



School of post graduate studies

**Investigating the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being
and productivity within project management environment: A case study of
World Vision Zambia**

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DECLARATION

I, the under signed, declare that this is my original work, and it has not been submitted to any other college, institution, or university for academic purposes

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my beloved family, my wife Harriet Hangádu Simubwa and my children (Chileleko, Changu Chabota) who have been a constant source of inspiration, encouragement, and support throughout my academic journey.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION	i
LIST OF TABLES	ii
LIST OF FIGURES	iii
ACRONYMS	iv
ABSTRACT	v
CHAPTER ONE	11
INTRODUCTION.....	11
1.0 Introduction.....	11
1.1 Background	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4 Problem Statement	3
1.5 Research Objectives.....	3
1.5.1 Main Objective.....	3
1.5.2 Specific Research Objectives	3
1.6 Research Questions	4
1.7. Significance of the Study.....	4
1.8 Limitations of the study.....	4
1.9 Scope of the Study.....	5
1.10 Definition of key terms and concepts	5
1.11 Organization of Dissertation	6
CHAPTER TWO-LITERATURE REVIEW.....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 The Concept of Work-Life Balance.....	7
2.2 Work-Life Balance Initiatives and Their Impacts	8
2.2.1 Dependent Care Initiatives	8
2.2.2 Flexible Time Work Arrangements	9
2.2.3 Work Leave Programme	9
2.2.4 Behavioral Outcomes Initiatives	10

2.2.5 Informal Support Policies	11
2.3 Theoretical Framework.....	13
2.3.1 Spillover Theory	13
2.3.2 Inter-role Conflict Theory	14
2.3.3 Job Demands-Resources Model Theory.....	15
2.4 Critique of the Literature.....	16
2.5 Conceptual Framework	16
2.6 Chapter Conclusion.....	17
CHAPTER THREE- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	18
3.0 Introduction.....	19
3.1 Research Design.....	19
3.2 Target Population	20
3.3 Sampling and Sample Size.....	21
3.4 Data Collection Procedure	22
3.5 Data Analysis	22
3.6 Ethical Considerations.....	23
3.7 Chapter Conclusion	23
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS & ANALYSIS	25
4.0 Introduction	25
4.1 Respondent Profiles	25
4.1.1 Gender Distribution.....	25
4.1.2 Age Distribution	26
4.1.3 Staff Category Distribution.....	26
4.1.4 Departmental Distribution	26
4.1.5 Years in the Organization	26
4.2 Results on Work-Life Balance Initiatives at World Vision Zambia	27
4.2.1 Awareness of Work Life Balance Initiatives at World Vision Zambia.....	27
4.2.2 Forms and Availability of Different WLB Initiatives	27

4.3 WLBI, Employee Wellbeing and Productivity at World Vision Zambia	27
4.3.1 Effectiveness of WLBI for Employee Personal & Work Lives	28
4.3.2 WLBI and Overall Wellbeing	29
4.3.3 WLBI and Employee Productivity	30
4.3.4 Satisfaction with WLBI at World Vision Zambia	31
4.3.5 Scale Reliability Assessment for Research Question 2 Items	32
4.3.6 Analysis of Individual WLBI Component Effects	32
4.4 Challenges and Improvement of WLBI at World Vision Zambia	33
4.5 Chapter Conclusion	35
CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	36
5.0 Introduction.....	36
5.1 Employee Awareness and Access to Work-Life-Balance Initiatives.....	36
5.1.1 RO1 Significance of Findings Vis-à-vis Existing Literature.....	36
5.1.2 RO1 New Insights and Understanding	38
5.1.3 RO1 New Knowledge Contributed.....	38
5.2 Work-Life-Balance, Employee Wellbeing and Productivity	38
5.2.1 RO2 Significance Findings Vis-à-vis WLB, Employee Wellbeing & Productivity.....	38
5.2.2 RO2 New Insights from Study on WLBI & Welfare/Productivity	39
5.3 Work-Life-Balance Initiatives, Challenges and Improvements	40
5.4 Chapter Conclusion	41
CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	42
6.0 Introduction	42
6.1 Study Conclusions	42
6.1.1 High Awareness and Accessibility of WLBI at WVZ	42
6.1.2 WLBI, Employee Wellbeing and Employee Productivity	43
6.1.3 Challenges and Improvements for WLBI.....	44
6.2 Policy Recommendations	44
6.3 Recommendations for Future Research	61

6.4 Overall Study Conclusion	45
REFERENCES.....	46
APPENDIX.....	47
I DATA COLLECTION APPROVAL LETTER.....	48
II COVER LETTER FOR QUESTIONNAIRE.....	49
QUESTIONNAIRE	50

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Study Population Distribution	36
Table 2 Sample size distribution	37
Table 3 Awareness of WLBI at World Vision Zambia	43
Table 4 Types and Availability of WLBI at World Vision Zambia	43
Table 5 Encouraged to Utilize WLBI.....	44
Table 6 Chi Square Test-Equality of Frequencies on WLBI Encouragement	44
Table 7 Effectiveness of WLBI	45
Table 8 Chi Square Test for Distribution of Effectiveness of WLBI	45
Table 9 Effect of WLBI on Overall Wellbeing	46
Table 10 Chi Square Test for WLBI and Overall Wellbeing.....	46
Table 11 Employee Productivity and WLBI at World Vision Zambia	46
Table 12 Chi-Square Test WLBI and Employee Productivity	47
Table 13 Respondent Satisfaction with WLBI at World Vision Zambia.....	47
Table 14 Chi Square Test Employee Satisfaction with WLBI	47
Table 15 Scale Reliability Analysis Results by Cronbach's Alpha	48
Table 16 Analysis of Individual WLBI components.....	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Study Conceptual Framework.....	33
Figure 2 Respondent Gender.....	40
Figure 3 Ages of Respondents.....	41
Figure 4 Roles of Respondents in Organization	41
Figure 5 Respondents by Department.....	42
Figure 6 Respondent Service Years in Organization	42
Figure 7 WLBI Improvements to Enhance Wellbeing & Productivity.....	50
Figure 8 Thematic Analysis of Suggestions to Improve WLB at WVZ.....	50

ACRONYMS

APM	Area Programme Managers
DOP	Day of Prayer
HRM	Human Resource Management
LMX	Leader Member Exchange
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
P&C	People and Culture
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TBE	Team Building Exercises
WLB	Work-Life Balance
WLBI	Work Life Balance Initiatives
WVZ	World Vision Zambia

ABSTRACT

Places of work and the demands they put on employees are in a state of continuous change. This study steps into the pressure cooker context of an organization that is administering donor funded socio-economic development aid to vulnerable children and their families, World Vision Zambia. The context is characterized by strict budgetary demands, high frequency of reporting demands and rising workload in periods when projects are about to close. The study was conducted by mixed methods to investigate effects of the Work Life Balance Initiatives (WLBI) adopted by the organization, particularly motivated by progressive downward adjustments in the scope and monetary value of interventions as the organization faces tighter budgets. Unlike the bulk of existing research, this study considered effects of a broad range of interventions for WLB. Data for the study was obtained by a semi-structured questionnaire that was administered to a countrywide sample of 85 employees of the organization at various levels, using Kobo-Collect. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS while qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis. Findings of the study confirmed high levels of awareness and accessibility of the WLBI to employees of the organization with 100% of respondents reporting such awareness and that 55.3% of the respondents agreed with the assertion that they felt encouraged by the organization to make use of the various WLBI initiatives while (28.2%) those that strongly agreed suggesting that there is a strong focus on ensuring utility of WLBI in the organization. 56.5 % of the respondents also confirmed positive effects of WLBI on overall employee wellbeing and productivity the test statistic of 53.776 was statistically significant at the 1% level given the p-value of 0.000. However, study participants also noted need for improvement in workload management practices to ensure fair relationships between workload and compensation. They also noted the need for extension of leave days. The study recommends that management in organizations such as World Vision Zambia offer broad based WLBI that meet diverse employee needs but also obtain employee feedback in their design to sustain relevance and achieved desired overall employee wellbeing and productivity outcomes. It adds to the existing literature by demonstrating the value of measures for overall wellbeing of employees as well as importance of workplace policies that reflect the significance of families in lives of employees.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The modern work environment is undergoing significant transformations, recognizing the importance of human capital beyond mere productivity (Adenuga, 2015). As employees face increasing demands from both work and personal life, the concept of work-life balance has become a crucial aspect of business and human resource management (World Health Organization, 2022). Despite its growing importance, there is still a need for further research on the impact of work-life balance on employee performance especially in the context of organizations that are donor funded and run on a project basis (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2022). This study aims to address this gap by investigating the effects of work-life balance on employee performance in the increasingly important non-governmental organization sector in the developing country context, with a specific focus on World Vision Zambia. By exploring the consequences of work-life balance and the effectiveness of related policies and practices, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of this critical aspect of contemporary work culture. The NGO sector is one of the most human resource intensive sector which focuses more on attaining the organization goals and target in order to impress the donors for continuity and sustainability as noted in recent studies (Harahap & Ramli, 2023).

1.1 Background

Composition of work and family life spheres has significantly changed over a period (Muis, et al., 2021). Today's working male and female face a wide range of daily challenges which many times create imbalance between their working life and personal/family life (Adenuga, 2015). Lack of work-life balance therefore has been investigated as a determinant of working individual's performance at workplace as well as in personal life (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2022). In the current socio-economic context with the world focusing on the demands of sustainable development goals, organizations that have a human development mandate are increasingly being looked upon to harness resources, including human resources, to achieve higher productivity and performance targets (Galleli & Santos, 2022). The increasing pressure to deliver

may be argued to mean that organizations, more than ever, need their employees to have healthy work-life balance (Adekoya, 2022). In other words, an employee with better work-life balance is hypothesized in the literature to contribute more significantly towards the organizational growth and success.

According to Kesri (2021) "Work-life balance is the state of equilibrium where a person equally prioritizes the demands of one's career and the demands of one's personal life." He further defined work-life balance that "involves looking at how working people manage time spent at and outside of work." Time outside of work may include managing relationships, family responsibilities, and other outside interests and hobbies (Adekoya, 2022). For Kesri (2021), methods an individual use to juggle all their work and life demands constitute their work-life balance. The actual term "work-life balance" is traced to the U.K. in the 80's as a plank in the Women's Liberation Movement. The movement inevitably advocated for flexible schedules and maternity leave for women (Raja & Stein, 2014). Therefore, early conceptualizations of work-life balance focused on the notion of equal distribution of resources across work and family or other life roles (Adenuga, 2015). These gave birth to employer strategies such as paid leave and maternity leave to demonstrate appreciation of Work-Life Balance needs of employees, although in some jurisdictions globally ultimately a labour law compliance issue (Le, et al., 2020).

According to the 2023 report by Randstad ([2023 report by Randstad](#)). The research aimed to examine how highly employees value work-life balance. The report showed that 78% of workers say they have a good work-life balance. According to Randstad's findings 94% of employees believe work-life balance is important while 61% of people would not accept a job if it disrupted their work-life balance, and 48% of survey respondents would quit their jobs if it prevented them from "enjoying their life." Moreover, the research found that work-life balance is crucial for most workers.

Modern conceptualizations are however less about divided spheres of work and employee objectives outside the workplace but more about integrated experiences that are intended to offer emotional and material support to enhance overall employee wellbeing so that work performance is optimized (Tamunomiebi & Oyibo, 2020). However, scholars such as Rosa (2022) have argued that demands for high performance in the workplace create the pressure that may make employer strategies

to provide work-life balance support to employees ineffective. These opposing positions suggest that more needs to be known about the relationship between work-life balance initiatives and employee well-being as well as productivity especially within project management environments where pressure to deliver is a daily aspect of work, which can spill over into challenges into their personal lives and adversely affect their performance as predicted by Spillover Theory (Siwale et al., 2021).

In Zambia, the Employment Code Act No. 3 of 2019, makes several provisions relevant to the WLB discourse. It stipulates standard hours of work per week and indicates the need for overtime pay where workers are required by their employers to exceed this standard. The code also provides guidelines on annual leave entitlements of employees, maternity leave for female employees, as well as paternity leave for 5 days for males with newborns (Tayali & Sakyi, 2020). Exposure to labour practices from different parts of the world has meant that the discourse relating to work-life balance strategies has also become important for employers and employees in different organizational settings (Siwale, et al., 2021; Tayali & Sakyi, 2020). According to Siwale et al. (2021), the rise in employment of female employees has increased the intensity of the debate particularly as female employees are traditionally in Zambian society expected to take the greater burden of taking care of families and take up other traditionally expected gender specific roles. Also, the growth of the presence of international organizations including nongovernmental organizations such as World Vision in Zambia's labour markets has entailed adoption of what may be deemed best practice in this area from around the world in terms of employer initiatives for promoting healthy work life balance amongst employees. However, such organizations have had to work under increasingly tighter donor funded budgets while the demands of program beneficiaries have been progressively rising with population expansion, leading to cuts to the scope of Work-Life-Balance Initiative entitlements of employees while workloads expand. For example, initiatives such as sponsored holidays for employees and their spouses have been cut out of strategies applied by the organization. Thus, the question of whether the broad, and adjusted range of such practices to support employees, have positive effects on employee wellbeing and productivity has become relevant for empirical research purposes.

1.4 Problem Statement

Employees in World Vision Zambia like those in many other Organization face different work-related problems that affect their work. According to Allen & Spector (2002), Stress is one of the common problems that affects most the employees in different organizations. Allan & spector stipulates that stress is caused by different roles and responsibilities that employees have at home and at work places and if not handled properly, it can affect the productivity of an employee. He adds that if there is no balance between the responsibilities that a person has at home and those that a person may have at work, there could be a conflict between the two responsibilities of which if not handled well among employees may lead to stress and in some cases even depression. In his study, he figured that multiple roles that employees play at home and at work have an effect on their well-being both at home and at work. The roles that people have sometimes may lead to family work conflict which causes a negative spill-over from family responsibilities to work responsibilities and vice versa which in most cases manifests in some form of passive aggressive behaviour, not being able to concentrate at work and even stress in most cases. All these problems are caused as a result of work-life conflict affects individual employee's social, economic, psychological and mental well-being (Agrwala, 2007).

On the other hand, pressure in work places continues to increase as things are changing in the world. According to Behav (2009), the major problem that employees all over the world face is trying to strike a balance between family related pressure, work and other private related matters that relates to their life. The demands that come with work and family related issues and the pressure to balance the two usually affects a number of employees as they fail to strike a balance between the two which in turn affects employee's wellbeing and health which results in employers loosing huge sums of money for healthcare costs. Alexandra et al (2009) conducted a study in the USA and reveals that stress related to jobs costs the industry around 300 billion dollars yearly in the form of absenteeism, turnover and diminishing productivity, medical insurance as well as legal expenses. Because of this, developed countries have taken the issue of work life balance serious so as to reduce the amount of money that organizations lose.

While the issue of work life balance has been encouraged in developed nations, Human Resource managers in developing countries including Zambia have not fully

embraced the concept of work life balance. However, a number of studies that have been conducted in Africa reveals that there is need to have an effective work life balance. Keino & Kithae (2016) conducted a study to measure the effects that work life balance has on performance of employees at Airtel. Orange, Yu and Telkom Kenya. Their study reveals that work life balance factors like long hours of work, lack of overtime, lack of vacation, family and work conflict have a negative effect on the performance of an employee at work. They noted that if an employee is subjected to any of these factors, then their productivity at work goes down.

Despite the recognition of the importance of work-life balance in enhancing employee wellbeing, productivity, and organizational performance, there is a gap in the implementation and utilization of work-life balance policies in target attainment-focused organizations such as World Vision Zambia, where the pressure to meet donor expectations and achieve program goals may overshadow employee wellbeing, leading to decreased job satisfaction, increased stress, and turnover, ultimately affecting the organization's overall performance and impact. "Work-Life balance is increasingly challenging in the modern context and the challenge arises from the fact that it is very difficult to strike the balance between work and other domains of life. Besides, to being a challenge to the individuals, the WLB as a concept has been taken up by the organizations and human resource departments across the board, in lieu of which many policies and strategies have been formulated to alleviate the conflict between the domains of work and life in order to improve wellbeing and productivity.

1.5 Research Objectives

1.5.1 Main Objective

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia.

1.5.2 Specific Research Objectives

The following were specific objectives for the study:

- a) To assess employee awareness and access in relation to the work-life balance initiatives implemented by World Vision Zambia in order to achieve employee wellbeing and productivity.

- b) To analyze effects of different work-life balance initiatives, as well as the overall policies, on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia.
- c) To identify challenges and propose improvements for enhancing work-life balance initiatives at World Vision Zambia.

1.6 Research Questions

- a) What is the level of employee awareness and access in relation to the work-life balance initiatives implemented by world vision Zambia in order to achieve employee wellbeing and productivity?
- b) How do work-life balance initiatives, individually and collectively, affect employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia?
- c) What challenges exist and proposed made, for enhancing work-life balance initiatives' effectiveness at World Vision Zambia?

1.7. Significance of the Study

The study aims to address gaps in work-life balance by investigating workers' personal lives and strategies to manage conflicts between work and other responsibilities, specifically within World Vision Zambia. It seeks to develop an evidence-based taxonomy of work-life balance strategies and a professional development program, filling a void in existing literature. This study could inform strategic decisions regarding work-life policies and practices, facilitating the retention and recruitment of future employees amid changing workforce dynamics. It also adds to the growing literature on Work-Life Balance management in organizations that are based on a project

1.8 Limitations of the study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged:

1. **Limited generalizability:** This study focused on a single organization, World Vision Zambia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other organizations or contexts. Future studies could explore the effects of work-life balance initiatives in multiple organizations or industries.
2. **Reliance on self-reported data:** This study relied solely on primary data collected through surveys, which may be subject to biases and inaccuracies. Future studies could incorporate multiple data sources, such as organizational records or observational data, to triangulate the findings.
3. **Assumption of linear relationships:** This study assumed linear relationships between the dependent and independent variables, which may not accurately capture the complexity of the relationships. Future studies could explore non-linear relationships or use more advanced statistical techniques to model the relationships.

Suggestions for Future Research

To address these limitations, future studies could Conduct multi-organizational or multi-industry studies to increase generalizability. Incorporate multiple data sources to enhance validity and reliability. Explore non-linear relationships or use advanced statistical techniques to model the relationships between variables.

By acknowledging these limitations and suggesting avenues for future research, this study provides a foundation for further exploration of the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee outcomes.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study's scope was intentionally limited to ensure control and well-defined investigative parameters. It exclusively examined employees of World Vision Zambia (WVZ), comprising a target population of 500 individuals deployed at head office in Lusaka and in different projects across the county. The sample was drawn from this population and an online survey with a semi-structured questionnaire used as the main

means of data collection. The study was conducted between October and December, 2024. In terms of the variables of interest, the study focused on the broad initiatives used by the organization to promote healthy work-life balance amongst its employees.

1.10 Definition of key terms and concepts

Work-life balance refers to the equilibrium between time spent on work-related activities and time dedicated to personal interests and relationships. When work consumes a significant portion of one's time or attention, there may be less opportunity to attend to other responsibilities or pursue hobbies and interests (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011).

Employee well-being encompasses the overall health and wellness of employees, including their mental, physical, emotional, and economic states. It is influenced by various factors such as interpersonal relationships at work, individual decision-making, and access to necessary tools and resources (Proto, 2016).

Productivity: this is a measure of economic performance that compares the amount of goods and services produced (output) with the number of inputs used to produce those goods and services (Andrews, 1974).

Employee retention: this is the capacity of an organization to keep its employees and sustain a consistent work force over a specified period of time. Chen & Wang, (2017)

1.11 Organization of Dissertation

The rest of the chapters of this dissertation include the literature review (Chapter Two), research methodology (Chapter Three), results and analysis (Chapter Four), discussion of findings (Chapter Five) and finally, conclusions and recommendation (Chapter Six). Each chapter has an introduction to explain its focus and a chapter conclusion section to provide a review of the main themes covered by the chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The research effort has been described as unique contribution that seeks to build on existing theories and/or create new theories based on the work done by other scholars in the past to expand the boundaries of knowledge (Azungah, 2018; Locke, 2007). This chapter presents the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of the study. It starts with the conceptual framework of the study. It then gives a synopsis of theories that have been provided by various researchers to give background to the theoretical framework of the study. The chapter also reviews and critiques relevant empirical studies that have explored the relationship between initiatives to promote healthy work-life balance and the productivity as well as wellbeing of employees from different settings.

2.1 The Concept of Work-Life Balance

Practices that are meant to help employees better manage their work and non-work times are called in the literature as work-family policies, family-friendly or family-responsive policies. According to the International Labour Organization (2010) work life balance refers to an individual's capacity to manage their work and personal commitments in a manner that is appropriate and suitable for their unique and personal preferences. In a global environment that is concentrated with conflicting responsibilities as well as allegiance, the demand on employees to perform better has never been greater than today. Work life balance has evolved over time, the term work life balance was brought on to the landscape of business and organizational behavior around 1986, despite its usage being less dominant in the early years (Boiarintseva, et al., 2019). In the global world today, the term "work-life balance" has replaced what was formerly known as "work-family balance" (Hudson, 2005). This paradigm shift arises from a recognition that childcare is by no means the only important non-work responsibility and the issue can be applied to any non-paid activities or commitments and to a diverse range of employees such as women, men, parents and non-parents, singles and couples. Study, travel, sport, voluntary work, personal

development, leisure, eldercare amongst other, are life activities that need to be balanced with employment or work.

Clarke (2004) suggested that it is very cardinal to understand from inception that work-life balance does not mean to devote an equal amount of time to paid work and non-paid roles; in its context, it is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement or fit between the multiple roles in a person's life. Even though definitions and explanations may vary, work-life balance is generally associated with equilibrium between the amount of time and effort somebody dedicates to work and personal activities, in order to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life.

Also understanding work-life balance requires one to be aware of the different demands upon us and our personal resources such as our time and our energy that we can deploy to address them. With this awareness, we can review and value the choices we have in terms of how we allocate our precious resources and time. Such conscious decision-making provides a sense of control over our working arrangements in order to better accommodate other aspects of our lives, while still benefiting the organizations.

Ioan & Patricia (2010) in their study, indicated that those workers who have some form of control over their working environment tend to suffer less stress-related ill-health, with clear implications for the concept of work-life balance. According to them "Work-life balance is meaningful achievement and enjoyment in everyday life". They believe that to achieve better work-life balance, each individual needs to work smarter to get more done in less time. The paramount way companies can help facilitate work-life balance for their employees is through work-life practices, that are usually associated with flexible working and reductions in working time or family-friendly policies. Although many companies have extensive work-life programs, most of them have not yet changed their organizational cultures to support employees and managers who want to use work-life options. The Kenexa Research Institute in 2007, in their research revealed that those employees who were more favorable toward their organization's efforts to support work-life balance also indicated a much lower intent to leave the organization, greater pride in their organization, a willingness to recommend it as a place to work for higher overall job satisfaction.

According to Hartel(2007), organizations can implement various work-life balance initiatives that can facilitate employees to better balance their work and family responsibilities, gain improvements in well-being and provide organizational benefits. There are a large variety of family friendly policies which go beyond the following: flexible working hours, job sharing, part-time work, compressed work weeks, parental leave, telecommuting, on-site childcare facility. Furthermore, employers may provide a range of benefits related to employees' health and well-being, including extended health insurance for the employee and dependents, personal days, and access to programs or services to encourage fitness, physical and mental health.

2.2 Work-Life Balance Initiatives and Their Impacts

Many companies and organizations today are rapidly realizing that workers with well-balanced work and lives are valuable to achieve greater success. The quality of a worker's personal life has huge impact on his/her productivity at a workplace and personal well-being and therefore, it is very important to encourage work and non-work incorporation. There are numerous organization policies that can appease the burden of work-life balance as outlined below.

2.2.1 Dependent Care Initiatives

Dependent Care Initiatives are programs or policies that support employees in caring for their dependents, such as children, elderly parents, or family members with disabilities. These initiatives can help employees attain work-life balance through Providing on-site childcare, childcare subsidies, or emergency childcare services. Offering resources and support for employees caring for aging parents or relatives by allowing flexible schedules, telecommuting, or compressed workweeks to accommodate caregiving responsibilities. In some instances, providing paid family leave, parental leave, or caregiver leave to ensure employees can take time off to care for dependents. By implementing these Dependent Care Initiatives, organizations can help employees manage their caregiving responsibilities, reduce stress, and improve work-life balance. Soni (2015) argues that dependents are individuals sustained by others, reflecting a longstanding challenge for corporate leaders in recognizing employees' dependents dating back to the late 1990s. Dependent care initiatives and stress management programs at work reflect the importance of fostering a supportive culture in embracing the work-life balance (WLB) concept.

According to Hein (2008), dependent care initiatives assist employees in balancing work and personal responsibilities, with such policies being crucial for employee retention. Jackson & Martinengo's (2006) study on IBM's commitment to employee needs found that on-site childcare facilitates alignment of work demands with employees' schedules, potentially increasing productivity. It found that on-site childcare enables employers to develop plans that align with work demands with time that can provide for all shifts with a capacity to adjust to varying demands on the employees. Secondly the study revealed that childcare should often be hinged on referral services and may be supported by a provision of such service or better still subsidized by the employer.

2.2.2 Flexible Time Work Arrangements

ILO (2011), indicates that flexible work arrangements point to work arrangements that are different from the standard work arrangements offered to a full-time worker who is faced with a linear career path in the organization. FWA is becoming an important component of the 21st century labor market which is experiencing a rebalancing between the demands of the employer and employee. Many organizations have adopted these practices as a central strategy to attract, motivate and retain key talent, leading to its widespread use in many organizations. Flexible time arrangements, as outlined by Nuesch (2017), provide employees with scheduling flexibility at the start and end of the workday. Ryerson (2016) highlights benefits like reduced commute times, focused work periods, and enhanced customer service. However, Mohawk (2013) notes that if flexibility negatively impacts productivity or operations, arrangements can be terminated.

2.2.3 Work Leave Programme

Leave programmes are viewed as best initiatives and fit well if implemented at the beginning of each calendar year to avoid conflicting situations and avoiding disrupting organizational management and operations. Patricia (2017) pointed out that in European countries, that paid leave programs are a relatively cost-effective way to reduce infant mortality because family leave allows parents to better care for their child and monitor their child's health. The Program perspectives (2009) report revealed that

paid leaves is common for US employees and include holidays, vacations, sick leave and personal leave. The parental leave of which the female employees are greater beneficiaries is an official permission granted to employees with childcare giving responsibilities to stay away from work and be paid for a period of about 3 months. Leave programmes cut across various individuals and aspects in the workplace. Oludayo (2015) regard parental leave as an official permission granted to employees saddled with child caregiving responsibilities. Another aspect of the work leave programme is that of maternity leave which is usually more beneficial to female employees where nursing mothers are permitted to stay away from work for 3-months.

Furthermore, on health grounds, there is provision for paid family and medical leave which permits absence from work in order to attend to dependent care challenges or personal health concerns of the employee. National Partnership for women and families (2017) points out that leave programmes have several benefits for workers, businesses and the economy in general. These benefits involve promoting parent's workforce participation and equity which looks at assisting new parents in keeping their families in order to meet new expenses. Peters (2017) progressed that paid leave policies also affect a family's finances after childbirth, via direct payment of leave and increased likelihood of mothers remaining in the labour force. According to Stanczyk (2016), paid leave program reduces a mother's risk of poverty following a birth, particularly among disadvantaged mothers.

2.2.4 Behavioral Outcomes Initiatives

Fisher (2001) views WLB in four sections of which an individual's behavior at work and in personal life is mentioned as beneficial, harmful, active and passive. Hughes (2007) during his research among bus drivers concerning their work-life balance, he found out that there is usually a withdrawal behavior when employees are dissatisfied with their job. Where the WLB concept is operational on global platform, however, the application of the concept is contextual since different human beings respond differently to another and is gender bias free (Fried, 1998). An individual's behavior is the expectation of behavior that others have of him/her. Oludayo (2015) progressed that there is possibility of negative outcomes to surface, however, he suggests that an effective management of WLB should place demand to successfully accommodate employees' work and non-work roles while not jeopardizing institutional goals and

reducing negative outcomes that may be associated with multiple-role conflict, stress and job dissatisfaction. Some of the behavioral outcomes include retention, absenteeism, job satisfaction and turnover intention, work-life conflict, employees' engagement among others. Therefore, appropriate work-life balance initiative will help in preventing deviant behavior in the world of work (Osibanjo, 2015).

Mathimaran (2017) made an assertion that employee productivity and wellbeing is a systematic effort by employers to create and foster an environment that encourages current employees to remain employed, effective and satisfied by having policies and practices in place that address their diverse needs. Furthermore, he claimed to the fact that when an organization fails to maintain key employees then it is costly. This strategy helps organizations provide effective employee communication to improve commitment and enhance workforce support for key corporate initiatives.

According to Messmer (2000) the employee retention strategy is an investment in employees' training and career development. In another development, the failure of employees to report at the scheduled time for their work. Akgeyik (2014) opines that employee absenteeism is a social phenomenon influenced by diverse individual, social and organizational factors. Sekar (2012) view absenteeism as a peculiar personal issue which has no cause but influences the development of an organization. Some researchers view this act would be either voluntary or involuntary. Absenteeism and turnover relate to withdrawal behaviors because they represent some physical removal from the workplace, which affects the organization's bottom line in the billions per year. Withdrawal behaviors refer to a set of attitudes and behaviors exhibited by employees when working in a position (Shapira, 2012).

Brayfield & Crockett, (1955) opinionated that the flexible work practices include the work attitudes (job satisfaction and turnover intention) and non-work attitudes (leisure satisfaction and perceived health) of employees. The concept of employee attitude which has been the topic many scholars focus on has over time spread into several branches such as job satisfaction, morale happiness at work and eventually, the term commonly understood today as employee engagement. Fritzsche & Parrish (2005) contended that a happy worker is a productive worker.

Work-life conflict is the concern for all growing organizations and can be taken as a part of an organization's development. Browne (2015) understands work-life conflict as being statistically related to increased supervisor support and reduced career consequences. It is defined as a perception that there is a general tension between one's work-life and non-work-life by Thompson & Bunderson (2001). The term is often associated with increased incidence of depression, psychological strain, anxiety, lower job satisfaction and commitment. According to Esther (2017), informal support is one that has not been statistically significant for estimating work-life conflict but has done so for employing wellbeing and productivity.

2.2.5 Informal Support Policies

Informal initiatives/support is the support given by family members, colleagues and supervisors to decrease the load and or stress of work-life interface and which is not part of written rules and regulations. Studies shows that the informal support is generally more acceptable than the informal support. According to Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness (1999), the informal support from the organization was operational as the organization's positive attitude toward combining work and family life such as the family-responsive culture. Ayman & Hannah (2016) in their study maintained that informal WLB practices such as managerial support and job autonomy had the most significant effect and are the determinants of turnover intentions and viewed the WLB concept as multi-dimensional and classified the informal WLB initiative into three: Schedule flexibility, Job autonomy and manager support. Anderson (2002) grouped the concept into formal and informal practice asserting that informal practices are superior to formal WLB practices (Ahmad & Omar, 2012). Hammer (2005) also ordained the superiority of the informal practices over the formal as it gives the employee better balance across all aspects of life. However, Anderson (2002) looks at the practicality of informal support to be a good alternative if a company cannot afford the resources to establish the formal practices.

According to Hill (2008), the schedule flexibility referred to as flextime simply means the flexibility granted to employees in choosing their starting and finishing times usually around a band of core hours where each employee must be present. It was preferred over the other forms of flexibility arrangements since it eliminates the physical boundary between work and personal life. Dunne (2007) observed that it is a preferred

practice because it has minimal cost. Job autonomy entails the capacity or freedom employees have within their workplace to make decisions about certain actions. It represents a key informal WLB practice and refers to the degree of freedom and discretion provided to employees to schedule work and choose the appropriate procedures to use in carrying out the job. The manager support is also another key informal WLB practice which refers to the extent to which managers' support and understands their subordinates as regards their personal and family life issues. Manager's support is expected to considerably improve satisfaction among employees (Abdallah, 2016). Managerial support is cardinal in setting up concrete actions in motion and secure successful implementation. Emhan (2012) points out that the commitment of employees to their organization soars because of managerial support and job satisfaction. In many organizations either non-profit or profit oriented there is a common need which is effective management or the need for managers to possess the motivating ability towards their employees.

Furthermore, Drucker (1992) argued that managerial support targeted at the employees plays a crucial role in achieving this. He also contends that one of the ways through which organizations can increase their productivity, efficiency and employee wellbeing is through employee motivation. Recognizing how important motivation is to employees for maximum output, he suggested that managers should be provided training sessions which would help to create the awareness in them about the effect human relation with employees through motivation which reflects in the increase in productivity. The understanding of employee motivation can tremendously influence an organization. When employees are motivated, the potential for them to work harder and become more satisfied with their jobs increase compared to demotivated employees (Barney, 2012). Motivation increases job performance effectively and efficiently. The expectancy-valence theory validates this thought. This theory focuses on motivation based upon the choices an individual makes when striving for a goal considering the expectations of an individual when understanding their anticipated motivation. According to Woodman (2010), he pointed out that employee expectations is mostly influenced by their supervisors and found that the expectancy-valence theory is important for investigating motivation because the overall context of the interactions

between supervisors and employees is important in shaping an employees' perception of a work environment.

Lunenburg (2011) pens an argument that communication between managers and employees cannot be undermined as managerial communication and employee motivation are identified within the three components of expectancy-valence theory. The first is the managers who set the expectations for employees. This means that managers should be able to communicate employee's job description adequately which will help employees know what they are expected to do and what should be their reward. Secondly, Managers can also consider employees' suggestions to enable them to succeed and adjust expectations if needed. Furthermore, they can guide employees to encourage them to accomplish their performance goals. Lunenburg (2011) describes ways that managers can link employee's effort to specific rewards. One of which he suggested is through clear communication of the evaluation of employee performance through administering clear and accurate assessments. Another suggestion is to provide clear examples of ways to achieve the rewards such as describing previous employees' past performance who received specific rewards. It is primary that employees see the clear connection between specific performance, the work values and specific rewards with real examples (Salamzadeh, 2014).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

To understand the effects of work-life balance, it is very important to review several theories. Through the history of the work life balance as a discipline, several theories have been proposed in seeking to explain this phenomenon. Some of those theories are described below.

2.3.1 Spillover Theory

Piatkowski's spillover theory emphasizes the interrelationship between work and family life. The theory proposes that balance between job related factors and family related factors are essential for employees to be productive and minimize employee turnover. The theory identifies the spillover effect as a problem associated with the balance between work and family and it may be horizontal or vertical. Spillover can be negative or positive: having negative family experiences lead toward negative work experiences and vice versa.

An individual's way of behaving, emotions, and capacities that might emerge from one's family role may spill over into one's work role and other ways round. The utilization of this theory makes sense because of its significance for work life balance studies, with its special focal point of interest on work and family connection. Liu, et al. (2013) expanded the theory by introducing the concept of positive and instrumental spillovers, whereby workers operate in two spheres of life: work and family. Conflicts arise when the demands from one domain interfere with the benefits of the other, this creates a work life imbalance and employees are forced to look for better options to reduce the conflict. In the context of the organization this creates job dissatisfaction, burnout and induces a low employee retention. Spillovers can be positive and negative, with negative spillovers indicating an inverse relationship between work life and family domain. In addition, spill overs can be viewed as either vertical or horizontal. The former points to the hierarchical organization while the later points to the different adjacent domains in the organization

Spillover theory explains what is needed for a balance between personal and professional life. If an individual is not satisfied from the work effort or mentally upset from work the individual may come home with an upset mind, thus affecting personal life. Similarly, if the person has tension at home like any domestic issue, it may negatively influence work life. Moreover, the spillover theory states that to have balanced life, an individual need to be satisfied, happy and stable in all walks of life such as including private, professional, and social spheres. Spillover theory has positive and negative assumptions. Negative assumptions explained that if a person cannot achieve their role obligations at one aspect of his life, they might not be able to accomplish other role tasks. On the other side the balanced positive assumption of the spillover theory is that if a person fulfills their role obligations with satisfaction, then they can positively achieve the other role tasks by playing the role better. Spillover theory explains the inverse relationship of individual roles among professional, private, and social life, which means that negativity in one role leads towards negativity in other roles and so as for the positive roles. It can be relatable with the daily life of a student and family member. For instance, if a student has a difficult day at college or university it affects their way of behaving at home. From the family's viewpoint, they can judge their relative based on their temperament whether the relative has had a decent day at university or not. In summary, the theory states that if an individual is not able to

perform well in one sphere, that individual cannot hold it and it will affect the other aspects of that individual's life. Ye & Wang (2019) utilized the spillover theory to explore how employee retention is influenced by work life balance, utilizing a spill over approach to comprehend the underlying mechanism of the association.

2.3.2 Inter-role Conflict Theory

Research in the inter role conflict in organizations is increasing in the field of work-family conflict and work-life improvement (Adenuga, 2015). Studies indicate diverse results of work-life balance from different situations and occupation. It is therefore important to balance work and family life on the impact of work-family conflict on the wellbeing, performance and productivity of employees. The purpose of inter-role conflict theory is to define the situation of those who are dealing with multiple roles at one time and have different expectations from every role. Bello & Tanko, (2020) argued that accomplishments related to one role may occur as a cause of invasion into another. An individual may face this kind of situation when requirements in one field of role impact the capability of the individual to meet the need of other role expectations. Several conflicting variables may cause role conflicts; attitude, role stress, and time are some suggestions. Recognizing roles that are significant is crucial as conflict and external support are interlinked, and the conflict level between roles is positively linked with the intensification of private relationships, and career successes (Bello & Tanko, 2020).

Inter-role conflict theory explains that if individuals have more than one role or status, they must find ways of performing all the roles at the same time. Often, a person cannot carry all the roles together. When responsibilities associated with a person's roles clash, it affects all roles and responsibilities, and it is difficult to do anything right. If a person has two or more roles and obligations, then the expectations of a role and its associated behavior start affecting other roles positively or negatively. For instance, if a person is doing his job as a police officer and at the same time, he is a father and a husband with certain achieved statuses, and a situation has emerged in which he has to choose one of the two, then whichever role or status he chooses in this difficult situation will influence other roles and statuses. For example, the police officer has his child's birthday or an anniversary coming up and at the same time he gets a call from the department to cover an emergency in the city, then if he chooses to cover the

emergency, he must compromise his child's birthday or the anniversary. On the other side if he chooses to stay with his wife or child, he must compromise the emergency and his professional duties.

2.3.3 Job Demands-Resources Model Theory

The job demands-resources model theory developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) in this study because it describes the roots of occupational stress. This model suggests that where there is an imbalance between resources and individual demands, stress is a response when one has to deal with these demands. This model is developed as an alternative resource model to other models for employee well-being, such as the effort-reward imbalance and the job demand-control model. According to the authors of the job demands-resources model, the limited set of predictor variables is not relevant for all positions (Bakker & Demerouti 2007) the broad range of analysis includes the conditions of employees and organizations. This model focuses not only on negative outcomes such as burnout, job stress, and illness, but also on indicators of positive employee health and positive outcomes. Each risk factor is associated with its own specific type of occupation stress and job stress according to the job demands resources model. These factors can be classified into two forms as job resources and job demand. A job demands social, physical, psychological, or organizational aspects that requires seamless psychological and physical commitment skills, for example the ability to handle emotional demands and pressures of work. Job resources are the psychological and physical support made available for an employee to achieve work goals. These resources include coaching of supervisors, role clarification, self-management status, career opportunities, the stimulation of learning, growth, and personal development, or the reduction of job demands.

Occupational stress is related to one's work and refers to a chronic situation. Working conditions as risk factors for stress can be managed only by understanding the working conditions and taking steps to improving them. A lack of support from supervisors and coworkers leads to occupational stress. When employees feel little control over the work performed and find themselves out of proportion to the reward, the risk for occupational stress also increases. Occupational stress concerns both employees and employers because stressful working conditions are linked to physical health, emotional well-being of employees and job-related performance.

According to the study by Yuan, Gazi, Rahman, Dhar, and Rahaman (2022) ILO found that long working hours, which are theorized to increase psychosocial occupational stress, are an occupational risk factor that is the major cause of occupational stress and is called disease burden. With regards to long working hours about 744,924 workers died according to the official joint estimate of WHO/ILO (Pega, 2022).

2.4 Critique of the Literature

The literature reviewed in this study offers a broad coverage of the different measures that organizations use to promote healthy work-life balance amongst their employees. A diversity of contexts has been reflected by the past research that has been conducted in this area. However, several limitations can be noted in the literature that this study was conducted to address. Some past studies have focused on many different organizations rather than focusing on a single organization without controlling for the organizational differences (Adenuga, 2015). One of the knowledge gaps identified is that there is lack of organization-specific research. Many studies focus on multiple organizations, making it difficult to isolate the effects of specific interventions. This study aims to address this gap by focusing on a single organizational context.

Secondly existing research tends to focus on individual strategies rather than the combined effects of various strategies. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the impact of a "cocktail of strategies" on employee performance and wellbeing. Additionally, the literature review highlights that existing research often overlooks organizational-specific factors, such as the availability of initiatives to employees and levels of awareness of different forms of support hence the for more research on the impact of work-life balance initiatives on employee wellbeing and productivity. While there is some research on the topic, the literature review suggests that more studies are needed to fully understand the relationship between work-life balance initiatives and employee wellbeing and productivity.

The literature review notes that informal support policies, such as managerial support and job autonomy, are important for promoting work-life balance, but more research is needed to fully understand their impact and there is need for more research on the impact of work-life balance initiatives on different types of employees (e.g., parents, non-parents, men, women) may have different needs and preferences when it comes

to work-life balance initiatives. More research is needed to understand these differences and how organizations can tailor their initiatives to meet the needs of different employee groups.

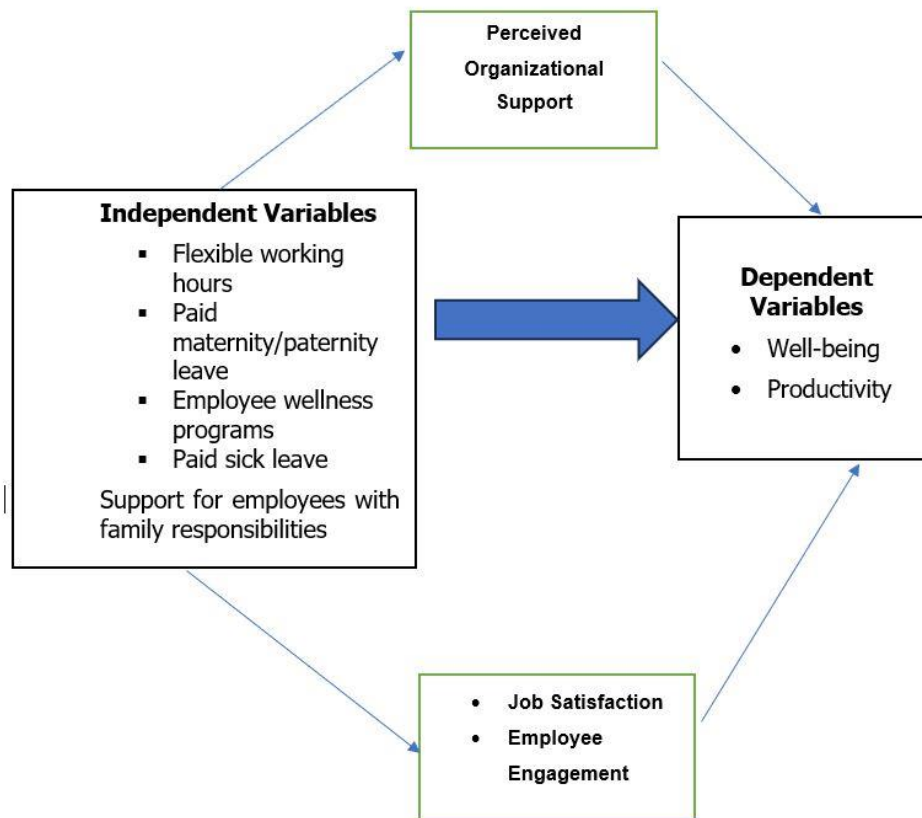
To address gaps in some of the existing studies, this study focused on a single organizational context to ensure that uniformity of policies across the organization could help to isolate the effects of the same interventions of outcome variables of interest. Another weakness of the existing literature is that they focus more on individual strategies rather than the combined effects of various strategies intended to promote healthy work-life balance that represent a more realistic approach. Thus, while some studies such as Mathimaran (2017) focus on the effects of paid leave, organizations are more interested in how a cocktail of strategies is likely, on average to affect desired outcome variables such as employee performance and wellbeing. Further, the literature does not consider organizational specific factors such as availability of the initiatives to employees, levels of awareness of different forms of support etc.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The definition of conceptual framework is in terms of measurable and observable behaviors by defining others' ideas that can be analyzed in actual practices (Locke, 2007). The operational definitions of the variables used on this study have been discussed in this section. This conceptual framework provides a visual representation of the relationships between the independent variables, mediating variables, and dependent variables. It serves as a foundation for further research, including hypothesis testing and data analysis. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework that this study used. The independent variables that were adopted by the study were variables relating to work-life balance initiatives in place in the organization of interest. These included dependent care, flexible time, work-leave programme, behavioral outcomes, and informal support policies. The dependent variables in the study were employee well-being and productivity as shown by the diagram. While the mediating variables are Job Satisfaction which focus on employee satisfaction with their job, Conflict between work and family responsibilities employee emotional, cognitive, and

behavioral investment in their work and Perceived Organizational Support which looks at employee perception of organizational support.

Figure 1 Study Conceptual Framework



Source: Developed from the Literature

2.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the relevant literature and offered a critique that supports the conduct of the study. The review has also touched on important theoretical underpinnings that require empirical investigation to understand how they may explain what is observed in a given organizational context. The methodology that was applied for this study to achieve stated objectives is presented and supported in the next chapter

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents methodology of how the study was carried out and how the answers to the research questions were obtained and analyzed. Specifically, this chapter presents the research approach, design, study population, sample size, sampling methodology, data collection methods, data analysis and ethical issues concerning the study.

3.1 Research Approach

This study used a mixed method research approach. This means that the study used both numbers and words to understand the topic better. The mixed method approach helped in getting more details about the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity. Using both ways made the study better because numbers alone or words alone would not have been enough. The study used both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative part was used to understand deep feelings and ideas from employees. The quantitative part helped to count and measure things, like how many employees agree or disagree with work-life balance initiatives. This way, the study gave a clearer picture of what was happening.

A mixed method approach was good for this study because it made sure that the results were more accurate. If only one method was used, some important information could have been missed.

Using two ways helped to make the study results stronger and more believable. Also, by mixing both methods, the researcher was able to check if the results from one method matched with the other. This made the research findings more trustworthy. According to Creswell (2012), combining qualitative and quantitative data gives better understanding of a research problem. This is why this approach was chosen for this study. The mixed method approach also helped in reducing mistakes that could happen if only one method was used. By using both methods, the research was more complete and covered different angles of the problem.

3.2 Research Design

Ngandu (2013) described a research design as the framework for the collection and analysis of data. Babbie and Mouton (2004) defines a research design as the conceptual structure within which research is carried out. Hence, research design entails a plan or blueprint of how the researcher plans to conduct the study. Overall, a research design signifies a plan, or a road map made by the researcher on how he/she intends to carry out research and how to discover answers to the research questions. In this study, a mixed method research approach is purposively adopted. The study used a mixed method approach to investigate the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity among world vision in Zambia. This study applied both open and closed ended questions to gather information and consequently answer the problem question by highlighting the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity. Creswell (2012) pointed out that a mixed method approach is a combination of qualitative and quantitative data in a single or same study to provide a better understanding of the research problem. It highlights procedures for collecting, analyzing and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or in a multiphase series of study. The rationale for combining data from both approaches is that they provide more insight into the issue understudy that might be missed when only one single research approach is used (Garuth, 2013). The approach was chosen to offset the problem of generalization and enhance the validity, credibility, dependability and reliability of the research findings.

A descriptive survey design is a research approach that involves collecting data from a sample of participants to describe a phenomenon or situation. As Babbie and Mouton (2004) noted, "research design is the structure that guides how research is done." This design is particularly useful for gathering information from a large group of people in a structured way, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data using a combination of closed and open-ended questions and analyzing data to identify patterns, trends, and relationships. The rationale for Choosing Descriptive Survey Design was that the descriptive survey design was chosen for this study because it allows for data collection from a large sample in this case employees of World Vision Zambia. Enables the collection of both numerical and written data using a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions and provides a structured approach to gather and analyze data.

A questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument for this study. The questionnaire included closed questions to collect numerical data and Open-ended questions to collect written data and capture more in-depth information. By using a descriptive survey design, this study aimed to gather a comprehensive understanding of the effects of work-life balance on employees of World Vision Zambia.

3.3 Target Population

The study was carried out on employees working under world vision Zambia. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) it is impossible to study the whole targeted population. The study focused on employees working under World Vision Zambia. Given the large size of the targeted population, it was necessary to select a representative sample to ensure the study's feasibility and reliability. As Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) noted, "it is impossible to study the whole targeted population." Therefore, a sample of employees was selected from the total population of World Vision Zambia. The sample size for this study consisted of 85 employees, as shown in Table 1. This sample size was deemed sufficient to provide reliable and valid results. The sample size of 85 employees was justified based on the following considerations: The sample size was representative of the different departments and levels of employees within World Vision Zambia. A sample size of 85 employees provided a reasonable level of precision for estimating the population parameters. The sample size was manageable and feasible given the resources and time constraints of the study. To ensure the reliability and validity of the study's findings, the following measures were taken: A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data, which was pilot-tested to ensure its reliability and validity. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings. By selecting a representative sample and taking measures to ensure reliability and validity, this study provides a credible and trustworthy insight into the effects of work-life balance on employees of World Vision Zambia. For this study, Table 1 shows the distribution of the study population at the time sampling was conducted.

Table 3.1 Study Population Distribution

Population Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
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Top Management staff	7	20
Middle level management staff	117	20
Other staff	296	20
Total	420	20

Source: Internal HR Records

3.3 Sampling and Sample Size

The sample size refers to individual observation or measurement that will be included in the sample, the sample is also a subset of the population that is selected for a study and holds similar characteristics to that of the population. This study was conducted as a mixed methods research, combining quantitative data with qualitative data obtained from the same respondents based on a semi-structured questionnaire. The Yamene formula for estimating sample size was applied as follows based on a population of 420 countrywide employees of WVZ across different roles and designations. A 10% margin of safety was assumed with the result below;

$$n = \left(\frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} \right) = \frac{420}{1 + 420 * 0.1^2} = 81$$

For purposes of arriving at a representative sample for the different classes of roles of employees in the organization, a sample size of 85 was taken, In this regard, the total sample size for this study was 85 participants, representing 20% of the target population of 420 staff across the entire organization countrywide. Table 2 shows the distribution of the sample which was selected by convenience sampling but based on relative proportions of the categories of staff/management from Table 1.

Table 3. 2 Sample size distribution

Population Category	Frequency	%	Targeted
Top Management staff	7	20	2
Middle level MGMT	117	20	23
Lower Management & staff	296	20	59
Total	420	20	85

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

To explore the effect of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity, primary data was collected via semi-structured questionnaires. To ensure access to the data collection instrument across the country, the study used kobo collect tool to administer the survey instrument. This was particularly useful as the tool is accessible even with poor or no internet connectivity which was important as staff are often in far flung parts of the country that would have otherwise presented challenges for the process of data collection.

3.5 Data Analysis

The data collected was extracted from Kobo-Collect to MS Excel, cleaned, edited and imported into SPSS window. SPSS was used to compute descriptive statistics for the variables of interest. Chi-square testing was used to detect differences in frequency distributions from those expected under assumptions such as equal distributions across response categories to establish potential patterns of preference for specific responses. The variables of interest for analysis in this study included awareness/rankings/satisfaction with flexible working hours, paid maternity/paternity leave, employee wellness programs, paid sick leave, support for employees with family responsibilities, remote working options, job sharing and other related measures for WLB. Effects of these on staff overall wellbeing and productivity were assessed using Chi-Square goodness of fit tests. Qualitative data from open ended questions was subjected to thematic analysis to establish the main themes that were present in respondent submissions to the questions. The approach for thematic analysis that was used was based on Braun & Clarke (2014) described as reflexive involving search for, review and definition of themes within textual data that was collected based on the open-ended survey questions.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to various standards of research ethics in dealing with organizations and human subjects. Participation was voluntary and all the respondents were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time if so, they wished. The identity of research participants was kept secret by ensuring responses were not linked back to specific respondents through none collection of personal identification data. Additionally, all the information collected was published as aggregates. In so far as the

researcher is concerned, there were no any grave potential physical risks associated with the subject's participation in research either physical or emotional injury and other inconveniences. The cases of the information leakage were taken care of with encryptions at all levels. Before participation, the researcher ensured participants received comprehensive information about the study's nature and potential questions. Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the organization as indicated by the attached data collection approval letter.

3.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive description and justification for the methodology that was applied for the study. The chapter has also outlined the ethical issues that were attendant in the study and described how they were addressed. In the next chapter, the results of the study are presented and analyzed.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

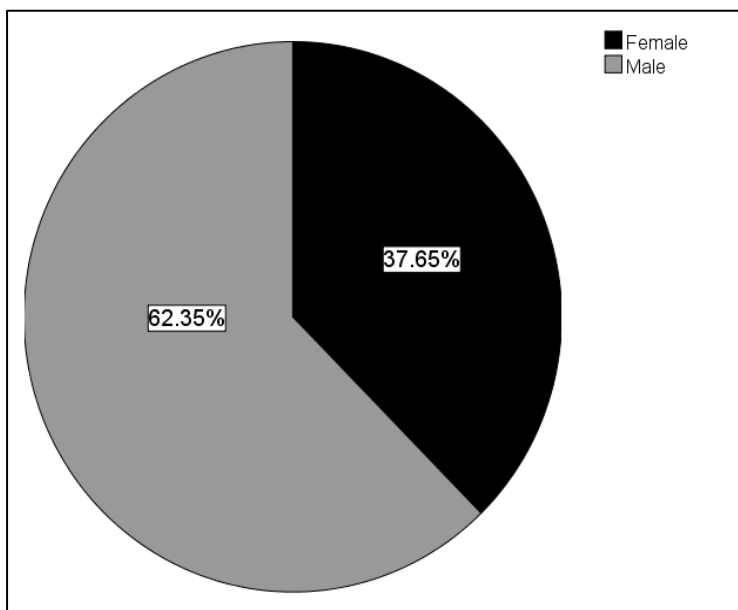
This study was conducted to investigate the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia. To conduct the study, a convenience sample of 85 respondents who are employees/managers in the nongovernmental organization across the country, was selected. Data was collected by a semi-structured questionnaire that was made administered to all study participants irrespective of location. The results of the data that was collected and analyzed are presented in this chapter. The chapter starts by presenting data on the profiles of study participants which were also of significance in the context of the study on work life balance initiatives as they generally influence lifestyle, workload, and levels of responsibility as noted in the past research reviewed in Chapter Two.

4.1 Respondent Profiles

4.1.1 Gender Distribution

Figure 2 shows the distribution of respondents by gender. The sample was male dominated (62.35%). Female respondents were 37.65% of the sample.

Figure 2 Respondent Gender

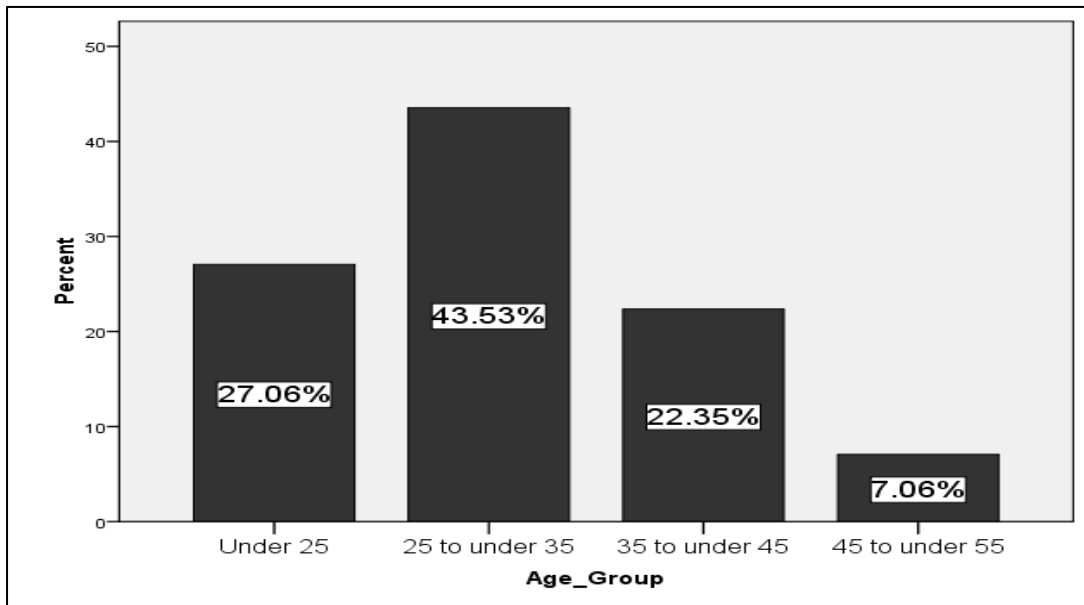


Source: Researcher (2024)

4.1.2 Age Distribution

Figure 3 shows the age distribution of the sample. The age group from 25 to under 35 had the highest frequency (43.53%).

Figure 3 Ages of Respondents

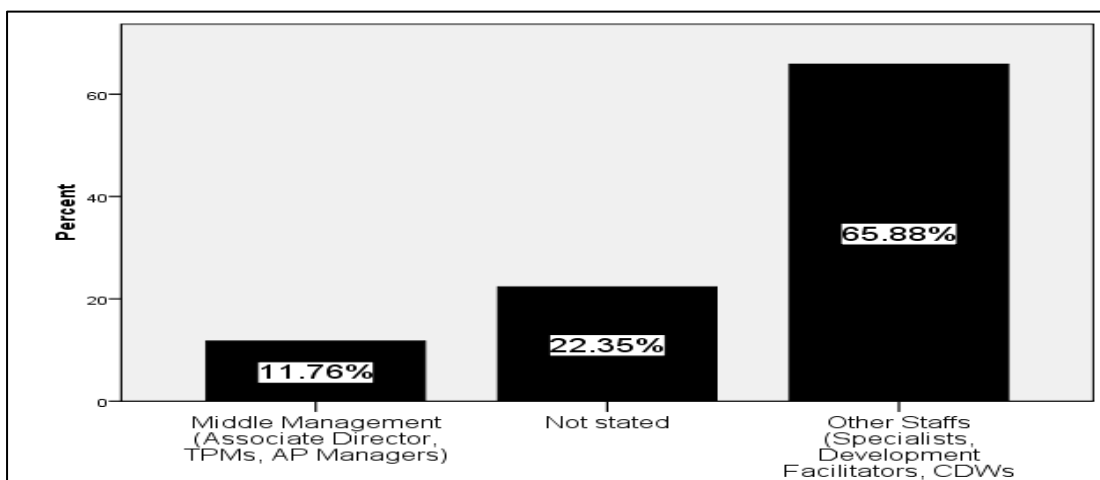


Source: Researcher (2024)

4.1.3 Staff Category Distribution

Data on the roles of respondents in the organization was also collected. Figure 4 shows the results. The largest ratio of the sample was the other staff (65.88%).

Figure 4 Roles of Respondents in Organization

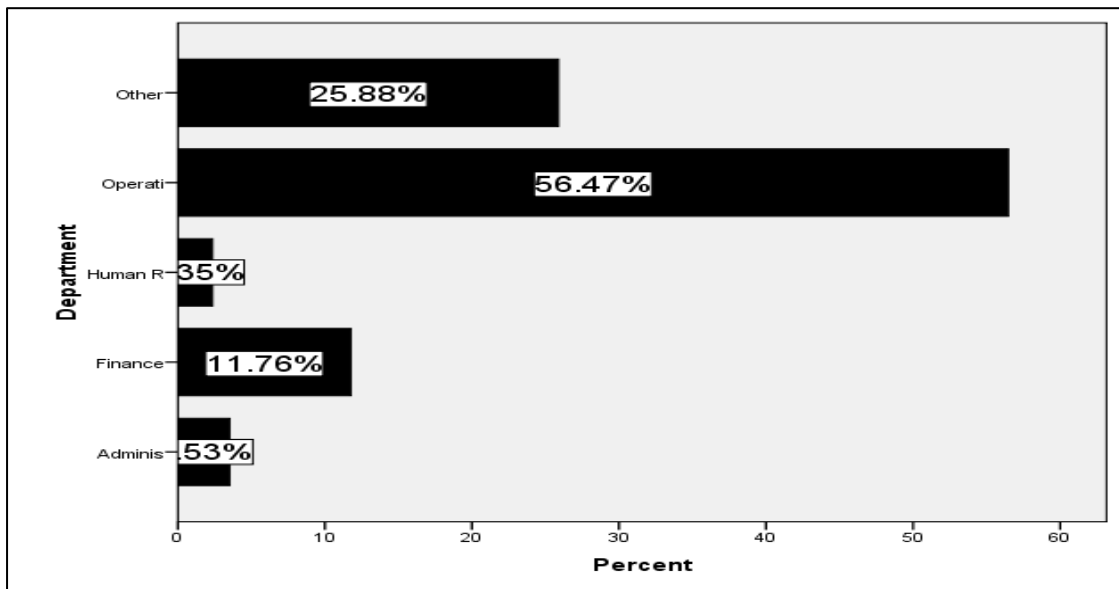


Source: Researcher (2024)

4.1.4 Departmental Distribution

Figure 5 shows analysis of the sample based on the departments in the organization to which respondents were deployed at the time of the study. Staff in the operational departments were the majority of the sample (56.47%).

Figure 5 Respondents by Department

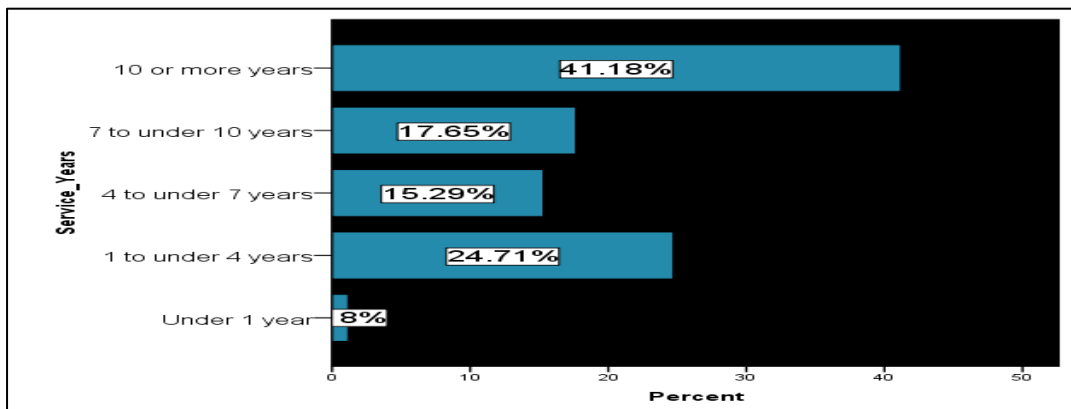


Source: Researcher (2024)

4.1.5 Years in the Organization

Figure 6 shows the analysis of the years served in the organization by respondents at the time of the study. Respondents with 10 or more years of service were the largest response category of the sample in this area (41.18%).

Figure 6 Respondent Service Years in Organization



Source: Researcher (2024)

4.2 Results on Work-Life Balance Initiatives at World Vision Zambia

4.2.1 Awareness of Work Life Balance Initiatives at World Vision Zambia

Table 3 shows data on respondent awareness of the Work Life Balance initiatives implemented by World Vision Zambia. All respondents indicated being aware of the initiatives implemented by the organization.

Table 4.1 Awareness of WLBI at World Vision Zambia

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative%
Valid	No	0	0	0	0
	Yes	85	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.2.2 Forms and Availability of Different WLB Initiatives

Respondents were asked to identify and state availability of different forms of Work Life Balance Initiatives applied by the organization. Table 4 shows the frequencies where respondents were allowed to select multiple items on the scale. The most frequently selected item was employee wellness programs (24.83%) followed by flexible working hours (21.48%) and by paid maternity/paternity leave (18.15%). The least frequently selected items were job sharing (5.37%) and other (2.01%). The popularity of the top WLBI also suggested that they were also most available to respondents.

Table 3.2 Types and Availability of WLBI at World Vision Zambia

WLBI	Count	Percentage
Flexible working hours	64	21.48
Paid maternity/paternity leave	54	18.15
Employee wellness programs	74	24.83
Paid sick leave	51	17.11
Support for employees with family responsibilities	27	9.06
Remote working options	24	8.05
Job sharing	16	5.37
Other	6	2.01
Total	316	100

Source: Researcher (2024)

Respondents were further asked to indicate whether they felt encouraged by the organization to make use of the various WLBI initiatives. Table 5 shows the results. Respondents that agreed with the assertion (55.3%) were in the largest response

category. This was followed by those that strongly agreed (28.2%), suggesting that there is a strong focus on ensuring utility of WLBI in the organization.

Table 4.3 Encouraged to Utilize WLBI

		Freq.	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Valid	Disagree	4	4.7	4.7	4.7
	Neutral	10	11.8	11.8	16.5
	Agree	47	55.3	55.3	71.8
	Strongly Agree	24	28.2	28.2	100.0
	Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 6 shows confirmation of the position of dominance of the agree and strongly agreed responses in the dataset. The result was based on the Chi-Square test of equal distribution of expected frequencies amongst response categories (null hypothesis) versus those actually observed that may deviate from the expectation (alternative hypothesis). The test statistic of 51.58 with a p-value of 0.000 indicates that the frequencies observed were significantly different from those expected under equality of frequencies across the response categories, suggesting that the views of those who agreed with the position on encouragement to take up WLBI were of greater statistical weight than those that did not have that view.

Table 4.4 Chi Square Test-Equality of Frequencies on WLBI Encouragement

	Encouraged
Chi-Square	51.518 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3 WLBI, Employee Wellbeing and Productivity at World Vision Zambia

4.3.1 Effectiveness of WLBI for Employee Personal & Work Lives

Respondents were asked to indicate how effective they considered the WLBI implemented by the organization were in helping them manage their personal and work lives. Table 7 shows the results. Respondents who were of the view that the initiatives are effective represented over half the sample (56.5%). In contrast, those

with the view that the initiatives were ineffective, or decided on the neutral position, were only cumulatively at 31.8% of the sample.

Table 4.5 Effectiveness of WLBI

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Ineffective	4	4.7	4.7	4.7
	Neutral	23	27.1	27.1	31.8
	Effective	48	56.5	56.5	88.2
	Very Effective	10	11.8	11.8	100.0
	Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 8 shows results of the Chi-square test for the equality of distribution of observed frequencies across the response categories in Table 7. The results confirm the conclusion that respondents who felt the methods are effective were statistically more than those that did not. The test statistic of 53.776 was statistically significant at the 1% level given the p-value of 0.000.

Table 4.6 Chi Square Test for Distribution of Effectiveness of WLBI

Test Statistics	
	Effectiveness_WLBI
Chi-Square	53.776 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 21.3.	

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.2 WLBI and Overall Wellbeing

Respondents were asked to indicate the effect of the WLBI adopted by their employers on their overall wellbeing. Table 9 shows the results. The majority of respondents noted positive effects on overall wellbeing arising from the WLBI adopted by their employer (50.6% indicating somewhat increasing overall wellbeing and 38.8% greatly improved wellbeing). In other words, the data suggests overall positive effect impressions amongst respondents of wellbeing due to the WLBI applied by the organization.

Table 4.7 Effect of WLBI on Overall Wellbeing

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative%
Valid	Somewhat decrease well-being	2	2.4	2.4	2.4
	No effect on well-being	7	8.2	8.2	10.6
	Somewhat improve well-being	43	50.6	50.6	61.2
	Greatly improve well-being	33	38.8	38.8	100.0
	Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 10 shows results of the Chi-Square test for equality of the frequencies across the response categories in Table 9. The results show a Chi-Square statistic of 55.735 with a p-value of 0.000 indicating statistical significance at the 1% level of alpha. Therefore, the view that the WLBI in the organization are considered positively in terms of overall wellbeing was supported by the results.

Table 4.8 Chi Square Test for WLBI and Overall Wellbeing

Test Statistics	
	WLBI Overall Wellbeing
Chi-Square	55.753 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 21.3.	

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.3 WLBI and Employee Productivity

Table 11 shows results that were obtained in relation to the question of whether the WLBI at the organization improved the productivity of the workers based on self-assessments. Similar to the distribution in Table 9 on overall employee wellbeing, results in Table 11 indicate tendency of respondents to agree that the WLBI have had positive effects on their productivity.

Table 4.9 Employee Productivity and WLBI at World Vision Zambia

		Freq.	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Disagree	4	4.7	4.7	4.7
	Neutral	17	20.0	20.0	24.7
	Agree	45	52.9	52.9	77.6
	Strongly Agree	19	22.4	22.4	100.0
	Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 12 shows results of the related Chi-Square test for the equality of frequencies across the response categories. Based on the results, the equality of frequencies across response categories hypothesis could not be sustained at the 1% level of significance (Ch-Square Statistic=41.635, p-value=0.000).

Table 4.10 Chi-Square Test WLBI and Employee Productivity

	WLBI Productivity
Chi-Square	41.635 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.4 Satisfaction with WLBI at World Vision Zambia

Table 13 shows the data that was collected to assess the overall levels of satisfaction with WLBI at World Vision Zambia. The response category with the highest frequency was the satisfied option (50.6%).

Table 4.11 Respondent Satisfaction with WLBI at World Vision Zambia

		Frequency	Percent	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Dissatisfied	8	9.4	9.4	9.4
	Neutral	20	23.5	23.5	32.9
	Satisfied	43	50.6	50.6	83.5
	Very Satisfied	14	16.5	16.5	100.0
	Total	85	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher (2024)

Table 14 shows related Chi-Square test of equality of frequencies across the response categories. The test statistic was 33.071 with p-value=0.000 indicating that results in Table 13 significantly deviated from the assumption of equal frequencies across the response categories.

Table 4.12 Chi Square Test Employee Satisfaction with WLBI

Test Statistics	
	Satisfaction WLBI
Chi-Square	33.071 ^a
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 21.3.	

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.5 Scale Reliability Assessment for Research Question 2 Items

To assess the extent to which items that were used to investigate research question two showed internal consistency in measuring the same underlying construct, Cronbach's alpha was calculated. Table 15 shows the results. The analysis involved the 4-item scale relating to effectiveness of WLBI, WLBI and overall wellbeing, WLBI and employee productivity as well as satisfaction with WLBI. The result of the alpha=0.843 suggests that the scale was a reliable measure of the same underlying construct.

Table 4.13 Scale Reliability Analysis Results by Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.843	4

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.3.6 Analysis of Individual WLBI Component Effects

To evaluate the effects of individual components of WLBI on overall wellbeing, respondents were asked to rank each component on a scale that was coded from 1 to 5 for purposes of data analysis representing "not at all" to "to a great extent" in terms of enhancement of overall wellbeing and productivity. Table 16 provides summary statistics for each component as well as the t-test statistic for whether the mean score of ratings for the component was significantly greater than the 3 which is the nominal 5-point Likert scale average. Results all indicated that mean ratings for the components were significantly above the notional average of 3 at the 1% level (p-values=0.000 for all the test statistics).

Table 4.14 Analysis of Individual WLBI components

	Rating FWHs	Rating RWOs	Rating PL	Rating SFFRs	Rating EWP	Rating JS
Mean	3.99	3.58	3.81	4.20	4.15	3.73
SD.	1.107	1.304	1.524	1.033	0.982	1.169
t-stat	8.228	4.077	4.912	10.712	10.824	5.753
p-value	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Source: Researcher (2024)

4.4 Challenges and Improvement of WLBI at World Vision Zambia

As much as the study was intended to explore effects of WLBI at World Vision Zambia on staff overall staff wellbeing and productivity, it was also focused on establishing challenges and areas for improvement that management may need to address to optimize both employee and organizational outcomes. Therefore, data relating to experiences of respondents that could not be easily captured on numeric scales was collected to provide these insights. The data was coded and subjected to thematic analysis. In the first case, respondents were asked to indicate, in their opinion, what additional WLB initiatives could World Vision Zambia implement to enhance employee well-being and productivity. Figure 7 provides an overview of the key themes that the analysis of the data generated for this question. The results demonstrated a broad range of areas in which respondents felt that WLBI could be enhanced to have better staff wellbeing and productivity effects. Some respondents noted that certain jobs placed excessive pressure on members of staff due to poorly defined scope that saw staff being compelled to extend their efforts too often to areas for which they would not be paid and yet necessary for operational effectiveness. A recurring theme was that either job descriptions be reviewed and properly outlined or staff be paid for the extra work to promote fairness and lower stress through proper management of workloads and identification of disproportionately burdened staff. It was also noted that taking leave should be encouraged more and not treated as outside normal staff entitlements to promote healthy WLB. Thus, respondents were also of the view that expanding the scope for remote and flexible work would be a welcome measure. While it was noted that wellness programs were a feature of the current WLBI, inclusion of aspects such as mental health focus would be helpful.

Figure 7 WLBI Improvements to Enhance Wellbeing & Productivity

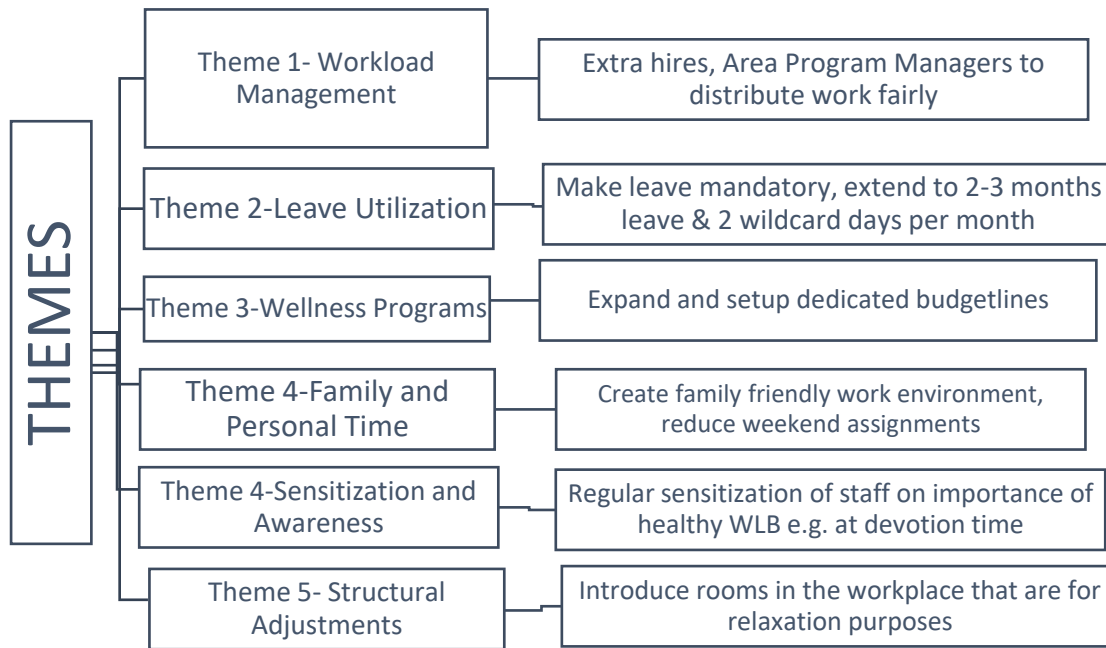


Source: Researcher (2024)

Respondents also mentioned the enhancement of team building as a means that can be effective for creating a healthy work environment in the organization. The view that relaxed interaction between staff and superiors can help reduce work related stress and improve Work Life Balance and its effects on staff wellbeing and productivity was stressed by some respondents as an important intervention that can give staff the sense of belonging required.

Study participants were also asked to indicate what suggestions they would have for improving work-life balance initiatives at World Vision Zambia. Thematic analysis of the resulting qualitative data is presented in Figure 8. The results closely reflected those in Figure 7 relating to challenges for WLBI at WVZ. Results indicated that workload management could consider making extra hires of even temporary staff during peak operational periods. Some respondents also felt that Area Program Managers need to be constantly made aware of the need to distribute work fairly and have concern for possible burnout of overburdened staff. A closely aligned theme was that of utilization of leave by staff as well as possible extension of leave periods while also allowing staff to optimizing the use of wildcard days of absence by increasing them to 2 per month to allow staff to attend to ad hoc personal needs that may become stressors if ignored.

Figure 8 Thematic Analysis of Suggestions to Improve WLB at WVZ



Source: Researcher (2024)

4.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data that was collected for the study. The chapter has analyzed the results in detail in line with the questions that were adopted for the study. The quantitative and qualitative data analysis results have been clarified on the question of WLB and staff overall wellbeing as well as productivity at WVZ. The results of the study are discussed in terms of significance and implications in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

The policy and academic discourse around Work-Life-Balance initiatives and employee outcomes such as wellbeing and productivity represents a critical area of inquiry given the increasing need for organizations to deliver to stakeholder expectations across different levels (Adekoya, 2022). Reliance by organizations on their people to get things done especially in socio-economic development project and program related fields within tight operational budgets invariably entails that staff are often asked to work long hours, raising the possibilities of stress and burnout, which have short- and long-term adverse effects on staff wellbeing and productivity (Adenuga, 2015). Hence, WLBI initiatives adopted by employers are expected to play an important role in countering these pressures to enable employees to have a healthy balance between work demands and personal lives imperatives. Related research to assess the effects of these employer supported initiatives is growing and this study was conducted to contribute to the growing knowledge in the area by conducting a mixed methods study of World Vision Zambia (WVZ). In this chapter, findings of the study are discussed to demonstrate their significance within the context of the existing theoretical and empirical literature.

5.1 Employee Awareness and Access to Work-Life-Balance Initiatives

5.1.1 RO1 Significance of Findings Vis-à-vis Existing Literature

A key question in this study was about awareness of and access to WLBI by employees of World Vision Zambia. This line of inquiry was premised on the argument that in most organizational contexts, WLBI initiatives adopted by employers are largely dominated by elements that require deliberate action to take advantage of by employees so that intended objectives of healthy WLB can be promoted (Le, et al., 2020). This is the case to a large extent except with measures such as maternity/paternity leave and annual leave entitlements for employees that are often integrated into labour laws (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2022). Options presented by WLBI such as participation in employee wellness programmes entail that lack of

staff awareness amongst staff of the availability of such programmes and related benefits, may entail they do not participate where such participation would be beneficial to both them and their employers. In other words, employee ignorance of the availability of these interventions may be counterproductive, despite employer fears of abuse of the entitlements also being partly valid as pointed out by scholars such as Oludayo et al. (2018). Such abuses can lead to fall in productivity for example if employees abuse opportunities for remote working to do more of their own things at the expense of the organization (Rosa, 2022).

In this study apart from awareness, the concern was also about access as employer/management fears about potential abuses may lead to controls that unfairly limit access to the entitlements for some employees, which can contribute to productivity falls, perceptions of lack of organizational justice and feelings of resentment amongst those who consider themselves to be excluded (Shakir & Siddiqui, 2018). Results of the study show that employees of World Vision Zambia have very high awareness of WBLI provided by their employers. All respondents in the study (100%) expressed the position that they were aware of the initiatives and their goals. This suggests that employee onboarding and other processes of inducting employees into the organization place emphasis on the concept of Work-Life-Balance. The organizational culture also encourages appreciation of healthy Work-Life-Balance amongst employees with policies such as sponsored annual outings (retreats) for all staff being a feature of how things are done to enhance such appreciation. The study found that significant proportions of the employees of the organization felt that they were encouraged to make full use of the entitlements. These results suggest that the organizational policies around WLBI are intended to promote positivity around them, which in turn should support employee outcomes relating to overall wellbeing and productivity. This approach appears to be consistent with theories such as Spillover theory from the positive perspective, which means that positive attitudes and practices towards Work-Life-Balance cultivated in the workplace are expected to spill into the personal and family lives of employees (Adekoya, 2022).

5.1.2 RO1 New Insights and Understanding

Regarding awareness of WLBI and accessibility of the same for employees, the findings of study offer the key insight that the culture of the organizational culture may

be the main factor that explains outcomes. The main insight from the WVZ case study is that strong cultural elements promoting WLBI can still help achieve high levels of awareness and accessibility even where resource constraints may adversely affect the full application of the broad range of WLBI to the fullest extent of each policy. The culture is reflected by the new employee onboarding processes that place importance on ensuring that there is appreciation of the policies for WLB in the organization.

5.1.3 ROI New Knowledge Contributed

The findings of the study contribute to the body knowledge in existing literature regarding awareness of and accessibility to WLBI initiatives as critical for positive WLBI initiatives. The study suggests that organizational values that demonstrate strong alignment with inclusion, fairness and transparency can act as an important solution to problems relating to resource constraints in the promotion of WLBI in an organization. These can lower the likelihood of adverse effects of WLBI such as those predicted by Rosa (2022).

5.2 Work-Life-Balance, Employee Wellbeing and Productivity

5.2.1 RO2 Significance Findings Vis-à-vis WLB, Employee Wellbeing & Productivity

The effect of WLBI on the overall wellbeing and productivity of WVZ employees was a central question in this study. This line of inquiry was supported by a plethora of recent studies that have also addressed the same question, highlighting the possibility of both positive and negative employee outcomes in this regard. As noted in the review of literature, some scholars are skeptical that these measures by employers have real effects on productivity and particularly wellbeing, with scholars such as Rosa (2022) for example raising the critic of gender insensitivity of the measures. As further noted, abuses of some of the initiatives such as remote and flexible working arrangements may entail lower productivity (Oludayo et al., 2018). Thus the literature pointed to a complex relationship that may yield either benefits or unintended negative consequences.

For this study, the results suggest an overall positive relationship between the WLBI adopted by WVZ and both the overall wellbeing and productivity of staff. The results show a Chi-Square statistic of 55.735 with a p-value of 0.000 indicating statistical significance at the 1% level of alpha for the frequency distribution of respondent views on whether the WLBI had positively affected overall employee wellbeing. Therefore, the

view that the WLBI in the organization are considered positively in terms of overall wellbeing was supported by the results. Similarly on the question of productivity effects, the results suggested an overwhelmingly positive view. The results of the study therefore are consistent with those of past research that supports the WLBI based on the positive associations with productivity (Adekoya, 2022; Shakir & Siddiqui, 2018). However, the results of the study relied on self-reported productivity assessments which can be biased and lead to misleading conclusions about the true effects of the WLBI at WVZ.

5.2.2 RO2 New Insights from Study on WLBI & Welfare/Productivity

The study provides a consistent position in terms of the positive association between the WLBI and employee wellbeing as well as productivity. As noted earlier, this aligns with past research studies that have found that the initiatives tend to have this type of effect but is at odds with scholars such as Rosa (2022) who suggest that the system is prone to abuse. The results obtained for this study indicate the possibility that each intervention has value in terms of promoting Work-Life Balance related overall employee wellbeing as well as productivity. The positive overall wellbeing and productivity effect responses obtained in this study could entail a synergistic element from the various components of the initiatives that may not be available when organizations attempt to specialize in only specific intervention. This could be due to the fact that employees have different needs and having a broad range of WLBI promotes overall wellbeing and productivity by speaking to the cross section of employee needs. Thus, the study concludes that focusing on the diverse needs of employees in the design of WLBI may offer the desired overall employee wellbeing and productivity outcomes. These insights may require further investigation in future.

5.3 Work-Life-Balance Initiatives, Challenges and Improvements

Perfect relationships are inevitably rare in the real world and there are bound to be challenges even for the best-intentioned policies may not work well (Nabawanuka & Ekmekcioglu, 2022). For example, WLBI cost money and organizations may find resources required to implement the policies that are difficult to put across, a genuine concern especially in donor funded organizations such as World Vision Zambia (Galleli & Santos, 2022). As suggested in the study background, one of the concerns surrounding the WLBI for the organization has been that progressively tighter budgets

and increasing needs of program beneficiaries have led to adjustments to the strategies applied, with earlier practices such as paid annual vacations for married couples being phased out for example. Nevertheless, this area also offers low-hanging fruit strategies such as job-sharing that can be implemented at minimal cost but with significant potential benefits in terms of overall employee wellbeing, reduced absenteeism and productivity as argued by Gholipour et al. (2010). Consequently, the question of challenges and areas for improvement in the WLBI of the organization was relevant for this study.

Results of the study suggest that challenges in the area of workload management, poor utilization of leave entitlements, as well as work not reflective of compensation and benefits were amongst the main challenges that arose in the thematic analysis that was conducted. Specifically, the results showed that respondents felt that certain jobs placed excessive pressure on members of staff due to poorly defined scope that saw staff being compelled to extend their efforts too often to areas for which they would not be paid and yet necessary for operational effectiveness. A recurring theme was that either job descriptions be reviewed and properly outlined or staff be paid for the extra work to promote fairness and lower stress through proper management of workloads and identification of disproportionately burdened staff. It was also noted that taking leave should be encouraged more and not treated as outside normal staff entitlements to promote healthy WLB.

In the area of improvements of WLBI, results indicated that workload management might include thinking about hiring more employees, even temporary ones, during periods of high operation. Additionally, several respondents believed that Area Program Managers should be continuously reminded of the importance of allocating work equitably and to be concerned about the potential burnout of overworked employees. Staff leave utilization and potential leave period extensions, as well as maximizing the use of wildcard days of absence by raising them to two per month to enable staff to attend to ad hoc personal needs that could become stressors if disregarded, were also closely related themes. Thus, participant suggestions for improvements resonated with those in the literature particularly applicable to contexts with strained resources such as Harahap & Ramli (2023) as well as theories such as the Job Demands-Resources Model Theory, which helps to identify root causes of job-

related stress and therefore provides an avenue for identifying how and where improvements can be made.

5.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study. The areas of similarity with past empirical literature as well as difference have also been highlighted by the study.

Objective 1: Assess Employee Awareness and Access to Work-Life Balance Initiatives

The study found that, employees of World Vision Zambia have high awareness of the work-life balance initiatives (WLBI) provided by their employer (100% awareness). Employees feel encouraged to make full use of the WLBI entitlements. Organizational culture and policies promote positivity around WLBI, supporting employee outcomes related to overall well-being and productivity. This suggests that World Vision Zambia has been successful in promoting awareness and access to WLBI among its employees.

Objective 2: Analyze Effects of Work-Life Balance Initiatives on Employee Well-being and Productivity,

The study found that there is a positive relationship between WLBI and employee well-being (Chi-Square statistic of 55.735, p-value of 0.000). Employees perceive WLBI as having a positive impact on their productivity. The study's findings align with past research that supports the positive association between WLBI and employee well-being and productivity. However, the study notes that self-reported productivity assessments may be biased, which could impact the accuracy of the findings.

Objective 3: Identify Challenges and Propose Improvements for Enhancing Work-Life Balance Initiatives.

The study found that challenges exist in workload management, poor utilization of leave entitlements, and work not reflective of compensation and benefits. Employees suggest improvements such as reviewing job descriptions, promoting leave utilization, and allocating work equitably. The study's findings resonate with literature that highlights the importance of addressing challenges in WLBI implementation, particularly in resource-constrained contexts.

Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia. The findings highlight the importance of promoting awareness and access to WLBI,

addressing challenges in implementation, and continually evaluating and improving WLBI policies and practices.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The quest for sustainable development has placed significant attention on the operations of organizations whose mandate places them at the center of the drive towards desired socio-economic development outcomes. As noted in this study, such operations are highly dependent on the wellbeing and productivity of the employees of the concerned organizations. However, human beings have needs that extend beyond what is seen in the workplace, and poor balance in attending to these needs may lead to stress and low productivity hence organizations adopt Work-Life-Balance Initiatives that are intended to support employees and ensure healthy balance. This study was conducted to investigate the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia. The study was conducted as a mixed methods study. In this chapter, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are delivered.

6.1 Study Conclusions

6.1.1 High Awareness and Accessibility of WLBI at WVZ

Employee awareness of measures that are intended to promote healthy Work-Life Balance is important as it sets the basis for the optimal utilization of such initiatives. Therefore, as much as employers take it upon themselves to design and implement such initiatives, it can be argued to be their duty to ensure that employees are made fully aware of these initiatives to encourage responsible use of the entitlements. It is also the responsibility of employers to ensure that there are fair processes for granting staff opportunities to use these entitlements. Poor practices in this regard may lead to resentment and higher levels of stress for employees who feel unfairly excluded from accessing the entitlements that promote healthy WLB. This study has underscored the importance of these two aspects of adoption of WLBI in the workplace to promote overall employee wellbeing and productivity. It is concluded in the study that employers taking these responsibilities seriously can be considered to be the main foundation for enhancing the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes in employee wellbeing and productivity. However, more studies of a comparative nature be need to be conducted to ascertain the veracity of this conclusion. In the case of WVZ for

example, differences between operations in different locations can be the basis of testing such conclusions. Such an evidence-based approach could be useful in ensuring that employee onboarding practices are standardized across the organization in this area.

6.1.2 WLBI, Employee Wellbeing and Employee Productivity

This study also dealt with the critical question of how WLBI affect employee wellbeing and productivity. Reliance on self-reported assessments was noted to be a key potential methodological issue for the study. Nevertheless, the use of a sample that could be considered representative may be argued to have been useful for mitigating this issue. Findings of the study overwhelmingly suggested a positive effect arising from the combination and its individual elements of Work-Life-Balance Initiatives. In other words, each intervention has value in terms of promoting Work-Life Balance related overall employee wellbeing as well as productivity. The positive overall wellbeing and productivity effect responses obtained in this study could entail a synergistic element from the various components of the initiatives that may not be available when organizations attempt to specialize in only specific intervention. This could be due to the fact that employees have different needs and having a broad range of WLBI promotes overall wellbeing and productivity by speaking to the cross section of employee needs. Thus, the study concludes that focusing on the diverse needs of employees in the design of WLBI may offer the desired overall employee wellbeing and productivity outcomes.

6.1.3 Challenges and Improvements for WLBI

Organizational contexts for implementation of WLBI differ. Tailoring the WLBI to the organizational contexts may enhance the likelihood of successful outcomes. In this study, the project and program management context of World Vision Zambia was considered. In such a context, closure of projects for example results in strained operating conditions that place a lot of stress on employees tasked with various operations relevant to such projects. There is pressure to deliver reports and reconcile variances resulting in extended working hours away from family. This challenge was noted by the study to be inadequately addressed by existing WLBI at World Vision Zambia particularly as extra hours of work required have not paid for. Also, some employees are disproportionately affected by such stress than others, calling into

question the workload management practices of the organization. Study participants highlighted the need to address this discrepancy if the overall spirit of the WLBI adopted by the organization is to be respected. Other improvements that were suggested in the study included introduction of relaxation facilities in the work environment as well as job sharing and employment of temporary workers during stressed periods. The need to extend and make mandatory leave and wildcard days off work periods was also stressed. The organization should therefore revisit its practices in order to iron out these weaknesses.

6.2 Policy Recommendations

The study makes the following policy recommendations;

- a) Management of employers such as World Vision Zambia should take it as a core human resource management function to support awareness of Work-Life-Balance amongst exiting and new staff. Any amendments to policies and their rationale should be clearly communicated to employees. Management should also conduct regular evaluations to ensure staff access to the entitlements is as required and follows organizational justice principles.
- b) Management of project and program focused organizations should take the Work-Life-Balance requirements of their employees seriously as they can affect overall employee wellbeing and productivity. They should continuously assess the initiatives to ensure that they adequately address the cross section of employee needs.
- c) Management of project and program focused organizations should obtain employee input in the design of WLBI. This input should be regularly obtained under an annual review system that ensures that the WLBI remain relevant for the intended purpose.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

This study has highlighted methodological concerns in seeking a comprehensive answer to the question of effect of WLBI on employee wellbeing and productivity. Future research may seek to address these concerns by considering data across many organizations to enhance the external validity of research. For example, measures of productivity such as production units per worker could be used in the case of manufacturing entities or beneficiaries reached per worker in the case of organizations such as World Vision Zambia. Also, comparisons between classes of

workers e.g., field versus office workers could provide valuable insights that can enhance the utility of WLBI.

6.4 Overall Study Conclusion

The study investigated the effects of work-life balance initiatives (WLBI) on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia. The findings suggest that employees have high awareness and access to WLBI, which is essential for promoting overall employee well-being and productivity. WLBI have a positive impact on employee well-being and productivity, with each intervention having value in promoting overall employee well-being and productivity.

Challenges exist in workload management, poor utilization of leave entitlements, and work not reflective of compensation and benefits. Proposed improvements include addressing workload management, promoting leave utilization, and allocating work equitably. Based on the findings, the study recommends, employers should prioritize employee awareness and access. Employers should ensure that employees are aware of and have access to WLBI, and that there are fair processes for granting staff opportunities to use these entitlements. WLBI should be tailored to organizational contexts, considering the diverse needs of employees. Employers should conduct regular evaluations to ensure that WLBI are effective and that employee input is obtained in the design and implementation of WLBI.

The study suggests that future research should address methodological concerns, such as using objective measures of productivity and considering data across multiple organizations. Future research could also explore comparisons between classes of workers, such as field versus office workers, to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of WLBI.

This study contributes to the body of knowledge in several ways, the study extends the existing literature on work-life balance initiatives (WLBI) by providing insights into the effects of WLBI on employee well-being and productivity in the context of World Vision Zambia. The study highlights the importance of contextualizing WLBI to the specific organizational context, considering the diverse needs of employees. The study also emphasizes the importance of employee awareness and access to WLBI, and the need for fair processes for granting staff opportunities to use these entitlements. The study further identifies challenges in workload management, poor

utilization of leave entitlements, and work not reflective of compensation and benefits, and proposes improvements to address these challenges.

The study's findings have implications for practice and policy, Organizations should prioritize employee awareness and access to WLBI, and ensure that there are fair processes for granting staff opportunities to use these entitlements. Human resource managers should consider the diverse needs of employees when designing and implementing WLBI. Employers should prioritize employee well-being and productivity by providing WLBI that address the diverse needs of employees.

The study suggests several that future research should focus on longitudinal studies to explore the long-term effects of WLBI on employee well-being and productivity and also focus on Comparative studies to explore the effects of WLBI on employee well-being and productivity across different organizational contexts. Intervention studies could explore the effectiveness of specific WLBI in improving employee well-being and productivity.

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APPENDIX



SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

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UNILUS-RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Ref no: FWA00033228-5212/24

Date: 1st December 2024

STUDENT NAME: Sydney Simubwa

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE INITIATIVES ON EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING AND PRODUCTIVITY WITHIN PROJECT MANAGEMENT ENVIRONMENT: CASE STUDY OF WORLD VISION ZAMBIA

The above research was submitted to the research ethics committee for review. The study has no major ethical problems and is approved subject to the following:

1. The study cannot be changed without express permission of the UNILUS research ethics committee.
2. Approval from the necessary authority should be sought.

The committee wishes you success in your work.



Professor Kasonde Bowa
MSc(Glasgow),M.Med(UNZA),FRCS(Glasgow),FACS,FCS,DPH(LSTMH),MPH(UCL)
Chairman- UNILUS REC
Professor of Urology and Consultant Urologist
Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research and Innovation
Executive Dean - School of Medicine and Health Sciences

I DATA COLLECTION APPROVAL LETTER



Sydney Simubwa

○ Ngoza Kabaso

11/19/2024

RE: Request for approval to conduct a research on the world vision employees

Sent: Tuesday, 24 September 2024 8:08 pm

To: Sydney Simubwa <Sydney_Simubwa@wvi.org>

Cc: Ngoza Kabaso <ngoza_kabaso@wvi.org>

Subject: Re: Request for approval to conduct a research on the world vision employees

Since this has to do with staff issues, P&C Durector has to be the one to make a decision

Sent from [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Sydney Simubwa <Sydney_Simubwa@wvi.org>

Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2024 5:25:31 PM

To: Wezi Kaira <wezi_kaira@wvi.org>

Subject: Request for approval to conduct a research on the world vision employees

Dear Mr Kaira,

I am writing to kindly request permission to conduct an academic research within World Vision Zambia under the topic: "Investigating the Effects of Work-Life Balance Initiatives on Employee Well-being and Productivity within a Project Management Environment: A Case Study of World Vision Zambia."

Background:

As an integral part of the modern workplace, achieving a balance between work and personal life has become increasingly important for employee well-being and productivity. This study aims to investigate the impact of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity within World Vision Zambia's project management environment.

Objectives:

1. Assess work-life balance initiatives implemented by World Vision Zambia.
2. Determine the relationship between work-life balance initiatives and employee well-being and productivity.
3. Investigate the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire: The Effects of Work-Life Balance Initiatives on Employee Well-being and Productivity at World Vision Zambia

Introduction: Dear respondent,

Thank you for participating in this survey. The purpose of this questionnaire is to assess the impact of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity at World Vision Zambia. Your responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

Section A: Demographic Information

1. **Gender:**

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say

2. **Age:**

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55 and above

3. **Department:**

- Administrative
- Operations

- Human Resources
- Finance
- Other (please specify): _____

4. Years of service with World Vision Zambia:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

Section B: Work-Life Balance Initiatives at World Vision Zambia

5. Are you aware of any work-life balance (WLB) initiatives implemented by World Vision Zambia?

- Yes
- No

6. Which of the following WLB initiatives are available at your organization?
(Select all that apply)

- Flexible working hours
- Remote working options
- Job sharing
- Paid maternity/paternity leave
- Paid sick leave

- Support for employees with family responsibilities (e.g., childcare)
- Employee wellness programs
- Other (please specify): _____

7. How would you rate the effectiveness of the current WLB initiatives in helping you manage your work and personal life?

- Very effective
- Effective
- Neutral
- Ineffective
- Very ineffective

8. Do you feel encouraged by your organization to make use of WLB initiatives?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Section C: Employee Well-being and Productivity

9. How do the WLB initiatives at World Vision Zambia affect your overall well-being?

- Greatly improve well-being
- Somewhat improve well-being

- No effect on well-being
- Somewhat decrease well-being
- Greatly decrease well-being

10. In your opinion, do the WLB initiatives improve your productivity at work?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

11. How satisfied are you with your current work-life balance?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

12. Have you experienced any negative consequences (e.g., stress, burnout) as a result of poor work-life balance at World Vision Zambia?

- Yes
- No

13. If yes, what are the major challenges you face in balancing work and personal life? (Select all that apply)

- Long working hours
 - Lack of flexibility
 - High workload
 - Lack of support from management
 - Unclear boundaries between work and personal life
 - Other (please specify): _____
-

Section D: Perceived Impact of WLB Initiatives on Employee Well-being and Productivity

14. To what extent do you believe the following factors contribute to improved well-being and productivity? (Rate from 1 = "Not at all" to 5 = "To a great extent")

Flexible working hours: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Remote working options: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Paid leave (sick, maternity/paternity): 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Support for family responsibilities (e.g., childcare): 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Employee wellness programs: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

Job sharing: 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] 4 [] 5 []

15. In your opinion, what additional WLB initiatives could World Vision Zambia implement to enhance employee well-being and productivity?

Section E: Open-Ended Questions

16. In what ways do you feel the work-life balance initiatives at World Vision Zambia have impacted your personal and professional life?

17. What suggestions do you have for improving work-life balance initiatives at World Vision Zambia?

0%

SIMILARITY OVERALL

36.27%

POTENTIALLY AI

SCANNED ON: 20 JAN 2025, 9:06 AM

AI Detector Results

Highlighted sentences with the lowest perplexity, most likely generated by AI.

 LIKELY AI
21.65%

 HIGHLY LIKELY AI
14.62%

Report #24476437

School of post graduate studies Investigating the effects of work-life balance initiatives on employee well-being and productivity within project management environment: A case study of World Vision Zambia SYDNEY SIMUBWA MSCPM23119495 A Dissertation submitted to the university of Lusaka in partial fulfillment of the Award of Masters of Science in Project Management (2025) 1 i DEDICATION This research is dedicated to my beloved family, my wife Harriet Hangebedu Simubwa and my children



UNIVERSITY
OF
LUSAKA

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

DISSERTATION CLEARANCE FORM

TO: SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

FROM: DR. KANGACEPE ZULU

DATE: 20th MARCH, 2025

RE: CORRECTION OF COMMENTS BY EXAMINERS

I submit that I have checked and ensured that (Name): **Sydney Simubwa (Student number) MSCPM23119495** has addressed all the corrections which were requested by the examiner and the final copy of the dissertation is now ready for final binding.

Supervisor's signature.....

Cc Dean – Postgraduate

HOD – Postgraduate

Research Coordinator - Postgraduate