and Klepa (1991) specifically reported that women had more work life interference than men despite spending about same numbers of hours in paid work as men. The similarity among the findings stems from the fact that it is generally the primary responsibility of women for childcare and therefore must adjust their work and family lives (Falkenberg & Monachello, 1990). This puts an extra pressure on women employees. Jenkins (2000) affirmed that issues such as bringing up children, the necessity of balancing numerous tasks etc. Affected health and family associations. Jenkins argued that it was particularly so for female workers. In a similar vein, Hyman and Summers (2004) posited that there were indicators of gender disparities in handling work life balance.

As such, notwithstanding their employment standing women were still principally responsible for domestic tasks and many of them consequently continued to be confronted by challenges in work life balance. These challenges affected their health and general wellbeing.

Burke (2002) posited that men tended to gain more or had more satisfaction than women at the work place since women put down firm borders between work and family and mostly disagreed with them overlapping or spilling over. As such women could exhibit discontentment, upset, aggravation and anxiety where work hindered them from taking care of their families. But men tended to achieve higher levels of fulfilment with better accomplishments at work irrespective of the ensuing effects on their family neglect.

According to Vandana and Meenakshi (2013), Work life balance was a critical aspect to enhance teacher effectiveness and satisfaction in the context of student learning. They argued that a good quality of work life balance resulted into the wellness of the faculty and also improved student behaviour. In a study Vandana and Meenakshi (2013) investigated the quality of work life balance among Indian teachers serving in different academic streams across universality and colleges. It emerged that designation of the teachers, their nature of appointment, the academic stream in which they were teaching, and the nature of their serving institution affected their quality of work life balance directly and significantly. They however, did not find significant marital status no variations in the quality of work life balance of the teachers on account of gender and marital status.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose was to examine the extent to which work life balance impacted the wellbeing of staff of the University of Cape Coast. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the impact of WLB on the psychological wellbeing of university staff.
2. Find out whether there were differences in the WLB of the staff of University of Cape Coast on account of gender.
3. Find out whether there were differences in the psychological wellbeing of staff of the University of cape Coast on account of gender

Research Hypotheses

1. H_0: Work life balance will not significantly impact thepsychological wellbeing of staff of University of Cape Coast.
   H_1: Work life balance will significantly impact thepsychological wellbeing of staff of University of Cape Coast.
2. H_0: There is no significant difference between work life balance of male and female staff of the University of Cape Coast.
   H_1: There is a significant difference between work life balance of male and female staff of the University of Cape Coast.
3. H_0: There is no significant difference between psychological wellbeing of male and female staff of the University of Cape Coast.
   H_1: There is a significant difference between psychological wellbeing of male and female staff of the University of Cape Coast.

Methods

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive design approach because it has the advantage of generating a reasonable amount of responses from a relatively wide range of respondents. It provides meaningful and lucid picture of events to explain people's perception and reaction on the basis of data gathered at a particular point in time (Kumar, 2005).

Participants

The study was conducted at the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and involved all lecturers and administrative staff from the five colleges of the university (Agriculture and Natural Science, Distance Education, Education Studies, Health and Allied Sciences, and Humanities and Legal Studies).

The total population of staff of UCC at the time the study was conducted was 1,217. This consisted of 681 lectures and 536 administrative staff (UCC Human Resource Unit, 2017). In order tom make the sample have a university wide representation, steps were taken through appropriate sampling procedures to ensure that staff from different colleges were included. A sample of 291 was selected through stratified random sampling using college, status, and gender as criteria foe stratification. The participants consisted of 163 lecturers and 128 administrative staff. The lecturers were made up of 135 males and 28 females whiles there was 59 males and 69 females administrative staff.

Instruments

The researches adapted two research instruments to collect data for the study. The first instrument, WLB Survey was developed by Brett and Stroh (2003). The instrument was used to measure the WBL of the respondents. It consisted of 36 items and included the following measures and indicators: family involvement, family satisfaction, family to work stress, work to family stress, family alienation, balance, work load, job satisfaction and job involvement. For the purpose of this study, four subscales were considered. These were work life balance (0.79), employee policy (0.84), work overload (0.80) and job satisfaction (0.84). The figures in parenthesis are the reliability indexes for each subscale.

All the items in WLB Survey were structured on a 4 point Likert-type scale. The second instrument was the version of Psychological General Wellbeing Index (PGWBI) by Grossi, Grot, Mosconi, Cerutti, Pace, Compare and Apolone (2006). It consisted of 16 items and was used to measure its Psychological well-being of the respondents. The items on this instrument were related to anxiety, vitality, depressed mood, self-control and positive well-being. All the items in this instrument were structured on a 5 point Likert-type scale and had reliability co-efficient of 0.80.

Measure of work life balance

Brett and Stroh (2003) developed a survey of WLB that operationalizes the construct from a situation perspective, which measures WLB according to the respondents' point of view and overall satisfaction with variables related to WLB. The survey is composed of 36 questions and includes the following measures and indicators: family involvement, family satisfaction, family to work stress, work to family stress, family alienation, balance, work overload, job satisfaction, and job involvement.

Brett and Stroh's (2003) WLB survey was developed to understand WLB from the subjective experience of the employee. The authors intended to account for a more elastic sense of time and balance, for instance when someone multitasks by doing chores while caring for children, and allows for a self-report within a situation list definition of work life balance (Brett & Stroh, 2003; Reiter, 2007). For the purpose of this study four subscales were considered. The reliability indexes for the four subscales were (a) work life balance (0.79), (b) employee policy (0.84), (c) work overload (0.80) and job satisfaction (0.84) (Brett & Stroh, 2003).

Psychological general well being index form

The Psychological General Wellbeing Index (PGWBI) was originally published by Harold J. Dupuy in 1970. The PGWBI is one of the most widely used generic measures of well being or quality of life in terms of mental health. The PGWBI is a self- perceived evaluation of Psychological Wellbeing composed of 22 items with six subscales related to anxiety, depression, positive wellbeing, self-control, general health and vitality (Grossi et al. 2006). The measure is scored on a numbered scale where a higher score is considered indicative of better quality of life or wellbeing. This measure is widely used and is one of the first quality of life measures related to mental health; it has been translated into multiple languages and is used across the world. The measure has proved reliable and valid (Lundgren-Nilson, Jonsdottir, Ahlborg, & Tennant: 2013; Grossi et al., 2006). Grossi et al. (2006) have developed a short version of the measure containing only six questions related to anxiety, vitality, depressed mood, self-control and positive wellbeing. This measure has proved reliable (Cronbach's alpha, 0.80) and valid (Grossi et al., 2006).

Pretesting of the Instruments

To ensure the reliable and valid of the instrument, the instrument was pretested with 30 lecturers and administrative staff of the University of Development Studies (UDS) Tamale Campus UDS between 20th and 31st

March, 2017. The WLB and Psychological wellbeing subsections proved reliable and valid Cronbach's alpha, 0.79 and Cronbach's alpha, 0.85 respectively.

Scoring of the Instrument

The item mean value determined for the work life balance component was two and half (2.5) because it was measured on a four point Likert-Type scale format. The greater the score the lesser the work life balance of the employee and the lower the score the higher the work life balance of the employee. The maximum score for the WLB items is 40 and the minimum score is 10. The mean value of 25 and above indicates the employee has work life imbalance while the mean value below 25 indicates work life balance.

The item mean value determined for the work life balance component was two and half (2.5) because it was measured on a four point Likert-Type scale format. The greater the score the lesser the work life balance of the employee and the lower the score the higher the work life balance of the employee. The maximum score for the WLB items is 40 and the minimum score is 10. The mean value of 25 and above indicates the employee has work life imbalance while the mean value below 25 indicates work life balance.

Procedure

The Ethical Review Board of the College of Education Studies of the University of Cape Coast gave an approval for the study to be conducted after all ethical requirements had been satisfied. All participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they reserve the right to withdraw from participating in the data collection. Participants were also informed that their own identity will remain undisclosed.

The questionnaire was administered to lecturers and administrative staff of the University of Cape Coast daily within the working hours of 8:30am to 4:30pm from 10th to 19th May, 2017. The introductory part of the questionnaire explained the importance of the study to participants and the need for their participation in the study. Data were collected from 163 lecturers and 128 administrative staff totalling 291 respondents representing 100 percent response rate.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data for hypothesis one (1) was tested using simple linear regression analysis. Data on hypotheses two (2) and three (3) were tested using the independent samples t-test. All the statistical tests were conducted at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis one sought to find out the impact of work life balance on the wellbeing of university staff. Simple linear regression was used in finding out the impact of work life balance on university staff. The summary of the results is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Predictive Ability of Work Life Balance on Wellbeing (N=291)

Model		R	R^2	R^2 Change	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)				22.029	.000
	Work life balance	.135	.018	.018	-2.313	.021

Dependent Variable: Wellbeing Significant, $p<0.05$

The result from Table 1 shows that work life balance significantly predicts wellbeing of staff of University of Cape Coast ($r = .135$, $p<0.05$). This implies that work life balance account for 1.8 percent of the variation in wellbeing of university staff.

The purpose of research hypothesis two sought to find out the differences in the work life balance of university staff in terms of gender. The independent samples t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Independent Samples t-test of Work Life Balance of Male and Female Staff

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Males	178	30.9	6.14	289	-5.97*	.000
Females	113	34.5	4.21			

Source: Field survey (2017) *Significant, $p<0.05$

Results in Table 2 show a difference between male and females in their work life balance. Table 2 shows that the mean score for the males was 30.9 while that of the females was 34.5. The standard deviation (SD) for males was 6.14 while the standard deviation (SD) for females was 4.21. The results show that female staff had a weaker work life balance than their male counterparts. It can be concluded from Table 2 that there is a significant difference in the work life balance of males and females. Therefore, based on the result the null Hypothesis One which states that "there is no significant gender difference in work life balance" was rejected; $t(289) = -5.97$, $p<0.05$.

This research hypothesis sought to find out the differences between the wellbeing of male and female staff of University of Cape Coast. The independent samples t-test was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance and the result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test of Psychological Wellbeing of Male and Female Staff

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
Males	178	43.5	7.23	289	2.244*	.035
Females	113	42.5	5.29			

Source: Field survey, (2017) Significant, $p<0.05$

The results in Table 3 shows that gender difference existed in the wellbeing of employees. The results from the Table show that the mean for the males was 43.5 while that of the females was 42.5. Also, the standard deviation (SD) for males was 7.23 while the standard deviation (SD) for females was 5.29. This result shows that male staff had a better psychological wellbeing than their female counterparts. It can therefore be concluded that there is a significant difference in the wellbeing of males and female workers. Therefore, based on the result the null hypothesis three that "there is no significant difference between the wellbeing of male and female staff" was rejected; $t(289)=2.244$, $p<0.05$. Hence, the alternative Hypothesis was upheld.

With respect to the first hypothesis, the results from the linear regression analysis showed that the wellbeing of employees had a significant impact on employees' wellbeing. The implication of this finding is that the issues that affect the wellbeing of employees have the potency of affecting their overall wellbeing. For instance, when the staff of the university work for more hours than they can cope with, their personal lives are likely to be affected thereby affecting their overall wellbeing. This finding supports the finding of Clark (2000) that workplace flexibility which is an element of wellbeing has an impact on employees' wellbeing. Thus, the more flexible the life of an employee the more likely the individual is to be satisfied with his or her job and ultimately have an improved wellbeing. Frone (2000) has also reported that conflicting and competing demands from work and family life can affect the wellbeing of workers. The report of Frone, therefore, implies that wellbeing has an effect on the wellbeing of employees. This was confirmed by the current study. Again, the results of the study support the results from the study of Greenhaus and Powell (2006) that work life balance can affect the wellbeing of employees. Some other studies such as that of Aryee, Srinivas, and Tan (2005) have shown that work life balance can bring phenomenal changes in the lives of employees. The similarity among all these findings implies that WLB can affect the wellbeing of employees.

The findings of research hypothesis two showed that there was a significant difference between the work life balance of male and female staff with females having more difficulty with their work life balance. This finding contradicts Vandana and Meenakshi (2013) that there was no difference in the quality of work life balance of employees across gender. This finding also contradicts the findings of Ampah (2012) that Ghanaian career women experienced work life balance due to external help, proper planning, good relationship with supervisors and employees, and finally the flexibility of their respective jobs.

The results from research hypothesis three revealed that there was a significant difference between the wellbeing of males and female staff with the males experiencing a better wellbeing than their female counterparts. This finding is not surprising because the findings of hypothesis two revealed that female employees had more difficulty with their work life balance.

The burden of adding home chores such as raising children, taking care of the home, and other domestic chores could lead to several challenges in health, happiness and general wellbeing of female staff of the university. The finding confirms the study of Jenkins (2000) that issues such as bringing up children, the necessity of balancing numerous tasks etc. affect health and family associations. This is particularly so for female workers. In a similar vein, Hyman and Summers (2004) posited that there were indicators of gender disparities in handling work life balance.

As such, notwithstanding their employment standing women are still principally responsible for domestic tasks and many of them consequently continued to be confronted by challenges in work life balance. These challenges according to Hyman and Summers affect the health and general wellbeing of female employees. The finding of Burke (2002) makes it even clearer. Burke posited that men tended to gain more or had more satisfaction than women at the work place since women put down firm borders between work and family and mostly disagreed with them overlapping or spilling over. As such women could exhibit discontentment, upset, aggravation and anxiety where work hinders them from taking care of their families. But men tended to achieve higher levels of fulfilment with better accomplishments at work irrespective of the ensuing effects on their family neglect.

Conclusion

The study employed both descriptive statistics in the analysis of the data. The study showed that the work life balance of employees has a significant impact on employees' wellbeing. In addition, it was revealed that there was a significant difference in the work life balance of male and female respondents with females having more difficulty with their work life balance issues. It was again shown that there is a significant difference in the wellbeing of males and female workers with the wellbeing of males being better than the wellbeing of females.

Recommendations

In planning policies for work life balance issues in the university, authorities should give consideration to the gender of employees and put in place interventions that suit the gender of employees. More specifically, interventions that can help female staff members adjust their work life issues better. In this regard gender advocates and civil society organisations should channel their efforts and resources towards educating males to be supportive in house chores, assisting females in time management, fight against work place discrimination and abuse. Also, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and Parliament should put in place legislation that enforces work and family friendly policies such as paternity leave, employment protected leave for parents, and telework to assist females achieve WLB.

It is also recommended that staff of the university who might be at risk of difficulties associated with their work life balance, more specifically, female staff should take advantage of counselling and other psychological services offered by the guidance and counselling centre of the University of Cape Coast.

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