UNIJERPS
Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies VOL.16 (2);
https://unijerps.org
2021 Impact Factor: 5.641; 2020 Impact Factor: 5.355.
July-December, 2023
Indexing and Impact Factor URL: http://sjifactor.com/passport.php?id=21363

PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND WORK EXPERIENCE AS PREDICTORS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

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ABSTRACT

The work environment in recent times is changing so fast with advancement in modern technology which is also increasing work and time pressures. However, the boundaries of the two most important domains of an employee's life (professional and personal) are getting fuzzy and worrisome as there is a continuous meddling between these domains. Hence, work life balance has been at the front burner of many contemporary organizational researches with many unanswered questions despite previous efforts made in this research direction. The present study examined the effects of perceived organizational support (POS) and work experience (WE) on work life balance (WLB) among civil servants. Standardized questionnaires were used to collect data from three hundred and twelve (312) respondents (168 males, and 144 females, mean age = 42.45yrs, SD = 1.80) utilizing convenient sampling technique and cross sectional design. Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Perceived Organizational Support Scale, Work Experience Measurement Scale and Work Life Balance Scale. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis with stepwise modeling was employed in analyzing the data. The results of the study revealed that POS significantly and positively correlated and predicted WLB. The result also showed that WE strongly and positively correlated with WLB. However, WE failed to significantly predict WLB. The findings of the study have practical implications for organizations and employees alike.

Keywords*:* Perceived organizational support, work experience, work life balance.

Introduction

A situation where the demands of one domain of a person's life do not interfere with other domains creates a state of equilibrium such that there is no role conflict between the domains. Work and family lives are two separate domains of a person's life which are crucial and are at the core of the person's happiness and satisfaction with life. According to ecological systems theory, work and family are the microsystems consisting of patterns of activities, roles and interpersonal relationships experienced in networks of face-to-face relationships (Neal & Neal, 2013). When the boundaries between the work and family microsystems are adequately penetrable and flexible, processes occur through which characteristics associated with the work and family domains influence each other (Voydanoff, 2004).

Several definitions of work-life balance have been put forth by different scholars. For instance Greenhaus and Allen (2006) defined work-family balance as the

degree to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in the roles of work and family domain are well-matched with the individual's life priorities. Clarke et al. (2004) assert that Work Life Balance (WLB) is a state of equilibrium or maintaining overall sense of harmony in life. Clark (2000) describes Work Life Balance as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home, with a minimum of role conflict. Duxbury (2004) had defined work life balance as a combination of role overload, work to family interference and family to work interference. Greenhaus and Allen (2006) defined work-family balance as the degree to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in the roles of work and family domain are well-matched with the individual's life priorities. Hill et al. (2001) defined work-life balance as the extent to which a person can concurrently balance the emotional, behavioral and time demands of both paid work, personal and family responsibilities. Bailyn et al. (2001) defined work -life balance as harmonious and holistic integration of work and non-work, so that men and women can achieve their potential across the domains in which they play out their life roles. Work-family balance was defined as the extent to which individuals are equally engaged and equally satisfied with work and family roles (Kirchmeyer, 2000).

Zedeck and Mosier (1990) and later O'Driscoll (1996) identified five basic models of work-life balance. They proposed the *segmentation model*, where the individual has two different domains in his life. One is work domain and the other is non-work domain. Since the individual has demarcated segments in life, they do not hamper the functioning and one segment has no influence on the other one in any way. The second model developed was *spillover model*, which suggested that one domain can influence the other in either a positive or negative way. The work-life of an individual can influence family life and similarly, family-life can affect work experiences. Such experiences of spillover are evident when the individual is either on flexible work schedules or has opted for work from home option. The third model developed was *compensation model*, which suggested that the individual tries to compensate for what is missing in one domain by making up for it in the other domain. If the individual is not satisfied with the work environment and it is not stimulating, the individual might compensate by being involved in activities at school for children or be proactive in community work which will give recognition and appreciation. The fourth model proposed was the *instrumental model*, where activities in one sphere are instrumental and supportive in success in other spheres of life. A worker may take up a job which is boring and dull in order to fulfill the desires of the family, e.g., education. The fifth model developed was *conflict model* which hypothesizes that when all spheres of life have high demands, the individual has to make difficult choices which could result in conflict and a possible overload.

There has is growing concern that as the hours of work are getting longer along with added pressures and demands of work, it is leaving very little time for quality time beyond work environment. Work-life balance is an amalgamation of a positive approach from both the individual and the organization to realize the importance of a balanced and satisfied work life and life

beyond work boundaries (Sen & Hooja, 2018). Employees with improved work-life balance in organizations that focus on efficient and effective performance can contribute more meaningfully towards organizational growth and subsequent success (Naithani, 2010). Depending on the orientation towards the dimensions of work and life beyond work, a number of individual factors play determining role. Some individuals have work as the central aspect of life as the need for achievement and prosperity gets fulfilled (Sen & Hooja, 2018).. Today, the issue of work-life balance is a major concern for employees and equally important to employers. Technology has contributed to the issue of excessive work hours. Lapierre & Allen (2006) found positive correlation between work-family issues and tele-work. Work-life balance issues are not restricted to certain types of professions or by gender; they are experienced by both men and women across different stages of their careers. This makes it a universal issue (Darcy et al, 2012). It makes individuals struggle regardless of their sex, gender or marital status (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010).

Work-life balance is sometimes characterized by the presence of unacceptable levels of conflict between work and non-work demands (Greenblatt, 2002). Hence, work-life imbalance leads to increased turnover intentions and perceived job overload (Rainayee, 2012).and has been seen to be inversely related to productivity and attrition rate (Aryee et al., 1999; Glass & Estes, 1997), employee commitment and satisfaction (Swarnlatha & Rajalaxmi, 2015), lower psychological capital (Sen & Hooja, 2015) and employee psychological well-being (Construction Industry Institute Inc, 2005). It leads to various behavioral and emotional problems like anxiety, depression, guilt, and problematic drinking (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). According to data collected by work-life balance compendium (2001), the absence of employees had doubled in the past decade due to work-life conflict. The workers who experience high work-life imbalance missed twice as many workdays. It is an arduous task for employees in current corporate work environment to strike a balance between their personal and professional commitments. Keeping this in mind, Dasgupta and Arora (2011) concluded that work-life balance can be achieved by reducing occupational stress which will contribute to employee productivity and business growth. In the past decade, a lot of studies have been conducted to study the various approaches that individuals take to strike a balance between their work -life and life beyond work boundaries. The fact that modern world of work creates work-life imbalance with consequences for individual, families and organizations, positive relationship between life satisfaction and work-life balance; and family satisfaction and work-life balance has been reported by Devi and Rani (2012).

A number of factors have been studied in relation to work life balance. For instance, in the work domain, hours/time pressure, role stressors, work social support, and organizational climate/practices have been found to be consistent predictors of work balance, whereas in the family domain, positive family attitudes and family/friend social support were linked to family balance (Shaffer, Joplin & Hsu, 2011). Also perception of organizational support has been reported to be associated with work

life balance (Kaur & Randhawa, 2020; Khoiriyah, Sari, & Widiana, 2020; Sulistiyani, Hidayat, & Suwardi, 2022; Thakur & Kumar, 2015). However, the objective of the present study is to investigate the effects of perceived social support and work experience on work life balance.

Employees' perception of support from their organization might be helpful in cushioning the impact of role conflicts between the work and family domains of employees' life. When either domains of an employee's life interfere with the other it creates an imbalance or a state of disequilibrium in the employee's work-personal life, which ultimately affects the job performance, commitment and satisfaction such employee will derive or/and give to the organization. However, in the presence of a sense of emotional or/and tangible supports from the organization, enables the employee to channel his/her energy and mental resources to delivering maximally on the job as well as maintain a healthy life style beyond work boundaries. Therefore, perception of organizational support is an important factor that may significantly affect the work life balance of employees.

Eisenberger et al. (1986) define perceived organisational support as the perception that the organisation cares about employees' wellbeing and values employees' contributions. In other words, it refers to employees'overall beliefs regarding the degree to which an employer values employees, cares about their wellbeing, and supports their socio-emotional needs by providing resources to assist with managing a demand or role. This definition incorporates two dimensions: (i) a sense that the organisation values employees' contributions is underpinned by performance-reward expectancies and (ii) a perception that the organisation cares about employee well-being is underpinned by the need for fulfillment of socio-emotional needs at work (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Accordingly, organisational researchers argue that within the employer-employee relationship, not only are impersonal resources such as money, services, and information exchanged, but also socio-emotional resources such as approval, respect and support (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001) which contributes towards employees perception of organisational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Employees, according to Levinson (1965 cited in Eisenberger et al., 2001), tend to perceive actions by managers or leaders of the organisation as actions of the organisation itself thus, personifying the organisation. According to Levinson, this personification of the organisation includes three factors which influence members' perceptions and behaviour. First, the organisation has a legal, moral and financial responsibility toward its employees. Second, the organisational precedents, traditions, policies and norms provide continuity and prescribe role behaviour. Third, the organisation exerts power over individual employees (Levinson, 1965 cited in Eisenberger et al., 2001).

Eisenberger et al. (1986) describes a link between employee expectations, rewards and the employee's attachment to the organisation within an exchange relationship, thus indicating that expectancy for reward exists. The reward does not need to be material or received immediately. The reward can be

affirmation, support for effort and the perception that they performed successfully, or performed consistent within the expectations of the organisation's culture. With this reward, there is greater employee motivation toward meeting the organisation's goals (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Simultaneously, this motivation fosters commitment as members become more connected with the organisation's goals, making the organisations' goals their own (Eisenberger et al., 2001).

There are a number of antecedent factors which affect perceived organizational support. These factors can be grouped into three categories namely: organizational factors, individual factors, and relationship between organization or organizational agents and employees (Sun, 2019). The organizational factors include: organizational fairness, working conditions, organizational political activities, organizational size, and organizational cultures. Individual factors include: values, positive or negative emotions, pre-hiring experience, work status and other variables. Relationship between organization or organizational agents and employees include: psychological contract, employee-organization match, leader-member exchange, management communication, leadership style and other variables.

Voydanoff (2004) assert that level of organizational support for employees'efforts to coordinate work and family obligations and activities is seen as a boundary-spanning resource (Resources that directly addresses how work and family connect with each other. Boundary-spanning resources may reduce work-family conflict and increase work-family facilitation through interrelated processes that enhance workers' perceived control over managing the work-family boundary and legitimize the use of work-family policies (Voydanoff, 2004). Many organizations still see them as individual not organizational concerns. Some organizations resonate the sentiment 'work is work and family is family and basically, the two do not mix' (Bailyn et al., 1997). Organizational support counters the dominant view that suggests work must automatically take priority over family needs and activities. It legitimizes the use of available policies that gives importance to help employees meet work and family needs and thus helps in reducing strain experienced due to lack of organizational support (Thakur, & Kumar, 2015). Examples are a work-family supportive climate (indirect support) where workers feel they do not have to sacrifice effectiveness in the family role to perform their jobs and can share work-family concerns (Kossek, Colquitt, & Noe, 2001), and perceived access to useful work-family policies (direct support) (Kossek et al., 2011).

An important factor that may influence employees' work life balance is their work experience. Work experience has been described as one of the most frequently used assessment methods for evaluating applicant eligibility for employment (Levine & Flory, 1975). Organizations seek employees whose prior work experience matches the current needs of the organization with the expectation that the experience will help them select the employee quicker (Rynes et al., 1997). The research on work experience has looked at its role in various functions of organizations such as selection, training, and career development (Campion, Cheraskin &

Stevens, 1994; Ford, Quinones, Sego & Sorra, 1992; McCall, Lombardo & Morrison, 1988).

In a review of work experience literature, Ford, Sego, Quinones, and Speer (1991) found that most studies used time on the job, or tenure, to measure work experience. However, other studies have measured experience by counting the number of times an individual has performed a given task (Lance et al., 1989; Vance et al., 1989). The literature on job rotation has operationalized experiences as the number of lateral moves an individual receives within a specified period of time (Campion et al., 1994). Another approach has focused on the actual content of the experiences as a critical determinant of job performance (Munford & Stokes, 1992). Finally, some have argued that individuals can differ in lessons they draw from similar experiences (McCall et al., 1988). Researchers have noted lack of consistency in the definition and measurement of work experience as well as discrepancies in measures of work experience construct (e.g., DuBois & McKee, 1994; Ford, Sego, Quinones, & Speer, 1991; Hofmann, Jacobs, & Gerras, 1992; Teachout, 1991). For instance, work experience can be defined as either the number of months spent in a particular job (job tenure), or the number of times a particular task has been performed. However, there is empirical evidence that suggests two individuals with equal amounts of job tenure can differ drastically in the number and types of tasks they perform (Ford et al., 1992; Schmitt & Cohen, 1989).

According to Sedarmayanti (2016), a person is said to be experienced or has experience with a job if they have gone through the job. Experience will occur if someone has been in a job for a long time, so they know the specifics and details about the job. Hence they know the best way to produce goods or services. The level of experience of a person depends on the length of time that person has been in the job. Foster and Karen (2001) assert that work experience is a measure of the length of time a person has worked in understanding a task and has done them well. Experience can also be described as the knowledge or skills that have been known and mastered by someone as a result of actions or work that has been performed for some time (Sedarmayanti, 2016).

There have been two primary categories of operationalizing work experience in the literature. The first and most common approach was to measure the accumulated experience the participants accrued at the same exact organization or firm (Goldsmith & Veum, 2002; Gordon & Fitzgibbons, 1982; Hunter & Hunter, 1984; McDaniel et al., 1988). This approach is quite similar to measuring an individual's tenure at an organization. During the last century it was quite logical to measure experience in this fashion because it was more common for employees to stay with one organization for a long period of time or their entire career. The alternative approach, more common to recent research, is to measure experience not only accrued at one organization or firm, but additionally all other experiences accrued from other organizations or firms (Castilla, 2005; Dokko et al., 2009; Finkelstein, 2003; Uppal et al., 2014). It is important to note that this multiple organization approach is more applicable to the workforce today because workers generally do not follow stable career paths within one organization, and have transitioned to a career experience

across various organizations (Hall, 2002; O'Mahony & Bechky 2006). Whether the experiences are gathered from one or several organizations, what is crucial is that the employee has garnered relevant skills that are required to help him or her excel in his/her professional and personal life. Consequently, we may say that work experience plays an important role in building and shaping the work and family life of an individual. For instance, an employee who has stayed long a job and has acquired the relevant skills needed to succeed on that job must have been adept at managing the role conflict that may arise between his/her job and personal life concerns. Accordingly, Ezeh and Chime (2021) revealed workers with more work experience were more likely to adjust their work life balance.

The main purpose of this study is to investigate to what extent work life balance can be predicted by perceived organizational support and work experience. Two research questions were formulated to achieve this aim:

1. Will perceive organizational support significantly predict work life balance among civil servants?
2. Will work experience significantly predict work life balance among civil servants?

Research Method

A total of three hundred and twelve (312) civil servants from various ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) in Anambra State participated in the study. It is a cross sectional study in which the researchers adopted convenience sampling technique in recruiting the participants. The demographic characteristics of the sampled participants revealed the following: Out of the 312 participants, 168 (53.8%) were males while 144 (46.2%) were females. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 65 years with a mean age of 42.45 and SD of 1.8. Twelve (3.8%) of the participants had NCE/OND, 123 (39.4%) had Degree/HND, 23 (7.4%) had PGD/PGDE, 120 (38.5%) had Masters, 34 (10.9%) had Ph.D. One hundred and forty seven (47.1%) of the participants had between 1-10 years of job tenure, 142 (45.5%) had between 11-20years, 21 (6.7) had between 21-30 years, while 2 (6%) had between 31 above years of job tenure. A total of three hundred and fifty (350) questionnaires were distributed, out of which 322 copies were returned, which represented a return rate of 92.0%. Out of the 322 questionnaires returned, 10 copies were discarded due to improper completion, leaving a total of 312 copies used for data analyses. Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS; Singh & Singh, 2010), Work Experience Measurement Scale (WEMS; Nilsson, Bringsen, Andersson, Ejlertsson, 2010) and Work Life Balance Scale (WLB-6; Gropel, 2006). Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS) developed by Singh and Singh (2010) was used to assess the respondents' perception of organizational support. It is a 20-item scale with responses structured on a five-point likert scale format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items include: i) "My organization cares for my opinion", 2) "The inmates of my organization try to make my job interesting as far as possible", 3) "We are forgiven for an unintentional mistake committed by us in my organization", and 4) "My supervisor is proud that I am a part of this organization".

The internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) of the instrument was found to be .86 (Singh & Singh, 2010).

Work experience measurement scale developed by Nilsson, Bringsen, Andersson, and Ejlertsson, (2010) was used to assess the level (quality and tenure) of work experience of the respondents. The scale has a total of 32 items divided into six dimensions. Sample item for each of the dimensions include: 1) supportive work conditions ("We encourage and support each other at work"), 2) internal work experience ("I feel that my work is meaningful"), 3) autonomy ("I decide my own work pace"), 4) time experience ("I do not need to work more than my scheduled hours"), 5) management ("My boss is available when I need him/her"), and 6) process of change ("The process of change was done with an open dialogue"). A 6-point Likert scale response format ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 6 (totally agree) was used to indicate the extent of agreement/disagreement with each of the items on the instrument. An internal consistency Cronbach's Alpha value of .89 was obtained for the main scale while the subscales had Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.85 to 0.96 (Nilsson, Bringsen, Andersson, Ejlertsson, 2010). The six-item work-life balance scale (WLB-6) was developed by Gro¨pel (2006) which measures the perceived sufficiency of time available for work and personal life. A 5-point Likert scale response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to indicate the extent of agreement/disagreement with each of the items on the scale. Sample items include: 1) 'I often visit my friends and acquaintances'; 2) 'Because of my work, I have no free time'; 3) 'Because of my work, I neglect my family or friends'. Cronbach's Alpha reliability estimate of .81 was obtained for this scale by Gro¨pel (2006). Data obtained from the study was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23.0. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to establish the relationship between study variables. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to ascertain the prediction of work life balance by perceived organizational support and work experience variables

Presentation of Results

The mean, standard deviation, and inter-correlations among the study variables are presented in Table 1. Table 2 contains the results of the hierarchical multiple regression of the predictor (perceived organizational support and work experience) and criterion (work life balance) variables.

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Table 1: Means, standard deviation and inter-correlations among the study variables

Variables		*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Age	42.45	1.80	-					
2	Gender	1.46	.50	-.14*	-				
3	Tenure	1.61	.64	.07	.01	-			
4	Education	3.13	1.16	.03	.16**	-.03	-		
5	POS	63.46	8.23	.08	-.10	-.10	-.02	-	
6	Work Experience	135.08	28.78	.05	-.02	-.11	-.04	.85**	-
7	Work Life Balance	19.12	3.66	-.06	-.06	.02	-.03	.27**	.23**

Note: *p < .05(two-tailed), **p < .01 (two-tailed), N = 312; POS: Perceived Organizational Support
Coding of Demographic Variables:
Gender: Male = 1, Female = 2; Age: 20-40 = 1, 41-60 = 2, 61 and above = 3; Experience: 1-10 = 1, 11-20 = 2, 21-30 = 3, 31 and above; Education: NCE/OND = 1, DEGREE/HND = 2, PGD/PGDE = 3, Masters = 4, Ph.D and Above = 5.

The demographic features of the study participants in Table 1 revealed that the average age of the participants was 42.45 (SD = 1.80). Majority of the respondents had degree and masters as their highest level of education while over 90% of the sample had between 1-20 years of work experience. The result of the correlational analysis in Table 1 revealed that perceived organizational support (r = .27, p< .01) had significant positive correlation with work life balance. While work experience (r = .23, p< .01) was positively and significantly associated with work life balance. None of the demographic variables significantly correlated with work life balance.

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regressions for the predictions of Psychological Work Life Balance (WLB) by Perceived Organization Support (POS) and Work Experience

Variables	**Beta (β)**	**t**	**R^2**	**$R^2\Delta$**	**FΔ**
Step 1					
Age	-.072	-1.254			
Gender	- .070	-1.964	.009	.009	.730
Job Tenure	.023	.408			
Education	-.013	-.221			
Step 2					
POS	.273	4.918***	.082***	.073***	24.189***
Step 3					
Work Experience	.014	.131	.082	.000	.017

Note: *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001; POS = Perceived Organizational Support.

Table 2 above shows the hierarchical multiply regression for the prediction of work life balance by perceived organizational support and work experience. The demographic variables (age, gender, Job tenure and education) were entered in first step of the regression model as covariates; which collectively accounted for 0.9% variation in work life balance. However, none of the demographic variables significantly predicted work life balance.

Perceived organizational support entered in step 2 of the equation significantly and positively predicted work life balance (β = .27, p < .001). The variance in work life balance explained on account of perceived organizational support was 7.3% [$R^2\Delta$ = .073; $F\Delta$ (1, 306) = 24.189, p < .001].

The inclusion of work experience in the third and final step of the equation failed to significantly predict work life balance (β = .01).

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to explore the effects of perceived organizational support (POS) and work experience (WE) as predictors of work life balance (WLB) among civil servants in Anambra State. The findings of the study revealed that none of the demographic variables (age, gender, job tenure, and education) correlated or significantly predicted WLB.

The results of the study further revealed that POS positively correlated, and significantly and positively predicted WLB. The implication of this finding is that POS enhances or promotes WLB. This outcome is suggestive of fact that organization should make adequate effort at making sure that their employees feel that there are been cared for and their contributions valued by the organization. Employees will show a sense of commitment to the organization as a means of reciprocation if they perceive that their work and family roles are well integrated as a result of support and care shown to them by the organization (Aryee, Tan, & Debrah, 2003; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This finding is consistent with ecological systems theory, and social exchange theory.

Ecological systems theory posits that a connection exists between work-life experience and context, individual, process, and time characteristics (Neal & Neal, 2013). That is, the interaction between the work and family systems of an individual impact the creation of the individual's work-family system, such that one affects the other (Beutell, 2013). This implies that the experiences of work or family life affect the other in either positive or negative manner depending on the nature of the experience. For instance when employees perceive that they are been cared for and their contributions valued (organizational support) by their organization, it spills into their family life by way of creating balance between their work and family life.

Social exchange theory is of the view that when employees are provided with fair treatment by their organization, and the organization also values the employees' contributions and wellbeing, then the employees will perceive high levels of support from the organization and consequently will feel obligated to reciprocate (Dawley et al., 2008; Shoss et al., 2013). From the tenet of this theory, it can be said that employees who get more support from their organization will be more disposed to reciprocate the good

gestures in the form of showing greater commitment and loyalty to the organization. Howbeit, extant studies (Beutell, 2013; Kojo & Nenonen, 2015) have shown that work-family enrichment includes constructs such as facilitation and positive spillover. Accordingly, when employees feel that they are supported by their organization it creates a sense of satisfaction and facilitation which spills over to the family life of the employee resulting in work life balance. This result collaborates the findings of previous studies (Mishra, & Bharti, 2020; Sulistiyani, Hidayat, Setiawan, & Suwardi, 2022; Thakur, & Kumar, 2015) which reported a positive significant relationship between POS and WLB. These studies suggested that as organization provides positive leadership support and reward to the employees for their contributions, it rubs off on the families of the employees by creating a convivial family atmosphere which culminates in work life balance.

The result further showed that work experience (WI) positively correlated with WLB. This outcome indicates that as employees advance in their work experience, it also enhances their work life balance. Work experience according to Sedarmayanti (2016) is the knowledge or skills that have been acquired and mastered by an individual as a result of tasks carried out over a period of time. Previous studies have shown that work experience is relevant for job performance (Quinones, Ford & Teachout, 1995), job promotion (Widiani, & Supartha, 2020), and employees' selection, training and development (Ash & Levine, 1985; Campion, Cheraskin & Stevens, 1994; Ford, Quinones, Sego & Sorra, 1992; McCall, Lombardo & Morrison, 1988). Hence, we can say that work experience is crucial in every aspect of an employee's work life. It helps in enhancing the psychological wellbeing and self-esteem of employees in their work settings. As employees advance in their experience, it creates a heightened level of confidence which enables them to succeed and progress in their organization and derive satisfaction from their job. This healthy psychological state and satisfaction derived from work experience is in turn transferred to their family life creating a balance between their work and family life. Hence, organizations/employees should encourage and also allow their employees to develop themselves through trainings, further education and skills development while on the job. However, the result of regression analysis revealed that work experience failed to significantly predict work life balance. This outcome may be due to the fact that in some cases despite the work experience of employees they still experience role conflicts between their work and family life.

Implications

The outcomes of this study have practical implications for management. Organizations who want to obtain more commitment and loyalty from their employees which are needed for the growth of the organization, should prioritize supporting and taking care of their workers welfare and valuing their contributions by putting in place a reward/recognition system that captures the input of employees in their job roles. These gestures by the organization will create a sense of satisfaction in the employees which inadvertently spills into their family life creating a balance between their

professional and personal life. Also in recent times there have been an increase in the competing and multifaceted demands of work and family life due to demographic and workplace changes. These changes include longer hours of work and increasing use of advanced technologies, the alteration of family structures with more single-parent households, and the entrance of more women in the workforce which often create role conflicts between the work and family life of the employees who have only limited time and energy resources to deal with work-life pressures (Goh et al., 2015). Therefore, organizations should be sensitive to these changes and focus on the personal needs, and demands of employees in their work and family environments.

Furthermore, employers/organisations should also focus on training and developing their employees to gain relevant work experience by providing resources that will enable the employees to be effective and be satisfied with their job. Three types of resources are often discussed in line with work life balance: financial, temporal, control and personal resources (Greenblatt, 2002). The personal resources (physical, psychological and social etc.) which are less frequently discussed are actually very important in encouraging employees to gain more experience on their job and attain work life balance. Concentrating on the personal resources will assist in formulating programs and theories that will help organisations reap the benefits of work life balance of their employees.

Limitations

This research has in no small measure contributed to knowledge. This is one of the few studies that have thoroughly explored the link between perceived organizational support, work experience, and work life balance. However, there are limitations to the study. First, the study is cross sectional in nature and made use of self-report data which has implications for consistency bias and method variance. However, other methods of data collection, such as interviews (which might be difficult to conduct) should be explored to reduce the biases associated with self-report measures.

Second, future studies should make use of larger sample size and include participants from different geopolitical zones of the country to enhance result generalization.

Finally, future researches can include mediating and moderating variables to get a clearer picture of the connecting mechanisms between the variables.

Conclusion

This study x-rayed the variables that are associated with the work life balance of civil servants in Anambra State, Nigeria. The findings demonstrated that perceived organizational support significantly and positively correlated and predicted work life balance. Also, work experience strongly and positively correlated with work life balance. However, work experience failed to predict work life balance. The possible reasons for the outcomes were identified and addressed. The findings have serious implications for management which was also discussed.

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