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## **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK LIFE BALANCE TOWARDS TRANSFER OF TRAINING**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*A better work environment lead to a better work performance. Employee who have some control over their working arrangement will have a better work performance, thus easy to apply their knowledge, skill and also change their attitude towards their ability. This paper conducted to identify the level of work life balance and transfer of training as well as the relationship between it. In order to achieve the research objective, this study used quantitative approach where questionnaire distributed 6 months after the computer skill training among 63 employees of ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd. The results showed that there is significant and strong relationship between work life balance and transfer of training. The result of this study helps the employee to improve their performance on transfer of training and strike balance in their work life.*

**KEYWORDS:** Performance, Training, Transfer of Training, Work Life Balance

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2015 budget, Prime Minister (PM) stated that, for an organization to move forward, the essential elements that each of the organization need is training. This is included fresh ideas, creativity, the latest innovations and soft skills to generate the economy of a nation (1). To make sure that the workers master the knowledge, both skills and attitude is needed. The main objectives of training is to apply what they have learned into their daily work (1). To close the gap between the current performance and the desired goal of full application of what is learned during the training, can be done by the feedback that is provided by the environment on the application of newly learned skills in the workplace (2). Besides that, training also an essential element for an organization to move forward. It enables organizations to adapt to the shifting conditions and to ensure its survival(1). One of the reason why training has a positive impact on transfer of training is because it is a prerequisite for transfer of training to occur in the workplace. Training enable employee to gain new knowledge, skills and attitudes, which should enhance the employees' ability to use various cognitive and behavioural tactics or strategies to apply their training outcomes to their job (3).

Both work and life are like two sides of coin that interwoven in nature and overlap. A professionally organization can pledge to strike balance between work and life in order to keep their employees smiling(4). Individuals will get benefit from having a better health and wellbeing when they have work life balance (WLB) and this will give impacts on organisational productivity and performance. Hence, that is why the organizations and individuals focus on the issue of work life balance(5). Before this, the term “work life balance” used to be known as “work family balance”. But, in this recent years it has been replaced with the new term as “work life balance”.

To diverse range of employees such as women, men, parents and non-parents, singles and couples, this issue can be applied to any non-paid activities or commitments. Besides that, the life activities that need to be balanced with employment also included study, travel, sport, voluntary work, personal development, leisure or eldercare (6).However, work life balance does not mean to devote an equal amount of time to paid work and non-paid roles. But, it is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement of ‘fit’ between the multiple roles in

people life. In order to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life, work life balance is generally associated with equilibrium between the amount of time and effort that somebody devoted to work and personal activities (6).

### **Problem Statement**

Nowadays, transfer of training is an important issue for the organizations. The on-going application in the work setting of knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired via a training/PD (professional development) programme is called as transfer of training(7). Both managers and supervisors should assist the interested employees to achieve a flexible work conditions. This will lead to the balancing of work life (8). In order to increase the teamwork as a part of the organizations, the companies need to work as single entity to be competitive in their respective market (9).

Work life balance is the quality relationship between paid work and unpaid responsibilities for success in today's business world. To reduce work-life conflict and enable employees to be more effective at work and in other roles, an organization need to designed work life balance (6). However, if the organizations do not concern about the balancing between work and life, it will only give stress and burden to their employees. Furthermore, the employees that were able to manage work-family conflict and achieve WLB, would likely be healthy and well at the workplace (5).

The growth and development of an organizations can be affected by training. However, some of the organizations treat training as some of a cosmetic exercise. Some of the organizations resort training in a less formal manner and make the employees less motivation (4). The employees that tend to suffer less stress-related ill-health were the employees who have some form of control over their working environment, with clear implications for the concept of work-life balance. According to Jim Bird, CEO of Worklifebalance.com (an international work-life balance and consulting company), "Work-life balance is an enjoyment and a meaningful achievement in everyday life" (6).

Transfer of training will affect the work life balance in an employee. If the employee can successfully transfer the training that they received, they will also can strike balance

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between work and life. Employees should actively participate in the training sessions conducted by the organizations (4).

### **Research Objectives**

From the study, there are 3 objectives can be found;

1. To determine the level of transfer of training among the employees in ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn.Bhd.
2. To measure the level of work life balance among the employees in ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn.Bhd.
3. To identify the relationship between work life balance and transfer of training among employees in ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn.Bhd.

### **Research Scope**

The scope of the study as below:

1. A set of survey distributed in one selected manufacturing industry located at Batu Pahat, Johor.
2. The survey among the employees which is the staff of ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd in the Human Resources Department
3. Respondent is among those who has attended for the computer skill training that had been organized by the company.

### **Significant of the Study**

This topic is chosen because there is low percentage of the employees that successfully transfer the training they received and successfully strike balance both in work and life(10). At the end of the study, the company can get information on how to make the training they provided can be applied successfully by their employees. This information also can give benefit to the employees on how to applied the training successfully and how to strike a balance in both work and life. The finding of the study also important for the policy makers to strengthen the policy regarding work life balance in Malaysia. Not many company are

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providing work life balance policy in their company. Government can enhance companies in practicing work life balance policy by offering incentive for them as a way to promote a healthy lifestyle.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Work life balance.** Before this, the term “work life balance” used to be known as “work family balance”. But, in this recent years it has been replaced with the new term as “work life balance”(6). Initially, the work life balance was term as work family conflict. An individuals’ ability, irrespective of age and gender, to find a life rhythm that allows them to combine their work with other responsibilities, activities or aspirations (11).

According to Shana Maiya (2014), work life balance can be defined as an interaction between paid work and other activities (12). This also included personal development, leisure and unpaid work in both families and communities. A balance between paid work and the life outside the work hour that could be attained by an individual also defined as work life balance. These also included childcare and self-development (12).

However, work life balance does not mean to devote an equal amount of time to paid work and non-paid roles. But, it is defined as a satisfactory level of involvement of ‘fit’ between the multiple roles in people life. In order to maintain an overall sense of harmony in life work life balance is generally associated with equilibrium between the amount of time and effort that somebody devoted to work and personal activities (6).

In fact, the satisfaction towards one’s work life balance with another one might be different. Some may feel that ‘more time at work and less time at home’ is consider a work life balance for them; while another may feel that ‘more time at home and less time at work’ will make up balance for them (13). According to Kaur (2017), an effective work life balance must include daily achievement and enjoyment. Without these two concept, a person are said as not having an effective work life balance (14).

**Workload and responsibility.** The content and quantity of work assigned to the employees is known as work load. Meanwhile, responsibility is taking care of one’s duties, answering for actions, accountability for work which has been assigned and being trustworthy to the management (15).The examples of workload and responsibility were time demands of their

work. It is also to indicate the extent to which they accurately reflected their level of responsibility at work and to indicate the actual number of hours spent directly undertaking work duties.

A direct predictor of work life conflict is role overload. When an individual takes too many roles on one time it is called role overload. Unable to perform all the role demands and obligations effectively, is considered as high levels of overload. Various role characteristics can create strain or distress that undermines an individual's ability or willingness to fulfil the responsibilities of another role. An individual that have too much work to do in the available time, known as subjective quantitative workload.

**Feelings about work.** It is fine to have feelings at work, after all our relationship revolve around them. However, it is important how we express the feelings. Less positive feelings about their organization and be less emotionally attached to their organization related to high levels of work-to-family conflict (15). Furthermore, by compressed work week, an organization can reduce the level of stress; the number of employee absenteeism and the number of turnover. Hence, an individual morality and loyalty will be increased.

The employees that does not need to deal with incoming work in daily basis, is likely suitable for them regarding the compressed work week. In exchange to reduce the number of working days on a weekly or biweekly basis, an individual tends to work in a longer shift. It is beneficial to an individual to reduced their working days that they spent in a week but could not reduce their working hours (6)

There is a positive relationship that exists between the organization and supervisor support for work-life issues and reduction of work-to-family conflict (16). Employees that feel comfortable with their jobs and have an effective work-life balance are proud to work for their companies (17). It is a positive sign which can lead to a better job performance as they will work harder for their companies.

**Work environment.** The place that one works is identified as work environment (15). The work environment is the physical and non-physical thing around the employee which may affect the employee in performing their duties (18). The relationship between an individual with supervisor, peer, and subordinate also include in work environment. An influential variable of work life balance was support that an individual received from their co-workers

and supervisors. When an individual received a supportive work environment, they would have a better work life balance. However, when an individual does not received any support from their co-workers and supervisors, it can lead to stress and family conflict (19). Unsupportive culture resulting from a lack of support from managers, supervisors, and colleagues also influence the employer's ability to use work life balance policies (20).

Besides that, an individual's perception about work environment as threatening or demanding, or discomfort experienced, defined as job stress (16). Family life and work-family conflict could arise when an individual had unsupportive supervisor or employer. This could happen only when they could not have a supportive employer to support them (10).

**Family dependants.** Other than dependent children, elderly parents, grandchildren, siblings, children of siblings, spouses or significant others and in-laws were an individual's responsibilities to the family members. It is important to not ignore the diversity of family. Caring for a child or other family dependents, increase the strain placed on the family and the time requirements. In turn, it can interfere with an individual's work role (15). During the absence employed wives, fathers experienced stress in child caring. The increased home demands causing additional stress and work family conflict were resulting from the increased number of children at home. In addition, more emotional burden affected on females compared to males in child care as well as care for elderly(16).

**Absence from work.** Absence from work is the employees keeping themselves away from the work with discharging their duties and responsibilities (15). By compressed work week, an organization can reduce stress; employee absenteeism and turnover. Hence, it will increase employee morale and loyalty. It is suitable for employees who do not need to deal with incoming work on a daily basis or there are several employees doing the same job. By minimizing absenteeism, turnover and work family conflict on flexible time strategy, it will improved the employee productivity (16).

**Training.** Training also an essential element for an organization to move forward. It enables organizations to adapt to the shifting conditions and be ensuring its survival. This is included fresh ideas, creativity, the latest innovations and soft skills to generate the economy of a nation (1). One of the reason why training has a positive impact on transfer of

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training is because it is also a prerequisite for transfer of training to occur in the workplace. Training enable employee to gain new knowledge, skills and attitudes, which should enhance the employees' ability to use various cognitive and behavioural tactics or strategies to apply their training outcomes to their job (3).

**Training effectiveness.** Training effectiveness evolved rapidly over time. The content and satisfaction can verily substantial if the employees understand the training concepts (21). Those who are attend training as a mandatory requirement were likely less effective compared to those who attend training because they want to improve their practice(22). However, trainer also plays important roles on the success of the training. According to Piyali et. al. (2012), interpersonal skills of a trainer is significance in ensuring the success of the training (23). Trainer need to build a good communication with the trainee to gain commitment from them.

**Transfer of training.** The transfer of formal and informal learning arising from a course or workshop is known as transfer of training. The idea that it will take care of itself or that it cannot be readily achieved can be the occurrence of transfer of training if it is repudiated and promoted. Transfer has always been a bewildering, controversial and complex concept as early as the beginning of the 20th century and caused this uncertainty has partly arisen (7). When a trainee is motivated to apply their learning without being forced, the process of transfer of training occurred. In fact, volition to transfer and motivation to transfer are the factor to a successful transfer of training. These motivational and volitional processes seem to mediate the transfer process (24). Trainer soft skills and training methodology also gives an impact on the process of transfer of training, which then lead to the increase of their work performance (25).

Training is part of the investment for the company. According to Kumar (2014), training provide benefits such as increase employee morale, improved performance level, enhanced productivity, and so on, thus it plays an important role in changing the attitude of both employees and employers towards work life balance (4).

## Conceptual Framework

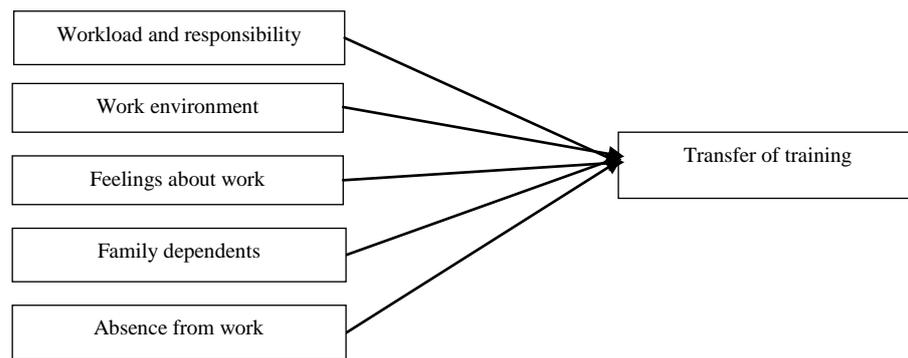


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### Research Design

This research is quantitative method in which collected data from the population of study will be quantified and results will be analysed. The collected data will be analysed by using mathematical based method. Quantitative research is being used in this study because it is based on collecting numerical data that using survey questionnaire. The purpose of using survey questionnaire was to see the effect of work life balance and how many trainees can apply the training to the workplace.

The research task is to determine the level of work life balance and transfer of training among the employees in ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn.Bhd and the relationship between it. Therefore, descriptive and inferential research design would be more appropriate (26). Furthermore, descriptive analysis describes respondents using basic statistical analysis, such as frequency percentage, distributions, measure of central tendency, and it is usually used in the early stages of the study (27). While inferential analysis is used to infer from the sample data what the population might think. It is also to make judgments of the probability that an observed difference between groups is a dependable one or one that might have happened by chance in this study.

## **Data Collection**

### **Participants**

The participants of this study consist of 63 employees in the manufacturing sector that located in Batu Pahat, Johor that have attended computer skills training organized by the company ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd in the past 6 months.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

This study is conducted using the method of survey questionnaire. A six-point Likert's scale was used to determine respondent's opinions or rating, which is rating number one is strongly disagree and rating six is strongly agree. Six-point Likert's scale was used because it is more reliable compare to the five-point Likert's scale. According to Chomeya (2010), a six-point Likert's scale has a higher reliability values than the five-point Likert's scale. Other than that, Chomeya also stated that by using the six-point Likert's scale will reduce the deviation of personal decision making. In fact, it is more reliable to use six-point Likert's scale when you have several variable as it will make the test as a whole has the numbers of item not to many, thus will not burdening the respondent while the reliability is acceptable (28).

The questionnaire design consisted of three sections:

- a) Demographic-respondent's profile
- b) Work life balance (WLB)
- c) Transfer of training

The questionnaire was self-develop by the researcher and some of it is adopted from the previous research. The demographic and transfer of training instrument was developed by the researcher while the work life balance instrument was adopted from A. Pandu et. al. (2011). The consistency of the questionnaire was tested using reliability analysis. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the reliability. The Alpha's value for the instrument was 0.919 which is good. Sekaran & Bougie (2009) explained that if the alpha value exceed 0.7, the level of reliability would be acceptable and if the value is above 0.8, the reliability is good (29).

## **Data Analysis**

Demographic data of the respondents was gathered and summarized. Test was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). The software helped in figure out the data that need to be measured. The demographic data, data reliability and normality of the data was analysed, and the hypotheses of the study was determined to be accepted or rejected.

## **4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Objective 1: To identify the level of transfer of training**

Based on the analysis of the findings, the level of transfer of training in computer skills attended by the respondent was high. This explains that the trainee or employee can apply what they learn from the training to their workplace. This is further refined with mean of knowledge which records 5.08 min readings, followed by 4.48 and 4.12 respectively. Previous research stated that, the increased in knowledge can give positive effects on training (30). Besides that, knowledge can affect its competitive ability and performance (31).

### **Objective II: To measure the level of work life balance**

Based on the research findings, more than half of the respondents which is 52 of them (82.54%) are having a very high level of work life balance. Only 11 of them (17.46%) are having high level of work life balance. This illustrate that the employees of the ABC Manufacturing Corporation (M) Sdn. Bhd. are having a balance between their time devoted for their work and their personal activities. However, among all the factors used to measured work life balance, absenteeism and work environment have the highest mean reading by 5.00; followed by work load and responsibility (4.86); family dependent (4.85); and work environment (4.73). Based on previous research, feelings about work state the highest coefficient with 4.79 and found to be significant at one percent (15). Besides that, Sigroha (2014), said that feelings about work could affect the employees performance (32).

**Objective III: To identify the relationship between work life balance and transfer of training**

**Table 1** Correlation

<b>Work life balance</b>	<b>Correlations</b>	<b>Transfer of training</b>
Workload and responsibility	Correlation Coefficient	.672**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
Work environment	Correlation Coefficient	.431**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Feelings about work	Correlation Coefficient	.720**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Family dependent	Correlation Coefficient	.440**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
Absence from work	Correlation Coefficient	.381**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002

The findings of the analysis showed the relationship between work life balance and transfer of training. It is stated that all the items measured under work life balance are having a significant and strong relationship.

**Workload and responsibility**, there is a significant and strong relationship between workload and responsibility with transfer of training by significant value of 0.001. It is parallel with the finding of van der Klink & Streumer (2002), where self-efficacy, prior experience with task, management support, and work load were the most powerful influences on the effectiveness of a training (33).

**Work environment**, there is significant and strong relationship between work environment and transfer of training with significant value of 0.000. A better work environment can help the employee to transfer their training better. The finding consistent with the finding of Awoniyi (2012), where individuals transfer their training into their work when their real environment fit their ideal environment (34). Other than that, this finding also supported by

the finding of Gitonga (2006) where the study found that trainee face difficulty in transferring learning due to low devotion of the learning environment to the work environment (35).

There is also significant and strong relationship between **feelings about work** and transfer of training with the significant value of 0.000. When an individual had higher commitment on their job, the possibility of transfer of training to success were higher. It is align with the finding of Pandu et. al. (2011) where the study found that feeling about work is the most significant factor in achieving work life balance, thus increase their commitment (15).

As for family dependent, the significant and strong relationship between **family dependent** and transfer of training is existed with the significant value of 0.00. When family dependants decreased, the work life balance increased, thus chance for transfer of training to occur successfully would also increase (15). According to Poulouse & Susdarsan (2014), the increased number of children will have caused additional stress that will then resulting the ineffectiveness on transfer of training (16).

For **absence from work**, the significant and strong relationship with transfer of training also existed with significant value of 0.02. The productivity of an individual will have increased when absenteeism and turnover were reduced. Thus, the transfer of training will occurred successfully(16). The reducing in stress will increased an individual morale and loyalty. This will have resulted in the successfulness of transfer of training as they work more effectively.

In conclusion, it can be conclude that all the factors in work life balance; workload and responsibility, work environment, feeling about work, family dependent, and absence from work are strongly significant correlated to the transfer of training.

## **5. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION**

In conclusion, all research objectives have been achieved through the distribution of survey questionnaires to the manufacturing industry. For the first research objective is to identify the level of transfer of training among the employees, the results show that the level of

transfer of training are moderate because the average is 4.99 for the mean scores. Among the factors of transfer of training, knowledge has the highest mean score which is 5.08.

For the second objective is to measure the level of work life balance among employees, the results show that the level of work life balance is also moderate because the average is 4.89 for the mean score. Among the factors of work life balance, both feelings about work and absence from work has the highest mean score which is 5.00.

For the third objective, to identify the relationship between transfer of training and work life balance. The research shows that all of the factors was significantly correlated to transfer of training. The correlations are weak. The objectives of research have been achieved by the researcher by using the method distributed questionnaire.

As the conclusion, it is essential to know the relationship between work life balances towards transfer of training. When an individual successfully applied the training that they attended to the work place, they will work more efficient. This could prevent them to bring home the task from the workplace. These will have allowed them to be spent more time at their home. Besides that, if an individual can balance their not-work related such as family, activities and so on, they tend to be more effective when they attend the training. The transfer of training at the work place would success. Thus, they will have a balance between work and life. With the suggestion provided, it is hoped that this research will be useful in the future.

For recommendations, the employer should concern on the factors resulting the work life balance among the employees such as giving the quantity of work is equal to the time for it to finish. Besides that, the employer should be restricting hours worked. This means, after the employees leave the worksite, they are not expected to work. It can also mean in each; the employers should be restricting how many hours are expected of any employee to work. Some organizations, after work hour, even stop their e-mail servers from forwarding messages.

For this study, the research only conducts in small city, Batu Pahat, Johor. Therefore, further research may be conducted in big city such as Johor Bahru.

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