WORK-LIFE CONFLICT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN ABIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT
The research examined work-life conflict and employee performance in Abia State University. The study was carried out to identify the extent work-life conflict impact on workers in their organization. Survey research method was used and questionnaire served as an instrument for data collection. The total population of staff which is 755 in ABSU were used, from were 262 were sampled. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentage and mean statistics, and 3.0 was adopted as the cutoff point. In line with data analysis it was discovered that time based conflict significantly affects productivity, and there is significant relationship between behaviour based conflict and industrial peace and harmony. The study recommends that organizational managers should focused on managing time based conflict, strain based conflict, and behaviour based conflict so as to achieve high productivity, and industrial peace and harmony.

Key words: Work-Life Conflict, Employee Effectiveness, Productivity, Industrial Peace and Harmony.

Introduction
Work-life conflict often initiates and sustains discordance between family and work obligations such that work impedes family life and employees’ job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. For example, considering the traditional roles of women, they are more saddled with family responsibilities compared to men; hence more susceptible to experience conflict in work-life relationships. The outcome of work-life conflict could probably make some employees to think of quitting their job to concentrate more on their family roles. It could also make some female employees lose their homes, while some choose to remain unmarried to meet up with the pressure and demands of organizational commitment and job performance in their various organizations.

Given the above dispositions, previous studies are of the opinion that work-life conflict often impact negatively on both attitudes and behaviors of employees during working hours (Lavassani & Movahedi, 2014; Costa & Pedro, 2017). This conflict is usually a product of inter-role conflicts, based on the need or desire of workers to have both happy family life and a good career. Workers who are facing the challenges of WLC experience job dissatisfaction, poor performance on jobs and increased turnover intentions (Allen, 2012; Eby & Alfonso, 2017). In other words, WLC reduces worker's performance and commitment in an organization, which most likely hinder overall organizational effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem
Work-family relationships contradict each other due to demands and pressure of both family and work roles. Consequently, work-life conflict has been receiving greater attention by researcher in recent times. It is within this justification that underpins this study. In addition, in-
spite of many studies on the relationships between work-life conflict, and various effectiveness measures like patronage, productivity, industrial peace and harmony, and managerial efficiency, it is evident that many of these studies failed to on manufacturing firms, or using effectiveness variables.

**Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of this study focused on work-life conflict and employee performance in Abia State University. The specific objectives include:

1. To determine the extent time based conflict affects productivity.
2. To identify the relationship between behaviour based conflict and industrial peace and harmony.

**Research Questions**

Based on the objective of the study, the following research questions were posed for the study.

1. To what extent does time based conflict affects productivity?
2. What is the relationship between behaviour based conflict and industrial peace and harmony?

**Research Hypotheses**

Based on the objective of the study and research questions, the following research hypotheses guided the study.

**Ho1:** Time based conflict does not significantly affects productivity.

**Ho3:** There is no significant relationship between behaviour based conflict and industrial peace and harmony.

**Conceptual Review**

**Work Family Conflict**

There is always conflict between work and life because of family pressure. In this case, work life conflict is the challenges a worker face from both work and other social and family engagements (Jayamohan et al., 2017). It is the interference of work on social and family life of an employee vice vise. Both career and family lives are very demanding and also mounts substantial pressure on the little time available for the employee to satisfactorily play both roles (Frone, 2010). In a contentious bid to meet the demands of both family lives and career within limited time, work-family role conflict surfaces. ‘Conflict’ indicates the present of a considerable problem between family role and work role that requires solution for ultimate benefit of both the organization and the employees (Clark, 2010; LaCosse et al., 2016).

Greenhaus (2015) therefore defined work-life conflict as an interconnected role clash between role pressures from the family and work, which are not mutually beneficial to some extent. Work-life conflict simply means the degree to which an employee encounters constant pressures within two different roles. In the words of many previous scholars, work-life conflict could therefore be characterized as strain-based, behavior based or time-based. Time-based conflict emerges in situations where the constant pressures experienced by the employee stemmed from two distinctive roles contesting for the employee’s limited time (Friedland & Cole, 2017).

**Employee Performance**

Performance is associated with the quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence/ attendance on the job, and efficiency of the work completed [and] effectiveness of work accomplished (Mathis & Jackson, 2009). To them, employee Performance is defined as the record of outcomes produced by a specified job function or activity during a specified time period. According to this definition, performance is set of achievements produced during a certain time period. Performance is not only related to the action but also involves judgment and evaluation process (Ilgen and Schneider, 1991).

Employee Performance in an organization is a very important area in the workplace. Ongori (2007) observed that employees’ performance to their organization is a response to employee empowerment, compensation and job enrichment prevalent in their organization. Anthony (2017) believed that committed employees
develop bonds with their organizations which lead to feasible organizational performance. In addition, Anthony (2017) observed that employees should be given enough facilities, training autonomy, responsibilities and adequate resources to make them perform better and serve organization better. Also, a fair and transparent treatment should be given to all employees irrespective of their age’s groups and experiences.

The demand of an organization’s service is based in part on the level of service received by the customer. For the service industry which is our focus in this study, the business is based almost entirely on their employee’s performance. That is why management must look for different ways of improving employee performance. Sinha (2001) stated that employees’ performance is depending on the willingness and also the openness of the employees itself on doing their job. He also stated that by having this willingness and openness of the employees in doing their job, it could increase the employees’ productivity which also leads to the performance. Stup (2003) also explained that to have a standard performance, employers have to get the employees task to be done on track as to achieve the organization goal or target. By having the work or job done on track, employers could be able to monitor their employees and help them to improve their performance. Furthermore, a reward system should be implemented based on the performance of the employees. This is to motivate the employees in order to perform more on their task.

There are several factors that being described by Stup (2003) towards the success of the employees’ performance. The factors are such as physical work environment, equipment, meaningful work, performance expectation, feedback on performance, reward for good or bad system, standard operating procedures, knowledge, skills and attitudes. Franco et al (2002) defined performance that relies on internal motivation but presence of internal factors such as necessary skills, intellectual capacity and resources to do the job clearly have an impact. As a consequence employers are supposed to provide appropriate working conditions in order to make sure the performance of employees meet the required standards. Employee Performance in a firm is a very important area in the workplace. It can help the firm increase and utilize the capacity of the human resources it has. It translates into good service delivery and interaction in which affects every area of the organization. To achieve this organization need to make polices that will encourage employee performance. An employee’s job performance depends on or is a consequence of some combination of ability, effort, and opportunity.

Hence the researchers have developed the working definition of employee performance for study purpose is that, “achievement of targets of the tasks assigned to employees within particular period of time”. Performance is not only related to the action but also involves judgment and evaluation process. The organization success depends on the employee performance. Therefore, it is important for a manager to create a well –rounded approach to managing and coaching its workforce. Anam, Muhammad, and Rab (2015) stated that employees’ performance are the desire of the employees for the success of the organization believing that staying at the present place of employment is best alternative.

Work Life Conflict and employee performance

It is good to determine the relationships between work life conflicts variables and organizational effectiveness variables. One of the variables of work life conflicts is time based conflict. In view of Ongori (2007), time based conflict is an aspects of work life conflicts. Time based conflict is the situation when time is divided between work-family areas and there is not sufficient time for both of work-family responsibilities (Stup, 2003). Time-based conflict occurs when the time demands associated with one role restrict the amount of time that can be devoted to the other role, inhibiting one’s performance in the latter role. Also, strain-based conflict occurs when stress arising in one role is carried or transferred to the other role, with the consequent strain symptoms (e.g. anxiety, irritability) reducing effectiveness in the second role. strain-based conflict does not imply competing demands directly but, rather, a situation in which participation in one domain results in either physical or psychological strain, which
hinders role performance in the other domain (Gornick and Meyers, 2013).

More so, behavior-based conflict takes place when the behavior of one role contradicts the behavior of the other role. In this case, time based conflict, strain based conflict, and behavior based conflict if well utilized will have positive effects on productivity, improved customer patronage and industrial peace and harmony. Work and social/family are most important parts in human life that are not easily separated. When trying to balance between the work and social life (including family), the employees often end with conflict and dilemma in giving priority to both career and family. The incompatible of demand between career and family seem to create a personal pressure to the employees. More often than not, conflict tends to create pressure to the employees as they try to balance the two roles that need to be performed simultaneously. Work–life conflicts are a common source of stress and have been linked to employees’ health and family functioning, as well as labor market decisions and fertility decisions (Gornick & Meyers, 2013).

Stress has the implications for the individual as well as the organization and it can no longer be considered merely as the individual manager’s problem. It is now generally accepted that prolonged or intense stress can have a negative impact on an individual’s mental and physical health. When trying to balance work and family responsibilities, many workers experience conflict between these two roles. Work – family conflict has been defined as a mutual compatibility between the demands of the work role and demand of the family role. Juggling work and family responsibilities is a common experience for many employees. Although engaging in both work and family roles can have positive effects for individuals, but if workers are unable to balance the responsibilities associated with both roles, the potential for conflicts between roles increases (Frone, Russell and Cooper, 2010). According to Greenhaus and Beutell (2015), Work-life conflict occurs when participation in the work role and the family role is incompatible in some respect. As a result, participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the other role. Work-life conflict can arise from:

a. The time demands of one role that interferes with participation in the other role.

b. The stress originating in one role that spills over into the other role detracting from the quality of life in that role.

c. Behaviour that is effective and appropriate in one role but is ineffective and inappropriate when transferred to the other role.

Empirical Review

Azeem and Akhtar (2014) investigated the influence of work life conflict and job satisfaction on organization commitment of health care employee in India. This was aimed at exploring the influence of work life balance and job satisfaction has on organization commitment among healthcare employee. Questionnaire was distributed to 275 respondents in the healthcare sector. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the quantitative data including correlation and reliabilities. The finding of the empirical test shows that employee in the health care sector have a moderate level of perceived work life balance, job satisfaction and commitment. There is a positive relationship between work life balance, job satisfaction and organization commitment.

Fapohunda (2014) investigated on the exploration of the effect of work life conflict on productivity Lagos Nigeria. The aim of the study was to explore the connection between work life balance and organization productivity and whether work life balance practice possibly decreases employee turnover and absenteeism. 200 respondents in the banking industry were used for the survey. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data. Chi square was used to analyze the data. The finding of the result was that there is a positive relationship between work life balance practice and employee turnover. It also found out that management support was not satisfactory.

Kamau, Muleke, Makaya and Wagoki, (2013) investigated work life balance practices on employee job performance of banks in Kenya. The main objective was to determine the effect of organization work life balance on employee performance. Fifty-Five (55) Eco Bank
employees were drawn through quota sampling method who also responded to survey questionnaires. Spearman’s Correlation Analysis was used to test the candidates’ work life balance, their performance to the organization. The finding of the empirical study shows that there was correlation between work life balance and employee performance.

Research Gap
For gap in subject scope, most past works were done on work-life conflict balance, and organizational performance, without any emphasis on work life conflict and employee performance. Some of the past work covers work life in banking industry, without focus on universities. Some work focus on work-life and employee/organizational performance in foreign institutions without considering Nigeria organizations. More so, the major variables in the content of this work were lacking in most past researches. Here, the variables covered in the objectives, research questions and hypotheses of this study were neglected by past researches.

Theoretical Framework
Ecological Theory
This study adopts ecological theory as the framework of analysis. The ecological theory which was propounded by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1977), and popularized by Mamie Clark and Edward Zigler in 1980s. This theory explains that any situation in any organization is being shaped by the environment and also by the interrelationships among the systems. This theory was used because the nature of any work environment determines the extent work-life balance could be achieved. Here, some work environment may be friendly and good, thereby encouraging work life balance. However, other May not. It should be noted here that, the focus of every organizations is to achieve its objectives through high performance. Also, the focus of every employee is to contribute toward the achievement of organizational objectives in the work environment and enjoy family and social life outside work environment.

Human beings, Azeem and Akhtar (2014) suggested, cannot develop in isolation, but within a system of relationships that include family and society. For that, there is need for work-life balance for workers in their work environment. Here, any organizations in each environment that provide good balancing between work and employee none work period is likely to enjoy more performance and organizational growth. Some factors within the work environment that negatively affects work life balance include the nature of management/leadership, number of personnel available in the work environment, the job specification and design of an employee, availability of working resources (equipment and finance) and many others.

Research Methodology
- Research Design: In this study, the research design that is adopted by the researcher is descriptive survey research design.
- Population of the Study: The population of this study is made up of the entire 755 staff of Abia State University.
- Sample Size Determinations: The sample size is mathematically derived using the Taro Yamane’s formula as thus:

\[ n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \]

When

\[ n = \text{sample size to be derived} \]
\[ N = \text{total population} \]
\[ e = \text{tolerable level of error of significance (0.05)} \]
\[ 1 = \text{constant} \]

\[ n = \frac{755}{1+755(0.0025)} \]
\[ n = 755 \]
\[ 2.8875 \]
n 261.45
n 262

- **Sampling Procedures:** The sample random sampling technique was adopted from the non probability method which entails random selection of staff.

- **Source of Data**
  - **Primary Data:** In carrying out this research, the use of questionnaire was employed to gather necessary and relevant data from the respondents.
  - **Secondary Data:** This data were collected from the use of relevant material such as textbooks, journal articles, seminar papers, periodicals and library research etc.

- **Validity and Reliability of Instrument**
  - **Validity:** The researcher used face validity method.
  - **Reliability:** In this study therefore, the researcher used the test retest reliability.

- **Data Analysis Technique:** The data collected in this study were analyzed using simple percentage, and mean statistics. The simple percentage format of likert five point scale was therefore used to rate the level of respondents agreements’ or disagreements with each attribute. The points are assigned in the following manner:
  - i. A respondent that strongly agreed to the point (SA) scored 5 points
  - ii. A respondent that agreed (A) scored 4 points
  - iii. A respondent who was undecided (UND) scored 3 points
  - iv. A respondent that disagreed (D) scored 2 points
  - v. A respondent that strongly disagreed (SD) scored 1 point

The researcher therefore adopts a cutoff point of 3.50 mean score. Thus, any response/attribute with a mean score up to 3.50 and above is accepted and below 3.50 is therefore rejected.

**Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

It should be noted here that out of 262 questionnaires distributed to the sampled respondents, only 240 were properly filled and returned.

**Item 1:** There is significant effect of strain based conflict and organizational growth.

**Table 1:** Responses on if work-life conflict hinders productivity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agreed</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>45.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>29.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>20.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagreed</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: field work 2021

\[ \Sigma F = 240 \]

\[ \Sigma X = 936 = 3.9 \]

Since our result in the above table is above 3.5, we therefore accept that time based conflict hinders productivity. The study therefore concludes that work-life conflict significantly affect productivity.

**Item 2:** There is significant effect of strain based conflict and organizational growth.

**Table 2:** Responses on if there is significant effect of strain based conflict and organizational growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agreed</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>45.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>27.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>19.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since our result in the above table is above 3.5, we therefore accept that strain based conflict encourage job turnover rate in an organization.

**Item 3:** there is significant relationship between behaviour based conflict and industrial peace and harmony.

**Table 3:** Responses on if behaviour based conflict discourages industrial peace and harmony.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agreed</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>47.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreed</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>33.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>7.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreed</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagreed</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>240</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since our result in the above table is 3.5, we therefore accept that behaviour based conflict discourages industrial peace and harmony. The study therefore conclude that behaviour based conflict significantly discourages industrial peace and harmony.

**Recommendations**

In the context of above conclusions, the following recommendations were suggested:

1. Organizations should focus on managing time based conflict, strain based conflict, and behaviour based conflict so as to achieve high productivity, improved customer patronage and industrial peace and harmony.
2. Organization should make their employees see their place of work as theirs so that they can put in their best. At best, firms can introduce an enhanced reward system that will motivate staff to improve the level of their productivity.

**Conclusion**

This study conclude that the achievement of employee performance depends on the extent to which time based conflict, strain based conflict, and behaviour based conflict are managed in the system. This is because employees’ commitment will significantly mediate between work-family role conflicts and organization's performance.

**REFERENCES**


