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## Flexible Working Time and Work Life Balance of Nursing Officers in Ampara District, Sri Lanka

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**Abstract:** The concept of work life balance (WLB) has considered as a very important phenomena in recent years. Health organizations provide flexible working time (FWT) for nursing officers to enhance their work and family life balance. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of flexible working time on work life balance. The population consists the type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district, Sri Lanka. Self-rating questionnaire was distributed to 142 nursing offices to gathered data. Among these 128 respondents were returned with duly completed manner.

The questionnaire has satisfactory level of validity and reliability. The results showed that strong positive correlation ( $r = 0.713$ ) exist between the flexible working time and work life balance. Results of simple regression analysis indicated that R square value was 0.508 and adjusted R value was 0.501, these values revealed that around 50% of total variations on work life balance of nursing officers explain by flexible working time. In addition, unstandardized beta value of FWT ( $b = 0.677$ ) described that, single unit change in FWT leads to 0.677 units change in WLB.

The future researcher scan be reproducing this study with large sample size including the related staff in health sector from both public and private hospitals and other effective data gathering techniques like direct interviews and 360 degrees rater measurement scale. According to the importance of FWT on WLB of nursing officers, administrations can consider the recommendations and suggestions given by researcher to enhance the affectivity of existing FWT.

**Keywords:** Flexible working time; work life balance; stratified random sampling; nursing officers.

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### INTRODUCTION

According to the present era, there is a custom spread among the entire human as to lead the dual career life. When the people both male and female enter into the employment market there is a need arisen automatically to balance their family commitments and work life, if the people balanced their personal and professional life, they can achieve the job and life satisfaction its lead to better productivity and mental wellbeing. If the person failed to balance their work and family life, there is an at most possibility to dissatisfaction and mental issues. Therefore, the concept work life balance has a critical importance in people's life. Further, in Sri Lankan nursing context there is two type of flexible working time available to their staff as shift working hours and compressed work week. Shift working consist four shifts per day with 6 hours duration for one shift. This study mainly considered the relationship of FWT and WLB regarding nursing officers. Hence, health sector workers specially nursing officers are the vital service providers for the society. Nursing officers entitle to work with flexible time routine and arrangements to serve people for 24 hours also maintain the balance between work and family. Especially this study focused on type "A" base hospital's nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka.

To look at the impact of flexible working time on work life balance, comparison ponders were conducted. The result of over factual examinations somewhat bolstered the explanation that flexible working time work plans would be backed to most extreme levels of work life balance than Standard-hour work plans (Hayman, 2009). Flexibility in work life is critical for workplaces to create worker devotion. In addition, flexible working directions that are upheld by organizations' shareholders (e.g., Administrators, supervisor, peers, and bosses) and have a positive influence on work life balance are considered to maximize their sense of devotion. The components advantageous for the work places and laborer's; redesign, control, and advancement of work timings and work shape as per worker needs, demands, and wants might be achieved by affirming the bolster of all individuals of work drive (Altindag & Siller, 2014).

Paryani (2015) expressed that work life regulations can improve the degree of work fulfillment and upgrade organizational commitment among their working human resource. WLB approaches are continuously alluded to in hone as 'flexible working time' having a few shapes of

elements such as: part-time working, term-time working, work sharing, annualized hours, shift working, compressed hours, virtual working, career breaks, domestic working, zerohours contracts, ponder take off, and virtual time working.

Job holders who comprehend the accessibility of flexible plans and utilize flexible working times, both authoritatively and sometimes, have been communicated to have large degree of engagement and long-lasting work opportunity with their boss (Richman, Civian, Shannon, Slope & Brennan, 2008), and lower level of work life strife (Hayman, 2009). Employees in organizations that give family-friendly approaches, which are not lawfully commanded, may feel both that they are recognized and encouraged that their work supplier takecares almost them. Work family activities and hones influence efficiency since specialists improve their exertion in trade for working in the most strong working climate (Kelly & kaley, 2011).

Reasonable flexible working time hones are upgrading the brilliant standard in that they fulfill the requests of laborers and work providers' e.g. flexible time (Fleetwood, 2007). A few human asset specialists assert that workers-friendly hones more often than not advantage for work suppliers. Concurring to Fleetwood (2007) a commercial case can be built for these sorts of flexible frameworks due to employee friendly flexible work hones make fulfilled workers, and fulfilled laborers are more profitable."

In most current days, flexible working hours are becoming most important to the organizations. A several number of work places provide flexible working time to workers because of the merits that flexible work time provides to both worker and employer. Highemployee productivity and greater organization profitability are the coreadvantages. Also, flexible working time enhance and facilitate work-life balance, minimized stress and increased workers wellbeing are results of the work-life balance (Shagvaliyeva& Yazdanifard, 2014).

Visible convenience of flexible working time was associated to proficient and family life balance. In addition, the observational prove from the past ponder was exceedingly strong of the finding that advertising the flexibility given to representatives through flexible working time plans can encourage the integration of work, individual, and family life (Hayman, 2009).

## RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study considers towhat extent flexible working times provide the work life balance to type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district inSri Lanka.

In today's very busy culture in the world, it is difficult to prioritize one's professional and personal work. But number of previous studies have described that lack in work life balance leads to stress and unhappy. It further leads to decrease in productivity of employees(Goyal, 2014).Managing a balance between individual life and professional or work life is the great challenge for both working population and the industry and organizations. Particularly for nurses and lady doctors, it arises as a more difficult phenomenon to tradeoff a balance between these two. Work life balance policiesand programs, especially, flexible working time arrangements help them in balancing their family and working schedules. These arrangements in time give them the feeling of satisfaction (Goyal, 2014).

After evolution of globalization, the needs of working places are highly advancing and more influential. Workers spend large time at the working organization rather than at family and atmosphere of family environment. In spite of the fact that organizations are seeing advanced broadening, the work-life balance of the working individual is no long time in control. Expanding number of divorces, suicides cases, cluttered families and connections, dishonor or negates within the work places, etc. are the out-comes about of destitute work-life balance of the work constrain. It is long time managers must buildup out techniques or arrange to bargain with the issues and help the workers to appreciate their work and individual life to the maximized level (Muthukumar, Savitha & Kannadas, 2014).

Flexible work schedules (flexible workingtime) permit the employee to utilizethe time efficiently and plan several activities in a way that match the employee's situation best (Parasuraman & Greenhaus, 2002).

Furthermore an employee seeking job satisfaction and work life balance to leads the happy life. If the working context does not provide the policies to enhance work life balance employees get in to dissatisfied, increasing feel of leaving the job and employers also affected by poor performance and co- operation. Especially in the nursing officers have an important role in serving to the patients. If the nursing officers dissatisfied with working time and organization strict policies, they do not further express the eagerness toward work, ignore the devotion dedication and kindness characters which are most important to serve the patients. In government sectors, dissatisfied workers go for a boycott and work stoppage severely affect the poor people regarding health service needs. So, to resolve problems as mentioned organization should seek the ways to enhance the WLB most commonly for nursing officers provide working time flexibility to adjust their work family needs because the health sector needs the 24 hours service in the global.

Nursing officers deficiencies have been a persistent and rehashed issue within the nursing and health sector (NHS), in portion since of the resolute highlight of the business, the constrained availabilities

for flexible working time, the need of WLB and the troubles of combining shift working hours with care taking commitments (Curtis, Ball & Kirkham, 2006a). In later time periods, flexible working time and WLB are seen as imperative stage for give the NHS administrations and enlisting, enlisting staff and retain staff (Division of Wellbeing, 2010). The need for a flexible working time plan in Dickerson's consider, medical attendants seen a flexible working time plan to be more imperative than paying rewards and benefits as they were made the chance to examine the display concerns they had with respect to working time and conditions (Dickerson, Brewer, Kovner & Way, 2007).

This is often since at certain focuses of their work life, a few of the nursing officers prioritize family commitments over work obligations. Essentially, Spetz and Adams (2006) uncovered that when it comes to nursing staff retention, nursing officers see that progression within the work environment, counting flexible working time plans, is more imperative than other points of interest, such as money related advantage installment and annuity. Encouraging nursing officers depicted a flexible working time as one that grants medical caretakers to meet family needs and individual necessities and gives them higher level of control over time off which permits them to arrange further activities (Spetz & Adams, 2006).

Therefore, consideration placed on this title and the research problem described under this topic is as below:

**Does flexible working time facilitate work life balance of nursing officers in Ampara district in Sri Lanka?**

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research questions formulated to this study has been given below:

- To what extent nursing officers comply with their flexible working time in type "A" base hospitals in Ampara district Sri Lanka?
- What is the level of work life balance of type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka?
- Is there any relationship between flexible working time and work life balance of type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka?
- Does the flexible working time impact on work life balance of type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka?

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study is intended to achieve the following objectives:

- To analysis to what extent nursing officers comply with their flexible working time in type "A" base hospitals in Ampara district Sri Lanka.
- To examine the level of work life balance of type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka.
- Find out the relationship between flexible working time and work life balance of type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka.
- To analyses the impact of flexible working time on work life balance of type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **Flexible working time (FWT)**

Recent times, working time flexibilities are becoming more crucial to the working organizations. Many of work places provide flexible working time to employees because of the merits that flexibility provides to both worker and job provider. Higher employee productivity and greater level of company profitability are the most ordinary rewards (Shagvaliyeva & Yazdanifard, 2014). The need for a flexible working time schedule, nurses perceived a flexible working time schedule to be high significant than paying monetary rewards and welfares as they were created the opportunity to collaborate the present concerns they had about their working time and conditions (Dickerson, Brewer, Kovner & Way, 2007). Due to this certain circumstance of their work life, some of the nursing officers prioritize family obligations over job duties.

Most researchers have defined / explain about the FWT. The term "flexible working time" consists an array of worker- work provider work arrangements that are built to facilitate work place and personal demands, consisting numbers of working hours, type of working patterns or time schedules of hours worked, pay system and work location. Working time flexibilities expresses a possibility for job providers to facilitate a most effective and efficient work group and for workers to balance work-personal life needs and further life requirements (Grote & Raeder 2009; Becker, McCutcheon & Hegney, 2010).

Working-time flexibility may be seen from the perspective of the job holder or employer. Employee-friendly policies and models of working-time flexibility are "those that give employees with the freedom to adapt their working hours and schedule to meet their own family and personal demands (Chung & Tjinders, 2011). Flexible

working time arrangement is defined as an alternative to the standard working time schedule (Rau & Hyland, 2002).

WLB practices and policies are often identified in practice as, 'flexible work time schedules' having variety of processes such as: job sharing, part-time working, career breaks, shift working, home working, compressed hours, term-time working, zero hours contracts, annualized hours, teleworking/e-working, study leave, and V-Time (Paryani, 2015). The following sections explain the two models of FWT.

#### **Compressed/Extended work week:**

Compressed or extended work weeks were implemented in the early 1970s; compressed workweek was a system to establish different types of options used instead of the standard five days, 40 hours work per week by rearranging the standard working hours per week to less than 5 days in the week. From an organization's view, this faced plant and machineries to be in use for longer hours of time with less numbers of begin-ups and close-ups. While the circumstance, it creates the situation for workers to encounter more hours of time blocks for their personal matters (Perrin, 2001).

Compressed or extended workweek is one of the flexible choices to do the job where an employee works their standard week hours such as 40 hours in less than 5 week days per week. Common examples are: four work days per day 10-hours, three work days per day 12-hour, per day 9-hours work Monday through Thursday and an 8-hour work per day on one Friday, with alternate Fridays off. Usually, communication centers, customer service centers and health service centers utilize these flexible time schedules to open their companies to work on a 24-hour basis (Perrin, 2001).

Further Downes and Koekemoer (2012) explain that working extra hours of time per day according to get permission for time or days off next to the day during the week (e.g. - working long hours for three days in the week to get permit allow next two days off); Working additional days in a week to get allowed for days or time off in the subsequent weeks while Trinkoff, Johantgen, Storr, Gurses, Liang and Kihye (2011) explain employees may be asked to attend the work with their total standard number of duty hours in the week over less than 5 days. Examples of compressed duty hours working forms include working time being rearranged to allow the weekly duty hours to be worked in 4 or 4½ days per week or over 9 days each fortnight. Policies are commonly established to prohibit total number of duty hours works per day/pay period, especially for health and safety concerns. Compressed workweeks (CWWs) imply the same number of working hours per day being scheduled over fewer days than is common in a standard workweek, which also results in longer working days (ILO, 2018).

#### **Shift working hours or Flexi hours:**

The substantive nursing staff do shift work, facilitating patient health care service in shifts or special fixed time periods over a 24-hour service. Good result for patients and nursing staff is associating with time scheduling on self-basis (Kilpatrick & Tremblay, 2006).

Some jobs, companies use shift-based employments due to the aspect of their typical integration with shift work according to the nature of the jobs - for example, some jobs facilitating 24 hours service per day such as nursing staff, doctors, and forces military officers (Williams, 2008). Irregular shifts and rotating shift are most used shift work has changed via the years.

Regular night shifts, usual evening shifts, rotating shifts (which is change regularly from days to evening or tonight shift) split shifts (two or more clear cut time periods per day) on call or casual (no pre-allocated shift schedules - for example, substitute nurses, teaching staff). Irregular schedule (changes, but always pre-planned and pre-scheduled one week or more in advance—for example, pilots) Other, non-day shift schedules (Williams, 2008).

#### **Work Life Balance (WLB)**

WLB describes as an integration between a people's various phases of life and their life-related aspects (Hildebrandt, 2006). Work-life balance has been referred subjectively as 'harmony or counter balance between job and personal life arena' (Chang, McDonald & Burdon, 2010). Various researchers have described work-life balance as parallel period, parallel psychological participation, and same level of satisfaction with one's personal and job roles (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003). Work-life balance also described as the complete interaction between job and family meanwhile, both not intervening with one another (Muthukumar, Savitha & Kannadas, 2014). Work-life balance is best viewed as a state of people's life that helps to attainment of satisfaction in working life and personal life (Swathi & Mohapatra, 2017). The phase work-life balance is provided priority as it consists the experiences of professional females and aid in analyzing fresh directions of working and living for them (Goyal, 2014).

The concept work-life balance is explained as "A level of equilibrium in which the needs of both a person's work and family life are equal". Work-life balance is based on the assumption that every working individual should have fulfill life in which an enough level of time is spent to the individual personal wants and

needs (such as societal or community work, continuing education, hobbies, sports etc.) and their family members interests (Doherty & Manfredi, 2006). Work life balance, from a worker point of view, is the following balance between obligations at job and at family commitments (DeCieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit, 2005). The proof proposes that, workers who face work-life balance issues encounter to greater level of stress than those who identified as have balanced between professional and personal life obligations (Lowe, 2006).

Organizational policies, organizational environment, attitude of the employers and support of the supervisors along with the management are few of the vital factors that influence on the work life balance (Haider & Azmi, 2019). Among number of factors attitude of the employee affects work life balance drastically. Attitude is described by one's likes and dislikes on the persons objects and situations in the work places. Attitude is the way individuals feeling and the path of thinking about something. Work life balance is drastically affected by number of psychological elements. How individual responses in the certain circumstances, how individuals handle job and co-workers compulsion are core dimensions of psychological behaviors. The subject of manage the emotions also contributes vitally in attaining and maintaining such work and personal life balance (Muthukumar et al., 2014). Further they explain work life balance is related with both family and working life, dimensions as, family background, economic status, and social values and status of the individuals' family, life stage of the worker, family hierarchy, every-day tasks, friends-group and societal customs also impact work life.

### **Role conflict model of WLB:**

There are three main forms of role conflict predictors (Dikkers, Dulk, Geurts, Peper & Kompier, 2004; Geurts, Peper, Dulk, Taris & Kompier, 2005; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

- **Time-based predictors**

Time-based predictors describe time commitments related to individuals' role, which is the degree of individual's time which is spent related in profession or personal life associated tasks (Parasuraman, Purohit & Godshalk, 1996). Further they described this predictor is commitments related to time are vital general predictor of profession or personal life friction due to the scarcity of time resource, time spent in single role associated tasks un avoidably minimizes the time which can be provided to next role. Working hours have been continuously related to hard processes in balancing professional and family life. While Boise and Neal (1996) proposed which is without regarding climate or whether, personal life obligations interact care taking for children and depended elders maximizes the time needs arisen on the personal family. Some time-based predictors are; time needed by work, time needed by family or home, role ambiguity, role conflict, tension and confusion.

- **Strain-based predictors**

Second type of predictor of profession and personal life friction associates to role-related dissatisfaction and distress. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) described that variety of role demand can create distress and strain which reduces one's ability or interest to meet the obligations of next role. Degree of workload describes on one's subjective insight which they have more task to do in the available period of time (Major, Klein & Ehrhart, 2002). Some strain-based predictors are; work over load, emotional exhaustion, unrealistic target, work and family clash, inability in managing work load, distress, dissatisfied and burnout.

- **Behavior-based predictors:**

The last types of predictors of profession and personal life friction which describes to the represent of particular behavior in single domain that are contradict with expected behaviors with the next domain phase, while role expectations and norm in an aspect of life are unmatched with other domain needs. In the job one may be desired to be ambitious, aggressive, task oriented and hard-driving. Successful duty performs may be depended upon the evidence of these behavioral aspects. In distinguish with being supportive family, accommodating and loving may be considered as necessary to enhancing and maintaining a cheerful and healthiest family life. Definitely these contradictory desires may form a tension between professional and personal life behaviors, as well as prohibiting to move from one environmental circumstance to another (Parasuraman et al., 1996). Some behavior based predictors are; ambitious, hard driving, task oriented and aggressive.

### **Flexible Working Time and Work Life Balance**

Challenges stimulated through present requirements for variety of working schedule with time and shift flexibilities to enhance nursing staff work-life balance also to highly reduce the work- personal life contradicts. Number of nursing officers face difficulties to maintain the highly stressed circumstance emerged via the permanent contradiction between job requirements and societal obligations also these contradiction has built number of nursing staff those who concentrate on their children and family members as a first and at most priority rather retain with their occupation (Alsayed, 2018). Moreover, when a person's flexible working time arrangements often have a marginal entire positive impact on workers work and family life balance, the assumption of utility and accessibility of this flexible working time arrangements seem to be the core factor in attaining work and family life balance for number professional workers (Hayman, 2009).

Majority (95%) of employees who work with schedule on time flexibilities indicated that workers having sense of feeling regarding balance between professional tasks and family commitments was highly significant. More

number of cases (80.5%) indicated that, flexible working schedules had had a supportive and positive reaction on working population work and family life balance (Kelliher&Anderson, 2008).The follow up of flexible working timearrangements in region of Europe in both private and government sectors have leadsto balance the professional and personal lifeobligations. So, the balance between life and work create the employees have mostwell - situated and correctperiod to complete the obligations of the personal life commitments such as food maintenance, child care taking andpurchasing process with peaceful mind (De Droure, 1995).Workers operating under work arrangements on time flexibilities expressedvitalmaximized degree of workand family life balance than standards hours workers who are utilizing conventional constant-hour schedules(Hayman, 2009).Also increasing the flexibility isfacilitated to workers through flexible working hoursarrangements have an ability toimprove the in-corporations of job and responsibilities regarding individuals’ personal needs (Hayman, 2009).Flexible working timearrangementsimprovethe work and familylife balance, minimized stress alsomaximizedworkers welfare are results of the work and family life balance (Shagvaliyeva& Yazdanifard, 2014).

Lewis and Humbert ((2010) described, male workers seems the flexible time arrangements as apath to enhance their commitments regarding their professional, whenfemale workersrelated the flexible working time schedules with the worklife balance enhancement. Number ofempirical evidence described that work arrangements with flexible timeactivitiesuitmostly for female than males and are mostdesired to be recruited by female workersbecause of the ideology norms of motherhood.Flexible work arrangementsregarding time flexibilities in the work positively impact on work andfamily balance and job holders’ complete life satisfaction(Shagvaliyeva& Yazdanifard, 2014).

### Significant of the Study

The health sector is a most important sector all around the world, due to the higher need of human healthy survival. Therefore, the health sector employees are the significant personalities ever. Even the very pandemic situation occurring times, the doctors and nursing officers could not be rest from their job. So, the health employees’ especially nursing officers always have the very influencing major roles towards the society. When compare with other office works and nursing employments, there is the huge difference can sense that, the nursing officers play the vital role physically and mentally beyond the very normal target completion, paper works and physical works. Nurses should have the higher level of patience to treat the patients. People in categories there are elders, youngers, females, males, children and infants have identically very different treatments, needs along with very different mentality. According to the emergency, nursing officers should perform their work at most fast way to serve the human lives.

Most research has referred that facilitating registered nursing officers with flexible shift work arrangement is an empowering element as it enhances their work and personal life satisfaction level and this, in turn, involveshigher level of loyalty and higher morale which also improves the opportunities that nursing officers will remain in the employment (Alsayed, 2018).

While consider about nursing staff retention, nursing officerscomprehend that improvement in the working place condition, including flexible working time schedules, is vital than other advantages in greater extent, such as monetary payments and retirement benefits. further, nursing officers described a flexible workingtime as one that permits nursing staff to attain family needs and individual demands and gives them higher level of dominance over time off which permits them to plan more (Spetz &Adams, 2006). Therefore this study is significant to provide the benefit to the existing body of knowledge to understand the importance of FWT, and the organization which are operating 24 hours a day. Also it provide a better understanding about work life balance for the nursing officers in order to get the work satisfaction as well as life satisfaction.

### Conceptual Framework of the Study

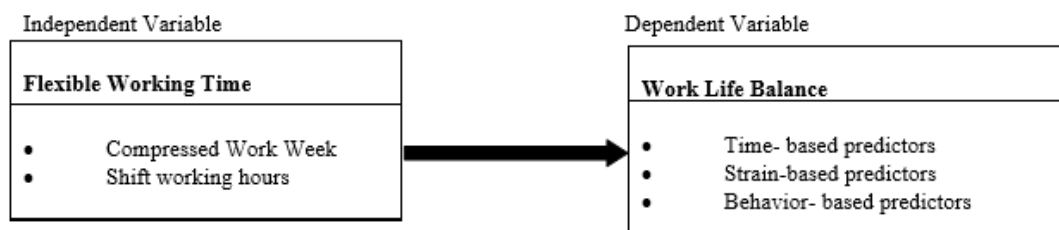


Fig.1: Conceptual framework

### Hypothesis of the Study

According to the conceptual frame work the hypothesis formulated to this study is given below:

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between flexible working time and work life balance of nursing officers in Ampara district in Sri Lanka.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between flexible working time and work life balance of nursing officers in Ampara district in Sri Lanka.

**Operationalization**

The below mentioned operationalization (Table 1) expresses perfectly that how the involved concepts measured in this study. According to the literature of this study, researchers formulated the flexible working time as an independent variable likewise work life balance as the dependent Variable. Then these two variables were formulated into dimensions. Finally, dimensions were formulated into indicators by researchers. Based on the indicators survey statements/ questions were developed.

**Table 1: Operationalization**

Variables		Dimensions	items	Measurement
Independent Variable	Flexible Working Time	Compressed /Extended Work Week	• Duration of work hours	Q No: 01- 04
			• Autonomy in Decision making	Q No: 05
			• Top Management Support	Q No: 06
			• Peers Support	Q No: 07
			• Health Support	Q No: 08
			• Family Support	Q No: 09
		Shift Working hours/ Flexi hours	• The variability or predictability of the schedule	Q No: 10- 15
			• The degree of input or control	Q No: 16- 18
• The amount of advance notice of the schedule	Q No: 19- 20			
Dependent Variable	Work Life Balance	Time-based predictors	• Time needed by work	Q No: 21-22
			• Time needed by family or home	Q No: 23-24
			• Role ambiguity	Q No: 25
			• Role conflict	Q No: 26
			• Tension	Q No: 27
			• confusion	Q No: 28
		Strain-based predictors	• Work overload	Q No: 29-30
			• Emotional exhaustion	Q No: 31-33
			• Unrealistic target	Q No: 34
			• Work and family clash	Q No: 35
			• Inability in managing work load	Q No: 36
			• Distress	Q No: 37
			• Dissatisfied	Q No: 38
		Behaviour- based predictors	• Burnout	Q No: 39
			• Ambitious	Q No: 40
			• Hard driving	Q No: 41
• Task oriented	Q No: 42			
		• Aggressive	Q No: 43-44	

(Developed for this study)

In case of flexible working time for nursing officers in Sri Lanka, there are two types of flexible working time arrangements available to them. Those are compressed work week or extended work week and shift working hours. Standard hours for nursing officers per day in Sri Lankan context 6 hours, there are 4 shift arrangements available to them 6.00 am to 12.00 pm, 12.00 pm to 6.00 pm, 6.00 pm to 12.00 am and 12.00 am to 6.00 am. The researchers used Perrin (2001) compressed work week dimensions and indicators to measure the Type “A” base hospital’s nursing officers work life balance. As per that shift working hours were measured by using the indicators of shift working hours elements reported in NHS (2018).

**Population and Sample of the Study:** The study targets the 142 nursing officers from 707 nursing officers, who are working in type “A” base hospitals in Ampara district as the sample of the study. There are 4, type “A” base hospitals in Ampara district namely Ashraf Memorial Hospital (AMH), Kalmunai North Hospital (KNBH), Base Hospital Sammanthurai (BHS) and Base Hospital Akkaraippattu (BHA). The study used the stratified random sampling method; in each stratum (hospital) 20% of nursing officers were selected from population (707).

**Method of Data Collection and Data Analysis:** This study considered on primary data, which were collected via the self – assessment questionnaires from the nursing officers who are working in the type “A” base

hospitals in Ampara district Sri Lanka. The survey questionnaire originally developed by researchers according to the job characteristics of nursing officers in Sri Lanka and availability of flexible working time arrangements to them at presently. Also, past literature of work life balance used to get the concept regarding work life balance measures.

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.0 was used by the researchers to simplify the statistical analysis work of this study. Collected data for this study from survey questionnaires were analyzed through reliability and validity, univariate and bivariate analyses initially.

The reliability and validity analysis were used to assure the quality of the data collection instrument. The consistency of the instrument was depicted by the reliability, to measure the reliability of the instrument Cronbach's Alpha test was used by researchers; although this model analyses the internal consistency of the data collecting instrument. As a technique the factor analysis simplifies the complex set of data through analyzing the correlation between the factors (Foster, 2001). Factor analysis used to determine the construct validity of the measure with a use of principal components analysis and varimax rotation method (Table 2). To confirm the sample adequacy and appropriateness of factor analysis Kaiser Meyer - Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity used. For the satisfactory analysis to preface the further calculation the KMO value should be greater than 0.5 (Pallant, 2007).

**Table: 2 Decision Attributes for data reliability analysis.**

Range	Decision Attributes
$CAC \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.8 \leq CAC < 0.9$	Good
$0.7 \leq CAC < 0.8$	Acceptable
$0.6 \leq CAC < 0.7$	Questionable
$0.5 \leq CAC < 0.6$	Poor
$0.5 > CAC$	Unacceptable

Where CAC= Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient  
(Source: George & Mallery, 2003)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study focused on the 142 respondents as the sample size out of 707 populations, who were expected to participate in the study. From the targeted sample 128 questionnaires were returned with fully completed manner. According to the returned questionnaires 128 respondents only used by the researchers to analyze the study variables, this consists the total response rate of 90.14%. Therefore, the response rate is satisfactory to derive the conclusion of this study, according to Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003) statement the study absorbed the 90.14% response rate which is excellent basement for data analysis. Response rates of each hospital were AMH 87.80%, KNBH 91.93%, BHA 91.67% and BHS 86.67% respectively.

### Reliability analysis

The Cronbach's Alpha analysis is used to measure the reliability of the instrument. When the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient value is above 0.700 is that considerable as an acceptable instrument (based on the decision attributes of reliability analysis by George and Mallery (2003) in table 2. According to this CAC acceptable value researcher can conclude that the instrument used to gather the data is fairly reliable measure of assessing the impact of flexible working time on work life balance. The following table 4 shows the result of reliability analysis.

**Table: 3 result of Reliability Analyses**

Variables	No. of scale items	Cronbach's Alpha value
Flexible Working Time	20	0.721
Work Life Balance	24	0.747

(Source: Survey data)

### Validity of the scale

The validity of the instrument used in the study to measure flexible working time and work life balance is assessed by using following elaborated methods.

### Content validity

Cooper and Schindler (2001) described that the content validity is the extent to which there is a need for the adequate coverage of all the domains of the constructs being examined. For this study, the content validity of the instrument that measuring flexible working time and work life balance is adequate enough due to researcher used the strong literature review to operationalize the study variables and its indicators. For measuring the



flexible working time, the researchers used Perrin(2001) and NHS (2018) flexible working time dimensions and indicators. The purpose to measure the work life balance, the researchers used Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) role conflict model of work life balance. According to attain the further details Dijkers et al., (2004); Geurts et al., (2005) research reports used to distinguish between three major forms of role conflict predictors. To measure the work life balance, number of indicators used by researcher from past literature especially from Parasuraman et al. (1996). Therefore, the study consists the high content validity of scale by the use of strong literature review for the research variables and dimension measures.

**Construct validity**

O' Leary-Kelly and Vokurka (1998) elaborated the construct validity is the analysis of the degree to which an operationalization correctly measures its targeted variables. for this purpose, each measurement scale was evaluated by analyzing its convergent and discriminant validity. Using factor analysis Convergent validity of the constructs was measured.

**Factor Analysis**

Factor analysis was performed on both study variables of this study with a purpose of ensure all the scales used in the research have adequate level of construct validity. Priory appropriateness of the factor analysis need to be assessed with a purpose of ensures the suitability of the data for factor analysis procedures. According to Pallant (2007) test the research data suitability to the analysis two test were used, which are the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure for sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity also, the minimum value of 0.5 of KMO is acceptable for running factor analysis while KMO is lower than 0.5 is not suitable to factor analysis process so, factor analysis should not be performed when the KMO value is below than 0.5. There is universal agreement which is factor analysis is inappropriate when sample size is below 50 (Field, 2005). According to Field's statement this study sample size is quite larger than the 50, realized sample size of the study is 128 this is ensured that the sample size is above the cut-off value.

Lombaard. Merwe, Kele and Mounton (2011) stated that the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is the determination index of factor analysis for the data set of a study. Bartlett's Test of the Sphericity is significant at  $p < 0.05$  for the factor analysis to be considered as appropriate. According to the findings Table 5 represents the measures out-put of KMO values of flexible working time and work life balance are 0.505 and 0.651 respectively, which are above the acceptable value 0.5 and the Bartlett's test of Sphericity for flexible working time and work life balance revealed the results as Chi-Square values are 299.532 (df = 190) and 666.228 (df = 276) respectively at the significance level of  $p < 0.000$ .

Regarding the above out-put values and measures researchers derived the conclusion that the questionnaire statements used by researchers for the data collection were significantly related, involving factor analysis was appropriate for the data set, while each KMO values of study variables are higher than 0.5. And Bartlett's test of Sphericity values ensured the factor analysis is highly suitable for this study data set. Hence, regard to the flexible working time and work life balance 20 and 24 items were subjected respectively to the factor analysis using the Principal Component Analysis. All the extraction values of the total 44 items were show the above 0.5 indices, that ensure the significant relatedness of the factors.

**Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Variables	KMO	Bartlett's test of Sphericity		
		Approx. Chi-Square	df	sig.
Flexible working time	0.505	299.532	190	0.000
Work Life Balance	0.651	666.228	276	0.000

(Source: Survey data)

**Descriptive Statistics**

**Descriptive statistics for flexible working time and its dimensions**

Overall mean value of FWT shown high value as 4.5122. Overall standard deviation is 0.18384, this value show that there is very low variation in the respondent responses regarding FWT therefore researcher perceived that the FWT have play an important role in their work and personal life. Further this perception was confirmed by examining minimum and maximum scores of respondents. Minimum score is 4.04 and maximum score is 4.9. Further, there is no big differences between dimensions mean values and standard deviations. Both 2 dimensions such as shift working hours and compressed work week have a high level of mean values 4.4950 and 4.5295 respectively. The dimensions standard deviations are 0.19049 and 0.17719 respectively.

**Descriptive statistics for work life balance and its dimensions**

Overall mean value of WLB shown high value as 4.4703. Overall standard deviation is 0.24407, this value show that there is very low variation in the respondent responses regarding WLB therefore researcher perceived that

respondents have similar level of work life balance. Further this perception was confirmed by examining minimum and maximum scores of respondents. Minimum score is 3.76 and maximum score is 4.9. Among the all 3 dimensions strain- based predictors has a highest mean value such as 4.4716 and standard deviation is 0.16718, this show that low level of variance among the respondents’ responses regarding strain- based predictors. Time- based predictors has the second most significant dimension in the work life balance, this dimension possessed 4.4678 mean value and 0.25208 standard deviation. While compare with above 2 dimensions behavior-based predictors has slightly less mean value that 4.4469 and standard deviation is 0.31296 respectively.

**Skewness and kurtosis**

The skewness values for measurement items range must within the recommended level of -1 to +1, skewness values falling out side to recommended range indicate a substantially skewed distribution (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006). Kurtosis ranges are well within the recommended level of -0.2 to + 2.0 (Coakes & Steed, 2003).

According to survey data results skewness values for flexible working time and work life balance are 0.094 and -0.074 respectively, this was consisted under recommended range. Kurtosis values are -0.211 and -0.971 respectively. Both skewness and kurtosis values of this study variables met the criterion range.

**Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis was done by researchers to determine the relationship between flexible working time and work life balance. According to the result, Correlation coefficient value of  $r=0.713$  statistically found between 2 variables, this was indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between FWT and WLB at 0.01 levelsince the p-value is less than 0.05 ( $P = 0.000$ ).

**Table 5: The result of Correlation Analysis between flexible working time and work life balance**

Variables	Work life balance	
Flexibleworkingtime	Pearson Correlation	.713**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	128

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)  
(Source: Survey data)

**Simple Regression Analysis**

**Table 6: Model summary of simple linear regression**

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.713 <sup>a</sup>	.508	.501	.19026

a. Predictors: (Constant), flexible working time  
b. dependent variable, work life balance.  
(Source: Survey data)

The model summary tabulated in Table7,R square and adjusted R square revealed the values as 0.508 and 0.501 respectively. The key result that found from the table is the adjusted R square value of 0.501. This indicate 50% of the variation in work life balance can be explained by the model containing flexible working time. This is indicating that prediction from the regression equation are fairly reliable. And rest of the 50% variation still unexplained, so adding other suitable independent variables might improve the fit of the model.

**Table 7: ANOVA table**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.424	1	3.424	69.877	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	3.289	126	.049		
	Total	6.713	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Work life balance  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Flexible working time  
(Source: Survey data)

According to ANOVA statistic of this study shown in the Table 8, Sum of Square regression value is 3.424 which refer to sum of squares explained by the regression equation. And the Sum of Square residual value is 3.289 refers to the variability in the dependent variable work life balance, this indicate the value that is left by the regression equation of the study.

The F value of the ANOVA is 69.877; which is significant in this study (P value = 0.000 < 0.05). According to the statistics researchers can be concluded that there is a linear relationship between the flexible working time and work life balance. Also, the study regression equation allows to predict the dependent variable work life balance in a sufficient level.

**Table 8: Coefficients.**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.613	.41		3.379	.001
	FWT	0.677	.093	.713	7.300	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Worklifebalance  
(Source: Survey data)

The coefficient of regression equation and test of significance is shown Table 9. In this table the values placed in the column B provide the gradient and intercept for the regression line. In Table 9 unstandardized beta values for constant and flexible working time are 0.613 and 0.677 respectively. Here this unstandardized regression coefficient of flexible working time indicates the degree or extent of impact of flexible working time on the work life balance of type “A” base hospital’s nursing officers.

A linear regression equation (Y= a+ Bx) of the study formed as follows:

$$WLB = 0.613 + 0.677(FWT)$$

According to equation while the flexible working time changes by one unit there will be the 0.677 units change in the work life balance. This equation shows the direction of relationship between 2 variables, As the time the positive coefficient indicates the direct positive impact of flexible working time on work life balance of nursing officers.

The t value against flexible working time regression coefficient in the model is reported to assess whether the flexible working time is a significant predictor of the work life balance. Since t = 7.300, p = 0.000 < 0.05, it can be interacted that flexible working time is significant predictor of work life balance.

### Hypothesis Testing

According to test the alternative hypothesis(H1), Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was done by researchers, for this test desired level of significant level was 0.05. Regarding this flexible working time has a significant relationship with a work life balance, the correlation coefficient (r = 0.73) is proven strong positive relationship between the variables 0.01 significant level. This correlation coefficient value is statistically significant with 0.000 significant value, its smaller than the desired level of significance (0.05). Regression model itself indicates that one unit increase in flexible working time that will increase the work life balance by 0.677 unit with 0.000 significance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is supported while the null hypothesis is not supported with justification with a survey data and its statistical results. Using statistical evidence to claim that there is a significant relationship between flexible working time and work life balance.

### Conclusion

Always nursing officers have to express the kindness, caring and other needed emotions towards the patients at any situation even they are in a very bad mood, physical hardship and family conflicts. Hence the job of nursing officers is very vital at each and every moment. So according to perform their exact duties at any time, the health organizations and administrations should facilitate them with high level of work life balance, then only the nursing officers reveal their higher enthusiastic work towards treatments. In order to maintain the nursing officers work life balance, organizations and hospital administrations implement the number of strategies accords with their capacity. All around the globe nursing officers have flexible working time arrangements to perform their duties in a better way without personal professional conflicts. There are so many researches previously conducted by scholars on the basis of attain the understanding of impact of the flexible working time on the work life balance of nursing officers with different variables. But in Sri Lankan health context there are two ways of flexible working time arrangements are in customized. According to Sri Lankan context there is very few researches conducted to determine the relationship between flexible working time and work life balance of nursing officers, this is the research gap that stimulated the researchers to fulfill the gap through this study.

Therefore, this study investigated whether the flexible working time impact on work life balance of type “A” base hospital’s nursing officers in Ampara district Sri Lanka. Through the finding of the study researcher derived the conclusion that, there is a significant strong positive relationship (r= 0.713) between the flexible working time and work life balance of type “A” base hospital’s nursing officers Ampara district Sri Lanka. The results show that around 50% of variance in work life balance explained by flexible working time (Adjusted R<sup>2</sup>= 0.501). And flexible working time have a significant and direct impact on work life balance of nursing officers. (b=0.677). Statistics revealed that, the flexible working time leads to higher level of work life balance among

the nursing officers. The results show that nursing officers who has higher self- satisfaction with their flexible working time has the high level of work life balance.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The finding of the study revealed that, there is significant strong positive relationship between the flexible working time and work life balance; therefore the health sector administration should maintain the adequate level of nurses' work life balance regard with the use of accurate flexible working time arrangements.
- Provide the further flexible working time schemes also can be facilitate the aware about current flexible working time and its further aspects and uses to build up the higher level of work life balance
- Administration can provide the career programs for the staff to organize the professional and personal works without clash in the flexible working time context. It may the effective training that helps the personalities who are under covered by flexible working time to maintain the work and family in orderly manner.
- [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
- Further administration can implement the different idea and techniques to ensure the work life balance of nursing officers who are working under flexible working time, provide more freedom in choosing the shifts, allow them to work continuous extended week according to their weekly plans etc.

### LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study encountered many limitations; those limitations provide the suggestions for future researchers to conduct the study on this topic in advanced way:

- First limitation is the researchers used the stratified random sampling method to select the sample. sample size is limited with 20% of the population among the total population, due to time constraint of data collection process. Although this study only covered the type "A" base hospitals' nursing officers in Ampara district, failed to cover the type "B" base hospitals and other divisional hospital nursing staff. Future researcher may replicate this study with a large sample size and covered with whole hospitals' nursing staff it may increase the validity and reliability of the study, and it may provide the room for clear explanation about the relationship between the study variables FWT and WLB.
- Second limitation is researchers considered only Ampara district nursing staff to collect the data, if the future researcher may get clear correlation statistics with high validity while covered the whole hospital nursing staff in island wide.
- Third limitation of the study is, researchers consider only the nursing officers as the population but, there are other staffs available in health sector who entitled to work in flexible working time arrangements. When the future researchers consider all other staff like doctors, non- skill labors and other all categories of workers in health sector that will be provide the advance range of findings to this study.
- Fourth limitation of the study is, researchers used only one dependent variable to see the effect of flexible working time arrangement of the nursing officers. Further researcher may incorporate with other suitable dependent variables beyond the work life balance like job satisfaction, job performance and organizational commitment, it may reveal the multiple findings to the study also the study may get increased level of worth.
- The final major limitation of the study is, researchers used only self-rating scale to gather the respondents' responses, although only the instruction phrased in the questionnaire to requested the respondents to provide the genuine responses frankly. There is high possibility for potential bias in the responses. Respondents may over confident on their emotion and they may rate themselves better. Therefore, researcher may use other effective data gathering techniques like 360 degrees rating scale, direct interviews to improve the accuracy of the data.

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