

Full Length Research Paper

Comparative study of the social effects of 5 and 6 days work on individuals

Rashid Saeed¹, Rana Nadir Idrees², Asad³

¹COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Sahiwal Pakistan.

²COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Sahiwal Pakistan.

³Institute of Administrative Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan.

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The main agenda behind this study is to know about the impact of work life on social life that is, to make comparison between two categories of people working 5 and 6 days a week. The impact will be seen on both males and females. It is the general observation and has also been proved that the person who works for 5 days a week is more relaxed and congenial to social life than one who works for 6 days. A qualitative and quantitative research has been done to know about the facts related to working hours on social life. This study revealed the fact that there is need of relaxed working hours to have positive impact on social life. A work life balance is vital to maintain in Pakistan.

Key words: employees, working hours, flexible work, work life balance, social life.

INTRODUCTION

A dynamic, developed and innovative supply chain industry is vital to enable and sustain global economic growth and development. According to the World Economic Forum (2012) 'the logistics and supply chain sector underpins the entire global economy'. Not only are substantial logistical infrastructure investments needed, but the availability of qualified, skilled and experienced employees are essential to ensure that the global supply chain industry can continue to deliver on global economic demands. The term supply chain management has risen to prominence over recent years with numerous definitions having been developed by academia and industry. For the purpose of this study, the much cited definition of The Council for Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP) is used, which states: 'Supply chain management encompasses the planning and management of all activities involved in sourcing and procurement, conversion, and all logistics management activities. Importantly, it also includes coordination and collaboration with channel partners, which can be

suppliers, intermediaries, third party service providers, and customers. In essence, supply chain management integrates supply and demand management within and across companies' (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals, 2013). The broad concept of supply chain management includes logistics activities such as: demand forecasting, transport management, warehouse management, procurement, materials handling, order fulfilment, packaging, facility location and design, reverse logistics, customer service, production planning, and logistics communication. The effective management of these supply chain management components and activities requires specific skills sets. This study examines the broad logistics and supply chain-related skills sets typically required by organisations in South Africa.

A recent supply chain foresight report (Barloworld Logistics, 2012) indicates that the supply chain skills shortage is the second major constraint to South Africa. This study is to assess the impact of males and females on their personal life, one who works 5 days a week and one

who does 6 days a week. It has been seen that problems arise when a man or a woman work for 6 days a week because he/she has less time to give to family. It is a common practice in Pakistan that the whole family is dependent on sole earner. The sole earner (6 days worker) then feels less time to give to his/her social life (Harrington, 2001). There are lots of problems that are given birth due to this like frustration, poor health, mentally upset, tensions and less time for family and friends. As the incomes of people are low in Pakistan so they work for over time to earn more and this affects their family life (Major et al., 2001).

Another point of view is that organizations are not managing and developing human resource. Even if they have the policies, they actually do not execute it because it is a common thing to be viewed in organizations especially educational institutions that employees are working after the working hours. This reduces the time for them to give it to their families. Working for hectic 6 days a week is the cause of dysfunctional turnover too. The continuous mental stress due lack of time given to families and friends also urge the person to quit.

The organizations working on the policies of work life balance take care of their employees. Organizations having implemented HR policies consider their employees an important source for competitive edge and deal them with care. It has been seen and observed that in the emerging global environment, the major stress is on long working hours in Pakistan which only overloads the males and females with mental and physical stress. With loads of works, they are unable to give time to domestic needs and problems. With the passage of time, the domestic problems are raised to the peak that also affects the individual in his/her professional life (Cooper et al., 1982; Duffy and McGoldrick, 1990; Daniels and Guppy, 1995; Clark, 1996).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aims of this study are:

1. To study work-life balance
2. To study the social life of individuals who are working five days a week
3. To study the social life of individuals who are working six days a week
4. To study the comparative social life of individuals who are working five days a week and six days a week
5. To provide guidelines and recommendations for the future policy makers

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Although some researches are available in the area of work life balance, long working hours and relevant issues

globally but little is found in Pakistan service sector particularly the educational sector employees. This established the basis for doing this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dow-Clarke (2002) found that work-life balance with regard to work hours can not be defined in general. Long working hours were generally perceived to effect on work-life balance. It is now common perception among the employees that they have to accept the pressure of working long hours for being on job despite considering the family life as secondary thing. La Valle et al., (2002) studied on happy families and described working long hours as a key contributor for mounting pressures on fathers in particular and family in general. Major et al., (2001) found too that long work hours are correlated with increased work-family conflict and indirectly leads towards psychological sufferings. They also concluded strong positive relationships between work hindrances with family and work overload and organizational expectations for time given at work place.

Parasuraman et al., (1996) did study on work and family variables, entrepreneurial career success, and psychological wellbeing. Among many findings, one of the significant finding was that male gave more time at work corresponding to time given to family when compared to female counterpart. Moreover, work overload and inflexible working hours were correlated to increasing time commitment at work. Time commitment to work was directly connected to stress in life. It is reality that sometimes employers simply forget about the lives of their employees beyond the workplace and subsequently the difficulties they have to face at home.

Saffer and Lamiraud (2012) described that increasing the number of hours at work per capita from last 30 years has formed an intuitively believable perception that now less time is given for social relationships. Uden et al., (1991). Number of factors like more demanding work, social support have been considered to be linked to coronary heart disease in epidemiological studies. Less social support is causing more heart rates along with blood pressure.

Batt and Valcour (2003) suggested that work-life balance practices together with the policies and practices of human resources led towards the most appropriate handling of work-family conflict and to turnover. Human resources practices like work redesign and giving incentives for motivation and commitment.

Jeff and Juliette (2004) described UK experiences of work-life balance in different organizations. The main problems includes (1) not to follow uniform policy across different sectors and organisations, (2) Lacking at both formalisation and implementation of policies at organisational level, (3) employees are not consulted appropriately both at the time of introduction and execution

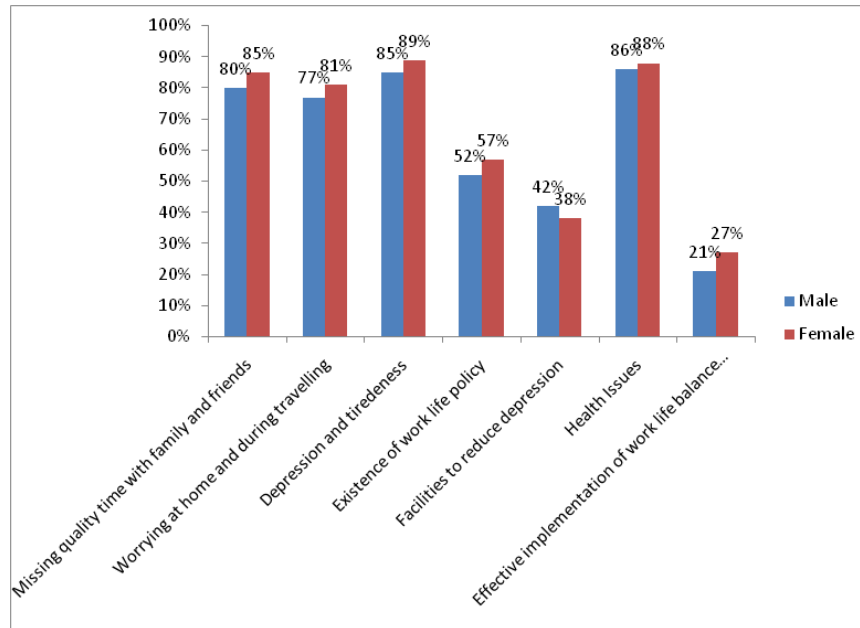


Figure 1: Social effects of six days working week

of policies,(4) the prime focus of policies is not the employees but business needs only, (5) there is nothing available showing decrease in working hours, (6) tangible and intangible work disturbances into personal life are very much there and (7) household duties are yet to be performed mainly by female women irrespective of their job and designation. They concluded that reconciling work and personal duties still appeared to be a difficulty for employees. Same types of experiences are observed here in the organizations of Pakistan when there is a question arises for the formulation and implementation of policies and practices to deal with work-life balance appropriately. Poor experiences are causing number of social problems mainly health and psychological issues and less time devoted to child and elder care.

METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view the purpose of the study, qualitative and quantitative study has been conducted through observations, surveys, textual analysis and previous researches done in this area.

This study was employed to identify the perceptions of faculty members toward social effects of working 5 or 6 days a week over their health, their children education, stresses and depression level. A renowned group of colleges, being one of the largest private sector education institutions in Pakistan, was selected as a population for this study. There were more than 300 faculty members out of which a total sample of 130 faculty members was selected.

Hypothesis

The people who are working for 6 days a week feel less pressure and are less tensed in their social life as compared to the one who

works for 5 days a week. In other words, the social problems like fatigue, tensions, frustration and health problems are less seen in 6 days workers than in 5 days workers.

The research questions are:

1. What are the effects of 6 and 5 days workers on their social life (self, family, friends, community and work) in the scenario of Pakistan education sector?
2. How the people are meeting the demands and requirements of social life while working 6 or 5 days a week?
3. What comparative social impacts over the social lives of individuals can be observed if their working days are reduced from 6 to 5?

DATA ANALYSIS

The following charts present comparative study of social impact of five days and six days working week over the life of male and female respondents working in the education sector of Pakistan. For the purpose of analysis the key variable include 1) missing quality time with family and friends; 2) worrying about work both at home and during travelling; 3) depression and tiredness due to long working hours; 4) awareness and existence of work life balance policy; 5) facilities to reduce depression and tension; 6) health issues and 7) effective implementation of work life balance policies.

Figure 1 depicts that around 80% of the male feel that they do miss a lot of quality time to spend with their family members, relative and friends if they have to work six days a week. Whereas the male respondents who have to work five days a week believe that they have much more time to share with their family and friends as depicted in Figure 2. Similar responses were observed in case of female respondents.

In case of six days working week around 77 to 81% of the respondents trust that they remain worry about their office work even at home and during their travelling from office to home or vice versa. On the other hand the respondents who work five days a week seem less worrying during their travelling or stay at home as

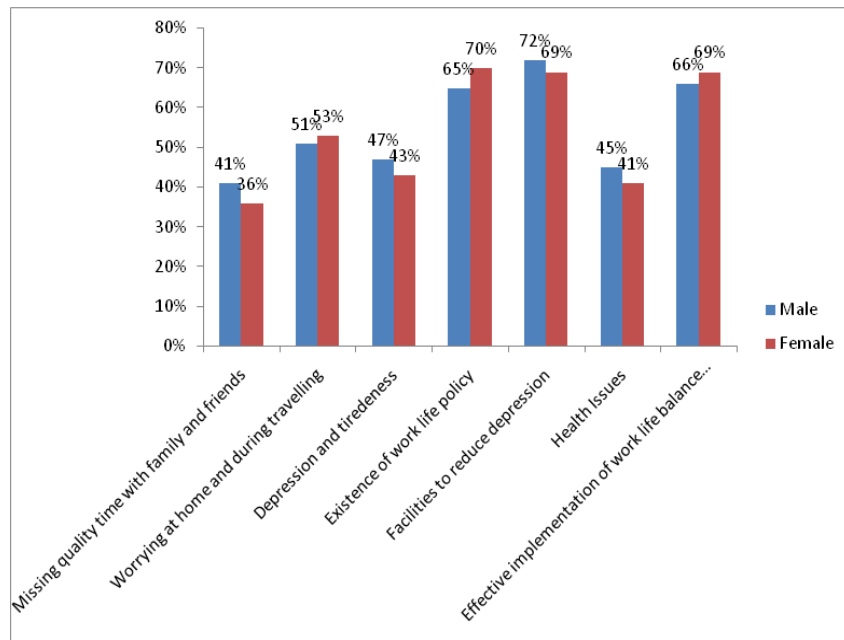


Figure 2. Social effects of five days working week

Table 1. Working hours per day and gender cross tabulation

Working Hours	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
8-9 h	15	33	14	47
9-10 h	17	37	9	30
10-12 h	14	30	7	23
Total	46	100	30	100

indicated in Figure 2.

Similarly a large number of respondents (that is, 85-89%) feel depression and tiredness at work place due to long working hours as compared to those respondents who have to work five days a week.

In case of six days working week almost half of the respondents believe that there is any existence of work life balance policy in education sector. Basic ingredients of work life policy may include provision of flexible working hours, holidays/ paid time offs, job sharing time career break/ sabbaticals and medical leave. The respondents were also concerned about the effective implementation of work life balance policies.

It was quite interesting to observe from respondent reviews that mostly those educational institutions that follow five days a week schedule also obliged their staff more facilities to reduce depression as compared to six days a week working institutions. These facilities generally include provision of parenting or family support programs, exercise facilities, relocation facilities and choices, transportation facilities and encourage the involvement of your family members in work achievement reward functions.

Due to long working hours the respondents normally use to take fast/ junk food and refreshment drinks/snacks. This in turn causes a number of health related issues like stress-related disease, blood pressure etc.

The cross tabulation of gender with their perception towards number of working hours per day is presented in Table 1 below. Around 67% of the male respondents have to work for more than nine hours a day. Out of total 53% of the female respondents have to work for more than nine hours a day. The relatively high percentage of male respondents may be due to ethics of the society plus female role in Pakistan society (that is, they also have to look after their families at home).

The cross tabulation of gender with their perception towards number of hours per day spend with their children is presented in Table 2 below. The 48% of the male were of the view that they spend less than two hours a day with their children. Out of the total 30 female teachers, 10% also give time to their children less than two hours a day. The lesser percentage describes that they need to spend more time not only for childcare but also for eldercare.

The cross tabulation of gender with their perception towards the time spend towards their education specially with reference to checking their performance in parent teacher meeting is presented in Table 3 below. The 50% of the male were of the opinion that they meet the teachers of their children once in a month. Out of the total 30 female teachers, 83% were of the view that they even meet their children teacher one or two times in a month. The relatively high percentage of female shows the level of care and affection they have for their children bright future.

Table 2. Hours per day spend with children and gender cross tabulation

Hours spend with children	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
less than 2 h	22	48	3	10
2-3 h	10	22	10	33
3-4 h	14	30	17	57
Total	46	100	30	100

Table 3. Teacher parent meeting time and gender cross tabulation

Teacher parent meeting time	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Twice a week	8	17	10	33
once in a month	15	33	15	50
once in six months	23	50	5	17
Total	46	100	30	100

Table 4. Means of managing stress due to long week and Gender Cross Tabulation

Means of managing stress	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	F.	%	F.	%
Meditation	14	31	10	33
Entertainment	32	69	20	67
Total	46	100	30	100

Table 5. Good work-life balance and successful organization and Gender Cross Tabulation

Good work-life balance and successful organization	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	F.	%	F.	%
Low	3	7	1	3
Moderate	8	17	6	20
High	35	76	23	77
Total	46	100	30	100

The cross tabulation of gender with their perception towards the means to manage stress due to long working hours and week is presented in Table 4 below. The 69% of the male were of the opinion that they try to reduce their stress level through entertainment as compared to 67% female teachers. The relatively high percentage may be due to easy accessibility of means of entertainment as compared to meditation. The cross tabulation of

gender with their perception towards level of good work-life balance and its effect on successful organization is presented in Table 5 below. More than 90% of both male and female perceived highly about the good work-life balance and its impact on the success of not only the organization but also their individual life. The relatively high percentage may be due to the perception that there should not be long working hours especially in the absence of facilities to curb

depression and frustration level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results gathered from this study and the previous ones under the scenario of Work-Life balance suggest that the employees are spending greater number of hours at work place and these extra working hours are not even paid in some cases.

Individuals are not asking for the reduction in working hours but they demand the organizations must introduce policies which are family friendly like child care, elder care etc. the organizations who are demanding employees with greater number of hours to be spent at work are more likely to show less productivity. Their work and family both are suffering from this.

The tendency to lessen the working hours so that time can be given to family too is found the same in males and females. In contrast to it, it is also seen that sometimes females are asking for working hour's reduction more than males. The reason is that females have to manage the household tasks as well as with the work so they are more delight to have reduced working hours.

The employee productivity is decreased with the increased pressure from work like spending extra hours at work, low paid and giving less time to family. Thus, the organizations and families, both are affected due to increased working hours.

Conclusion

After going through the relevant studies and data analysis it is perceived that working long hours negatively associated with many dimensions of work and home life. Following compressed workweeks with reference to work-life balance practice likely to be positively correlated with more satisfaction on job, performance of an employee and subsequently to the success of the organization in general.

Those who did not feel in control of their working lives were much more likely to report a sense of deprivation to meet their close relative and friends leads towards less social and ultimately become the victim of loneliness.

The conflict of work-life is rising because mainly employers are not ready to facilitate their employees for family care. So there is a dire need to devise work hour adjustment mechanism to reconcile increasing work force diversity and rising work life changes. Five days working week provide employees with sufficient leisure time to manage their activities for self, family, friends-community and work. Working five days a week when compared with six days working week in service sector organizations of Pakistan in general and educational sector of Pakistan in particular may help to create a strong positive impact over more job satisfaction, performance and balancing work and personal life and maintaining sound health.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Keeping in view the outcomes of data analysis and the derived conclusion some of the valuable guidelines are being suggested for the policy makers in the service sector organizations.

Provision of counseling services for employees, health programs, parenting or family support programs, exercise facilities, relocation facilities and choices, transportation facilities, to encourage the involvement of employees family members in work achievement reward functions, to give incentives and bonuses for extra work done, less strictness in work, arranging workshops and seminars, working opportunities for family.

Research data from other countries particularly from South Asian countries where working week has been reduced to reasonable extent and even instances are that a working week of thirty-five hours has been adopted can be used for effective implementation plan in the case of Pakistan.

There is a need to pay due attention to reconciling the balances of work life and personal life by understanding the association between long working hours and work-life balance. There scope of the research is very much there if organizations working in service sector especially the educational sector of Pakistan persist to follow long working week and hours.

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