



Effect of Work-Life Conflict on Employee Performance: A case of Kabul Based Government and Non-Government Organizations

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Abstract

This research investigates the work-life conflict and its impact on employee performance in the cultural context of Afghanistan. Questionnaires from the survey respondents living and working in government and non-government organizations in Kabul Afghanistan were used as technique for data collection. Kabul city is selected for survey as it is the capital and largest city in Afghanistan. This approach is undertaken to find the work-life matters of Kabul's inhabitants and the impact on the workforce being employed in various government and non-government organizations in Kabul.

Qualitative research method is being used that consists of both primary and secondary approaches for data and information collection. Questionnaires were used to collect the primary data. This research provides adequate information about work-life conflicts and its impact on the employee performance and aids to change skills attitudes. Both government and non-government organizations strive to enlarge flexibility and openness to all people including their stakeholders, managers, subordinates and clients. Non-government and private organizations in Afghanistan concentrate further to advance more improvements and progress of their employees.

Keywords: Work-life Conflicts, Employee Performance

I. Introduction

In today's developing world, the issue related to work-life conflict and its effect on employee performance has been the focus of organizational behavioral researchers since decades. Today, every individual is combating for maintaining their rights and strives to achieve a reputable position to proliferate their living standard for comfortable life. The effort made by an employee to earn livelihood is not only for their success but it is also for their family life and safety.

Among other forerunners of employee performance, one that has risen recently is conflict in personal and work life of employees. That is to balance the work and life responsibilities, whereas any incompatibility and misbalance of work and life activities is called work-life conflict and has stern effects on work performance (Kinnunen, Feldt, Geruts & Pulkkinen, 2006; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2006). The work-family conflict is an inter role conflict having incompatibility in work and life domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Frone (2000) identified that the work-life conflict defined by Greenhaus & Beutell has bidirectional relation between family life and work-life. So there are two types of conflicts, work affecting family life is work-family conflict and family affecting the work is family work conflict (Frone, Russel & Cooper, 1992; Frone, Yardley & Markel, 1997).

The tendency of women working in organizations has gigantically developed in Afghanistan after the fall of Taliban regime in 2001. Thus, it has augmented the need of work-life balance with family and job. Some of the concerns raised by many researchers are time, energy and relationship. A woman has to deal her spouse, do the chores, housekeeping, looks after her children and has to manage work life as well. To deal with this issue many companies took serious initiatives to provide family friendly environment (Jackson, 1983). Many organizations studied and proposed solutions for work-life conflict. To manage this issue, they arranged programs like summer camps, flexible timings, job sharing, child care at kindergarten, part time job facilities and special leaves. If the mentioned issues are not resolved properly, it will have a catastrophic outcome for the women. They are required to keep the balance between everything they are engaged in managing. Maintenance of balance or equilibrium by women is very tough to achieve.



A survey was done which vividly portrayed that 95.1% women are worried for their balance as their work-life engrosses all their time and they are left with little time of the day to cope with the family. In order to earn a position and livelihood, most of the women have to sacrifice their households. A research also stated that 40.4% of the spouses were dual-earners (Rapoport, 2002).

1. Purpose of the Research

This research the effect of work-life conflict on employee performance is aimed to investigate the conflicts that people are being faced with living in Kabul during their work-life and the effect it has on their performance. The researcher has covered whole Kabul in which various employees of various government and non-government organizations were taken into consideration. This research is limited only to Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan and the people living in it.

2. Objectives of the Research

- To determine different factors related to work-life conflict and its impact on job performance of Kabul based government and non-government organizations' employees.
- To resolve the work-life conflict in order to improve the staff performance in Kabul Afghanistan.
- To form the significance of work-life conflict that affects the employees' performance in Kabul based government and non-government organizations.
- To organize issues pertaining to work-life conflicts by employees of various government and non-government organizations in Kabul Afghanistan.

3. Problem Statement

With the passage of time due to security threats and political instability, the economy of Afghanistan fluctuates with the burgeoning percentage of unemployment. The average per annum unemployment rate of Afghanistan is 11.5% (Statista, Afghanistan Unemployment rate 2020). The unemployment rate and employee turnover rate have increased in many organizations across the globe particularly in Kabul Afghanistan due to an increase in work-life conflict. Work-life conflict causes enormous psychological pressure and exacerbates work environment for employees in Kabul that results in rapid decline of employees' job performance. The stated problems employees' turnover rates and low job performance need a serious consideration to manage and control.

II. Literature Review

1. Work-life Conflict

The issue related to the impact of work-life conflict on employee performance is considered a vital topic to deal with (Aryee, 1992). Work-life conflict is defined as a form of inter-role conflict in which work and family demands are reciprocally incompatible so that meeting demands in one domain makes it problematic to meet demands in the other (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000; Greenhaus & Beutell 1985). The conflict between work and family demands induce conflict between work responsibilities and family responsibilities which is denoted as work and family conflict.

Most of the researches conducted in various countries so far confirm that there is a negative relationship between personal life and job performance. For example Frone et al. (1997) used a self-reported scale to measure job performance and reported momentous relationship when examined the impact of work-life conflict on performance. In another research study findings conducted by Blackhurst, Brandt and Kalinowski (1998) reported that organizational commitment is negatively related to family life of the persons which leads to low performance and hence high work-life conflict. The performance of employee is reduced in terms of commitment that work-life conflict affects it. Every individual employee faces with a number of problems during their official accountabilities that they have to identify to solve. The work-life conflict impacts the wellbeing of a person. The higher the work-life conflict happens; the lower would be the wellbeing of an individual (Aryee, 1992; Frone, 2000; Frone, Thomas & Ganster, 1995).



Many males and females are encountering the work-life conflict in their personal and professional lives. Here the role of gender variances are also reckoned (Santos, G.G. and C.C. Cardoso, 2008). In contrast to males, females are facing greater conflict because their responsibilities are greater than them. Besides, females also have greater mental and physical illness and home related responsibilities. Further, children also associate with women than men (Emslie, C. Hunt, K. and Macintyre, S. 2004). The life quality outcomes (work-life conflict, work overload and stress) are impacted by the working hours of both the spouses. When both spouses work (39-45) long working hours then the quality of life will be better (Moen, P. and Y. Yu, 2000).

Work-life conflict is the main problem for the managers and the organizations. It causes a negative effect on both the performance of the employees and organizations. Due to work-life conflict staff can't perform their assigned duties and responsibilities effectively because of the conflict they are engaged in work and family (Hammer, L.B., T.N. Bauer and A.A. Grandey, (2003). The ways to resolve work-life conflict is to have friendly environment with the household and to let the supervisors know about the conflict and problems (Frye, N.K. and J.A. Brebaugh, 2004).

Work-life conflict can be diminished by developing and maintaining cordial relations between the employee and employer, the organization's policies and flexibility (Rotondo, D.M., D.S. Carlson and J.F. Kincaid, 2003). Managers in the organization and human resource experts can reduce work-life conflict by flexibility in the workplace. Staffs and bosses can improve the outcome of the organizations by solving this problem (Rotondo, D.M. and J.F. Kincaid, 2008).

2. Employee Performance

Employee performance is defined as scalable actions, behavior and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to organizational goals (Viswesvaran and Ones, 2000,p. 216). Employee performance refers to how your workers behave in the workplace and how well they perform the job duties you've obligated to them (Ashely Donohoe,

2019). Organizational performance depends upon the performance of its employees. The better the employees of an organization perform, the higher will be the performance of an organization. There is a positive relationship between employees' performance and productivity of an organization (Armstrong and Baron, 1998).

Employee performance can be enhanced by investment on human resources. Organizations with abundant work have conflicts and the employees of these organizations have high physical stress, but these employees have given extreme performance to make a fair income (Dyne, L. V. Jehn, K. A. and Cummings, A, 2002).

3. Influence on Employee Performance

Sharlyn Lauby (2018), described six factors that influence employees' performance. Employees' performance is influenced by both the employee and the work environment that in some cases they are beyond their control. These work areas are both internal and external. External factors that influence employees' performance are organizational processes, physical resources and data information on the other side internal factors that influence employees' performance are individual abilities, motivation and job knowledge.

Najafbeygi (2007), performance management system influences staff in various organizations. The success of an organization towards goal attainment is influenced by an organization staff's insight about incentives and performance.

4. Work Stress

Work stress is conceptualized as work role conflict, work role overload and work role ambiguity (Cooke RA, Rousseau DM, 1984). The more conflict among work roles, the greater the chance that stress will spill over and cause negative behaviors that interfere with fulfilling family roles (Greenhaus JH, Bedian AG, Mossholder KW, 1987). Role overload is the result of having too many things to do in a given time period (Bachrach SB, Bamberger P, Conley S, 1991). Work role ambiguity happens when employees are not sure of what is expected of them in a work role.

5. Shift Work



Shift work refers to various operational time arrangements that contains all operational hours exterior from the normal daytime (Knutsoon, 2004). Shift systems can be organized in various ways, contingent on several constituents containing shift length, rest breaks and consecutive shifts (Folkard et al, 2007), which lead to various effects on the performance of workforce. Researches show that employees can be impacted both physically and mentally (Aryee, 1992).

III. Theoretical Framework

For work-life conflict various models are recommended. Work-life conflict arises when the expectations of one role interfere or conflict with those of another role (Greenhaus & Beutell 1985). A large number of researchers perceive the work-life conflict and share various perspectives about the theories particularly about the rational view structure (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1986).

IV. Research Methodology

This research stems from various analysis of the present literature review. It refers to the qualitative study whose primary data is gathered from questionnaires for evaluating the work-life conflict and its impact on employees' performance in Kabul based government and non-government organizations.

This research is qualitative based approach and used various literature reviews and its study and results pertaining to questionnaires distributed to the respondents to observe work-life conflict and its effect on employee performance.

1. Research Participants and Sample

Participants were chosen from Kabul based government and non-government organizations. In the government sector questionnaires were distributed to employees of the Administrative Office of

the President, Ministry of Communication, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Public Works whereas among the non-government organizations, ESSO, CESSO and PEDO were chosen. 167 questionnaires were distributed, 153 were retrieved, 9 were incomplete therefore, 144 questionnaires were valid. The data was collected from the employees holding minimum bachelor degrees in different disciplines aging (30-45) working in the mentioned organizations at various managerial positions with the authority of participating in decision making. Out of 144 respondents 102 were males and 42 others were females. This sample was chosen by the participant's individuality as age (30-45), education level (bachelor, master and PhD) and experience and performance appraisals in the organizations.

2. Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to managerial level staff of the stated government and non-government organizations that had understanding of their organizations, work-life conflict and its impact on their performance. The reason beyond including the managerial staff in the study was their acquaintance with the organizational structure, duties and authority distribution, chain of command and mainly their involvement in decision making process at the relevant directorates. While distributing questionnaires, it was ensured that the respondents' data would remain confidential and would not be used for political, administrative and any other purposes.

3. Research Instrument

The questionnaire which is the research instrument is chosen to collect data from respondents of various qualifications working at managerial positions in different government and non-government organizations based in Kabul. Qualitative research approach is being adopted to collect data on work-life conflict and its impact on the performance of employees.

V. Results and Discussions

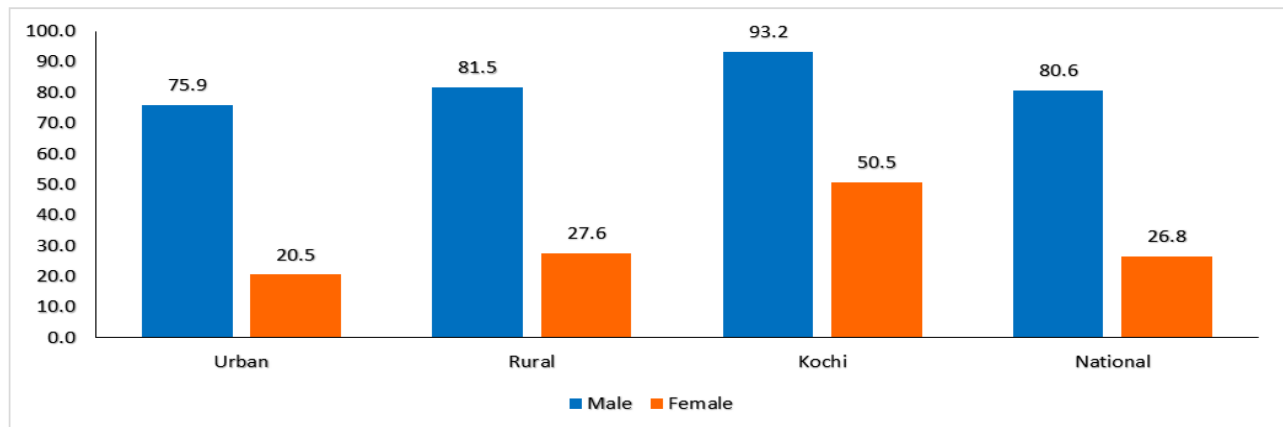
Kabul is the capital and the largest city located in the eastern section of Afghanistan. The population of Kabul is estimated to be 4.5 million and includes all the major ethnic groups of the country. Kabul serves as the political, economic and cultural center of Afghanistan and the research is conducted in this place. The national and official languages spoken are Pashto and Dari



and the religion is Islam.

The level of labor force partaking differs in Afghanistan based on sex and location. In 2016, the Survey of Afghanistan Living Condition indicates that the labor force consists of 15.9 million people of whom 7.4 million were inactive, 8.5 million people were employed or actively seeking jobs and 2.0 million were unemployed. The survey finds that men's participation in the labor force is greater than women. Male participation in Afghanistan's labor force is 80.6% nationwide, 75.9% in urban areas, 81.5% in rural areas and 93.2% midst Kuchi. On the other hand, females participation in the labor force is 20.5% in urban areas, 27.6% in rural areas and 50.5% midst Kuchi and 26.8% countrywide.

Figure- 1: Labor Force Participation by Sex and Location



Source: Afghanistan Living Condition Survey 2016

The analysis of this research justify that work-life conflict often affect employees' performance in Kabul based government and non-government organizations. According to respondents they encounter lots of complications in finding jobs. Mostly recruitment of employees in organizations isn't merit based and employees with reference are preferred and prioritized. When employees get the job, they struggle to maintain their effective performance to retain their jobs. Employees earning salaries are most likely to support their families and dependents financially. In joint family system in Kabul the work-life conflict does not that much affect performance of employees as it

does in separate family system. To some extent joint family system erases work-life conflict in different ways. For instance, if a person is not giving and sparing time to his family (wife and children) owing to official work accountabilities then this conflict is diminished by other members of household. Either maternal or paternal relatives of husband provide them recreational and entertaining activities thus, the work-life conflict diminishes. The main effort and focus of Kabul based employees is to satisfy the necessities and desires of their households and provide them financial support.

Afghanistan comprises of predominantly joint family system and men dominated working environments. In separate family system the level of work-life conflict among Kabul based employees is too high in contrast to employees of joint family system. Mostly female workers encounter problems of managing chores and job related responsibilities. Besides managing to perform official job related responsibilities, married females are also held accountable to take care of their children and do their household tasks, rather than wife there is no other person in the family to cooperate handle this matter which greatly intervenes in their role.

This research shows that employees in Kabul consider that the relevant management and leadership of their organizations' cooperation and support help them boost their performance and progress. It is also found that some employees mostly females are likely to quit their jobs due to work-life conflict. These females claim that family pressure make them quit their jobs and prefer to handle home related responsibilities. Most employees feel motivated and perceive team spirit, incentive, motivation and leadership of the organization as the main factors contributing them in diminishing work-life conflict and performance improvement.

According to the findings of this research the following work-life conflicts are available in employees of Kabul based organizations.

- I. Role Overload: This form of conflict arises from work and one's personal life; mostly it exists when one accomplishes multiple roles at the same time and depletes the resources to perform them.
- II. Interference of work with family members: This type of conflict ascends when employment demands and tasks make it complicated to fulfill family related responsibilities and give time to family members (e.g. Staying long hours in work avoids availability at family's recreational events).



- III. Interference of family in job practices: This form of conflict occurs when family demands and accountabilities make it problematic to perform and accomplish official job related responsibilities (e.g. absence at job due to illness of a child or any other family member).
- IV. Caregiver Stress: It is defined as burdens in caregivers' day to day lives attributed to provide care to someone who needs it (Robinson, 1983).

1. Causes of Work-life Conflict in Kabul

The foremost responses of the participants in this research that propose the major causes of work-life conflict in Kabul are; overload of roles at the office and families which makes it difficult for employees to fulfill the role demands of both workplace and family, high work demand, unexpected overtime in non-government organizations, job pressure, excessive work, personal problems, augmented desire of employees taking a lot of job related duties seeking to achieve promotions and monetary benefits, intervention of family demands in an employee's workplace, it frequently occurs in separate family systems who have a large number of responsibilities to their children such that it leads to employee's late arrival to work or thinking further about their families while at work. Besides, clashes between employees in the organizations, lack of accepting each other and complications in socializing with the organizational culture are also the major causes of work-life conflicts in Kabul.

VI. Conclusion

Resolution of conflicts is vital for boosting organization's programs and achieving its objectives. Thus, this paper has addressed several parts of work-life conflicts in Kabul that organizations can use to overcome. As discussed, work-life conflicts in Kabul frequently impact employee's productivity and performance. This conflict incurs due to several factors including workloads, interference of work with family members, interference of family in work and caregiver stress. All these conflicts impact the physical and mental capacities of employees in handling their work and

family related responsibilities. In order to prevent and resolve these concerns, organizations need to take some initiatives and assume different mechanisms to ensure that there is a work-life balance among workers and employers should also make sure that their employees are not overworked. To satisfy the needs of the employees, organizations need to develop proper strategies and policies.

VII. Recommendations

The findings of the study of work-life conflict and its impact on employee performance in Kabul based organizations indicate that work-life conflict induces depression, absenteeism, lowers creativity, innovation and risk taking capacity of employees.

Participants were asked to suggest measures to avoid work-life conflict.

Shared Support of Spouses: Mutual support for a husband and wife is essential when they are in workplace that is each partner should provide support and as well as receive support.

Establishing Child Care Centers: Participants recommend the establishment of child care centers and kindergartens near to workplace. Respondents argue that establishment of kindergartens and child care centers are applicable mostly for separate family system in which both husbands and wives are working and no other family member exists at home to take care of their children.

Flexible Work Schedule: Work scheduling flex time and practice that allows employees to choose starting and quitting office time within certain limits. It usually follows a core time during which all employees must be present. Employees should be given freedom in deciding when to start and finish work and autonomy to take leaves for attending family matters. Flexibility at work is perceived by respondents as care and support from management of the organization.

Job Sharing: To diminish work-life conflict among employees, organizations need to predispose employees the opportunity in which they can perform the same job at different working hours and days. Employees voluntarily share the responsibilities of a full time job and receive salaries and benefits on pro-rata basis.

Employee Motivation: To resolve conflicts and achieve growth, organizations must persuade



their employees. They must know their employees' abilities and know how to motivate and resolve conflicts between them in Kabul. To motivate employees consider the following points.

- Provide personnel rewards and praises: If the employee performs effectively and meets the organization's expectations, they have to be awarded and recognized in front of the entire personnel that will motivate them further to aggrandize their performance.
- Provide personnel bonuses and incentives: Continuous provision of rewards and incentives boost work quality and enhances overall organization's performance.
- Capacity Building Programs: Conducting training and development programs to enhance employees' skills and abilities.

Ensuring Work-Life Balance: The management plays a key role in boosting the lives of the employees so that the outcomes of the organizations get improved too.

Social Support: Employees may create social support programs that assist colleagues to direct, support and coach each other.

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