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**Work Life Balance Strategies for Women in The Civil Service. A Case of the Ministry of
Agriculture Agritex Department**

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents William and Virginia Huku, and my own family
Brian, Ryan and Milan.

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May God bless you.

ABSTRACT

The study sought to determine work life balance strategies for women in the civil service particularly those in the Ministry of Agriculture Agritex Department at the head office in Harare. In this study, 40 female employees were used as the research subjects. Questionnaires were used as the key research instrument. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 20. Mean was used to make sense of demographic data while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses which were formulated for the study. The study identified that they were several factors that made work life balance harder among them difficulties in taking leave, amount of travel required and having to take additional work home. In the study, results showed that women use strategies such as using technology, engaging helpers, as well as support from both workmates and family. The strategies however differed with demographic variables that included age, marital status, number of children, age of children, educational qualifications and having primary care responsibilities. Generally, all strategies were widely used but single women who were below the age of thirty appeared to have a balance in their lives while those who were married, had care responsibilities and middle age cited that they were not able to balance work and life. All the participants agreed that work life balance was partly an employer's responsibility and partly an individual's responsibility but sometimes it remains a sole responsibility of the employer. It was then recommended that communication, supportive work cultures and support from management and supervisors be improved.

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Chapter One

Orientation to the Study

1.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on background information to the study of the strategies that female employees use in balancing their work and personal life. It provides a statement of the problem that motivated the researcher to embark on the study. The purpose of the study is also reiterated in this chapter together with specific objectives. The delimitations of the study are included as parameters in conducting the research. Key terms which will constantly be made reference to are also defined.

1.1 Background to the Study

Modern gender policies have redressed imbalances that existed between men and women. Consequently, contemporary women have been empowered to participate in education and the labour market and are no longer confined in home environments. For example, the world has, therefore, witnessed a drastic increase in the number of women, some older than twenty-five pursuing full or part time studies at various universities and colleges as a way of increasing their future employment opportunities. Traditionally the role of women was confined to cooking, cleaning and raising children and other household chores and women rarely had access of outside home but it has become different. With the improved education and employment opportunities today, in Zimbabwe the redressing of gender policies has played a pivotal role, women now even play important roles outside the home. Most homes now have dual earners because of increase in expenses and necessities. The expansion of higher education has also enhanced job prospects for

women and there is a shift in the role models from stay-at home mothers to successful professional women (Thriveni & Rama, 2012). Despite these facts, there has also been a shift in the roles of both men and women but still most household chores are not shared equally between men and women. With increase in pressure at work place and important demands at home, work life balance is at stake (Reddy, Vranda, Ahmed, Nirmala & Siddaramu, 2010). Women are no longer a minority group in employing organisations nevertheless work life balance is an issue of women as well as men but the study was however centred on women.

The Civil Service amongst other institutions has witnessed significant increase in the number of female employees. The study sought to investigate WLB strategies of female employees in the Ministry of Agriculture's Agricultural Technical and Extension Services Department (Agritex). The department is distinct within the ministry as it coordinates farming activities particularly training throughout the country. Agritex is composed of 5 700 employees in provinces and districts and it is the Head Office where the research was conducted that is involved in decision making, influencing activities and cascading down to all the provinces and districts. The total establishment at the head office is 76 employees, 40 of which are women who are the focus of the study and are expected to work effectively under various challenges and work life balance concerns. It is therefore imperative to examine work life balance strategies that these women use to cope with the demands of work and family issues. Quite a number of women are found in management, operational and supervisory staff making over 50% of the total staff compliment. The increased participation of women in the labour market can be to a greater extent be attributed to the redressing of gender policies by the Zimbabwean Government.

On the surface, empowerment of women is very positive. However, research on Work Life Balance (WLB) show that working women perform multiple roles and therefore struggle to balance their work demands and the demands of their families (Bardoel, de Ceiri & Santos, 2008). In most cases, the immense changes that have been occurring within organisations which include technology, globalisation, mergers, acquisitions, restructuring, downsizing and strategic alliances have increased working women's workloads (Carlson, Kacmar & Williams, 2000).

Work-life imbalances result in job stress which is costly to both individuals and organizations (Glynn, 1998). For instance, in the United States, job stress is estimated to cost industry more than three hundred billion dollars in a year in related costs such as absenteeism and reduced productivity (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work [EASHW], 2008). The EASHW study further revealed that individuals who cannot balance their work demands and the demands of their families ended up having health challenges. In the Western world, work-life balance challenges of women have been tackled at both individual and organizational levels. For example, women have been assisted to develop new coping skills (Holbeche & McCartney, 2002). Whilst, several organisations have put in place several balancing programmes such as onsite child and elderly care facilities, parental leave, compressed working weeks, telecommuting, flexi-work and job sharing to avert stress on the part of working women. The WLB literature is however silent about the strategies female employees use to attain work-life balance. This is a serious omission especially in settings such as the one in Zimbabwe where female employees' plight is worsened by the prevailing economic challenges affecting industry and commerce.

Most firms are downsizing and the tasks that used to be done by several people have to be done by a reduced number to sustain the organisations. This also means that negotiating time off work is no longer easy. The situation has been tightened by labour law amendments particularly section 12 of the Labour Act and Supreme Court labour judgements which brought uncertainties to employees in general. This became an additional challenge to women as they try to keep their jobs and at the same time have time for their family and personal lives.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The repelling of gender insensitive labour laws has enabled female employees the world over to participate in education and the labour market. Consequently, contemporary women are no longer confined in home environments. However, most working women have not relinquished their traditional family roles of being mothers and wives. The prevailing economic meltdown in Zimbabwe has forced female employees to show loyalty and commitment to their jobs by sacrificing time for their personal activities for fear of losing their jobs and incomes. Because WLB research is not advanced in the Zimbabwean setting, little is known about the strategies working women employ to avert the negative effects of job stress. Before any support service can be planned for the female employees in Agritex in Harare, it is essential to conduct a survey study on WLB strategies of these women.

1.3 Significance of the Study

No recorded study could be found that had been conducted in the Agritex department in Harare on the WLB strategies of female employees. Data collected could therefore be valuable to the Human Resources Practitioners and the researcher.

1.3.1 Human resources practitioners

The findings were hoped to enable Human resources practitioners to plan training and support services for female employees in the Agritex department in Harare. Furthermore, the findings could be used to develop preventive and promotive programmes for female employees in the Ministry of Agriculture.

1.3.2 The researcher

The study was an opportunity for the researcher to interact with theoretical and practical knowledge about WLB and contribute to the advancement of the discourse on WLB strategies of female employees. The researcher also picked up valuable research and scholarship skills that enabled her to eventually become an independent public researcher.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to survey and describe strategies that female employees in the Agritex department in Harare use to balance their work and family demands with the view of making recommendations for appropriate intervention.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- Identify and describe work life balance strategies of women in the Agritex head office in Harare
- Compare work life balance strategies of women in the Agritex head office in Harare by demographic variables.
- To make recommendations for appropriate intervention.

1.6 Hypotheses

1.6.1 Female employees at Agritex head office in Harare do not use any strategies to achieve work-life balance.

1.6.2 Work-life balance strategies of female employees at Agritex Head Office in Harare do not differ by demographic variables.

1.7 Assumptions

The researcher assumed that:

1.7.1 Female employees at Agritex head office used WLB strategies to avert stress.

1.7.2 Female employees were willing to reveal their WLB strategies to the researcher.

1.7.3 Female employees provided truthful information about their WLB strategies.

1.7.4 The information generated by this study benefited female employees and the Ministry of Agriculture, Agritex head office.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

This study focused on work life balance strategies only and not any other strategies. The study was also limited to all levels of female employees in Ministry of Agriculture, Agritex head office in Harare.

1.9 Limitations

The study was restricted to Agritex department particularly the head office in Harare and excluded other similar organisations outside Harare making it difficult for findings to have a wider generalizability. Some of the questionnaires were not returned thereby reducing the sample

size and the information the researcher expected to gather. Data was gathered using self-report questionnaire which made it difficult for the researcher to eliminate participant bias.

1.10 Definition of Terms, Abbreviations and Acronyms

Agritex- Agricultural Technical and Extension Services

APA- American Psychological Association

SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

WLB- Work Life Balance

QWL – Quality of work life

WFC – Work to family conflict

FWC – Family to work conflict

Work life balance- the ability of individuals to be equally engaged with both their work and their family demands in terms of time, involvement and satisfaction.

Stress- the response that people may have when they are presented with challenges, demands and pressures that do not match their knowledge, abilities and resources thereby challenging their ability to cope.

Work-life balance strategies - are deliberate methods female employees use to reduce work life conflict enabling them to be more effective at work and in other personal and family roles.

Work-life conflict – the incompatibility of pressures from work and family/personal domains which can be time, strain or behavior based.

1.11 Chapter Summary

The chapter has attempted to lay a firm foundation by giving relevant background information of the study. Objectives that guide the researcher have also been stated and the boundaries within

which the research was conducted were clearly drawn. Assumptions made were also highlighted together with the significance of the study to all stakeholders. The chapter prepared the researcher for the next chapters enabling her to make conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter outlined studies that have been carried out in the area of work life balance in other countries covering various sectors. Work life balance issues were highlighted based on participant education, gender, marital status and age. This chapter also explored how the experience of work life balance influence employees as reflected in relevant scholarly work conducted worldwide. The theoretical frameworks identified for this study illuminated the phenomena under study.

2.1 Definitions of Work Life Balance

The concept of work life balance is associated with a variety of meanings and therefore lacks a universal definition. Clark (2000) defines work life balance as good functioning and satisfaction both at home and at work with minimum role conflict. It may also be referred to as work-family balance. Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) cited that the concept is an inter role phenomenon which consists of time, involvement and satisfaction balance. Time balance is when equal time is given to both work and family roles, involvement balance focuses on equal levels of psychological involvement in both work and family roles while satisfaction is by having equal levels of satisfaction in both work and family roles. Balance is considered a continuum reflecting an individual's life orientation across roles with balance at one end and imbalance at the other (Greenhaus et al., 2003).

An imbalance occurs when individuals struggle to maintain or satisfy the demands placed by them either by work or life. Such kind of imbalance is called family to work conflict and work to family conflict. Work family conflict is the push and pull between family and work responsibilities (Lockwood, 2003). According to Carlson, Kacmar and Williams (2009) work family conflict takes two forms that is work to family conflict (WFC) and family to work conflict (FWC). Work to family conflict is a kind of role pressure arising from the work place and affecting the family circle whereas family to work conflict entails that the involvement of the individual in the family role makes it difficult for them to participate in the work role (Dixon & Bruening, 2005).

According to Macmillan, Morris and Atchley (2011) balance is when there is lack of interference between work and family roles. The definition helps in bringing out the fact that balance may as well occur without spending equal amounts of time in both roles and also view balance as social rather than psychological and also focusing on actual activities rather than satisfaction but also taking meaning outside the individual. Grzywacz and Calson (2007) define balance as accomplishment of each role's expectations which are shared between individuals and their role related partners in both domains. The idea of negotiation also brings about individual effort which formed the main idea of the research. In this research work life balance was taken to mean the ability to both work and life activities with maximum satisfaction and the term work life conflict or work family conflict meaning the absence of a balance or work life imbalance.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

The term work life balance was coined in 1986 although it was not widely used, balance practices were implemented from as early as the 1930s. In the 1960s and 1970s most employers

considered the issue as pertaining to working mothers who struggled with paid work and raising children at the same time (Lockwood, 2003). Hudson Resourcing, 2005 says that during the 1980s pioneering companies such as IBM, Deloitte and Touch as well as Merck started to work on their internal workplace policies and procedure and benefits to suit the needs, values and concerns of working mothers. Such changes included maternity leave, working from home, flexible work arrangements and child care referrals. The 1990s however solidified the concept of work life balance as a crucial issue for every employee be it married, single, men, women, parent or non-parent (Bird, 2006). Larson, (2012) asserts that the term work life balance sets up work and life as enemies, as a battle of one against the other. Larson added that work life balance is not a permanent state as it comes and goes. Furthermore, the work life balance narratives seem to talk of an existing point where balance can be said to have been achieved and seems to call up on women to struggle to find the point which causes some women to struggle to reach the point and blame themselves or external structures if they feel out of balance. The terminology is misleading hence some authors are advocating work-life effectiveness (Thriveni & Rama, 2012). Work-life balance is not just about families and childcare, it is about striking the right balance between what can be achieved at work and at home and being fresh enough to give the best to all the areas of life (Oberman, 2013).

Warren (2004) found out that there are about 170 life domains that need to be balanced with paid work. These include travel, sports and recreation, voluntary work, personal development, leisure, childcare, elder care and sometimes care for dependents with special needs. It is imperative to note that work life balancing does not entail devoting the exact amounts of time to paid work and

non- paid roles but just mere satisfactory fit between the multiple roles in a person's life (Clarke, Koch & Hill, 2004).

Most recent terms that are being used in the literature include work family interaction, work family interference, work life integration and work-non-work interference (Lockwood, 2003). Work life balance according to Lunau, Bambra, Eikemo and Dragano, (2014) is measured by answering the question of how well an individual's working hours fit in their family and social commitments. A review of previous work life balance articles reveals that there are disagreements as to what comprises the positive side of the work life interface although the negative side is quite similar. According to Frone, (2003) enhancement, facilitation, integration and enrichment are closely linked to the positive side of the interface. Carlson et al, (2006) however feel that each of Frone's (2003) symptoms are distinctive constructs which actually describe different aspects of the positive interface.

2.3.1 Integration.

McMillan, Morris and Atchley (2011) says that integration is when attitudes in one role positively spill over into another role or when the other role serve as a resource to enrich another role for example when paid work enables one to participate in golf, a sport that they like. Integration is in line with the spill over theory of work life balance which suggest that most individuals often carry over some attitudes and beliefs from one role to the other. Edwards and Rothbard (2000) adds that integration is also supported by the Person- Environment fit theory which suggests that when an individual has his or her role integration increase at the work place to a level the individual prefers, that person will become more likely to start negotiating work life balance (Kreiner, 2007) in other words individual strategies will begin to emerge.

2.3.2 Enhancement

Graves, Ohlott and Ruderman (2007) define enhancement as facilitation which emanates when one role increases energy and attitude that contribute to the development of skills in the other role. In addition, Thoits (1987) suggests that individual participation in multiple roles enhances energy reserve through increased availability of resources, rewards, social identity and self-esteem. Such scenarios therefore allow greater ability to cope with multiple demands. Wadsworth and Owens (2007) assert that it is possible to be experiencing high levels of both enhancement and conflict at the same time as these are distinct constructs.

2.3.3 Facilitation

Facilitation is defined by Wayne, Gryzwacz, Carlson and Kacmar, (2007) as the level to which a person's engagement in either family or work provides gains that can be affective, developmental capital or efficiency which contribute to enhanced functioning in either work or family domains. The concept of facilitation is also found on the assumption that individuals desire and have the ability to grow and develop. Wayne et al. (2007) identified three contributors to facilitation which are engagement, gains and enhanced functioning. The same authors added that engagement means the level of intensity that is applied by an individual to role related activities when an individual is active, lead to the gaining of privileges that can be carried out in the other domain (Sieber, 1974).

2.3.4 Enrichment.

If experiences in work domain improve the quality of the life domain and vice versa, enrichment is said to be taking place (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Enrichment occurs either through the

instrumental part whereby gains in one role directly increase the performance in the other role or the affect path which is indirect, one role indirectly increase performance in the other leading to overall improvement of quality of the individual's positive affect (Carlson, et al, 2006). Greenhaus and Powell (2006) opposes Carlson et al's view of distinct constructs but support the view that enrichment is heavily associated with enhancement, facilitation and integration.

2.4 Costs and Benefits of Work Life Balance

Literature on work life balance shows that they are costs of imbalances as well as benefits for work life balancing. Personal consequences of work life imbalance include increased stress levels and stress related illnesses such as depression and stroke, decreased levels of life satisfaction, violence, divorce, conflict and increased incidence of substance abuse and other reckless behaviours (Downes, 2011). Individuals with the skills and opportunities to balance their work and life are happier, healthier and more productive (ACAS, 2015). Companies that make work life balance their culture are better able to attract high calibre employees. Employees who on the other hand successfully take advantage of both individual and organisational strategies have a sense of fulfilment and have decreased stress related illness and better quality of work life (Levy, 2012). Being relaxed and well rested increases productivity and improves work performance. Additionally, personal and professional relationships are strengthened and conflicts are avoided as far as possible (Lockwood, 2003).

Organizations may implement various work life balance initiatives that may assist employees in both domains. Organizational initiatives include job sharing, flexible working hours, part time working hours, shift work, compressed working week, parental leave, on-site child care or elder care facility, working from home, using technology and supportive work cultures. These enable

employees to improve on their well-being (Lazer & Ratiu, 2010). Such interventions are usually termed family friendly policies or work life benefits. Work life balancing certainly has more impact on women than men and most women are highly likely to take advantages of these initiatives to balance their work and life responsibilities (Osterman, 1995).

Human Solutions Report (2007) notes that few work organisations are tackling the challenges of balancing work and other family commitments. Consequently, many employees especially female ones suffer job stress due to their failure to achieve work-life balance (APA, 2010). In the United States, job stress is estimated to cost the United States more than three hundred billion dollars a year in related costs such as absenteeism and reduced productivity and an estimated \$225.8 billion a year on productivity losses due to personal or family health problems. In the United States, at least 55% of adult employees in a survey carried out by the EASHW (2008) reported that family responsibilities were a source of stress. In her 2003 study, Lockwood also found that employees are often preoccupied with work when not working and when in the company of family and loved ones. They therefore experience an inability to be meaningfully engaged in non-work spheres. If employees are given the opportunity to integrate time and effort across the spheres of work, family and self, they may reach a level of self-fulfillment and satisfaction in their lives which may have positive outcomes for themselves and their employers (Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Work life balance strategies have a positive effect on employee performance and are more effective in situations demanding high employee flexibility and responsiveness. Firms with a more skilled workforce are more likely to implement work life balance enhancing practices (Bloom, Kretschmer & Van Reenan, 2009). Today it has become a deciding factor for choosing jobs.

2.5 Work Life Balance and Demographic Variables

In order to adequately explore the impact of work life balance strategies, demographic variables were also considered.

2.5.1 Work life balance and age

In a study conducted in the banking sector in two cities in India by Nanda (2015) it was revealed out that work life conflict was lower in age groups 18-24 and was higher in 35-45 and lower in above 45 age groups. It was however highest in age groups 25-34 despite nature of job or educational qualifications. It is not only the age of the specific employee but also the age of their children. An Indian study by Reddy and his colleagues in India revealed that WFC and FWC were found to be more among the women having the eldest child between 6 and 10 years old. Age of children was therefore significantly correlated with FWC among the working women (Reddy, Vranda, Ahmed, Nirmala & Siddaramu, 2010). This assertion is further confirmed by the inter domain model which states that women with younger children tend to suffer more in both domains as the younger the children the higher the demand for care.

Working women with longer periods of service usually five years and above have better work life balance than fairly new employees, the reason being that they would in their stay have devised means of coping with the demands of both work and life domains. Research has also revealed that work experience is correlated with chronological age, the more the work experience the more the number of years the individual employee has (Downes, 2011). Such employees would have come to a realization that both work and life are dependent on each other and require their attention as improper prioritization may cause negative effects which can then be felt in both domains. Hochschild (1989) indicated that young women especially single may find it

difficult to establish themselves in both domains and put excessive energy time in one especially work. Fredriksen-Goldsen & Scharlach, 2001) added that extra attention in one domain causes negative effects which exhibit themselves in a bi-directional manner. Age is therefore an important dimension in understanding work life balance.

2.5.2 Work life balance and gender

The social construction of gender particularly in African countries give women more tasks, roles and duties in the life domain and therefore their work life balance experiences cannot be the same as their male counterparts in paid work (Lockwood, 2003). Some women are married, lone parents, divorced and have at least a primary care responsibility such as elder care, child care or care of the sick or disabled and their engagement in paid work does not necessarily mean that their traditional roles are extinguished or can be abandoned. Hochschild (1989), Lundberg and Willemsen (2000) added that women's work is more than that of men as women continue to work after they have fulfilled the demands of paid work. Lundeberg and Willemsen (2000) in their study of work-loads across Sweden and Netherlands found out that women had an additional 24 hours a day per year as compared to male counterparts.

Women and men have different experiences especially in the life domain. Most men do not have significant demands at home as compared to women, if some responsibilities are there for men surely they are not treated with the same affection as that of a mother. Ahmad (1999) studied work life conflict amongst nurses and their partners and found out that the degree of conflict varied as they tried to meet the demands of both domains. Over two thirds of female nurses, confirmed that their husband were either traditional or egalitarian in their role orientations. Those who had egalitarian husbands had less role conflict than those who had traditional as they were

able to share household responsibilities with them which helped to absorb some tension generated in the work environment.

Studies conducted in Nigeria particularly the one by Bernas (2004), further supported by Ojo, Salau and Falola (2014) concluded that African traditional role orientations are a threat to work life balancing. High levels of conflict were recorded and these were evident in time, involvement and satisfaction. Evidence suggest that the significant shift from one extreme end to the other on the balance continuum produced cognitive constraints in both time and resources needed to be competent in both roles. The two major effects were usually quitting paid work or high experiences of familial conflicts and conflicts between partners.

2.5.2 Work life balance and marital status

Several studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between marital status and work life balance. Results suggest that those who are married suffered more family to work conflict as compared to their single counterparts particularly if they had a highly demanding partner. Marriage conceptualization in Africa gives women more care responsibilities through additional members from the extended family thereby increasing care responsibilities leading to inter domain conflicts. In addition, the impact of home experiences resulted in more work to family conflict and psychological strain in both married males and females (Eagle, Miles, & Icenogle, 1997). No such conflicts were noted for single counterparts who are believed to have a wide range of alternatives and buffers against both forms of conflict particularly if they have no specific care responsibilities. In cases were a big sister heads a household for example when a family has lost both parents, single ladies with such responsibilities were found to have more conflict than married counterparts (Levy, 2012).

In a study by Brown (2000) significant psychological strains were observed for single and divorced participants and no relationship was observed for a predictor variable of a partner. The correlation analysis revealed a positive relationship between psychological strain and the presence of a partner. Mennino, Rubin and Brayfield (2005) suggested that the presence of a husband or a partner to most women stimulated positive well-being particularly through social support and emotional support and sometimes help in executing other domain demands outside the work place. Levy (2012) in his study found out that the support of a partner was more significant than that provided by colleagues at work.

There is widespread debate on whether lone parents are meeting the demands of paid work and family roles. The challenge with the existing literature is that in some single parents and adults without minor children were combined in one group despite the marked differences in the level of conflicts that are experienced between the two (Nomaguchi, 2012). Avison, Ali and Walters (2007) added that most of the studies did not examine differences at the multivariate level but only stated that the single women felt more of work family conflict at a descriptive level than married parents. In a Canadian sample no differences were found in family to work conflict between single parents and those with partners but the study revealed that low income was positively correlated with FWC for single parents than for mothers with partners (Nomaguchi, 2012). This therefore suggests that marital status is a significant factor in work life balances.

As expected, levels of family to work conflict vary by the intersection of marital status and gender, with single mothers feeling greater family to work conflict than single fathers, married

fathers and married mothers. After controlling for background characteristics such as age, education, and race or ethnicity differences in home to job conflict between single mothers and single fathers disappeared however differences between single mothers and married fathers and mothers remained the same (Nomaguchi, 2012).

2.5.3 Work life balance and educational qualifications

Education among other social-demographic variables such as gender, occupational class which accounted for only 2% of the variance in work life balance according to Levy (2012). There has been a dramatic shift in women wanting to pursue higher education to meet the demands of the changing environments as well as taking advantage of the redressing of gender policies. Globally the content of work has changed, there is need to secure jobs, to be adaptable and multi skilled (EASHW, 2015). Attaining a higher qualification entails time and effort that most frequently extends to home, interferes with other life activities and putting other things on hold. For working women with young children it applies that, the higher their educational attainment the higher their participation in the labour force (Levy, 2012). In a study that sought to examine the relationship between work and life balance amongst lecturers at the University of Gujrat, the findings were that the need for academic professionals to keep on upgrading themselves gave rise to problems in work life balancing and was found to be more straining for females (Saeed & Farooqi, 2014). According to Carnicer et al, 2004, in a research conducted on Spanish employees there was a significant positive relationship between job category and FWC or WFC whereby managers experienced greater work conflict than lower category employees. Explanations derived from the time based WFC model elaborated that there was a problem in the maintenance and balancing of time to perform higher order roles within an organization and simultaneously

perform at a similar level of commitment in the home setting. Such high demands triggered prioritization of time invested in particular activities over others.

Related to this category was the level of academic engagement. Evidence suggest that employees that have a master's or doctoral degree experienced greater FWC and WFC as compared to their work colleagues who had lessor qualifications. This was based on the fact that the amount of cognitive resources they invested in trying to balance increased cognitive workloads and home responsibilities led to a somehow negligence of home duties (Carnicer, et al, 2004). In another research with a population of Malaysian clerks, secretaries, nurses and physicians, physicians were found to experience the greatest intensity of FWC and WFC due to the nature of cognitive investment that they put in dealing with the demands of their job (Duxbury, Higgins & Lee,1994).

Robinson and Godbey (1997) reported that time crunch was more common among women, particularly divorced. Their findings also indicated that parents were more pressured than non - parents and well educated and affluent respondents reported that they felt highly time crunched. Ross and Huber (1985) however reported that from their findings education was the single most important status for women's wellbeing when other aspects of status are held constant and had the largest effect on reducing stress. Therefore, for those who have already attained higher qualifications, their attainment may have a positive influence on the work life balance but for those who are still in the process, balance is at stake and conflict in both FWC and WFC is prevalent.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The study was framed within Sue Campbell Clark (2000)'s work family border which seeks to explain how individuals balance paid work and family and construct the borders between these domains. The major assumption is that work and family are independent spheres that influence each other and people are therefore 'cross borders' who navigate between the borders of work and life. Work and life are demarcated by a border which varies in the degree of permeability (Clark, 2000). According to Clark permeability is the level to which the border between the home and work domains allows elements from one domain to enter the other (Grzywacz & Bass, 2003). Although Clark's focus was on these two domains, the study was approached from the perspective that work life balance encompasses several domains such as leisure, recreation and self-care.

Hudson Resourcing (2005) asserts that the key concepts of the theory include the characteristics of the home and work domains, central or peripheral participation of border crossers as well as the permeability, flexibility as well as blending of the border between work and family domains. An attempt to understand the complex interaction between border crossers help to predict when conflict will occur and give a framework for attaining balance. Although there are physical, temporal and psychological borders between the two, they remain interconnected and people are therefore regular cross borders between the two domains. The transition between work and home ranges from a slight transition for some, to extreme for others and is based on the contrast between domains. Individuals are partly able to shape the environment in which they exist and negotiate the borders between their family and work domains (Clark, 2000). Such individual efforts were the main investigation of the research.

Individual women may be central or peripheral participants. Those with centrality have internalized domain culture and are competent in their responsibility and personally identify with domain responsibility at a higher degree (Lambart, Kass, Piotrowiski & Vodanovich, 2006). Such individuals are more autonomous, influential and flexible, centrality also leads to greater control over one's life and the ability to negotiate the borders between these domains which will help in achieving a balance. Peripheral participants on the other hand are less aware of their domain responsibilities and are less competent in their responsibilities. The lack of control makes them more susceptible to difficulties in balancing work and family roles. Individuals may therefore shape the border between the two domains to build some level of desired balance (Clark, 2000).

2.7 Knowledge Gap

Although WLB is an international problem, far less attention has been given to literature from developing countries including Zimbabwe (Ojo, Salau & Falola, 2014). Consequently, the area has been flooded with western literature. Research and policies directed at work-life balance have focused on the causes, consequences and how to improve the level of this phenomenon at organizational levels (EASHW, 2008). This study discussed the changing world of work life balance particularly individual strategies that women implement and their motivating factors in considering work life balance.

According to Bird (2006), most organizations until recently have taken a one-sided approach to their work life efforts their focus has been on adopting organizational policies, benefits and procedures to solve the work life balance problem. Although helpful the systems approach overlooks a critical fact that at its core, work life balance is more than an individual issue that affects the organization than it is an organizational issue that affects the individual (Banwell, 2006) The systems approach is concerned with what the organisation can do to create a better

work life balance for the individual while the other half of the work life strategy is the individual approach which is concerned with what the individual employees and managers can do for themselves to create their own best work life balance (Bird, 2006). Most organizations have been myopic in their approach and through the systems approach have health insurance, vacation time, various benefits and possibly EAPs and flexible work policies.

Women may reinforce what they already have but it may be more valuable to implement some creative, well calculated and potentially quick hit strategies that might have a high impact such as engaging maids, using kindergarten schools and support from both family and work colleagues. The current trend in work life research is to examine the idea of conflict which is the negative interaction between work and life as well as enrichment which is the positive interaction between work and life (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The study therefore sought to investigate individual strategies of female employees in a region and industry where no previous recorded studies have been found.

2.8 Chapter Summary

The chapter has demonstrated the theoretical foundations guiding understanding of the work on work life balance on the basis of gender, age, education and marital status as well as the current position of women in the contemporary world of work as compared to previous years. It revealed how work life balance impacts on women and their organisations. The chapter also provided the scholarly view of the phenomena, theoretical framework and outlined the knowledge gap that the researcher intends to fill in and address with the research.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The chapter is about research methodology which refers to strategy or architectural design by which the researcher maps out an approach to problem solving basing on type and features of the research (Buckley & Chiang, 1976). The components of research methodology are research paradigm, target population, sampling, research instrument, data collection analysis procedures and ethical considerations. In addition, the chapter identifies and discusses study limitations as far as they impact on findings.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Burns, (2000) defines a set of interconnected assumptions concerning the social world which offer a philosophical and conceptual framework for the organized studies of that world. The research uses a quantitative research paradigm. Quantitative explains phenomena by collecting numerical data that is analyzed using mathematically based methods test a hypothesis (Cohen, Manion, & Morison, 2000). Therefore, the study quantifies data and generalises the results of the sample to the population. Quantitative research allows a better and easier interpretation of data over qualitative by use of quantifying instruments of research so as to produce statistical facts.

3.2 Research design

According to Hussey and Hussey (1997), a research design is a road map that depicts the direction, format and theoretical structure underpinning the study and enhances the internal and

external validity of the research. Additionally, it refers to the overall strategy that one may choose to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way thereby ensuring effectiveness in addressing the research problem, it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Trochim & William, 2001). The researcher employed the survey research design. Kelly, Clark, Brown and Sitrza (2003), define a survey as a selection of a relatively large sample from a predetermined population and use the information to make inferences about the wider population and data is collected in a standardized format with no attempt to control or manipulate variables. According to Mouton and Marais (1994) and Kelly et al. (2003), surveys have both advantages and disadvantages, the major advantage being that large amounts of data can be generalized in a short period, the research can therefore set a time span for the research which may assist in planning and delivering end results. Surveys also administer acceptable and reasonable feedback and are ideal for a large population. The coverage of many people means that it is more likely than some other approaches to obtain data based on a representative sample and can therefore be generalized to a population.

The challenge with survey designs is that focus may become too much on the range of coverage to the exclusion of an adequate account of the implication of those data to relevant issues, problems and theories, securing a high response rate is difficult to control particularly if it involves postal and electronic inquiry tools and may not be the best options for low literacy participants.

3.3 Target population

Khotler (1998) says that a target population is a group from which a research sample is chosen for measurement. A research population is generally a large collection of individuals or objects which are the main focus of a scientific inquiry (Nestor & Schuut, 2012). All individuals within a

certain population usually have a common, binding characteristic or trait (Nestor & Schuut, 2012). The population of the study involved female employees who work in the department of Agritex Head Office with a total of 40 women. The population is characterised by female employees in top management, supervisory, and operational staff all from different sections and branches within the department.

3.4 Study Sample

Data was collected from a sub set of individuals and the findings were used to make inferences about the entire population. Hussey and Hussey (1997) define a sample as a subset of the population that represents the main interests of the study. According to Zikmund (2000) the significance of research findings depends much on the degree to which a sample of individuals in a study is representative of the population under study. The sample size was 36 participants drawn from the target population of 40 employees at Agritex Head Office. The sample was calculated using a sample size calculator by Resolution Research (2014) basing on a statistical thumb rule which applied a confidence level of 95% with a confidence interval or margin of error of +/-5 points.

3.5 Sampling Technique

The researcher employed the stratified sampling technique. A stratified sample is defined as one resulting from classification of a population into mutually exclusive groups called strata and choosing a simple random sample from each stratum (Lohr, 1999). Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Lyman (2006) assert that stratified sampling improves efficiency of sampling and reduces possible errors.

Stratified random sampling ensures that subgroups within the population, based on job category and section are adequately represented in a sample (Nestor & Schutt, 2012). Participants were drawn from management, supervisors and operational staff which represented organizational hierarchy. The target population was made up of 6 participants in management, 10 in supervisory and 24 in operational staff in different sections and designations. To therefore get a sample from each stratus the researcher divided the mean of each stratus by the mean of the target population (20), multiplying it by the sample (36) and the stratus were represented as follows, management 5 from 6 participants, supervisory 9 from 10 and 22 participants from 24 operational staff. The sample size is appropriate for this study as it represents more than three quarters of the study target population.

3.6 Research Instrument

Research instruments generally refer to tools for collecting data and are mainly influenced by the research paradigm and the research design. In this research, the researcher used the questionnaire as the data gathering instrument.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a method with list of questions that is used to elicit, record and collect information from respondents (Kirakowski, 2003). The author added that the use of the word method in the definition implies that it is a tool rather than an end in itself. A well designed questionnaire has the ability to gather information about the problem at hand. Questionnaires can either have closed ended or open ended questions, closed ended have restricted range of answers which limit participant responses whereas open-ended can help gather vast and creative information (Kirakowski, 2003, Miller, 2004).

The researcher found it appropriate to adopt the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Trust paid work tool kit (2003) which articulate areas that are parallel to the study. The paid work tool kit was employed to initiate an investigation on age, level of education, marital status, number of children, age of children, length of service and primary care responsibilities. The questionnaire was developed in 2003 and showed a reliability Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha = 0.809$. The interpretation is that the tool kit had a statistically satisfactory level and therefore has some internal consistency. Reliability indicates the accuracy and precision of the measuring instrument (Norland, 1990). Ideally paid work toolkit is an instrument used by the researcher to investigate on the listed pointers. The tool kit has 24 question items, uses Likert scale type of questions and is composed of four sections. The first contains the demographic variables, the second one is about the view of work and life activities and the factors that make work life balance harder. The third section contains the strategies which is the main focus of the study and the last section is on opinions on the general opinions on work life balance.

The questionnaire has its strengths and weaknesses as a data collection instrument. Amongst its main advantages is its suitability for a large cross-section of people and its assurance for anonymity and privacy thus inspiring respondents to be truthful and frank in their responses simultaneously reducing biases in participant responses. It is convenient when participants are too mobile. Self-administered questionnaire offered respondents the flexibility of filling in the questionnaires at their own convenient times and have enough time to think about their response. Failure to interpret questions by respondents might however be a problem. If the respondent gets it wrong, the response given will be accordant hence faulty data may be collected. The response rate of questionnaires is usually poor as compared to face to face interviews. Unlike with

interviews the researcher is not in a position to determine emotions of the respondent and also difficult to determine honesty.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure is a process of gathering information in a sequential and organised manner in a bid to analyse the accrued data (Wegner, 1999). The process involves the answering of research questions through the use of questionnaires. Upon being granted permission as per the requirements of the Midlands State University of conducting a research study. the researcher collected a proposal letter from the Psychology department. In addition, the researcher also wrote a requisition letter to the Ministry of Agriculture authorities to be granted permission of carry out the research and was granted.

The researcher also got the chance to address the participants on the nature of research she was going to conduct. Areas to do with the ethics in which the research is commanded to abide to were outlined. It was discussed that confidentiality was going to be upheld. The researcher also assured the participants that they were not forced to participate in the research. She further articulated other ethical considerations that the research was going to adhere to.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a method of assessing data via the use of logical and analytical reasoning so as to solve the problem that triggered the research. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyse study data. Initially data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e frequencies and percentages). Thereafter, hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics

(i.e., reports, and analysis of variances). Tables as well as graphs were used to present findings. These strategies of data presentation make it easy to interpret the study findings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

These are legitimate regulations that are set by a committee or academics so as to manage and direct the research and researcher not to abuse or ignore principles that need to employ adequately in a research paper or during the investigation. These considerations are tools used by research evaluators and scholars to monitor and recommend that the research was done under the best conditions. Psychological research is guided by the American Psychology Association (APA) guidelines. The following ethics were considered in this research.

3.9.1 Confidentiality

It is the responsibility of the researcher to protect the identity and privacy of participant responses during and after the research process (APA, 1982). The researcher treated gathered data with confidentiality considering that the respondents' honest opinion may affect their work relationship both with management and with peers. The information was only disclosed to the Midlands State University lecturers for the purposes of supervision for research to be academically correct.

3.9.2 Informed Consent

Participants have a legal right to be knowledgeable about the nature, course of action, and goals for the research paper that has made them to be parties to participate (APA, 2010). The participants were brief on all the intentions of the research and researcher and what they were expected to do. After outlining the purpose, procedure and risks of the research, the researcher

availed consent forms for the participants to consent their willingness to participate in the research.

3.9.3 Protection from harm

The 1982 APA ethical principles clearly state that psychological research must be free from physical and emotional harm as much as possible. The researcher refrained from exposing participants to physical and emotional harm as it was also the responsibility of the researcher to safe guard the participants' emotions by protecting their responses. The assurance that the research was free from harm or torture made the participants feel at ease to participate in the research.

3.9.4 Right to withdraw

The researcher made it clear before the research process that the participants had a right to withdraw from the research any time they wished to without any negative consequences. Participants would also take with them any information or documents that they would have handed to the researcher and will not be intimidated for that.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter described the research and its quantitative nature, the target participants to be female employees through surveys and the data collection procedures. It further described the data collection instrument that was used and how the data was presented and analyzed. It is also in this chapter that the ethical considerations were articulated.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation and Interpretation

4.0 Introduction

This chapter focused on data presentation based on information gathered during the research and the findings that were obtained by the researcher through the use of questionnaires. Findings were presented more descriptively and reinforced by tables and graphs. Data was presented linking it to the research objectives to avoid straying away from the topic. The data may however be subject to sampling errors and tolerances since data was collected from the sample and not the entire population.

Respondents	Questionnaires issued	Questionnaires returned	Questionnaires not returned	Response Rate
Management	4	4	0	100%
Supervisory	9	8	1	89 %
Operational	24	22	2	92 %
TOTAL	36	33	3	92%

4.2 Demographic Data

General explanations of the demography were made using descriptive statistics and the following data explains information about the participants in the study. The majority of the women were aged between 31 to 40 years (45.5%: n=15) followed by those who were under the age of 30

giving (33.3%: n=11). The remainder were above 40 years of age making 21.2%. From the findings, most of the women were also married (45.5%: n=15), single (21.2%: n=7), divorced (15.2%: n=5) while both separated and divorced had (9.1%: n =3). In terms of the educational qualifications, most women were degreed giving (36.4%: n =12), diplomas (30.3%: n = 10), and (18.2%: n =6) had master’s degrees while only three had certificates (9.1%), two had ordinary level (6.1%) and none had ZJC. In the organizational hierarchy most women were under operational staff comprising (64%: n=21), Supervisory (24,2%: n=8) and Managerial (12.1%: n =4). Most women, that is 45.5% cited that they had child care responsibilities, elder care 21.2% while 22% had no care responsibilities at all. The table below summarizes demographic variables of the study.

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Age	Below 30	11	33.3	33.3
	31 to 40yrs	15	45.5	78.8
	Over 40yrs	7	21.2	100.0
Marital Status	Single	7	21.2	21.2
	Married	15	45.5	66.7
	Separated	3	9.1	75.8
	Divorced	5	15.2	90.9
	Widowed	3	9.1	100.0
No. of children	None	7	21.2	21.2
	1	8	24.2	45.5
	2	7	21.2	66.7
	3	5	15.2	81.8
	3+	6	18.2	100.0
	Under 2 years	3	9.1	30.3

	2-6 years	4	12.1	42.4
	6-14 years	10	30.3	72.7
	14-18 years	9	27.3	100.0
Education	O level	2	6.1	6.1
	Certificate	3	9.1	15.2
	Diploma	10	30.3	45.5
	Degree	12	36.4	81.8
	Master's Degree	6	18.2	100.0
Job type	Operational	21	63.6	63.6
	Supervisory	8	24.2	87.9
	Management	4	12.1	100.0
Length of Service	less than 5 years	8	24.2	24.2
	5 to 10 years	14	42.4	66.7
	11 to 20 years	11	33.3	100.0
Care	None	7	21.2	21.2
	Childcare	14	42.4	63.6
	Eldercare	7	21.2	84.8
	sick child or adult	3	9.1	93.9
	disabled child or adult	2	6.1	100.0

The sample under study according to the summary below were on average middle aged, married, had children who were between 5 to 11 years. Their educational qualifications mostly fell under degrees and diplomas while their length of service was mostly between 5 to ten years of service. Most of the women also had a care responsibility under them most common being their children and or their parents most of whom have become old.

Table 4.3: Mean, mode, median of the demographics

	Age	Marital status	Children age	Children	Education	Job	Length of service	Care Responsibility	
N	Valid	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Mean		1.8788	2.4545	3.3333	2.8485	5.5152	1.4848	2.0909	1.3636
Median		2.0000	2.0000	4.0000	3.0000	6.0000	1.0000	2.0000	1.0000
Mode		2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	6.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Std. Deviation		.73983	1.25227	1.51383	1.41689	1.09320	.71244	.76500	1.11294

4.3 Factors making work life balance harder

In the research, it can be noted that there are factors within the work environment that made work life balance harder. Among these factors were deadlines and schedules, type of work being done, attitudes of supervisors, attitudes of male workmates, number of hours, amount of travel required, start and finishing time, difficulties taking leave as well as having to take additional work home. Although women cited some of these as making their work life balance harder, difficulties in taking leave which had a mean of 2.21 meaning that it was mostly very often, having to take additional work home had a mean of 2.24, amount of travel with a mean of 2.45 were cited as the most significant factors in making working life balancing a lot harder. In order to balance work and life activities, leave of work is necessary, if it is difficult to take leave then work life balancing is a challenge. Having to take additional work home and travelling affects more people with care responsibilities thereby making their work life balance harder. Attitudes of male work mates was least affecting as it has a mean of 3.72. This implies that male

counterparts have been appreciate that women need more time as they mostly have extra responsibilities outside work that most men do not have.

Table 4.4: Factors that make work life balance harder

		Type of work	Number of hours	Supervisor Attitudes	Male workmates attitudes	Difficulties taking leave	Amount of notice	Taking additional work home	Amount of travel	Starting and finishing time
N	Valid	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.6364	3.1212	2.6061	3.7273	2.2121	3.4848	2.2424	2.4545	3.2727
Std. Deviation		1.16775	.92728	1.22320	1.09752	1.40885	1.14895	1.54172	1.459695	1.17985

The chart in Fig 4.1 below shows amongst the prominent factors that made work life balancing harder, the difficulties associated with taking leave with more than 50% citing that it was to a greater extent that difficulties in taking leave made work life balance harder.

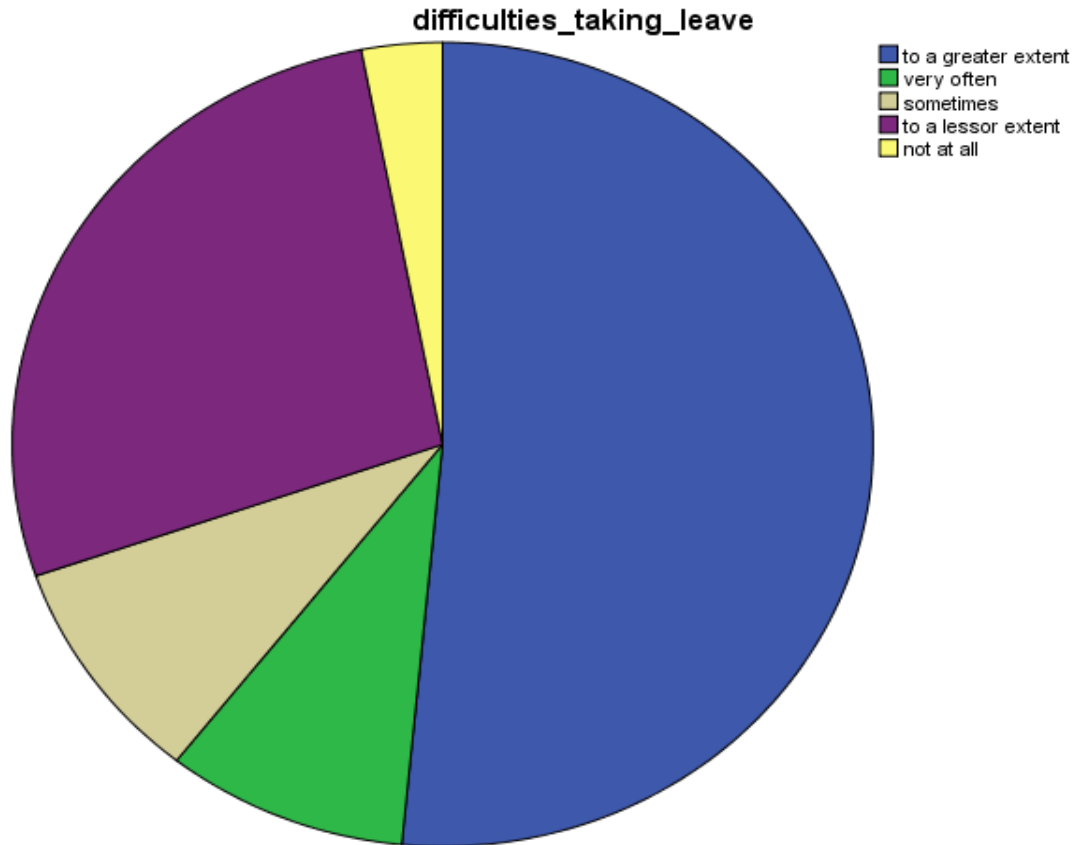


Fig 4.1: Difficulties in taking leave

4.4 Strategies for Balancing Work and Life Activities

The report below gives the mean and standard deviations of the strategies that women at Agritex use to balance their work and life activities. Strategies like using technology had a mean of 1.96, engaging helpers 1.96, making use of industrial holidays 1.96 and support from family were often used according to the means shown below. About 50% of the women, with mean usage of 2.27 admitted that they used work time to take care of their personal business whenever the chance arose. Support from workmates and working from home were sometimes used, they have means of 2.66 and 2.54 meaning that they are not widely used strategies.

Table 4.5: Means and standard deviation of balancing strategies

	Using technology	Working from home	Personal business during working hours	Engage helper	Use of industrial holidays	Support from family	Support from work mates
Mean	1.9697	2.5455	2.2727	1.9697	1.9697	2.2727	2.6667
N	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
Std. Deviation	1.18545	1.14812	1.20605	1.48923	1.01504	1.12563	.88976

Table 4.4 showing strategies for work life balance

The diagram below, figure 4.2 below shows a frequency polygon of taking care of personal business during working hours. The strategy was commonly used amongst the female employees as it had a mean of 2.27 and a standard deviation of 1.206.

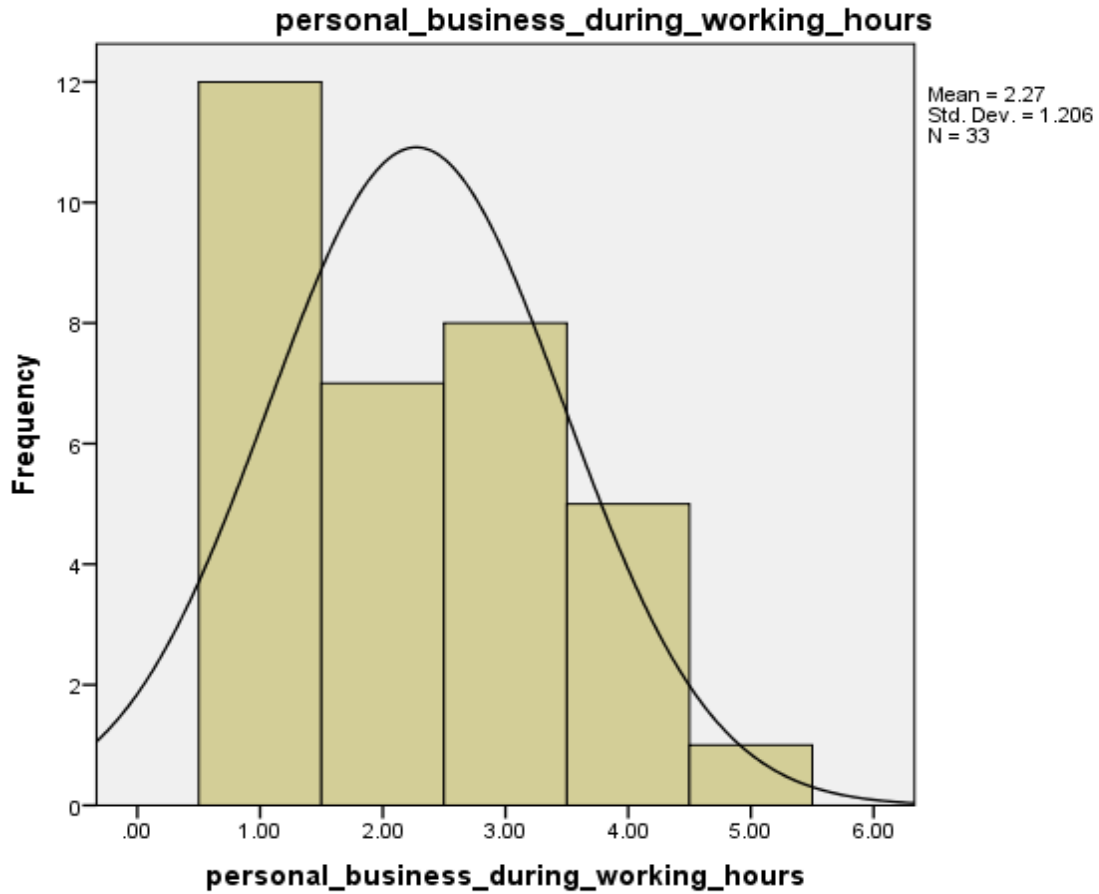


Fig 4.2 Frequency distribution of taking care of personal business during working hours.

In figure 4.3, engaging helpers can be noted that it is a frequently used strategy as it was used by more than 50% of the women.

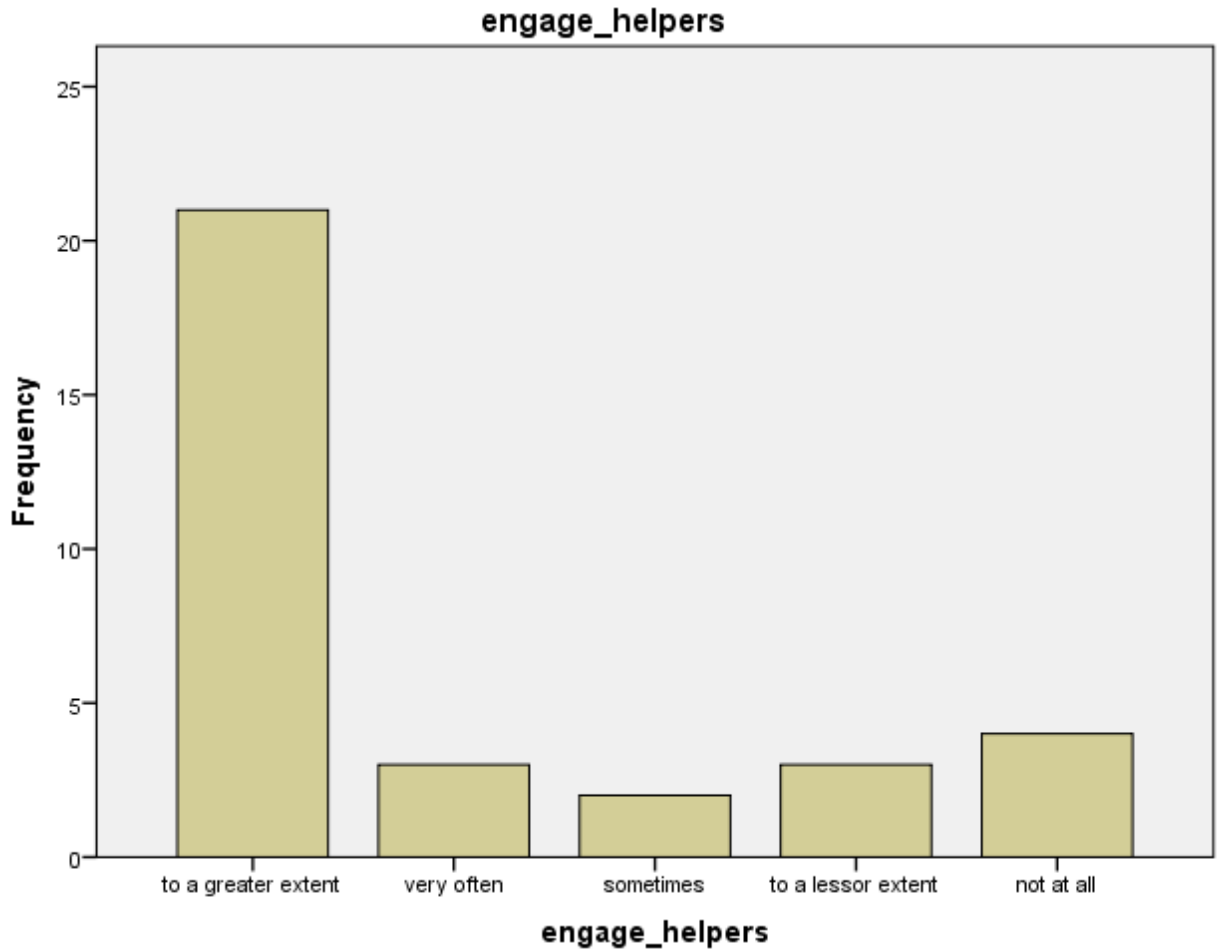


Fig 4.3 Frequency of engaging helpers as a strategy for balancing work and life

4.5 Variances Between Strategies Used and Demographic Variables

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze variances between individual strategies and variables such as age, marital status, age and number of children as well as having a primary care responsibility. Table 4.5 below shows the variances with age.

4.5.1 Age and work life balance strategies

Table 4.5.1 below shows results for engaging-helpers strategy $F(2, 30) = 7.813$; $p < 0.05$. Engaging helpers was statistically significant as it had a significance value of 0.002 which is less than the p value of 0.05. The F statistic for engaging helpers was 7.183 and is greater than 1.00 which means that there were real effects and the differences were not mainly due to chance. The rest of the strategies like using technology $F(32.2) = 3.277$; $p > 0.05$, working from home $F(30.32) = 0.219$; $p > 0.05$, personal business during working hours $F(2.30) = 1.626$; $p > 0.05$, use of industrial holidays $F(30.32) = 1.128$; $p > 0.05$, support from work $F(32.2) = 3.277$; $p > 0.05$, support from family $F(30.322) = 0.685$; $p > 0.05$ were insignificant with age as they had values which were more than the threshold value of 0.05.

Table 4.6: Showing variance of age and work life balance strategies

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Using technology	Between Groups	8.062	2	4.031	3.277	.052
	Within Groups	36.907	30	1.230		
	Total	44.970	32			
Working from home	Between Groups	.608	2	.304	.219	.804
	Within Groups	41.574	30	1.386		
	Total	42.182	32			
Personal business during working hours	Between Groups	4.552	2	2.276	1.626	.214
	Within Groups	41.993	30	1.400		
	Total	46.545	32			
Engage helpers	Between Groups	24.305	2	12.152	7.813	.002
	Within Groups	46.665	30	1.555		
	Total	70.970	32			
Use of industrial holidays	Between Groups	.933	2	.467	.437	.650
	Within Groups	32.036	30	1.068		
	Total	32.970	32			
Support from family	Between Groups	6.703	2	3.352	2.971	.066
	Within Groups	33.842	30	1.128		
	Total	40.545	32			
Support from work mates	Between Groups	1.106	2	.553	.685	.512

Within Groups	24.227	30	.808
Total	25.333	32	

4.5.2 Marital status and work life balance strategies

The table below shows the variances in strategies according to marital status. Using technology shows $F(4, 28) = 5.251$; $p < 0.05$, the variance is therefore statistically significant and the f statistic of 5.251 shows that the differences were not mainly due to chance. The same can be said for engaging helpers which is statistically significant at $F(4, 28) = 8.198$; $p < 0.05$. The rest of the strategies were insignificant with marital status as they had values which were less than the p value of 0.05.

Table 4.7: Association between marital status and work life balance strategies

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Using technology	Between Groups	19.274	4	4.819	5.251	.003
	Within Groups	25.695	28	.918		
	Total	44.970	32			
Working from home	Between Groups	6.391	4	1.598	1.250	.313
	Within Groups	35.790	28	1.278		
	Total	42.182	32			
Personal business during working hours	Between Groups	3.288	4	.822	.532	.713
	Within Groups	43.257	28	1.545		
	Total	46.545	32			
Engage helpers	Between Groups	56.855	4	14.214	8.198	.000
	Within Groups	14.114	28	.504		
	Total	70.970	32			
Use of industrial holidays	Between Groups	3.389	4	.847	.802	.534
	Within Groups	29.581	28	1.056		
	Total	32.970	32			
Support from family	Between Groups	9.422	4	2.355	2.119	.105
	Within Groups	31.124	28	1.112		
	Total	40.545	32			
Support from work mates	Between Groups	.438	4	.110	.123	.973
	Within Groups	24.895	28	.889		
	Total	25.333	32			

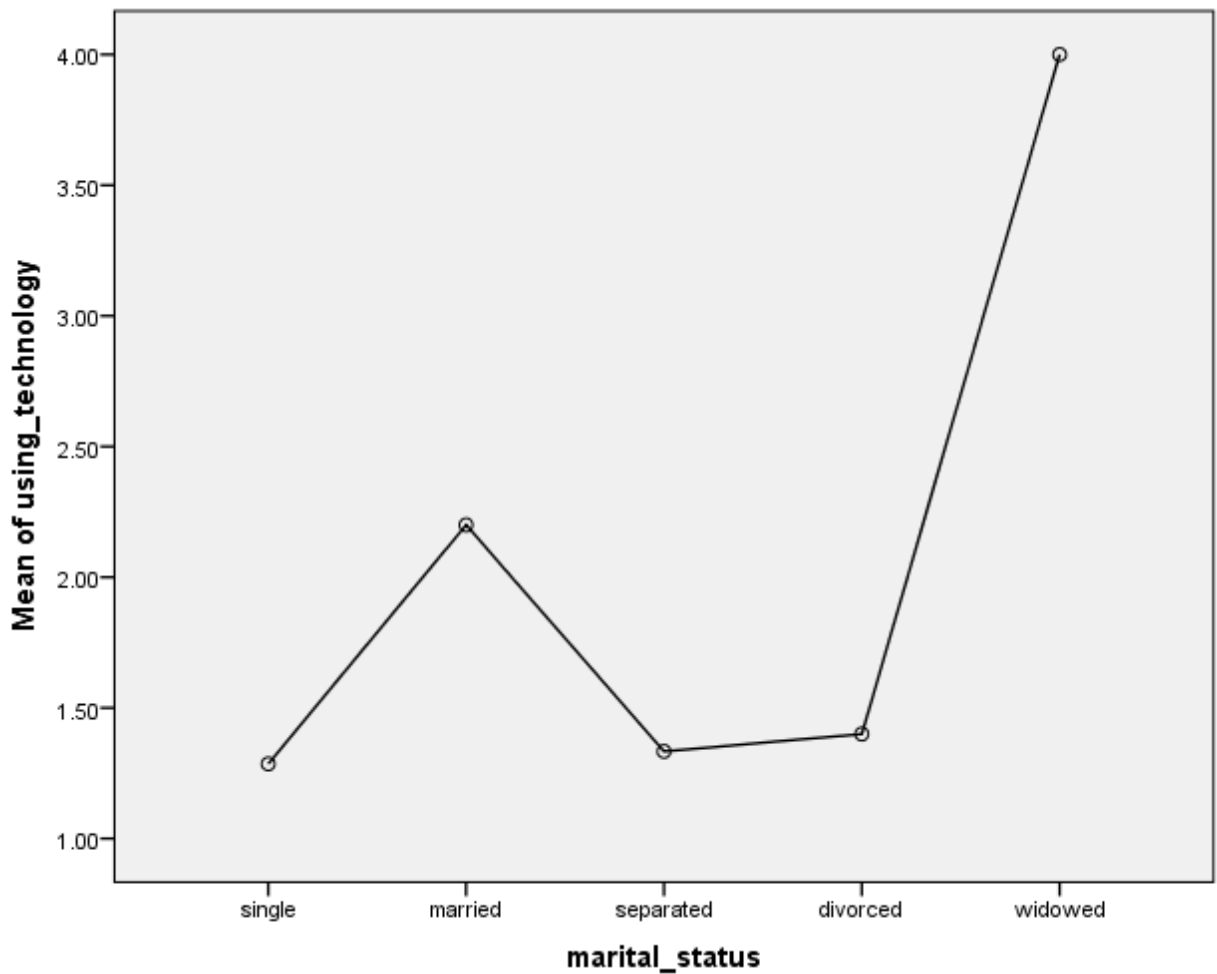


Fig 4.4 The graph represents a means plot showing variances on marital status and the use of technology.

4.5.3 Care giving responsibilities and work life balance strategies

Table 4.5.3 below shows the variances in strategies according to care giving responsibilities. Engaging helpers was statistically significant at $F(4, 28) = 10.460$; $p < 0.05$. The significance value was 0.000 which is less than the p value of 0.05. The F statistic also reflects real

differences as it is 10.64 which is greater than 1.00. All the other factors were insignificant as they all had significant levels which were above the p value of 0.05.

Table 4.8: Association between care responsibilities and balancing strategies

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Using technology	Between Groups	5.803	4	1.451	1.037	.406
	Within Groups	39.167	28	1.399		
	Total	44.970	32			
Working from home	Between Groups	2.658	4	.665	.471	.757
	Within Groups	39.524	28	1.412		
	Total	42.182	32			
Personal business during working hours	Between Groups	12.545	4	3.136	2.583	.059
	Within Groups	34.000	28	1.214		
	Total	46.545	32			
Engage helpers	Between Groups	42.517	4	10.629	10.460	.000
	Within Groups	28.452	28	1.016		
	Total	70.970	32			
Use of industrial holidays	Between Groups	3.660	4	.915	.874	.492
	Within Groups	29.310	28	1.047		
	Total	32.970	32			
Support from family	Between Groups	7.474	4	1.869	1.582	.207
	Within Groups	33.071	28	1.181		
	Total	40.545	32			
Support from work mates	Between Groups	.452	4	.113	.127	.971
	Within Groups	24.881	28	.889		
	Total	25.333	32			

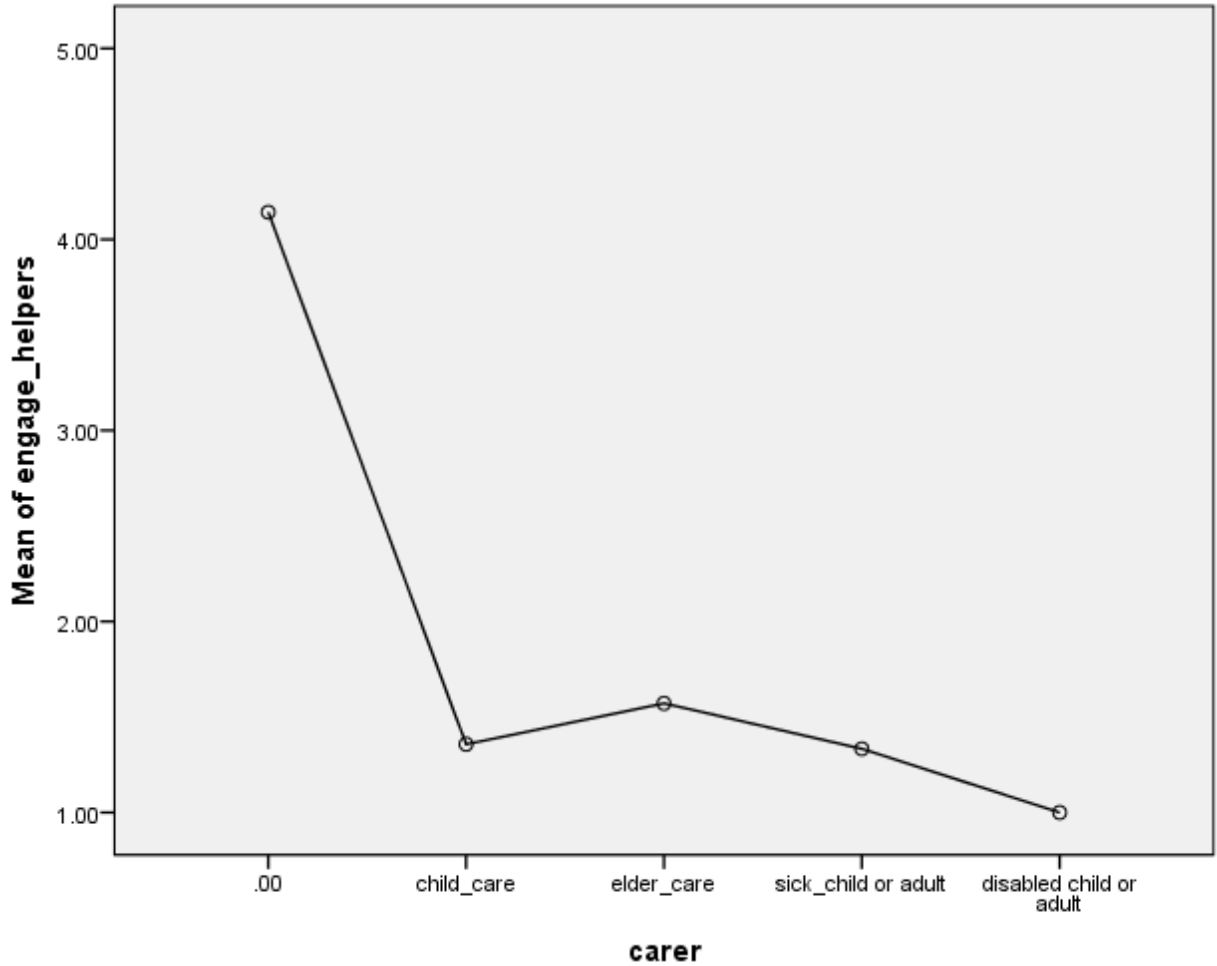


Fig 4.5 the graph is a mean plot showing the variances of means of work life balance strategies according to care responsibilities.

4.6 Perception on WLB as partly employer and partly employee responsibility

Table 4.10 below shows that quite a significant number of the women under study felt that generally work life balancing need both the efforts of the employer and those of the individual. 57.6% said that it was to a greater extent, 30.3 felt it was often and only 12.1 % felt that it was partly the responsibility of both.

Table 4.9: WLB as partly employer and partly employee responsibility

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
to a greater extent	19	57.6	57.6	57.6
very often	10	30.3	30.3	87.9
Sometimes	4	12.1	12.1	100.0
Total	33	100.0	100.0	

4.7 Work life balance as entirely an employer's responsibility

The table below shows results of the view that work life balance is entirely an employer's responsibility. 45.5 % were of the opinion that it was sometimes the responsibility of the employer while, 22.2 said it was often, 22.2 said it was to a greater extent, 9.1% felt that it was to a lesser extent and only 3% felt that it was never an employer's responsibility.

Table 4.10: Work life balance as entirely an employer's responsibility

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
to a greater extent	7	21.2	21.2	21.2
very often	7	21.2	21.2	42.4
Sometimes	15	45.5	45.5	87.9
to a lesser extent	3	9.1	9.1	97.0
not at all	1	3.0	3.0	100.0
Total	33	100.0	100.0	

4.8 General perception on work life balance

Generally, most women felt that they were unable to balance work and life activities constituting 63.6% while 36.4% felt that they were able to balance their work and life. The results are shown in table 4.12 below.

Table 4. 11: General perception on work life balance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Yes	12	36.4	36.4
Valid	No	21	63.6	100.0
	Total	33	100.0	100.0

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented data gathered from the paid work tool kit questionnaire and the responses as provided by females in the Agritex department. The next chapter presents discussion, conclusions and recommendations of the findings.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses, concludes and makes recommendations on improving work life balance. The chapter therefore summarizes the major findings of the study.

5.1 Discussion of findings

5.1.1 Strategies women in the Department of Agritex use to achieve work-life balance

From the reviewed literature it is clear that women have multiple roles and diverse caring responsibilities. Since times have changed the roles have also increased forcing women to have strategies that help them as they move across work and family spheres which are both necessary elements of their lives. Women at Agritex are no exception as they revealed that they widely used several strategies to enhance balance. Amongst the strategies are using technology, working from home, using work time for personal business, engaging in full time or part time helpers, making use of industrial holidays to take care of personal business as well as getting support from family and work mates.

5.1.1.1 Using technology

Most researches on WLB including those of Carlson, Kackmer and Williams (2003) and Lockwood (2003) agree that the use of technology enables WLB and is closely associated with working from home. With technologies employees are enabled to work from other environments that are outside the work environment using laptops, mobile phones, internet, electronic mail, skype, Instagram and specifically designed organizational websites where they can log in and do

their work. In the research, use of the strategy was 48%, although it is quite a significant number it is still less than half which may imply that the organisation is not backing up use of technology or the employees are not well versed or lacking the tools. Another possible explanation is that Zimbabwean labour laws have not yet included flexible start and finish times in their enactments and flexibility and working from home are at the employer's discretion.

5.1.1.2 Taking care of personal business during working hours

Though unethical working mothers have found it helpful to take care of their business during working hours. Lockwood's 2003 study showed that some women were preoccupied with family issues while at work and work issues while carrying out other life activities. Whenever they had the opportunity women in the study agreed that they would divert to their personal business. Personal business may include study, making personal calls using company resources and during working hours, knocking off early or arriving to work late maybe for the purpose of checking up on care responsibilities. Social media may also be used for interaction with family and friends or even marketing personal additional activities which are outside work. Clark's (2000) work family border also supports the need to cross borders, a concept she termed permeability such that work life balance can be achieved. This strategy may be necessitated by factors that they were cited as making work life balance such as difficulties in taking leave or attitudes of supervisors so whenever the chance arises personal business is done during the working day.

5.1.1.3 Engaging helpers

This is quite a common strategy for women in paid work who have dependents to take care of. These dependents range from child care, elder care and care for a sick or disabled child or adult. For women to be able to cross the border between family and paid work, the helpers are

necessary. They may include part time or full time household workers or preschool were children can be taken care of during the day. Some helpers may also assist with household chores thereby enabling balance for the working mother. The findings were similar to those of Levy (2012) in his study of working mothers and their perceived work life balance. Balance was found to be better when there was the presence of helpers especially at home.

5.1.1.4 Use of industrial holidays

According to Clark (2000) work family border theory which forms the theoretical basis of this research, women are daily cross borders of work and life. They are other responsibilities that would need permeability of a whole day or more. In the Zimbabwean setting, this would involve visiting parents or in laws or attending family gatherings who are usually strategically coincided with such holidays. This strategy is also commonly used as it usually does not affect the working days and time. Activities that may need to be balanced with work may be done during these specific days that would have been declared as public holidays. Working women can then plan and schedule other activities around such times where they can travel and not have to request for leave of work or time off.

5.1.1.5 Support from family and workmates

Support from others is important in enabling balance. The study revealed that support from both family and workmates was averagely used. Family may provide support in caring for young children, the elderly, the sick and the disabled. Work mates may provide the so much needed support particularly if they are aware of the care responsibilities. One may be excused from working overtime, travelling and be relieved from other duties that may bring much constraints to women who are more challenged with work life balance issues. The results coincide with

those of a survey by Equal Employment Opportunities Trust (2003) which also conclude that on average one needed support from both family and workmates if they are to have work life balance. EASHW, (2008) however concluded that support from workmates was only significant if the employer has work life balance policies and initiatives and has clearly made work life balance a priority in the workplace. Levy (2002) also concluded that support from family was very helpful especially when a working mother also has to care for the aged, the sick or the disabled.

5.1.2 Work-life balance strategies of female employees and demographic variables

5.1.2.1 Age

Women of different ages have different responsibilities. The research findings concur with Nanda's 2015 investigations which showed that WFC was lower in age groups 18-24, higher at 35-45 and lower on those above 40 years of age. Both WFC and WFC was highest for women aged 25-34. In this study women aged between 30 to 40 years of age were significantly challenged with work life balancing.

5.1.2.2 Number of children and their ages

In the research, the more the number of children the more work life balance constraints were recorded. Younger children need more care and time from their mothers unlike older children. Women with more children have more challenges than those with less or without. Reddy et al. (2010) found out that women with the eldest child between 6 and 10 years old were more challenged. This is further supported by the inter domain model of work life balance which suggests that women with younger children suffer more in inter domains.

5.1.2.3 Marital status

More psychological strain resulting from the impact of home experiences more inter domain conflicts. Mennino, Rubin and Brayfield (2005) however were of the opinion that social support provided by a partner provided the partner is supportive were much more important than those obtained from work colleagues. Using an African sample Nomaguchi (2012) found out that the divorced, widowed or separated had more challenges particularly if they had young children which agrees to the research findings.

5.1.2.4 Level of education

Results of this study show that those with higher educational qualifications were moderately challenged as they had a mean of 3.12. this may be because they have capabilities of using other strategies like technology. In a research for female lectures at Gujrat University, women were more challenged maybe due to the need to upgrade themselves. Carnicer et al. (2004) found out that employees with higher qualifications experienced greater conflict because of the need for more cognitive resources for increasingly cognitive workloads, more responsibilities at work leading to somehow neglect of home duties. Ross and Huber (1985) however found that education had a positive impact to those who have already attained but straining to those who were still in the process and especially if they had care responsibilities.

Some women would like to spend more time with their families especially their children, some have a number of dependents to take care of while some have primary care responsibilities such as elder care, or care for the sick and the disabled. In some cases, women may single parents sharing care with a former partner or living in an extended family. Single women have less responsibilities than middle aged women who have children to take care of. Most women who

are above the age of forty have elder care responsibilities. Compulsory overtime, fixed start and finish times and travel requirements which may be frequent and usually away from home may be frequent away from home may be a challenge to women with care responsibilities but may not prove challenging to single women.

Those women with child care, elder care, or responsibilities for a sick or disabled child also tend to depend on support from both family members and their workmates. Family members may help with care when they are at work while work mates and work supervisors may willingly free them to attend their care responsibilities.

5.3 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to analyze if women in the civil service use work life balance strategies and if the strategies differed with demographic variables. It was evident from the research findings that these women widely used balancing strategies which significantly differed with demographic variables such as age, marital status, number of children, length of service and work experience. Women in the study were in agreement that balancing work and personal lives of employees was a dual responsibility of employees and employers. However, it remains an employer's responsibility to schedule some activities that are beyond the control of individual women.

5.4 Recommendations

5.4.1 Communication

It might be difficult for management to support work life balancing for women if the women have not come out with their specific concerns. Individual women should develop a culture of communicating with their supervisors and managers to make them know of their issues and challenges. This will make it easier to negotiate time off or leave other than using unorthodox means of getting their personal business done. Women should do so without fear of losing their jobs and benefits. The supervisors should also give necessary feedback to their followers especially on the work life initiatives that they can use without victimizing them for pursuing those initiatives.

5.4.2 Supportive work cultures

Poor work-life balance affects workplaces, employees and their families. Some of the effects are increased tendency to make mistakes, low staff morale and increased use of sick leave (Equal Employment Opportunities Trust, 2003). The workplace should therefore role model effective work life balance and encourage women to use employee assistance programmes which impact positively on women and their work commitments. With the current industrial relations climate some women think that by using work life balance initiatives they would probably have damaged their career prospects and work relationships as well as fear of losing jobs and being seen as not committed to work by making use of the provisions.

5.4.3 Role of supervisors and managers

Supervisors interact with their subordinates daily and should make efforts to know them personally and be aware of the primary responsibilities they have outside work and the challenges they face. Women may be engaged personally or as small groups. Managers should ensure that information about work-life policies the organization have reaches every employee and there is no marginalization in terms of career prospects, educational qualifications or other distinct individual characteristics. To ensure employees who are mothers feel supported at work, the first step would be to investigate their needs and if the existing initiatives if any are helping them achieve and cope with both roles. The supervisors should however be realistic and not over-promise and make it clear that it is not every suggestion that would be committed to and that some suggestions would take longer to implement and above all being consistent, if confidentiality is promised let it be ensured. Efforts should also be made to avail technological devices such as laptops that would help women when working from home especially after field visits and give the necessary training.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

Results of this study cannot be generalised since the research was conducted at Agritex Head-Office with a small sample size hence the researcher recommends that future studies extend the study to larger populations. For example, further research could include qualitative approaches in order to find out exactly what employees have to say about their strategies.

5.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter has analyzed the results of the studies in light of the results of other researches in the area of work life balance. The end result from the study is that women do use strategies to balance their work and life commitments. In the chapter, data gathered from the study was discussed and concluded, recommendations were also made to the employees and department of

Agritex in relation to the problem statement. Recommendations for future research were also stated

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ANNEXURE A: Questionnaire for Work life balance

Section A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please tick in the appropriate box in the spaces provided

1. Age Group

Under 30 year [] 31 to 40 years [] Over 40 years []

2. Marital status

Single [] Married [] Separated [] Divorced [] Widowed []

3. How many children do you have?

None [] 1 [] 2 [] 3 [] More than 3 []

4. How old are your children?

Not applicable [] Under 2 years [] 2-5 years [] 6-14 years [] 15-18 years []

5. Level of education

ZJC level [] O' Level [] A' Level [] Certificate [] Diploma []
Degree [] Master's Degree [] Other-----

6. Please tick the organisational level you fall under

Operational [] Supervisory [] Management []

7. Number of years in the organisation

Less than 5 years [] 6-10 years [] 11-20 years []

8. Please tick if you have any of the responsibilities as primary career?

- a) Child care []
- b) Elder care []
- c) Caring for sick child or adult []
- d) Caring for disabled child or adult []

SECTION B: WORK LIFE BALANCE STRATEGIES, OPINIONS AND VIEWS

1. Is work keeping you busy from your family activities more than you would like?

To a greater extent Very often Sometimes To a lesser extent Not at all

2. Do family responsibilities often interfere with your work responsibilities

To a greater extent Very often Sometimes To a lesser extent Not at all

3. Does family time often interfere with activities at your work that could be helpful to your career?

To a greater extent Very often Sometimes To a lesser extent Not at all

To what extent do the following make work life balance harder?

		To a greater extent	Very often	Sometimes	To a lesser extent	Not at all
4.	Deadlines and schedules					
5.	Type of work you do					
6.	Number of hours you need to work					
7.	Expectations/attitude of supervisor or manager.					
8.	Attitude of male workmates					
9.	How difficult it is to take leave					
10.	Amount of notice you get about the hours/overtime you need to work					
11.	Having to take additional work home					
12.	Amount of travel required					
13.	Starting and finishing time					

What strategies do you use to achieve work life balance?

		To a greater extent	Very often	Sometimes	To a lesser extent	Not at all
14.	Technology like laptops/VPN/Internet/cell phones					
15.	Working from home					
16.	Take care of personal business during working hours whenever the chance arises					

17.	Engage full time or part time helpers to take care of dependents and household chores					
18.	Making use of industrial holidays, and provision for leave of work to take care of personal matters					
19.	Support from family members					
20.	Support from colleagues at work					

Please tick the most appropriate option on statements on work life balance.

		To a greater extent	Very often	Sometimes	To a lesser extent	Not at all
21.	WLB is partly employers and partly individuals' responsibility					
22.	WLB is entirely an employer's responsibility					

23. How much time do you spent on the following activities in a working day (as a percentage)?
 Office [] Hobbies [] Household activities [] Study [] Care []

24. Do you generally feel you are able to balance your work and family life?
 Yes [] No []

End

ANNEXURE B: Consent Form for Participants

Title of the study: Work life balance strategies for women in the Ministry of Agriculture, Agritex department

Purpose: To survey and describe strategies that female employees use to balance their work and family demands with the view of making recommendations for appropriate intervention.

Dear Participant,

You are kindly invited to participate in a research data collection exercise which I am carrying out to establish work life balance strategies for women in the Ministry of Agriculture, Agritex department. The study is being done in partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology. You are expected to respond to a questionnaire which will provide valuable information on work life balancing strategies.

If you agree to participate in the study, it would be purely on voluntary basis. Note that you have the right to withdraw from the study any time you wish during the course of the research. all the data collected shall not be linked to any name or identity of participants. There is no physical or emotional risk anticipated during and after the collection phase. Also note that participation in this research has no monetary or any other benefits.

Declaration from the participant.

I have read and understood the nature and procedures of the study, I voluntarily participate in this study. I am also aware that I can withdraw from the study at any time and that my withdrawal from the study at any time and that my withdrawal would not in any way affect my work.

Signature of Participant.....

Date.....

Nyararai Blessed Huku (Researcher).....

Date.....

*Cell: +263 772 460 461,
Email: enbthuku@gmail.com*

ANNEXURE C: Letter from Midlands State University

Midlands State University



Established 2000

P BAG 9055
GWERU

Telephone: (263) 54 260404 ext 261
Fax: (263) 54 260233/260311

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

Date...13-01-2015

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE WITH DISSERTATION INFORMATION

FOR NYARARA BLESSED T. IHUKU R135144W

BACHELOR OF PSYCHOLOGY HONOURS DEGREE

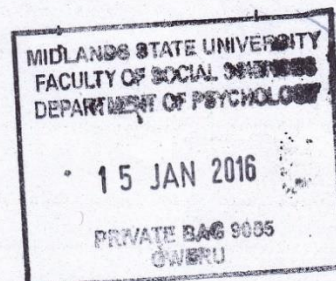
This letter serves to introduce to you the above named student who is studying for a Psychology Honours Degree and is in his/her 4th year. All Midlands State University students are required to do research in their 4th year of study. We therefore kindly request your organisation to assist the above-named student with any information that they require to do their dissertation.

Topic: WORK LIFE BALANCE STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE: A CASE OF THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE'S AGRITEX DEPARTMENT.

For more information regarding the above, feel free to contact the Department.

Yours faithfully

F. Ngwenya
Chairperson



ANNEXURE D: Approval letter from the Ministry of Agriculture Agritex Department

 All correspondence should be addressed to the Director
Department of Agricultural Technical and Extension Services
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, MECHANISATION AND
IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT

AGRITEX
Head Office
No. 1 Borrowdale Road
Ngungunyana Building
Harare.

P.O. Box CY 2505, Harare, Zimbabwe Tel: (+203) 04-784381-2

21 January 2016

Ref: R 135144 W

Ms N.B.T Huku
807 Msasa Road
New Marimha
Harare.

**REF: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT ACADEMIC RELATED RESEARCH: MS.
N.B.T. HUKU: R 135144 W**

The above subject matter refers:

Reference is made to your university letter seeking approval to conduct academic related research with the Department of Agritex.

Be informed that the Head of Department has no objection to your request to conduct research in the Department. At the end of your study the Department requires you to submit your findings and recommendations for future implementation.

Please note that your research proceedings should not disrupt daily Departmental operations.

Best wishes in your studies.



Chipungura H[Mr]
For: Director, AGRITEX.



ANNEXURE E: Audit Sheet

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Date	Activity	Supervisor's Comment	Supervisor's Name	Student's Signature
15/09/15	Proposal	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
10/10/15	Proposal	Proceed	Mr L. Maunganidze	
01/12/15	Chapter one	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
18/12/15	Chapter one	Proceed	Mr L. Maunganidze	
03/01/16	Chapter two	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
11/01/16	Chapter two	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
31/01/16	Chapter two	Proceed	Mr L. Maunganidze	
15/02/16	Chapter three	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
21/02/16	Chapter three	Proceed	Mr L. Maunganidze	
01/03/16	Chapter four	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
08/03/16	Chapter four	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
15/03/16	Chapter four	Proceed	Mr L. Maunganidze	
18/03/16	Chapter five	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
19/03/16	Chapter five	Proceed	Mr L. Maunganidze	
23/03/16	First draft	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
01/04/16	Second draft	Rework	Mr L. Maunganidze	
13/04/16	Final draft	Submit	Mr L. Maunganidze	

Supervisor's Signature.....

Date.....