Impact of Work Life Balance Practice on Employee Committment

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ABSTRACT

This research study sets out to assess the impact of work-life balance practices (leave policy) on employee commitment in Primary Health Centers in Benue State. This study adopted a descriptive survey design using quantitative research techniques and measures. All the 115 female PHCs workers in Oju and Obi Local Government Areas of Benue State formed the target population for this study. These was used as the sample size of the study. Structured questionnaires were used to collect the data for this study. A total of 93 questionnaires were returned valid indicating a response rate of 81%. The findings reveal converging views among employees regarding their perception on work-life balance practices; results showed positive correlation between employee commitment and work-life balance practices. The study concludes that achieving well established leave policies and sustaining employee commitment cannot be underestimated. The study recommends that organizations in the health industry due to the nature of the job and precision required in undertaking the jobs should explore leaves as a way of rejuvenating their employees by being innovative and friendly in implementing them.

Keywords: Work life balance, Leave policy, Employee commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Individuals when employed into an organization are faced with the challenge of striking a balance between their personal life and work life. This is because both are important and complement each other. This often brings the debate as to whether we live to work or work to live. Studies have shown that work and home (family) are the most important domains in the life of an employed individual (Grehaus, Collins & Shaw, 2002; Kofodimos, 1993; Levis & Copper, 1995). Every individual is an integral part of the family in particular and the society in general. Today's career men or women when done with his or her duties at the office, are again faced with more commitments and responsibilities at home. Work-life balance practices are deliberate organizational changes in programs or organizational culture that are designed to reduce work-life conflict and enable employees to be more effective at work and in other roles (Lazar, 2010). Successfully balancing work and family life is one of the major challenges facing current individual workers.

Managing work-life balance has become one of the most critical managerial strategies for ensuring employees' performance and organizational performance improvement (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Work-life balance (WLB) practice has become an imperative issue that attributes to positive results at the workplace including reduced or low turnover, improved work commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, in-role performance, increased firm productivity, enhanced job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Researchers and executives' attention in the world over – especially in developing countries – has recently been drawn to work life balance. Conversations among employees depicts their lives as a circus of juggling act where they have to attend to multiple pressing roles or responsibilities at work, meet heavy meeting schedules, travel for business trips often; all these beside managing their daily routines of their homes and personal lives.

Historically, all-over the world, work-life balance issues have been considered personal issues (Emslie & Hunt, 2009), and employers have just responded to their employees' needs by providing additional benefits such as on-site childcare service and paid maternity leave in the workplace. However, with environmental

shifts and value changes of employees, employees' desire for work-life balance has increased and employers have begun to offer more active support of their employees' work-life balance (Thornthwaite, 2004). It is widely recognized that employees who achieve work-life-balance work more efficiently, are more committed to their employers and are less likely to become ill as a result of stress. For employers it is very important to have correct policies which enable it. Shukla and Bagali (2013) assert that work life balance policies should be flexible to meet the needs of employees and the organization as they change. It is vital to state here that these policies should be widely communicated, so that employees are aware of what is available and easily accessible.

In recent time, there has been an upsurge in the consideration of the pressures that work has on family as well as life of employees in Africa as well as in Nigeria. The realities of African patriarchal society have brought about serious challenges for women employees both at home and in organizations causing them to be pressured, which is largely responsible for the nature of motivation and commitment they bring to work (Uzoechi & Babatunde, 2012). African women are regarded as the guardians of their children's welfare and have explicit responsibility to provide for them materially, emotionally & socially. This places great burden on women employees further straining on their capability to balance work and non-work demands. Very significant gains have been made on the women population in Africa with most young women showing that they do not just want to stay back at home and carry out house chores but would also want to have successful careers (UN, 2010).

Armstrong (2006) observes that the level of employee commitment is likely to increase an individual's performance. Conflicts and challenges that may arise from the demands of the two domains namely work and family may weigh down on employees' level of commitment. Every employee has a personal and professional life; both of these are very difficult to separate. If an organization wishes to have better productivity and more commitment from employees then they have to be happy and satisfied. Mukururi and Ngari (2014) add that for higher levels of employee commitment to be achieved in organization, an employee must fulfill his or her individual right to have a fulfilled life inside and outside work. This right however must be accepted and respected, to the mutual benefit of the individual and the organization. Government, institutions and organizations should therefore create workplace environments where people can achieve this communal right.

Women in the workplace, particularly in the Healthcare field, face unique problems in both their personal and professional lives. Majority of community women are working through-out week and majority of the them are struggling to achieve work life balance. These women life has become a juggling act as they have to shoulder multiple responsibilities: career, social, spiritual, recreation, cultural and economics. The management of facilities in the health sector needs to be conscious of this and create supportive environment to help these women achieve work life balance. WLB is important in one's personal life as well as in the workplace, and it can have negative implications if not well managed. A situation where health centers have a poor working organizational culture such as buying of work-leave of employees, inconvenient period of leave for employees and inability of employers and employees to keep to leave policy in the employment agreement is likely to impact negatively on the commitment of the workforce. Thus, organizations must establish various leave policies to promote a healthy working environment. Against this backdrop, this article examines the effect of work life balance practice on the commitment of female health employees in the primary health centers (PHCs) in Benue State. The specific objectives are:

1. To evaluate the observance of leave policies in PHCs in Oju and Obi LGA.
2. To determine the effect of leave policies on employee commitment in PHCs in Oju and Obi LGAs in Benue State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work life balance

Work-life balance is a concept that assists employees to conveniently share their time and effort between job tasks and other commitments in the family. Work-life balance enables an employee to afford time for; family, friends, social gatherings, spiritual nourishment, community engagements, self-grooming, and other personal errands hand in hand with the demands at place of work (Crooker, Smith & Tabak, 2002). Researchers have generally agreed that work-life balance engenders a person's psychological well-being, better self-esteem, satisfaction, and a harmonized life and all these reveal a successful balance between work and personal roles (McDonald, Townsend & Wharton, 2013). According to Krisor, Diebig and Rowold (2015), purposed implementation of work life balance greatly improves the working environment and thereby avails a stress-free working life to the employees. The fact that most individuals have multiple roles, work-life balance brings an experience of satisfaction to employees if they feel that all the domains of their life are being catered for.

Work-life balance refers to the flexible working arrangements that allow both parents and non-parents to avail of working arrangements that provide a balance between work responsibilities and personal responsibilities (Redmond Valiulis & Drew, 2006). Delecta. (2011) states that work life balance is an individual ability to meet their work commitments as well as other non-work and family commitment.

According to Clarke, Koch and Hill (2004), work-life balance is generally associated with equilibrium between the amount of time and effort somebody devotes to work and personal activities, in order to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life. Clark (2002) defined work life balance as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict. It could be called a condition of equilibrium where the demand of a person's work equals that of his personal life. Hobber and Lemmon (2009) opined that work life balance is about efforts of employees to split their time and energy between work and other important aspects of their lives. The term usually refers to the individuals' ability, irrespective of age and gender, to find a life rhythm that allows them to combine their work with other responsibilities, activities or aspirations (Vidal, Leiva & Navaro, 2012).

Work Life Balance according Barrera (2007) refers to employers working constructively with their employees to put in place arrangements, which take into account the needs of the business as well as the non-work aspects of employees' lives. This definition will be adopted for this study because it is broad and encompassing. It comprises of both employees and employers who are both central to the subsequent use and successful implementation of work life balance policies and practices. This can only be achieved as a joint effort between employers and employees. There are other life activities that need to be balanced with employment may include study, travel, sport, voluntary work, religious activities, personal development, leisure or dependent care. Research has 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. Organizations can implement various work-life balance initiatives that may assist employees to better balance their work and family responsibilities, gain improvements in well-being and provide organizational benefits.

Leave Policy

Leave policies cut across various individuals and aspects in the workplace. Leave is the number of hours/days employees of an organization are permitted to be away from their employment position within a period of time without consequences. This time off is paid by the company and employees are allowed torequest the time for any reason they wish to be off work. It also gives the ability for employee to release themselves from work stress and create a balance between work and their family activities. This type of work life balance helps employees to perform other duties outside work, which creates a balancing effect

between work activities and life activities.

Work Place Information (2002); Orogbu, Onyeizugbe and Chukwuemeke (2014); Oludayo, Gberevbie, and Popoola (2015) states that there are different types of leave policy. Firstly, annual leave is paid leave for the purpose of recreation to which employees become entitled after a period of qualifying service or employment with a particular employer. Secondly, parental leave is an official permission given to employees with childcare giving responsibilities. Women are entitled to twelve weeks' maternity leave with at least half pay but usually the customary benefits are more generous with maternity leave fully paid. The female employees often times are the greater beneficiaries of this leave in Nigeria where maternity leave allows a nursing mother to be away from work for three months. Thirdly, career leave is an official permission for an employee to take time off to take care of an immediate family or household member who is sick or injured or help during a family emergency. But it comes out of the employee personal leave balance. Fourthly, paid family and medical leave relates with an officially granted leave of absence from work to attend to dependent care challenges or personal health concerns of the employee. Fifthly, sick leave is time off from work that an employee can use to address their health and safety needs without losing pay. Sixthly, study leave is given to any staff member who is undertaking an approved study course. Training leave is given to an employee for self-development and organization development.

Leave provisions is a vital part of work life balance and to ease the conflict given, more opportunities, balanced and enough time to take care of issues such as children, spouse, and elderly and to attend to spiritual matters as well as personal issues should be accorded to employees. This will result in satisfied and committed workforce for the organization. Sufficient rest-time off work activities is believed to improve employee attitude and attendance eventually enhancing employee commitment.

Work-Life Balance Practices and Employee Commitment

Employee commitment has attracted the attention of both organizations' stakeholders and scientists from different spheres in the modern day. In order for any organization to effectively meet its obligations to shareholders, employees and society at large, it is important for the top-level management to develop a relationship between the organization and employees that will fulfill the ever-changing needs of both parties. It would thus appear logical to argue that for employees to be engaged in their work, they have to be contented with their relationship with the organizations thereby making them have positive attitude towards work demands. Even though expectations from the management and ambitions from the employees vary from one organization to another (Beer, Lawrence, Mills & Walton, 1984), at a minimum, the organization expects employees to perform reliably the duties assigned to them. Employees on the other hand, have their own expectations depending on their needs for security, status, involvement, challenge, power and responsibility. Engaged employees can therefore be defined as those employees who work with a passion and feel a profound connection to their company whilst also at the same time driving innovation and moving the organization forward (Gallup Study, 2006).

The relationship between work-life balance practices and employee commitment cannot be underscored in the current economic times. Work-life balance initiatives is hinged on the assumption that over involvement in one role necessarily precludes attention off another role therefore leading to work-life conflict (Parus, 2010). Organizations' which neglect issues relating to employee work-life balance will end up with lower productivity thus will find it even more difficult to handle economic downward spirals (Andreas & Christine, 2007). They further advice that such organizations must comprehend the long-term relevance of employee commitment and need to continue promoting work-life initiatives. They warn that failure toadhere will result in lower levels of employee engagement and productivity creating new challenges for medium and long-term organizational survival.

It is evident that effective work-life balance remains a key driver of employee commitment. Commitment with one's work is important, given that work is a pervasive and influential part of an individual's well-being, affecting not only the quality of an individual's life but one's mental and physical health as well

(Wrzesniewski, Rozin, & Bennett, 2002). Engaged employees are more likely to offer support and encouragement to their fellow workers, take pride in their roles and offer ideas for the betterment of the company. Engaged employees will also have a greater attachment to their organization (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Truss, Soane, Edwards, Wisdom, Croll & Burnett, 2006).

Striking healthy work-life balance and high levels of employee commitment is the goal of most organizations. Robinson (2006) suggests that employee engagement can be achieved through the creation of an organizational environment where positive emotions such as involvement and pride are encouraged, resulting in improved organizational performance, lower employee turnover and better health. According to Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) the experience of engagement is a fulfilling, positive work-related experience and state of mind and has been found to be related to positive work-life balance. When individuals feel positive emotions, they are able to think in a more flexible, open-minded way and are also likely to feel greater self-control, cope more effectively and be less defensive in the workplace (Holman, 2005). An employee's balance between work and life can thus be regarded as an important measure of how much they are involved or feel towards their role in the organization.

Spill over theory

This study is anchored on spillover theory by Guest (2002). It postulates the conditions under which spillover between the work micro system and the family micro system occurs. It can either positive or negative. If work- family interactions are rigidly structured in time and space, then spill over in term of time, energy and behavior is negative. When flexibility occurs, which enables individuals to integrate and overlap work and family responsibilities in time and space lead to positive spill over which is instrumental in achieving healthy work life balance.

According to Guest (2002), the determinants of work life balance are located in the work and home contexts. Contextual determinants include demands of work, culture of work, demands of home and culture of home. Individual determinants include work orientation (i.e. the extent to which work (or home) is a central life interest), personality, energy, personal control and coping, gender and age, life and career stage. The variables of the study are under the contextual determinants, which are leave policy on one hand, employee commitment on the other hand. The leave policy is the culture of work, while the employee commitment is the demand of work.

The nature of work life balance was defined both objectively and subjectively. The objective indicators include hours of work and hours of uncommitted or free time outside work. Subjective Indicators refer to the states of balance and imbalance. He also noted that balance may be reported when equal weight is given both to work and home or, when home or work dominates by choice. Spill over occurs when there is interference of one sphere of life with other. Also, numerous outcomes of work life balance which include personal satisfaction and wellbeing at work, home and life as a whole, performance at work and home, impact on others at work, family and friends. The relevance of this theory to the study is that organizations are expected to adopt work life balance policies that will enable employee have a positive work life balance in which will make them be effectively committed to achieving the organization's goals.

Empirical review

Mohamud (2021) examine women work satisfaction and work life balance. The target population of this study were 200 working women in the fields of health care, in Mogadishu. Of all those questionnaires, (177) were returned making the response rate about, 89%. Descriptive statistics was used to describe study constructs while the inferential statistics is used to test the hypothesis of interest in this study. The result revealed a positive relationship between work life balance and job satisfaction. The research concludes that achieving woman's job satisfaction through work-life balance initiatives is to the best interest of both individual and organization. The situation of trhe study on one location is nonrepresentative of generalization.

Roa and Shailashri (2021) in their study tries to identify various factors affecting the personal and professional life of female medical professionals and discuss ways to improve their WLB. The study's goal was to fill a gap in the literature on the WLB of female medical professionals in the healthcare industry. The work-life balance literature review seeks to identify numerous parameters associated with WLB in female doctors and nurses. A systematic review was carried out on the existing literature of WLB of Female Doctors and Nurses using the keywords Work-Life Balance, Hospital, Female Doctors, Female Nurses in three search engines: PubMed, Google Scholars, and Academia. The eligible articles were screened using exclusion criteria before being analyzed for the conceptual framework of the study. The study attempted to identify the relationship between work-life balance and personal and professional factors such as gender, age, marital status, number of dependents, number of children, designation, and so on. The findings revealed that all of these have either a negative or a positive relationship with WLB. The studies also proposed several strategies for improving the WLB of female healthcare workers. This could be used in the healthcare industry to gain a competitive advantage by attracting and retaining highly skilled and experienced doctors and nurses who will be more efficient and effective while working in a flexible and employee-friendly environment. They will be able to provide the highest level of patient care. In conclusion, the study opined that implementing the WLB strategies can help medical professionals reduce turnover intentions and emigration plans. The consideration of several dimensions of WLB as well as male health workforce provides a wider insight.

Jensirani, M and Muthumani, A (2017) highlights the issues connected with work life balance of nurses. A descriptive research design was adopted with the population of the study set at 100 respondents from 20 Private Hospitals in Kovilpatti Town. Data was analysed using simple percentage and presented in tables. From the study it was found that family – friendly policies like parental leaves, job sharing arrangements, provision of child care facilities etc. should be provide in the organization so that women can be encouraged to prove their competence. The study highlighted that the best individual work-life balance will vary over time with regards to single, married women and women with children. Hence, HR practitioners should be guided in redesigning their policies in relation to work – life balance thereby ensuring the well-being of all categories of nurses. The sample though small is fairly representative of the population.

Roshani and Bagrecha (2017) in their study examined the effect of work life balance variables on improved effectiveness at work of women nursing professionals in both government and private hospitals in India. Data for this study was gathered through questionnaire administered to 400 nurses working in Government and Private Hospitals in Bangalore were taken for analysis. Convenience sampling method was adopted. SEM using AMOS 16.0 was conducted. The model reveals that Improved Effectiveness to Work (IEW) is influenced by satisfaction with work-life balance evidenced in reduced work interference and Personal life interference. The study concludes that when the workplace support is more, work interference in personal life will decrease. The sample size and study area have statistical power to precisely estimate parameters.

Sivaprasad, K. I and P. T. Raveendran, P. T (2014) in their study attempt to assess the role of maintaining a satisfactory level of work life balance on the level of organizational commitment among female nurses in Cooperative Academy of Medical Science, Pariyaram situated at Kannur District in Northern Kerala. A descriptive survey research design using questionnaire and sample size was fixed at 47 female nurses. Data analysis consisted of Descriptive statistics, ANOVA?s, Crosstab, and also correlation to find the result. The finding suggested that the respondents were satisfied with their current level of work-life balance. They are very much committed to their organization, which is highly contributing towards work-life balance. The study concluded the need to spread the appropriate awareness among the employees about work life balance policies and try to communicate those things in a proper way to the employees to prevent work-life imbalance issues as it will improve their commitment level and also productivity with good maintenance of work-life balance among employees including women. The sample size for this study is insignificant for generalization.

Lalitha (2016), in her study titled 'Work-life balance: A good organizational practice' carried out in India, she indicates that it is a pre-requisite for organizations and Human Resource professionals to frame formal work-life balance practices and initiatives for the well-being of the employees. Her findings also acknowledge that the present workforce is consist of many working fathers and mothers whose aim is to find a balance between work and family roles which is a high matter of concern to them and the organization at large. Even though employers and employees recognize the existence of WLB concept, no specific WLB practices policies were in place in the study site, posing inadequacies in dealing with highly formal recruitment and the informal processes that favour workers with familial obligations and relational commitment. This kind of practices is likely to create a conflict between work life and personal life; therefore, adversely affecting employees' commitment.

In another study, Muchiti and Gachunga (2015) examined the influence of work-life balance on employee productivity in Kenya a case of Milimani Law courts Nairobi. This study emphasized on predicting employee productivity from the following variables; flexible working schedules and leaves programs. Among the key finding in this study included the fact that technological resources that allow flex time greatly influenced employee productivity. Finally, they recommended the need for management to formulate leave programs such as paternity leave, maternity leave, compassionate leave, sick leave and recreational leave to encourage employee productivity; a key determinant of employee engagement. The consideration of five dimensions of leave policies is commendable in this study.

Hye (2014) investigated "the work life balance and employees' performance: the mediating role of affective commitment" which was aimed at investigating the effect of work life balance on affective commitment and in role performance. 293 respondents filled the questionnaires which were used for the survey. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the quantitative data including reliabilities and multiple regressions. The finding of the empirical test demonstrated that employee experience of work life balance increases affective commitment.

Anuradha and Mrinalini (2016) examined the effects of work life balance on job satisfaction of women doctors in the private hospitals of Jharkland. The study population totaled 200 and convenience sampling was adopted and on the basis of data collected, regression and ANOVA were used to test the proposed hypotheses. The result indicated that a positive relationship exists between WLB and job satisfaction. The study recommended that women doctors should set clear boundaries between their personal and professional life and should strive to cope with their conflict. This is a job well done but limited to one geographical area as responses from different locations could yield different results.

Adisa, Mordi and Mordi (2014) investigated the challenges and the realities of work-family balance among Nigerian female doctors and nurses in their hysteric efforts to balance their work and family obligations. In doing so, semi-structured qualitative interviews were carried out among 131 female medical workers (60 female doctors and 71 female nurses) respectively. Data used for this study were collected across the six-geopolitical zones of Nigeria using a typical-all-round qualitative method. The findings thus reveal that both employees and hospital management are yet to experience the positive results of implementing work-family policies. Consequently, it recommends the introduction of more work-family policies that will enhance healthy balance between their multiple roles. Despite of the geographical spread of the study, the sample size is quite small.

METHODOLOGY

This population of the research consists of female workers in the Primary health centers (PHC) in Oju and Obi LGAs in Benue State, Nigeria. A total of 115 questionnaires representing the total population were distributed but the valid responses of 93 female employees representing 81% was taking for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages will be used in analyzing the research question.

This hypothesis is tested using the Product Moment Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) to find the positive relationship between work life balance (Leave Policy) and employee commitment.

Table 1. Demographic profile of Respondents

|Demographic Variables	No of respondents	Percentage
Age		
Less than 20years	4	4.3
21 – 30 years	20	21.5
31 – 40 years	30	32.3
41 – 50 years	24	25.8
51 – 60 ears	11	11.8
Above 60 years	4	4.3
Marital status		
Single	20	21.5
Married	57	61.3
Divorce	9	9.7
Widowed	4	4.3
Cohabiting	3	3.2
Educational level		
FSLC	6	6.5
SSCE	35	37.6
BSC/HND	29	31.2
MBA/MSC/PHD	23	24.7
Years of service in the unit		
Less than 1 year	20	21.5
1 -3 years	17	18.3
4 -6 years	31	33.3
Greater than 6 years	25	26.9

Source: Survey data 2023.

Table 1 shows that all study participants were female. Out of 93 respondents, 4.3% ,21.5%, 32.3%, 25.8%, 11.8% and 4.3% were in the age group of less than 20, 21-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60 and above 60 respectively. Approximately 21.5%, 61.3%, 9.7%, 4.3% and 2.3% were single, married, divorced, widowed and cohabiting respectively. About 6.5%, 37.6%, 31.2& 24.7% had primary, secondary, undergraduate and postgraduate education respectively. About 21.5%, 18.3%, 33.3% and 26.9%% of the respondents had work experience of less than 1, 1-3, 4-6 and over 6 years respectively.

Table 2: Responses on implementation of leave policy

VARIABLES	SA	A	U	D	SD	Std dev.
Leave policy is observed by the organization.	25 26.9%	25 26.9%	23 24.7%	13 14%	7 7.5%	1.239
Nursing mothers are not allowed maternity leave.	22 23.7%	13 14%	14 15.1%	20 21.5%	24 25.8%	1.531
Employees time off to care and support their dependents.	29 31.2%	29 31.2%	13 14%	14 15.1%	8 8.6%	1.302
There is well established annual leave for employees.	34 36.6%	34 36.6%	13 14%	7 7.5%	5 5.4%	1.139
Leave enable employees' resolve personal life issues.	15 16.1%	28 30.1%	19 20.4%	17 18.3%	14 15.1%	1.315

Source: Survey data 2023

From the results, most of the respondents generally agree that the health centers grant her female employee leaves.

Table 3. Leave policy and employee commitment

VARIABLES	SA	A	U	D	SD	Std dev
I feel motivated after leave to carry out my work responsibilities.	**20** 21.5%	**29** 31.2%	**26** 28%	**11** 11.8%	**7** 7.5%	**1.176**
Leave has good effect on my ability to perform my job.	**28** 30.1%	**10** 10.8%	**16** 17.2%	**10** 10.8%	**29** 31.2%	**1.642**
It will be very hard for me to leave my job and organization right now.	**16** 17.2%	**17** 18.3%	**16** 17.2%	**27** 29%	**17** 18.3%	**1.377**
I give all my best to the job given to me in the organization.	**20** 21.5%	**16** 17.2%	**20** 21.5%	**13** 14%	**24** 25.8%	**1.442**
I enjoy discussing about my job and organization with people outside it.	**20** 21.1%	**29** 31.2%	**26** 28%	**11** 11.8%	**7** 7.5%	**1.642**

Source: Survey data 2023

The table depicts the findings on the relationship between leave policy and employee commitment. Most of the respondents generally agree that leave policy as implemented in the health centers influenced the commitment of female workers in their various primary health centers.

Correlation analysis.

		Leave Policy	Employee commitment
Leave Policy	Pearson correlation	1.000	.227**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.004
	N	93	93
Employee commitment	Pearson correlation	.277**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.004
	N	93	93

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Pearson's correlations analysis conducted at 95% confidence interval and $p < 0.05$ two-tailed found that there was a positive correlation between employee commitment and Leave policies with a correlation valueof 0.28. Based on the obtained data the level of employee commitment is influenced by quality of WLB policies in this case leave policy. Based on the decision rule for significant level, we reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, we conclude that there is a positive relationship between leave policies and employee commitment. This implies that organizations that implement leave policy tend to motivate their employee to be more committed to their job.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study was conducted to ascertain the influence of leave policies on employee commitment. It also revealed that leave policy is implemented in the primary health centers in Oju |and Obi LGAs of Benue state but there is more room for improvement. The study revealed that there is a positive relationship between leave policy and commitment of female health workers in the study area. Employees who have gone for leave reported feel motivated after leave to carry out my work responsibilities. Employees felt leave has good effect on their ability to perform my job, spurred to give their best to the jobs in the organization, and when asked, they indicated that it will be very hard leave their job and organization right now. Thus, they enjoy discussing about their job and organization with people outside it. For an employee to remaincommitted to her job, the organization must continue to improve on their work life balance incentives by the various leave given to their employees. Several studies found similar results. Sivaprasad and Raveendran (2018), Jensirani and Muthumani (2017), Roshani and Bagrecha (2017), Mohamud (2021), Rao and Shailashi (2021), Muchiti and Gachunga (2015), Muli, Muathe and Muchiri (2014), Hye (2014), Lalitha (2016) and Anuradha and Mrinalini (2016) supported the finding that employees are committed to their work when they experience work life balance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Attaining work life balance is possible with effective management. This study concludes that work life balance philosophy is associated with real benefits for an organization. It can be concluded that time off (Leave) from work created a change of environment and a break from the daily working environment. The relationship between achieving well established leave policies and employee commitment cannot be underscored. Employees with balanced lives will experience reduced tension and conflict with their coworkers and management thereby increasing and sustaining commitment and overall productivity. Therefore, it is essential that organization should be responsive to the work life balance of their workforce, especially females, in order to improve their commitment level. On the basis of the findings and conclusion drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made: Managers/Heads of primary health centers should continually support the work life balance among female health workers in Oju and Obi LGAs in Benue State. Managers of PHCs should explore leaves as a way of rejuvenating their female employees by being innovative in implementing them. Future research may want to advance existing base of knowledge to investigate effect of work life balance on male health workers in Benue State.

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