

**FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF
LITERATURE**

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DECLARATION

I, undersigned, declare that this independent conceptual study paper is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university other than the University of Nairobi for academic purposes.

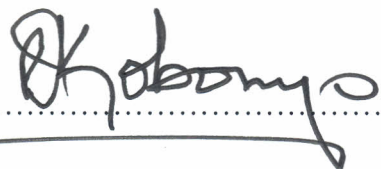
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This independent conceptual study paper has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Flexible work schedules is an important and critical issue in this 21st century. Nevertheless, human resource practitioners only recently began to see flexible work schedules as a business issue that has benefits for both employees and employers (Clutterbuck, 2003). Research that supports the benefits of flexible work schedules for organizations is substantial. It highlights a positive, although indirect, influence on organizational profit (Morgan, 2009). Many organizations and employees are becoming increasingly aware of the potential benefits of flexible work schedules. These benefits include employee job satisfaction and well-being; reduced absenteeism and turnover; successful recruitment and retention; increased productivity; customer satisfaction; employee commitment and improvement in organization citizenship behaviour (White, Hill, McGovern, Mills & Smeaton, 2003).

Today's workforce more than ever before would consider leaving their current employers to gain a better flexible work schedule, even if it meant reduced pay, this practice has gained popularity even among the demographic population that was considered less likely to use it for example men who are believed to be more inclined to their jobs as opposed to family issues given the societal defined gender roles. As a result, organizations that invest heavily in flexible work schedules programmes report lower employee turnover (Mayberry; 2006). The perception is that organizations that offer flexible work schedules are particularly concerned about their employees welfare and through these employees are motivated to reciprocate for this offer by in turn being highly committed to their jobs and working very hard to enhance the success of the organization. Consequently, flexible work schedules as one of the top employee concerns of today is a frequent topic of discussion during recruitment interviews (Clutterbuck, 2003). In the 2003 Best Company to Work for Survey, 23 companies reported flexible work schedules as a key aspect of employees who used flexible work policies took only half as much sick leave as those who did not, this points to the fact that flexible work schedules enhances better health among employees (Morgan, 2009). With such important organizational advantages, it is not surprising that the existence and use of flexible work schedules have become increasingly prevalent globally (Doherty, 2004).

1.2 Flexible Work Schedules

Flexible work schedules refer to any policies, practices, formal or informal, which permit people to vary when and where work is carried out (Maxwell, Rankine, Bell & MacVicar 2006). Gardiner & Tomlinson (2009) view flexible work arrangements as a broad concept that includes any work arrangements that digress from standard employment involving fixed daily hours on the employer's premises. Similarly, flexible work schedules can be said to be employer provided benefits that permit employees some level of control over when and where they work outside of the standard workday (Lambert, Marler, & Gueutal, 2008). Flexible work arrangements have been acknowledged as a means of obtaining a competitive advantage by improving the attraction and retention of high quality employees (Cole 2006). The utilization of flexible work arrangements has been linked to favourable positive employee outcomes such as improved organizational commitment, motivation and job satisfaction (Nadeem & Henry 2003), and increased productivity and morale (Melbourne, 2008).

Flexible work arrangements have also been recognized as a means for employees to create a more satisfying balance between their work and family lives thereby reducing the conflict that tend to arise as employees try to balance between their work and family matters (Shockley & Allen 2007). The availability of flexible work schedule is often perceived as an indication of overall organizational support for employees and their families (Allen, 2001). This idea is consistent with signaling theory, which suggests that observable actions by the organization may be interpreted as a signal of more unobservable characteristics such as care and concern for employees on behalf of the organization. Furthermore, Wayne, Randel & Stevens (2006) pointed out that flexible work arrangements may generate more perceptions of control over work-family matters, thereby increasing positive attitudes at work that may transfer to more positive effect at home a view that is also held by (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006).

This interpretation is, however, not without criticism. In the context of the psychological contract theory, that refer to the individual employee's subjective belief in the reciprocal obligations between the employee and the organization (Rousseau, 1995), it is possible that employees may not feel obliged to reciprocate their organization's provision of flexible work schedules with an increase in positive, work-related behaviours or attitudes. Instead, they may perceive that access to such practices is an entitlement, rather than an example of favourable treatment. It is also difficult

to estimate the extent to which employees may construe such practices as favors versus rights. In addition to this the spillover theory that advocates for possible transfer of behaviours, emotions, attitude and stress from the two domains, work and life will mean that it would be difficult for employees to manage their work- family conflict.

1.3 Forms of Flexible Work Schedules

Flexible work schedules occur in many forms for example teleworking, flexitime, compressed work week, leave, job share, phased retirement, contract work, part time jobs and term time working but the most common forms of flexible working have been categorized as follows:

1.3.1 Flexibility at the Place of Work

A common form of flexible work schedule relates to the location or place of work. These consist of telework or flexplace, and informal teleworking often combined with nonstandard working time. Under a telework or flexplace schedule, employees work from a location outside of their physical organizational setting. Telework or flexplace is defined as a flexible work schedule that allows employees to work in varied locations, typically using technologies transmitting communication and information (Pérez, Sánchez, & de Luis Carnicer, 2002). Although there are many forms of telework or flexplace, there are four defining types that capture most of these: telecommuting, satellite offices, neighborhood work centers, and mobile workers (Kurland & Bailey, 1999). Telecommuters work from home on a regular basis and may or may not use technology in their work. Employees at satellite and neighborhood work offices work outside the home and organization. However, employees at satellite offices are from a single organization; while employees at neighborhood work centers can be from multiple organizations that share office space in a local suburban area rather than commute to a downtown center. Such opportunities allow employees to engage in regular interactions with work colleagues, while reducing the commuting time and the need to purchase urban office space.

Teleworking can also include informal teleworking combined with nonstandard working time. Informal flexible work schedules are a rising trend that needs to be considered when referring to teleworking. The nature of many jobs has changed to be increasingly virtual, flexible, and self-regulated with growing access to portable e-work, defined as electronic-work from Blackberries, cell phones, or laptops (Kossek & Lautsch, 2008). Work is increasingly being diffused over all

hours of the day or week extending later into the night and starting earlier in the morning, and also spreading into vacations and weekends (Hamermesh, 1999). More and more individuals are casually teleworking in planes, trains, and automobiles, or in public places like coffee shops and restaurants. Employees who have access to this type of flexibility save time and money in commuting costs. Employers who provide and support this type of flexibility can save money on utilities, other overhead costs, and in organizations that exist only virtually, the cost of actual real estate. In addition, research by Gajendran & Harrison (2007) revealed that these programs are related to better employee performance and lower turnover intentions. However, without a proper infrastructure, a telecommuting program can be costly to start, though effective practices will ultimately pay for themselves. This type of schedule may be criticized on the grounds that the employees who make use of it may be passed over for promotions due to lack of visibility in office, there are increased chances of burnout as work is carried home and it may be increasingly difficult for employees to reduce work- life conflict. This kind of schedule is only feasible where an employee works completely independently and there is no need for team work. This can however lead to a feeling of isolation from the other members of the organization.

1.3.2 Flexibility in the Number of Days Employees Work

This type of flexibility is most often associated with the idea of the compressed workweek. It involves the relocation of time worked into fewer and longer blocks during the week. In a compressed workweek, employees may work for longer hours for a few days, for example, four 10-hour days instead of the normal five 8-hour days. Employees who have access to and use this type of flexibility gain an extra day each week to spend in life pursuits outside of the workplace. Employers who implement such a workplace approach across the organization can realize substantial cost savings as well as higher employee performance (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright & Neuman, 1999). In addition, environmentally-conscious organizations can also produce less pollutants and contaminants by moving to this type of work schedule. Besides this, there is increased productivity due to decreased absenteeism and turnover; it provides an inexpensive way to improve employee morale and creative opportunity to retain staff.

Whereas these benefits may be cited, challenges such as reduction in employee income and benefits and the fact that it is a system that only suits a group of employees and not individuals

may limit its usage in the organization. Furthermore, the full implications of compressed work week on worker wellbeing have yet to be fully explored. For example, (Knauth, 2007) observes that compressed workweek may have adverse health outcomes due to long hours of work but many studies find no such health detriments and substantial improvements in work-life balance (Bambra, Whitehead, Sowden, Akers, & Petticrew, 2008). At the same time, the use of compressed work week may conflict with the available legislations for example the Kenyan labour laws spells the maximum working hours as eight hours in a day and any extra hour should be perceived as an overtime to be paid separately.

1.3.3 Flexibility in the Number of Hours Employees Work or Amount of Work

This refers to flexibility in terms of the amount of workload or the amount of working time using some methods such as: Reduced time or workload which is any reduction in the total number of working hours for 40 hours/week in exchange for lower pay (Kossek and Michel, 2011). It includes: Part time jobs under which employees are required to work for less than 35 hours in week (Christensen and Staines, 1990); secondly there is job sharing under which two employees voluntarily share work responsibilities where each works less than full-time (Christensen & Staines, 1990).

Job sharing can increase flexibility when used to meet peak demand, for instance by both sharers being present when workloads are heavy. However, the employees must agree on any changes to the contracted hours. The other advantage is that if one partner is absent, due to illness or holiday, the other partner can carry on with at least half the work. In addition, two people can also bring a wider range of skills, experience, views and ideas to the post. Job sharing is particularly useful for parents of young children and can make it easier for women to return to work after maternity leave, beyond the coordination required in job sharing, there are relatively few costs associated with this type of flexibility; thirdly, phased retirement is another example of reduced-load work, where full time employees are allowed to gradually reduce their workloads and hours before retirement. Phased retirement is beneficial to employers in that it cushions the loss of experienced, key personnel, it provides more time to develop other interests, volunteer opportunities and it also helps prepare the employee for retirement. However, it has the following disadvantages; there is potential loss of income, it may be taken less seriously on the job and may affect pension benefits. Finally, there is shift swapping where workers are given freedom to swap shifts between

themselves, ensuring the shifts are covered. With good management procedures in place, to ensure the employer knows who is due in on any given shift, this gives employees more freedom, and can work for most employers where the staff perform the same tasks. Proper coordination and team is necessary for the success in the use of this type of schedule.

1.3.4 Flexibility in Timing of Work

The most common method used here is flexi-time; others include shift work and contingent work. Flexitime is defined as flexible hour's schedules that allow workers to alter workday start and finish times. Here, employees have the discretion to vary the times they arrive and leave work, within management parameters, to meet their personal needs (Avery & Zabel, 2001). Flexitime schedules have a predetermined range of times in which employees can arrive and leave, with a core band in between work starting and stopping times when all employees must be present. The need for the core hours is to help managers with the coordination of meetings and supervision (Van Dyne, Kossek & Lobel, 2008). Flexitime policies sometimes incorporate daily carryover, where employees can vary their work schedules in regards to daily time spent at work, as long as they spend a predetermined set amount of weekly time at work. This is in contrast to traditional work arrangements that require employees to work a standard time daily. Flexitime is mostly applicable to professional and higher level employees than lower level employees. Workers in service and manufacturing jobs also have less access than jobs in other industries (Kossek and Distelberg, 2009).

Shift work is another common form of nonstandard working time. It can involve evening night or weekend hours; rotating shifts or double shifts when a worker is not relieved from 24- 7 operations such as in hospitals, prisons, or factories. Sometimes an employee can have a regular but nonstandard schedule, such as a set 8-hour work schedule that always takes place at night (Barnett & Hall, 2007). Some workers do choose shift work as it allows them to engage in other life pursuits during the day such as education or child care. Lastly, there is contingent work which refers to a work schedule that involves the hiring of workers based on a temporary fixed-term contract (Kossek & Michel, 2011). Employees who have access to and use this type of flexibility gain the ability to work for an organization without the need to invest 40, 50, or 60 hours each week. Examples of contingent workers include seasonal, temporary in-house or freelance workers. These programs can increase worker productivity and provide an alternative

to downsizing during economic recessions (Sutherland, 1997). Employers who provide and support this type of flexibility can improve their ability to attract and retain talented employees who do not want all of the demands associated with full-time employment (Cunningham & Murry, 2005).

Flexibility in timing of work can be criticized on the grounds of the challenges it raises. For instance, although it enables organizations to extend working hours, setting up and maintaining time-keeping systems will always come up with additional costs which might not necessarily be associated with remuneration (Grzywacz, Carlson, and Shulkin, 2008). This may include power and water costs that are incurred during the extended working hours. The managers are likely to be burdened more with this kind of arrangements especially when it comes to supervision of employees.

1.3.5 Flexibility to Allow for Short-Term Breaks in Employment or Time Off

Receiving considerable less attention than other flexible work schedules are part-year work, sabbaticals, vacations, and leaves. These flexible work arrangements allow for short-term breaks in employment without losing one's job. These are increasingly important flexible work schedule forms as they enable individuals to maintain their relationships with their employers, yet have a break from work responsibilities. These breaks help individuals to engage in renewal, undergo new skill development, travel, and attend to care giving, health demands, or prevent burnout. Under a flexible work arrangement that allows sabbaticals, employees take a prolonged paid time away from work and expect to return to their same jobs at the end of the sabbatical (Etzion, 2003). Sabbaticals are traditionally linked to universities and academic positions as a means to allow for skill enhancement or renewal after heavy teaching loads or administrative work. Although less available in the private sector and they are often distributed.

Flexible work arrangement that allows for leave of absence involves employees being absent from work or work duty for a set period of time in order to handle domestic or personal needs. This absence can range from a few minutes or hours, off during the work day to several weeks, months, or longer (Ivanovic & Collin, 2006). Leave can be paid or unpaid and granted for many reasons including religious demands, training for a marathon, adoption, short-term disability, maternity, paternity, foster care, caring for a sick child or relative, or educational purposes

(Galinsky et al., 2004). One of the most common leaves is maternity. Under a part-year work arrangement, workers are typically employed to fulfill seasonal or short-term needs. This enables organizations to maintain flexible and short-term staffing (Drucker, White, Hegewich, & Maynbe, 1996). Some professions attract high-level talent by offering seasonal flexibility in annual scheduling, such as academic, teaching, and tourism jobs. Other industries hire seasonal migrant workers, such as in construction and agricultural jobs, or offer part year employment to handle variation in customer seasonal demand including holiday retail jobs, tax accounting firms and ski resorts.

Despite the classification of the flexible work schedules above, the list is not exhaustive; other forms of flexible work schedules would include child care programmes such as day care facilities that provide the employees with opportunities to attend to their children at their places of work during break time. This is usually beneficial to parents with breast feeding children, pre- school children and school-going children out of school hours. Similarly, there is elder care programme that gives the opportunities to employees to attend to their elderly parents. The use of the types of schedules mentioned above vary with different organizations, industries, products and different jobs; for instance, it is easier to achieve flexibility in routine as opposed to non –routine jobs, professional and higher level employees are more likely to have access to flextime than lower level employees. Workers in service and manufacturing jobs also have less access to most of the schedules than jobs in other industries (Kossek & Distelberg, 2009). Shift work is more feasible in the service and technical industries. Part-time workers and small business owners report greater schedule flexibility than do wage and salaried employees (Golden 2001). Employers who handle customer calls from a variety of time zones may use flextime and telework to staff extended work hours. Smaller businesses may not have sufficient staffing to allow workers discretion in work scheduling as opposed to larger organizations with a bigger staff. Flexible schedules such as telecommuting may be suitable if a position is one in which an employee works completely independently. This type of arrangement would not be suitable for positions that require more of team work or requires a significant amount of interaction with others as part of the job responsibility.

1.4 Drivers for the Growth of Flexible Work Schedules

The growth and expansion in the use of flexible work schedules can be viewed from macro-organizational perspective, such factors as demographic labor market shift, cost saving, environmental and technological forces are the driving force for flexible work schedule growth, making them vital for employer adoption. Demographic labor market shifts has created a workforce that increasingly needs and values flexibility. Statistics have shown an expansive growth in the number of individuals who must ensure family responsibilities are managed while they are at work. For instance, today's fathers play a greater role in care giving and value flexibility more than those of previous generations (Pleck, 1997). The current generation of workers entering the workforce, the millennials take a more balanced approach to work than previous generations (Deal, 2007).

Product and labor cost savings are yet another force for the growth of flexible work schedules. The adoption of contingent and part-time work schedules, and temporary extra shifts, allows employers to expand and contract workforce size and employment at will in response to variation in product demand, economic uncertainty, and new market developments in the global economy. Globalization and rising consumer demand, and the high costs of shutting down continuous processing manufacturing systems mandate 24-7 operations with production and service delivery around the clock for many firms. Many studies have shown that the information technology sector is at the forefront of having a flexible mobile often off-shored workforce, which enables firms to quickly hire staff, form partnerships and develop a customer base around the globe (MacEachen, Polzer & Clarke, 2008).

Contingent work schedules have been used to reduce labor costs. Companies now have a two-tiered work force: a core and a noncore group. One group is full-time employees who have better health care and pension benefits and some job security. The other is a contingent work group with less favorable benefits and hours, who can be easily laid off to quickly reduce labor costs. Telework reduces office costs due to more efficient facility management and space use, in most cases most of the work is performed out of the office (Karnowski & White, 2002). More employers have become comfortable with flexibility as technological tools enhance the ability to electronically monitor employee productivity (Venkatesh & Johnson, 2002).

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 Introduction

Flexible work schedules have been recognized at both theoretical and practical level as an important factor in organizational performance, productivity and an improvement in job satisfaction of employees. The theories that have been linked to the study of flexible work schedules comprise: border theory, spillover theory, social exchange theory, signaling theory and psychological contract theory.

2.2 Border Theory

The work/family border theory was developed by Clark (2000). The theory tries to explain how people manage to draw negotiation between their life within their families and responsibilities at the workplace and the boundaries between these spheres as they try to strike a balance. The key aspect of this theory is the idea that work and family make up two distinct domains or spheres which however have a bearing on each other. Clarke (2009) observes that this is so due to the fact that there are generally different cultures both at family level and work level which thus means an individual has to transit between these two cultures on a daily basis. Whereas the transition could be slight in cases where acceptable behavior in both cases is more or less similar, there are cases where there is massive contrast between the two spheres of an employee's life (Othman, 2009). This could be due to the fact that individuals are motivated by different things in both spheres like income and accomplishment at work and close relationships and happiness in family (Clark, 2000). For this reason, between work and home, there exist borders which might be temporal, physical or psychological. Clark (2000) observes that these borders might be temporal given the differences in time an individual crosses to another domain or physical as elaborated by the walls of a workplace or home. Similarly, a border can be psychological in terms of the difference in thoughts, behavior patterns or emotions one has when in a given domain (Othman, 2009).

In making emphasis about the theory, Clark (2000) posits that domain means work and home which are more of two different worlds with distinct rules, thoughts, patterns and behaviors. Desrochers & Sergent (2006) points out that the two domains became different with the industrial revolution and this has been enhanced by different factors like the increase in divorce rates that has resulted in many single parents, increase in women in employment, and a lot more

expectation of what a father is supposed to be in society among other things. Individuals thus have to find a way of striking a balance between these two domains in order to avoid conflicts that might be caused by the demands of both sides. Border crossers and border keepers are other concepts in this theory. Individuals or employees who frequent both domains are called border crossers (Clark, 2000). According to Desrochers, Hilton & Larwood (2005) border crossers are integral in both domains and while some believe that they easily make decisions regarding how they operate in the two domains, Clark (2000) argues that this is not always the case. Border keepers on the other hand are crucial members in determining the borders and they include such people like spouses and supervisors who though might or might not be conversant with the other domain, may have different opinions regarding the demands of the other domain (Hill, Miller, & Weiner, 1998).

The theory assumes that work and family are distinct realms and that it is possible to have a psychological border in terms of the difference in thoughts, behavior patterns or emotions one has when in a given domain (Othman, 2009). This assumption however, is questionable given the possibility of spillover effect where individuals carry their emotions, behaviours, values and thoughts from one domain to the other (Wilensky, 1960). Besides, employees due to the nature of work are sometimes forced to carry work home in a bid to meet the deadlines. In addition, Clark (2000) through this theory make an assumption that despite the fact that many facets of family and work spheres are not easy to alter, it is possible for employees to find ways to bridge the gaps between them and strike a favourable balance to ensure that neither of the two are compromised. This on the contrary is not always the case given the competitive nature of the business environment that put more pressure on the employees and the challenges in family set ups leading to work- family conflict. The applicability of this theory will therefore be possible only if organizations are able to offer flexible work schedule that will enable the employees to have discretion on when and where they carry out their work so that they are able to attend to family issues. Furthermore, the support from management is paramount in facilitating the balance between work role and family roles.

2.3 Spill over Theory

Spillover theory states that general behavior, emotions, attitudes as well as stress can be carried over from life domain to another (Wilensky, 1960). This therefore means that in cases of an adult

who is working, the emotions, behaviors and attitudes can easily be carried from work to their family and vice-versa. Spillover can be either negative or positive spillover (Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003). Negative spillover can be illustrated with the type of conflicts it results into. According to Haar & Bardoel (2000) work-life conflict can be typified into three categories, time based, strain based and behavior based conflict. All these conflicts generally sum up the problems that employees undergo as they try to negotiate between work and family. Strain conflict can for instance be exhibited by the divisions caused as one exhibits different behavior within each domain or role. On the other hand, failure to adequately find time to attend to roles in both one's family and at work elaborates time conflict.

According to Grzywacz (2000) negative spillover is bi-directional which means that there can be interference between roles from both work and family. Haar & Bardoel (2000) assert that arriving late at home as a result of work commitments and being distracted when taking care of sick child shows how spillover can negatively affect the roles in the different spheres of an adult's life. Whereas work and life roles cannot always be interdependent, it is also true that spillover between roles cannot always be negative. Greenhaus and Powell (2006) for instance have tried to balance the negative spillover with enrichment perspectives in both the roles in the family and at work. To describe positive spillover, Haar and Bardoel (2000) observe that terms like enhancement and facilitation have been offered. Greenhaus & Powell (2006) further posit that the positive spillover can occur in both work and family. According to Hanson, Hammer & Colton (2006,) positive spillover refers to the transfer of positively valenced effect, skills, behaviors, and values from the originating domain to the receiving domain. This therefore means that attitudes gained from the different roles can positively enhance the roles in another domain.

The theory assumes that general behavior, emotions, attitudes as well as stress can be carried over from a life domain to work done (Wilensky, 1960) and that there can be both positive and negative spillover. Whereas the suggestion for the positive spillover over from either domain may be beneficial either to work or family, work-life conflict may arise due to this spillover effect. The theory therefore raises doubts on its applicability in solving the problem of work-life conflict that flexible work schedules is considered to reduce. More over the negative spillover can be detrimental to both work and family leading to job dissatisfaction of employee as they try to strike a balance between these two domains. Therefore the question of boundary management

is still a concern although is ignored by this theory. Boundary management enables individuals to coordinate role requirements and expectations to specific work or family domains (Clark, 2000). It therefore enhances employees' commitment in both domains without having to choose one over the other.

2.4 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory can be explained by the concept of reciprocity. Korsgaard, Meglino, Lester & Jeong (2010) observe that there are two forms of reciprocity. The first form is the obligation to reciprocate, which is the belief that someone will return a favor or engage in a behavior because they feel obligated to pay someone back. The second form of reciprocity is expected reciprocity. Expected reciprocity is the belief that if a person does something for another person, he or she should get some sort of benefit in return, in the near future. Beham (2011) agree that employees will act in accordance with social exchange theory. Blau (1964) argues that employees are continually participating in a give-and take relationship with their employer whereby one party gives socio-emotional resources that are desired by the other in exchange for others that they desire. This exchange relationship is maintained through principles of mutual reciprocity or gains, that is, if you scratch my back, I will scratch yours, and of trust and respect.

Flexible work arrangements are organizational resources that allow employees to adapt how and when they work, and as such are desirable to the individual as they enable them to manage their work and non-work lives (Lambert, 2000). When the employee holds positive perceptions of these arrangements, they will feel that the organization cares about their needs, which signifies to the employee that they are participating in a social exchange relationship (Bauregard and Henry, 2009). Therefore, they will feel obliged to repay the organization in kind by engaging themselves fully in their roles (Saks, 2006). Given that workers typically perform their work role as well as their role as an organizational member (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003), it follows that employee engagement will consist of two distinct, yet related, types: job engagement and organization engagement. Job engagement is the extent to which an individual is psychologically present in their job role, such as feeling enthusiastic, focused and energized when performing one's job, whereas organization engagement is the extent to which an individual is psychologically present in their role as a member of the organization, such as feeling exhilarated by and involved in the daily activities of the organization (Saks, 2006). Social exchange theory therefore clearly explains the

relationship between flexible work schedule and commitment. This theory supports the possibility that flexible work schedules promote employee participation in the organization to the extent that the employees feel obligated to exert extra effort in return for these extra benefits (Lambert, 2000).

The theory has been criticized on the grounds that it reduces human interaction to a purely rational process that arises from economic gain. It is possible to have people who are committed to their work without relying on the reciprocal obligation on the management side as observed from normative commitment perspective. In addition to this social exchange theory does not provide information on the various exchange rules. Although reciprocity is a major exchange rule, the theory would be better understood if there is a variety of exchange rules such social responsibility, group gain, status, consistency, and competition (Miller, 2005). Nevertheless, with flexible work schedule in place, employees are likely to be committed to their jobs.

2.5 Signaling Theory

According to Grover & Crooker (1995) Signaling theory has been used to explain how flexible work schedules can lead to positive perceptions. By offering flexible work schedules, organizations show that they support employee's well-being by allowing them to attend to their personal needs such as child care or elder care, attendance to health matters like exercise and professional development. In feeling supported by their organizations, employees may experience more control to cope with work-family demands. This will in turn yield into job satisfaction and commitment among the employees and hence higher productivity). Randel, and Stevens (2006) explained that the availability of flexible work schedules may lead to perceptions of control over work-family matters and positive effect, which can help employees cope with work-family conflict.

The assumption of this theory that organization can be perceived as caring and concerned with employees welfare through sending signals such as provision of flexible work schedules raises concerns since not all people will perceive such programmes as flexi- time, leave, tele- work and offs as signals on the part of the organization that they are concerned with their welfare. Some of the employees perceive these as their rights and that it is the duty of the organization to provide them with such schedules to enhance their productivity in the organization. As such these schedules may fail to realize the expected results. Similarly the provision of flexible schedules as

signals for organizations concern for employees' welfare is not enough; organization must go beyond this and ensure that these programmes are tailored to the needs and requirements of employees for them to achieve the expected benefits (Mayberry, 2006). Most organizations offer these schedules just to attract employees to the organization during recruitment process and as such may not necessarily meet the needs of the employees, this hinders their effectiveness.

2.6 Psychological Contract Theory

The psychological contract theory explains a two way exchange process of perceived promises and obligations between employees and their employers. According to Armstrong (2006) it is an open ended agreement about what the individual and the organization expect to give and receive in return in the employment relationship. The contract represents a dynamic and reciprocal deal. Armstrong (2006) posits that the theory holds that employees expect to be treated fairly as human beings, to be provided with work that utilizes their abilities, to be rewarded equitably according to their contribution, to be able to display competence, to have opportunities for further growth, to know what is expected of them and to be given feedback on how well they are doing. On the other hand employers expect employees to do their best on behalf of the organization, to be fully committed to its values, to be compliant and loyal and to enhance the image of the organization to its customers and suppliers. Bratton and Gold (2007) contend that at the heart of the psychological contract theory is an exchange of individual employee commitment, motivation and task performance beyond expected outcomes by the organization. According to Lam (2001) these actions which are beyond formally prescribed roles and job descriptions that is extra role behaviour rather than role behaviour is what is called employee productivity. The provision of flexible work schedules is therefore perceived by employees as a favour that deserves to be reciprocated.

The Psychological contract theory assumes that there is a series of mutual expectations that govern the relationship between the employer and employee and that although these expectation are just implied, they are binding to both parties (Shapiro, 2000). This is a weakness to this theory since both parties may not be aware of each others' expectations and therefore may fail to fulfill the obligations. The second weakness of the theory is that the contract is subjective, unwritten and often not discussed or negotiated (Beardwell, 2007). It simplifies the relationship between the employee and the organization on emotional terms which in reality given the human

nature is not bound to work. Its practicality is questionable as the contract is unwritten and may not be adhered to. There is therefore need for both parties to discuss their expectation and reach an agreement and if possible this should be accompanied by a written contract. In this regard the employees must be informed that the organization is offering them flexible work schedules with the expectation that they will remain committed and productive to the organization.

CHAPTER THREE: NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

A number of factors determine the use and success of different types of flexible work schedules in organizations. These factors include quality communication, supportive organizational culture, favourable job characteristics, supportive legislation and employee involvement.

3.1 Quality Communication

There should be continuous and advanced communication between employees, clients, colleagues, teams and management. The management should also maintain proper communication with employees on the available work schedules, work locations, work progress, and expected dates for completion of work. Lack of Proper communication of the availability of these practices both to employees and their supervisors may hinder their use and consequently their intended influence on organizational effectiveness. An issue frequently cited in accounts of flexible work schedules implementation is lack of use. Research conducted amongst organizations in the United Kingdom suggests that employees often remain unaware of their entitlement to flexible work schedules (Kodz, Harper, & Dench, 2002). Even when employees are fully informed of the practices available to them, many display a reluctance to use them. Relative to female employees, few men make use of family leave, choosing instead to take vacation or other discretionary days off upon the birth of a child or other family-related event (Pleck, 1993).

Hall (1990) refers to this as the invisible daddy track; if colleagues and superiors are not aware that an employee is taking time off work for family reasons, he is less likely to be accused of having competing priorities and less likely to be perceived as committed to his job. Gender role theory may help to explain this phenomenon. In a study by Wayne & Cordeiro (2003) examining perceptions of citizenship behaviours among male and female employees who either took family leave or did not, female employees were not rated differently regardless of their use of family leave. Men who took family leave, however, were rated as being less likely to help their co-workers, to work overtime, and to be punctual than men who did not take family leave, are expected to place work before family, and are thus not viewed as being good organizational citizens when they take leave.

Even though there may be quality communication on the availability of these schedules, there is need for the management to encourage the employees to make use of these policies without possible victimization such as lack of promotions and access to high status positions. In addition to that, the top management must play a key role in changing the attitude of the employees and junior managers with regards to the use of these schedules, where possible there should be proper training offered to the managers on the administration and supervision of employees using these schedules and guidance to employees about scheduling working times and arrangements. The general work environment should be conducive to enhance the success in implementation of flexible work schedules (Beauregard, Alexandra, Henry & Lesley, 2009).

3.2 Supportive Organization Culture

For effective introduction and implementation of flexible work schedules there must be a work place organization culture that supports and values such practices. Flexible work schedules must be valued and appreciated both at the management level and employee level. The notion that using flexible work schedules will have a negative impact on their career prospects appears to be a powerful demotivator for employees' use of these practices (Kodz et al., 2002). The study by Kirby and Krone (2002) found that working part-time is incompatible with promotion and access to a range of higher status male-dominated occupations, and Junor (1998) study revealed that the proportion of female part-time employees categorized as unprompted was 96.7 percent and this data was similar for male part-time employees. This perception is reinforced by organizational cultures unsupportive of the schedules.

According to Ryan & Kossek (2008), implementation attributes including supervisor support for use and universality of practice availability will affect the degree to which flexible work schedules are seen by employees as fulfilling their work-life needs and signaling support from the organization. Organizations featuring an entrenched long-hours culture and unaccommodating attitudes among managers and co-workers tend to discourage employees from making use of the available flexible work schedules. As Bailyn (1997) puts it, putting in time – being visibly at work, often for long hours – is seen as a sign of commitment, of loyalty, of competence and high potential, and in many cases as an indicator, in and of itself, of productive output. Employees who do not give the maximum amount of time possible to the organization are often defined as less productive and less committed, and are therefore less valued than

employees working longer hours; this view is reflected in the attitudes of many managers to the promotion of employees working reduced hours or non-standard schedules (Lewis, 1997).

Despite availability of supportive organization culture, the success on provision of these schedule cannot be built on good and trusting relationships between employees, managers and colleagues alone, there must be Professional discipline among the employees; employees should show accountability, responsibility, maturity and motivation towards the organization and their work as well as in how they use flexible work schedules, they should be committed to achieving deadlines, completing the required work, working the correct number of hours as well as satisfying client needs and expectations. There is also need for control and measurement; proper guidelines for managing the use of flexible work schedules and for disciplining employees immediately and effectively for misuse are necessary, measurements of outcomes or outputs and productivity to control misuse are necessary (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011).

3.3 Favourable Job Characteristics

Part-time workers and small business owners report greater schedule flexibility than do wage and salaried employees (Golden 2001). Many studies have found that workers who have access to flexible schedule tend to be exempted from overtime regulation and to hold jobs characterized by high status, high earnings, and opportunities for advancement (Bond and Galinsky, 2006). The nature of occupation and organization determine whether or which schedule is feasible. For example, assembly line workers must be present on a given shift to produce products. Flextime is not a practical option for these workers; however, other types of alternative work schedules such as compressed workweeks are possible (Christensen & Staines, 1990). In contrast, employers who handle customer calls from a variety of time zones may use flextime to staff extended work hours. Management or professional workers generally have greater job autonomy than other types of workers in beginning and ending their days. Smaller businesses may not have sufficient staffing to allow workers discretion in work scheduling.

The implication of this is that jobs that would not allow for the use of flexible work schedules are likely to be very unpopular in the current competitive business environment where employees tend to opt for jobs that offer such flexibility. They may attract only a few applicants and the possibility of turnover is likely to be higher, firms are likely to lose most of their talented employees who

would opt for better prospects (McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2010). In addition to this, resentment might arise if the nature of work does not allow other employees within the company to practice this arrangement for the need of business continuity especially with the customer service staff (Al-Rajudi, 2012). However, where flexibility is feasible, critical resources, like 3G and cell phones, are needed to ensure connectivity and access to employees at all times support in addition to these, staff is needed to assist all employees.

3.4 Supportive Legislation

Legislation can dictate whether or not an employer can offer employees a flexible schedule. Some state legislation establishes the minimum and maximum number of hours an employee can work within a seven-day period (Olmsted & Smith, 1994). At the federal level, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 currently precludes offering private sector employees any flexible schedule that involves working more than 40 hours per week without overtime compensation. This restriction was amended for government workers in the Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1978. Consequently, federal government employees should have greater access to flexible work schedules as compared to state and local government or private sector employees. According to the Kenyan employment Act, Cap 226, every employee is entitled to at least one rest day in every period of seven days. After every twelve consecutive months of service with his or her employer, an employee is entitled to not less than twenty-one working days of leave with full pay; others include maternity leave and paternity leave.

Although the available legislation may be supportive of the provisions of flexible work schedules for example annual leave, maternity leave and paternity leave, to some extent these legislations may be constraints to achievement of flexibility. For example the Kenya labour laws spell out the maximum working hours for a day as eight hours, the question is how organizations should account for compressed work weeks that require employees to work for long extended hours a day. The issue of employee health and safety especially as pertains to compressed work week which has been questioned on the account of employees' health is yet another concern (Knauth, 2007). Furthermore the idea of flexi time schedules can be an issue pertaining to the law with regards to consideration of overtime hours.

3.5 Employee Involvement

When employees have input into decision-making processes in their organization, initiatives are more likely to have their intended effect (Grawitch, Ledford, Ballard, & Barber, 2009). Including Identifying key employee needs, allowing programs to be tailored in a way that maximizes their effects. Employee involvement early in the process can also help to build ownership over new initiatives, leading to a desire to utilize new programs and less resistance during implementation. Finally, encouraging employees to provide feedback on evaluation and refinement instead of merely communicating results and potential changes, sustains feelings of ownership throughout the change process.

Involvement of the employees alone in the initiation of these schedules is not enough to realize their success; employees need to focus on individual planning and management of their working times, schedules and days in order to manage work and non work responsibilities. There must be professional discipline among the employees; employees should show accountability, responsibility, maturity and motivation towards the organization and their work as well as in how they use flexible work schedules, similarly, there must be informed awareness and understanding among the employees at all levels on how the organization implements flexible work schedules to promote access, there should be an understanding of employees' working preferences or differences and how, they use flexible work schedules for these schedules to realize the intended outcomes (Downes, & Koekemoer, 2011).

3.6 Employee Demographic Characteristics

The employee characteristics determine the need for and the use of flexible work schedules among the employees that would result into an improvement in organization performance. The aspects of employee demographic characteristics that have been linked to flexible work schedules include gender, age, education, and marital and family status. Balancing work and family is often more difficult for women compared to men because of the disproportionate burden of the family responsibilities (Bird, 2006). Women often face uneven distribution of child care and other domestic responsibilities which become a major challenge in their work and a barrier in their career advancement (Cross and Linehan, 2006). In many African societies women are expected to share the large responsibility of family care. There is also a notion that work family roles are

largely shaped by stereotypical gender roles (Gutek et. al. 1991) due to the traditionally held belief of men as bread-winners and women as house maker. This social construction of gender makes motherhood therefore less negotiable as compared to fatherhood. These therefore imply that women rather than men are inclined to use more of flexible work schedules in order to balance between work and family responsibilities. Although in the current generation men are increasingly appreciating the need for a more balanced life in order to take up their parental responsibilities.

Employees across ages have varied preference to the type of flexible work schedules that will meet their personal needs notably, the biological age determine the need for work life balance programme. younger employees are perceived to have fewer demands on their out of work time than older employees for instance younger employees do have fewer dependants and are less likely to engage in elder care and child care than employees who are older (Allen, 2001). This implies that younger employees should have less need for work-life balance initiatives than older employees. However, other researchers have argued that younger employees report greater use of flexible scheduling than do older employees especially when it comes to compressed work week and flexi place (Tausig and Fenwick 2001). With regards to the family status, the married employees with children have more responsibilities at home that tend to conflict with their responsibilities at work. These employees have a duty to provide parental care to their children. Furthermore the level of education of an employee has a bearing on the need for and use of work life balance programmes with more educated people opting to work in organizations that offer work life balance programme. Although more research has been focused on gender and family status, there is need to examine such demographic characteristics such as age and education in relation to the use of flexible work schedules and particularly with respect to particular schedules like compressed work and flexi place.

CHAPTER FOUR: OUTCOMES OF FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

Previously flexible work schedules were perceived to benefit only employees at the expense of the organization; however, research has since proved that these practices have a positive impact to both the employer and employee. Such benefits include: Job satisfaction and organization commitment, lower turnover intentions, reduced work–family conflict, organization performance, employee growth and development, improved employee health and safety and employee job autonomy.

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are among the most commonly studied outcomes of flexibility. Scholars have defined job satisfaction as an employee’s affective or emotional reaction to a job, based on comparing actual outcomes with desired outcomes (Cranny, Smith & Stone 1992). Organizational commitment is the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Porter & Steers 1982). Employees with access to flexible work schedules report high morale and job satisfaction (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999), as well as high levels of company loyalty, discretionary effort, and organizational commitment (Bond and Galinsky 2006). Flexible work schedules is likely attributable to employee perceptions that their organizations value and have concern for them (McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2010). It increases the employees control over their lives due to other opportunities to work during times more suitable to personal needs. In addition to this it improves employee’s perception about their employer and the overall positive feeling towards the employer which in turn imparts on organization commitment and employee job satisfaction. Although the provision of flexible work schedule is perceived to enhance job satisfaction and commitment, it is possible that the employee may derive satisfaction from other thing such as compensation and promotion and not necessarily from these schedules.

Previous studies have shown that flexible work schedules availability is negatively related to turnover intentions (McNall et al., 2010). Grover and Crooker (1995) found that individuals with access to family-responsive policies such as flexible hours and community childcare services reported significantly lower turnover intentions than did employees without access to these policies. Signaling theory (Casper & Harris, 2008) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) have been used as explanations as to flexible work schedules relate to attachment to the organization. Organizations offering flexible work schedules provide a signal that they care about their

employees' well-being. Such signs promote greater psychological commitment and lower tendency to quit (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). These results suggest that availability of policies can influence turnover intentions when people perceive these policies as a sign that the organization cares for their well-being. Despite these findings, it can be argued that not all the employees may perceive these policies as a signal for organizations' care of their welfare, others may feel that it is the obligation of the organization to provide them with these programme and thus they will have no impact on their intentions to leave the organization, furthermore, it is difficult to predict whether the employees will perceive these schedules as privileges or rights.

Flexible work schedules were created to help employees cope with work–family conflict (Galinsky, Bond, & Sakai, 2008). There are two types of work–family conflict: Strain-based conflict, which occurs when participating in one role produces stress that is carried into the other and time-based conflict, which happens when participating in one role impedes time spent in another role. This interference can occur from work-to-family and from family-to-work. Drawing on the notion of domain specificity (Frone, 2003), predictors that reside in the work domain tend to be more highly related to work–family conflict while predictors that reside in the family domain tend to be more highly related to family-to-work. A previous meta-analysis examining the antecedents of work–family conflict showed that work practices were more strongly related with work-to-family than with family-to-work (Byron, 2005). By offering flexible work schedules, organizations show that they support employees' well-being. In feeling supported by their organizations, employees may experience more control to cope with work–family demands (Wayne, Randel & Stevens, 2006). Nevertheless, even with availability of flexible work schedules there is still likelihood of negative spillover from either side of the domains especially for those employees who are not able to plan their time properly; they will still find their work encroaching into their family life as they try to meet the deadlines. Moreover other forms of flexible work schedules for example telework has resulted into work being diffused over all hours of the day or week extending later into the night and starting earlier in the morning, and also spreading into vacations and weekends (Hamermesh, 1999). Similarly, more and more individuals are casually teleworking in planes, trains, and automobiles, or in public places like coffee shops and restaurants thereby enhancing work- family conflict.

Kelly, Kossek, Hammer, Durham, Bray, Chermack, Murphy & Kaskubar (2008) posit that flexible work schedules like flexitime can have an impact on organizational Performance through two processes: firm revenues and firm costs. Flexitime can increase firm revenues through attracting higher-quality candidates and increasing the marginal productivity of existing employees. Flexitime can also decrease costs through the reduction of turnover and absenteeism. Flexible work arrangements (Rousseau, 2001), when properly managed, create a win-win scenario for the organization and employees. Thus, organizational justice can be maintained without standardization by building trust among organizational members, clarifying responsibilities and role requirements, and providing transparent and concrete performance appraisals that inform the provision as well as continued provision of those work arrangements (Greenberg, Roberge, Ho, & Rousseau, 2004). Moreover, publicly recognizing high performers with work flexibility may send a message to employees that such arrangements are a reward for consistent high performance, are only continued given consistent performance results. On the contrary, the provision of these programmes alone is not a guarantee that there will be an improvement in the performance of the organization, there must be Professional discipline among the employees. There is also need for control and measurement; proper guidelines for managing the use of flexitime and for disciplining employees immediately and effectively for misuse are necessary, measurements of outcomes or outputs and productivity to control misuse are necessary and the programmes themselves must also be tailed to the employee's needs (Downes, & Koekemoer, 2011) .

Work flexibility may also provide employees with much-needed flexibility or time to engage in healthier lifestyles thereby resulting in improved health and safety. For example, there are strong empirical links between flexible work schedules and physiological or psychological health outcomes (Steenbergen & Ellemers, 2009). Perceived work flexibility predicts better sleep behaviors, physical activity, and participation in stress management practices (Grzywacz, Carlson & Shulkin, 2008)). Moreover control over time away from work counteracts job stress and helps to maintain a person's well-being. Therefore worker's well-being significantly increases with each additional day off from work. With improvement in employee health the rate of absenteeism is likely to reduce and this is an added advantage to the organization as it possible that the employees will meet their production targets leading to improved organization performance. On the contrary,

the full implications of work-life initiatives on worker wellbeing have yet to be fully explored. For example, a compressed workweek may have adverse health outcomes due to long hours (Knauth, 2007), but many studies find no such health detriments and substantial improvements in work-life balance (Bambra, Whitehead, Sowden, Akers, & Petticrew, 2008). In addition to the fore mentioned, flexible work schedules such as informal telework that forces employee to extend working hours even up to late in the night and double shifts raises health questions that need to be explored for examples employees rarely have regular hours of sleeping time which can be dangerous to their health.

A flexible work schedule enhances employee job autonomy. Autonomy is the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in doing the work. It is considered fundamental in building a sense of responsibility in employees. Although most employees are willing to work within the broad constraints of an organization, employees want a certain degree of freedom. Autonomy has become very important to people in the workplace. For example, a salesperson is considered to be highly autonomous by scheduling his or her own work day and deciding on the most effective approach to use for each customer without supervision. As predicted by the job characteristic model, employee job autonomy is significant as it enhances employee job satisfaction and motivation and consequently his or her performance on the job (Hackman and Oldham 1975). In as much as the employees would like to decide on where, when and how they want to carry out their jobs, the management must provide proper guidance and establish proper measures and control to ensure that the employees do not abuse these priviledges and work towards achievement of the goals of the organizations. This calls also for professional discipline among the employees to ensure that they meet their individual targets (Downes, & Koekemoer, 2011).

CHAPTER FIVE: CHALLENGES OF FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULES

Flexible work schedules have been observed to have a number of challenges. For instance Grzywacz, Carlson & Shulkin (2008) argue that although it enables organizations to extend working hours, setting up and maintaining a time keeping systems will always come up with additional costs which might not necessarily be associated with remuneration. This may include power and water costs that are incurred during the extended working hours. Furthermore, measuring the productivity of those employees who use flexible work schedules has always been considered a challenge. The success of these schedules will therefore require proper assessment on the feasibility and sustainability of these programmes and proper budgeting in line with the foreseeable costs. There is also need for proper training of the managers on areas to do with implementation, supervision and control measures of these schedules to boost the managers' competence and skills in these related areas to enhance the achievement of the objectives in the use of these schedules.

In addition to the above, managers are likely to be burdened more with this kind of arrangement especially, with regard to communication; supervision and dealing with scheduling of employees working time (Towers-Perrin, 2001). This is occasioned by the fact that employees' reporting and leaving time differs and therefore the management has to organize for different schedules during which they can supervise the workers. In fact, this is one of the reasons that make some managers not to embrace this kind of work arrangement (Sweet, Pitt- Catsouphe, & Besen, 2014). Furthermore, managers and organizational leaders may discourage flexible work schedules implicitly or explicitly because of their reluctance to relinquish control (Dancaster, 2006). The need for training of managers on the implementation and supervision of employees' using these schedules is therefore paramount for the success of these programmes. A part from this, there should be programmes specifying time periods where all the employees are expected at work stations to make it easier for communication and supervision. There is also need for the management to find out the type of jobs within the organization that will allow for flexibility since in most cases flexibility is easier to achieve in routine jobs as opposed to non-routine ones.

Besides the foregoing, the employees themselves might also resist flexible work schedules, if a certain kind of freedom and tolerance accompanies the already existing system and if there are no proper communication on the benefits in the use of such schedules (Podnar & Golob, 2010).

Above this, is the fact that even though, flexible work schedules has been known to reduce the frequency of workplace conflicts, resentment might arise if the nature of work does not allow other employees to practice this arrangement for the need of business continuity especially with the customer service staff (Al-Rajudi, 2012). For successful implementation of these schedules, therefore there must be effective communication to the employees on the benefits that will be realized from using these programmes, for those whose nature of work may not allow for the use the available schedules, other alternatives should be provided in order to win their support for these programmes.

A part from the foregoing, there is possible stigma or career penalties associated with using flexible work schedules. A number of previous research support the notion that workers who make use of flexible work schedules suffer negative perceptions from colleagues and superiors (Allen, 2001). These employees are perceived by co-workers as having lower levels of organizational commitment, which was thought to affect the subsequent allocation of organizational rewards such as career advancement opportunities and salary. Participation in flexible work schedules makes an employee less visible at work, which in turn, may form the obstacle for their career development and promotion prospects (Campbell & Clark, 2000). Furthermore, employees using flexible work schedules may be perceived as less committed to their organization and work (Allen, 2001), which may also jeopardize their career development. A study by Kirby & Krone (2002) found that working part-time is incompatible with promotion and access to a range of higher status male-dominated occupations. The negative career consequences make more employees reluctant to use these schedules despite their availability. The success of flexible work arrangement will hence call for a change of attitude of both the employees and management towards those who opt for these schedules and supportive relationships right from the management to the employees. The culture of team work must be inculcated in the employees and management for those organizations planning to offer flexible work schedules.

The other challenge is on genders perceptions: Perceptions that flexible work schedule is developed only for women is a factor related to their use. A review of men's use of family friendly employment provisions argues that barriers to men's use arise from three major sources (Guttek et. Al. 1991). First the culture in many workplaces casts doubt on the legitimacy of men's

claims to family responsibilities; secondly, the business environment is imposing competitive pressures on business and firms to maintain market share and increase earnings; and thirdly, the domestic organization in employees' own homes often precludes men from taking up available flexible work schedules options. Some flexible work provisions, such as paternity leave, are intended specifically for men and aim to foster a greater sharing of responsibilities between men and women. For the success of these schedules, therefore, there is need to encourage universality in the use of these practices, this will see more men taking up these opportunities for flexible work and more importantly there is need for a supportive work environment as well as change in attitudes and expectations in the wider community.

In summary, for effective development and implementation of flexible work schedules, there should be supportive organization culture that will encourage employees to adapt these programs. In line with this the human resource department should make executive and organizational leaders aware of the importance of organizational culture in the implementation of flexible work schedules. Organization' leaders can show their commitment to flexible work schedules by allocating the needed resources (Rayman, Bailyn, Dickert, Carre, Harvey & Read, 1999). At the same time, top management support can give employees the security they need to commit themselves to the effort since it encourages participation and input, and fosters the belief that risk-taking will be rewarded (Rayman et al., 1999). Human resource managers may need to serve as communication channel between users of the programs and top management (Nord, Fox, Phoenix & Viano, 2002). They should communicate with high-level managers about how the new programs are affecting employees' life and organizational performance, and encourage them to support more to the use of flexible work schedules.

Secondly, supervisors and line managers should be cautioned that some of their traditional practices may undermine the effectiveness of flexible work schedules (Nord et al., 2002). Human resource department should therefore offer new training for them to accept the change in the workforce and the new job arrangement as a means of helping managers and supervisors overcome difficulties involved in supervision and monitoring the performance of employees utilizing these schedules and generally to change their attitudes towards the different employees with gender, position and family responsibility. It is only when organizational management respects employees' needs by balancing their work and family, respect demands from all

employees (Glass & Finley, 2002), that these schedules can achieve the effectiveness and utilization. In addition, HR department should offer Line managers some assistance in adapting their managerial approaches to the new work arrangements.

Thirdly, new performance evaluation methods should be established by human resource department. In order for the effective utilization of flexible work schedules, the assumption that a worker out of sight is a worker out of control that prevails in many organizations must be changed (Rayman et al., 1999), and this demands new performance evaluation methods. In other words, the organization should establish the performance based assessment which measure employees' contribution and commitment by performance rather than face time (Glass & Finley, 2002). Organization should therefore loosen managerial control while fostering high productivity through outcome oriented evaluation for their employees (Glass & Finley, 2002). Furthermore, new evaluation procedures may be needed to reflect alterations among different kinds of contracts, concerning not only the short-term evaluations of employees, but overall career paths as well (Nord et al, 2002).

Lastly, the human resource department should make these programs to be perceived as fair by both users and non-users, consideration must be taken to avoid subtle penalties with respect to task assignments, compensation and promotion (Nord et al, 2001). In this regard, managers and supervisors should share control and responsibility of flexible work schedules with employees. Dialogue among employees in the workplace is critical to overcoming both subtle resistance among supervisors and resentment of and to benefit acquired through the establishment of flexible work schedules. Only by motivating employees in efforts to change the prevailing workplace culture, will fear of using flexible work options be overcome (Bailyn et al., 2001).

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

The business case for the provision of flexible work schedules relies on their ability to enhance recruitment and retention, job satisfaction and commitment and reduction of work-life conflict among employees. It makes intuitive sense that offering work-life balance practices would attract individuals to an organization, and that using these practices would result in improved employee attitudes and behaviours within the organization. However, the critical literature review on flexible work schedule reveal that despite the provision of these schedules, employee take-up may be low due to concerns that using work-life practices will result in reduced advancement opportunities or perceptions of the employee as being less committed to the organization (Allen, 2001). The need for supportive organizational culture, team work, proper communication and training of managers may be at the fore front in addressing this issue.

Nevertheless, flexible work practices are often associated with improved organizational performance. Making these practices available to employees appears to give organizations a competitive advantage in terms of recruitment, by enhancing perceptions of anticipated organizational support among job seekers (Casper & Buffardi, 2004), particularly those who might require that support due to care giving responsibilities (Frone & Yardley, 1996). The availability of these practices may also increase positive job-related attitudes, work effort and contextual behaviours by enhancing social exchange processes; as symbols of organizational concern for employees, flexible work schedules promote employee interest in and obligation to the organization. Having employees who make use of available flexible work schedules may also incur cost savings for organizations via longer work hours and enhanced productivity. Employees may work longer hours because flexible arrangements increase their availability for work and reduce their commuting time, or because they are exchanging leisure time for flexibility (Golden, 2001; Meyer et al., 2001). They may choose to work during their peak hours in terms of personal productivity or work extra hours during the organization's peak times in exchange for flexibility at other times (McDonald et al., 2005). They may also increase their work effort to avoid losing a job that offers them the flexibility they desire (Shepard et al., 1996).

Despite these conclusions, the possibility that successful organizations are more likely to offer work-life practices cannot be discounted and that the schedules themselves may not be exerting a favourable effect on organizational performance is also to be examined further through research.

Equally, it may simply be that organizations offering work-life practices are more likely to engage in high-quality management practices overall, generating positive effects on employee and performance outcomes. The review has also identified the moderators of the link between flexible work schedules and outcomes. For example organizations are likely to reap the benefits of flexible work schedules given particular demographic characteristics of the employee that informs the utilization of these practices and through the positive employee outcome that arises from the provision of such schedules such as job satisfaction, commitment and reduced turnover among the employees. Still, there is need to examine whether there is direct positive association between flexible work schedules and organizational performance, it is generally agreed that many flexible work practices, such as flexi time, telework, and informational assistance with dependent care services, have low financial costs that are associated primarily with program administration and do not require an extensive initial outlay of resources. In a study of a nationally representative sample of U.S. firms employing more than 100 people, Galinsky and Bond (1998) found that 36% of organizations reported their flexible work arrangements to be cost-neutral, with 46% claiming a positive return on investment in these practices. With regard to care giving leave, often regarded as a costly endeavour, 42% of firms viewed them as cost-neutral, with another 42% reporting a positive return on investment in their leave programs.

Lastly the principle of universality of these practices needs to be addressed; it should be a common phenomenon in the organization that these practices are meant both for men and women. Without necessary changes being made, users of flexible work schedules will continue to be predominantly women, men will continue to anticipate negative repercussions arising from their use, and career-oriented individuals of both sexes will continue to think twice before availing themselves of the practices on offer. This would be a considerable step backwards for all concerned, and lessen the benefits to organizations derived from improved employee perceptions of current or anticipated organizational support. Similarly flexible work schedule should be designed and implemented in such a way that both the organization and employees can derive the greatest possible benefits from them. More research has been focused on gender and family status, there is need to examine demographic characteristics such as age and education in relation to the use of flexible work schedules and particularly with respect to particular schedules like compressed work and flexi place. The fact that most studies have not linked flexible work

schedules directly to organization performance leaves a gap in this area that needs to be fulfilled in order to be conclusive on whether flexible work schedules can have a direct effect on organization performance. Furthermore, only a few studies have been done in Kenya regarding flexible work schedules therefore, there is need for more studies concerning flexible work schedules in the Kenyan context.

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