

INFLUENCE OF WORK LIFE BALANCE ON EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION: A CASE OF NORTHERN RANGELANDS TRUST IN ISIOLO COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

The term work life environment is used to describe the surrounding conditions in which an employee operates as well as where he lives and how both affect his productivity. Employees should meet the performance criteria set by the organization to ensure the quality of their work. The study objective was to determine the influence of work life conflict on job satisfaction among employees of the Northern Rangelands Trust. This research focused on the employees of Northern Rangelands Trust. The study employed descriptive research design and the population of interest for this study consisted of employees of Northern Rangelands Trust and who are specifically classified to be in top management, middle management, lower management staff and non-management. The organization has a workforce of 132 employees. The study used stratified random sampling method to ensure balanced representation in the sample and to reduce biasness in sample selection as each element was to be subjected to equal chance in selection. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The study sought to find out whether home and family responsibilities affect the work life of the respondents and how this affects job satisfaction. The results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation while data presentation was done using tables. The study found that there is relationship

between work life balance and employee satisfaction. It was recommended that management should try as much as possible to build a work environment that attracts, retain and motivate its employees so as to help them work comfortable and increase organization productivity hence the feeling of job security.

Keywords: Influence, Work Life Balance, Employee, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Culture

INTRODUCTION

The fast pace economic development in 20th century, across the globe has created new endeavors for the business organizations. Globalization has changed the world into a global village. This change has pushed the organizations for striving hard to gain and sustain their competitive advantage in the market, by reducing cost, increasing profits and enhancing the operations. The changing world scenario also evoked the changes in the organizational culture (Nadeem and Abbas, 2009). The term work life environment is used to describe the surrounding conditions in which an employee operates as well as where he lives and how both affect his productivity. The work environment can be composed of physical conditions, such as office temperature, or equipment, such as personal computers. It can also be related to factors such as work processes or procedures (Armstrong, 2009).

Apart from the job scope itself, one factor that significantly influences how employees feel about work is the environment. By work environment, it means everything that forms part of employees' involvement with the work itself, such as the relationship with co-workers and supervisors, organizational culture, room for personal development. The work environment is a key component influencing human performance that ought to support the physical, physiological and psychological needs of an employee to provide an acceptable work context and minimize employee dissatisfaction by giving consideration to several factors within the technical, human and organizational environment. A positive work environment makes employees feel good about coming to work, and this provides the motivation to sustain them throughout the day (Abugre 2012).

A positive work environment can increase job satisfaction and decrease employee turnover. According to Gallup Business Journal, (2011) your relationship with your supervisor and co-workers will likely affect your wellbeing and engagement at work, which will also influence how long you decide to stay there. Positive, uplifting conversations with your boss and peers will create an encouraging workplace environment that's productive, thriving and innovative. This type of workplace will also focus on and praise employees' progress because,

according to a Harvard Business Review survey (2010), workers are the happiest and most motivated when they believe they're improving and moving forward in their work.

Statement of the Problem

Many businesses and organizations fail to understand the importance of working environment for employee job satisfaction and thus face a lot of difficulties during their work. Employee is an essential component in the process of achieving the mission and vision of a business. Employees should meet the performance criteria set by the organization to ensure the quality of their work. To meet the standards of organization, employees need a working environment that allows them to work freely without problems that may restrain them from performing up to the level of their full potential.

The technical environment consists of the tools, equipment and infrastructure at the organization, as well as other physical elements that affect employee job satisfaction. Like the office layout, whereby more than one department share office space. Sometimes it becomes noisy with limited space, little privacy and no security while other staff members are allocated large offices. The human environment concerns peers with whom employees at the company relate and confide in when they encounter problems, personal or work related. Management who are responsible for the day-to-day activities and the leadership within the company should involve work groups who work together to achieve common objectives that are set by the company and group norms that have emerged, as well as the communication within the company.

The organizational environment focuses on the structure of the company, like the restructuring of the operations, reporting structures and Organogram including policies, processes and procedures and their implementation. That is attributed to the organic growth of the organization arising from intricate demands on it by the member conservancies, the community it works with, donor requirements and its scope of operation and interventions. However, this is often changed to suite the situation confronting the company, creating confusion and double standards on many occasions. The sustainability of any organization is dependent on its ability to improve or maintain a competitive advantage in order to differentiate itself from competitors and survive the challenges posed. It is therefore important for Northern Rangelands Trust to have a conducive working environment enhancing the work, human, technical, and organization elements crucial to improving the organization's competitive position in attracting qualified human asset.

Work environment comprises of occupation and health elements such as location and design of office including lighting ventilation and its tranquility, suitability of furniture and safety measures against such emergencies as fires. People working in unsafe and unhealthy environments are prone to occupational accidents and incidence that impacts on employee's performance decreasing productivity. NRT covers a wide geographical area with a myriad of environmental and physical factors that employees work in. This spatial element provides a special difficult in occupation health and safety faced by employees such as long travel hours to and fro, long working hours in the field and in the office, long away time from family, workload, stress, overtime, fatigue, boredom are some factors to increase job dissatisfaction. On the other hand provision of good working condition, refreshment & recreation facility, health & safety facility, fun at workplace may increase the degree of job satisfaction. The purpose of this study was therefore to determine the effect of work environment on job satisfaction of employees at Northern Rangelands Trust by way of office facilities, working hours, remuneration, safety measures at workplace and skills improvement. This will lead to drawing conclusions and making recommendations that will contribute to new body of knowledge.

Objective of the study

To determine the influence of work life conflict on job satisfaction among employees of the Northern Rangelands Trust.

Research Question

What aspects of work life balance affect job satisfaction among employees of the Northern Rangelands Trust?

Scope and Limitations of the study

This research focused on the employees of Northern Rangelands Trust. It was carried out in order to determine the impact of work environment on employee job satisfaction. The research findings was limited to factors and conditions existing at the company, as at the time of the study. Moreover, the conclusion of this research study was limited and constrained to unique factors associated with this company.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory

Hertzberg's Two Factor Theory cited by Robbins (2001) determined what people actually want from their jobs. It was developed by a psychologist Frederick Hertzberg in 1959, who theorized

that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction act independently of each other. The characteristics related to job satisfaction included advancement, recognition, the work itself, achievement, growth and responsibilities. Herzberg referred to these characteristics as 'motivators'. The characteristics related to dissatisfaction, which included working conditions, supervision, interpersonal relationships, company policy and administration were referred to as 'hygiene' factors. It states that there are certain factors in the workplace that cause job satisfaction, while a separate set of factors cause dissatisfaction.

The theory perceives workplace as independent variable and job satisfaction as dependent variable. These variables concur with the study variables which are technical environment, physical environment and organizational environment and job satisfaction. According to Schermerhorn (1993), Herzberg's two-factor theory is an important frame of reference for managers who want to gain an understanding of job satisfaction and related job performance issues. Schermerhorn asserts that Herzberg's two-factor theory is a useful reminder that there are two important aspects of all jobs: what people do in terms of job tasks (job content), and the work setting in which they do it (job context).

Schermerhorn suggests that managers should attempt to always eliminate poor hygiene sources of job dissatisfaction in the workplace and ensure building satisfier factors into job content to maximize opportunities for job satisfaction. Therefore, this theory is relevant and significant to this study in that it recognizes that employees have two categories of needs that operate in them and that both should be addressed. This theory therefore can guide a researcher in establishing determinants of work environment that affects employee satisfaction at Northern Rangelands Trust in Isiolo.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Work life balance

Work life balance is a comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employee's primary priorities of their employment position and their private lifestyle. Most psychologists would agree that the demands of an employee's career should not overwhelm the individual's ability to enjoy a satisfying personal life outside of the business environment. Work life balance practices are organizational changes designed to reduce work family conflict. These work life balance practices enable employees to be effective in both work and personal roles. The more control an employee has on their lives the more able they are to balance work and family. (Iqan Iazar, 2010) Conclude that, a successful balance between work and non-work roles are beneficial for both employee and employer. And this balance in work and life domains enhances quality of personal relationship and organizational outcomes.

Work/life balance is a broad concept that encompasses prioritizing between work (including career and ambition) on one hand, and life (including areas such as health, leisure, family, pleasure and spiritual development) on the other. There are also two key concepts related to work/life balance - achievement and enjoyment. (Bowman 2013). Achievement can be related to setting and achieving the goals we have in life i.e. buying a new house, job satisfaction, further education etc. Enjoyment is related not just to happiness, but also pride, satisfaction, celebration, love, and a sense of wellbeing. Life will often deliver the value and balance we desire when we are achieving and enjoying something every day in all the important areas of our lives. Therefore, a good working definition of work/life balance is meaningful daily achievement and enjoyment in each of our important life quadrants. These life quadrants will vary for each person but may include, for example, work, family, friends and self.

According to (Susi.S, 2010) Work life balance is drive for satisfaction of employees. Many organizations feel the need of work life balance which include retention of valuable work force, reduce work family conflict, and reduce employee stress, job satisfaction and better life balance. Work life balance practices need to be supported and encouraged at workplace culture. Strong and supportive organizational culture increase employee intent to remain in the organization. (Felicity Asiedu-Appiah, 2013) concludes that work life balance is important in enhancing employee performance at work and home. Gender difference exists in work life balance needs because work and non-work responsibilities are different for male and females. Some research results show that female demonstrated more need for work life balance as compared to male. An individual derive satisfaction in life from work and family domains. Researches find that work balance practices effect overall organization and individual performance.

Lockwood 2003 defines work life balance as a managing work and personal responsibilities. Work-life programs require support from senior management. For work/life benefits in work environment it is helpful to have a corporate culture that encourages employees to look at business in an entirely different way and supports and accepts employees as individuals with priorities beyond the workplace. Work life balance programs increased employee motivation and productivity.

Work-life environment is a concept that supports the efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and the other important aspects of their lives. Work-life environment is a daily effort to make time for family, friends, community participation, spirituality, personal growth, self-care, and other personal activities, in addition to the demands of the workplace. Organizations are social systems where human resources are the most important factors for effectiveness and efficiency and need effective managers and employees to achieve

their objectives. Organizations cannot succeed without their personnel efforts and commitment. Job satisfaction is critical to retaining and attracting well-qualified personnel. Exceptional organizations have leaders that create work environments where people can achieve work-life balance and well-being as they define it for themselves Spinks (2004). A satisfied work force is essential for the success of organizations and their businesses. Dissatisfied employees make organizations dysfunctional, damaging their financial performance. Job satisfaction and work life balance are more likely to drive employees to remain with their current employers than

Work-life balance is assisted by employers who institute policies, procedures, actions, and expectations that enable employees to easily pursue more balanced lives. The pursuit of work-life balance reduces the stress employee's experience. When they spend the majority of their days on work-related activities and feel as if they are neglecting the other important components of their lives, stress and unhappiness result. Work-life balance enables employees to feel as if they are paying attention to all the important aspects of their lives.

Because many employees experience a personal, professional, and monetary need to achieve, work-life balance is challenging. Employers can assist employees to experience work-life balance by offering such opportunities as flexible work schedules, paid time off (PTO) policies, responsible time and communication expectations, and company-sponsored family events and activities.

Managers are important to employees seeking work-life balance. Managers who pursue work-life balance in their own lives model appropriate behavior and support employees in their pursuit of work-life balance. They create a work environment in which work-life balance is expected, enabled, and supported. They retain outstanding employees to whom work-life balance is important.

Literature shows that managers have valuable role in encouraging employees to manage their work and life activities. Strong relationship exists between work life balance and employee satisfaction, hence companies should make policies and programs for employees. Managers can apply different roles of leadership to manage employees work life balance and provide success to the company (Rani 2011). When employees are not clear about their roles to be performed then employees are unable to meet organizational goals and it also has an impact on their personal life and employees become dissatisfied towards their job and organization faces lack of effectiveness.

A study was conducted in Pakistan by Nadeem and Abbas, (2009) to discover the relationship among work life conflict and employee job satisfaction at all levels of the management in public and private organizations. Findings showed that job satisfaction at top level of management has negative correlation with family to work interference, family to work

interference and stress and job satisfaction has positive correlation with job autonomy. Job satisfaction at the middle level of employees decreases when work life conflict and stress increases. Job satisfaction at the lower level of employees has negative correlation with stress and family to work interference and positive correlation with job autonomy. Hanglberger (2010) studied the effect of work-life balance, specifically working hours on employees' job satisfaction and finds a positive relationship between them. The same was analyzed by Gash et al. (2010) for women in UK and Germany and the findings supported Hanglberger studies, showing a positive effect of reduced working hours on employees' life satisfaction. Another study (Malik et al. 2010) was conducted in Pakistan to investigate the relationship between work-life balance, job satisfaction and turnover intentions among medical professionals in hospitals.

The level of employees' job satisfaction increases by many factors and when employees are satisfied with their work, they feel motivated (Noor, 2011). The demand of employees work life balance is increased by change in trends in the business such as change in organizations structure, diversity of work force and female employees working in organizations. Organizations should provide work life balance facilities to their employees so that employees can perform their duties effectively and leads organization to the success (Parvin and Kabir, 2011).

Another study by Dev 2012, conducted in India indicates that work-life balance is significantly correlated with job satisfaction in the banking sector. It suggested that female employees should be given more facilities such as flexi time, job sharing, child care, etc. to gain their organizational commitment. It was revealed that those doctors who are better in managing their work-life shows higher satisfaction with jobs and less turnover intentions. Job satisfaction has negative correlation with work stress, family to work interference and work to family interference but have positive correlation with workload.

Employees' productivity is reduced and their turnover and absenteeism are increased due do work life strain and most of the institutions also complain that they can't much facilitate their employees to balance their work and family responsibilities. Fatima and Sahibzada (2012) conducted a study on work-life balance in the universities s. They concluded that due to heavy workload in universities, staff becomes dissatisfied. Hence, universities should develop strategies that could facilitate faculty needs to balance between work and life activities to achieve competitive advantage. A study was conducted by Maren et al. (2013) to analyze work-life balance and job satisfaction among teachers exposed a negative relationship between work-life conflicts and job satisfaction. The study suggested that if organizations offer facilities to reduce work-life conflicts, it will lead to improvement in employees' job satisfaction. Chahal et al. (2013) suggested to increase the efficiency of the employee's bank should timely appraise their employees and encourage them to work hard because satisfied employees are reason for the

success of the organization. When employees are satisfied with their jobs they become loyal and committed to the organization. Saleem et al (2013) say that organization should make strategies and policies that will help employees to have clear understanding regarding their job tasks and objectives and if employees are not satisfied with their job they will not pay attention to their work and will not make customers happy.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed descriptive research design which, according to Collins (2002), involved fact finding and enquires of different types by explaining a state of affairs as it exists in the current. The population of interest for this study consisted of employees of Northern Rangelands Trust and who are specifically classified to be in top management, middle management, lower management staff and non-management. The organization has a workforce of 132 employees as shown in the table 1.

Table 1: Populations Size

SECTIONS	POPULATIONS SIZE
Top Level Management	8
Mid-Level Management	24
Lower Level Management	30
Non-Management	72
Total	132

Source: NRT Organogram, 2016

The study used stratified random sampling method to ensure balanced representation in the sample and to reduce biasness in sample selection as each element was to be subjected to equal chance in selection. The researcher chose to use 50% since it's more appealing and that the target population was not high. ($50/100 \times 132 = 66$).

Questionnaire was used for data collection. All qualitative and quantitative data from respondents to the questionnaire was collected and electronically captured and analyzed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (regression and ANOVA). The data was then summarized by means of frequency distribution to represent research findings and analyzed to establish the relative frequencies as a percentage value.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The researcher prepared and issued 66 questionnaires to the employees of Northern Rangelands Trust at different management levels and departments. From the given questionnaires, 59 questionnaires were returned representing 89.4% of the total questionnaires and 7 questionnaires were not returned.

Table 2: Work life balance on Employee job Satisfaction

Work Life Balance	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Total %
Too much work at home	6.8	3.4	89.8	100
Many personal demands	6.8	8.5	84.7	100
Preoccupied with personal life at work	8.6	5	86.4	100
Personal life takes up my time	17	11.9	71.1	100
Home life interfere with work	22.1	5	72.9	100
Busy home life	20.4	6.8	72.8	100

From the findings, 89.8% of the respondents disagreed that they are often too tired at work because of the things they have to do at home, 84.7% disagreed that their personal demands are so great that it takes them away from their work and 86.4% disagreed that their superiors dislike how often they are preoccupied with personal life while at work. 71.1% totally disagreed that their personal life takes up time that they would like to spend at work, 72.9% disagreed that their home life interferes with their responsibilities at work such as getting to work on time, accomplishing daily tasks and working overtime and 72.8% totally disagreed that their home life keeps them from spending the amount of time they would like to spend on job related activities. This implied that a majority of the respondents disagreed that their home/personal life interferes with their responsibilities at work.

From the results it can be deduced that a large number of employees disagreed that their family and home life has any effect on their work life. The few who agreed based their answers on occasional periods like maybe when there is a problem at home or maybe when one is studying or taking exams. These reasons are only temporary bringing to the conclusion that it is rare that their family and personal responsibilities has an effect on their job responsibilities.

Work/life balance is a broad concept that encompasses prioritizing between work (including career and ambition) on one hand, and life (including areas such as health, leisure,

family, pleasure and spiritual development) on the other. There are also two key concepts related to work/life balance - achievement and enjoyment (Bowman 2013).

Correlation of Work-life Balance and Job Satisfaction

Table 3: Correlation of Work-life Balance and Job Satisfaction

	Work-life Balance	Job Satisfaction
Pearson Correlation (R)	1	.902**
Work-life Balance Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
N	59	59

** Correlation is significant at 0.05

Table 3 shows that Work-life Balance had a very strong correlation with employee Job Satisfaction at 90.2%. It also had a coefficient of determination of 81.4% which means that it was able to account for 81.4% of the variations in employee Job Satisfaction which was found to be significant by the study. These results concur with Iqan Iazar (2010) which found that the more control an employee has on their lives the more able they are to balance work and family. According to Bowman (2013), an employee is more satisfied when they are able to have both achievement and enjoyment. Just like Asiedu-Appiah (2013), this study concludes that work life balance is important in enhancing employee performance at work and home.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study Work life balance is a comfortable state of equilibrium achieved between an employee's primary priorities of their employment position and their private lifestyle. The study sought to find out whether home and family responsibilities affect the work life of the respondents and how this affects job satisfaction.

The ability to attract, keep and motivate high performance is becoming increasingly important in today's competitive organizational environments. Working environment has a positive impact on the Job satisfaction of employees. Bad working conditions restrict employees to portray their capabilities and attain full potential, so it is imperative that the organization realize the importance of good working environment. This research study contributes towards the welfare of society as the results create awareness about the importance of good working environment for employee job satisfaction. The study impacts upon the future performance of

organizations by taking working environment more seriously within their organizations to increase the motivation and commitment level of their employees.

The study recommends that management should try as much as possible to build a work environment that attracts, retain and motivate its employees so as to help them work comfortable and increase organization productivity hence the feeling of job security. Employers should have in place a good working condition for their employees in order to boost their morale and make them more efficient. An example is making their benefit programs to suit employees such as the introduction of outpatient health insurance to all employees. For a successful organization an employer must ensure their employees believe policies and procedures are fair and just. Shared values are not easy to change and therefore need to coincide to promote Job satisfaction.

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