

# Impact of work-life balance on employees performance: An Empirical Study on Seven Apparel Organizations in Sri Lanka

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**Abstract:** The objective of study is to analyze the relationship between Work Life Balance (WLB) and Employees Performance. This study involved 96 employees who were selected from seven apparel firms in Sri Lanka. The research revealed there is a positive relationship between work life balance and employee performance. An important implication of the findings is that there is a need for a systematic effort to enhance work life balance of employees to achieve better employees performance.

**Keywords:** work life balance<sup>1</sup>, employee performance<sup>2</sup>, apparel industry<sup>3</sup>

## Introduction

Human resource management is effective utilization of human resource in the organization. In the present, organization practice Human resource management because, to utilize their work force very effectively and retain them long time in the organization. More practices of the Human Resource Management focuses on increasing employee performance through the employee's satisfaction by implementing various human resource functions such as employee motivation, compensation management, human relation, work life balance practices etc..., Today work life balance practices are critical important because, work life balance has become a subject matter of concern to scholars as well as business leaders because of the contemporary demographic, technology, environmental changers and changes in the individual expectations and aspirations (Baral and

Bhargava, 2010). Work life balance has implication for employee attitudes, behaviors, wellbeing as well as organizational effectiveness (Eby et al, 2005). work-life balance is very important to every employees in organizations. Large number of employees work in the industries in Sri Lanka. Several major industries are available belongs to public or private in Sri Lanka. Private sector contribution is significant to the economy. There is a view that the majority of the people in Sri Lanka suppose that the private sector is more effective in the practice of management than the public sector ( Fernando, 2001/2002). Public sector and private sector industries contribute 14.2% and 85.8% respectively to the employed population (Wimalasena, Millenium Issue).

Manufacturing industry is one of the major industry in the economy. The Sri Lankan Apparel Industry is one of considerable importance to the manufacturing industry in terms of output and employment ( Master Plan Study/ Apparel Industry, UNIDO , 2000). The apparel industry of Sri Lanka employs about 15% of the country's workforce. There is no doubt that the "person" as the principal resource of labour incentive garment industry plays a crucial role in any productivity improvement effect. Further, this argument is supported by the facts that labour comprises about 20 per cent of the cost price of a garment (Gerry, 1997 in Sanjeewa, 2011). Therefore, the way people are directed, motivated or utilized will be decided upon whether the organization will be prosperous and survive or ultimately fail. Hence, people are the key element for competitive advantage (Luthan, 1995 as in Sanjeewa, 2011). One of the

important factors which have contributed to the rapid development of the apparel industry in Sri Lanka has been highly trainable, skilled and literate work force (Sri Lanka Garment, 2002 as in Hussainali and Opatha 2008)

Organization has to encourage employees for better performance through better HR practices. In garment sector in Sri Lanka it is very important to increase labor productivity because of garment industry in Sri Lanka is Labor intensive industry. The HRM practices and labour turnover are one of the major determinants of organization productivity. Therefore, organizations need to design effective HRM practices that encourage the retention of high performing employees.

Most of the organizations have not given the top priority to the work-life balance of employees so that develop and motivate their employees in our country. Because the organizations which are implementing the WLB presently are not studied and confirmed the effectiveness of the WLB. However, there is a study carried out by Hussainali and Opatha (2008) on “Impact of Systematic Performance Appraisal on Business performance: An empirical study in Sri Lankan apparel industry”. It has focused only the performance appraisal system in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. In addition, the researcher couldn't find any evidence about to what extend the WLB is practiced and the effectiveness of the WLB in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka. Hence, there is a need to assess to what extend the WLB influenced on employees performance in apparel industry. In specific the research problems were addressed in this research paper:

1. Is there any relationship between work life balance and employee's performance in Sri Lanka?
2. Is work life balance positively related to the employee performance?
3. Do work life balance influence significantly the employee performance ?

The objective of the paper is to investigate whether WLB influence the employees performance to a significant extent in apparel industry in Sri Lanka.

## Research Framework

**Work-life** is a term used to describe the integration of work and personal life responsibilities. Work-life is the practice of providing initiatives designed to create a more flexible, supportive work environment, enabling employees to focus on work tasks while at work. It includes making the culture more supportive, adding programs to meet life event needs, ensuring that policies give employees as much control as possible over their lives, and using flexible work practices as a strategy to meet the dual agenda – the needs of both business and employees.” (Eichler and Matthews, 2004 ). Work-life balance is most frequently used to describe the equilibrium between responsibilities at work and responsibilities outside paid work; having a work-life balance means that this equilibrium is in the right position for the individual concerned.

**Employee Performance:** Each organizations should clearly define about performance to implement the performance appraisal system effectively. It is important to classify what is means because if performance cannot be defined, it can't be measured or managed (Armstrong, 2000). An employee's job performance depends on or is a consequences of some combination of ability, effort, and opportunity. But, the measurements can be done in terms of out comes or results produced (Ferris et al., 1998). Performance is defined as the record of out comes produced on a specified job function or activity during a specified time period. (Bernadrin and Russel, 1998). According to this definition performance is set of out comes produced during a certain time period. Hence the researchers has developed the working definition of employee performance for study purpose is that, “*achievement of targets of the tasks assigned to employees within particular period of time*”.

The dimensions of performance on which an employee is evaluated are called the criteria of evaluation (Ivancevich, 1998). Opatha, (2002) suggested that several criteria becomes needed in order to evaluate job performance of an employee accurately. In the view of Mathis& Jackson (2003), the data or information that managers receive on how well employees are performing their jobs can be of three

different types. Trait-based information, Behavior-based information, Result based information. Opatha (2002) indicated that trait-based information identifies a subjective character of the employee such as attitude, initiative or creativity. Behavior-based evaluations of job performance focus on what is included in the job itself (Mathis& Jackson, 2003). Results are outcomes produced by the employee. Result based information consider employee accomplishment. For jobs in which measurement is easy and obvious, a results-based approach works well (Opatha, 2002).

The results show that employers generally supported positive experiences of work-life balance policies to date, and most importantly, they found both business benefits and personal benefits for employees as a result of these policies. (Redmond et al, 2006). As a result, the literature stresses that WLB practices can help organizations to increase their results in productivity, performance, and turnover (Cegarra-Leiva et al, 2012). Hence, these arguments lead to a hypothesis as follows:

Hypothesis: Work-life balance is positively related to employees performance.

### Study Design

The researchers were interested in investing whether work-life balance rrelates to employees' performance of apparel industry employees There was no intention of establishing definite cause effect relationship between the two variables. The type of investigation of this study was correlational rather than causal. Because this study attempted to analyze the relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable, this study was analytical in nature or purpose. Study was conducted in the natural environment of the organization with direct interference by the researchers with the normal flow of work. The researchers used a questionnaire to individuals. Hence, the extent of research interference was high as this study was a field study. Population of this research included the apparel organizations. Ninety six employees in seven apparel organizations were selected as sample. Simple random Sampling method was applied. Selected sample size for the study was 96 (n = 96). Structured questionnaire was developed and distributed among the selected

employees in the apparel organizations under the sample. It was possible to collect whole questionnaire from seven organizations. There was a hypothesis of the study. It was about relationship between two variables, and hence the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation technique was used. The data analysis of this study involved two types of analyses i.e., Univariate analysis (involving one variable at a time) and Bivariate analysis (involving two variables at a time). Under the Bivariate analysis, parametric tests were used because the data were collected on interval scales and data was normally distributed. Pearson correlation coefficient was used by the researcher to reveal the strength of two variables for interval scale.

### Results

The employees work-life balance and their performance have been reviewed by the researchers and found that the few dimensions of work-life balance must be improved. Based on the result of Univariate analysis, the degree of systematic quality level of each dimension of work-life balance and employees performance is as follows (See Table: 1 and Table: 2):

**Table: 1: Descriptive statistics for Work life balance**

**Table: 2: Descriptive Statistics on the**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work_life_balance_ total responses	96	22.6458	4.94598
Valid N (listwise)	96		

### Perception of Employee performance

Mean and standard deviation for WLB is 22.6458

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employee_ performance_total_ responses	96	21.9375	4.29397
Valid N (listwise)	96		

(Source: Sample Data) SPSS 16.0

and 4.94598 respectively and mean and standard deviation for employees performance is 21.9375 and 4.29397 respectively. The hypothesis formulated for the study was that work-life balance is significantly and positively related to its employees' performance. The appropriate statistical test was Pearson Correlation Coefficient in order to test alternative hypothesis. Desired level of significant level was 0.05. One tailed test was used as the formulated alternative hypothesis had been directional. The results of the correlation test are given in the following table 3:

The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient were 0.521 for the variables between work-life balance and employees performance. According to table Pearson correlation is 0.521 suggesting that there is a positive relationship between Work-Life balance and Employee performance. As the significant value (0.000) is smaller than the desired level of significance (0.005), the found correlation coefficient (0.521) is statistically significant. Hence alternative hypothesis can be accepted while rejecting the null hypothesis. Therefore, there is statistical evidence to claim that there is a significant relationship between perceived systematic use of Work-Life balance and its employees' performance. The study found empirical evidence to support the hypothesis of Work-Life Balance is significantly and positively related to its employees' performance. A finding derived from univariate analysis if the data was that quality level of WLB in apparel organizations is low implying that it greater degree of improvements are needed to reach the level of very high.

**Table: 3 Correlation between employee work life balance and employee performance**

		Work_Life_ Balance	Employee Performance
Work_Life_ Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.521**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	96	96
Employee_ Performance	Pearson Correlation	.521**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	96	96

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

(Source: Survey Data) SPSS 16.00

## Conclusion

The results of the study lead to confirm the prediction made by the researchers regarding a significant and positive relationship between work-life balance and employees performance of employees. It is more likely that an improvements of practices of WLB for apparel industry employees will bring results in improvements of Employees' Performance. By analyzing the approaches of the organization's work life balance practices, the researchers recommend to focus such as on flexible work arrangements, positive working environment, certain degree of autonomy at work, and guide the employees to allocate the enough time for family responsibilities.

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