



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**TITLE: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WORK – FAMILY POLICY TOWARDS WORK
– LIFE BALANCE AMONG EMPLOYEES IN PRIVATE SECTOR**

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**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WORK – FAMILY POLICY TOWARDS WORK – LIFE
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This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of requirements for a
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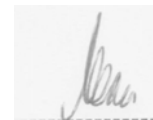
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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of work – family policy towards work – life balance among employees in private sectors. Moreover, this study is specifically focused on employees who are married with children and what are the issues and challenges with work, family, personal and other related issues faced by them in order to have a balance work and life. To reduce employees burden at work, organization have implemented work – family policies to benefit the employees. This study was conducted to explore the effectiveness of the current work – family policies to the employees. From this study, it is identified that the most and least effective work – family policies in the organization and improvement that can be done to the current policies. The research design used in this study is case study and interview is used as an instrument to collect necessary data from the informants. The most suitable sampling for this study were purposive sampling. The findings of this study have revealed that there is a need to make improvement on the current work – family policies and few suggestions on other work – family policies which can be implemented. Informants have also stated their most and least effective work – family policies in the organization. Last but not least, the results from this study were important for HR practitioners to build an understanding of work-life balance environment in the organization so that work-life balance initiatives are supported by the organization in helping employees, especially those are having difficulties to manage their work and family domain. This can be a ground for the employees to have a proper balance between their work and family domain.

Keywords: Employees, work – life balance, work – family policies, challenges, improvement

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji keberkesanan polisi mesra keluarga terhadap pekerjaan - keseimbangan hidup di antara pekerja di sektor swasta. Lebih-lebih lagi, kajian ini secara khusus difokuskan pada pekerja yang sudah berkahwin dengan anak-anak, mempunyai masalah dan cabaran dengan pekerjaan, keluarga, peribadi dan masalah lain yang dihadapi oleh mereka untuk mempunyai keseimbangan kerja - keseimbangan hidup. Untuk mengurangkan beban pekerja di tempat kerja, organisasi telah melaksanakan dasar kerja - keluarga untuk memberi manfaat kepada pekerja. Kajian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui keberkesanan kerja keluarga - polisi keluarga kepada pekerja, Dari kajian ini, pengkaji mengetahui dasar pekerjaan - keluarga yang paling berkesan dalam organisasi dan peningkatan yang dapat dilakukan terhadap dasar semasa. Reka bentuk kajian yang digunakan dalam kajian ini adalah kajian kes dan wawancara digunakan sebagai instrumen untuk mengumpulkan data yang diperlukan dari informan. Persampelan yang paling sesuai untuk kajian ini adalah persampelan bertujuan. Penemuan kajian ini telah menunjukkan bahawa ada keperluan untuk membuat penambahbaikan terhadap pekerjaan semasa - dasar keluarga dan beberapa cadangan mengenai pekerjaan lain - dasar keluarga yang dapat dilaksanakan. Pemberi maklumat juga telah menyatakan dasar kerja - keluarga mereka yang paling berkesan dan tidak berkesan dalam organisasi. Akhir sekali, hasil dari kajian ini penting bagi pengamal sumber manusia untuk membina pemahaman mengenai lingkungan keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dalam organisasi sehingga inisiatif keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan disokong oleh organisasi dalam membantu pekerja, terutama mereka yang menghadapi kesukaran untuk menguruskan pekerjaan dan keluarga mereka. Ini dapat menjadi alasan bagi pekerja untuk memiliki keseimbangan yang tepat antara domain pekerjaan dan keluarga mereka.

Kata kunci: Pekerja, keseimbangan kerja – kehidupan, kerja – dasar keluarga, cabaran.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The core of this research is to study the effectiveness of work family policy towards work life balance among employees in private sector. There are several sections in this chapter. The first section describes about the background of study. The next section elaborates the problem statement followed by stating the research objectives which is general and specific objectives. The research question will be developed parallel to the specific objectives. Moreover, the significance of study is being intended. The limitations of study will be discussed and towards end of this chapter definition of terms will be defined both conceptually and operationally to explain the terms used in this study. The end of this chapter is a summary.

1.1 Background of study

According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2018), labour force in Malaysia have increased to nearly 15.3 million individuals in 2018 compared to 15 million in 2017. The participation of male work force has increased drastically compared to female work force. If we take a closer look on the statistic, the number of women entering workplace has increased in all the countries. According to Sohrab and Karambayya (2016), the number of economies have become industrialized and the service sector has brought up many opportunities for women in order to create a successful pathways in their life. Moreover, women's involvement in the labour force has contributed a steady increase in dual-career

couples where both spouses having professional careers (Rahman, Mustaffa, Wahid, and Samsuddin, 2018).

Harmony between work and life is one of the main issues and concerns of the 21st century is stabilizing work and family is among the severe challenges faced by current employees in private sector (Sharma, 2018). Work and life both are important aspect for any of the organization to manage. In this scenario, an employee needs to balance the status between personal and professional life in order to be successful in life. According to Tiwari (2017), it is important for an employee to understand how much and how long they require to work hard in order to achieve a win- win situation in the end and satisfaction in achieving a balanced work life. In this current era, employees spend half their day at work and return home at night. In this case, meeting all the demands of both the work and family domain is very crucial as their energy level is not constant. Thus, it may end up in conflict and lead to some kind of dissatisfaction in managing their roles (Murthy and Shastri, 2015).

Based on the research done by Development (2010), The National Family Policy (NFP) aims at developing families prosperous, safe and resilient to maintain social stability. According to NFP, there are five challenges affecting contemporary families. First challenge is children where they are abused and neglect by their family. Then, Adolescent often face challenges like abandoned babies, immorality, drugs and influence of foreign cultures. Husband/ wife often face challenges in relationship, infidelity and divorce. Parent main challenges are in financial, problem with adolescent and work life balance. Lastly, Elderly. They often face loneliness, health and financial stability. Therefore, NFP came up with a policy statement to prioritize family viewpoints to ensure quality generation in all socio-economic development initiatives.

1.2 Problem Statement

The main aim of this research is to determine the effectiveness of work family policy on the work life balance of an employee and their satisfaction towards the policy. According to Goyal and Babel (2015), Work-life balance is a struggle for employers and employees alike who are filled with jobs at work and also have to balance family and personal life at the same time. Work life balance issue arises when they fail to manage work life and personal life as both are two sides of the same coin. Besides, when it comes to married women employee to face the hardship as the competition at the work place is high and they need to be more effective (Tiwari, 2017). This is where many women lose their attention on their family and pay more attention on their career in order to be ahead of other employees at workplace. According to Greenhaus and Kopelman (1981); Marican and Sabil (2017) studies on work-family conflict has explored into various dimensions such as age, sex, number of children and amount of time spent along with aspects of organization which are number of working hours, type of jobs which have identified as the causes of conflict between work and family.

In order to overcome the imbalance in work and life, work - family policies were put in place to minimize the impact of job on family life. For instance, the size of the organizations has influenced the work-family policy. Based on the research done by Poelmans, Chinchilla, and Cardona (2003), the large company in Spain designed more policies as there are many foreigners working in that company.

The research above was supported by Ahmad (2007), where the research have shown that the implementation of work family policy have encountered positive outcome including with satisfaction on work life balance, reduced work-family conflict, reduced turnover and greater commitment to the organization. Despite coming up with all this policies, several studies have shown that implementation of this policies does not bring much satisfaction to

the employees. Thus, this study examines the effectiveness of work family policy in private sector and get employees opinions on how to improve on the current policies.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to study the effectiveness of work - family policies towards work - life balance among employees in private sector.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

- I. To explore the work, family, personal and other related issues and challenges faced by the employees.
- II. To explore the implementation towards the current work - family policy in the organization.
- III. To suggest the improvement that can be done on the current work - family policies in the organization.

1.4 Research Questions

- I. What are the work related issues and challenges faced by an employee?
- II. What are the family related issues and challenges faced by an employee?
- III. What are the personal issues and challenges faced by an employee?
- IV. What are the other issues faced by an employee?
- V. What is the employee's satisfaction level towards the current work family policies?
- VI. What are the other suggested work family policies to the organization?

1.5 Significance of the study

This research can be said to be significant since this research can contribute to different aspects. Encountering the issues and challenges faced by the employees in depth is the understanding of how far work life balance needs attention from the respected authorities. Based on the research done by Rahman et al. (2018), Government and private companies provides different kinds of work-family policies. For instance, Government bodies provide childcare, medical benefit, maternity and paternity leave for the employees. Whereas in Private companies support for the employees will be limited. There is many research done in the western countries on work-family policies. In Malaysia, not much research has done on this and after realizing the imbalance in an employee's work-life balance. Thus, this study is done in order to study the effectiveness of work-family policies, employee's satisfaction towards it and work-life balance.

Besides that, this study will also help the organization. The Human Resource Department can use this study to implement more work-family policies or make some amendment in the current policies. From this study, Human Resource can know what kind of policies does an employee want in order to have a work-life balance.

Furthermore, there a books, articles and journals that has specified about work-family policies and how does it affect work-life balance. Researchers from western countries have implemented numerous strategies to overcome employee's problems on work-family policies. For this reason, this study is conducted to contribute to the literature on work-family policy.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

This study consists of few limitations. This research was limited to male and female employees working in Malaysia who are married with children. The data collection was done in qualitative way where several interviews were carried out in order to search for the right informants.

The informants involved in this study are from selected state in Malaysia which is Selangor. To be more specific, this research is conducted in Wisma Tenaga Nasional Berhad (TNB), Jalan Timur, Petaling Jaya. Informants are from the Human Resource Business Partners Department in TNB. Hence, the findings might not be fitting for other settings. This study is also time-consuming as it involved interview for data collection.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Terms that are used in this study are defined conceptually and operationally in that order of sequence.

1.7.1 Work – family polices

The conceptual definition according to Galinsky, Aumann, and Bond (2013) work – family policy are the employer governments implement work-family policies to help workers balance their job and non-work responsibilities, encourage positive involvement in the operation of the labor market, family and personal life to improve the quality of life.

In this study, work-family policies prepared by the organization for the employees for example leave and flexible working time.

1.7.2 Work – family conflict

Work-family conflict is referred to bi-directional and multi-dimensional. The bi-directionality comes from the concept that work can interfere with family, and that family can interfere with work. Whereby, multidimensional nature of work/family conflict occurs in each direction (Carlson, Kacmar, & Williams, 2000).

In this research, imbalance work-family policy will interrupt work-life balance of an employee which will conduce conflict between family and work.

1.7.3 Work – life balance

Work-life balance means how much time you spend doing your job compared to how much time you spend with your family and other things you enjoy doing. It is a comfortable balance between the main priorities of the employee's job position and personal life. (Meenakshi & V, 2013).

In this research, work-life balance is when the employee has a balance between work and family domain.

1.8 Summary

In a nutshell, this research is done to study the effectiveness of work - family policy towards work - life balance among employees in private sector. This chapter has discussed the background of the study, the problem statement that has been identified together with the research gap. Then, the general and specific objectives have been crafted to determine the purpose of the study. The research questions have been developed parallel to the research objectives. In addition, the significance of the study has been discussed to discover the expectation and the importance of the study to be carried out. The limitation of study has been also discussed after that. Lastly, definition of terms for work-family policies, work-family conflict and work-life balance have been defined in both conceptual and operational. The next chapter delves into the review of the literature.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

There are several sections in this chapter. The first part of this chapter will be discussion on issues related to the topic. For example, work-related issues, family-related issues and other – related issue. Besides, there will be discussion theories related to work-family policies. Moreover, there will be some discussion on the past similar findings done by scholars, that can be used to explain in this research. This literature related to this research will be reviewed from different sources like thesis, journals, articles, books and other relevant resources.

2.1 Work-life balance

The term Work-life balance was first coined in 1986 and used as everyday language in all these years. Work/life programs have existed in early 1930s. An organization's policies and procedures developed to encourage employees to perform their job efficiently while allowing flexibility in dealing with personal issues or family issues. Moreover, there should be a healthy work and life when there is a good working at work and at home. Incompatibility between the domain of work and non-work results in conflict and this is when people experience a lack of work-life balance. This imbalance will directly lead in job exhaustion, stressed and disruption in relationship (Meenakshi & V, 2013).

According to the research done by Goyal and Babel (2015), Work-life balance is a key area of concern for gurus, who perceive work and life as critical in terms of workplace quality in the general and service industries. Attaining “work-life balance” is not as simple as it sounds. Work-life conflicts arise when work and family roles ' responsibility, obligations and responsibilities are compatible. Kumari (2012) have stressed that each of the factors of work-life balance is an important predictor of job satisfaction and that there is an identical gap between women and men in job satisfaction with reference to different factors of work-life balance. In the study she conducted in a banking industry in 2012, there was a practical significance of improving employee commitments and productivity, along with recruitment and retention of employees, for human resource managers of the bank in particular.

Chavare and Kasmi (2017) discussed the idea of work-life balance has resulted in the fact that the work and personal life of an individual may have competing demands on each other as both areas are very important.. Work-life balance is about maintaining a balance between work-to-home obligations. As years goes by, Work-life balance is one of the most challenging problems faced by employees in the 21st century, because the type of roles they play at home and at work is completely different.

According to the research done by Kumar and Prakash (2016), this study aims to examine the relationship between policies on work-life balance and employee satisfaction. Work-life balance is the balance between work and other activities which involves tension between official and household life. Employment satisfaction refers to the attitude towards their work and their organizations. Besides, the quality of work policies is becoming part of the business strategy and reflecting on the value of these policies is affecting the quality of work and, most significantly, allowing workers to maintain a work-life balance with fair work and family time.

2.1.1 Work related issues

The main issues related to work are work stress. When pressure at work becomes unmanageable that's where it leads to stress as the employee could not manage with the stress. Besides, some workplace stress is normal but when there is excessive stress Besides, some workplace stress is normal but when there is excessive stress it can interfere the employee's productivity and performance, impacting physical and emotional health and affecting relationship and work-life balance. Moreover, work-related stress can lead to health problems like heart attack, hypertension and burnout (Stress, 2018).

According to Smith, Segal, Robinson, and Segal (2018), Burnout is an excessive and prolonged state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion. This happens when a person feels exhausted, drained emotionally and unable to meet any requirements. When pressure continues, a person will start losing interest and motivation, which in the first place will lead to a certain job. Burnout decreases productivity and makes a person feel helpless, hopeless and resentful. Based on the research by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996), burnout consists of three dimensions which are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal accomplishment.

The signs of burnout are further divided into three which are physical signs, emotional signs and behavioural signs. Example of physical signs are feeling tired and drained, lowered immunity and frequent headaches. Emotional signs can be self-doubt, feelings of detachment, lack of motivation and feeling overwhelmed. Behavioural signs are withdrawing from responsibilities. This is where imbalance of work-life balance occurs. Isolating yourself from others and procrastination are also the signs under behavioural. In all aspects of life, including home, work and social life, the negative effects of burnout exist.