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**INVESTIGATION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN ORGANISATIONS IN
KWAZULU-NATAL: COMPARISON WITH THE UNITED KINGDOM**

By

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree of

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At the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Westville Campus)**

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Date: November 2008**



**UNIVERSITY OF
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10 November 2008

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I have supervised the masters research of Ms Judith Nzimande (Reg. Number 203517844), which was undertaken in partial fulfillment of her M.Com Degree. I hereby grant permission to her to submit her dissertation for evaluation.

Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'S. Brijball Parumasur'.

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Abstract

It has become imperative for organisations to create family-friendly work-environments, where employees can effectively balance work and family life, in order to ensure employee satisfaction and increased productivity. It is important to establish how far South African organisations are in creating such environments and how much still need to be done as employee productivity ultimately impacts on the country's economic performance.

This research study was concerned with dissecting the concept of work-life balance by highlighting the various types of flexible work arrangements that exist and comparing the legislations that promote work-life balance in South Africa with those of UK.

The study was conducted in the province of Kwa-Zulu Natal in Durban. A questionnaire was administered to 84 adults occupying management positions in various corporate organisations in Durban.

The analysed findings revealed that South KwaZulu-Natal organisations are far behind UK in adopting and implementing work-life balance initiatives. South African organisations must introduce more flexible-working arrangements and the government must improve family-friendly legislation. South Africa still has a lot of work to do in introducing family-friendly legislation. Recommendations were also made with regards to what organisations as well as the government need to do in implementing work-life balance initiatives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGES
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
1. Chapter One	
Introduction and Overview of the Study	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2 Background to the study	2
1.3 Problem statement	3
1.4 Purpose of the Research	7
1.5 Research Questions	7
1.6 Elucidation of Concepts	7
1.7 Limitations of the Study	8
1.8 Conclusion	8
2. Chapter Two	9
Work-Life Balance	9
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 United Kingdom	9
2.3 Types of Flexible Work Arrangements	12
2.3.1 Flexitime	13
2.3.2 Casual Work	15
2.3.3 Part Time work	15
2.3.4 Temporary work	16
2.3.5 Project Work	17
2.3.6. Working home	17
2.3.7 Job Sharing	18
2.3.8 Compressed Work Week	19
2.3.9 Leaves and Sabbaticals	19
2.3.10 Tele-Working or Telecommuting	20
2.3.11 Annualised hours	21

2.4 The Need for Flexible Working Arrangements	21
2.4.1 Changing Labour Market Conditions	21
2.4.2 Increased Female participation in the work-force: Implications	21
2.4.3 Single working mothers	22
2.4.4 The need to retain skilled labour	22
2.4.5 Market Globalisation	23
2.4.6 Technology	23
2.5 Conclusion	23
3. Chapter Three	25
Legislation	25
3.1 Introduction	25
3.2 Existing family-friendly policies in South Africa	25
3.2.1 Annual leave	25
3.2.2 Sick leave	25
3.2.3 Maternity leave	26
3.2.4 Family Responsibility leave	26
3.3 Existing Family-Friendly Policy in UK	26
3.3.1 Parental leave	27
3.3.2 Maternity leave	28
3.4 Conclusion	30
4. Chapter Four	31
Research Methodology	31
4.1 Introduction	31
4.2 Research Design	31
4.3 Sampling Procedure	31
4.3.1 The Target Population	32
4.3.2 The Sample	32
4.3.3 The Sampling Technique	32
4.3.4 The Sample size	33

4.4 Research Instruments	33
4.5 Data Collection Plan	34
4.6 Data Analysis	34
4.7 Ethical Consideration	34
4.8 Conclusion	35
5. Chapter Five	
Presentation of Results	36
5.1 Introduction	36
5.2 Composition of Sample	36
5.3 Results of the Study	42
5.4 Conclusion	67
6. Chapter Six	
Discussion of Results	68
6.1 Introduction	68
6.2 Discussion of the findings	68
6.3 Conclusion	71
7. Chapter Seven	
Recommendations and Conclusion	72
7.1 Recommendations	72
7.2 Recommended Organisational Role	72
7.3 Recommended Legislative Interventions	73
7.4 Conclusion	77
Appendix 1	78
References	82

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

It is said that very few people in their death bed wish that they had spent more time at work finishing that extra project. Many people wish that they spent more time at home with their families, or that they had dedicated more to time to see their children grow, or attend their children's sports day. Too often parents are too bogged down with work that they miss out on their children's upbringing even though they live with them in the same house. Both men and women are now dual-income earners and this puts a tremendous amount of strain on juggling the work life balance. Both need to play an equal role in being caregivers to their immediate families. The first couple of years are critical in a child's development making it essential that either parent is able to spend sufficient time with their child whilst still satisfying work requirements. It is important that parents do not become absent parents as their children grow in autopilot.

There are many instances when people wish that they had spent more time with an ailing parent or relative, but could not do so due to inflexible work requirements. The normal 8-5 routine leaves one very little time to care for the aged and sickly. Two extra hours in the morning or evening can make a major difference in the quality of life for the sickly without affecting the work output of the caregiver. The satisfaction of being able to care for your relative would be beneficial in the work environment because employees would then be able to focus on their work knowing that they have been able to fulfil their moral obligations to those in need of their time and care.

People who are fortunate enough to work until retirement always discover very late in life that they have actually spent their lives at work than with their families. This is a regret that bothers their conscious until they die and yet it is something that all the stakeholders involved in the work life situation could have avoided.

1.2 Background to the study

The miraculous transformation of South Africa from the era of apartheid to the current new democracy has been accompanied by rapid change legislation that affects all aspects of life. The South African constitution is one of the best in the world even though enforcement is still a problem. This rapid change has propelled South Africa to be on par with a lot of first world countries when it comes to rights and quality of life for some. This rapid change has not been accompanied by sufficient capacity building to ensure that all South Africans can enjoy the new dispensation. Work life balance is already being applied in certain companies, even though the government intervention is still limited (Apgar, 2000). On the other hand, the majority of South Africans are too busy with more pressing issues such as getting employment, safety and security, and working to even start thinking about a better quality of life and some kind of work life balance.

The workforce of the new millennium is quite different from the one organisations are used to managing, that being the male dominated workforce of the past. The new workforce is older, more ethnically diverse, and has a larger proportion of working women, working mothers, dual-income families, employees with responsibilities for the care of aging parents, fathers with dependent care responsibilities, as well as those burdened with both childcare and eldercare responsibilities (sandwich employees)(Appelbaum, Bailey, Berg and Kalleberg, 2003). With the advent of the dual-income family, employees of both sexes are now coping with care giving and household responsibilities that were once managed by

a stay-at-home spouse. Such employees are not well served by traditional “one-size fits all” human resource policies which can impose rigid time and place.

Organisational cultures which focus on hours rather than output and dictate that work takes priority over family and life make it difficult for many of today’s employees to achieve a balance. The South African government and corporates have been preoccupied with a lot more pressing issues such as, unemployment, crime prevention, poverty alleviation, building capacity for government, HIV/AIDS, and social welfare. This has meant that both governments and employers have been slow to respond to these changing social and economic pressures that affect the South African employees and their families. It is said that South African managers are at risk with respect to heart diseases as a result of being over worked, lack of physical exercise and a poor quality of life.

In the absence of supportive government policies and organisational practices, families have struggled to accommodate job demands, often at the expense of their family role obligations and their own well-being. The result has been an increase in work-life conflict and stress. The fact that many organisations and governments tend to have a limited, somewhat biased, view of the topic of work-life balance (many still subscribe to what Kanter (1979) has termed “the myth of separate worlds”) has also contributed to increases in work-life conflict. The myth of separate world’s paradigm assumes that work and family are two quite separate domains, that work demands take priority over non-work demands, and that employees both can and must manage their family demands so that they do not interfere with their ability to fulfil their responsibilities at work (Skrypnek and Fast, 1996). The utility of this paradigm as a management principle has been eroded in recent years as the number of South Africans in traditional families, where males are breadwinners and women are homemakers, have declined while the number of families where both partners

have paid employment outside the home (dual-income) and single parent families has increased. The worlds of work and family are intricately connected both positively and negatively within these types of families. Employees within these family structures find it difficult, if not impossible, to separate work and family demands and to always give work their priority (Galinsky and Stein, 1990).

In addition to the above, organisations who ascribe to the myth of separate worlds often feel that helping employees balance competing work and non-work demands is not their responsibility. Instead, they argue that 'it was the employee's choice to have a family, and as such, balancing competing demands is their problem not ours'. Such organisations also argue that they are in the business of increasing shareholder value and serving customers and not helping employees to cope with stress. To compound the problem, a backlash against family-friendly initiatives which has occurred in some firms has made it harder for these organisations to address the issue. This backlash takes several forms but most commonly occurs when employees without dependent care responsibilities interpret family-friendly policies as favouritism and complain that employees without children are being unfairly or inequitably treated. Such employees' feel that their colleagues with childcare or eldercare responsibilities are getting away with less work and that the needs of childless employees are being ignored (Galinsky and Stein, 1990).

Work-personal life harmonisation issues are experienced in the context of different cultural expectations, levels of government, workplace, family and personal life support (or lack of it), and varying economic and social contexts and conditions. Many of the core issues are the result of globalisation and technology which have made the world more interdependent. Globally, the push for even more 'efficient' and less expensive ways of working has been ineffective in that it has led to increasingly long and/or intensive working hours and more

intensive lives. Issues relating to the harmonisation of paid work with personal and family lives are central and cannot be considered as purely personal, or as just family, employer or even national concerns. They are crucial issues of concern in the unfolding global economy.

While the pressure to create new and effective ways to balance work and life is being felt negatively world-wide, some countries have taken this phenomenon and turned it into an advantage that benefits them. The UK government has been promoting good practice in balancing work and home life to businesses through the DTI work-life balance campaign, launched by prime minister Tony Blair in March 2000. One element of the campaign is the Challenge Fund, which has paid out a total of £11.3 million in three years to support employers and unions taking action. Another was the establishment of Employers for Work-Life Balance, an alliance of 22 employers committed to promoting work-life balance. The government also provides support to help people balance their work and non-work lives in other ways. For example, it provides information to make choices easier, it promotes best practice and it provides and funds support services.

1.3 Problem Statement

The harmonisation of paid work with other parts of people's lives is a central issue for many societies and people today. As more and more people work longer or more intensely – be it because of perceived or absolute economic necessity, a response to societal or workplace expectations, or because they enjoy and derive fulfilment from paid work – key questions are emerging:

- What does such a lop-sided distribution between paid work and other parts of life do to people and societies in terms of equity or well-being?
- How does a lop-sided distribution between paid work and other parts of life impact on the sustainability of people, families and communities in terms of both changing demographics or a sense of dignity they are able to experience?

- What are current working patterns and expectations doing to time and energy available for family responsibilities, care and connectedness with others, leisure, and time to simply think, rest and refresh the spirit and,
- What opportunities are available for people who have or wish to dedicate time and energy to other non-paid parts of life?

These questions link in with many issues connected to the global economic context in which our lives are unfolding. Balancing paid work with the rest of life is both affected by and affects a number of issues such as falling birth rates; stress-related sickness and epidemics such as HIV/AIDS; changing needs and wishes of men and women and relationships between them; changing family structures and values as well as changing practices and value given to paid work. The current global economy is also an issue that brings affluence to some, poverty to many and tends to encourage long and intensive working practices. In order to optimise the experiences of people and societies in relation to work-personal life balance, it is essential to understand where countries are currently in their evolutions of understanding and support for these issues.

In South Africa the new 'post-apartheid' constitution emphasises equality. Compared to race, there is less focus on gender than race equality issues. There is no national debate on work-personal life balance but individual awareness of the issues is emerging as are organisational initiatives in some contexts to deal with this. A legacy of truth and reconciliation, in the context of race equality, highlights awareness about the importance of processes, rather than a quick fix, in enacting change. In the context of gender, current approaches focus on increasing numbers of women in paid work rather than changing society to fit changing work personal life balance needs. At the moment, work-personal life balance and gender issues are overshadowed by other concerns: AIDS, unemployment,

crime, poverty. There exists backlash among some employers and groups of people against equity considerations and affirmative action promoting Blacks and women in the workplace that can be constructed as threatening. People are beginning to make some connections between work-personal life harmonisation and many of these issues.

1.4 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research is to investigate work-life balance in KwaZulu-Natal organisations. The research focuses in the following areas;

1. The first objective is to look into the different types of flexible work arrangements and the progress made by different employers in KwaZulu-Natal and UK.
2. The second objective is to look into the effects of work life balance policies on job satisfaction.
3. The third objective is to highlight the legislation that promotes work-life balance in KwaZulu-Natal and the UK.

1.5 Research Questions

The investigation into the status of work-life balance in South African organisations will be guided by the following questions.

1. What are the different types of flexible work arrangements adopted by employers in KwaZulu-Natal?
2. What can South Africa learn from UK and its flexible work arrangements?
3. What are the effects of work-life balance policies on job satisfaction?
4. What is the legislation that promotes work-life balance in South Africa?

1.6 Elucidation of Concepts

- **Work-life balance**

This entails the establishment of a balance between personal life and work efficiency and effectiveness. There are three components that need to be in balance to achieve a healthy lifestyle: paid work, unpaid work, and personal time. Work-life balance allows one to spend sufficient time with one's family whilst still satisfying work requirements.

- **Flexible working arrangements**

Also referred to as Family Friendly Working Arrangements, these are initiatives that are aimed at achieving an effective balance by employees between the demands of the workplace and the home. These arrangements generally promote work-life balance.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study will take place in the city of Durban in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The sample will be limited due to the fact that it will be from one province and can therefore, not be generalised to the rest of the South African population. The study will also be limited in that the organisations from which the sample was selected are not representative of all industries that exist within KwaZulu-Natal in full. The sample will therefore, not be a true representation of all employees in SA.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has served the purpose of introducing the research study by setting out the background against which the study is to be conducted. The problem statement and the research questions which the study will attempt to answer were also included, as well as the purpose and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 will be composed of a discussion on work-life balance, focusing on the different types of flexible working arrangements or family friendly working arrangements. Chapter 3 highlights legislations that promote work-life balance in SA and the UK.

CHAPTER TWO

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

2.1 Introduction

There are numerous types of flexible working arrangements to cater for the different needs of employees. This chapter highlights these flexible working arrangements and gives insights into the legislations that promote work-life balance in South Africa and UK. The inclusion of UK serves the purpose of providing valuable lessons into the direction that South Africa should be heading towards, in adopting and implementing work-life balance. The chapter therefore, begins by briefly examining UK and the programmes that the Government introduces to promote work-life balance.

The different types of flexible work arrangements are then discussed along with a discussion on the need and benefits of these arrangements. This discussion is then followed by the legislation of South Africa which is the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997 and UK's legislation which consists of the Trade Union & Labour Relations Act 1992; Employment Act 2002; Employment relations Act 2004; Work and families Act 2006; Working Time Regulations 2003; Equal Opportunities Regulations 1999; Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999; Equality Bill 2003; Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 and Part-time workers (prevention of less favourable treatment) Regulations 2002.

2.2 United Kingdom

In UK, the term 'work-life balance' is well known and used widely. The government has been promoting good practice in balancing work and home life to businesses through the DTI work-life balance campaign, launched by prime minister Tony Blair in March 2000.

One element of the campaign is the Challenge Fund, which has paid out a total of £11.3 million in three years to support employers and unions taking action. Another was the establishment of Employers for Work-Life Balance, an alliance of 22 employers committed to promoting work-life balance. There is growing evidence that employers too are seeing the benefits in business terms of providing the kind of flexibility that employees want. The LRD/UNSION survey found high levels of flexible working arrangements, with 86% of respondents reporting that flexible working is available to at least some staff in their organisation, and 90% saying that job sharing was an option. Almost all (94%) offered part-time working. Reduced hours on return from maternity leave was considered by 73% of employers, and voluntary reduced hours by 65%. Homeworking was an option in 51% of workplaces, but often only for managers.

Since 1999 a whole raft of family friendly legislation has been brought in, giving parents new and improved rights at work. Many of the new rights come from European Directives and are linked to improving 'Work-Life Balance'. They provide branches with an ideal opportunity to win improved conditions for employees. Getting a local agreement on the legal minimum rights should be straightforward, but branches should be looking to get more than just the legal minimum. There is growing evidence that employers too are seeing the benefits in business terms of providing the kind of flexibility that employees want.

The Work-life balance (2000) Baseline study found that 91% of employers agreed that people work best when they can balance their work and other aspects of their lives. The majority of employers (59%) also accepted that the employer has a "responsibility to help people balance work and other aspects of their lives". More than half (58%) of employers thought that work-life balance practices improved staff motivation and commitment, and 52% thought that staff turnover and absenteeism were lower as a result. These findings are confirmed by research by Industrial Relations Services among leading companies which

found that more than two-thirds reported that employee commitment and motivation, as well as recruitment and retention, had improved as a result of the introduction of family-friendly practices. Absence rates were also found to have dropped.

Other 'Family Friendly' Rights

- **Child tax credits**

Working parents are also entitled to a number of other 'family friendly' rights. Paternity, adoption and flexible working rights were introduced in April 2003, as was Child Tax Credit. The Child Tax Credit, paid direct to the main carer, incorporates the child elements of Working Families' Tax Credit. It also incorporates elements from Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance. Nine out of ten families with children will be eligible for Child Tax Credit, which is paid in addition to Child Benefit. There is also a higher payment available for families with at least one child under one year old (the baby element), and for families with children with a disability. The parents of young or disabled children have the right to request flexible working arrangements. Employees who are parents of children aged under six, or of disabled children aged under 18, can apply to vary their working arrangements, and employers have a duty to consider such requests seriously (Internet 1, WWW.Worklife.UK:2007).

- **Paternity leave /Maternity support leave**

Partners of new mothers with responsibility for the upbringing of the child are entitled to take 2 weeks paternity leave (also known as maternity support leave), which must end not later than 8 weeks after the birth of the child. Paternity leave is paid the same as the lower rate of Statutory Maternity Pay - £112.75 a week or 90% of average earnings if that is lower. To be entitled to take paternity leave, employees must have 26 weeks service with their employer by the 15th week before the baby is due.

- **Adoption leave**

Adoption leave is similar to maternity leave. When a child is adopted, the employee who adopts them, or one member of a couple who adopt, is entitled to Ordinary Adoption Leave of 26 weeks followed by 26 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave. Like Statutory Maternity Pay, Adoption Pay is paid for 39 weeks and according to the same rate as SMP. That rate is £112.75 a week or 90% of average earnings if that is lower. The person taking adoption leave must have 26 weeks service. The partner of the person taking adoption leave is usually entitled to paternity leave. There is no provision yet for legal rights regarding foster care.

- **Parental leave**

Employees with 'parental responsibility' and who have one year's service have the right to take up to 13 weeks unpaid parental leave up to their child's fifth birthday. In the case of adoption this leave can be taken up to 5 years from the child's placement, or the age of 18 if that is sooner. Parents of children with disabilities can use their parental leave up to the age of 18.

- **Time off for dependants**

Employees have got the right to 'a reasonable period of time' off work to deal with an emergency involving a dependant. This can relate to illness, childcare arrangements, birth or death, and applies to partners, children, parents and people who live with you as part of your family.

2.3 Types of Flexible Work Arrangements

The different types of flexible work arrangements that are going to be discussed include: flexitime, casual work, part-time work, temporary work, project work, working at home, job

sharing and the compressed work week, leaves and sabbaticals, tele-working or telecommuting and annualised hours (Ronen, 1981).

2.3.1 Flexitime

Flexitime is a type of flexible work arrangement that allows employees to vary their work schedules, within certain ranges and dimensions, according to their differing needs (Ronen, 1981). Unlike other flexible work arrangements, flexitime focuses exclusively on the work schedule and does not alter the location of work or the total number of hours worked. Although there is no truly "standard" work schedule, the traditional workday is defined as a forty-hour week, from 4:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through to Friday and usually 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. in South Africa (Catalyst, 1997). Flexitime allows employees to break from the standard work schedule by starting the work day early and ending early, starting late and ending late, or taking breaks during the day and making up the time at the beginning or end of the day. Some flexitime options allow employees to work extra hours on one day to make up for shortened hours on another day (Golembiewski and Proehl, 1990).

Several key dimensions of flexitime have been identified, such as core hours (the daily hours during which employees must be at work), bandwidth (the earliest and latest starting and stopping times to which employees can adjust their schedules) and schedule flexibility, which is the ability to change starting and stopping times from day to day and week to week without prior approval from supervisors (Golembiewski and Proehl, 1990). Variations in flexitime policies are determined by the organisation and generally concern the extent of control that employees have over their schedules. Employees or employers may control how often schedules can be altered, variability in the length of the working day, and core time when all employees are required to be at work (Ronen, 1981).

An individual's work situation is also important to understanding flexitime. The suitability of flexitime may vary for individuals depending on factors such as their job or hierarchical level within the organisation. Some jobs, for instance those with set customer service hours or those in production may have limited compatibility with flexitime. Narayanan and Nath (1982) suggest that such constraints affect lower level employees more than they affect higher-level employees. Kossek (1989) found that non-exempt employees had less favourable opinions of flexitime than professional employees and surmised that the effect was likely due to the time constraints associated with being a non-exempt employee. However, flexitime may be less useful to higher-level employees, as they often have inherent flexibility in their jobs. Thus, flexitime would be more beneficial to lower level employees with more rigid schedules.

The utilisation of flexitime as an alternative work arrangement has disadvantages and advantages for both employers and employees. Some of these advantages and disadvantages are:

❖ **Advantages for employers**

- Saves costs that would be incurred through overtime and short-time work payments.
- Improves delivery time and responsiveness to customer demands.
- Better adaptability of the workforce to the workload.
- Increases employee motivation which leads to high productivity.

❖ **Advantages for employees**

- Greater control over their work schedules.
- Additional days off for further training, child-care and holidays.
- A better balance between work, family and private life.
- The payment of a consistent wage despite variations in working hours.

❖ **Disadvantages for employers**

- Loss of direct supervision over working hours.
- The increase in working hour flexibility might be accompanied by a greater complexity in scheduling work.
- Possible employee resistance during implementation of flexitime. Some employees may initially resist this form of work arrangement (Den, 2000).

❖ **Disadvantages for employees**

- A danger of overloaded time accounts, such that employees are unable to use much of their accumulated time off. This is counterproductive because employees become overworked, leading to higher absenteeism, increased illness and reduced motivation.
- Limits on control over work schedules. Unforeseeable fluctuations in workload may not allow employees to take accumulated time off as they wish. This can generate frustration among the workforce, who may then see time banking as a form of hidden unpaid overtime (Catalyst, 1997).

2.3.2 Casual work

Casual work usually has no job security, low pay, and on-demand schedules. Employers generally perceive casual workers as having little or no commitment to the organisation. Often both employers and employees are better served by using permanent part-time staff than by relying on casuals (Lewis, 2003).

2.3.3 Part Time Work

Part-time workers work on a continuing basis for lesser hours than fulltime workers. Fulltime is commonly understood to be 40 hours a week but is generally defined as more than 30 hours a week. Part-time workers may work under a number of different

arrangements. The more input part-time workers have into their rosters, the better rosters work in practice. Many workers other than women with young children would prefer to work part-time. Many jobs, or aspects of them, can become part-time alternatives. It is worth thinking laterally about the possibilities (Lewis, 2003).

The reasons for employing part-time employees are varied but the most common ones, as depicted by literature include the temporary replacement of permanent staff members, an increased demand for workers and when there is a short-term project to be completed.

Some of the advantages of part-time work are:

- Flexibility – part time workers make no long-term commitment, do not receive pension or fringe benefits and can start work at short notice.
- Strategic contribution – part-time workers bring new insights and fresh perspectives into the organisations they enter based on wide experience.
- Focus on achievement – these workers generally focus on achieving the objectives set out for them by the organisation as they do not involve themselves in internal politics. They have no career ambitions within organisation and no fear of dismissal.
- Cost efficiency – employing part time workers is less expensive as their daily rate plus expenses is usually less than those of permanent employees (Thompson, 2003).

2.3.4 Temporary Work

The term 'temp' traditionally refers to workers employed for short periods of time in occupations such as office work, the hospitality industry and some trades. In larger cities, businesses tend to use agencies to employ temps. In formal temping the agency acts as employer and aims to maintain a pool of good temps. Agencies attempt to create some loyalty between the workers and the organisations that hire them temporarily. They perform the balancing act of meeting the individual motivations of their worker-clients by getting

them the right amount of work, while also meeting the demands of their organisations and clients (www.worklife.uk:2007).

2.3.5 Project Work

Projects are defined as pieces of work with specified outcomes that occur within limited timeframes. There are three major ways in which ‘projects’ feature as an alternative work option.

- Firstly, within the ‘dejobbed’ workplace where people are fully employed by one employer to work on projects, often more than one at a time as opposed to ‘having a job.’
- Secondly, in the traditional workplace when workers are employed for a period of time to work on a particular project. In this scenario, the individual creates a working life by doing a combination of projects for different employers.
- Thirdly, employees who participate in project work often have flexibility in their use of time and space and can use this flexibility to ensure that out of work commitments as well as their work commitments are met (Williams, 2003).

❖ Disadvantages:

- Can be demanding as there no set work times.
- Employees often find themselves working longer hours than they would if their performance was measured in terms of time and presence in the office.
- Delays in completion of projects or poor management can leave workers unoccupied between projects. This is expensive for the employer and frustrating for the workers.

2.3.6 Working at home

Home-working refers to people who work away from the work site, using an increasing range of electronic tools for communication and to do their work. It can be done in a number of ways including setting people up with remote access and a company computer at

home with a duplicate office so they have two offices: a home office and access to an office-based hot desk. Working away from the office can be occasional for example, while caring for someone who is ill, to complete a particular project, or as a regular component of a job for all or part of the week or month (Ronen, 1981).

There are a number of considerations that must be made before this flexible work arrangement can be adopted and implemented. Generally, the arrangement needs to suit the job and the person, and the job needs to be clearly defined with agreed outputs and performance objectives. There must be agreement on whether employees will be available by phone and when, how they will schedule their work, expectations about attending meetings. Employees working away from the office must be included in communication systems. Employees must be self motivated, have time management skills and be able to organise appropriate work space and ensure that all equipment and resources are adequate and appropriate.

The main disadvantage of working at home is isolation and the cost of internet connection and phone calls. Other concerns are health & safety issues, security of information, availability of technology, performance measurement and trust, and meeting the costs of space, power and consumables (Parker and Allen, 2001).

2.3.7 Job sharing

Job sharing is voluntarily sharing the duties and responsibilities of one job amongst part-time employees and/or full time employees. The commonest arrangement is for two people to each do half of a full-time job. It requires high level organisational skills and excellent communication. There can be problems about who is ultimately accountable – this needs to be clearly spelt out (Greef and Nel, 2003).

2.3.8 Compressed Work Week

Under this arrangement, employees typically work a standard work week (usually a 40-hour week) but may only work 3 or 4 days of the week. This requires them to put in more working hours per day in fewer working days (Rau, 2003). The most common is four-day week, referred to as the 4/10 schedule, whereby the employee works four 10-hour days and has a three day weekend. An alternative is for the employee to work 9 hours for 8 workdays and 8 hours for one workday during a biweekly pay period and receive one day off biweekly (Holland, 2001). With this arrangement, employee's times of arrival and departure from work are fixed, and so are the days on which they are required to complete the basic work requirement (Holland, 2001). In South Africa, the compressed work week is regulated in Section 11 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997 (BCEA). It states the following: "An agreement in writing may require or permit an employee to work up to twelve hours in a day, inclusive of the meal intervals required in terms of Section 14, without receiving overtime pay" (BCEA 1997, Section 11 (1)). The Act further states that: "An agreement in terms of subsection (1) may not require or permit an employee to work

- a) more than 45 ordinary hours of work in any week;
- b) more than ten hours of overtime in any week; or
- c) on more than five days in any week" (BCEA 1997, Section 11 (2))

Provided that the overtime complies with the conditions in the BCEA and employees are working under compressed schedules, overtime pay will continue to be paid for work over and above the compressed scheduled.

2.3.9 Leaves and Sabbaticals

Leaves and sabbaticals are authorized periods of time away from work without loss of employment rights (Williams, 2003). Sabbaticals are usually paid (or partially funded) and occur on a regular basis in addition to vacation time. In some cases, self-funded leaves are

also possible where a portion of the employee's salary is withheld and returned to the employee 'as pay' during the time away from work (Williams, 2003).

Governments play a significant role in supporting families to find a better balance between maintaining living standards and careers, and care for children and family members. The BCEA designates an entire chapter (Chapter 3) that regulates leave taking in South Africa. However, the chapter applies to only those employees who work for more than 24 hours a month for an employer (BCEA, Section 19(1)). The Act regulates aspects such as sick leave, maternity leave and family responsibility leave.

Flexible working arrangements expands to include extensions to statutory maternity leave, career breaks, paternity or parental leave, leave for caring for elderly relatives, emergency leave, nurseries or other help with child care (Dex and Smith, 2001). Legislation in the UK provides exceptional family friendly policies that facilitate the balance between home and work.

2.3.10 Tele-working or Telecommuting

In this instance an employee uses a computer or telephone to work at a location other than the office. Like home-working they are only paid for the hours that they have worked for. Tele-working is presently the fastest growing trend in scheduling (Robbins, 1998). The use of technology has given employees the chance to work from different locations, but this comes with some challenges. These employees could be left out of decisions pertaining to promotions (Robbins, 1998). Tele-working can be considered in the same manner as home-working.

2.3.11 Annualised hours

The employee works a pre-determined number of hours per year. The contract is signed with stipulated working hours per year instead of number of days per year.

2.4. The Need for Flexible Working Arrangements

2.4.1 Changing Labour Market Conditions

Globally, the share of permanent, full-time workers has been declining with an increase in casual employment. South Africa has followed suit, where labour statistics confirm that while permanent workers still constitute the largest share employment, there is a rising share of temporary workers. According to Thompson (2003), a convergence between full-time and part-time occupation is taking place and this confirms that firms are substituting full-time staff for part-time staff within particular occupations. The nature of employment is changing whereby employers are looking for a different type of worker other than the traditional full-time employee. On the other hand, the employee is looking for different working arrangements in order to maintain a work-life balance.

2.4.2 Increased Female participation in the workforce: Implications

There has been a progressive increase of females entering the workforce. A research paper entitled "Women in the Workplace", done by the research unit of the Independent Counselling and Advisory Services (ICAS), drew on studies throughout the world to lay bare the inequalities that working women face. The research paper notes that as a consequence of not only the biological imperative of childbearing, but also the influence of tradition and of male and female socialisation, women still assume the brunt of the childcare and domestic work that is required to keep a family going (Bennett, 2003). South African women are not exempt. Stress over work-life issues appears to be on the increase among South African women as they take on more senior positions whilst still carrying the bulk of the responsibility at home. The researchers suggest that the first challenge for

employers would be to craft meaningful work-life policies to give women more control over their work (Bennett, 2003).

2.4.3 Single working mothers

The family is in a state of change in South Africa with women bearing the financial burden of caring for children far more than was previously the case (Mills, 2003). A 1990 study on the breakdown of African family life in Cape Town, by Burman (cited in Mills, 2003) indicates that over 50% of African marriages end in divorce and at least two thirds of those cases involved children. Burman's research suggested that a significant proportion of children spend some part of their lives in female-headed households and an increasing number of children are cared for by single mothers. The 1995 October Household Survey confirmed these findings. According to this survey, 42% of all children from all population groups in South Africa live with their mothers only. In order for poor single mothers to meet the needs of their children, they must work, and delegate the responsibility of childcare to others (Mills, 2003).

2.4.4 The need to retain skilled labour

According to the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), South Africa is currently experiencing a shortage of more versatile and experienced managers and professionals across all sectors of the economy (Skills Shortages in the SA Labour market - HRSC study, 1999). Of the 135 organisations studied, about a third (34%) reported shortages. In addition to our shortage of skilled labour, the number of skilled professionals leaving South Africa went up by 62% in 2003, according to a report by Statistics South Africa (Statistics South Africa cited in Parker, 2004). It is clearly obvious then, that South African employers need to make a conscious effort to retain its skilled workers since retaining skilled workers is the key to the stability and knowledge of the organisation (Work & Parents: Competitiveness

and Choice Green Paper, 2002). The adoption of flexible working conditions may just be a vital tool in the battle to retain talented existing employees (Paton, 2003).

2.4.5 Market Globalisation

Market globalisation means that companies of all sizes have to work and interact on an international scale. Instant access to enterprise applications and real-time information, regardless of the worker's physical location - at head office, in branch offices, at home or on the move – is now widely demanded (Thompson, 2003).

South Africa, being a developing country with provinces where traffic and business are increasing by the day, needs a new revolution in the work place. South African employers have to realise the potential of telecommuting to increase employee productivity, specifically time efficiency (Ehlers, 2001). With increased globalisation, it is imperative that South African organisations learn to adapt to the newest flexible working arrangements of the world (Ehlers, 2001).

2.4.6 Technology

South Africa's engagement on the Internet is growing as rapidly as anywhere in the world. South Africa was 14th in the worldwide Internet connectivity with some 88 000 host names and possibly 420 000 users in 1995 (Hodge and Miller, 1997). This places South Africa in a position that enables it to support telecommuting.

2.3 Conclusion

This Chapter was composed of a discussion on work-life balance, focusing on the different types of flexible working arrangements or family friendly working arrangements. Chapter 2 was composed of a discussion on work-life balance, focusing on the different types of flexible working arrangements or family friendly working arrangements. This chapter

highlighted these flexible working arrangements and gives insights into the legislations that promote work-life balance in South Africa and UK. The inclusion of UK serves the purpose of providing valuable lessons into the direction that South Africa should be heading towards, in adopting and implementing work-life balance. The chapter therefore begins, by briefly examining UK and the programmes that the Government introduces to promote work-life balance.

The different types of flexible work arrangements are then discussed along with a discussion on the need and benefits of these arrangements. This discussion is then followed by the legislation of South Africa which is the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997 and UK's legislation which consists of the Trade Union & Labour Relations Act 1992; Employment Act 2002; Employment relations Act 2004; Work and families Act 2006; Working Time Regulations 2003; Equal Opportunities Regulations 1999; Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999; Equality Bill 2003; Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999 and Part-time workers (prevention of less favourable treatment) Regulations 2002. Chapter 3 highlights legislations that promote work-life balance in SA and the UK.

CHAPTER THREE

LEGISLATION

3.1 Introduction

The following discussion focuses on legislation that is aimed at promoting work-life balance in South Africa. In South Africa there is only one legislation which promotes family-friendly policies, which is the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997. UK is one of the best implementers of family-friendly policies. This is highlighted by the fact that this country has more legislation that promotes work-life balance as compared to South Africa. Therefore, it is crucial for South Africa to learn and introduce more family-friendly policies if it wishes to be at the same standard as UK with regards to implementing work-life balance.

3.2 Existing family-friendly policies in South Africa

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997 is responsible for regulating all aspects of leave. The Act provides for annual leave, sick leave, maternity leave and family responsibility leave.

3.2.1 Annual leave

In South Africa, an employee is entitled to an amount of paid sick leave equal to the number of days the employee would normally work during a period of six weeks (BCEA,S20 (2)) .

3.2.2 Sick Leave

During every sick leave cycle, an employee is entitled to an amount of paid sick leave equal to the number of days the employee would normally work during a period of six weeks. (BCEA, S20 (2)). A sick leave cycle means a period of 36 months of employment with the

same employer immediately following an employee's commencement of employment; or the completion of that employee's prior sick leave cycle (BCEA, S20 (2)). Despite Section (2), during the first six months of employment, an employee is entitled to one day's paid sick leave for every 26 days of work (Landis, 2003).

3.2.3 Maternity leave

An employee is entitled to at least four consecutive months' maternity leave (BCEA, S25 (1)). The payment of maternity benefits is subject to the provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1996 (Act No.30 of 1996). According to the UIA, 1996, a contributor shall not be entitled to the benefits in terms of subsection (1) unless she was in employment as a contributor, or was otherwise in employment, for at least thirteen weeks during the fifty-two weeks immediately preceding the expected date of her confinement or, where application for benefits is made on or after the date of birth (UIA, 1996, Act No.30 of 1996, S37 (5)).

3.2.4 Family Responsibility Leave

In South Africa, Section 27 of the BCEA permits family responsibility leave for male and female employees employed for longer than four months and who work over four days a week. An employer must grant an employee, during each annual leave cycle at the request of the employee, three days paid leave (BCEA, S27 (2)). An employee's unused entitlement to family responsibility leave lapses at the end of the annual leave cycle in which it accrues (BCEA, S27 (6)).

3.3 Existing Family-Friendly Policies in UK

The Employment Act 2002; Trade Union and Labour Relations Act; Work and Families and Working Time Regulations provides for employers and employees to negotiate about times of work, including the number of hours worked each day, start and finish time breaks

and how to arrange any shift work (www.dti.gov.uk2007). In UK, the Acts that support people in balancing their paid work and family responsibilities are:

- a) Trade Union & Labour Relations Act 1992
- b) Employment Act 2002; Employment relations Act 2004
- c) Work and families Act 2006
- d) Working Time Regulations 2003
- e) Equal Opportunities Regulations 1999
- f) Transnational Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations 1999
- g) Equality Bill 2003
- h) Maternity and Parental Leave Regulations 1999
- i) Part-time workers (prevention of less favourable treatment) regulations 2002.

3.3.1 Parental leave

Parental leave is the right to take time off to look after a child or make arrangements for the child's welfare. The right to parental leave entitles all eligible employees who have completed one year's qualifying service to take a period of unpaid leave to care for each child born or adopted on or after 15 December 1994 (on or after 15 December 1981 in the case of a disabled child). The right applies to mothers and fathers and to a person who has obtained formal parental responsibility for a child under the Children Act. Parents are able to start taking parental leave as soon as the child is born or placed for adoption, or as soon as they have completed the required one year's qualifying service with their employer, whichever is later. Changes to the right were introduced on 10 January 2002, which benefit parents of disabled children and parents of children aged under 5 on 15 December 1999 (the date the right was first introduced) (www.dti.gov.uk).

3.3.2 Maternity Leave

If you are a mother who is an employee, you have the statutory right to a minimum amount of maternity leave. Your employer may also offer their own maternity leave scheme. The basics of maternity leave:

Statutory maternity leave is for 52 weeks (if the week your baby is expected to be born starts before 1 April 2007, it is for 26 weeks, with an extra 26 weeks if you meet certain conditions). You may be entitled to receive Statutory Maternity Pay for up to 39 weeks of the leave. To qualify for maternity leave you must be an 'employee'.

- **Company schemes**

Your employer may have their own scheme which could be more generous than the statutory scheme. Check your contract of employment or staff handbook for details or ask your employer. Your employer can not offer you less than the statutory scheme.

- **If your baby is due on or after 1 April 2007**

As an 'employee' you have the right to 26 weeks of 'Ordinary Maternity Leave' and 26 weeks 'Additional Maternity Leave' - making one year in total. Provided you meet certain notification requirements, you can take this no matter how long you have been with your employer, how many hours you work or how much you are paid.

- **If your baby is due before 1 April 2007**

As an 'employee' you have the right to 26 weeks of 'Ordinary Maternity Leave'. Provided you meet certain notification requirements, you can take this no matter how long you have been with your employer, how many hours you work or how much you are paid. If you have been with the same employer for 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the beginning of the week when your baby is due, you also have the right to an extra 26 weeks of 'Additional Maternity Leave' so you can take up to one year in total.

- **Maternity pay**

If you are working and have a baby, whether you work full or part time, you have the right to receive Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) as long as you meet certain conditions (www.dti.gov.uk/2007).

The maternity pay benefits you might get will vary depending on your circumstances. Usually you will claim either:

- a) Statutory or contractual maternity pay from your employer
- b) Maternity Allowance through Jobcentre Plus.

There are also a number of other benefits which you may be entitled to such as the Contractual (company) maternity pay.

- **Contractual (company) maternity pay**

Your employer might have their own maternity pay scheme. Check your contract of employment or staff handbook, or ask your employer's HR department. Some company schemes require you to pay back some money if you do not come back to work. However, you must be paid at least as much as SMP (if you qualify), which does not have to be repaid.

- **Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)**

If your baby is due on or after 1 April 2007 you can get SMP for up to 39 weeks, as long as you meet the conditions. If your baby was due earlier than this then SMP is for up to 26 weeks. If you have the right to receive SMP, you will get it even if you decide to leave your job before you start receiving SMP. You do not have to repay it if you decide not to go back to work or leave your job whilst getting SMP. If you are employed you can choose when you want your SMP to start; this will normally coincide with your Ordinary Maternity Leave. Unless your baby is born sooner, the earliest SMP can start is 11 weeks before the week your baby is due (www.dti.gov.uk/2007).

How much SMP will you get?

If you get SMP, your employer will pay you 90 per cent of your average weekly earnings for the first six weeks, then up to £112.75 for the remaining 33 weeks (or 20 weeks if your expected week of childbirth begins earlier than 1 April 2007). You pay tax and National Insurance in the same way as on your regular wages. Your employer reclaims the majority of SMP from their National Insurance contributions and other payments. To qualify for SMP you must pay tax and national insurance as an employee (www.dti.gov.uk/2007).

3.4 Conclusion

Chapter 3 highlighted legislations that promote work-life balance in SA and the UK. In South Africa there is only one legislation which promotes family-friendly policies, which is the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997. UK is one of the best implementers of family-friendly policies. This is highlighted by the fact that UK has more legislation that promotes work-life balance as compared to South Africa. Therefore, it is crucial for South Africa to learn and introduce more family-friendly policies if it wishes to be at the same standard as UK with regards to implementing work-life balance. Chapter 4 outlined the research methodology that was used to gather and analyse the information that was collected during the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The information gathered and used in this research study required planning and administration of the research process. The research design, sampling procedure, research instruments, and data collection plan as well as data analysis formed important aspects of the research methodology followed. It is these diverse facets of the research that form the basis of this chapter.

4.2 Research Design

According to Neumann (1997), research design is a plan that will guide the collection and analysis of research data, making it more systematic than everyday observations. Coldwell and Herbst (2004) further strengthened the argument for the relevance of research design, when they stated that a design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project work together to try to address the central research questions. The research design is made up of a number of features. These include the research approach to be adopted for the purpose of the study. This can be qualitative or quantitative. This particular research study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research allows for an in depth analysis of the problems, opportunities and situations within an environment. This study focused on revealing in-depth knowledge and understanding of issues concerning work-life balance rather than the sole use of statistics.

4.3 Sampling Procedure

Sekaran (2000) defined sampling as the process of selecting a sufficient number of elements from the population so that by studying the sample and understanding the properties or the characteristics of the subjects, it would be possible to generalise the

properties or characteristics to the population elements. The purpose behind the use of sampling lies in the fact that it is not possible to study the entire targeted population. It is more practical and possible to study a small portion of this population. It is important, however, that the sample that is selected can be generalised to the rest of the population. Certain components of sampling have to be determined and understood in order to ensure that the sample sufficiently represents the target population (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). These include:

4.3.1 The Target Population

The target population is the entire targeted group of people, objects of interest or events that is being investigated by the researcher. A sample is taken from the population for measurement. The target population for this research study was 84 adults occupying management positions in various corporate organisations in the city of Durban in the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

4.3.2 The Sample

The rationale behind using a sample is to allow a possible exploration of the unit in which we are interested in an efficient and effective as well as reliable and valid way as possible (Searle, 2000). According to Sekaran (2000), a sample is a subset of the population. When dealing with people, a sample can be defined as a set of respondents selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey. The sample for this survey was made up of 84 individuals employed at management level. These are people who might or might not have immediate families.

4.3.3 The Sampling Technique

There are two kinds of sampling techniques, namely, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The difference between the two lies in the way that the subjects that make up the sample are chosen. Probability sampling is based on the principle that every

unit in the population has a known but not necessarily an equal chance, of being selected. Non-probability samples, on the other hand, are selected using the expertise or judgement of the researcher (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). The purposive non-probability sampling technique was used in selecting the subjects for this study. The purposive sampling technique is relevant in cases when it is necessary to obtain information from a specific target group (Sekaran 2000).

4.3.4 The Sample Size

According to Coldwell and Herbst (2004), the size of the sample is determined by various factors and constraints and is critically important in ensuring representativeness. According to Crothers, Brown, Naidoo, Waters, Devey, Valodia, Elery and Jones (2003), the sample size should be appropriate for the purpose of the study and the theory. The main objective of a sample size is that it should enable the researcher to get a representative comparison to the whole population. This size of the sample that was selected for this specific study was 84 individuals occupying management positions.

4.4 Research Instruments

This research used a questionnaire as its research instrument (Appendix 1). A questionnaire is a pre-formulated, written set of questions to which respondents record their answers (Sekaran, 2000). The advantages of using a questionnaire are that the identity of the respondent does not have to be known as it can be completed anonymously. It is inexpensive to administer and it can be administered to many people. In designing a questionnaire there are a number of considerations that need to be made, one of which is the type of questions to include. Questionnaires generally contain open-ended and closed questions. This research was composed of closed questions. The advantages associated with closed-ended questions are that they are relatively easy to analyse and at the same time, are able to extract standardised responses (Crothers et al., 2003).

4.5 Data Collection Plan

Coldwell and Herbst (2004) point out that research studies generally require certain types of information which can be obtained through certain sources. Information that has not been interpreted by a researcher and is contained in a primary source is referred to as primary data. Secondary data can be regarded as second hand information, which has been interpreted and processed from primary sources (Crothers et al., 2004). Information such as perceptions and attitudes of subjects are best obtained by talking to them and gathering information from the actual sites of occurrence of events. Information obtained in this manner is primary in nature. This research study was based on the collection of data.

4.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis serves the purpose of generating meaning from the primary data collected (Coldwell and Herbst, 2004). Data analysis techniques vary and are determined by the research study being conducted. For the purposes of this research study, all statistical analyses were carried out using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The descriptive statistics method was used in analysing data for this study. Descriptive statistics are relevant in research in that they specify and summarise information and large amounts of data with the purpose of providing an overall coherent and sound picture (Strywig and Stead, 2001). Bar graphs and frequency tables are used to present the data. This research study was based on the collection of primary data.

4.7 Ethical consideration

Employees were informed of the purpose of the study. It was emphasized that the study was an attempt to establish knowledge about work-life balance. Participation was voluntary and consent was obtained from the respondents. Questionnaires were assigned unique codes and the responses of each individual questionnaire were kept in strict confidence.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research methodology that was used to gather and analyse the information that was collected during the research. A questionnaire is a pre-formulated, written set of questions to which respondents record their answers (Sekaran, 2000). The advantages of using a questionnaire are that the identity of the respondent does not have to be known as it can be completed anonymously. Chapter 5 presents the findings of this research.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

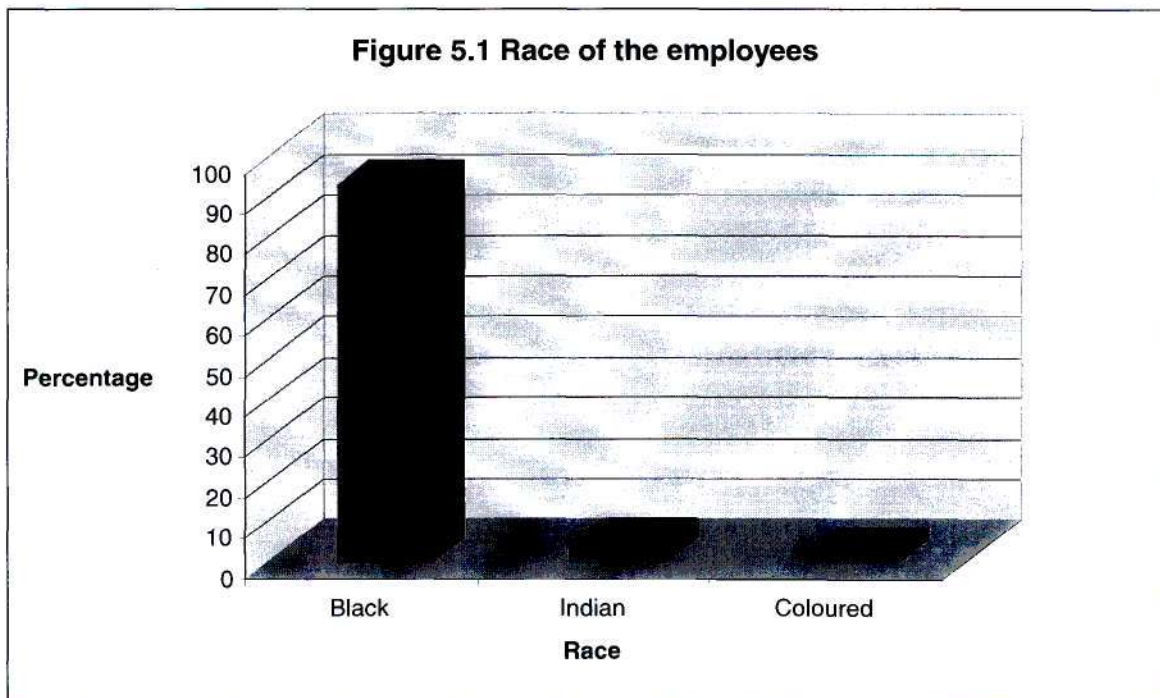
This chapter serves the purpose of presenting the analysed results from the research that was conducted. A questionnaire was the data collection method used that contained both demographic as well as critical questions. In order to ensure that the respondents were from the targeted population, these demographic questions were necessary: race, gender, management level and marital status. Critical questions were in the form of closed ended questions with the aim of ensuring that the information extracted from the respondents was relevant to the study.

The presentation of the result takes the form of graphs and frequency tables. According to Struwig and Stead (2001), graphs are considered to be the best presenters of categorical data. The form of analysis used was Descriptive statistics. The sample consisted of 84 employees from different organisations regarding their perspectives about work-life balance.

5.2 Composition of Sample

A total of 84 employees were randomly selected and interviewed for the study. Among the respondents, the majority (92.9%) of them were Black and 20.2% were female. All the employees who were selected for the study were working in the lower level, middle level and top level management. A questionnaire is a pre-formulated, written set of questions to which respondents record their answers (Sekaran, 2000). The advantages of using a questionnaire are that the identity of the respondent does not have to be known as it can be completed anonymously.

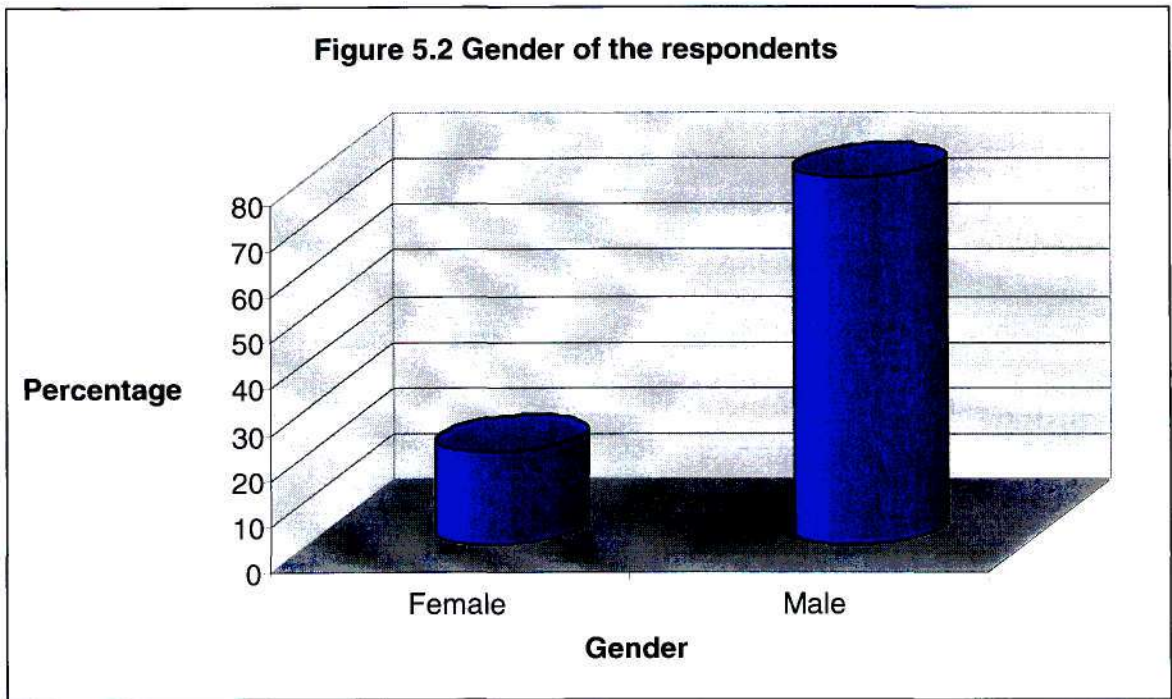
Race	Frequency	Percentage
Black	78	92.9
Indian	4	4.8
Coloured	2	2.4
Total	84	100.0



The majority (92.9%) of the respondents are Black, Asian are 4.8% and Coloureds 2.4%.

Table 5.2: Gender distribution of the employee of the company

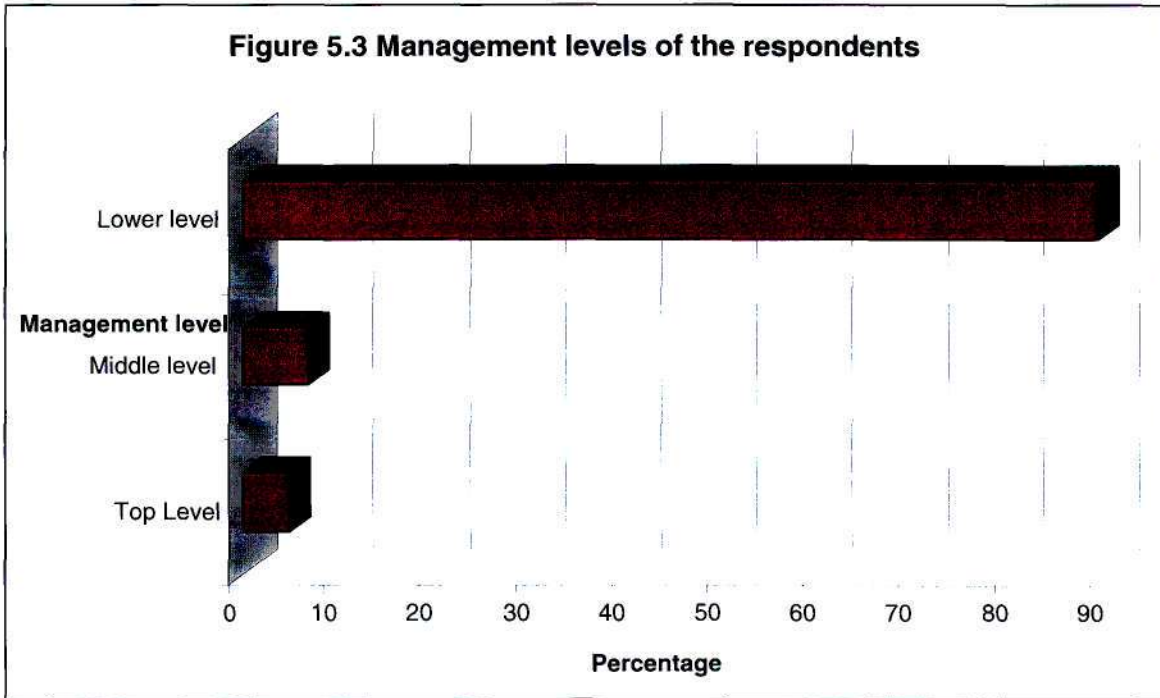
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	67	79.8
Female	17	20.2
Total	84	100.0



The majority (79.8%) of the respondents are males and the remaining 20.2% are females employees.

Table 5.3 Management level of the respondents

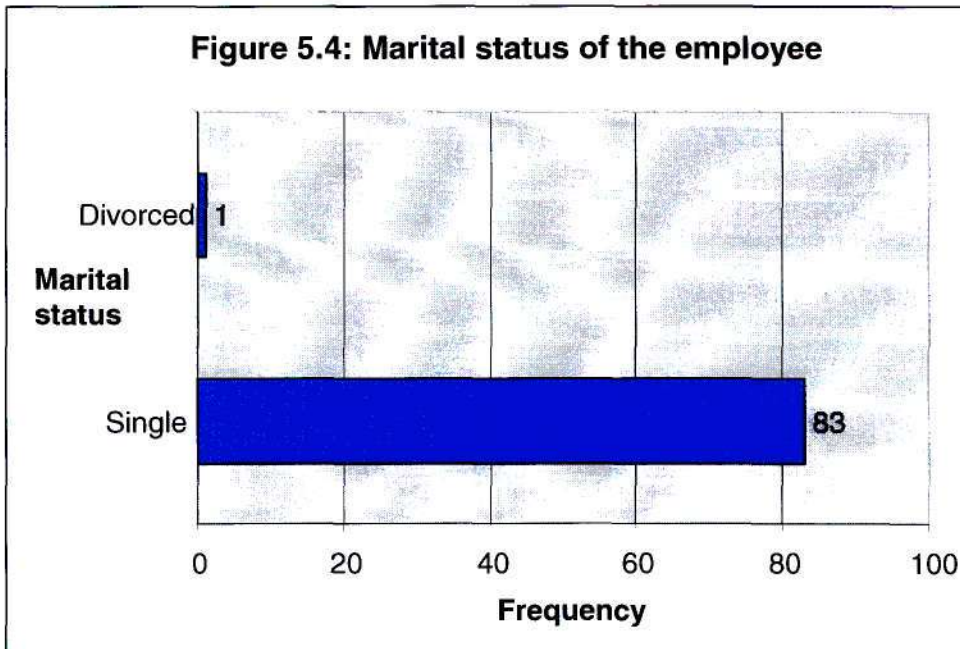
Management level	Frequency	Percentage
Top level	4	4.8
Middle level	5	6.8
Lower level	75	89.3
Total	84	100.0



The majority (89.3%) of the respondents are from lower management, middle level (6.8%) and top level (4.8%).

Table 5.4: Marital status of the employees of the company

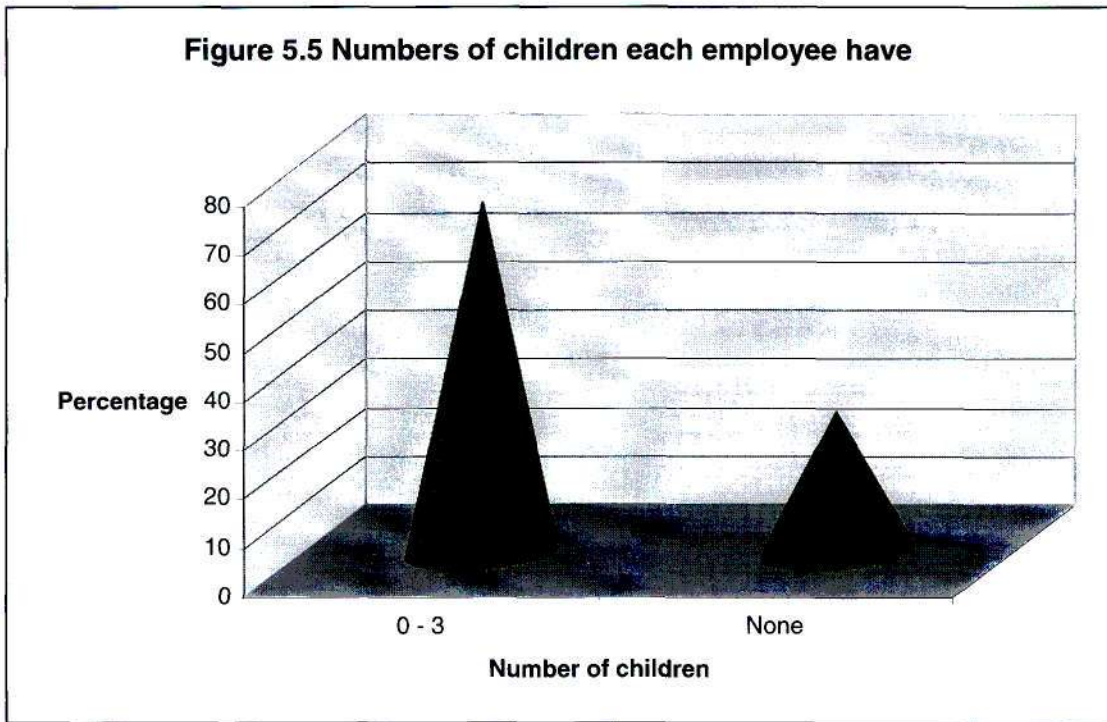
Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	83	98.8
Divorced	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0



The majority of the respondents are single and one respondent is divorced. Most of the respondents are from lower level management.

Table 5.5: Number of children each employee has in the company

No of children	Frequency	Percentage
0 - 3	60	71.4
None	24	28.6
Total	84	100.0

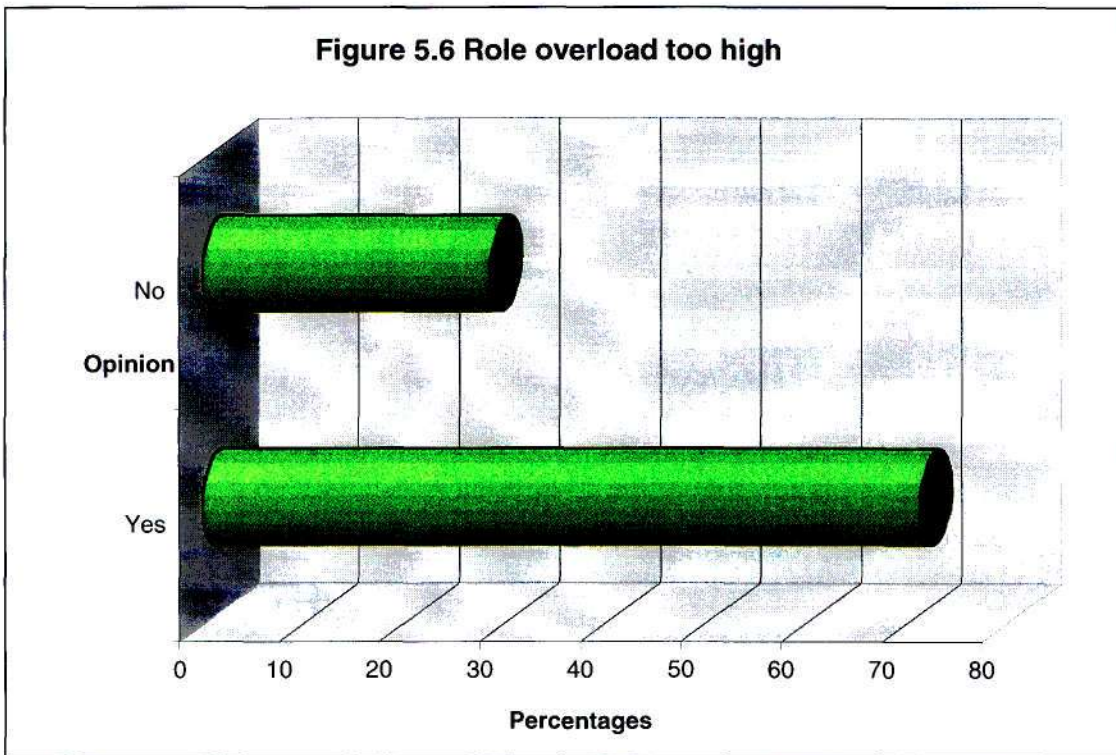


Over two-thirds (71.4%) of the employee had between 0 – 3 children.

5.3 Results of the Study

Table 5.6: Role overload too high among the employees of the company

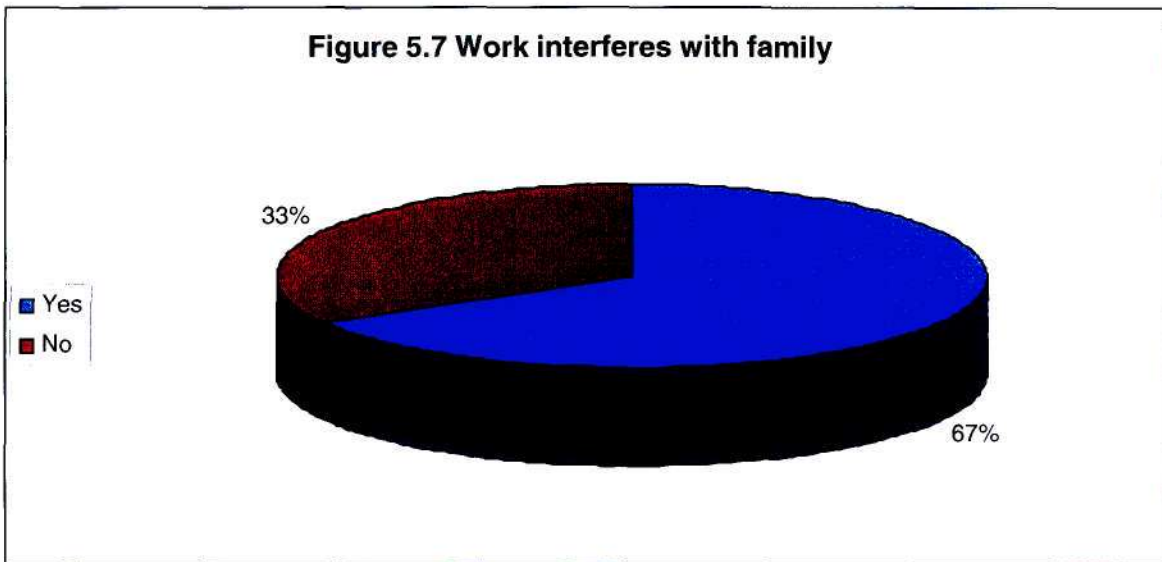
Role overload	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	60	71.4
No	24	28.6
Total	84	100.0



Over two-thirds (71.4%) of the employees agreed that their role in the company is overloaded.

Table 5.7: Work interferes with family among the employees

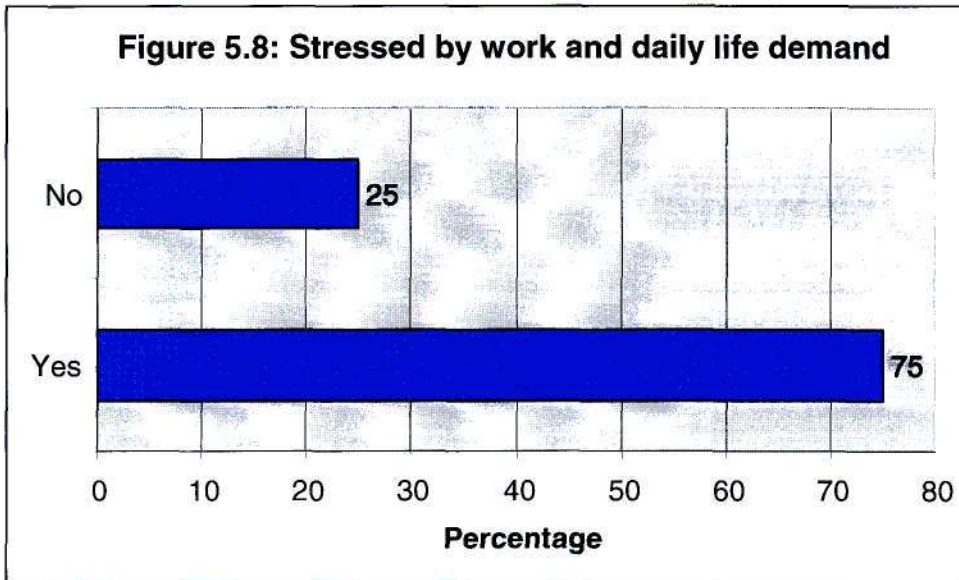
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	56	67
No	28	33
Total	84	100.0



The results reflect that two-thirds (67%) of the employees said their work interfered with their family.

Table 5.8: Stressed by work and daily life demand among the respondents of the company

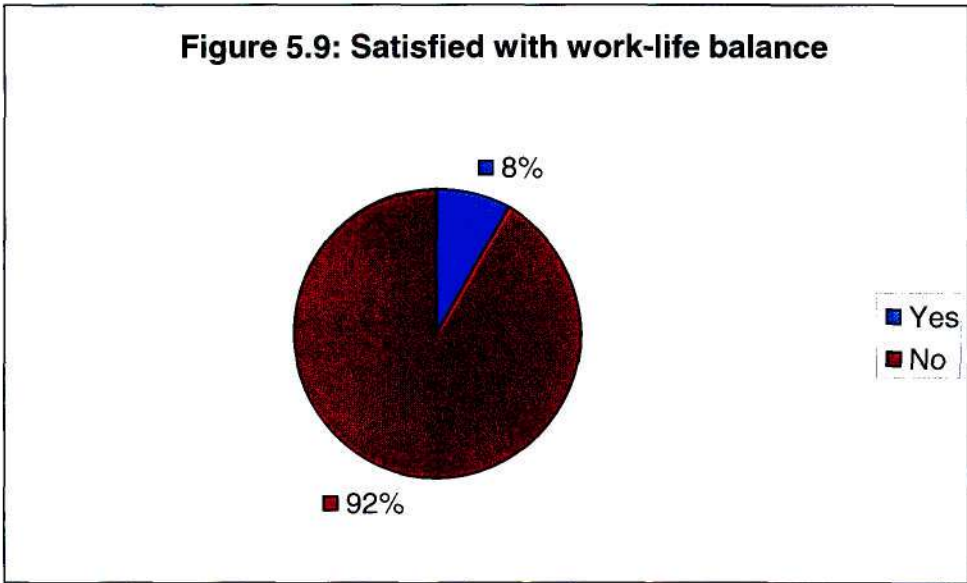
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	63	75.0
No	21	25.0
Total	84	100.0



Among the respondent, three-quarters of the employees were stressed by their work and daily life demand.

Table 5.9: Satisfied with work-life balance among the respondents in the company

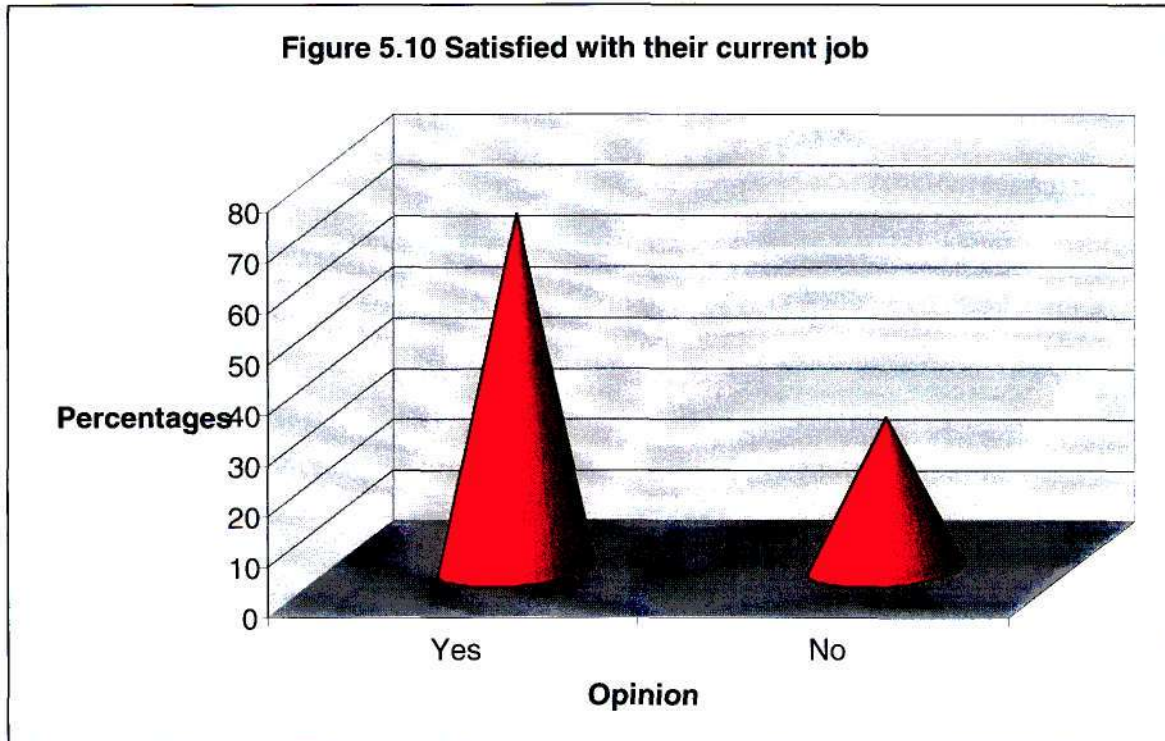
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	8.3
No	77	92.0
Total	84	100.0



Most (92%) of the employees of the company were not satisfied with work-life balance in the company.

Table 5.10: Employees were satisfied with their current job

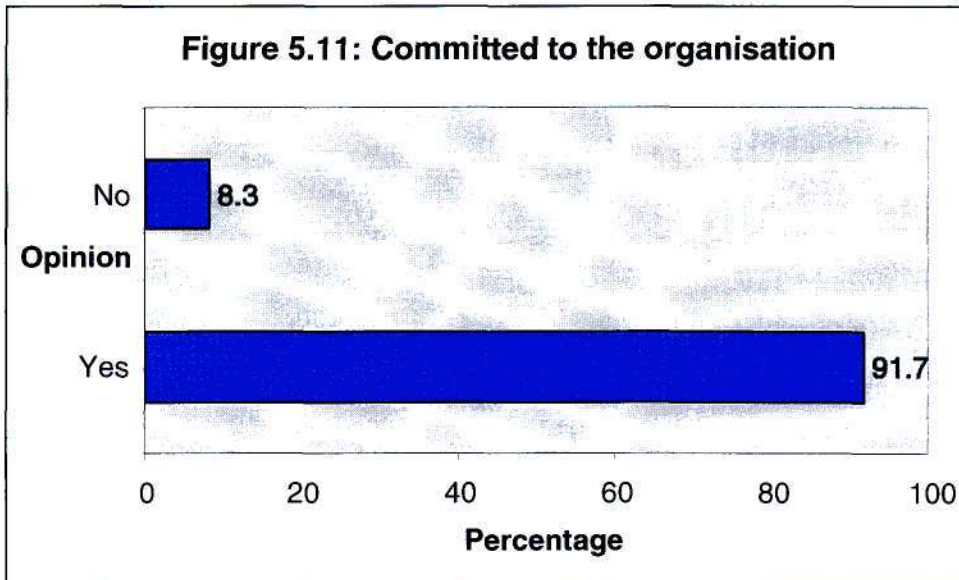
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	59	70.2
No	25	29.8
Total	84	100.0



Over a quarter (29.8%) of the respondents were not satisfied with their current job situation yet the majority 70.2% of the respondents were satisfied.

Table 5.11: Committed to the organisation

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	77	91.7
No	7	8.3
Total	84	100.0

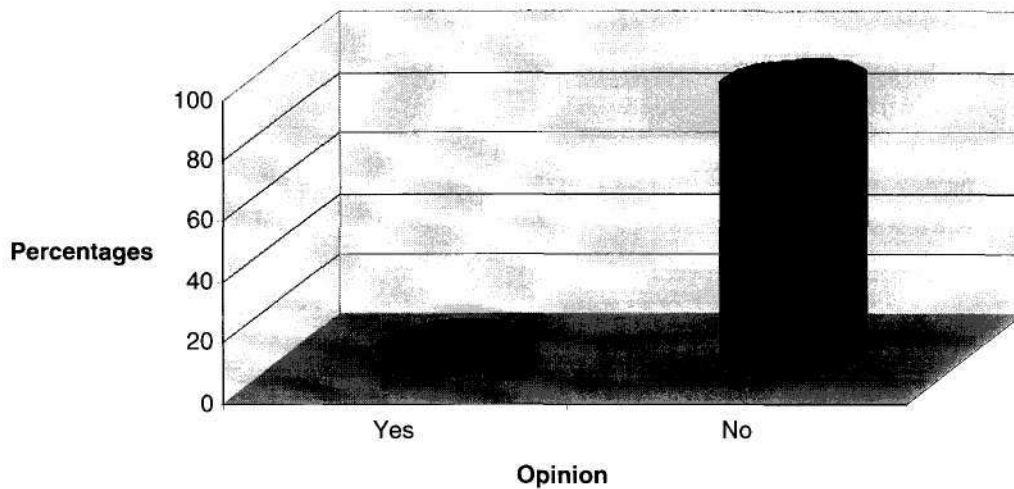


It was found that majority (91.7%) were committed to the organisation even though some of them were not satisfied.

Table 5.12: Intention to leave the organisation within the next six months

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	6	7.1
No	78	92.9
Total	84	100.0

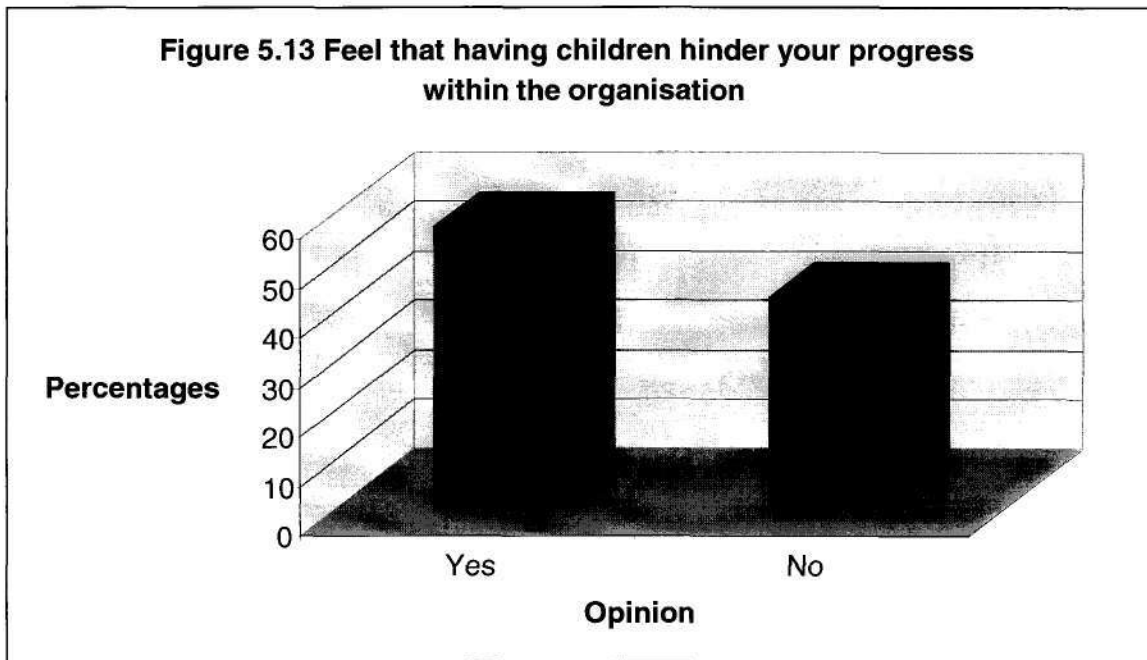
Figure 5.12 Intention to leave the organisation within the next six months



Only six (6) respondents intended to leave the organisation within the next six months.

Table 5.13: Feel that having children hinder your progress within the organisation

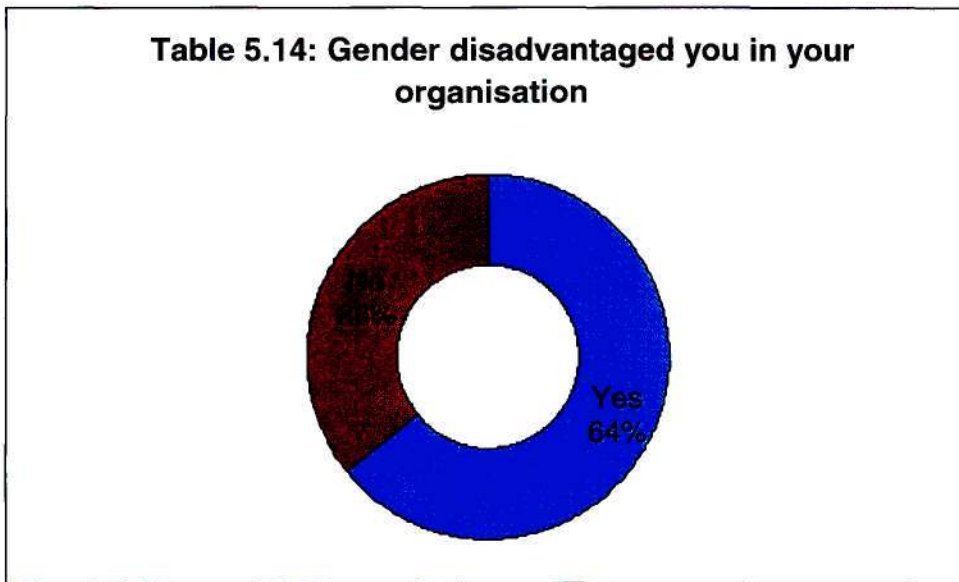
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	48	57.1
No	36	42.9
Total	84	100.0



Over half (57.1%) of the respondents felt that having children hampered their progress within the company.

Table 5.14: Gender disadvantage you in your organisation

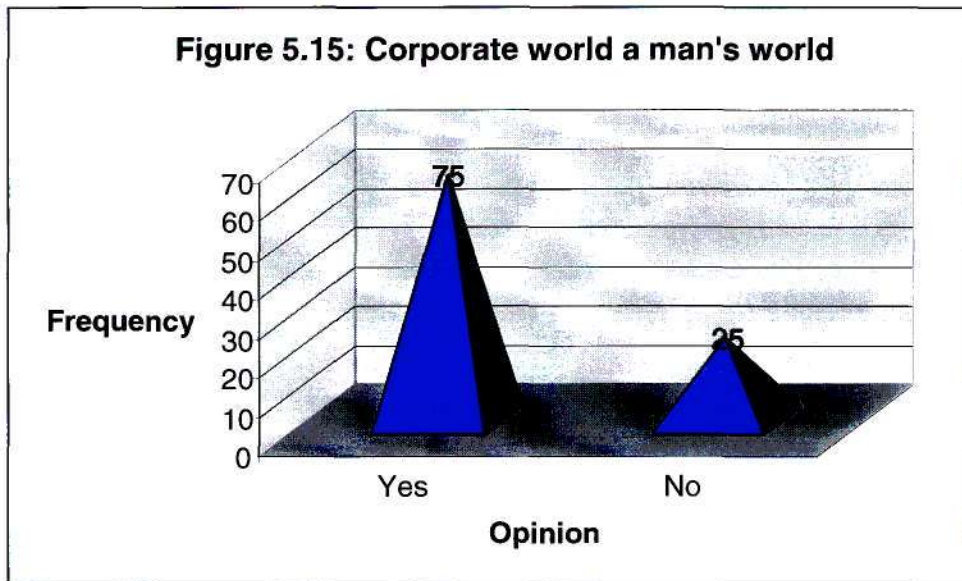
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	54	64.3
No	30	36.0
Total	84	100.0



Almost two-thirds (64.3%) responded positively about gender discrimination in the organisation.

Table 5.15: Corporate world is a man's world

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	63	75.0
No	21	25.0
Total	84	100.0

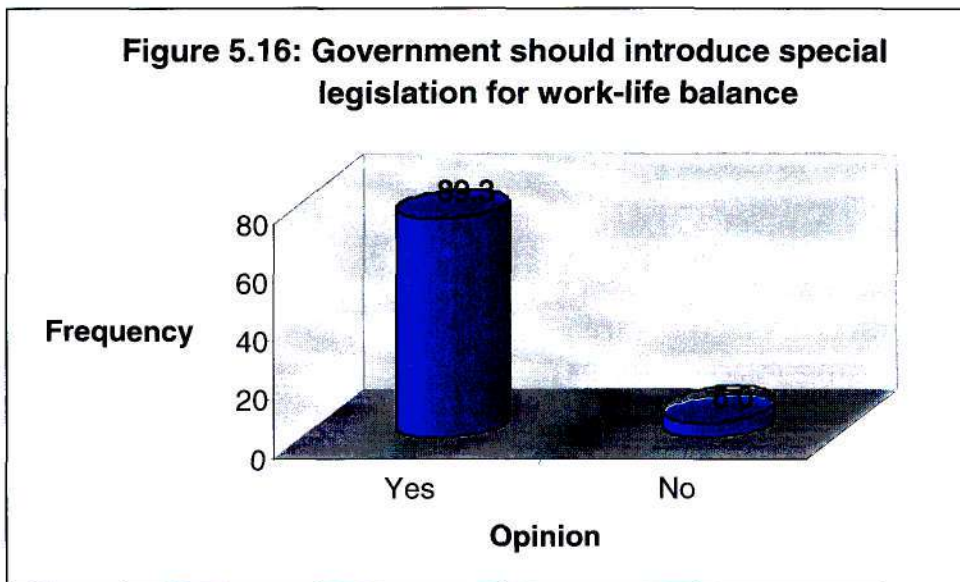


Almost three quarters (75%) of the respondents agreed that the corporate world is a man's world.

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Table 5.16: Government should introduce special legislation for work-life balance

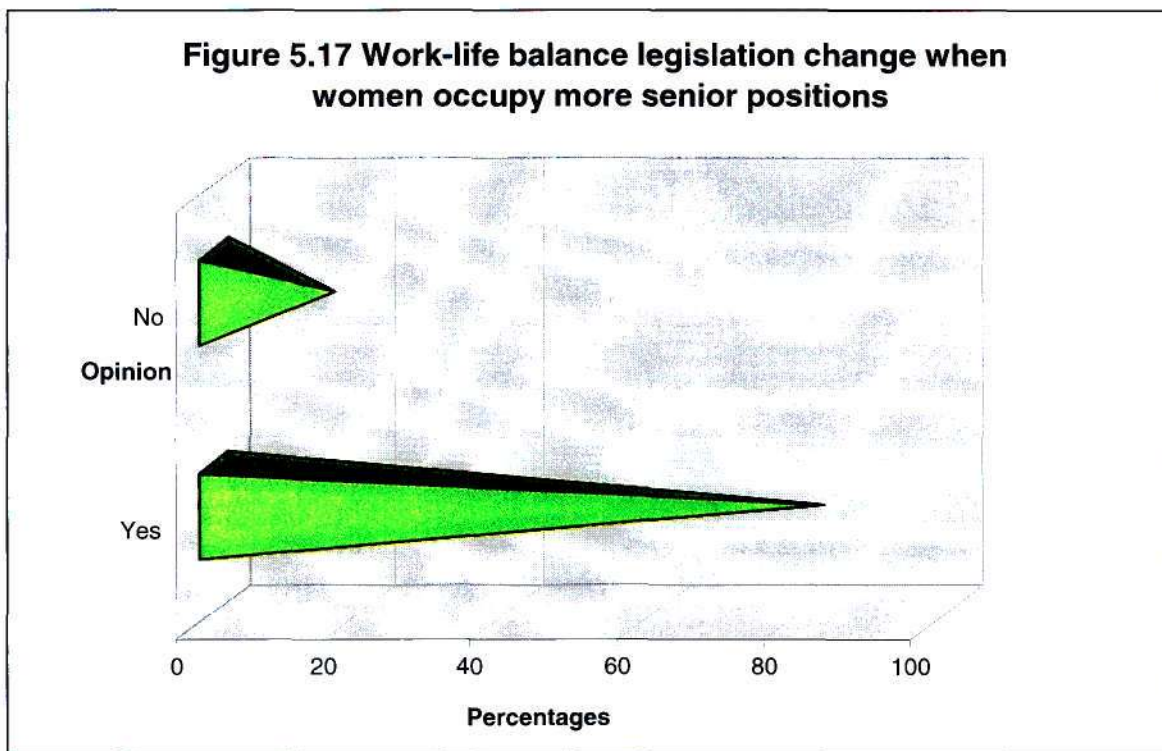
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	75	89.3
No	5	6.0
Total	80	95.2
Missing System	4	4.8
Total	84	100.0



The majority (89.3%) of the respondents were in favour that Government should introduce special legislation for work-life balance.

Table 5.17: Work-life balance legislation change when women occupy more senior positions

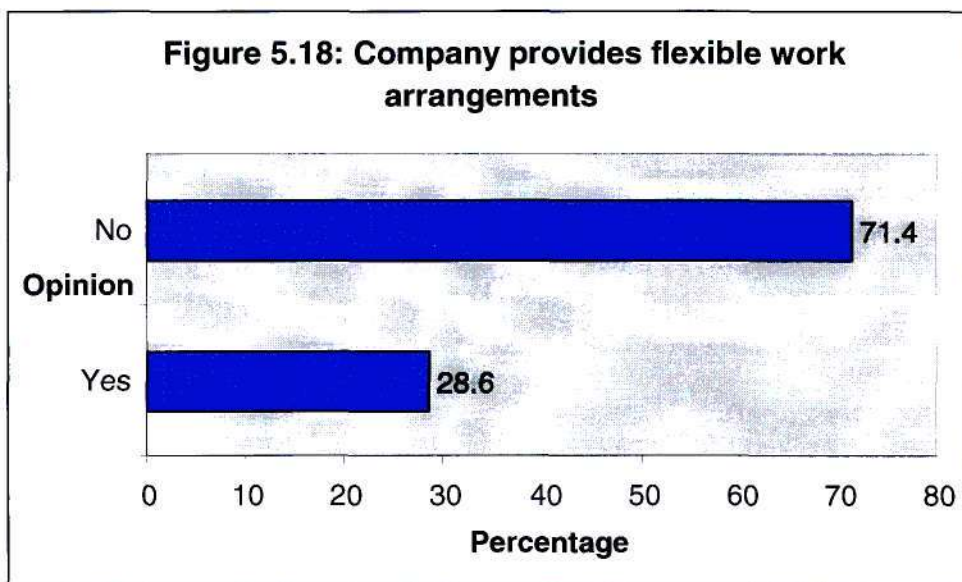
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	83.3
No	14	16.7
Total	84	100.0



Among the employees, 83.3% of them said work-life balance legislation change when women occupy more senior positions.

Table 5.18: Company provides flexible work arrangements

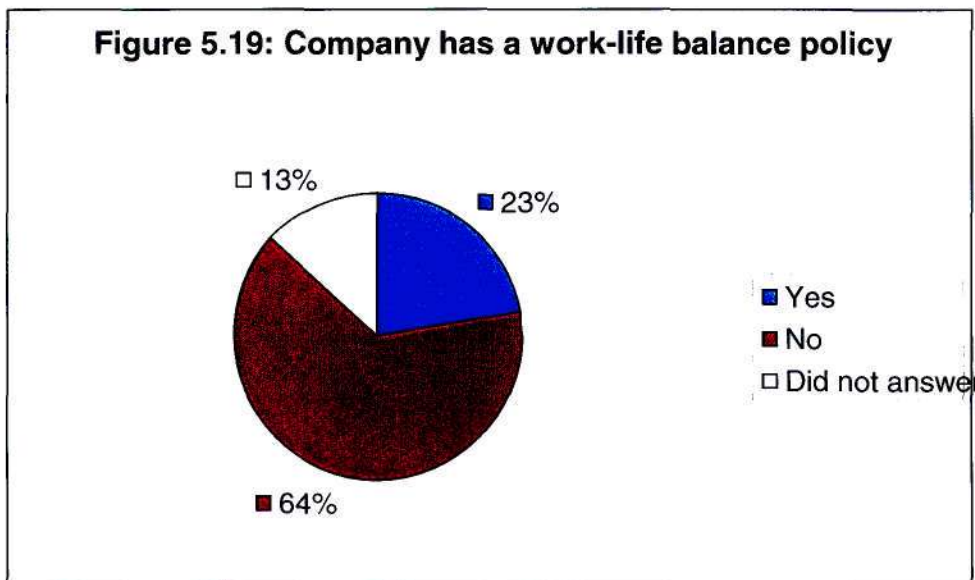
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	28.6
No	60	71.4
Total	84	100.0



Almost three-quarters (71.4%) of the employees did not agree that the company provides flexible work arrangements.

Table 5.19: Company has a work-life balance policy

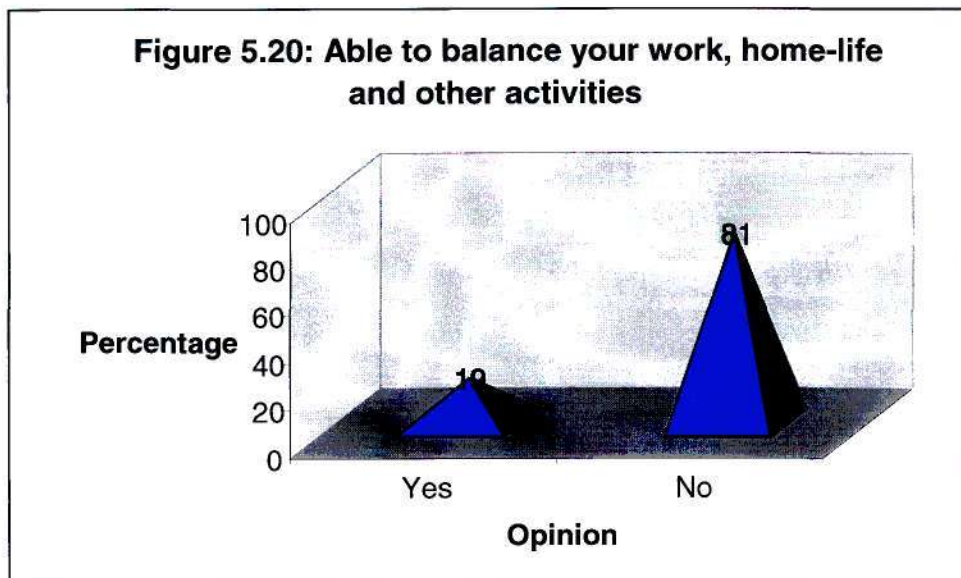
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	23.0
No	54	64.3
Total	73	86.9
Missing System	11	13.1
Total	84	100.0



Almost two-third of the employees said there is no work life policy in the company and another 13% did not answer the question meaning they might not be aware of this policy.

Table 5.20: Able to balance your work, home-life and other activities

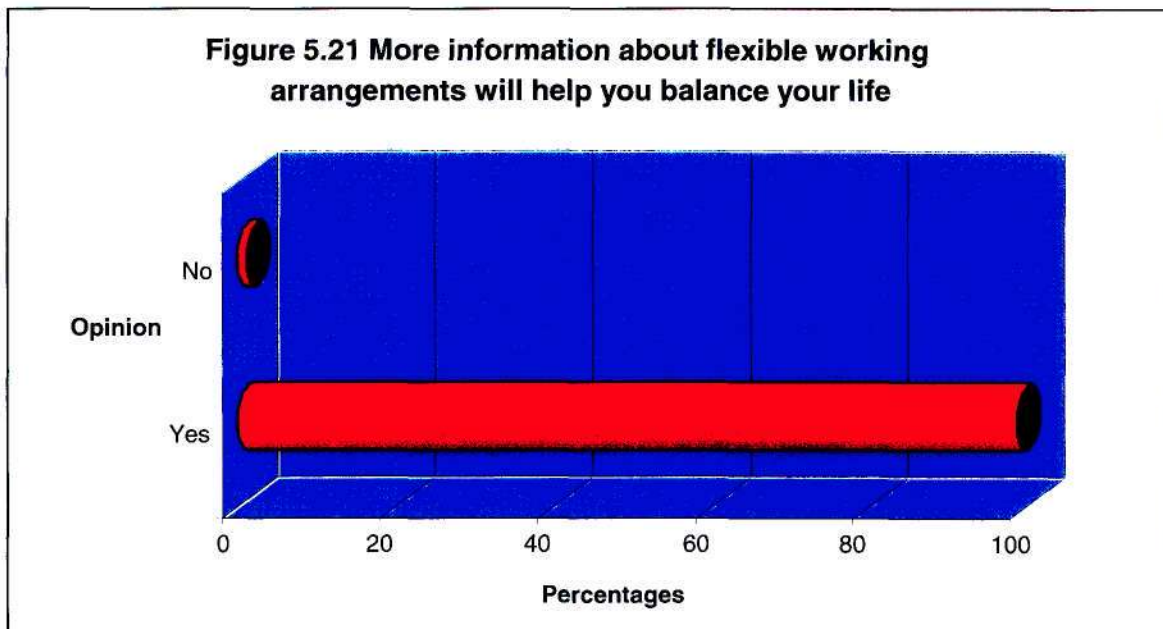
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	19.0
No	68	81.0
Total	84	100.0



Most (81%) of the workers were not able to balance their work, home-life and other activities.

Table 5.21: More information about flexible working arrangement will help you balance your life

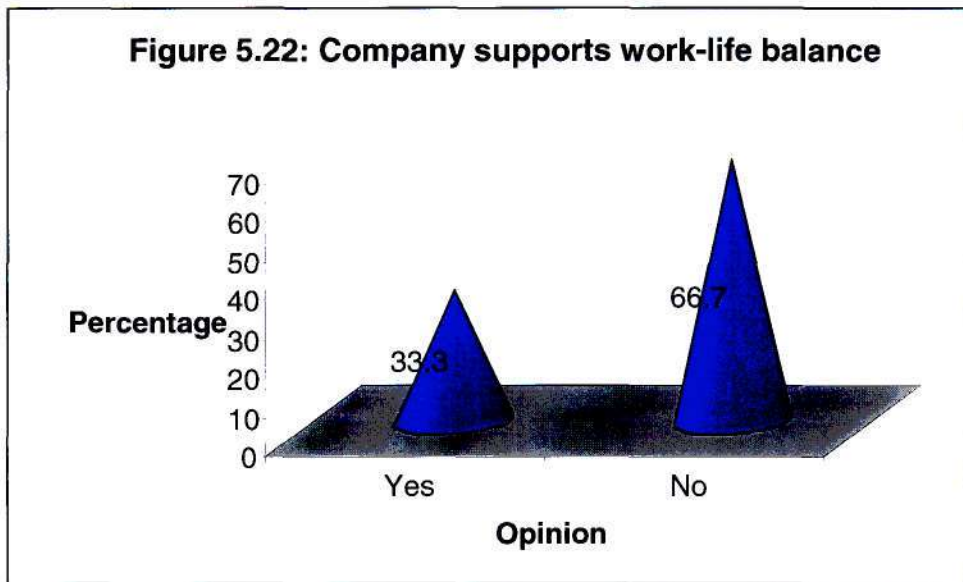
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	83	98.8
No	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0



Almost all (98.8%) the respondents agreed that more information about flexible working arrangement would help them balance their life.

Table 5.22: Company supports work-life balance

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	33.3
No	56	66.7
Total	84	100.0

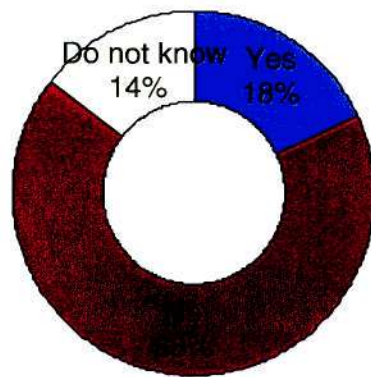


Two-thirds (66.7%) of the respondents answered negatively regarding their company's support of work-life balance.

Table 5.23: Work-life balance practices in your organisation lead to business benefits

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	18
No	56	68
Do not know	12	14
Total	83	98.8
Missing System	1	1.2
Total	84	100.0

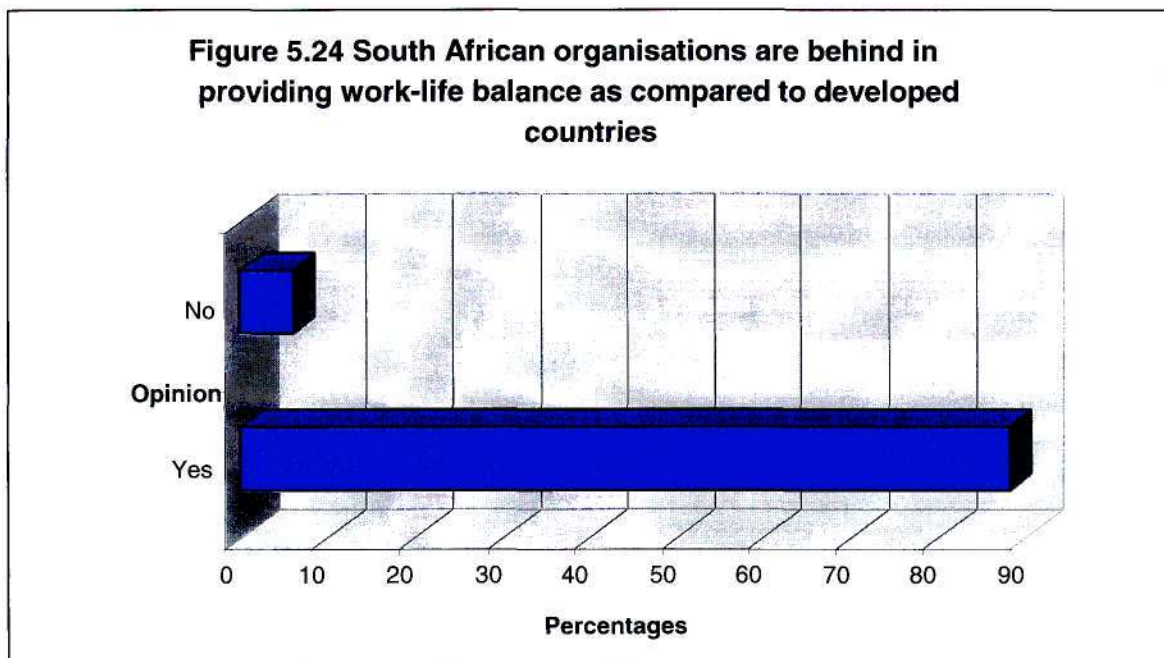
Figure 5.23: Work-life balance practices in your organisation lead to business benefits



The majority of the employees of the company (68%) replied negatively or did not answer when asked whether work-life balance practices in the organisation leads to business benefits.

Table 5.24: South African organisations are behind in providing work-life balance as compared to developed countries

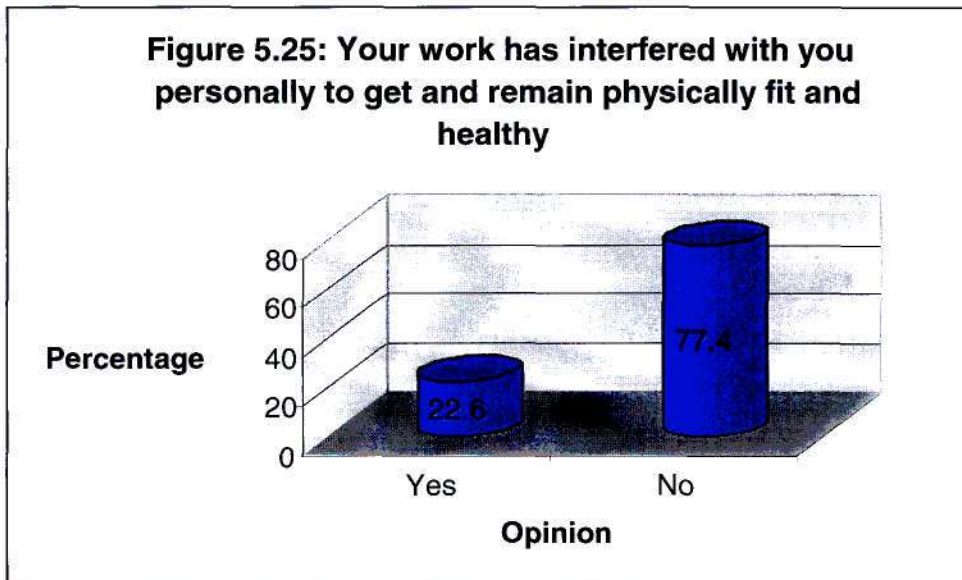
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	74	88.1
No	5	6.0
Total	79	94.0
Missing System	5	6.0
Total	84	100.0



Almost all (88.1%) of the workers thought that South African organisations are far behind in providing work-life balance as compared to developed countries.

Table 5.25: Your work has interfered with you personally to get and remain physically fit and healthy

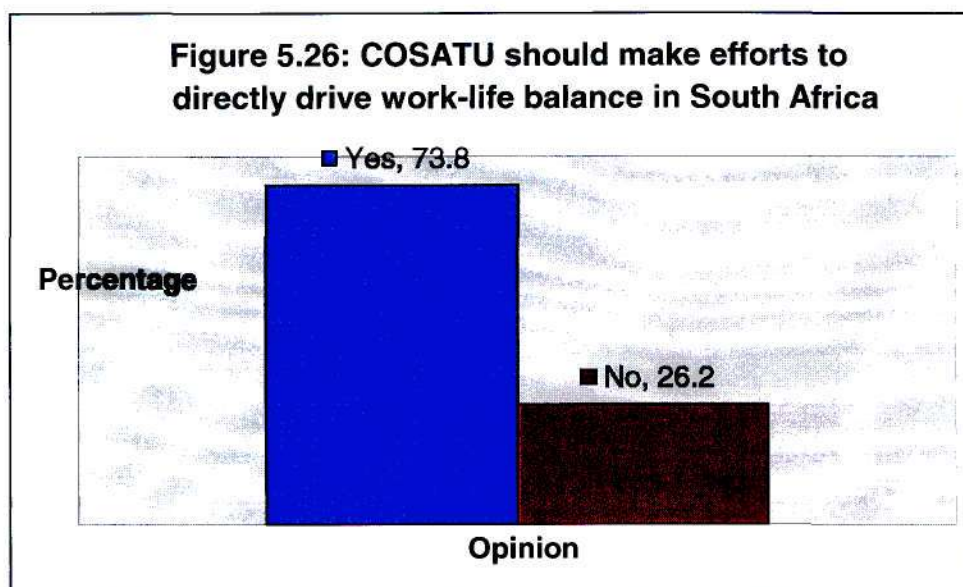
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	22.6
No	65	77.4
Total	84	100.0



It was found that majority of the employees' work had interfered with them personally to get and remain physically fit and healthy.

Table 5.26: COSATU should make efforts to directly drive work-life balance in South Africa

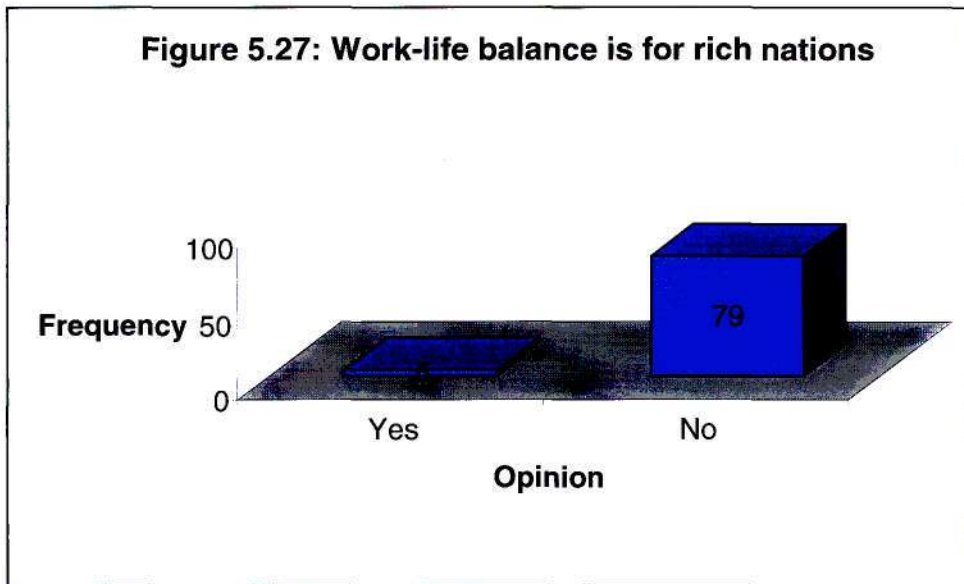
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	62	73.8
No	22	26.2
Total	84	100.0



Almost three-quarters (73.8%) of the employee suggested that COSATU should make efforts to directly drive work-life balance in South Africa.

Table 5.27: Work-life balance is for rich nations

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	5	6.0
No	79	94.0
Total	84	100.0

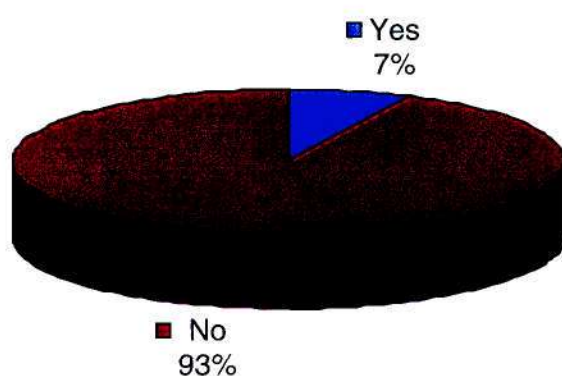


Among the respondents, (94%) of them believe that work-life balance is not for rich nations.

Table 5.28: Work-life balance reduce productivity

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	6	7.1
No	78	93
Total	84	100.0

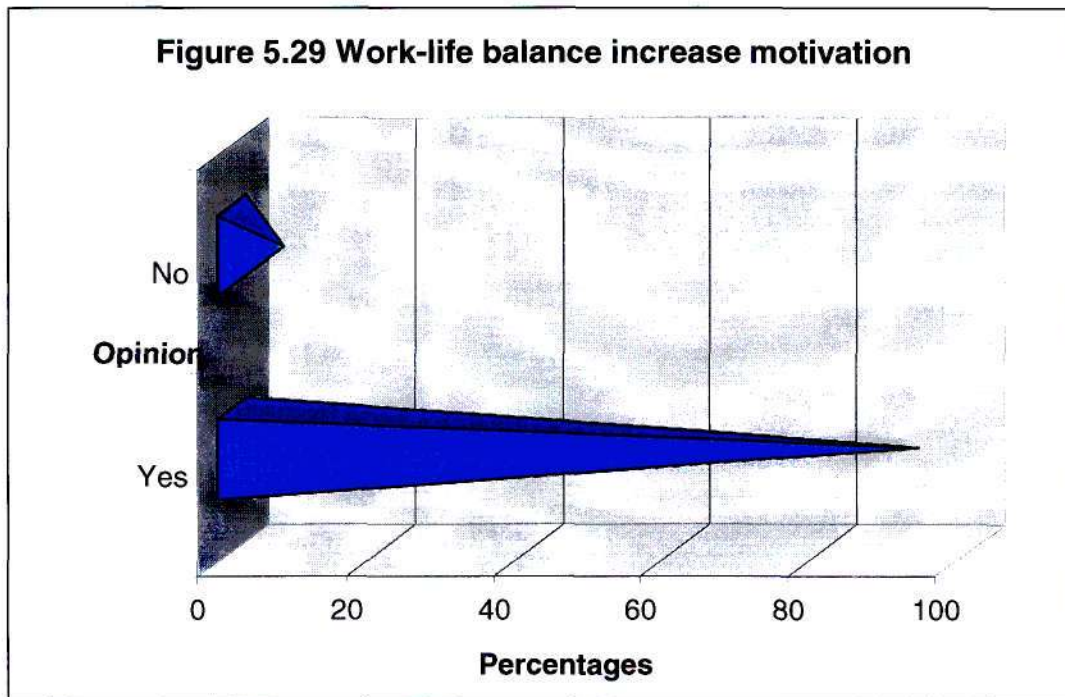
Figure 5.28: Work-life balance reduce productivity



The majority (93%) of the respondents said that work-life balance does not reduce productivity.

Table 5.2.29 Work-life balance increase motivation

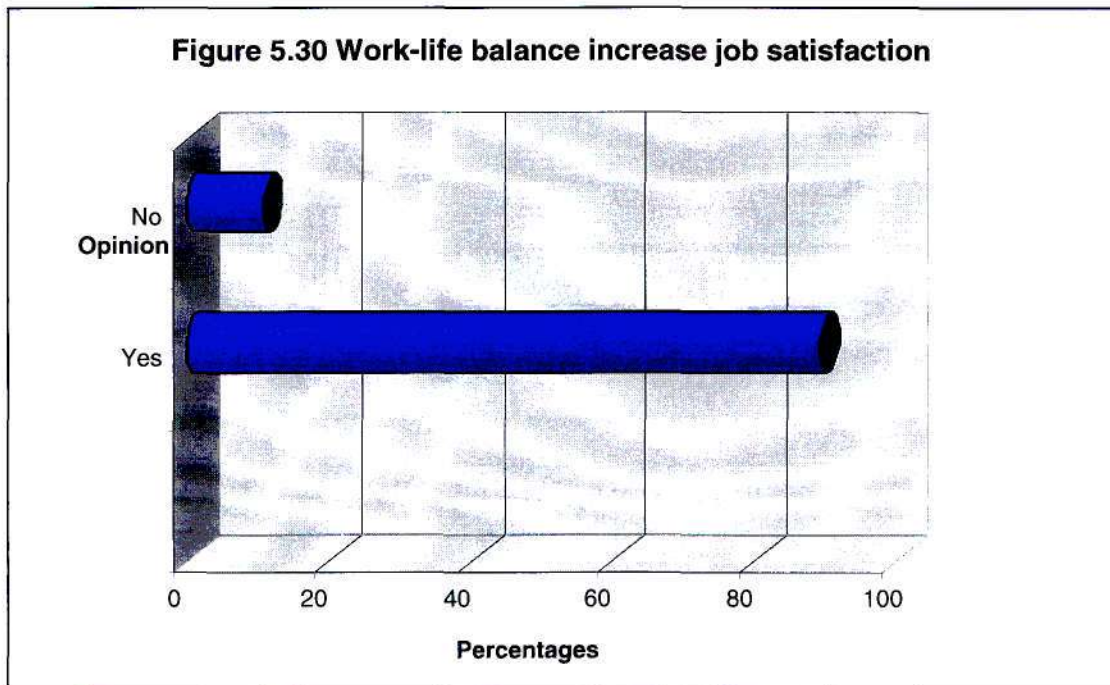
Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	78	92.9
No	6	7.1
Total	84	100.0



The majority (92.9%) of the respondents agreed that that Work-life balance increases motivation in the organisation.

Table 5.30 Work-life balance increase job satisfaction

Opinion	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	75	89.3
No	9	10.8
Total	84	100.0



The majority (89.3%) of the respondents agreed that work-life balance increase job satisfaction.

5.4 Conclusion:

5.4 Conclusion:

Most workers tend to have children and they are overloaded with their work. Because of this they become stressed as their work interfere with their family. They are not familiar with work-life policy that exists in the organization. More information in this regard should be provided so that each employee especially female employee can take advantage of this and balance their life accordingly.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

As mentioned in chapter three, the purpose of this study was to investigate work-life balance in South African organisations. The different types of flexible working arrangements were discussed and differences in work-life balance legislations between South Africa and UK were highlighted. The aim of this chapter is to discuss the findings of the study which were presented in the previous chapter and to make recommendations where possible. The findings in this chapter are discussed based on the literature reviewed.

6.2 Discussion of the Findings

Flexible working arrangements are a growing phenomenon in present organisations as the entry of women into the labour force has motivated organisations to become more family-friendly by implementing policies to alleviate the work and family conflict (Parker and Allen, 2001). Flexibility has become a buzz word in organisations; there has been growing interest in family-friendly policies or work-life balance policies (Dex and Smith, 2001). This however, is not the case in South African organisations. In South Africa, 7.1% of women are directors and only 14.7% are executive managers. This can be attributed to the fact that organisations have not supported work-life balance and as a result, employees are finding it impossible to adequately address family responsibilities as well as work demands. This was verified by the results of this research study.

The general response from respondents who participated in this research study was a lack of satisfaction with their jobs in relation to it being a hindrance to time spent with their

families. The perception of work as an obstacle to quality time spent at home can be attributed to the fact that most of the respondents felt that their work loads were too high and regarded their work and daily life demands as causes of stress in their lives. It was found that 75% of the respondents were stressed by work and daily demands. Most employees were not able to balance work, home-life and other activities.

The issue of gender accommodation was raised by the respondents' responses to questions regarding gender and whether or not it is a disadvantage within the workplace. A large portion of the respondents regarded it as a disadvantage, reporting that child bearing and rearing were constraints to their upward progression within organisations. The assumption that can be reached from these results is that women without children are entitled to more opportunities within the workplace as they can afford to push themselves and work extra hours to get promotions. The conclusion that can be made from this is that some organisations are failing to implement initiatives which will ensure that working mothers and child-rearing employees are able to balance their roles at home and still progress successfully at the workplace. The legislation in South Africa, specifically the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, is an attempt to ensure the former; however, more needs to be done. South African organisations need to adopt and implement intensive flexible work arrangements if they expect loyalty and job satisfaction from all their employees.

The government and its contributory role, or rather lack of it, in encouraging work-life balance was highlighted in the study. The majority of the respondents agreed that the government should introduce special legislation that encourages work-life balance, which reflects dissatisfaction with the impact of the current legislation. Certainly, when one considers the extent to which UK has gone to ensure family-friendly work environments, South Africa is behind. In South Africa, it seems there is some discrepancy between the level of government intervention with regards to work-life balance and the desire of

employees to have that work-life balance. If it is indeed true that the government is failing to take a firmer stand on the issue of work-life balance, then employees should be concerned because it is this same government whose duty it is to force employers to implement labour legislation and work-life balance policies. The failure by the government to fulfil this duty is evident from the majority of respondents in this study. In this study, 71.4% of the respondents reported that their workplaces did not have flexible work arrangements or work-life balance policies. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that 93.7% of the respondents perceived South African organisations as being behind in providing for work-life balance initiatives as compared to developed countries. Trade unions are also criticised for their inability to make more attempts to drive work-life balance in organisations.

The results from the study outlined a cry for assistance from South African employees when 81% of the respondents reported that they were unable to balance their work and home lives. The respondents viewed work as an interference when it came to certain aspects of their personal lives. One aspect which was brought into the lime light in this study was physical fitness and health. The majority of the respondents stated that work got in the way of them achieving their physical fitness and health goals. In addition, 83% of the respondents thought that more information and initiatives on flexible work arrangements was necessary to allow them to make this balance.

The minority of the respondents, 23%, who reported that their organisations supported and implemented work-life balance initiatives, also stated that their organisations benefited from it. This highlights the importance of work-life balance to both employees' success as well as the organisations'. One of the important results of work-life balance for the organisation is its influence over productivity. The respondents highlighted the fact that ensuring that employees can balance their work and home life generally results in happier

employees as employees become motivated to work harder. This in turn means employees are satisfied with their jobs.

6.3 Conclusion

The conclusion that can be made from this is that some organisations are failing to implement initiatives which will ensure that working mothers and child-rearing employees are able to balance their roles at home and still progress successfully at the workplace. The legislation in South Africa, specifically the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, is an attempt to ensure the former; however, more needs to be done. South African organisations need to adopt and implement intensive flexible work arrangements if they expect loyalty and job satisfaction from all their employees. In this study, it is highlighted that South African organisations are behind in providing for work-life balance initiatives as compared to the UK.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Recommendations

The urgent need for organisations to adopt and implement work-life balance initiatives that will ensure family-friendly work environments has been acknowledged worldwide. United Kingdom is one country that has taken the concept of work-life balance and family-friendly work environments and made it come alive. South Africa still has a long way to go in terms of legislation and work policies. It is recommended that the government and employers take more responsibility in ensuring family-friendly work environments.

7.2 Recommended Organisational Role

In recognition of the needs of the South African workforce, it is recommended that South African organisations start investigating ways in which they might play a part in helping their employees obtain a better integration of their work and non-work lives. The types of support offered and the level of organisational commitment to work-lifestyle issues, however, varies widely. The broadest definitions of supportive employer policies include the provision of traditional employee benefits, such as a wage, health insurance, and the right to a paid vacation (Scandura and Lankau, 1997). Although it is acknowledged that these traditional benefits are indeed necessary if employees are to meet their most basic needs, the results of this present study suggest that such benefits are not sufficient for the purpose of relieving the heavy burden on today's employee. In United Kingdom, organisations are working hand in hand with the government in improving work and family life.

It has been acknowledged that management support within organisations is a vital factor. The ability to maintain a work-life balance is highly dependent on the support/flexibility provided by employers. A focus on work-life balance starts at the top and permeates down through the organisation. Some literatures have noted workplace culture as the biggest barrier to progress in the work-life area. It is therefore, critical that the workplace culture be the first element to be changed when an organisation is aiming to adopt work-life balance initiatives.

A number of literatures have expressed the view that some employers are stuck in the past, in an era when the male breadwinner had a partner at home who took responsibility for childcare and other domestic work. Some managers still seem to be back in the past. They tend to be older males who have spent all their working life 'slaving their guts out' (with someone else looking after the kids and house) and they do not understand why we should not be doing exactly the same thing. They do not seem to have grasped the concept that work-life balance can enable you to 'work smarter, not harder'. Employers and human resources practitioners recognised, that managers have a great deal of influence and that often employee outcomes depend largely on the attitudes of their immediate supervisor. It is crucial that work-life balance leadership within organisations must be 'from the top'. Top management must put family-friendly policies in place as well as communicate these effectively to employees. Employers must make sure that employees listen and bring forward any suggestions about family-friendly policies.

7.3 Recommended Legislative Interventions

The results of this present study revealed that the majority of South African organisations are behind developed countries with regards to implementing work-life balance. The

government has a major role to play in facilitating the implementation of work-life balance policies within organisations, therefore, the following suggestions are proposed.

- **Reform national and provincial labour laws**

Since labour laws establish the basic working conditions in most industries, reforming both provincial and national labour laws has been identified as a key strategy that governments can use to reduce work-life conflict. The following areas can be focussed on: reducing chronic overtime such as providing the right to take time off in lieu of overtime, prorating benefits for part-time and temporary workers, introducing new forms of part-time work (that is, long part-time), ensuring the portability of employee benefits between jobs, improving family leave rights. Provisions could also cover new forms of paid employment such as homework, tele-work, and job sharing.

- **Improve and standardize the legislation and regulations governing family leave**

While many collective agreements contain arrangements and benefits which address employees' needs with respect to work-life balance, there is a need for consistency with respect to labour standards and legislative requirements pertaining to work-life balance.

Current legislation needs to provide a starting point for organisations in developing workplace policies and practices that address work-life balance issues. Standardisation is needed in the following areas: the type of family related leaves, eligibility requirements, lengths of leaves and the guarantee of rights to return to paid employments. Standardisation is especially important for the many workers who do not enjoy the flexibility enjoyed by managers. Securing broad access to leave policies goes hand in hand with improving leave policies more generally. By international standards, South Africa's package of public leave provisions such as the length of leaves and benefit replacement levels is not very generous when compared to European countries such as United Kingdom (Dex, McCulloch and Smith, 2002). Previous research has gone into highlighting the elements that distinguish

countries which support work-life balance from those that are less progressive in this regard. Research in this area has found that countries with supportive family leave policies generally recognise that:

- society has a role to play in caring for children
- parents, when given the choice, would prefer to spend more time with their very young children, and;
- a parent's income and future participation in the labour force should not be sacrificed because of their caring responsibilities (Lewis and Cooper, 1999).

In addition, there is a need to improve other types of family leave that allow family members to take on intensive caring roles like caring for a relative who is dying, without sacrificing their employment. Governments who are concerned with work-life balance issues must consider implementing legislation:

- which allows some flexibility as opposed to the fixed 40 ordinary hours of work per week,
- which extends family responsibility leave according to each employee's needs.

- **Other recommended government interventions**

The government can provide assistance outside of legislation. There is also a high need to co-ordinate government programs and initiatives that address work-life conflict. At the micro level, governments can institute specific initiatives such as employment insurance (EI) job sharing programs where EI funds are used to offset the lost income of workers who agree to share the available work by working fewer hours than normal. They could also revise the legislated payroll taxes in order to reduce the cost of new hires and thereby eliminate a powerful incentive for employers to encourage overtime among existing employees. These types of measures could promote the redistribution of working time,

foster greater economic security and reduce unemployment while at the same time offering individuals greater control over their working hours.

Governments who are interested in promoting work-life balance consider the following actions.

- develop and implement a national child care program which address the needs of children of all ages such as affordable, quality day care, supervision for older children, before and after school care, extra-curricular programs,
- develop and implement a national elder care program, and
- make it easier for family members who wish to stay home to care for their children or elderly dependents.

In addition to the above, as one of the largest employers in the country, the government should, themselves, become a best practice/model employer in the area of work-life balance by introducing appropriate policies and enacting forward-thinking legislation. Such an approach will give governments the moral authority to ask for changes in this area from others.

Governments could also contribute to work-life balance initiatives by funding research in the area, disseminating relevant information to key stakeholders, and developing and offering appropriate educational programs such as educating companies about the negative impact of imbalance as well as educating employees and families on how to cope.

Finally, it should be noted that policy makers will miss the needs of real families if they continue to base public policy on outdated definitions of what a family is. Many policies are based on definitions of the 1950's male breadwinner family or on the idealized nuclear family of mother, father and dependent children. Changes in longevity, divorce, remarriage, and non-traditional family structures have changed what a "family" is: public policy should reflect this.

7.4 Conclusion

This research study attempted to explore the concept of work-life balance by highlighting the various types of flexible work arrangements that exist and comparing the legislations that promote work-life balance in South Africa with those of UK. The information gained from this research is important in highlighting how far South African organisations need to go to create more family-friendly work environments. These organisations need to acknowledge their employees' needs and requirements, so that pressure is alleviated from work and family stresses and so that superior staff can be retained.

The analysed findings revealed that South African organisations are behind UK in adopting and implementing work-life balance initiatives. South African organisations must introduce more flexible-working arrangements and the government must improve family-friendly legislation. South Africa still has a lot of work to do in introducing family-friendly legislation. With the country still grappling with issues such as high unemployment, shortage of basic services such as health, work-life balance has taken a back seat. It is up to the individual organisations to implement the policies. South African employees need work-life balance in the workplace to help them cope with the additional stress that comes with having to balance work and family. South Africa has a lot to learn from UK about work-life balance.

APPENDIX 1
QUESTIONNAIRE

Section A: Biographical Information

1. Race

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| a) White | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Black | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Coloured | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. Gender

- | | |
|-----------|--------------------------|
| a) Female | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Male | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. At which level of management are you?

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| a) Lower Level | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Middle Level | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Top Level | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. What is your marital status?

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| a) Single | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Married | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Divorced | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Widowed | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. How many children do you have?

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------|
| a) 1-3 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) 4-6 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) 7+ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Section B: Critical Questions

6. Is your role overload too high?

- [YES]
[NO]

7. Does your work interfere with family?

- [YES]

[NO]

8. Are you stressed by work and daily life demands?

[YES]

[NO]

9. Are you satisfied with your work-life balance?

[YES]

[NO]

10. Are you satisfied with your current job?

[YES]

[NO]

11. Are you committed to the organisation?

[YES]

[NO]

12. Do you intend to leave the organisation within the next six months?

[YES]

[NO]

13. Do you feel that having children hinders your progress within the organisation?

[YES]

[NO]

14. Does your gender disadvantage you in your organisation?

[YES]

[NO]

15. Do you think the corporate world is a man's world?

[YES]

[NO]

16. Do you think the government should introduce special legislation for work-life balance?

[YES]

[NO]

17. Would work-life balance legislation change if women occupied more senior positions?

[YES]

[NO]

18. Does your company provide flexible work arrangements?

[YES]

[NO]

19. Does your company have a work-life balance policy?

[YES]

[NO]

20. Are you able to balance your work, home-life and other activities?

[YES]

[NO]

21. Would more information about flexible working arrangements help you balance your life?

[YES]

[NO]

22. Does your company support work-life balance?

[YES]

[NO]

23. Have work-life balance practices in your organisation lead to business benefits?

[YES]

[NO]

24. Do you perceive South African organisations to be behind in providing for work-life balance as compared to developed countries?

[YES]

[NO]

25. Has your work interfered with your personal goal to get and remain physically fit and healthy?

[YES]

[NO]

26. Do you think COSATU should make efforts to directly drive work-life balance in South Africa?

[YES]

[NO]

27. Do you think work-life balance is for the rich nations?

[YES]

[NO]

28. Does work-life balance reduce productivity?

[YES]

[NO]

29. Does work life balance increase motivation?

[YES]

[NO]

30. Do you think work life balance increases job satisfaction?

[YES]

[NO]

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30 MARCH 2009

MRS. J NZIMANDE (203517844)
MANAGEMENT

Dear Mrs. Nzimande

ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL NUMBER: HSS/0077/09M

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been approved for the following project:

“Investigation of work-life balance in organizations in KwaZulu-Natal: Comparison with the United Kingdom”

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Yours faithfully

.....
MS. PHUMELELE XIMBA

cc. Supervisor (Prof. S Brijball Paramasur)
cc. Mrs. C Haddon