PRIORITISING YOUR WORKING LIFE? ASCERTAINING KEY DRIVERS FOR A BALANCE WORKING LIFE.

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Abstract:

Work-life balance is a daily effort to make time with family, friends, and communities, in addition to the demands of the workplace. A balance working life can reduce stress experiences and unhappiness. In this era, having a balance working life is very challenging due to monetary, family, and personal needs. A balance working life is also an elusive goal for everybody; managerial or non-managerial employees. Wondering on this issue, three domains that probably balance up the working time and non-working time has been suggested. A method called simple random sampling was used to obtain the data. In order to find out the relevant and significant relationship between the selected variables, a multivariate technique called structural equation modelling using Smart PLS 3.0 was utilized. The results from this statistical procedure proved that only workload given and interpersonal relationship have significantly related to work life balance. The results also depicted that the measures of variation R^2 is 34.4% which implies 34.4% of variation in work life balance is explained by workload given and also interpersonal relationships between the employees' commitment and management. The results may help policy makers in refining their new company policies and also help the employees to balance up their daily lives activities.

Keywords: Workload, Interpersonal relationship, Role of Conflict, Work life balance, Structural equation modelling, Working time.

Introduction

In this modern and globalisation era, the daily schedule of millions of people divides their time into time at work and time outside work. These two domains criteria and the interactions between them were studied by academicians decades ago. However, the work-life balance still becoming an issue and concern for individual and organisations that are keen in the superiority of life and its relation to performance and employee satisfaction (Sharmini & Murali, 2015). A

study that has been done by Harr, Ruse, Sune & Malaterre in 2014 among employees from seven distinct population has depicted that there is a significant relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction. This scenario again proved that the work-life has to be balanced up with non-working life.

The determinants and consequences of work life have been extensively studied. Wu, Kwan, Liu & Resick (2012) have found that interpersonal elements like employees relationship with colleagues and supervisor have an effect on the working life. Besides that, there is also another study that suggests the job itself, the degree of autonomy that job possess has to be equally balanced the working life with ordinary routines (Morganson, Major, Oborn, Verive & Heelan, 2010). Also, most of the studies are still reflecting the effect of work- life conflict on job satisfaction.

Malaysia is a country where the work-life balance is in the in-trend interest. From a survey that has been conducted in 2015, Malaysians prefer a balanced work-life rather than a better pay. 67% of the workers in Malaysia stated that a work-life balance career would be their top priority rather than a better pay compared to Singapore, 57%. Interestingly, 40% of workers in Malaysia stay on because work life balance, salaries and job progression come in second and third reasons. This means that most of the Malaysians needs a balance working life, meaning the working life and personal life are balanced even though at the same time salaries plays an important role.

Since, most of the workers in Malaysia are considering a balance working life, this study would like to concentrate more on the working life balancing by considering three key drivers (i,e: workload or task given to the employees, work-life conflict and interpersonal relationship). Thus specifically, the objectives of this study are (1) to identify the key drivers for a balanced work-life, and (2) to determine the contribution for each of the factors towards working life balance among employees.

Literature Review
Work-life balance has a great impact on employees' attitudes towards their organisations as well as their lives. This phenomenon has received substantial interest over the years. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate the trend of work-life balance and its development which affects the job outcomes of employees at work. Work-life balance is an extent to which an individual is equally engaged in and equally happy with his or her work role and family role (Greenhaus,2003). Hence, employees who experience high work-life balance are those who spend similar investment of time and commitment to work and non-work fields.

The workload is one of the factors that influence work-life balance. Shah (2011) stated that workload refers to the intensity of job assignments. It is a source of mental stress for employees. He added that in the real life each employee seems to be exposing the workload problem. Overload work occurs when multiple demands exceed resources, and it can be either qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative overload refers to a situation where a task is too difficult to complete, while quantitative overload is when there are too many tasks to complete. Goh (2015) claimed that workload and life satisfaction does not have a direct effect. However, he further explained that his findings recommend that individuals do not evaluate life satisfaction poorly due to high job demands, as workload and life satisfaction might have other relationship influenced by need fulfilment and challenge.

Other than that, the role of conflict also can contribute to a balanced work-life. The role of conflict is the simultaneous occurrence of two or more sets of pressures, such that complying with one would make compliance with the other more complex. Inter-role conflict, one type of role conflict, arises from opposing role in a different work-related role, such as complying with two or more demands at the same time. Sonnetag, Unger and Nagel (2013) stated that there is a relationship between workplace conflicts and employee well-being. Thus, a place of work with high conflicts, their employee's life is unstable.

Similarly, positive interpersonal relationships at work have an advantages impact on both organisational and individual interest. Song and Olfshki (2008) stated that organisational cultures which foster informal communication provide more opportunities to form friendships. Specifically, organisational norms and rules that encourage communication between immediate superiors and subordinates have a significant impact on friendship opportunity.

One recent study by Nor Azilah Husin, Amirul Syafiq Mohd Ghazali, Norasiah Abdullah and Mohamad Izzwan Abdul Hadi (2017) suggest that family factor, work factor, flexible hours and health factor have significant relationships to the work-life of Malaysian lecturers. Health has become the mediator variable that strengthen those relationships.

Further, friendships at work may form simply because of the proximity, interactions and shared experiences of co-workers. Rousseau (1995) suggested that managers may be instructed to promote a climate of openness and friendship among their staff and to set positive examples of desired workplace relationships. According to Berman (2002), he identified common strategies for promoting a climate of friendship. The strategies included providing employees with the opportunity to socialise, encouraging them to act friendly toward one another and to seek each other for emotional support and training supervisors to establish positive relationships with employees.

In this study, we proposed the following theoretical framework and hypothesis;

1. There is a significant relationship workload and work-life balance among employees in a public sector
2. There is a significant relationship between role of conflict and work-life balance among employees in a public sector
3. There is a significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and work-life balance among employees in a public sector.

Methodology
Data Collection Method
To test the hypothesized relationship, a cross-sectional data collection was used. Using the survey methodology, in particular sampling, instruments and data collection approach were undertaken. A probability sampling technique, specifically random sampling was utilized for this study among the target population which is the employees in Selangor, Malaysia from various sectors. A questionnaire that consists of two sections with four parts (Section A: Demographic profile, Section B: Part 1: information regarding work-life balance, Part 2: information regarding workload, Part 3: information regarding workplace conflict, Part 4: information regarding interpersonal relationship at the workplace) were distributed. To obtain an adequate sample size for the testing using partial least square (PLS) path modelling approach, power analysis was utilized (Chin, 2010), which recommend a minimum sample size of 100. Overall, 140 questionnaires were distributed and 120 valid questionnaires (85.71%

responses rate) were returned. Therefore, this 120 valid questionnaire were been used for the analysis. It can be observed that most of the respondents are female (55%). Most of the respondent's age is between 25-35 years old (49.2%). A university graduate seems to be our majority respondents (55.8%) and most of them have a working experience between 2-5 years (42.5%). The summary for the demographic profile are as follows.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

Profile	Percentage of frequency
Gender	
Male	45.5%
Female	55.0%
Age	
17-25	27.5%
26-35	49.2%
More than 35	23.3%
Academic qualification	
High school graduates	44.2%
University graduates	55.8 %
Woking experience	
1 year	24.2%
2-5 years	42.5%
More than 5 years	33.3%

Partial Least Square (Structural Equation Modelling)

This study analysed the data using SmartPLS 3.0. PLS-SEM method is based on iterative techniques approach that maximises the explained variances of endogenous constructs. It also well behaved like multiple regression techniques (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 2010). This characteristic makes the method of PLS-SEM is valuable for exploratory research. The standard approach is to present the results in two phases. The first part is focusing on the data reliability and validity while the second part is focusing more on the structural model assessment (Hair, Hult & Ringle,2013).

The measurement model in PLS is assessed in terms consistency and validity which includes item loading, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). Item loadings which are greater than 0.70 are considered as sufficient enough for the variable to be in its construct while a value of composite reliability which is higher than 0.70 is considered to be acceptable regarding its reliability.

Average variance extracted (AVE) determine the amount of variance captured by the construct from each of the variables due to measurement errors. As suggested by Fornell and Lacker, (1981) a minimum of 50% of variance should be captured by the construct. This implies that the values of AVE should be more than 0.50.

The structural model in PLS is examined by evaluating the path coefficients value at 5% level of significance to see the nature of the relationship between the constructs. To validate the model, the diagnostic checking was conducted onto the model by observing the value of R^2 which determine the strength of the model. Also, the effect size is also examined using f^2; the value determines the magnitude or strength of the relationships among the constructs. This helps the researchers to assess the overall contribution of the study. A value of effect size of 0.02 indicates small effects, 0.15 indicate medium effects and more than 0.35 indicate large effects respectively (Cohen's, 1988).

Results

The proposed model was analysed to obtain the item loading, Average variance extracted (AVE) and Composite reliability (CR). As shown in table 2, all the item loading of the reflective construct's work life balance, workload, conflict in the workplace and the interpersonal relationship is at least 0.70 as proposed by (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011). Also, it can be observed that the composite reliability value is more than 0.70 and the AVE of each latent variable are well above the minimum required level of 0.50. These three diagnostic checking has ensured that the data is well behaved and valid.

Table 2: Measurement Model Properties

Construct	Item (Variables)	Item loading	Composite reliability	AVE
Work life balance	My organization is takes care of employee welfare.	0.779	0.856	0.546
	I am able to work and have a good commitment.	0.854		
	I feel like I am generally able to balance life and work commitment.	0.719		
	I would enjoy working 8 hours a day.	0.701		
	I highly value a position that offers flexible hours.	0.759		
Workload	I work more than 8 hours a day.	0.711	0.710	0.510
	I also work on holidays.	0.702		
	My daily activities affected because of workload (i.e, sleeping and eating time)	0.714		
	I feel that there are too many deadlines in my work that are difficult to meet.	0.931		
Workplace conflict	I always receive an assignment that is not really my task.	0.730	0.903	0.652
	I am having uncertainties on what is expected from my work.	0.827		
	The task given is not related to my background	0.822		
	I always feel that I have to do things on the job that are against my better judgment.	0.751		
	I always have a challenging task.	0.866		
Interpersonal relationship	I have a good relationship with my colleagues.	0.787	0.901	0.647
	I enjoy working with my colleagues.	0.812		
	I get help and support from my colleagues.	0.808		
	My line manager encourages me at work.	0.734		
	I am often feeling that I am liked and accepted by people at work.	0.780		

The structural model was run using a bootstrapping procedure of 5000 times of resampling, and the results are consistent. The path coefficients in PLS-SEM analysis are shown in table 3. At 10% of significance level, the nature of the path coefficient shows that workload factor (*p-value= 0.060*) and interpersonal relationship (*p-value = 0.000*) has a significance effects towards wok life balance. The details of the results are depicted in table 3 below:

Table 3: Structural Model Properties

Path	Coefficients	t-statistics	*p-value*	f^2	R^2
Workload → work life balance	0.153	1.819	0.060**	0.139	0.344
conflict → work life balance	0.360	1.386	0.164	0.035	
Interpersonal relationship → work life balance	0.320	4.610	0.000***	0.174	

*** significance at 0.05 **significance at 0.10

The strength of the relationship can be measured by observing the value of R^2. The value of R^2 for this model is 0.344. It can be said that about 34.4% of work life balance among employees in Malaysia is explained by the workload given and the interpersonal relationship among the employees and management. To measure how much is the contribution for each of the factor, f^2 statistics are obtained. The results revealed that the effect size for workload factor and interpersonal relationship factor is 0.139 and 0.176 respectively. The results suggest that workload factor and interpersonal relationship factor contribute a medium effect in work life balance.

Discussion
This behavioural survey based research focused on the work-life balance among employees in Malaysia to determine the factors influencing their work life balance. Using the conceptual framework to identify whether workload, conflict at the workplace and interpersonal relationship that builds up the work-life balance, it filled the gaps between the employees and the management. The results will help the management to consider all the factors before employing their workers.

This research are focusing on the work life balance among the employees in Malaysia by considering work load or task given to the employees, conflict at the workplace and the interpersonal relationship that build up the work life balance as its factors. This study might filled the gaps between the employees and the management.

After the analysis was conducted, the results depicted that workload or task given and the interpersonal relationship are the only two significance variables. When considering the workload or task given, it should be delegates as fair as possible and to a right people. The more immersed in your role you become, the more tasks you end up taking off, that is how the assignment or task should be distributed. In delegating the tasks, a right person should be picked up and matched. The tasks should not be given to the inappropriate employees, this is to maintain the quality of the work and also to ensure that everybody in the organisation have a fair load.

Interpersonal relationship at workplace can be described as a close relationship among employees at the workplace. In nurturing the relationship, it requires good effort because it might be ranged from flittering to enduring. If everybody can get along in a harmonious way, a special bond will be constructed that may bring happiness in working.

On the contrary for the variable conflict in a workplace, it is found that there is no significant relationship with work life balance which provides evidence that the employees work professionally and they are not doing the task which is not in their job scope.

Conclusion and Recommendation
To conclude, in our research on the work life balance which involves workload, a role of conflicts and interpersonal relationship as predictors. The result of this research shows that the two main objectives had been answered. The first is to determine which factors contribute to the work-life balance among employees. After completing the analysis, it is found that workload and interpersonal relationship contribute to the work-life balance. It can be concluded that 34.4% of work-life balance among employees is contributed by these two factors.

The second is to determine the contribution for each of the factor. The results revealed that both of the factors (i,e: workload and interpersonal relationship) contribute a medium effect to

the work-life balance among employees. Overall, this research is targeted to all levels of management and employees. For management, they might consider these two factors when hiring the employees while for employees, do take care the relationship among each other and please take into account regarding the workload and tasks were given. This research also may help a policy maker so that the right task will be given to the right person.

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