


2016

# Work-Life Balance Programs to Improve Employee Performance

George Sheppard  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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George Sheppard

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Walden University  
2016

Abstract

Work-Life Balance Programs to Improve Employee Performance

by

George Sheppard

MBA, SUNY Empire State College, 2011

BS, SUNY Empire State College, 2008

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

January 2016

## Abstract

Although work-life balance programs in the United States have become increasingly popular through the years, there is still a need to understand the contributions of these programs on employee performance. The purpose of this case study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize to improve employee performance at a charter school organization. The job demands-resources model formed the conceptual framework for this study. Data were collected through semistructured interviews from a purposeful sample of 10 managers and 10 non-managerial employees working at a charter school organization in Harlem, New York. Data collection also included organizational performance track indicator documents on employee absenteeism, turnover, motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, and retention, archived organizational records on WLB programs, and current WLB programs and policies guidelines. Through methodological triangulation, a number of themes emerged. These themes included work-life balance programs' effectiveness, the importance of a supportive work environment, employee commitment and motivation, employee well-being and productivity, employee job satisfaction and quality work life, organizational culture change, and low utilization of the job sharing program. According to the study results, work-life balance programs could help improve organizational culture and employee overall performance. The results of this study may contribute to social change by preparing employers for success while simultaneously positioning individuals to attain optimum balance between work and life responsibilities.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this doctoral study to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for his grace, mercy, and favor to complete this doctoral program. I also dedicate this degree to my beloved wife Amorel and my children Tatiana, Kelvin, John Luke, and Adonai for providing me an opportunity to practice balance between my professional and personal life. Your support, prayers, understanding, and wisdom allowed for my success. Furthermore, my dedication goes to my mother and father, my brothers and sisters. Thank you all for praying for my continuing progress as well as for believing in me. This has been a long and rewarding process that would not have been possible without all of you. Each of you touched my life in ways that inspired me to press forward when this journey became challenging.

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## Section 1: Foundation of the Study

The protestant work ethic (PWE) is the belief that working hard is a social equalizer leading to prosperity and it affects the judgment and behaviors of many Americans (Levy, Freitas, Mendoza-Denton, Kugelmass, & Rosenthal, 2010; Okulicz-Kozaryn, 2011). Although working long hours could serve as an indicator of commitment and productivity in some organizations (Jayanthi & Vanniarajan, 2012), working long hours is a barrier to work-life balance (Jayanthi & Vanniarajan, 2012). This imbalance of work-life relationships can negatively impact job performance (Naithani, 2010).

The increased interest in work-life balance remains influenced by concerns that work-life imbalance could lead to health issues, low productivity, and consequences for individuals, their families, and organizations (Lu & Kao, 2013; Singh, 2010). The impact of work-life imbalance on an organization is (a) low productivity (Mantalay, Chakpitak, Janchai, & Sureepong, 2012), (b) low employee retention, (c) low level of morale and motivation, (d) low performance levels, (e) increased number of grievances, (f) poor organizational image (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013), and (g) increased absenteeism and turnover (Chimote & Srivastava, 2013; Kumari, 2012). Researchers (Allen, 2001; Aryee, Chu, Kim, & Ryu, 2012; Cook, 2009; Haar & Roche, 2010) have indicated that when employees perceive their employer as more family-supportive because of family-friendly policies and programs offered, they report affective commitment, fewer turnover intentions, greater job satisfaction, less job burnout, and less work-to-family conflict (Wayne, Casper, Matthews, & Allen, 2013).

The major reasons behind these policies and programs are the substantial changes in the demographic composition of the U.S. workforce (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002). For this reason, family-friendly policies and programs are the tools that organizations can actively implement to improve their workforce (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011). Although some policies and programs that favor work-life balance are available, some workers may not take advantage of these opportunities for a variety of reasons (Booth & Matthews, 2012). For example, workers may not use available programs because the culture of the organization may not be supportive of putting family first (Pedersen, Minnotte, Kiger, & Mannon, 2009), or workers may interpret the use of benefits as detrimental to their career (Allen, 2001; Anderson et al., 2002). McDonald, Brown, and Bradley (2005) identified five key dimensions of culture necessary to sustain work-life programs: (a) career consequences, (b) coworker support, (c) manager support, (d) organizational time expectations, and (e) nongendered perceptions of policy use.

### **Background of the Problem**

Job satisfaction is an aspect of all labor market matches as it is a summary measure of utility at work (Brockerman & Ilmakunnas, 2012). In other words, job satisfaction is an individual's feelings or related views about work and its associated aspects (Jamal & Muhammad, 2012). Organizational leaders and research practitioners identified the direct and indirect connection between employees' job satisfaction and organizational productivity (Jamal & Muhammad, 2012), job related well-being, turnover, and job performance (Al-Zoubi, 2012). Researchers have highlighted these connections in various practical and theoretical studies (Crede, Chernyshenko, Bagraim,

& Sully, 2010; Jaturanonda & Nanthavanij, 2011; Nyberg, 2010). Organizational policies and procedures (e.g., compensation packages, decision-making practices, and the quality of management), feedback, the physical nature of the work environment, and aspects of the total workload could have an impact on employee job satisfaction (Jamal & Muhammad, 2012). Overall, the main objective of human resource practices in organizations is to improve employee productivity and performance to sustain the organization's competitive advantage (Ning, 2012). According to Jamal and Muhammad (2012), if some workers are not satisfied with their jobs, management, working conditions, or work culture, they may not provide their customers with quality services and the ultimate impact will be on organization's productivity.

Work-life balance has become an important issue for both employees and organizations (Madipelli, Veluri-Sarma, & Chinnappaiah, 2013). The business environment can be demanding with deadlines and tight schedules (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013). Changing demographics, competition, globalization, and technological development influence the development of work-life programs (Caillier, 2012; Haar & Roche, 2010). The utilization of work-life balance practices to help reduce work-life conflict and increase positive employee appraisals of the organization (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010). Work-life programs can improve organizational structural, cultural, and relational support for work and family (Kossek, Lewis, & Hammer, 2010). There is a greater focus in the United States than elsewhere on employer driven work-life initiatives, particularly those implemented by large organizations to support higher-level managers and skilled professionals (Kossek et al., 2010). The world has evolved since

work-life programs first emerged, requiring employers to further mainstream work-life initiatives to respond to new societal changes ranging from economic to environmental and from health to technological (Kossek et al., 2010). As Burke (2010) noted, organizations face heightened competition on a worldwide basis, employees are experiencing increasing performance pressures, and the hours employees spent at the workplace increased significantly between 2000 and 2009. Furthermore, there is an ongoing struggle between employees and employers regarding work-life balance because some employees and employers do not understand that work-life balance is reciprocally beneficial (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013).

Work-life balance for the individual is a function of both individual and organizational actions (Mayerhofer, Schmidt, Hartmann, & Bendl, 2011). From an organizational perspective, work-life balance may be a part of good performance, and from an employee perspective work-life balance programs may be a positive factor in deciding to work for or remain with a particular organization (Mayerhofer et al., 2011). Whether called *work-life balance* or *family friendly*, there are macro and micro reasons why these programs are particularly important in contemporary organizations (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). On the macro side, the programs allow an organization to maintain a more committed workforce (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Employee commitment is an important factor in the success of an organization (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). The top three drivers of employee commitment are employers' care and concern, fairness, and fulfillment (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Investing in employees' health and safety is vital if other investments are to yield greater results such as organizational growth and



productivity (Howard-Quarley & Buenar-Puplampu, 2012). For this reason, the responsibility of every employer is to provide a pleasant work environment and conditions for employees devoid of risks, hazards, and diseases (Howard-Quarley & Buenar-Puplampu, 2012). From a micro point of view, the programs when utilized as an instrument help to reduce employee absenteeism, stress, and turnover rates, and increase employee retention and commitment to the organization (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013; Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Equally important, organizations that offer these programs are likely to increase their competitive advantage by reducing employees' compensation, costs associated with withdrawal behaviors, and medical claims, while sustaining a high level of job performance and productivity (Vuksan, Williams, & Crooks, 2012; Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). Although work-life programs have the potential to benefit organizations, they can also be an expensive investment, and for that reason, employers are most likely to realize gains in situations where potential benefits outweigh expected costs (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). Researchers have examined employee work-life balance (Avgar, Givan, & Liu, 2011; Chawla & Sondhi, 2011; Darcy, McCarthy, Hill, & Grady, 2012; Dash, Anand, & Gangadharan, 2012), and for this reason, I wanted to add to the work-life research by conducting this study in which I focused on the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize. Understanding the contributions of work-life balance programs on employee motivation, job satisfaction, turnover, retention, absenteeism, and productivity is important for understanding the effectiveness of the WLB programs offered in nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, the results from this

study brought attention to the contributions of WLB programs on employee performance in a charter school organization.

### **Problem Statement**

The impact of absenteeism in the workplace contributes to lost productivity (Gangai, 2014). In the United States, organizations lose approximately \$74 billion a year due to absenteeism and lost productivity (Lally, 2014). Furthermore, the performance of many organizations has deteriorated due to high turnover rates, low loyalty, and low productivity (AbuKhalifeh & Som, 2013). The general business problem is the direct and indirect costs of absenteeism, employee turnover, and the loss of productivity affecting the organizations' bottom line. The specific business problem is that some nonprofit school leaders lack work-life balance programs to improve employee performance.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative explanatory case study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. The sample population consisted of 10 managers and 10 employees employed by one nonprofit charter school organization. The geographical area for data collection was in Harlem, New York. The results of this study might contribute to management practices by identifying procedures for creating flexible, supportive work environments to engage employees and maximize organizational performance. The implications for social change include the potential to empower employees to balance both professional and personal responsibilities while improving their overall performance.

### **Nature of the Study**

The focus of this study was to explore the work-life balance programs (e.g., flexible work schedules, job sharing, health and wellness, paid time-off, and flexible work arrangements) that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance.

Researchers utilize qualitative research methods to gain an understanding of the structure, order, and broad patterns found among a group of participants in the research study (Hunt, 2011). According to Doz (2011), qualitative research is similar to opening the *black box* of organizational processes of the how, who, and why of collective and individual organized action as it develops over time in context. Qualitative research methods allow researchers to comprehend the experiences from the views of the participants in substantial and specific social grounds (Eshlaghy, Chitsaz, Karimian, & Charkhchi, 2011). As articulated by Nuttall, Shankar, Beverland, and Hooper (2011), qualitative researchers strive for a meaningful, often circumstantial, sensitive understanding of individuals' desires and motivations. In this sense, when conducting qualitative research, researchers need to keep in mind that individuals may not act in accordance with the principles of rational self-interest (Nuttall et al., 2011). Intrinsically, individuals do not always know why they conduct themselves in particular ways (Nuttall et al., 2011). For this reason, some researchers require methods that enable them to comprehend individuals' experiences (Nuttall et al., 2011).

Both mixed methods and quantitative methods were not suitable approaches for this study. In quantitative research methods, researchers collect data, but rely less on

interviews, observations, and focus groups, and employ statistical techniques to capture and analyze data (Corner, 2002). In qualitative research methods, researchers focus on understanding of complex processes or realities; there are no precise measurements or predetermined hypothesis, and questions evolve cumulatively as the study or investigation continues (Plano Clark, 2010). However, researchers using qualitative research methods can collect data to generate or refine a hypothesis, which is in stark contrast to quantitative methods where researchers develop a hypothesis and collect data to test that hypothesis (Jervis & Drake, 2014). Mixed methods research refers to those studies or lines of inquiry that integrate qualitative and quantitative techniques for data collection and analysis (Feilzer, 2010; Small, 2011).

Researchers who choose the mixed method employ both quantitative and qualitative research methods (in parallel or sequentially) to understand a phenomenon of importance (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). Nonetheless, there have been fierce debates concerning whether or not it is even relevant to combine multiple techniques grounded on radical paradigmatic assumptions (Venkatesh et al., 2013). In spite of this, the mixed method is methodological choice for many researchers and scholars from a variety of discipline areas (Cameron, 2010).

According to Trochim and Donnelly (2008), quantitative research is deductive and allows researchers to confirm hypotheses; qualitative research is inductive and involves in-depth exploration. In this sense, sometimes researchers make predictions and test those predictions (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). Furthermore, scholars using a quantitative research design rely on numbers, statistics, and the relationships between

numbers and events to make valid inferences (Goertz & Mahoney, 2013). For this study, I did not seek to make predictions about the outcome of the results, control variables, or use random sampling procedures to select participants for this study. My goal as the researcher was to explore and understand the participants' experiences and views about a phenomenon, and to develop common themes from participants' accounts of the event.

Because both mixed and quantitative methods did not fit this study well, I chose from a number of qualitative designs, such as case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, and phenomenology. For this study I utilized an explanatory qualitative case study design. According to Yin (2014), an explanatory case study design is appropriate when a researcher seeks to answer a question to explain causal links related to the intervention. Other case study designs I considered for this study were exploratory and descriptive. As indicated by Yin (2014), researchers employ an exploratory case study design to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon or to generate new ideas and hypotheses. Researchers use a descriptive case study design to describe an intervention or phenomenon within the context that it occurred (Yin, 2014). My goal as the researcher was not to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon to generate new ideas and hypotheses or to do an in depth scrutiny of the situation under study. Therefore, exploratory and descriptive case study designs were not appropriate for the study.

In case study research, the fundamental objective is to explore a program, event, activity, process, or individuals by collecting detailed information about individuals or groups using a variety of data collection procedures (Pastore, Carr-Chellman, & Neal, 2011; Yin, 2012). As indicated by Yin (2009), the central benefit of the case study is that

utilizing the design enables researchers to explore how individuals construct meaning concerning events, programs, or processes, in a time bound manner in a specific social context. A qualitative explanatory case study design was appropriate because the focus of this study was to investigate the experiences and perceptions of employees at a charter school organization regarding the existing work-life balance programs at their place of employment. I preferred the case study design for this study as opposed to other qualitative research designs, because it is an approach that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; White & Drew, 2011; Yin, 2009).

Although I considered utilizing the phenomenological research design at the beginning of this project, I chose the case study design. Utilizing the case study design allows researchers to preserve the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as (a) international relations, (b) organizational and managerial processes, (c) small group behavior, (d) individual life cycles, (e) school performance, and so on (Yin, 2012). In a case study, the researcher conducts a detailed investigation of current events or circumstances by obtaining data from real-life settings in a truthful and impartial manner (Amerson, 2011). Phenomenological studies aid in the exploration of a shared phenomenon within a group of individuals (Smith, Bekker, & Cheater, 2011). When employing the phenomenological design, a researcher has to eliminate everything that represents a presupposition or prejudice. In other words, a researcher should look at things openly, undisturbed by the habits of the natural world (Smith et al., 2011). In general, a phenomenological approach provides a suitable approach through inquiring,

discovering, and interpreting the meanings of experiences of multiple individuals (Greenfield & Jensen, 2010). However, the objective of this case study was to understand the nature and complexity of a specific process that is taking place, and to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study (Cao & Hoffman, 2011). I selected this case because it was typical and to capture the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation (Yin, 2012).

Boddy (2011) noted that ethnography researchers focus on cultural groups and seek to provide a detailed, thorough description of everyday life and practices. Researchers employing grounded theory develop theories from data collected (Dunne, 2011). Researchers who utilize the narrative approach collect and analyze narrative accounts or stories of the individuals (Etherington & Bridges, 2011). Ethnography and grounded theory involve collecting data from individuals or groups through interviews over a long period (Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2009) and the narrative approach involves family stories, field notes, interviews, journals, letters, life experiences, and photos (Etherington & Bridges, 2011). However, due to time constraints both methods were not appropriate for this study. My use of a qualitative explanatory case study was appropriate to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at one charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance.

### **Research Question**

To gain an understanding of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance, I asked the participants a series of questions based on the following main research question:

What work-life balance programs do leaders utilize in this organization to improve employee performance, and what are the perceived contributions?

### **Subsidiary research questions**

- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee motivation?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to reducing employee absenteeism?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to reducing employee turnover?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee job satisfaction?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee productivity?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee retention?

### **Interview Questions (Leadership)**

1. How would you describe your work-life balance programs?
2. How do employees react to those work-life balance programs?
3. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee absenteeism?
4. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee turnover?
5. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee retention?
6. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee motivation?



7. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee job satisfaction?
8. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee productivity?

### **Interview Questions (Employees)**

I used the interview questions listed below to gain further insight into the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance.

1. What are your opinions on the work-life balance programs offered by this organization?
2. What are your views on the need for work-life balance programs in this organization?
3. In your opinion, what are the most rewarding parts of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs?
4. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work schedule programs?
5. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the job-sharing programs?
6. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the health and wellness programs?
7. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the paid time-off programs?
8. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work arrangement programs?

9. Based on your experience, how would you describe the importance of you having access to each of these work-life balance programs?
10. Which of the programs, if any, affected your motivation? What was the nature of the contribution?
11. Which of the programs, if any, affected your job satisfaction? What was the nature of the contribution?
12. Which of the programs, if any, affected your productivity? What was the nature of the contribution?
13. Which of the programs, if any, affected your absenteeism? What was the nature of the contribution?
14. Which work-life balance programs incentives, if any, affected your decision to continue working for the organization? What was the nature of the contribution?
15. In your opinion, what are the limitations of the organization's work-life balance programs?
16. In your opinion, what are the failures of the organization's work-life balance programs?
17. What type of alternative programs to improve employee motivation, job satisfaction, absenteeism, retention, turnover, and productivity would you like to see the organization implement, and why?

### **Conceptual Framework**

Employees can contribute significantly towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives. Therefore, it is extremely vital for organizations to have the

knowledge of the various factors affecting their employees' behavior to bring out the best in them (Dash, Anand, & Gangadharan, 2012). For this reason, I selected the job demands-resources model (JD-R) as the conceptual framework for my study.

According to the job demands-resources model, job demands are initiators of a *health impairment process* and job resources are initiators of a motivational process (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Equally important, utilizing the JD-R model can help leaders identify how demands and resources work together, and enables leaders to predict crucial organizational outcomes (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). The main assumption of the job demands-resources (JD-R) model is that every occupation has its own particular risk factors associated with job-related stress, which are job demands and job resources (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Job demands pertain to those psychological, physical, societal, or organizational characteristics of the job that require continuous physical and psychological (thinking and emotional) exertion or skills associated with certain physiological and psychological costs (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Job resources relate to psychological, physical, societal, or organizational parts of the job that are either purposeful in attaining business goals, decreasing job demands and the associated psychological and physiological costs, and encourage personal development growth, and learning (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Thus, resources are not only essential to deal with job demands, but they also are significant in their own right.

The job demands-resources model (JD-R) was applicable to this study in several ways. The purpose of this qualitative explanatory case study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to

improve employee performance. Employing the job demands resources model (JD-R) helped me in investigating job positions to understand if the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders use improve employee performance. To date, numerous scholars (DeBray, Scott, Lubienski, & Huriya, 2014; Hays, 2013; Silverman, 2012) have conducted studies on the overall performance of charter school organizations and not specifically on work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize to improve employee performance. For this reason, the JD-R model was the cornerstone of this study. At the core of this model lays the assumption that every profession may have its own causes of employee well-being produced by two distinct and overarching sets of working conditions, defined in the form of job demands and job resources (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Therefore, employing this model allowed me to investigate the work-life balance programs implemented by the charter school leadership to gain an understanding of the perceived contributions of the WLB programs.

Scholars use the job demands-resources model to explore, explain, or predict relationships between job characteristics and performances (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). For example, Youngkeun (2013) used the job demands-resources (JD-R) model to examine turnover intention (TI) and occupational citizenship behavior (OCB) to measure organizational outcomes. Huynh, Metzger, and Winefield (2012) used the model to understand volunteer well-being and retention in health care organizations. The researchers found that *connectedness* mediates the relationship between job resources and volunteer satisfaction, determination to continue, and health. However, the researchers did not find that engagement mediates the relationship between job resources and

volunteer satisfaction, determination to continue, and health (Huynh et al., 2012).

Furthermore, Sardeshmukh, Sharma, and Golden (2012) also used the model to explore the effects on job demands and resources to understand the processes through which telework affects the exhaustion and engagement of the teleworker. The results were both positive and negative. The positive effect was that telework revolves around reduced role conflict and work pressure and increased autonomy. The negative effect of telework manifested through reduced feedback and support and increased role ambiguity (Sardeshmukh et al., 2012). However, Boyd et al. (2011) used the job demands-resources (JD-R) model to determine how well job demands (work pressure) and job resources (procedural fairness) would predict psychological strain and organizational commitment. The results from the structural equation modeling (SEM) analyses revealed that job resources directly predicted psychological strain and organizational commitment, but that job demands predicted psychological strain only indirectly via job resources. However, the researchers did not find evidence for reversed causation, and therefore suggested the need for future research to examine whether employee psychological health and commitment may influence perceived or actual job resources and demands (Boyd et al., 2011). Van Ruyseveldt, Verboon, and Smulders (2011) utilized the model to obtain a better understanding of the interplay between job demands, job resources, and learning opportunities in the energy-depletion process. The authors found that autonomy and task variety promoted learning opportunities, which in turn moderately mediated between emotional exhaustion and job resources. However, mixed results pertaining to job demands revealed that cognitive demands promoted learning opportunities, whereas

workload frustrated such opportunities, and there was no significant relationship between emotional demands and learning opportunities (Van Ruysseveldt et al., 2011).

My research design contained open-ended interview questions that enabled me to explore the views and experiences (Mikèné, Gaižauskaitė, & Valavičienė, 2013) of charter school managers and employees in one school to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders in that school utilize to improve employee performance. In this explanatory qualitative case study, I collected and evaluated the data and interpreted the views of the participants on work-life balance policies and programs to understand their effectiveness against factors that may affect employee performance. Using the extant literature on work-life balance and work-life imbalance (Smith, 2010; Sprinks, 2013), work-family conflict (Ahmad & Muhammad Tahir, 2011; Avgar, Givan, & Liu, 2011), absenteeism, turnover, retention (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010; Emery, 2010; Haines, Jalette, & Larose, 2010), employee motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Maslow, 1954), and job satisfaction (Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964), facilitated establishing the foundation of the literature review section.

The lack of research on the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize at charter school organizations to improve employee performance has hindered practice because previous researchers have not taken into account the experiences of charter school managers and employees. My objective for this study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance and further the dialogue on the contribution of work-life programs.

## Operational Definitions

*Absenteeism:* A lack of physical presence (failure to report or remain at work) at a work setting when and where an individual should be (Ejere, 2010; Gosselin, Lemyre, & Corneil, 2013).

*Burnout:* A syndrome of work related negative experiences, including feelings of exhaustion and disengagement from work (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004).

*Employee retention activities:* The procedures, practices, and policies organizations use to prevent valuable employees from leaving their employment (James & Mathew, 2012).

*Family-friendly policies:* Strategies that contribute to creating balance between work and family (Moon & Jongho, 2010).

*Job satisfaction:* The extent to which individuals' needs are satisfied and the extent to which individuals recognize that satisfaction as stemming from his or her total job situation (Vroom, 1964).

*Motivation:* An individual willingness to exert effort to attain organizational goals (Vroom, 1964).

*Occupational stress:* Negative psychological and physiological effects produced by one's work environment (Severn, Searchfield, & Huggard, 2012).

*Turnover:* Turnover is when an employee totally separates from a company and includes cessations, discharges, layoffs, and resignations (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010; Hom, Mitchell, Lee & Griffith, 2012; Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010).

*Work-life balance*: The coordination of employee and employer striving for stable, effective management of the competing demands between work and nonwork domains (Avgar, Givan, & Liu, 2011; McCarthy et al., 2010).

*Work-life imbalance*: Inability to balance work activities from those of personal (Aziz, Adkins, Walker, & Wuensch, 2010).

### **Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations**

#### **Assumptions**

The assumptions of this study were that: (a) the questions I developed were relevant to the meanings or perceptions concerning participants' experiences, (b) the participants would be open and honest in their responses to the interview questions, and (c) the data provided from participants would aid in helping the reader understand the contributions of work-life balance programs offered by the organization on employee performance.

#### **Limitations**

The limitations of this study were: (a) that the study pertained to employees and managers from one charter school organization, (b) the participants were from the same charter school organization, which might limit the variety and independence of experiences, perceptions, and meanings collected in this study, (c) the validity of the study findings depended on the participants answering the open-ended interview questions about how the work-life balance programs contribute to improving employee performance truthfully, and (d) the organization tracking indicators on employee performance were from one charter school organization.



## **Delimitations**

I restricted this study to one nonprofit charter school organization located in the geographical area of Harlem, New York. The sample consisted of one chief academic officer, chief financial officer, chief operations officer, comptroller, head and assistant principal, human resource manager, development manager, information technology manager, and office manager. Other participants included two teachers, senior administrators, security officers, food service workers, and maintenance technicians.

I interviewed leaders and employees who were responsible for the daily operations at an organization in Harlem, New York. Therefore, I restricted the study to an exploration of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance in this school.

## **Significance of the Study**

### **Contribution to Business Practice**

This study on the experiences and perspectives of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance might help educational leaders gain relevant knowledge on work-life programs, enabling them to review their programs and policies based on this information, identify strategies to improve organizational policies, and potentially influence industry policy standards. The results of this study could contribute to bringing awareness surrounding the issue of employees' job performance and satisfaction. Furthermore, the results from this study could benefit the public by extending the knowledge of how work-life balance policies and programs contribute to improving work and personal

relationships, work motivation, and career decisions. These benefits may also positively contribute to business practice by offering organizations in different industries ways in which they approach the development, implementation, and utilization of work-life balance policies and programs to promote supportive managerial attitudes towards family-friendly policies and programs. Publishing the results of this study may inform organizational leaders and business professionals of the potential contributions that work-life balance programs can have on employee performance, with the potential to position organizational leaders and business professionals to better provision work-life responsibilities. Most important, the findings from the study might provide further insights that could be instrumental in assessing job effectiveness among organizational workers and reducing employee absenteeism and turnover.

### **Implications for Social Change**

The concepts of work-life balance and family-friendly workplaces are not amenable to precise definitions. Different individuals interpret work-life balance differently, with some needing more personal time to experience comfort than others need (Chandra, 2012). Within different industries, there are workers who try to attain work-life balance, but their desire to be successful in their profession draws them into a situation where they work long hours and experience conflict between home and work (Chandra, 2012). For this reason, the results of this study might contribute to social change by helping individuals become critical, creative, and reflective thinkers when it comes to professional and personal values of balancing work and life. Furthermore, data from this study might provide organizational leaders and business professionals with the

foundational knowledge to implement and maintain different work-life balance policies and programs and further assess whether organizational leaders and business professionals current workplace policies and programs improve employee quality of worklife.

### **A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature**

The contents of this heading are a review of current literature related to factors that may contribute to work-life imbalance as well as factors that influence employees' work-life balance. The review of the literature included various research studies of *work-life balance*, *work-life imbalance*, *family-friendly policies*, *employee absenteeism*, *employee turnover*, *employee retention*, *motivation*, *job satisfaction*, and *work-family conflict* within different industries. By using the above search terms, I researched several academic databases from the Walden University Library, ABI/INFORM Global, Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, Emerald Management Journals, ProQuest Central, PhycArticles, PsycINFO, SAGE Premier, ProQuest, Science Direct, and Thoreau. Most important, the search pertained only to articles published within the last 5 years. What follows is an analysis of current literature on the many research findings on work-life balance and work-life imbalance. In addition, the literature review provides an overview of the seminal works in the field of business on work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), role overload (Kahn et al., 1964), and the job demands-resources model (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011), which I cited to provide a comprehensive conceptual understanding of behavior patterns. For that reason, this review of the literature emerged from the absence of research data on the work-life

balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. Overall, 94% of the literature review's current sources were peer reviewed and published between 2011 and 2015. The remaining 6% of the sources included books, non-peer-reviewed articles, and peer-reviewed articles published before 2011.

I examined numerous research studies to gain an understanding necessary to evaluate the many factors of work-life balance and work-life imbalance (absenteeism, turnover, etc.). For this reason, I divided this heading into several parts. First, I did a brief overview of the literature pertaining to change in the business environment in which organizations function (Ansari, 2011; Bieńkowska, 2012; Nekoranec, 2013; Van de Ven & Sun, 2011), work-life balance and work-life imbalance (Noor, 2011), and work-life balance definitions. In the next subheading I focused on employee motivation, job satisfaction (Cherian & Jacob, 2013; Xingkun & Weijie, 2013), absenteeism, turnover, retention (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010; Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010), family-friendly policies and programs (Miryala & Chiluka, 2012), job stress and work hours (Brown et al., 2010; Katz et al., 2012), and work-family conflict (Knecht, Bauer, Gutzwiller, & Hämmig, 2011). I concluded the literature review section with a discussion of the need for more research on the effectiveness of work-life balance programs. In this heading, although the extensive review of academic literature revealed areas of inquiry, I concluded there remains a gap in the literature on the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at charter school organizations utilize to improve employee performance.

### **Work-life Balance and Work-life Imbalance**

Describing the working environment in which people spend most of their active life is not easy (Nekoranec, 2013). Change is an ongoing and never-ending process of organizational life (Kim, Song, & Lee, 2013; Van de Ven & Sun, 2011). In recent years, working conditions have undergone a distinctive transformation. Among the reasons for this is the impact of the unstable business environment on organizations and changes in employees' attitudes towards work (Bieńkowska, 2012). The first of these relates to the changing nature of the environment in which organizations currently function (Bieńkowska, 2012). A turbulent environment characterized by unpredictability directly affects organizations' profitability and productivity (Bieńkowska, 2012). The situation of uncertainty triggers unexpected changes in conditioning of activities, which in turn effectively blocks long term planning (Bieńkowska, 2012).

Organizations are under constant competitive pressure to improve their organization structure to get employees and managers to perform better (Ben-Ner & Lluís, 2011). Having a committed and dedicated workforce is a valuable asset that contributes to organizations' competitive edge (Ansari, 2011). The highly competitive environment of today's business organizations emphasizes the significance of developing proficient and productive workers in addition to retaining them (Ansari, 2011).

American workers frequently occupy the greatest portion of their waking hours in a place of employment, physically separated from their families (Andreassen, Hetland, & Pallesen, 2010; Treiber & Davis, 2012). Numerous researchers have conceptualized work and family domains as conflicting spheres (Ahmad & Muhammad Tahir, 2011; Aiswarya

& Ramasundaram, 2012; Baral & Bhargava, 2011; Bianchi & Milkie, 2010; Boushey, 2011). From the perspective of the family, work is a problem and from the employer's point of view, family requirements hinder productivity (Treiber & Davis, 2012). This work-family conflict can have detrimental consequences for workers' well-being (Innstrand, Lamgballe, Espnes, Aasland, & Falkum, 2010; Severn, Searchfield, & Huggard, 2012; Treiber & Davis, 2012).

Chang, McDonald, and Burton (2010) indicated that there is need for a better understanding of work-life balance because in only 26% of qualitative studies and 9% of quantitative studies researchers investigated work-life issues as compared to studies on work-family balance. What does it take to establish a work-life balance? The answer to this question produces a series of interrelated questions of how. These are not simple instrumental questions, but rather essentially philosophical problems, which are beyond normal conversations about work-life balance attainment (Fouché & Martindale, 2011).

Work-life balance is a broadly investigated phenomenon in organizational literature where researchers have pinpointed a variety of ways in which work and private life affect each other (Mordi & Ojo, 2011). Maintaining a balance between work and life is a well-known topic in society as well as a significant concern for individuals and organizations (Aziz, Adkins, Walker, & Wuensch, 2010; Fischlmayr & Kollinger, 2010; Lauzun, Morganson, Major, & Green, 2010; McCarthy, Darcy, & Grady, 2010; Noor, 2011; Ten Brummelhuts & Der Lippe, 2010; Webber, Sarris, & Bessell, 2010). The issue of work-life balance came to the forefront in the 1960s and 1970s in the United Kingdom by working mothers (Malik, Saleem, & Ahmad, 2010). However, the issue became a

discussion topic for the United States Department of Labor in the 1980s, which led to an acknowledgment by human resource departments all over the globe in the 1990s (Malik et al., 2010).

Work-life balance (WLB) appears to be a significant part of corporate social responsibility today (Bilal, Rehman, & Raza, 2010). Therefore, organizational leaders ought to recognize their responsibilities in an effort to ensure that their employees are not working so hard that it is interfering with their personal lives that can lead to medical issues, which has the potential to affect morale, reduce productivity, and decrease job satisfaction (Bilal et al., 2010). The argument on the issue of job satisfaction is an ongoing debate that has continued for years in connection with work-life balance, which gained importance in developing countries (Malik et al., 2010).

Combination of professional and personal life has progressively become essential due to the way of life in revolutionizing times (e.g., employed mothers, dual earner families, employees with elder care responsibilities, etc.) and changing demographics and patterns of work and family (Higgins, Duxbury, & Lyons, 2010; Jansen, Mohren, Van Amelsvoort, Janssen, & Kant, 2010; Nayeem & Tripathy, 2012). These changes contributed to an increase in role overload as workers struggle to accommodate the various demands placed on them by their profession and personal lives (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Higgins et al., 2010; Kahn et al., 1964). Researchers found that role overload has numerous stress related outcomes such as anxiety, burnout, fatigue, and decreased satisfaction with family and work (Ahola, Väänänen, Koskinen, Kouvonen, & Shirom, 2010; Frone, Yardley, & Markel 1997; Shultz, Wang, & Olson, 2010).

Equally important, it also contributed to high rates of absenteeism, low levels of commitment, turnover intention, and poorer physical and mental health (Higgins et al., 2010).

Although some organizations are moving forward by trying innovative approaches to improve the work-life balance of their workers, it still depends on how individuals change their procedures, mindsets, principles, and insights to fit with their professional life (Sandhya, Choudary, Kumar, & Reddy, 2011; Sonnentag, Mojza, Demerouti, & Bakker, 2012). Even with the acknowledgment of the lack of work-life balance, there are still different perceptions regarding how to achieve and maintain it, and whether it is necessary (Fischlmayr & Kollinger, 2010). This does not negate the fact that WLB practices are receiving vast attention to the degree that many organizations and workers from different industries are gradually becoming aware of procedures for balancing their professional and personal life (Fischlmayr & Kollinger, 2010).

According to Chawla and Sondhi (2011), the present day world may have groundbreaking innovations and accelerated development and growth in various fields. However, the downside to this may be associated with the extensive working hours (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011). Furthermore, technology enables individuals to access their work environment twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011; Sarker, Xiao, Sarker, & Ahuja, 2012), which creates concern among employees and employers (Musura, Korican, & Krajnovic, 2013). For example, email that allows employees 24-7 access to business communication, which is an advantage, could turn out to be a disadvantage because of the negative effect it could have on an employee work-



life balance (Waller & Ragsdell, 2012). For instance, employees from contemporary, multinational organizations (senders) can be expecting an immediate response from other employees, regardless of the time of day or night. Similarly, the receivers may feel obligated to respond immediately, despite the time (beyond their work schedule) or the interruption the communication may cause them personally (Kim & Wiggins, 2011). Consequently, the area of life that the majority neglects is a balance between work and family (Chawla & Sondhi, 2011).

In the contemporary business environment, an individual's occupation is more than likely to interfere with his or her personal life, thus making it no easy task to maintain a work-life balance (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011). This is one reason why balancing work and life can be a difficult endeavor to achieve, however; nothing beats a failure but a try. Undoubtedly, by trying, employers and employees alike could be encouraged and motivated to develop valuable skills needed in other areas of their life (Chimote & Srivastava, 2013). The overall message of work-life balance is that an occupation ought to be beneficial and should leave time for individuals to engage in interests outside of the workplace (Chimote & Srivastava, 2013).

Time is the most perishable commodity and to make matters worse, an individual cannot recycle time. In this sense, long periods of exposure to elevated job demands could have a serious effect on an employee's health (Dawson, Noy, Harma, Akerstedt, & Belenky, 2011; Siltaloppi, Kinnunen, Feldt, & Tolvanen, 2011; Tims, Bakker, & Derks, 2013). Work, time pressures, and the average time spent on the job increased significantly between 2009 and 2011 (Brauchli, Bauer, & Hämmig, 2011; de Oliveira

Camada, Pataro, & de Cássia Pereira Fernandes, 2012; Jansen et al., 2010; Kiriago & Bwisa, 2013; Moen, Kelly, & Lam, 2013; Nugus et al., 2011; Syrek, Apostel, & Antoni, 2013). As a result, work could potentially dominate an individual's personal life (Nayeem & Tripathy, 2012). This imbalance of work-life associations can lead to serious health issues and hinder job performance (Singh, 2010).

Overall, work-life balance has a lot to do with organizational efficacy because there is an active interplay between WLB and organization effectiveness (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013). Kumar and Chakraborty (2013) articulated that there are virtuous and vicious cycles. The virtuous cycle pertains to organizational effectiveness, balanced work-life, content employees, and improved performance (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013). The vicious cycle relates to organizational crisis, imbalanced work-life, discontent employees, and poor performance and productivity (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013). Even though work-life balance has received a vast amount of exposure in different professions (Hancke et al., 2014; Kawase et al., 2013; Seston & Hassell, 2013), there remains a gap in literature on the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at charter school organizations utilize to improve employee performance. Consequently, there was a need to understand the contributions of work-life balance programs as well as how work-life imbalance affects charter school employees and managers (total of 20) by identifying the factors to reduce the imbalance and achieve balance in both work and family spheres.

### **Work-life Balance Definitions**

The term work-life imbalance refers to the inability to balance work and personal activities (Aziz, Adkins, Walker, & Wuensch, 2010; Singh, 2010; Smith, 2010). In this sense, work-life balance is an individual taking control over his or her personal and professional responsibilities by reflecting on both areas of his or her life fairly (Avgar et al., 2011; Kar & Misra, 2013).

There are as many definitions of work-life balance as the amount of research performed on the subject matter. For example, Chang et al. (2010) defined WLB as the daily management of an individual's job and activities outside of the job, which signifies balance. Darcy et al. (2012) referred to WLB as organizational initiatives intended at increasing individual's knowledge of work and non-work domains. Furthermore, Nwagbara and Akanji (2012) described it as when an individual life obviously separates into two noticeable spheres: work and life, with the former frequently having negative limitations on the latter. Karthik (2013) defined WLB as balancing oneself on a seesaw (one side is work while the other side personal time and family). Additionally, Ghalawat, and Sukhija (2012) mentioned that it is a self-defined state that lets a person efficiently manage several responsibilities without guilt, stress, or feelings of regret. Other researchers argued that work-life balance does not even mean to have an equal balance (Sandhya et al., 2011). Fouche and Martindale (2011) indicated that sometimes the perception of work-life balance is negative (stressor) and sometimes viewed as a strategy for using policies or programs. Dash et al. (2012) articulated work-life balance is no longer an issue that only women face but an issue for men as well, because, just as

women, they are equally finding it difficult to balance work and their personal time. Such work-life balance definitions are just an indication that researchers continue to disagree on a concrete definition for WLB, and as a result, the concept remains ambiguous. The great number of definitions is due to the frameworks of reference researchers are using. Mordi and Ojo (2011) noted that the significance of work-life balance differs with age, curiosity, value, and personality of individuals.

### **Employee Motivation**

One of the main factors that contribute to organizational performance is employee job performance. Employees who perform their job duties well will help their organizations to meet strategic goals and objectives (June, Kheng, & Mahmood, 2013). By performing well, they will also play a significant role in sustaining the organization competitive advantage (June et al., 2013). There are numerous definitions of employee job performance. June et al. (2013) defined job performance as having the knowledge pertaining to employees job goals and their ability to meet the expectations of the organization's objectives and achieving the work standards established by the organization. Alternatively, job performance can be described as the outcome of two facets that individuals may possess, their skills (acquired) and abilities (natural) that can be a good source of motivation for a better job performance (June et al., 2013).

Motivation is one of the most essential factors in influencing human behavior and performance (Yusoff, Kian, & Idris, 2013), and this could be the reason why research is rich in theories pertaining to this topic. In view of this, it is impossible to cover all of the theories. Therefore, I briefly discussed a few prominent cognitive theories (Adams, 1963;

Locke & Latham, 1990; Vroom, 1964) that focused on the psychological and behavioral processes behind motivation. In addition, I also discussed the need theories that allow us to explain human motivation (Alderfer, 1969; Deci & Ryan 1985; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; Maslow, 1954).

Many researchers and theorist (Alderfer, 1969; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Herzberg et al., 1959; Maslow, 1954; McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1976) have sought to answer the longstanding question, *what motivates employees in the workplace* (Anderfuhren et al., 2010; Korzynski, 2013). For this study, the operative definition of motivation was *an individual willingness to exert effort to attain organizational goals* as defined in Vroom Expectancy theory of motivation (Vroom, 1964). Vroom's expectancy theory (1964) differs from the work of other researchers (e.g., Alderfer, 1969; Herzberg et al., 1959; Maslow, 1954), because, unlike needs theorists, Vroom did not specify which specific rewards motivate individuals (Lunenburg, 2011). Instead, in his theory, Vroom describes a process of cognitive variables that shows individual differences in work motivation (Lunenburg, 2011). The foundation of this theory is the idea that individuals believe that a relationship exists between the effort they demonstrate at work, the performance they attain from that effort, and the rewards they obtain from their effort and the performance (Lunenburg, 2011). In other words, individuals could become motivated if they believe that demonstrating a strong effort will lead to a better performance and better performance will lead to desired rewards (Lunenburg, 2011). For example, there are four assumptions based on the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). The first assumption is that individuals join organizations with expectations about their

motivations, needs, and prior experiences. The second is that an individual's behavior is intentional (conscious choice). The third is that individuals want different things from their employer such as advancement, a good salary, and job security. The fourth is that individuals will think about alternatives to enhance outcomes for them personally (Lunenburg, 2011). Equally important, these four assumptions have three crucial elements, which are expectancy, instrumentality, and valence (Lunenburg, 2011). Therefore, a person becomes motivated to a certain degree when he or she believes that effort will lead to an acceptable performance, that rewards will follow that performance, and the value of the rewards will be highly positive (Lunenburg, 2011).

Adams (1963) developed the equity theory to explain employees' motivation in the context of whether they perceive fairness and justice practiced by management (Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011). The core of this theory is that subtle and variable factors affect an employee's assessment and perception of his or her relationship with work and the employer (Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011). With the equity theory, motivation is not merely a function of individual rewards, but it is a function of how an individual views his or her ratio of outcomes to inputs (i.e., effort and rewards), compared to the ratio of outcomes to inputs (i.e., comparing oneself to others to determine if they received fair treatment) of referents (Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011). For instance, an employee can perceive an over reward or an under reward; nonetheless, the latter inequity would result in the employee taking action to reestablish equity (Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011). One way that an employee can reestablish equity is to decrease the amount of effort he or she puts into his or her work. The other alternative is to request greater rewards, such as an increase in pay

(Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011). Consequently, if reducing inputs or increasing outcomes does not restore equity, employees ultimately will leave their employers (Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011).

Locke and Latham (1990) developed the goal-setting theory, which includes two cognitive determinants of behavior (values and intentions). Locke and Latham (1990) proposed that the way in which an individual experiences his or her value judgments is emotional. In this sense, an individual's values create the desire to do things consistently (Lunenburg, 2011). Equally important, goals also affect individual's behavior (job performance) directly and indirectly (Locke & Latham, 1990). For example, goals direct attention and action; challenging goals drum up energy that lead to greater effort and increase persistent effort (Lunenburg, 2011). Overall, the model demonstrates that goals motivate individuals to create approaches that will enable them to perform at the required goal levels (Locke & Latham, 1990; Lunenburg, 2011).

In the needs, motives, and values theories (Alderfer 1969; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Maslow, 1954) the focus is on the internal and external determinants of behavior. The development of the needs theories came about in the wake of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (Maslow, 1954). Maslow conceptualized human needs as a pyramid with five levels: (a) physiological, (b) safety, (c) belonging, (d) esteem, and (e) self-actualization (Groff Paris & Terhaar, 2010). He posited that motivation is natural for individuals with regard to psychological growth and self-development (Maslow, 1954). Furthermore, he elucidated that human beings work to achieve unmet needs at the lower levels before focusing on higher-level needs (Groff et al., 2010). In this sense, with the

fulfillment of each lower-level need, the next higher need occupies one's attention until fulfilled (Groff et al., 2010). The highest-level need, self-actualization, is to become all that he or she is capable of becoming in terms of abilities, skills, and talents (Groff et al., 2010).

Alderfer (1969) developed a follow-up of the hierarchy of needs known as *ERG theory*, in which he grouped Maslow's five needs into three groups that consisted of *existence* (physiological and safety needs), *relatedness* (safety and belonging), and *growth* (esteem and self-actualization needs). Herzberg's two-factor theory came to the forefront in 1959 after data was collected from two hundred accountants and engineers in the United States pertaining to their personal feelings towards the environment in which they worked (Herzberg et al., 1959; Yusoff, Kian, & Idris, 2013). Herzberg et al. (1959) defined two factors (motivation and hygiene) in determining employees working attitudes and level of performance (Yusoff et al., 2013). This theory is similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, because it introduced additional factors to measure how employees become motivated in the workplace (Yusoff et al., 2013). The motivation factors will increase satisfaction whereas the hygiene factors serve to reduce dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). According to this theory, meeting hygiene factors of an individual would not motivate him or her to apply effort; rather it will only prevent the individual from being or feeling discontented (Yusoff et al., 2013). For this reason, to motivate individuals and increase performance or productivity, higher-level needs (motivation factors) must be met (Yusoff et al., 2013).



The self-determination theory introduced the intrinsic-extrinsic contrast into motivation theories (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This theory has multiple constructs including autonomy support, psychological needs, and motivation (Sweet, Fortier, Strachan, & Blanchard, 2012). *Autonomy support* refers to an individual's perception of his or her social environment to the point to where it provides choices and opportunities, acknowledges one's opinion, and provides justification when recommending choices (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sweet et al., 2012). In this sense, greater levels of autonomy support will optimistically influence an individual's psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Sweet et al., 2012). *Competence* refers to feeling effective in ongoing interactions within the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one's capabilities (Deci & Ryan, 2000). *Relatedness* is the aspiration to feel connected to people (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Overall, the satisfaction of these three psychological needs leads to higher levels of self-determined motivation (Sweet et al., 2012).

Equally important, because of technological advancement (i.e., when information and knowledge are particular factors of power), we live in times of intense transformation (Tebeian, 2012). Every organization is competing to survive in this ever increasingly challenging and volatile business environment (Mahazril'Aini et al., 2012; Tebeian, 2012). In order to survive, organizations need pools of exceptional, capable, and productive human capital (Mahazril'Aini et al., 2012). For this reason, organizations today cannot afford to undervalue the importance of skillful employees, holders of great

factors like information and knowledge (Tebeian, 2012). The key to success for an organization is the quality of their workers and their performance (Tebeian, 2012).

Work motivation is one of the most intensively studied topics in the social sciences. Motivation is what moves individuals from boredom to interest (Ebrahimabadi, Jalilvand, Sharif, Ali Salimi, & Khanzadeh, 2011). Motivation symbolizes those psychological processes that cause the awakening, guidance, and determination of voluntary activities that are goal oriented (Ebrahimabadi et al., 2011). In this sense, individuals must be enthusiastic, focused, stimulated, and willing to commit their energy for a long period to realize their objective (Ebrahimabadi et al., 2011). In general, motivation represents a crucial element when going through the process of human learning (Ebrahimabadi et al., 2011). For example, if workers are not motivated to excel, the knowledge within the organization is not realistically used to a maximum (Ebrahimabadi et al., 2011). Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the employer to find the factors that prevent the motivation of its workforce (continuous learning) and take advantage of this knowledge to ensure it is living (Ebrahimabadi et al., 2011).

In the fields of human resource management and organizational behavior, employee motivation is one of the most significant concepts (Qayyum, 2012). According to Anderfuhren, Varone, Giauque, and Ritz (2010), motivated employees are the foundation of any organization, as work motivation is one indispensable factor of individual and organizational performance. Qayyum (2012) articulated that motivated employees possess the consciousness to achieve specific goals and objectives in particular ways and direct their energy towards attaining such goals and objectives. All

employers want their workers to perform to the best of their abilities. Nonetheless, motivation remains a difficult factor to manage because workers' desires and goals do not always match what their employers can provide (Qayyum, 2012).

Employee turnover is a great risk, because it brings many losses that consist of the loss of expertise, knowledge, relationships, teams, and time (Tebeian, 2012). Teberian (2012) mentioned that one solution to this issue is to create an environment that is attractive, so that workers become motivated enough to bring out the best in them and increase their performance levels. Researchers have studied employee motivation in different disciplines because of its importance to many fields including anthropology, economics, management, psychology, and sociology (Anderfuhren et al., 2010; Word & Carpenter, 2013). Word and Carpenter (2013) articulated that employees look for countless things beyond pay in the professions they pursue, including motivating and meaningful work. Thus, it is extremely important to understand the factors that drive individuals' to choose their professions, and aspects of those professions that keep them motivated are a fundamental need of management (Word & Carpenter, 2013). For example, results of a study conducted in the for-profit and public sector using Perry's Public Service Motivation Scale (PSM) to examine the motivation of nonprofit workers revealed that intrinsically rewarding activities (giving challenging tasks, involving in decision making process, giving a higher rank in hierarchy, etc.) offered by organizations are what motivated employees (Word & Carpenter, 2013). For example, involving workers in *policymaking* improved their feeling of self-importance, strengthened their *commitment to public service*, and reinforced the importance of *civic duty* (Word &

Carpenter, 2013). In addition, the results also indicated that four of the variables had a significant and positive impact on nonprofit workers motivation: attraction to mission, depth of involvement in the sector, location by state, and race (Word & Carpenter, 2013).

As previously noted, several contributing factors influence an employee's motivation to work. Rewards, recognition, and communication are among the factors identified by researchers (Alderfer, 1969; Herzberg et al., 1959; Lunenburg, 2011; Maslow, 1954; Skiba & Rosenberg, 2011; Sweet et al., 2012; Vroom, 1964). Even though there are different opinions pertaining to what may or may not motivate employees, a rewards recognition system is an important tool that management can use to channel employee motivation in desired ways (Mahazril' Aini et al., 2012). In other words, reward systems attract people to join particular companies, help in retention, and motivate people to perform at higher levels (Mahazril' Aini et al., 2012). A study conducted in Pakistan on the impact of rewards and recognition towards motivation results revealed that managers could provide recognition to employees by sitting and having informal conversations about their personal life (family, friends, and aspirations) or in the form of a combined dinner (Danish & Usman, 2010). In addition, the researchers mentioned that when practiced, effective rewards and recognition within an organization might produce a favorable working environment that can motivate workers to excel in their performance (Danish & Usman, 2010).

In China, researchers from the University of Geosciences conducted a study utilizing expectancy theory to examine the relationship between satisfaction with compensation and work motivation (Ghazanfar, Chuanmin, Khan, & Bashir, 2011). The

researchers found that satisfaction with compensation could be a factor of work motivation. In addition, the researchers found that flexible pay was not a motivating factor and benefits did not have a significant impact on employee work motivation (Ghazanfar et al., 2011).

Other than rewards and recognition, communication is also one of the factors that can motivate employees to work (Mahazril'Aini et al., 2012). The use of effective communication channels in organizations could enhance the motivation of employees. In other words, managers can stimulate employee's motivation by conveying relevant information as well to displaying a good attitude (Mahazril'Aini et al., 2012). As a result, having positive communication throughout the organization may boost motivation levels among workers as well as foster workers understanding of the job (Mahazril'Aini et al., 2012). Most importantly, open communication could make workers feel appreciated by their employers, making them loyal and committed to the organization (Mahazril'Aini et al., 2012).

Results of a study conducted in Lithuania at three organizations demonstrated that the attitudes of employees and managers towards applicable means of motivation differ significantly (Ramanauskienė, Vanagienė, & Klimas, 2011). The employees indicated dissatisfaction with both monetary and normative incentives, whereas, managers believed that they cared and listened to their employees' concerns and ensured suitable working condition in each organization (Ramanauskienė et al., 2011). The authors concluded that in order to achieve employee motivation the implementation of an organizational employee motivational system is essential. Overall, employee motivation is particularly

relevant because an appropriate employee motivation system eventually benefits both employee and employer (Ramanauskienė et al., 2011). In this sense, employers' who support their workers' careers, benefit as well, because this links employee motivation and professional growth with the organizations' objectives (Ramanauskienė et al., 2011).

Equally important, job involvement and organizational commitment have an impact on employee motivation (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). Cherian and Jacob (2013) articulated that there is a strong emphasis on the commitment level that individuals give to their profession. For the reason, that an individual profession is not only a source of revenue to maintain, but it also gives meaning to the work he or she is performing as well as a great deal of job security (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). Therefore, an individual behavior may be associated with the degree of commitment that he or she shows to his or her profession. This means that individuals who have the ability to show commitment to their profession may attempt to improve their skills and motivate themselves to perform well (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). Such individuals might spend time in terms of developing their expertise and promoting their self-efficacy by showing greater job involvement (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). For this reason, work-life programs may motivate employees to exert maximum effort on the job (Konrad & Mangel, 2000). Overall, motivation makes workers open to learning, and this in turn, translates into better performance and innovative practices (Sathyapriya, Prabhakaran, Gopinath, & Abraham, 2012). Collectively, the engagement of all workers may lead to better performance by organizations (Sathyapriya et al., 2012).

The purpose of this qualitative explanatory case study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. Therefore, I looked at the systems perspective and not only at the workers, but at the programs, policies, and the environment in which they work. The job-demands resource model provided the necessary structure to assess job demands and resources. High job demands exhaust employees' physical and psychological resources and can lead to health problems and the depletion of energy (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). In contrast, job resources foster extra-role performance and employee engagement, which is the motivational process (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). In other words, the views and experiences of managers and employees (total of 20) from one charter school organization who manage job demands, motivational issues, and strategies to use resources were essential in gaining an understanding of the WLB program's effectiveness. The charter school setting provided the high demand environment perfect for this framework.

### **Job Satisfaction**

The story began with the idea of the *scientific management movement* or *Taylorism* by Frederick W. Taylor in 1911, which depicts human beings as *economic-man* where money is the leading motivator for job satisfaction (Saif, Nawaz, Ali Jan, & Khan, 2012). However, in 1924, Elton Mayo and associates criticized this view during the *Hawthorne Studies* during the 1930s concerning the nature of human beings. They discovered numerous factors that contributed to employee motivation and satisfaction including morale, positive interrelationships, and management that understands

individual and group behavior through interpersonal skills (Saif et al., 2012). For this reason, among others, job satisfaction has developed more extensively both theoretically and empirically within the literature of industrial psychology, organizational behavior, and sociology (Holland, Pyman, Cooper, & Teicher, 2011; Ikyanyon, 2012; Westover & Taylor, 2010). According to Parvin and Kabir (2013), there is an association between job satisfaction and many organizational phenomena such as attitude, conflict, leadership, moral, motivation, and performance.

Job satisfaction is a form of workplace attitude (Bozionelos & Kostopoulos, 2010; Ibrahim Al-Shuaibi, Subramaniam, & Mohd-Shamsudin, 2014). Locke (1976) referred to job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. In other words, some aspects of the workplace are more satisfying than others are; therefore, individuals will experience some degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their job, which tends to vary from one workplace to another (Nagar, 2012). Job satisfaction is the level of contentment felt by individuals in two aspects of physiology and psychology on environmental factors (Ching-Sing et al., 2013; Khan, Ramzan, & Butt, 2013). Specifically, it is a subjective response from the worker to the working situation (Ching-Sing et al., 2013). Furthermore, job satisfaction is also a significant factor of productivity at work along with having an interest, motivation, and proper training. Therefore, frustrations on the job may stem from numerous aspects of the occupation itself, personal motivation for work and its results and the work environment (Tomina & Sorana, 2011). Nonetheless, there remains perplexity and disputes among practitioners on the topic of workers job satisfaction and attitudes even at



a time when workers are increasingly important for organizational competitiveness and success (Khan et al., 2013).

In simple terms, job satisfaction is an attitudinal variable that explains the ways in which individuals perceive their job (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Gordon, 2011; Holland et al., 2011). In other words, job satisfaction is an individual perception or assessment of the degree to which he or she fit in a particular organization (Ahmad, & Veerapandian, 2012; Holland et al., 2011). Implicit in this definition of job satisfaction as an employee attitude is the significance and interdependence of both feeling (affect) and thinking (Holland et al., 2011). Overall, the definitions for job satisfaction are open-ended, with many versions presented in the literature (Kuzey, 2012). In this sense, there is not one definition since *job satisfaction* applies to general as well as to specific work satisfaction (Gallardo, Sanchez-Canizares, Lopez-Guzman, & Nascimento, 2010; Kuzey, 2012). Job satisfaction is a multidimensional concept that includes intrinsic (job tasks) and extrinsic (i.e. benefits, bonuses and salary) satisfactions because of the association of various job aspects (Kuzey, 2012). In general, job satisfaction is important because of its connection with a number of advantageous managerial outcomes such as low absenteeism and turnover rates, high productivity (Nagar, 2012; Xingkun & Weijie, 2013), organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and organizational performance (Yang, Brown, & Moon, 2011).

Fisher (2010) articulated that individuals could be more authentically satisfied if they feel a *calling or a connection* between what they do on the job, the satisfaction that they derive from what they do, and pleasure of working with individuals who add value

to their work and the organization. Therefore, job satisfaction can enhance individual and organizational performance by increasing work motivation and by reducing costs associated with negative organizational behaviors (Kaifeng & Kassekert, 2010).

For this study, the operative definition of job satisfaction was the extent to which individual's needs are satisfied and the extent to which individuals recognize that satisfaction as stemming from his or her total job situation as defined in Vroom expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964, p.12). Vroom (1964) articulated that the terms *job attitudes and job satisfaction* both refer to affective orientations on the part of individuals toward their job roles that they are currently occupying. In other words, positive attitudes regarding the job are conceptually comparable to job satisfaction, and negative attitudes toward the job are comparable to job dissatisfaction (Vroom, 1964).

Vroom (1964) identified the significance of numerous individual motivations and needs such as valance, expectancy, and instrumentality. Valance refers to the desired of the reward, expectancy pertains to the possibility that effort will lead to the effective performance, and instrumentality concerns the estimate that performance will result in getting the reward (Vroom, 1964). For this reason, it is one of the most comprehensive theories of motivation ( $\text{valance} \times \text{expectancy} \times \text{instrumentality} = \text{motivation}$ ) and job satisfaction (Saif et al., 2012).

Although I selected Vroom's expectancy theory, this does not mean that other theories on employee job satisfaction and dissatisfaction such as those of Maslow and Herzberg were not useful for this study. Within Maslow's theory, the hierarchy begins with basic physiological needs (food and shelter) and proceeds in order through need for

safety (security), belonging (social and affiliation), esteem (recognition and achievement), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). Self-actualization is the opportunity to accept responsibility and gain achievement (Maslow, 1954). This theory leads to the assumptions that different needs, emerging at radical phases of the hierarchy, will require different types of satisfaction, with emphasis on self-actualization, which is the highest psychological order of need (Lawler & Porter, 1967). Thus, in establishing a framework for views related to individual's job, Maslow theory is beneficial for identifying and patterning motives and needs (Lawler & Porter, 1967).

Frederick Herzberg (1959) theorized that employee satisfaction depended on two sets of factors: *motivators and hygiene* factors. Herzberg articulated that addressing the hygiene factors, the motivators would create satisfaction among workers (Herzberg et al., 1959). In short, Herzberg proposed that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are unique issues. For instance, factors leading to positive attitudes and those leading to negative attitudes would be different (Islam & Ali, 2013). Furthermore, Herzberg argued that there are motivators (job satisfiers) related to the job contents and hygiene factors (job dissatisfiers) associated with the job context (Herzberg et al., 1959). In this sense, motivators include advancement, recognition, responsibility, and work itself, whereas, the hygiene factors do not play a role in motivation or satisfaction but can help prevent dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Therefore, these are contextual such as administration, company policies, interpersonal relations, supervision, wages, and working conditions (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Researchers have argued that pursuing job satisfaction reflects the humanitarian concern that employees deserve fair treatment and respect (Rogelberg, Allen, Shanock, Scott, & Shuffler, 2010; Xingkun & Weijie, 2013). Ikyanyon (2012) conveyed that satisfied workers are productive and committed to the organization goals, objectives, and values, and are less likely to exhibit negative job related attitudes such as intention to quit, turnover, and absenteeism, which are costly and detrimental to the growth of the organization. In addition, Gordon (2011) articulated that by looking at the differences between what workers' want and what they receive, employers' could make organizational improvements to the work environment that may motivate workers.

Job satisfaction is like a continuum that can range from negative to positive feelings (Gordon, 2011; Xingkun & Weijie, 2013). For example, researchers at the society for human resource management (SHRM) conducted a survey in 2011 and 2012 on employee job satisfaction and engagement of U.S. employees (SHRM, 2011, 2012). In 2011, the researchers found that 83% of U.S. employees reported being satisfied with their current job, 41% extremely satisfied, and 42% fairly satisfied (SHRM, 2011). However, in 2012, the researchers found that 81% of U.S. employees were satisfied with their jobs, 38% very satisfied, and 43% somewhat satisfied (SHRM, 2012). The researchers noted that there was a 2% decrease in satisfied workers, 3% decrease in extremely satisfied workers, and 1% increase in fairly satisfied workers (SHRM, 2012). Furthermore, Lan, Okechuku, Zhang, and Cao (2013) conducted a study in 2012 with 370 accountants (268 females and 102 males) from six cities in China about the impact of job satisfaction and personal values on work orientation. The researchers used the Schwartz's

value questionnaire survey to measure personal values, the Wrzesniewski questionnaire to measure work orientation, and the job descriptive index (JDI) to measure job satisfaction. The researchers found that 41.9 % of the participants viewed their work as a career, 37.6 % regarded their job as a calling, and 20.5 % considered it just a job (Lan et al., 2013). In addition, the researchers revealed that job satisfaction was the highest among the *calling* group and lowest among the *job* group (Lan et al., 2013).

Employers who want to be successful as well as retain their workers must ensure that their workers are satisfied (Raza Naqvi, Ishtiaq, Nousheen, & Ali, 2013) with their work and the work environment (Ahmad, Ahmad, Ahmed, & Nawaz, 2010; Moradi, Almutairi, Idrus, & Emami, 2013). An organization with a great amount of satisfied workers has a greater chance of being more efficient because satisfied workers are more productive as compared to dissatisfied workers, which cost organizations millions of dollars each year (Andrew & Sofian, 2012; Moradi et al., 2013; Raza Naqvi et al., 2013). Tatsuse and Sekine (2011) noted that a dissatisfied worker's health deteriorates faster than the health of a satisfied worker. The findings from a meta-analysis indicated the association of job dissatisfaction with mental health problems such as anxiety, burnout, depression, and low self-esteem, as well as physical health problems including coronary heart disease (CHD) and mortality from CHD (Tatsuse & Sekine, 2011). However, the associations of job satisfaction with physical health remain inconclusive (Tatsuse & Sekine, 2011). According to Al-Zoubi (2012), higher job satisfaction equates to a healthier and improved quality of life, and possibly higher productivity and performance. For this reason, in order to improve workers job satisfaction, organizations may need to

identify which aspects of the job have more influence over workers job satisfaction (Edmans, 2012; Tatsuse & Sekine, 2011).

A study conducted in the German hospitality industry with 101 workers to assess leadership influence (transformational, transactional, and non-leadership behavior) on employee job satisfaction utilizing Bass's (1985) full range leadership model, surveys, correlation analysis, multiple regression analysis, and MANOVA (Rothfelder, Ottenbacher, & Harrington, 2012). The researchers found a positive association between employee job satisfaction and leadership behavior (Rothfelder et al., 2012). The researchers noted that transformational leadership behavior had the greatest impact on employee job satisfaction compared to the transactional and non-leadership behavior (Rothfelder et al., 2012). For this reason, the researchers concluded that the most appropriate behavior for positively influencing employee job satisfaction was transformational (Rothfelder et al., 2012). However, the researchers stressed the importance of establishing structure within the organizations that these leadership behaviors become part of the organizations foundation (Rothfelder et al., 2012).

The above study reflects that in service industries the employees in direct contact with customers represent the organization and *transmit* the service (Garcia, Varela, & Del Rio, 2011). In this sense, the abilities, attitudes, and behavior of workers have become the very cornerstone of the organization (Gallardo et al., 2010). Therefore, it is beneficial for organizations to concentrate on improving employee job satisfaction in order to guarantee service quality and increase the organization's bottom line (Gallardo et al., 2010). Equally important, it is also advantageous to concentrate on the organizational antecedents as a

way of favoring job satisfaction in order to enhance services provided to customers (Garcia et al., 2011; He, Murrmann, & Perdue, 2010).

If individuals' jobs were like an open book, employers would probably find that they have strong views about how they feel, how they intend to behave, and what they believe (Mofoluwake & Oluremi, 2013). Recognizing that individuals spend approximately one-third of their lifetime at the workplace and that what they do to make a living symbolizes a central aspect of how they think of themselves, such strong feelings should not be shocking (Mofoluwake & Oluremi, 2013). The diverse opinions individuals hold towards their profession referred to as job satisfaction is either an optimistic or a pessimistic outlook towards their job (Mofoluwake & Oluremi, 2013). All facets of a particular occupation, good or bad, positive or negative, are likely to contribute to the development of feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Mofoluwake & Oluremi, 2013). Nonetheless, some employers are more likely to have a dedicated workforce when workers are satisfied with family-friendly programs than when employers oppose these work-life programs. Therefore, commitment is likely to increase as these programs enhance in ways that improve worker's satisfaction (Caliller, 2012).

### **Employee Absenteeism**

Absenteeism and turnover relate to *withdrawal behaviors* because they represent some physical removal from the workplace, which affects the organizations' bottom line in the billions per year (Avery, Volpone, McKay, King, & Wilson, 2012; Berry, Lelchook, & Clark, 2012). Withdrawal behaviors refer to a set of attitudes and behaviors exhibited by employees when working in a position, but for some reason decide to be less

participative (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Even-Zohar, 2011; Sliter, Sliter, & Jex, 2012).

However, in an organization, there is nothing more crucial than fitting the right employee in the right position (Kumar, 2013). The success or failure of an organization depends for the most part on how well employees perform their jobs using the available resources (Ezirim, Nwibere, & Emecheta, 2010). The inability of employers to satisfy the needs or expectations of employees may result in frustration leading to low productivity, high labor turnover, loss of skillful people, and absenteeism (Ezirim et al., 2010).

An employee not reporting to work when scheduled is a critical human capital risk. As a result, an employee can only contribute to the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives when he or she is present at work (Ejere, 2010). Consequently, absenteeism negates the goal of productivity improvement as it translates to lost productivity (Ejere, 2010; Waldmann & Sowada, 2012; Ybema, Smulders, & Bongers, 2010). Likewise, when employees are absent, their day away from work not only affects business performance but also increases business risk and costs (Swart, 2010). Having qualified employees in attendance at work is crucial to keep business activities moving forward and on schedule (Swart, 2010). Nonetheless, whether scheduled or unscheduled, the most productive and reliable employees may sometimes miss work entirely (Ejere, 2010; Swart, 2010). The reasons for an employee absence can vary, including family emergencies, illness, transportation issues, or just wanting a day off from work (Lambert, Hogan, & Altheimer, 2010). Lambert et al. (2010) categorized specific reasons of being absent into unavoidable absenteeism and avoidable absenteeism. Unavoidable absenteeism is the result of conditions that are usually not



under the control of the employee (sickness, injury, or taking care of a sick family member). Avoidable absenteeism results from an employee deciding to be absent from work for inappropriate or even illegitimate reasons such as wanting the day off to attend a social event (Lambert et al., 2010). In addition, Lambert et al. (as cited by Lach, 1999) mentioned that approximately 60% of absences fall into the unavoidable category and the other 40% are avoidable absences.

Employers are reflecting on policies concerning absenteeism because the costs and organizational problems resulting from an increase in the number of absences are obvious incentives to do so (Bierlaa, Huverb, & Richard, 2013; Steensma, 2011). Work absenteeism is also a leading problem in educational organizations (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Ishan, 2013). In the United States, the District Management Council in 2004 reported that teachers nationwide were absent from the workplace on an average of two weeks each year due to sickness, personal days, and other excused absences such as staff development (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Ishan, 2013). As a result of absenteeism, districts end up paying for substitute salaries, recruiting, administrative tasks, and absent teacher salaries, which costs the United States approximately \$2 billion per year (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Ishan, 2013).

According to Miller (2012), a study conducted by researchers from the Center for American Progress (CAP) in 2011 revealed that up to 40% of teachers in Camden, New Jersey public schools were absent from the classroom. This figure differs sharply from the 3% national rate of absence for fulltime wage and salaried American workers, and the 5.3% rate of absence for American teachers overall (Miller, 2012). The researchers found

that out of the 56,837 schools analyzed in the dataset, 36% of teachers nationally were absent more than 10 days during the 2009-2010 school year (Miller, 2012). The percentages reported by each school ranged from 0 % to 100%, with 62% of the variation in the measure occurring between districts and a third occurring within districts (Miller, 2012). The researchers noted that the latter statistic is important because all schools within a given district operate under similar policies and absenteeism levels above a district average may be a sign of a dysfunctional professional culture at the building level (Miller, 2012). Overall, the purpose of the CAP report was to draw attention to teacher' absenteeism happening in schools because of the costs financially and academically (Miller, 2012). Understanding and better predicting absenteeism can benefit schools by allowing management to identify potential absenteeism antecedents, intervene early, and prevent progressive forms of withdrawal (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Even-Zohar, 2011).

Whether absences are scheduled or unscheduled, the financial impact on an organization can include diminished profit margins from having to approve overtime or hire temporary personnel to meet business deadlines (Bukchin & Cohen, 2013; Leung, Chan, & Chen, 2012; Swart, 2010). Senel and Senel (2012) noted that absenteeism is one of the greatest expenses organizations pay, representing about 57% of total value of services and goods produced. The indirect costs of absenteeism is in terms of failure to meet organizational performance objectives, scheduling, poor customer service, reduced productivity, decreased morale, loss of skills and proficiency, and increased turnover, all of which may far exceed the direct cost of employee absences (Lambert et al., 2010; Senel & Senel, 2012; Swart, 2010). The direct costs of absenteeism include disability

benefits (paid by the employer or an insurance carrier) and overtime pay to cover employees who are absent (coworkers or temporary workers), sick, or take a vacation pay (Lambert et al., 2010). The indirect costs often exceed the direct cost of absenteeism (Prater & Smith, 2011). According to Biron and Bamberger (2012), absenteeism cost the United States \$225.8 billion each year in productivity losses. In Great Britain, approximately 175 million work days are lost due to absenteeism, costing the economy 32.8 billion euros per year, and costing organizations 841 euros per employee each year (Baker-McClearn, Greasley, Dale, & Griffith, 2010; Frooman, Mendelson, & Murphy, 2012). In the Netherlands, the estimated amount lost per employee each year is at 1,268 euros (Frooman et al., 2012). Obviously, managing employee absenteeism is crucial to all employers attempting to survive in an increasingly competitive business environment (Frooman et al., 2012).

Conversely, reductions in absenteeism can even generate impressive cost savings for organizations. For example, Prudential Insurance Company saved \$80,000 in annual absenteeism costs following the introduction of a backup day care facility (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2009). Furthermore, a study conducted in Canada on hospital workers revealed that a 0.81 decrease in annual absenteeism reduced organizational payouts by approximately \$42,980 (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2009). In contrast, in Canada, each time an employee is absent, the organization loses an average of \$2,500 daily, which includes both direct and indirect costs (Prater & Smith, 2011). Therefore, as highlighted, the cost of absenteeism is significant to organizations and is therefore a logical target for organizational intervention (Mayfield & Mayfield, 2009).

Gosselin, Lemyre, and Corneil (2013) noted that there is a universal agreement on the meaning of absenteeism as being a lack of physical presence at a setting where a person ought to be. However, even with the interest and development of intervention strategies, absenteeism remains a problem in many organizations globally (Bacharach, Bamberger, & Biron, 2010; De Paola, 2010).

Researchers have proposed a number of explanatory theories and alternatives to define the scope of absenteeism behavior at work (Laaksonen, Pitläniemi, Tahkonen, & Lahelma, 2010). The majority of researchers employed the decision choice paradigm (Gosselin, Lemyre, & Corneil, 2013), selecting different ways in an effort to describe this behavior (e.g., adjustment-to-work model, conflict model withdrawal model) in addition to employing some integrated models (e.g., Brooke and Price model of absenteeism, Nicholson attendance motivation model, and Steers and Rhode model) to account for the determining factors of absenteeism and their connections (Gosselin et al., 2013). According to Gosselin et al. (2013), the five absenteeism determinants that capture researcher's attention are the decision process itself, personality, social context, socio-demographical indicators, and workplace behavior. Although various models have successfully described absenteeism behavior, many of these models are limited because of their predictive capacity (Gosselin et al., 2013).

Absenteeism is prevalent in different industries and countries. For example, Belita, Mbindyo, and English (2013) articulated that different factors influence healthcare workers' absenteeism including workplace and content, personal, organizational, and cultural factors. Salehi-Sichani, Lee, and Robinson-Fayek (2011) noted that the levels of

absenteeism increased over the years in the construction business (8.6% in 2006, 9.3% in 2007, and 8.5% in 2008). Furthermore, studies conducted in Bangladesh, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, and Uganda showed that absenteeism rates among teacher were between 11% and 27% (Ejere, 2010). In Kenya, reports revealed that 20% of teachers were absent during work hours, while in Uganda, the rates of teachers' absenteeism in 2002 and in 2007 were 27% and 20% respectively. Currently, approximately 20% of the teaching workforce in Nigeria are absent on a given work day (Ejere, 2010). Additionally, researchers from the Direct Health Services in Australia conducted a study in 2008 on absenteeism found that the average worker takes about 8.62 days off per year in addition to their authorized time off (Emery, 2010). The researchers revealed that approximately 28% of the 183 participants surveyed indicated that absenteeism increased in 2007 compared with 18% who said that it decreased. Equally important, 62.5% of manufacturing and construction participants noted an increase of 40.6% in government and public service where the average was 10.8% days per year (Emery, 2010). The researchers concluded that the cost of absenteeism was \$354 per person per day, which is \$26.6 billion in lost productivity for the Australian economy each year (Emery, 2010).

Overall, researchers contributed to the body of knowledge on absenteeism; however, there are still unknown factors that inhibit a comprehensive understanding of absenteeism and its reduction (Salehi-Sichani, Lee, & Robinson-Fayek, 2011). Since it is impracticable to do away with absenteeism in the workplace, then the only doable option is to handle it effectively in such a way as to keep it low and make it less disruptive to organizational life (Ejere, 2010).

## **Employee Turnover**

Since the beginning of the 20th century, how and why people quit jobs has intrigued practitioners and scholars (Hom, 2011). Nonetheless, in the 21st century, turnover continues to draw attention globally (Hom, 2011). The issue of employee turnover is one of the more frequently examined in the field of management because of its negative influences on organizational climate and performance (Song, Martens, McCharen, & Ausburn, 2011). Turnover incurs financial costs (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010; Johansen, 2013), increases accident rates (Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012), reduces quality, and disrupts operations (Hancock, Allen, Bosco, McDaniel, & Pearce, 2013).

Teaching may be the most scrutinized occupation in the economy (Staiger & Rockoff, 2010). It is a demanding occupation, at any level, within any content area (Kitchel, Smith, Henry, Robinson, Lawver, Park, & Schell, 2012). This is partially a result of high expectations in relation to deadlines imposed to increase student learning as well as to national and state standards (Kitchel et al., 2012; Tingle et al., 2012). In education, issues of educator's turnover and job satisfaction have also held a continuous focus of study because of similar adverse impacts to the education system (Song et al., 2011). In this sense, job turnover and dissatisfaction among educators are particularly significant because these factors affect not only individual educators' careers but also the broader school community (Renzulli, Parrott, & Beattie, 2011). As organizations, schools are specifically reliant on a positive sense of community among families, educators, and pupils for successful functioning (Renzulli et al., 2011).

Yesil Dagli (2012) noted a dramatic increase in the percent of educators who either transferred to other schools or left the educational industry entirely to pursue other professions in recent years. For this reason, one of the most serious issues in education is the problem of teacher turnover in the K-12 school system (Kloss, 2012). According to researchers from the National Commission on Teaching and Americas Future (NCTAF), annual teacher turnover rates for the past 15 years reached approximately 17% across the United States (Yesil Dagli, 2012). Equally important, the estimated cost of turnover in public schools is over \$7.3 billion a year (Fall, 2010; Yesil Dagli, 2012). To a certain degree, the perception of turnover in schools is both constructive and inevitable; however, the exodus of large numbers of educators has negative consequences for both districts and students (Fall, 2010). The negative consequences include but not limited to a decline of organizational stability, diminished teaching quality, uncertified teachers, shortages of qualified teachers, and substantial financial costs associated with recruiting and hiring (Fall, 2010). Equally important, educator's turnover rate can be high, particularly in schools serving low income, nonwhite, and low achieving student populations (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2012).

Researchers from the National Center on School Choice conducted a study on how teacher turnover differs between charter schools and traditional public schools (Stuit & Smith, 2010) by using data from the national center for education statistics (NCES), schools and staffing survey (SASS), and the teacher follow up survey (TFS) from 2003-2004. The researchers found that 14% of teachers in charter schools left the profession, and 11% moved to different schools, while 7% of teachers in public schools left the

profession, and 7% transferred to new schools (Stuit & Smith, 2010). Furthermore, by using multinomial logistic regression, the researchers found that the odds of teachers from charter schools leaving the profession as opposed to staying in the same school were 132% greater than teachers from public schools (Stuit & Smith, 2010). Equally important, there was not a significant difference in turnover between new charter schools and those operating more than three years (Stuit & Smith, 2010). However, 47% of teacher turnover in charter schools was because of dissatisfaction with workplace conditions and poor administrator support (Stuit & Smith, 2010). The researchers conveyed that the data revealed very little evidence to the claim that the turnover is higher in charter schools. However, they did mention that most of the turnover in charter schools was voluntary by educators and detrimental to the school (dysfunctional), rather than beneficial (functional) to the school (Stuit & Smith, 2010). Most importantly, the researchers did articulate that the organizational disruption triggered by high levels of dysfunctional turnover could create challenges for some charter schools to sustain high levels of instructional quality each year (Stuit & Smith, 2010).

Ronfeldt et al. (2012) conducted an 8-year study to understand the impact of educators' turnover on students' achievement. The researchers utilized regression models to estimate the effects of educator's turnover on over 850,000 New York City fourth and fifth grade students (Ronfeldt et al., 2012). The researchers found that students in grade levels with a higher educator turnover scored lower in both math and English language arts (ELA). Furthermore, the researchers mentioned that the impact of educator's turnover was particularly strong in schools with more low performing and black students.



Overall, the results imply the effect of troublesome turnover beyond changing the distribution in educator quality (Ronfeldt et al., 2012).

Marinell and Coca (2013) conducted a 3-year investigation on teacher turnover to understand the factors that contribute to individuals' decisions whether to stay or leave a school, where to go if they leave, and how their perceptions of their work environment influenced those decisions. Analyzing data obtained from the New York City Department of Education, human resource professionals revealed that 27% of teachers from middle school left their schools within a year of employment, 55% left within three years, and 66% departed within five years (Marinell & Coca, 2013). Furthermore, the researchers found that between 2002 and 2009, 59% of educators left the system completely and 41% transitioned to different schools (Marinell & Coca, 2013). The researchers noted that some amount of teacher turnover is beneficial because it could bring new innovative ideas, vitality, and talent to schools. However, turnover may compromise the continuity of relationships between teachers, students, parents, administrators, and staff (Fall, 2010; Marinell & Coca, 2013; Yesil Dagli, 2012). Overall, the findings indicate that turnover may be creating chronic instability making it hard to establish a consistent, constructive school culture more challenging in many of New York City schools (Marinell & Coca, 2013).

A traditional assumption in turnover research is that turnover is a significant business problem, therefore; organizational leaders should develop ways to reduce turnover (Yongbeom, 2013). The Bureau of Labor Statistics data revealed that annual turnover rates in the U.S. ranged between 40% and 50% during the decade of the 2000s

(Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010). Furthermore, voluntary turnover rates, reflecting those who left, ranged from 17% to 28%; whereas involuntary turnover, including those discharged and laid off, varied from 16% to 19% (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010). In addition, the remaining 3% to 4% of turnover contributed to death, disability, retirement, and transfer (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010). Most important, in 2009, involuntary turnover rate exceeded the voluntary turnover rate. However, when comparing 2001 and 2009 voluntary turnover rates, researchers found a 39% drop across the period (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010). There emerges a current decade long range of combined or collective turnover in the United States for all industries of 36% and 51% (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2010).

Long, Perumal, and Ajagbe (2012) noted that high turnover can be detrimental to organizations' productivity because when proficient workers leave the remaining population contains a high number of unskilled workers. James and Mathew (2012) mentioned that the cause of turnover varies from external environmental factors (economy) to the organizational variables (benefits, location, occupation, organization size, payment, selection process, supervisory level, promotions and growth, and the work environment).

Employee turnover is a problem that organizations cannot disregard because of the negative impact it has on finances, morale, relationships, and the quality of products and services that organizations provide (Abii, Ogula, & Rose, 2013; Wang & Yi, 2011). Researchers from the Australian Human Resources Institute conducted a study in 2008 on the turnover rates within Australian businesses. The researchers found that turnover rates

increased from 12.6% in 2006 to 18.5% in 2007. By calculating the costs of replacing employees (150% of salary), the researchers estimated that Australian businesses are losing \$20 billion dollars a year from turnover (Emery, 2010). Equally important, over 95% of surveyed respondents stated that turnover has a negative effect on businesses. Furthermore, results from a survey distributed by Mercer Human Resource Consulting indicated that 25% of Australians and New Zealanders (Maori or Pakeha) workers planned to look for a new employment, 70% of organizations indicated that employee turnover had a negative impact, 70% reported having problems replacing employees, and 50% experienced problems with employee retention (Babatunde & Laoye, 2011). In addition, the results from a comprehensive analysis conducted by researchers at the Saratoga Institute in California revealed that for 88% of the 19,700 leaving and current voluntary turnover was not because of money only (Chat-Uthai, 2013). Additionally, researchers from the National Institute of Development Administration in Taiwan conducted a longitudinal study in 2012 on the predictors of turnover. The researchers found that 31.5% of workers left because of a lack of promotional opportunities or career advancement, 1.7% because of a lack of job security, 20.2% because of a lack of job fit, 7.7% due to no scheduling flexibility, and 16.5% because of the general work environment (Chat-Uthai, 2013). However, the researchers noted that benefits and pay were the second most common reason, but only 22.4% of surveyed respondents mentioned it (Chat-Uthai, 2013).

The above results are just an indication that employee turnover results in tangible and intangible costs and a loss of social capital, which may be critical to organizational

success (Choi-Sang, Musibau-Akintunde, Khalil, & Ebi- Shahrin, 2012; Lambert et al., 2010; Maertz & Boyar, 2012). In human resources context, turnover is the rate at which an employer gains and misplaces workers or how long the worker tends to stay in a particular organization (Choi-Sang et al., 2012).

Not everyone follows the traditional path to leaving employment though. Allen et al. (2010) mentioned that scholars could use the *unfolding model* to identify paths to turnover (expected, unexpected, job-related, non-job related, positive, neutral, and negative) and that these paths to turnover occur because of a shock (leave because of some kind of precipitating event). In this manner, shock can be expected (e.g., graduating from college) or unexpected (being mistreated by a supervisor), job-related (e.g., not receiving a salary increase) or non-job related (e.g., partner offered the opportunity to work aboard), positive (e.g., receiving an employment offer), neutral (e.g., a merger or acquisition announcement), and negative (e.g., receiving a bad performance review). The unfolding model is useful in describing how individuals take different psychological paths in making decisions to leave their employer (Diestal & Schmidt, 2010). The central contribution of this approach is that it shifted theorizing from an assumption that turnover is always an evaluative and rational process to a broader model of how individuals make their decisions (Diestal & Schmidt, 2010). This examination showed that although some decisions to quit are probably quite consistent with standards of expected-value rationality, more intuitive or routinized decision processes drive a great many others (Diestal & Schmidt, 2010).

Researchers (Allen et al., 2010; Hee & Ling, 2011; Song & Naimi, 2012) have also offered important suggestions for management at the level of certain practices to reduce turnover such as: (a) interview applicants carefully to make certain that they fit well with the organization culture, coworkers, and managers; (b) be attentive to employees' personal needs by offering flexibility whenever possible; (c) strengthen employees' engagement by offering training and development opportunities with room to advance; and (d) institute new hire socialization programs where experienced organization insiders are role models, coaches, and mentors. However, according to Allen et al. (2010), investing significant resources in retention initiatives without actually understanding the nature of turnover in a particular setting is unlikely to maximize the return on these investments. Allen et al. conveyed that effective evidence-based management requires combining numerous sources of data within a specific context. They emphasized that designing a strategic, evidence-based approach to address turnover involves having the capability to identify the extent to which turnover is a problem and adapt an understanding of underlying retention principles to a particular organizational context (Allen et al., 2010).

Frequently, employers view involuntary and voluntary employee turnover in the same way. In some cases, turnover might influence profits and organizational goals and objectives positively (Wallace & Gaylor, 2012). Nonetheless, depending on the reason of the separation researchers categorize turnover as functional or dysfunctional (Direnzo & Greenhaus, 2011; Dong, Mitchell, Lee, Holtom & Hinkin, 2012). Functional employee turnover is the replacement of low performing employees for high performing employee,

and dysfunctional turnover is the opposite, affecting the remaining employees to pick up the slack (Wallace & Gaylor, 2012).

When evaluating the impact of employee turnover, the focus is usually on how it affects organizational performance (Wallace & Gaylor, 2012). In general, the evaluation of costs associated with employee turnover such as advertisement, lost productivity, recruitment, and training of new hires (Babatunde & Laoye, 2011) are the reasons as to why employers invest in employee retention programs (Wallace & Gaylor, 2012). Nonetheless, before investing in retention programs, human resource managers must evaluate the current situation and assess the turnover rate in their organizations. In addition, they need to calculate the turnover by dividing the number of annual terminations by the average number of employees in their workforce (Wallace & Gaylor, 2012). Wallace and Gaylor (2012) noted that employers should anticipate turnover regardless of the retention programs implemented because of the changing workforce culture. Overall, employee turnover does not always affect an organization negatively; it can be beneficial. For example, it can allow the organization to hire new employees with current training, contribute to positive outcomes such as adaptability, flexibility, higher quality, innovation, less expensive replacements, and opportunities to promote a talented high performer (Iqbal, 2010). Therefore, the nature of an existing employee departure determines the type of employee turnover experienced (Wallace & Gaylor, 2012).

Some theoretical models developers propose that turnover could offer the chance to comprehend the main and compelling motives of why employees decide to remain

with an organization, with a serious focus on the factors that provide the most credibility to retention (Pomaki, DeLongis, Frey, Short, & Woehrle, 2010).

### **Employee Retention**

The keyword in terms of human resource management is retention; this means continuation, holding, maintaining, preventing from leaving, and securing employees in a company (Yamamoto, 2011). In the retention concept, employers are the important players and retention is a specific administrative management issue (Yamamoto, 2011). The success or failure of an organization greatly depends on its human capital (Kehoe & Wright, 2013). In this sense, an organization's human capital is the stock of expertise, knowledge, and innovative capacity, which is the driving force behind remaining competitive and creating financial stability within the business environment (Jehanzeb, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2013). Therefore, to retain skillful workers, employers should be mindful about the organizational commitment and retention of their employees (Jehanzeb et al., 2013). Numerous employers have made the mistake of thinking that employees are merely looking for economic benefits from their jobs. This perception ignores the high importance that many employees reside on the essential advantages of their careers (Jehanzeb et al., 2013).

The retention of educators is a problem in the United States as well as internationally (Corbella, Osborne, & Reiman, 2010; Taylor, 2013). Approximately one third of all beginning teachers leave the profession within their first three years of teaching, which increases to around 50% after the first five years of teaching (Ado, 2013; Corbella et al., 2010; Martinez, Frick, Kim, & Fried, 2010). Nations globally provide

education for their citizens through school systems; however, there remains a shortage of educators worldwide, which is a challenge for some schools (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012). Concern for establishing a stable educational labor force with an adequate supply of educators has existed throughout the history of education in the United States (Gardner, 2010). Fear of not meeting this objective continues, as many analysts warn of a present or looming educator shortage (Gardner, 2010). Education helps societies through aiding economic growth and building human capital (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012). Therefore, a shortage of educators poses a threat to learning outcomes over the longer term (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012). There are many challenges that educators face today to facilitate the academic success of students in addition to meeting federal and state accountability standards (Taylor, 2013). For this reason, having competence and resiliency are needed in order for educators to deal with the challenges and remain in the education profession (Taylor, 2013).

Current education policy discussions often emphasize the significance of educators and the need to improve the quality of education (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, & Wyckoff, 2011). In order to achieve and maintain a robust workforce, schools need to attract high quality educators, select the best from the pool of candidates available, and retain those who are particularly effective (Boyd et al., 2011). In other words, educational institutions' success depends on their ability to attract, recruit, and retain high quality educators (Ado, 2013; Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012).

Both district and school leaders continuously recruit gifted and smart new educators while continually making efforts to retain existing productive faculty members



(Ado, 2013; Egalite, Jensen, Stewart, & Wolf, 2014). Faced with the challenge of raising educator quality in a cost effective manner, administrators, district officials, policymakers, and principals may turn to studies to determine how they can best recruit high quality educators and strategically retain the most effective individuals while improving current educators' skills (Egalite et al., 2014). People enter the educational field for a variety of reasons such as the benefits of teaching, intrinsic value of helping students, salary, vacation time, and working conditions (Hughes, 2012). Nonetheless, once in the workforce, educators continue to weigh the benefits of teaching compared with other employment opportunities with a new understanding of the working conditions in teaching (Hughes, 2012). Furthermore, transferring to different schools or leaving the teaching profession is greater among educators than other professions. In addition, the explanations for the problems of recruitment within public schools are not because of increased student enrollments and educator retirement but because of organizational characteristics, which are contributing factors to the problem of retention of educators (Hughes, 2012).

Gardner (2010) conducted a study to construct a profile of K-12 educators in the United States in order to develop a model to predict their attrition, retention, and turnover. The data (Schools and Staffing Survey) came from 47,857 public and private school teachers, including 1,903 music teachers. The researcher analyzed the data by using comparative statistics, factor analysis, logistic regression, and structural equation modeling (Gardner, 2010). The researcher found that 1,903 music educators were far more likely than other types of educators to hold itinerant or part time positions.

Furthermore, the researcher found that the music educators did not receive support when working with special needs students. In addition, the researcher noted that some educators left the teaching profession for better benefits and pay, and were more satisfied in their new field of work. However, the educators who perceived levels of administrative support had the most satisfaction and retention (Gardner, 2010).

Hughes (2012) conducted a study with educators in the southeast of the United States utilizing block entry logistic regression analysis to explore the potential relationships of teachers' characteristics, school characteristics, organizational characteristics, and teacher efficacy with retention of teachers. The participants were 782 educators from 37 elementary schools, 20 junior high schools, and 13 high schools (Hughes, 2012). The researcher found that the tolerance statistics were all greater than .01 and ranged from .47 to .93, and the variance inflation factors were all below 10 and ranged from 1.08 to 2.13. Furthermore, the researcher mentioned that 83.5% (653) planned to continue teaching until retirement, 6.91% (54) selected to advance their career within education, 3.58% (28) decided to pursue a career outside of education, 3.58% (28) left to take care of family, and 2.43%(19) left because of personal reasons (Hughes, 2012). In addition, the researcher found that 129 participants who planned to leave prior to retirement, 13.95% (18) decided that they would return to teaching, 29.46% (38) decided not to return, 50.39% (65) were unsure if they would return, and 6.20% (8) did not respond to the questions (Hughes, 2012). The researcher noted that the data revealed the need for organizational improvements. For that reason, the researcher recommended that the leaders of the schools that participated in the study and those leaders who are

interested in improving retention rates consider increasing salaries, reducing the workloads of their educators, and striving to improve students' and parents' participation levels (Hughes, 2012).

The results from the above studies are an indication that retention of key personnel remains an issue for organizations (Chen, Ployhart, Thomas, Anderson, & Bliese, 2011), and the importance was on the selection process in general and the interviewing process in particular, in order to select the highest quality employees (Self & Dewald, 2011). As a result of increased competition, employers become dependent on their top workers to be successful in adjusting to market changes. However, these same changes may at the same time result in job dissatisfaction among key workers (Chen et al., 2011). Replacing human capital is expensive to organizations because of the process of hiring, training, and developing, which incur costs (James & Mathew, 2012). Unfortunately, the organizations' productivity could decrease because of the time it takes to replace skillful workers, which affects the organization's bottom line (James & Mathew, 2012; Wallace & Gaylor, 2012).

Retaining employees requires effective retention management, which is an ongoing analysis of the cause and effects of turnover (Allen et al., 2010). Retention management in general focuses on voluntary turnover because these individuals are often workers the organization would prefer to retain (Allen et al., 2010). In other words, this is a strategic approach to appropriately target, determine, develop, and apply human capital retention initiatives to impact organizational success (Allen et al., 2010). Employee retention is beneficial for employee and employers alike (James & Mathew, 2012).

Therefore, it is the responsibility of employers to retain their best workers. If not, employers take the risk of losing talented and professional workers (James & Mathew, 2012).

Retention protects the organization's investment in human resources. Indeed, for many organizations, human assets are as important, if not more important, than physical assets (Shore, 2013). Notably, human assets are a good source of competitiveness, essential factor in redesigning business, and a significant contributor to profitability (Shore, 2013). Yamamoto (2011) argued that if high performing employees leave voluntarily, this might increase short-term costs such as the capital used on hiring, training of new hires, and personnel restructuring. Additionally, if the overall work assignments stay the same, the short-term burden on the remaining workers will intensify and is likely to have a negative impact on their motivation (Yamamoto, 2011). However, in the end, the organization-specific knowledge, skills, and expertise that longtime workers possess are no longer available when the individual leaves the organization (Ratna & Chawla, 2012). In this sense, retention of employees, especially the high performers, is a significant issue for organizations (Yamamoto, 2011).

Kuslivan, Kuslivan, Ilhan, and Buyruk (2010) articulated that workers are crucial determinants of service quality, competitive advantage, organizational performance, customer satisfaction, and loyalty. Therefore, hiring knowledgeable people for the job is essential for an employer. However, retention is even more important than hiring. In today's business environment, it becomes very critical for establishments to retain their employees (Ratna & Chawla, 2012). It is not only the cost incurred but also the need to

retain proficient employees from being enticed. The process of employee retention will benefit an organization as the cost of employee turnover adds hundreds of thousands of dollars to a company's expenses (Ratna & Chawla, 2012).

The major challenge for employers in managing retention of their workers is the fact that workers motivation differ by different factors relative to their desire to stay with an organization (Iqbal, 2010). For that reason, employers must ensure that the design of their retention programs focuses on the needs of the employees targeted for retention (Iqbal, 2010). Nonetheless, employers are taking the initiative to implement retention strategies such as annual performance appraisal, career planning, financial support, flexible work time, mentoring and coaching sessions, on-site day care facilities, rewards and recognition, stock investment opportunities, training, and development opportunities (James & Mathew, 2012). Furthermore, other employers offer job customization and job redesign; new compensation plans and strengthening of social ties (Iqbal, 2010), and buses to take employees to and from work (Daniel, 2010). In addition, some employers implement policies that help demonstrate confidence in their workers' day-to-day activities and practices that view workers as friends and partners in progress of the organization (Ramlall, 2004). Additionally, some offer half-pay holidays, professional development leave, work-life balance agreements, and work shadowing (Belbin, Erwee, & Wiesner, 2012).

However, with the current economic downturn, organizations across sectors had to significantly tighten budgets and find ways to reduce costs (Wells, 2011). Consequently, the value of program evaluation becomes clear at precisely this point when

organizations place increasing value on productivity and cost-savings and challenge work-family experts to identify which work-family programs are most likely to result in cost containments such as absenteeism and reduced turnover (Wells, 2011). Furthermore, this assessment can help organizations determine what is working, what needs to change, and how the programs affect employee well-being and productivity. Evaluating a program's impact against a program's objectives can be as simple as asking employees what they think, or it could be a more sophisticated, in-depth survey (Neely, 2012).

### **Family-Friendly Policies and Programs**

Reactions to work and family demands vary among individuals across nations and continents (Chandra, 2012). The different levels of economic development and global competition, together with the rapid advances in technology and changes in the family as an institution, are impinging upon and impacting the *time money squeeze* between family responsibilities and the demands of work (Chandra, 2012). The reality of working life today is that workers are continuously trying to manage their work and personal lives. In their effort to balance both, it is often the influence or the interference of one on the other that leads to positive or negative *spillover* (Bell, Rajendran, & Theiler, 2012).

Family-friendly, or work-family, practices have come to the forefront of employment policies in many countries in the past decade (Wood & de Menezes, 2010). The focus at work and in the family was normally on paternity leave and other ways of helping parents become more involved with their children as well as helping employees with elder care obligations (Wood & de Menezes, 2010). Nonetheless, the social trends behind these growing concerns include the ageing population, demands for equal opportunity, higher

contribution of women in the labor force, increase in single parent households, and the demand for a better work-life balance (Wood & de Menezes, 2010). Currently, there is a heightened concern for health issues and the well-being of the population, which has intensified the interest in a suitable balance between work and non-work (Wood & de Menezes, 2010).

There can be a range of work factors that could affect an individual's capability to cope with life's activities such as ineffective employment policies, long working hours, low pay, and pressurized work environment (Madipelli et al., 2013). Unfortunately, incidences do happen regardless of the cultural and geographical circumstances (Ziegert, 2011), which can influence the balance between both work and life domains. The challenges of integrating work and family life is a part of everyday reality for the majority of employees (Kar & Misra, 2013; Smith, 2010). However, one of the major causes of work and family stress has to do with individuals not having sufficient time to dedicate to both domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Nonetheless, some employees still work extremely hard to balance the demands of work while meeting the commitments of family life (Kar & Misra, 2013).

The issue of WLB is so significant that organizations have introduced measures to improve the effect of an imbalance on work and life (Moon & Jongho, 2010). More and more employees are expressing severe anxiety over the amount of work and the pressures that accompany those workloads and the quality of time spent with family (Kim & Wiggins, 2011). Researchers (Bilal, Rehman, & Raza, 2010; Downes & Koekemoer, 2011; Lee & Hong, 2011; Wang, Lawler, & Shi, 2011) disclosed the benefits of

implementing family-friendly policies and programs in organizations that might address employees work-life balance, morale and retention, job satisfaction, and productivity. For example, health care costs in the United States have been rising rapidly and employers are responsible for a growing proportion of these expenses (Kaspin, Gorman, & Miller, 2013). Therefore, to address the rising cost, employers take steps in prioritizing their workers' health (Kaspin et al., 2013). For this reason, employers have sponsored wellness programs as an approach to improve the health of their workforce (Kaspin et al., 2013). Baicker, Cutler, and Song (2010) conducted a critical meta-analysis on the cost and saving associated with organizations wellness programs. The researchers found that medical costs fell by approximately \$3.27 for every dollar spent on wellness programs and absenteeism cost fell by \$2.73 for every dollar spent (Baicker et al., 2010). The researchers noted that the return on investment suggests that the wider adoption of wellness programs might prove beneficial for organizations' budgets and productivity (Baicker et al., 2010).

Organizational wellness programs are widespread in the business environment, where approximately 90% of large organizations offer at least one type of wellness program such as behavioral health, health risk management, and lifestyle management (Naidu & Ramesh, 2011). Even small organizations (three to 199 employees) have adopted wellness strategies (Neely, 2012). Approximately 65% of these companies offer at least one type of wellness program. The main reasons for offering a wellness program include improving employees' health, boosting employee morale, improving productivity, reducing absenteeism (Howard-Quartey, & Buenar-Puplampu, 2012;



Marzec et al., 2011; Neely, 2012), decreasing health care utilization (e.g., emergency room visits, hospitalizations), increasing worker's quality of life (Kaspin et al., 2013), and impacting the organizations bottom line positively (Benavides & David, 2010). Even though there may be several motives behind these policies and programs, the major reasons are to reduce work-family conflict, increase organizational commitment, and increase individual and organization performance (Wang, Lawler, & Shi, 2011).

Saleh, Alameddine, Hill, Darney-Beuhler, and Morgan (2010) conducted a four-year study on the cost-effectiveness of employer-based wellness programs of rural workers in upstate New York. The participants were from six organizations, which the researchers categorized into three groups: one control group and two intervention groups (Saleh et al., 2010). The control group consisted of 150 participants; the first intervention group (Trail Markers) had 323 and the second intervention group (Coaching and Referral) had 200 (Saleh et al., 2010). The 673 workers completed an annual health risk assessment (HRA) that addressed 16 wellness areas (aerobics, alcohol use, blood pressure, body composition, cancer, cholesterol levels, happiness, heart health, nutrition, safety, seat belt use, sick days, sleep, stress, and tobacco use). At the end of the four-year period, the researchers analyzed the health risk assessment (HRA) and the effectiveness data. The researchers found that the second invention group (Coaching and Referral) was the highest in strength of member participation and showed exceptional improvement in numerous wellness areas and in percentage of workers with good health indicators as compared to the first intervention group (Trail Marker) and the control group, which were the lower-intensity intervention groups (Saleh et al., 2010). Saleh et al. (2010) noted that

the rural organization wellness program show great potential in their usefulness, in addition to cost effectiveness. However, such a program should not be boring, too forceful, and expensive to produce favorable returns for organizations (Saleh et al., 2010).

Liu et al. (2013) examined the Pepsi Company health and wellness program to understand how it affected medical cost and utilization. The researchers analyzed three years of the company's health plan and program data (baseline data from 2002-2003 and intervention data from 2004-2007) of workers and their dependents between the ages of 19-64, a total sample of 55,030 participants (Liu et al., 2013). The researchers employed a multivariate regression model with an individual-level random effect to measure the impact of the program (Liu et al., 2013). The researchers found that, in the first year, the program association with a comparative increase in per member per month (PMPM) cost of \$66 ( $P < 0.01$ ), with a \$76 ( $P < 0.01$ ) decrease in PMPM costs and \$61 ( $P < 0.01$ ) in the second and third year (Liu et al., 2013). Furthermore, the researchers found that, over a three-year period, the program helped in reducing per member per month costs of \$38 ( $P < 0.01$ ), while decreasing emergency room visits by 50 per 1000 members ( $P < 0.01$ ), and a reduction ( $P < 0.01$ ) in hospital admissions by 16 per 1000 members (Liu et al., 2013). In addition, the case management increased PMPM costs by \$2795, and the disease management program reduced PMPM costs by \$154, but there were no significant effects observed for lifestyle management over the three years of the intervention period (Liu et al., 2013). Overall, the findings indicated the associations between cost increases and decreases, but most important, the findings emphasize the

importance of taking a long-term perspective when executing such programs and assessing their effectiveness (Liu et al., 2013).

The phrase *family-friendly policy* has increasingly become a widespread issue for a discussion (Subramaniam & Selvaratnam, 2010) and a new issue in human resource management (Moon & Jongho, 2010). These organizational policies help employees to carry out both work and family life responsibilities (Kang, 2013; Moon & Jongho, 2010), and many professionals refer to them using a wide variety of names, including family-supportive practices, work-family policies, and work-life balance policies (den Dulk & Groeneveld, 2012; Kim & Faerman, 2013). One of the reasons that family-friendly policies and programs are a significant topic in the human resource management is because of the dramatic changes in the workforce (Moon & Jongho, 2010). As a result, researchers have advocated the importance of family-friendly policies and programs over the years to help employees achieve balance between work and family life. The term work-family has changed to work-life balance (Kim & Wiggins, 2011).

The formulation and implementation of family-friendly policies and programs benefit both organizations and employees (Lee & Hong, 2011). From the employee perspective, family-friendly policies and programs can provide relief for non-work concerns through work flexibility. In contrast, from the organizational perspective family-friendly policies and programs benefit them in that the pressures of employees' personal life can directly affect their work performance, and employees who perceived their employers as unsupportive on family issues show higher degrees of stress (Lee & Hong, 2011). Organizations that have appropriate family-friendly policies are at an

advantage because their employees experience less hardship (Belwal & Belwal, 2014; Vuksan et al., 2012). Having family-friendly policies and other benefits in place also contributes to recruiting and the retention of employees (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011; Stout, Awad, & Guzmán, 2013; Vuksan et al., 2012). According to Vuksan et al. (2012), workers who place a great value on having access to these policies may decide to work for organizations that are *family-friendly*, and may take a pay cut in salary to do so. Aside from the organizations image, which is important for attracting workers, organizations that offer family-friendly policies receive recognition as to having highly motivated workers as well as lower employee turnover rates and less monetary losses than those that do not (Vuksan et al., 2012). Equally, important family-friendly programs may increase employees' opinions that they can use some influence over challenging work environments by enabling them to see their work environment as less intimidating (Wang et al., 2011).

According to Barney and Elias (2010), organizations within different industries favor eliminating fixed working hours in support of flexi-time or flexible work hours allowing workers to create their own work schedules. Eldridge and Tahir (2011) noted that flexi-time overtime has become a vital component of work-life balance packages designed for alleviating the problems of an inflexible working hour culture, with positive consequences for both employers and employees. In this sense, the concept of flexitime allows workers some freedom to select their work hours from the beginning to the end to serve their needs as well as the organization (Barney & Elias, 2010). Typically, a flexitime program will require workers to be present for a set time of the day, for instance,

9:00 am to 12:00 pm (Barney & Elias, 2010). Nonetheless, outside this time, workers have the liberty to decide when to arrive and leave from the workplace (Barney & Elias, 2010). Flexible work schedules are common in today's business environment (Bamberg, Dettmers, Funck, Krähe, & Vahle-Hinz, 2012). One form is on-call work, which ensures that an individual can be available at short notice (Bamberg et al., 2012). Being on call applies to various professions such as doctors and midwives who actually need to work at least to some extent on call, information technology (IT) professionals, and the mass media professionals for which being on call is a prerequisite (Bamberg et al., 2012). For employers and the clients, on-call work may be beneficial because it provides 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 52 weeks of non-stop service (Bamberg et al., 2012).

Organizations that offer flexible work schedules and arrangements and generous family-leave policies create an atmosphere of assurance that illustrates to employees that leadership does care about their well-being beyond their work scope (Baral & Bhargava, 2011). Flexibility is an omnibus word that includes numerous types of flexible work arrangements (Lyness, Gornick, Stone, & Grotto, 2012). In social science, flexibility refers to temporal arrangements of work such as job sharing, part-time work, and telecommuting from home (Lyness et al., 2012; Troup & Rose, 2012). In other words, flexible work arrangements refer to purposeful workplace options, formal or informal, that provide employees with choices over when, where, and how long they work which include flex-place, mobility, schedule flexibility, compressed workweeks, and virtual office (Berg, Kossek, Misra, & Belman, 2014; Carlson, Grzywacz, & Kacmar, 2010;

Eldridge & Tahir, 2011; Grawitch & Barber, 2010; Hill, Erickson, Holmes, & Ferris, 2010).

Galinsky, Sakai, and Wigton (2011) used the 2008 national study of the changing workforce data to explore 28 different aspects of workplace flexibility, which they grouped into five categories: choices in managing flexi-time and flex-place (traditional flexibility and daily flexibility), reduced time, time off, and culture of flexibility. The researchers found that that 62% of the participant's schedules and shifts met their needs and 37% have complete control over their schedules. Furthermore, 45% had control over when their workday begins and ends (traditional flextime), 84% were able to make short-notice changes to their schedules (daily flextime), 16% worked some regular paid hours at home, and 36% worked compressed workweek at times (Galinsky et al., 2011). In addition, 37% of full-time workers could arrange to work part time in the positions they held at the time, 92% of part-time worker were able to arrange to work full-time in their current position, and 23% could arrange to work part of the year (Galinsky et al., 2011). Additionally, 35% reported that was is not hard to take time off for family or personal matters, 62% indicated that they received five paid days for personal illness, and 48% for sick children; 53% could take time off for elder care without the fear of losing their income, and 70% could take time off without fear of losing their job (Galinsky et al., 2011). For the culture of flexibility, 58% strongly disagreed that they had to choose between advancing in the workplace and devoting attention to family and their personal life, whereas, 61% strongly disagreed that workers who inquire about flexibility will not

move up in the workplace or their careers, and 3% for supervisor support (Galinsky et al., 2011).

The flexibility for individuals to choose their work schedule, the choice to work from home, or having accessibility to child-care resources, may serve to boost their capability to perform work and family obligations and reduce conflict between their professional, personal, and family life (Wang et al., 2011). For example, work schedule flexibility has become a significant topic for both employers and employees in the United States pertaining to job negotiations (Nadler, Cundiff, Lowery, & Jackson, 2010; Troup & Rose, 2012). Furthermore, work schedule flexibility might affect the perception of an organization's attractiveness directly (Nadler et al., 2010). Equally important, work schedule flexibility is positively associated with employee commitment, job satisfaction, psychological health, and work-life balance (Hill et al., 2010; Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011; Nadler et al., 2010). In addition, it is a relatively low-cost organizational strategy for promoting employee satisfaction and the management of multiple family and work responsibilities (Jang, Zippay, & Park, 2012). In other words, schedule flexibility creates the opportunity to reduce work-family conflict, increase work-family enrichment, and enhances functioning performance at home and in the workplace (Carlson et al., 2010). Wadsworth, Facer, and Arbon (2010) conducted a study on alternate work schedules of city government human resource directors. The researchers found that HR directors perceived the availability of alternate work schedules positively contributed to workers morale and the promotion (by the agency) of workers, thus maintaining a healthy work-life balance (Wadsworth et al., 2010).

According to Wadsworth et al. (2010), alternative work schedules and compressed workweeks, such as a four day workweek to reduce energy costs for organizations or to decrease transportation and fuel costs for workers, were receiving a significant amount of media attention. Much of this attention is because of the state of Utah's push to move most of its workers to a four day workweek (Wadsworth et al., 2010). However, various media stories have also noted the use of alternative work schedules by local governments (Wadsworth et al., 2010). The use of alternative work schedules is not a new innovative idea, but a major movement that started in the 1970s (Wadsworth et al., 2010). In other words, alternative work schedules and compressed workweeks are trends that are the results of centuries of changing views regarding suitable work schedules (Wadsworth et al., 2010). Compressed workweeks (CWWs) allow employees to work a traditional full-time workweek in less than five workdays (Amendola, Weisburd, Hamilton, Jones, & Slipka, 2011). Many professions under the federal government are already under strict compressed workweeks including people working for the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (Amendola et al., 2011). For example, researchers from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) implemented a pilot program in 2010, called results-only work environment (ROWE) that allowed workers to work whenever and wherever they wanted, if they completed their job assignments (Boushey, 2011). The researchers found a greater satisfaction among workers; a shift in focus among both workers and employers on productivity instead of hours worked, and improved perception of leadership (Boushey, 2011).



Different types of organizations (government, nonprofit, private) have shifted to alternative work schedules such as compressed workweeks, which consist of a four day workweek and working four nine hour days and eight hours (9-80s) every other Friday (Arbon, Facer, & Wadsworth, 2012). In 2008, 37% of organizations were using the compressed workweek; however, government and nonprofit services had the highest percentages (45%) of organizations implementing such programs (Arbon et al., 2012). There are several reasons as to why employers decided to move to compressed work schedules including cost savings, reducing absenteeism, enhancing employee morale, increasing efficiency, and improving the work-life balance and job satisfaction of workers (Arbon et al., 2012). Arbon et al. (2012) suggested that employers consider five important factors before making the decision to implement compressed workweeks: (a) the people, (b) the purpose, (c) the process, (d) the perceptions of workers and employers, and (e) performance outcomes.

Gholipour, Bod, Zehtabi, Pirannejad, and Kozekanan (2010) noted that flexible working arrangements have been the subject of considerable interests as well a source of controversy for the past 20 years. In spite of the controversy, human resource managers continue using flexible working arrangements to help their organizations survive and to maintain their organizations' competitive advantage (Gholipour et al., 2010). One of the flexible work arrangements methods that became popular was job sharing (Rogers & Finks, 2011). The concept of sharing work responsibilities emerged in the 1970s and allowed workers more flexibility (Rogers & Finks, 2011). In general, job sharing is a form of part-time employment in which two individuals take on the responsibilities to

cover the duties of a single fulltime position (Rogers & Finks, 2011). Although practiced more in Europe (Gholipour et al., 2010), this type of employment was offered by 19% of US employers in 2005, down from 26% in 2001(Rogers & Finks, 2011). Overall, job sharing could benefit both employers and employees. For example, job sharing might allow workers with special circumstances, such as those caring for children (with or without disabilities) and elderly parents, to work part-time and thereby improve their work-life balance (Rogers & Finks, 2011). When there is a balance between an individual's occupation and personal life, he or she could enter the workplace with a more positive mind frame and become more productive, which is beneficial for the organization' bottom line (Rogers & Finks, 2011). For employers, the benefits include a decrease in absenteeism, a reduction in workload on full time workers, and the retention of experienced workers who have a wide range of skills (Rogers & Finks, 2011).

Gholipour et al. (2010) noted that there are three types of job sharing: responsibility participation (no sharing of duties, but each individual is equally doing his or her job appropriately), responsibility sharing (divided jobs into different projects where individuals are in charge and focus on their part of the job), and unrelated responsibilities (different jobs in the same location). In this sense, individuals perform different jobs that are entirely different while they are in the same location (Gholipouret al., 2010).

Researchers from The International Public Management Association for Human Resources and Fox Lawson & Associates, a division of Gallagher Benefit Services conducted a study in 2011, which included 458 organizations across the United States to

examine the integrations of paid-time off (PTO) programs. The researchers found that out of the 26% of organizations surveyed, only 34% of the city, and 38% of the county organizations offered PTO programs (IPMA-HR, 2011). The researchers noted that 1.6% of the federal organization that responded to the survey did not offer paid-time off (PTO) programs. Furthermore, the researchers found that 55% of participating organizations implemented PTO programs to grant more flexibility for workers, 39% implemented them to decrease absenteeism, and 36% implemented them to reduce administrator problems. In addition, 50% of the surveyed employers indicated that after implementation of paid-time off (PTO) programs, they witnessed an improvement in morale, 47% indicated a decrease in administrative issues, 33% mentioned a decrease in unscheduled absenteeism, and 26% noted a significant reduction in expenses (IPMA-HR, 2011).

Researchers from The Society for Human Resource Management (2012) reported that the landscape for workers benefits has transformed over the last 10 years. This transformation is because of the rising costs of benefits, combined with legislative modifications and new benefit options (SHRM, 2012). Human resource budgets over the past three years have undergone substantial cuts because of the issues within the economy (SHRM, 2012). Consequently, employers are shifting workers decision-making and cost accountability to workers (SHRM, 2012). Nonetheless, this has forced employers to be more innovative in order to remain competitive in the area of recruitment and retention of good workers (SHRM, 2012). For this reason, employers continue to modify offered benefits as well as give workers greater responsibility in managing their

benefits (SHRM, 2012). Nonetheless, in the United States, the support of paid time off (PTO) programs has been progressively increasing among organizations (SHRM, 2012). A paid-time off program combines traditional personal days, sick leave, and vacation time into one comprehensive plan, which gives workers the flexibility and freedom in managing their leave (SHRM, 2012). The percentages of organizations that offer paid-time off programs have increased from 29% in 2004 to 42% in 2008 and to 51% in 2012 (SHRM, 2012). Furthermore, of those organizations that offer paid-time off programs, 16% offered donation programs and 18% offered a cash-out options; a program that allows workers to donate their paid-time off benefits to a pool of other workers so they can also benefit from the PTO program. In addition, 1% provides their workers with unlimited paid-time off (SHRM, 2012).

The studies (Nadler et al., 2010; Hill et al., 2010; Jang et al., 2011) above on workplace flexibility provide useful information to help employers in managing productivity by employing flexible options (schedule flexibility, job sharing, and paid-time off) for when, where, and how work gets done (Arbon et al., 2012; Buchan, 2011). Boushey (2011) reviewed federal data from the council of economic adviser (CEA) on the economic value of implementing workplace flexibility. The researcher found that the benefits outweigh the *costs* to employers that adopt work-life managerial practices. In this case, adopting such practices could improve workers health, increase productivity, lower turnover, and decrease absenteeism (Boushey, 2011). However, the researcher mentioned that workplace flexibility has a fixed cost of recruiting, teaching, and monitoring workers, which can increase the cost of employing individuals to work part-

time rather than full-time (Boushey, 2011). In addition, the researcher found that one third of the organizations reported costs or limited finances as obstacles to employing workplace flexibility arrangements (Boushey, 2011).

Although there are positive outcomes from the use of alternative work schedules for both employee and employers, there are also unintended negative outcomes (Liu et al., 2013; Saleh et al., 2010). For example, Russell, O'Connell, and McGinnity (2009) investigated the relationship between four flexible working arrangements (flexi-time, job sharing, part-time hours, and working from home), workers work-life conflict, and work pressure. The researchers found that while part-time work reduces work pressure, working from home is associated with higher levels work-life conflict and work pressure (Russell et al., 2009). Kelliher and Anderson (2010) examined the unanticipated consequence of implementing flexible working practices on work intensification. Work intensification concerns the reduction in employee well-being and job satisfaction (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). The researchers found that flexible employees had higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment than nonflexible employees. However, the researchers reported that employees who worked remotely and those who worked reduced hours experienced work intensification (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Furthermore, the researchers identified three ways by which intensification happens: (a) imposed intensification, (b) enabled intensification, and (c) intensification as an act of reciprocation or exchange (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). In addition, Drake, Singleton, Flatt, and Arif, (as cited by Buchan, 2011) noted that there is a negative side to workplace flexibility, which occurs when employers attempt to offload the cost and risk onto

employees. In this manner, flexibility becomes an instrument to *reduce choice of hours, force through unattractive shift patterns, and casualise work contracts* (Drake et al., 2011). Ten years ago, plans such as improving working lives supported more worker-friendly, flexible working practices. However, that was a time of relatively easy funding and competitive labor markets. Nonetheless, some organizational leaders are now obsessed with cost-effectiveness and cost containment (Drake et al., 2011).

The Department of Labor in New Zealand researchers reported in 2003 that a poor work-life imbalance led to an increase in workers mistakes on the job and poor work performance (Cowan & Bochantin, 2011). For this reason, employers implement work-life balance policies and offer various programs to ensure a healthy and sufficient workforce (Durga & Joyce, 2011). Results from a survey conducted with a sample of 32,103 US federal government employees indicated that policies that supported family were effective in promoting employees' loyalty, efficiency, job satisfaction, and work-life balance (Jang et al., 2011). Furthermore, a study performed in the Midwest of the US involving 196 working mothers revealed that arrangements related to the family such as work flexibility, decreased hours and support from supervisors and are all associated with positive parenting, including enthusiasm and receptiveness toward children, the amount of time devoted to children, and mother's psychological well-being (Jang et al., 2011). In addition, Kim and Wiggins (2011) conducted a study in the public sector to understand whether human resource policies aimed at enhancing work-family and work-life balance are successful among employees regardless of age, sex, ethnicity, agency, and pay level. The researchers found that employees' demographic characteristics significantly

influence their satisfaction with family-friendly policies and that unfairness existed in terms of access to employee benefits (Kim & Wiggins, 2011). The researchers concluded that such inequity might result from both organizational problems and employees' lack of understanding about the full value of such benefits (Kim & Wiggins, 2011).

Work-life balance programs are important long-term investments in workers (Miryala & Chiluka, 2012; Thulasimani, Duraisamy, & Rathinasabapathi, 2010). The purpose of these programs is to assist employers in attracting and retaining highly skilled personnel by providing support to balance their professional and personal lives (Wang & Verma, 2012) inside and outside of work (Thulasimani et al., 2010). A number of organizations have implemented work-life balance policies and others have not. Even among those who have implemented these policies, there is a big difference as to the type of programs implemented. Such differences create issues for human resource managers who are responsible for introducing these programs within the organization (Wang & Verma, 2012).

Gunavathy (2011) articulated that implementing work-life balance provisions involve costs that employers should be willing to accept. These costs include the design and implementation of the work-life policy, workers and space (childcare participants and facilities), equipment (information and communication technology to facilitate working from home), disruption costs, and short-term reduction in productivity from disruption (Gunavathy, 2011). Nonetheless, an organizational leader's perception of whether or not work-life programs have a positive return on investment (ROI) determines his or her commitment to such initiatives (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). Therefore, assessing the impact

of work-life balance programs on an organizations bottom line is imperative in evaluating the costs versus benefits of such programs (Wang & Verma, 2012). In 2007, professionals at the Alliance for Work-Life Progress compiled success stories from several organizations that demonstrate specific return on investment (ROI) from implementing work-life programs. Bank of America adopted a child-care subsidy program that increased employee retention. Eight of Bright Horizons (provider of early education, employer sponsored childcare, backup care) clients gained a \$3.4 million aggregate cost savings from reduction of voluntary turnover, in addition to a 97% retention rate (AWLP, 2007). Furthermore, managers from Children's Health Systems implemented an emergency backup childcare program that helped parents (336 out of 2,900) find childcare and saved 4,020 workdays. As a result, turnover decreased from 22% to 12%, with a return on investment three times higher than the cost (AWLP, 2007). General Services Administration (GSA) leadership team offered child-care subsidy for their workers and three-fourths reported an increase in their job performance, 55% reported being more focus, 19% reported missing fewer workdays, and 48% decided to stay with the organization(AWLP, 2007). Hewlett Packard management implemented compressed workweeks for their workforce and reported a 50% decrease in overtime (AWLP, 2007). A leadership team from Johnson & Johnson, after implementation of their family-friendly policies, indicated that employee absenteeism decreased from 40% to 30% within a six-month period (AWLP, 2007). Additionally, KPMG (audit, tax, and advisory firm) managers implemented an emergency back-up child-care program, which yielded a 125% return on investment within six months of implementation, gradually



ramping up to a 521% return on investment by the fourth year (AWLP, 2007). Further, United Parcel Service (UPS) implemented flexible work schedules and decreased turnover from 50% to 6% (AWLP, 2007).

Although there is strong support for family-supportive practices, work-family policies, and work-life balance programs (Kang, 2013; Lee & Hong, 2011; Moon & Jongho, 2010; Subramaniam & Selvaratnam, 2010), there remains skepticism pertaining to their effectiveness. There are examples suggesting that some policies and programs that appear to be family-friendly may be harmful to the working conditions of workers (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Russell et al., 2009). For example, Moon and Jongho (2010) articulated that women's perception of family-friendly policies might come off as an admission of inadequacy that they are unable to manage both their professional and personal demands. The negative result from this is that such policies might make female workers less committed and less desirable than other workers (Moon & Jongho, 2010). Therefore, employers need to consider appropriate roles and places for both women and men in and outside of the workplace. In this sense, employers should carefully examine the impact of family-friendly policies on gender equality before implementation (Moon & Jongho, 2010).

O'Donovan (2004) also noted that work-life balance policies and programs could act as a two-edged sword. For example, such policies and programs cut through the old-fashioned need to be at the workplace between traditional hours. Furthermore, work-life balance policies and programs open the way for workers to reduce working hours, which can have negative long-term effects (O'Donovan, 2004). While reducing working hours

may be appropriate for some workers, it does have serious implications for one's career, salary progression, and benefits (O'Donovan, 2004). To date, women take the opportunity to make the most of flexible working policies and programs by taking longer maternity leave and working part-time (O'Donovan, 2004). Consequently, these very same policies and programs ultimately end up holding employees from advancing in their career as well as affecting their income (O'Donovan, 2004). For this reason, among others, human resource and benefits managers face the challenges of finding ways to treat all personnel fairly ensuring that the reward gap between men and women does not continue because of work-life balance policies and programs (O'Donovan, 2004).

In investigating why some employers offer WLBP's and others do not, Gunavathy (2011) argued that there are challenges to implementing work-life balance policies, which include cost, lack of knowledge, management of initiatives, and raising expectations. Wang and Verma (2012) articulated that there are methodical differences across industries in implementing work-life balance programs because different industries experience different levels of bureaucratic pressures. They identified three types of pressure that act on organizations to produce conformity or isomorphism including coercive, mimetic, and normative. According to Wang and Verma (2012), mimetic isomorphism refers to the tendency of an organization to copy another organization's makeup because of the idea that the makeup of the latter organization is favorable. For example, if several organizations in one industry implement flexible hours, the majority of organizations will follow and implement the procedure so they can gain legitimacy in their industry (Wang & Verma, 2012). Given that each industry has its own customs, the

expectation is that implementation of work-life balance programs would be different from one industry to another (Wang & Verma, 2012). In this sense, employers that only need a small amount of participation from personnel and regard personnel as a cost to control are less likely to implement or even consider these programs, because offering work-life balance programs does not align with their business strategies. Consequently, such programs are just *costly and unnecessary* to these employers (Wang & Verma, 2012).

The examples above demonstrate that family-friendly programs are not a good fit for some organizations. For example, family-friendly policies such as paid leave and childcare can cost organizations extra money (Lee & Hong, 2011). Therefore, if the family-friendly policies do not show significant results, unlike expectations, organizations can have a difficult time convincing stakeholders, even if the organizations could provide benefits at reduced cost because of economies of scale and tax advantages (Lee & Hong, 2011). Lee and Hong (2011) conveyed that family-friendly policies could take personnel outside organizations or bring personal problems inside, and this aspect of work-family balance involves a vast amount of trust between the employers and personnel and the organizations abandoning of control.

The studies above are just an indication of the attention placed on the effects of family-supportive practices, work-family policies, and work-life balance policies on workers and organizations. Some outcomes are positive, negative, or even mixed. For this reason, the findings are relevant to this study when considering the work-life balance

programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance.

### **The Impact of Job Stress and Work Hours**

In developed and developing nations, job stress is one of the most significant workplace health risks for workers (Ur Rehman et al., 2012). Stressors concern interpersonal relationships on the job, such as conflicts with the conduct of managers, conflicts with coworkers, conflicts with organizational policies, and conflicts with subordinates (Ur Rehman et al., 2012). In addition, other factors such as barriers to career advancement, changes in management, conflicting demands from organizational stakeholders, excessive rules and regulations, heightened competition, high pressure deadlines, inadequate support, lack of participation in decision making, long working hours, new technology, and work overload are associated to job stress (Babatunde, 2013; Gladies & Kennedy, 2011).

The consequences of stress are of great importance to occupational health and safety regulators (Nakao, 2010). Workers and their employers across all levels in the organizational hierarchy are vulnerable to negative consequences associated with job stress such as anxiety, burnout, cardiovascular disease, depression, and insomnia (Lee, Joo, & Choi, 2013; Morris, Messal, & Meriac, 2013; Nakao, 2010). These negative consequences have direct and indirect ramifications for workers and organizations, such as accidents, counterproductive behavior, impeded learning transfer, resistance to change initiatives, employee dissatisfaction, tardiness, decreased quality and quantity in job performance, low morale, and low motivation (Morris et al., 2013; Rodríguez,

Kozusznik, & Peiró, 2013). While stress is common in the workplace, too much stress can interfere with workers' productivity and affect their emotional and physical health, and their ability to deal with it can mean the difference between triumph and failure (Rodríguez et al., 2013). In this sense, employers could have a significant impact on their workers' behavior and some of those effects may eventually manifest in how workers feel about their jobs and responsibilities (Khan et al., 2013). For example, job satisfaction is one of the most explored variables (e.g., benefits, communication, co-workers, safety, work conditions, pay, promotion, etc.) in organizational behavior (Holland et al., 2011; Ikyanyon, 2012; Westover & Taylor, 2010). These variables are significant because they all influence the way individuals feel about their jobs. If workers are not satisfied with their jobs, this will affect their productivity, which can result in behaviors such as absenteeism (Ejere, 2010; Lambert et al., 2010; Willert, Thulstrup, & Bonde, 2011), turnover intentions (Jehanze et al., 2013), and workplace aggression (Gladies & Kennedy, 2011). In other words, work life could produce extreme stress to the point that workers could exhibit withdrawing behavior (psychologically or physiologically) while still present in the workplace (De Cuyper, Raeder, Van der Heijden, & Wittekind, 2012; Gbadamosi & Ross, 2012; Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, & Ahmad, 2011; Toker & Biron, 2012; Vuori, Toppinen-Tanner, & Mutanen, 2012). The psychological symptoms of stress that an individual may experience include anger, anxiety, dissatisfaction, and moodiness (Gladies & Kennedy, 2011). The physiological responses include headaches, muscle pains, and stomach ulcers (Gladies & Kennedy, 2011).

Stress has been on a rise as science and technology have advanced bringing tremendous changes in the lifestyle of individuals (Gachter Savage, & Torgler, 2011). Stressful situations at the work place such as discrimination and harassment, excessive overtime, and poor working conditions (Gachter et al., 2011) disturb the mental peace, weaken a person mentally, and create complexities in social and family relationship (Karthik, 2013). Job stress became so important that the United Nations labeled job stress *the 20th Century Disease* because from 1996 to 2008, 1 million workers were absent every day from the workplace because of stress related illnesses. A couple years later, scientists at the World Health Organization said that it had become a *worldwide epidemic* (Kanji & Chopra, 2009). In general, stress has become common and very frequent whenever and wherever there is human involvement. It has also become one of the most serious occupational health hazards of the time (Adebayo & Ogunsina, 2011; Charu, 2013).

According to researchers from the American Institute of Stress, the estimate of job stress cost to U.S. industries in 2010 was nearly \$300 billion. This included costs because of accidents, absenteeism, and employee turnover (Gladies & Kennedy, 2011; Morris et al., 2013); diminished productivity; tort and Federal Employer's Liability Act judgments; and direct medical, legal, and insurance fees (Nixon, Mazzola, Bauer, Krueger, & Spector, 2011). According to Adaramola (2012), approximately 60% to 80% of accidents in the workplace are stress related. Overall, job stress represents a large emotional cost to workers' well-being and puts a considerable financial burden on organizational performance (Bell, Rajendran, & Theiler, 2012; Skakon, Nielsen, Borg, &

Guzman, 2010). For this reason, employee health and well-being have gained increasing societal attention, driven by both rising worker' compensation claims and the considerable personal, organizational, and medical costs associated with stress-related illness (Nixon et al., 2011). In this manner, high stress on the job is a prevalent topic in organizations (Gbadamosi & Ross, 2012). Researchers at The Federal Governments National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) summarized findings from several sources that indicate that up to 40% of U.S. workers feel that their job are *very stressful or extremely stressful* (Feizi, Soheili, Hasanzadeh, & Pakdel, 2012). In addition, 25% of the respondents view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives, and three fourths believe they have more on-the-job stress than a generation ago (Bhui, Dinos, Stansfeld, & White, 2012). Matheson and Rosen (2012) mentioned that stress is one of the many reasons why individuals feel unbalanced in their lives, and achieving balance between work and non-work is a growing concern for both men and women.

Given the complex nature of the concept of stress, it seems like an overwhelming task of reaching a unified definition because a singular approach may not be able to cover the breadth of the phenomenon (Babatunde, 2013). Furthermore, the concept of stress is not just challenging to define but to measure as well (Katz, Sprang, & Cooke, 2012). However, it is beneficial when it is manageable and leads to increased competence, growth, and expertise, and detrimental when it is severe, drawn-out, or recurrent and weakens and overwhelms physiological or psychological coping abilities (Katz et al., 2012).

There are different types of stress that workers may experience including *eustress* and *distress* (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). Selye (1976) was the first to describe eustress as a positive affect following a response. However, after years of exploration in 2007, researchers Debra Nelson and Bret Simmons established this concept more clearly, with their holistic stress model that personifies both the positive and the negative stress components (Saksvik & Hetland, 2011). They defined eustress as the degree of cognitive appraisal of situations in relation to whether situations are beneficial for individuals to the point that increases their well-being, whereas, distress is an appraisal of situations as negative, decreasing individuals well-being (Saksvik & Hetland, 2011). In other words, eustress is a positive stress that aids individuals in preparing their mind and body for situations that will happen in the near future (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011; Mujtaba & Reiss, 2013). In this sense, eustress represents a positive kind of stress that can help develop individual's creativity, competitive spirit, energy, as well to offering the strength for achieving performance (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011; Mujtaba & Reiss, 2013). However, distress transpires when something affects individual's routines for a short period (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). It has a negative impact on individuals and it contains the following categories of stress: *acute stress* and *chronic stress* (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). Acute stress emerges when a change transforms one of the routine jobs that an individual performs. Even though it appears to be an extreme stress, it passes quickly (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). Some of the symptoms of this stress include headaches, hypertensions, rapid heartbeat, and abdominal problems (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). However, chronic stress is the most severe stress because it is



detrimental to individual's health, which may cause chest pains, heart palpitations, elevated blood sugar levels, increased blood pressure, and raised cholesterol levels (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). This stress occurs when something changes routines for a long period (e.g., facing several work or personal setbacks), from weeks to years (Mirela & Madalina-Adriana, 2011). Overall, individuals will continuously perceive a combination of eustress and distress. However, factors in the workplace (e.g., job demands too extreme, information overload, disproportion between the workload and abilities, long work hours, low pay, poor physical working environment) may be of importance of how individuals perceive stress (Saksvik & Hetland, 2011). Nonetheless, individuals could experience a greater degree of one of them (Saksvik & Hetland, 2011).

Productive workplace conditions in terms of high complexity, rapid change, and risk-taking innovation, may lead to the perception as stressful because of inadequate control, high workloads, pressure, and uncertainty (Houdmont, Cox, & Griffiths, 2010). However, this does not refute the association between stressful conditions, high productivity, and optimal performance (Ablanedo-Rosas, Blevins, Gao, Teng, & White, 2011; Adaramola, 2012; Walinga & Rowe, 2013). For example, there are considerable variations in the way individuals perceive and respond to the business environment in which they work. Personal and situational variables (e.g., coping skills, support from supervisors) could influence the onset and duration of job stress, and situations that one individual may find demanding and stressful another person may find as challenging and stimulating (Nakao, 2010). For this reason, it is essential to understand that stress is a condition, not an illness, which individuals experience because of exposure to a range of

job demands (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). Job demands contribute to an equal range of consequences, that may concern workers' well-being, be an illness, an injury, or changes in their behavior and lifestyle (Moustaka & Constantinidis, 2010). Nonetheless, workers who oversee the daily operations of organizations are under tremendous pressure to increase revenue, products, and services (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). Doing things better, faster, with fewer workers, and tighter budgets (getting more with less) are the goals of many organizations today (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). The expected or the demanded results are to achieve greater performance that leads to growth and higher profits (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). However, employee aggression, burnout, family imbalance, stress, and turnover can occur during this process (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). In other words, some workers experiencing high levels of stress may be unable to function effectively in their job (Nagar, 2012). In the face of economic slowdown, forcing employers to squeeze more productivity out of a fewer resources, workers are experiencing increased job pressures. As a result, this may have a significant overall negative impact on the workers in today's business environment, and may even prove to be fatal (Nagar, 2012). In this sense, some factors that contribute to the increasingly stressful nature of today's workplace stem from the relentless push for efficiency and quality, the accelerating pace of work, and the trends of non-standard work hours (Wells, Probst, McKeown, Mitchem, & Whiejong, 2012).

The concept of an 8 hour workday, with 8 hours of rest, and 8 hours of leisure time uninterrupted is only available on the weekends or during an extensive break (Brown et al., 2010). However, due to long work hours, greater work demands, and

unusual work schedules, this could jeopardize the capacity for some employees to acquire such time (Brown et al., 2010). In today's Western societies, round-the-clock performance is the norm in many occupations (Flo et al., 2012). Equally important, there are positions that are undeniably essential and require individuals to work at times outside of their assigned hours (Cha, 2010; Harris & Giuffre, 2010). Working long hours have become common globally, which is one of the most significant issues in occupational health (Nakashima et al., 2011). Some people may work long hours on occasions to meet deadlines at work (Lingard, Francis, & Turner, 2010), whereas others work long hours because they find enjoyment in doing so (Van Wijhe, Peeters, & Schaufeli, 2011). However, this does not negate the fact that long work hours negatively affect workers' health by increasing exposure to occupational hazards (De Castro et al., 2010). Furthermore, working long hours may increase the risk of various adverse outcomes, including anxiety, deterioration in cognitive function, depression, psychological distress, sleep disorders (Swanson et al., 2011; Virtanen et al., 2012), absenteeism, burnout, decreased productivity, increased stress, low job satisfaction, role conflict, strained family relationships, and turnover (Beheshtifar & Omidvar, 2013; Lingard, Francis, & Turner, 2010). Nonetheless, working long hours can serve as a sign of responsibility and efficiency, conversely; these can be an obstacle to work-life balance, as well, to a lack of communication, flexibility, support, organizational practices, and financial and time pressures (Jayanthi & Vanniarajan, 2012).

A nationally representative sample of 10,793 working adults in the United States showed that working long hours lead to a 61% higher injury hazard rate compared with

jobs working within the required work schedules. Furthermore, working more than 12 hours a day lead to a 37% increased hazard rate, and working over 60 hours a week increased the hazard rate by 23% (Nakata, 2011). In Canada, the results from a study conducted over a two-year period showed that working 41 hours or more per week compared to 35-40 hour workweek leads to major depressive episode (MDE) among females but not among males (Virtanen, Stansfeld, Fuhrer, Ferrie, & Kivimäki, 2012). In general, depression is an important public health concern. As a result, the World Health Organization (WHO) predicted that by 2030 that depressive disorder would be the leading cause of disease burden in high-income countries (Virtanen et al., 2012). In addition, the researchers revealed the association between working long hours and the onset of a major depressive episode in a sample of British civil servants. The findings indicated that working extensive hours of 11 or more hours created a higher risk of an MDE that when compared with working only an 8-hour shift. Additionally, work-family conflict, inability to relax after work, and prolonged increased cortisol levels were contributing factors (Virtanen et al., 2012).

In a longitudinal study conducted in New Zealand, researchers found that individuals who worked more than 50 hours a week had higher rates of alcohol-related problems (frequent alcohol use, alcohol abuse, and alcohol dependence) that were 1.8-3.3 times greater than those who were unemployed. The associations between working long hours and alcohol-related problems were similar for men and women (Gibb, Fergusson, & Horwood, 2012). The International Labor Organization (ILO) report in the late 1990s indicated that 28.1% of the population of Japan worked more than 50 hours a week. As a

result, the term Karoshi became very popular when referring to sudden death because of cardiovascular events resulting from working long hours. To this very day, working extensive hours is a critical issue for workers' health care in Japan (Nakashima et al., 2011).

Numerous studies performed in Australia, Finland, and Hong Kong pointed out the effects associated with working long hours such as obesity, type 2 diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular disease, certain metabolic cancers, depression, poor body image, and low self-esteem (Magee, Caputi, & Iverson, 2011). These findings are of great importance specifically for Australian adults who are working more than 49 hours, which have increased from 22% to 30% among males and from 9% to 16% among females, between 1985 and 2000 (Magee et al., 2011). In fact, obesity in Australia increased between 1980 and 2000, and currently 24.8% of Australian adults are obese, and 36.6% are overweight (Magee et al., 2011).

Cross-sectional studies conducted in Australia, Asia, Europe and the U.S. revealed that there is a connection between a lack of sleep and obesity, which longitudinal studies have verified illustrating how a lack of sleep at baseline predicts modest weight gain over the years (Magee et al., 2011). For example, results from a cross-sectional survey performed in Australia showed that obese workers tend to work longer and sleep less. For that reason, one could determine that working extensive hours could be a factor to obesity by interfering with sleep duration. In addition, researchers in Hong Kong conducted a study to examine the association between long work hours, sleep duration, and body mass index (BMI). The participants were 4,973 fulltime workers aged

17 to 83(2500 men and 2473 women), from the financial sector, technology sector, law firms, hospitals, and government agencies. The researchers found that working long hours and not receiving the proper amount of sleep could affect an individual body mass index (Magee et al., 2011).

Obesity rates over the past few decades have increased among occupational groups (Escoto et al., 2010). Most employees work 8 to 12 hours a day, which could affect other spheres in their lives such as physical health and self-care (Escoto et al., 2010). A number of researchers suggested that long work hours contribute to employees higher body mass index (BMI), reduced physical activities, and poorer dietary habits (Au & Hollingsworth, 2011; Courtemanche, 2009; Magee et al., 2011; Solovieva, Lallukka, Virtanen, & Viikari-Juntura, 2013). For example, researchers conducted a study on U.S occupational groups (bus drivers and transit workers) found that bus drivers had the highest obesity rates, with estimates at 31.7% for men and 31.0% for women (Escoto et al., 2010). In addition, the researchers found that transit workers working more than 50 hours a week had a higher BMI and less healthful food habits (Escoto et al., 2010). On the other hand, female transit workers who worked over 50 hours consumed more fruits and vegetables (Escoto et al., 2010). The researchers noted that working long hours increased reliance on unhealthy foods particularly among male transit workers. Overall, male transit workers communicated that long work hours creates difficulties in finding time for family, exercise, and maintaining a healthy diet (Escoto et al., 2010).

Apparently, the findings in many studies have illustrated that regardless of the industry individuals are not immune to the detrimental health effects of working long

hours (De Castro et al., 2010; Nakashima et al., 2011; Nakata, 2011). For example, in the healthcare industry, nurses are often required to work long hours working in physical and mentally demanding areas that could increase the levels of acute and chronic fatigue (Barker & Nussbaum, 2011; Su Chuan et al., 2011). In addition, due to the unpredictable nature of cardiac surgery, cardiovascular perfusionists spend extensive hours providing care under abnormal hours. This can result in perfusionists experiencing fatigue triggered by acute sleep deprivation and circadian rhythm disruption (Trew, Searles, Smith, & Darling, 2011). In Australia, the working hours for surgical trainees are a subject of international debate (O'Grady et al., 2010). Surgical trainees working excessive hours impaired their health (induced chronic sleep loss placing trainees at risk of fatigue), increased stress related problems (anxiety, panic attacks, circulatory problems, and heart problems), and compromised patient's health (O'Grady et al., 2010). The Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) developed guidelines where all surgical trainees would only work a maximum of 70 hours a week and be able to obtain 8 hours of sleep per every 24 hours to improve their well-being (O'Grady et al., 2010).

Liu, Ballard, and Ibbs (2011) conducted a study to understand the relationship between productivity and the ratio of total job completion to planned tasks, weekly workload, output, and hours worked (workflow variation and labor productivity). The researchers found that labor productivity was positively correlated with percent plan complete (PPC), a measure of workflow variation (Liu et al., 2011). However, the researchers mentioned that there was no significant correlation between productivity and the ratio of total job completion to planned tasks, weekly workload, output, or work hours

(Liu et al., 2011). Overall, the results indicate that productivity does not increase by completing as many tasks as possible, regardless of the plan, increased workloads, output, or long work hours (Liu et al., 2011).

Overall, the studies in this section illustrated the different factors associated with stress (long work hours) in different industries and countries, which is a widespread phenomenon with extensive concrete and monetary concerns (Aftab & Javeed, 2012; Kaveri & Prabakaran, 2013; Usman & Ismail, 2010). Workers in every sector of the economy experience work stress at different levels (Kaveri & Prabakaran, 2013; Sirajunisa, & Panchanatham, 2010). While stress, may cause an imbalance in workers lives (Kaveri & Prabakaran, 2013; Sirajunisa & Panchanatham, 2010), it may improve the efficiency of employees or seriously affect the health, attitude, or job performance of them (Kaveri & Prabakaran, 2013). For example, some workers could lose confidence, refuse to take on responsibilities, become irritated quickly, and become unsatisfied with their job, which can result in a decline in their job performance (Kaveri & Prabakaran, 2013). Altogether, work stress affects workers themselves, their families, and organizations (Kaveri & Prabakaran, 2013). The impact of work-related stress on organizations includes increased employee absenteeism and turnover, low productivity, and financial damages (Aftab & Javeed, 2012; Mohsan, Nawaz, & Khan, 2011). In other words, when workers suffer from the impact of stress, so does the organization output and bottom line (Mohsan et al., 2011; Shaheen, Batool, Sajid, & Nabi, 2013).

Although there is no one-way of dealing with stress in the workplace, formulation of recommendations could increase the effectiveness of such interventions (Małgorzata,



Merecz, & Drabek, 2010). Therefore, it is of importance to take advantage of a wide range of techniques and practices (e.g., cognitive behavioral methods, participation, relaxation, work redesign), taking into consideration that one size does not fit all (Małgorzata et al., 2010). For that reason, employers should examine their existing work-life balance policies regarding stress and try to identify problems before they become severe (Loveday, 2012). Stressed workers are neither content nor productive, and long-term absence can affect productivity (Loveday, 2012). Increasing efficiency to reduce expenditure can be counterproductive if performed without looking at the impact that it may have on workers (Loveday, 2012). Employers must take workplace stress seriously or they risk both competitive edge and their best workers (Loveday, 2012). Therefore, employers can create a workplace culture and climates that reflect concern for their workforce lives outside of the job. For this reason, it is important for employers to review current work practices and processes to determine which ones lead to work inefficiencies and workers' stress (Jyotbi & Jyotbi, 2012). According to Gunavathy (2011), there is a need for employers to adopt human resource policies and strategies that accommodate the work-life needs of their workforce in the current business environment. Work-life issues affect individuals, regardless of their age, education level, family structure, gender, income level, or job status (McMillan, Morris, & Atchley, 2011). A major deterrent to employee job performance is stress associated with managing work and life (McMillan et al., 2011). Therefore, the attainment of work-life balance continues to be of importance not only for individuals in the workforce but also for employers (McMillan et al., 2011). Sarwar and Aftab (2011) argued that organizations' human resource departments should

look for policies to strengthen the work-life balance of its personnel; in return, this could help organizations in achieving better business outcomes in the end (e.g., increased employee motivation, retention, satisfaction, decreased absenteeism, health care costs and stress-related illnesses).

### **Work-Family Conflict**

Researchers have dedicated years to understanding work-family conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn et al., 1964). Furthermore, researchers identified the consequences associated with work-family conflict such as depression, elevated need for recovery from work, job burnout, life dissatisfaction, increased sickness absence, and psychological distress (Allen, Herst, Bruck, & Sutton, 2000; Hilton & Whiteford, 2010; Jansen et al., 2006; Rao & Indla, 2010). Separate from the psychological consequences of work-family conflict, researchers also focused on work outcomes and found association between work-family conflict and intentions to turnover (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Collins, 2001; Fuss, Nübling, Hasselhorn, Schwappach, & Rieger, 2008), indicating that a common reaction to high work-family conflict may be a desire to flee the situation. Even though there exists a great deal of information about the nature of work-family conflict and its antecedents and consequences, there still remains a lack of information about how work-family conflict can be avoided and resolved (Allen et al., 2000; Major & Morganson, 2011).

According Ho, Chen, Cheung, Liu, and Worthington (2013), work-family research has been overly individual focused. In other words, current research has lost sight that people do not live in a social vacuum because work and family are not separate

but intertwined spheres of human life (Ho et al., 2011). Therefore, establishing and maintaining harmony between work and family is also of great importance for families, organizations, and society as a whole (Ho et al., 2013).

The possibility of conflict between work and life responsibilities has always existed (Treadway, Duke, Perrewe, Breland, & Goodman, 2011). This issue has grown as dual-earner families have become common (Treadway et al., 2011). Furthermore, in 2010, 75% of full-time workers were members of dual-earner families (Treadway et al., 2011). In addition, dual-earner families with dependents invested approximately 20% of their time during the workweek that left them with only an hour a day of personal time away from the workplace (Treadway et al., 2011).

Most American employees nowadays have family obligations that can create conflict between family and work. However, paid employment is essential for the well-being of employee's families (Boushey, 2011). Nonetheless, in view of the financial significance of work and the reality that most employees may be breadwinners or co-breadwinners, obtaining methods to manage work and family conflicts may be at the top of the agenda at family meetings across the nation (Boushey, 2011). American employees in general have the least amount or no power over their work schedules, work hours, and a small number has a right to job-secure paid leave to care for family members (Boushey, 2011). For the majority of individuals, the two most dominant life domains are work and family because of the increase in dual-earner households, non-traditional gender roles, and partially, due to the increase in the number of hours individuals work (Michel, Kotrba, Mitchelson, Clark, & Baltes, 2011). Consequently, managing both domains is

part of everyday life for millions of individuals (Michel et al., 2011). Thus, both work and family demand time and energy, which can generate inter-role conflict, known as work-family conflict (Knecht et al., 2011).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) defined work-family conflict based on the work of Kahn et al. (1964), as a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. Furthermore, the authors identified three different types of work-family conflict. The first, time-based conflict, refers to the notion that time consumed meeting demands related with one role prevents the time utilized in the other role. The second conflict, strain-based conflict, happens when the strain undergone in one role influences execution in another role. The third, behavior-based conflict, refers to the mismatch of desirable behavior in family and work realms (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Ergeneli, Ilsev, and Karapınar (2010) mentioned that interference and overload are two forms of strain when role demands collide. Overload is present when the demand of numerous roles is too vast to perform effectively, while interference transpires when conflicting demands make it challenging to carry out obligations of various roles. On the contrary, Idris (2011) noted that, there is an association between strain, psychological, and physiological reaction to a situation involving perceived threat to a person's well-being.

Subsequently, work-family conflict is a bidirectional concept embroiling family to-work conflict (FWC) and work-to-family conflict (WFC). For this reason, the former happens when the demands of the family role, interferes with the work role, and the latter

when the work role interferes with the family role (Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

According to Ahmad and Muhammad Tahir (2011), long work hours, inflexible work schedules, commuting hours, and high job demands lead to work-life conflict. However, it is a known fact that conflict between work and family responsibilities harms workers' well-being (Matthews, Swody, & Barnes-Farrell, 2012). In other words, distinctive roles can affect each other if conducted at the same time (Šimunić & Gregov, 2012).

This is very similar to role theory, which suggests that human beings take up positions within various social contexts (e.g., family, society, and workplace) and groups in a way that influences an individual's expectation about the functions executed in a role. For the most part, individuals occupy various roles consecutively (e.g., father, brother, mother, daughter, uncle, aunt, student, worker) each with its own set of associated behaviors, expectations, and functions (Kahn et al., 1964). In essence, role theory links work and family conflict to the time spent in each domain (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

Contrary to popular belief, work-family conflict is not only a women's issue because the evidence supports that WFC is a challenge for both genders (Leslie & Manchester, 2011). According to Leslie and Manchester (2011), men and women tend to experience similar levels of WFC, and the negative effects, such as depression, heavy alcohol use, and poor physical health, and the magnitude of these effects do not significantly differ for both genders.

Work-family conflict has an impact on businesses and individuals in different countries and affects both in different ways. For example, Pal (2012) conducted a comparative study on work-family conflict in Norwegian and Indian hospitals. The researcher found that Norwegian and Indian healthcare workers differ significantly in terms of job control, flexibility, working hours, and on work and family conflict. The Norwegian sample perceived the association between high job demands and work-family conflict, however, the Indian sample perceived the association between high job control and work-family conflict, and working long hours for a given profession as not having no association to work-family conflict (Pal, 2012).

In Turkey, 723 frontline employees in the hospitality sector completed questionnaires anonymously to examine the potential antecedents and consequences of work-family conflict and family-work conflict (Burke, Koyuncu, & Fiksenb, 2013). The employees worked extremely long hours each day. Nonetheless, the findings illustrated that work-family conflict and family-work conflict were significantly and positively associated. Furthermore, the results indicated higher levels of work-family conflict than family-work conflict; however, the levels of both were average, which is surprising given the excessive work hours employees worked (Burke et al., 2013). In addition, the frontline employees in supervisory positions and managers reported high levels of work-family conflict and family-work conflict. Overall, the frontline employees reporting high levels of work-family conflict specified greater job satisfaction and absorption, while frontline employees indicated lower levels of family-work conflict reported high levels of job satisfaction and vigor (Burke et al., 2013). The authors concluded that their findings

were generally consistent with those reported by others in the hospitality sector. Equally important, the authors noted that employees in the hospitality sector worked very long hours possibly due to a culture of acceptance of working long hours and having a supportive family system (Burke et al., 2013).

Rupert, Hartman, and Miller (2013) conducted a study on 126 practicing psychologists to answer one question: *Does our work life influence the quality of our family life?* The participants responded to two waves (Time 1 and Time 2) of longitudinal studies of their work and family life. The researchers tested work-family conflict as a mediator between work demands and resources (control, emotional exhaustion, hours worked, support) and family functioning (Rupert et al., 2013). The researchers found that work demands, but not work resources, significantly predicted family functioning over time. Specifically, the more hours' employees worked and greater emotional exhaustion at Time 1 related to a poorer family functioning at Time 2 (Rupert et al., 2013). Work-family conflict did not mediate these relationships, suggesting that the direct relationship between these work demands and family functioning was stronger than the relationship between work-family conflict and family functioning (Rupert et al., 2013). Overall, the results indicated that time spent at work and exhaustion at work directly influences family life. This influence extends beyond satisfaction with family life to actual family functioning (Rupert et al., 2013). For this reason, the researchers noted that finding ways to manage work demands is essential not only to the individual psychologist, but also potentially to his or her entire family (Rupert et al., 2013).

Aslam, Shumaila, Azhar, and Sadaqat (2011) conveyed that constant change goes on in organizations as well as in people's lives. Meeting these changes is challenging for both workers and employers, and there are increasing problems for both, as they have to resolve these issues. These changes create work-family conflicts that have implication for both worker and employer because work-family conflict spillover creates disorder in work and family spheres (Aslam et al., 2011). If there is a disturbance in a workers' family and work life or if they have conflicting roles that they need to perform, then eventually the performance of the worker and employer is affected. Therefore, this issue is of great importance for both employee and employer as a whole (Aslam et al., 2011).

### **The Need for Research on the Effectiveness of Work-life Balance Programs**

Understanding the needs of individuals means to pay close attention to their psychological and physical needs (Emadzadeh, Khorasani, & Nematizadeh, 2012). Results from studies (Chitakornkijasil, 2010; Nayeri, Salehi, & Noghabi, 2011; Vagharseyyedin, Vanaki, & Mohammadi, 2011) revealed that employees fulfill their psychological needs when using QWL techniques. Quality of work life is an individual psychological perception of the environment within the workplace (Emadzadeh et al., 2012). This is to say that quality of work life pertains to employee's welfare and is completely different from job satisfaction, yet associated. In other words, QWL does affect job satisfaction, whereas, it also influences employees personal lives outside of the workplace (Emadzadeh et al., 2012). However, when the needs of employees at work do not meet, likely they experience a great deal of work stress that will have unfavorable



outcomes on their well-being and job performance (Emadzadeh et al., 2012; Nayeri et al., 2011).

In the educational industry, success depends on dedicated managers and employees because they are the most crucial and valuable forces of their work environment. Therefore, if there are poor conditions in their work environment, this may spillover to their home environment (Emadzadeh et al., 2012). Thus, it is important for educators to check their QWL and WLB status, which appears to be essential in maintaining a healthy and supportive work environment that enables them to have balance between life at the workplace and life outside of the workplace (Chitakornkijasil, 2010; Emadzadeh et al., 2012).

Workers have made a significant impact in different industries, however, the question is at what cost? It was essential to study experiences and views of a chief academic officer, chief financial officer, chief operations officer, comptroller, head and assistant principal, human resource manager, development manager, information technology manager, office manager, teachers, senior administrators, security officers, food service workers, and maintenance technicians. To gain an understanding of the work-life balance programs nonprofit leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance.

Researchers have documented a disparity between occupation and non-occupational individuals and their balance of work and family (Allen et al., 2000; Sandhya et al., 2011; Sonnentag et al., 2012). Furthermore, researchers used theories to explain how work and family life are in constant conflict, and how both domains can

improve each other (Ahmad & Muhammad Tahir, 2011; Brotheridge & Lee, 2005; Frone et al., 1992).

Researchers highlighted the associations between work and family and the effects on individuals' well-being, businesses, and work-life balance (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Collins, 2001; Ho et al., 2013). Existing theories focus on work and family as either conflict or enrichment to each other (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Kahn et al., 1964). Matthews et al. (2012) stated that both a high conflict and high enrichment viewpoint could take place at various times in individual's lives.

Nevertheless, there are gaps in the research literature on the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at charter school organizations utilize to improve employee performance. Therefore, there is a need for future research, to understand the effectiveness of work-life balance policies and programs. For this reason, this study of charter school managers and employees (total of 20) was an attempt to gain an understanding of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at charter school organizations utilize to improve employee performance.

### **Transition and Summary**

The first section of this proposal set the foundation of this study by defining the (a) problem statement, (b) purpose statement, (c) nature of the study, (d) research and interview questions, (e) conceptual framework, (f) definition of terms, (g) assumptions, (h) limitations, (i) delimitations, and (j) significance of the study. Furthermore, there was a review of the professional literature on (a) work-life balance, (b) work-life imbalance, (c) absenteeism, (d) turnover, (e) retention, (f) job satisfaction, (g) motivation, (h) family-

friendly policies, (i) the impact of job stress and long work hours, and (j) work-family conflict. In this section, I described how I explored the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize to improve employee performance. In section 2, I have clarified the data collection process, in addition, to the research method employed for this study. In section 3, I provided an overview of the study and presented the findings from my research. Furthermore, section 3 contains a discussion of the impact of this study on business practices and positive social change along with recommendations for actions and future research studies.

## Section 2: The Project

In this section, I explain the (a) purpose of the study, (b) role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) research method and design, (e) population and sampling, (f) ethical research, (g) data collection, (h) data analysis techniques, and (i) the validity and reliability of the study findings.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this explanatory qualitative case study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. The geographical location for the data collection was in Harlem, New York. The sample consisted of a mixture (total of 20) of managers and employees (a chief academic officer, chief financial officer, chief operations officer, comptroller, head and assistant principal, human resource manager, development manager, information technology manager, office manager, teachers, senior administrators, security officers, food service workers, and maintenance technicians) from one not-for-profit charter school organization. The results of this study may contribute to social change by identifying effective work-life programs that leaders could utilize in the educational environment, contributing to the work-life literature, supporting policy changes to positively affect organizations' profitability, and improving the overall performance of employees.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The role of the researcher in qualitative research is to explore views and experiences and the underlying meanings through paying special attention to the words

participants articulate when explaining phenomenon under study to provide a contextually appropriate account of the underlying meaning (Pettigrew, 2013). Hence, the role of the researcher is to seek further, rather than factual, accounts that identify everyday life experiences participants share with each other (Pringle et al., 2011). In a qualitative case study, the researcher gathers data from multiple resources, such as (a) interviews, (b) records, (c) documentation, and (e) artifacts (Yin, 2012). In this sense, a researcher becomes an instrument for data collection in a qualitative study (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Before conducting my study, I completed the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research Protecting Human Research Participants certification (certification No.: 882682) and reviewed the *Belmont Report's Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research*. My role in this research project was to collect data for this qualitative explanatory case study by conducting face-to-face interviews, asking relevant interview questions, and taking field notes. By listening, reflecting, and asking probing questions, I was able to keep the momentum of the conversation to develop the essential data for addressing my study's research question (Bartkowiak, 2012; Draper & Swift, 2011).

After receiving approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), I distributed consent forms to potential participants. The consent forms were the means for promoting interest in this study. A participant arriving at the business location for the scheduled interview after signing the consent form was an indication that he or she agreed to participate. The signed consent form served as evidence that each participant was willing to take part in the interview process. Most importantly, each

participant had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. To prevent any forms of bias it was my responsibility as the researcher to communicate the purpose of the study. In addition, I ensured that all information that participants provided remain confidential, ensuring that there were no repercussions because of their participation. As the researcher, I attempted to mitigate bias and limit personal inquisitiveness by remaining open to data collected from participants during the 20-interview sessions (Chenail, 2011) and separating my personal views of work-life balance programs, participants' reactions, and opinions of managers and nonmanagerial employees participating in the semistructured interviews.

After the interview process, I entered all information into Microsoft Word and used MAXQDA software. The utilization of this software allowed me to explore themes and identify patterns emerging in the study. Furthermore, I used the software to transcribe interview responses as well as field notes to organize and summarize for coding. In addition, as a precaution to make sure that the findings were trustworthy, I reviewed the coded interview transcripts, field notes, and listened to the interview recordings daily to ensure inclusion of all relevant data.

### **Participants**

The participants of this study came from one nonprofit charter school organization within the geographical area of Harlem, New York. The eligibility criteria for the participants were managers and employees who have spent at least 3 years in an administrative, directorial, managerial, operational, supervisory, or teaching position at one charter school organization. I used a purposeful sampling technique to select 20

participants who met the study criteria and represented the overall population. As indicated by Marshall and Rossman (2011), researchers employ purposeful sampling to support the research problem and research question. Unlike in quantitative studies, the number of participants in qualitative studies is often *small* because qualitative researchers are interested in the variances of experiences and the depth of information (Hennick, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011). As Mason (2010) indicated, conducting qualitative research can be extremely rigorous and analyzing a large sample can be overwhelming (time consuming) and often simply impractical.

The sample consisted of a mixture of (total of 20) managers and employees (a chief academic officer, chief financial officer, chief operations officer, comptroller, head and assistant principal, human resource manager, development manager, information technology manager, office manager, teachers, senior administrators, security officers, food service workers, and maintenance technicians) who resided within the New York Metropolitan area.

Selecting participants (sampling) is extremely important in qualitative research because respondents cannot adhere to the techniques of quantitative selection because the objective is not to count the views or individuals but to explore the array of views and different accounts of a topic (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Thus, the two fundamental factors that guided the sampling process methods were appropriateness and sufficiency (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013).

The participation of individuals in research is essential to bring awareness to create change, increase our understanding of humanity, and advance behavioral science

(DuBois et al., 2012). Research is not without risk (DuBois et al., 2012), and as the researcher, it was my responsibility to identify and explore the potential risks to participants, by evaluating possible risks against potential benefits. To protect the research participants, I followed all of the procedures and guidelines established by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), U.S. federal regulations, and Walden University ethical standards (Walden, 2013).

In today's complex society relationships do not develop without trust (Krot & Lewicka, 2012). In general, working relationships must develop slowly and constructively to allow for high trust and collaboration. For this reason, to build a successful working relationship, the participants and I engaged each other in an optimistic and productive way. Treating each other with respect enabled participants and I to know one another professionally and personally. The participants encouraged me before and after each interview, which I appreciated. I sincerely thanked the participants for sharing their time and experiences with me. I know that the completion of this study would not have been possible without the selfless contributions of the 20 participants. Most important, by building a trusting working relationship with the participants ensured that I prevented unnecessary conflict through establishing boundaries and standards by fostering a *give-and-take* dialogue. In this sense, I sought to build on the views of the participants while gaining agreement to support ideas and actions through a constructive process.

To gain access to the participants for this study, I contacted the organization's executive leadership team by phone to set up an appointment to speak with them face-to-



face and explain the proposed study in more detail. The executive team agreed to meet and I provided further information and explanation about the expectations for the selected participants and myself. The organization's executive team authorized permission for me to (a) recruit managers and nonmanagerial employees, (b) obtain managers and employees' consent, (c) audio record participants' interviews, (d) communicate with participants via work email, and (e) conduct member checking with participants.

Providing consent forms to participants face-to-face made the course of action easier when responding to questions relating to their participation, the purpose of the consent forms, and the purpose of the study. Furthermore, I took preventative measures to limit any potential bias by remaining impartial, nonjudgmental, and unbiased throughout the research process because researcher bias can change the direction or results of a case study (Yin, 2014). For this reason, I separated my emotions and personal feelings concerning employees' job performance, and all personal reactions and views of individuals participating in the interviews.

### **Research Method and Design**

Research involves methods of exploring phenomena; including (a) interviewing study participants, (b) collecting other data, (c) analyzing data, and (d) establishing valid conclusions (Bak, 2011; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013; Hanson et al., 2011). Within each of these phases are procedures that assist in conducting research. The research method and design are the two important parts that are crucial in conducting research (Bernard, 2002; Sergi & Hallin, 2011; Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2012). The different characteristics of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods offer researchers numerous techniques

(Cakiroglu, 2012). It is imperative to understand that the appropriate choice of each research method will depend on the nature of the study (Kourula, 2010). In this sense, selecting the right research design will provide the appropriate strategies for implementation of the research method. The research design is the *road map* to achieve the goals and objectives of the study. Overall, selecting the appropriate and compatible research method and design is essential to the success of a study (Butt, 2010).

### **Research Method**

I selected the qualitative research method to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon. The qualitative method involves the comprehension of meaning of different experiences, as well as covering a vast number of interpreting procedures in the areas of decoding, describing, and translating (Sergi & Hallin, 2011). The implementation process can be a valuable learning experience for both researcher and participant (Hunt, 2011). Depending on the selected research method, a researcher chooses research strategies in the context of the research questions (Kourula, 2010). Qualitative researchers use images, stories, expressions, and other forthcoming illustrations as non-numerical descriptive information when exploring a phenomenon (Marais, 2012).

The qualitative research method involves an interpretive and naturalistic approach (Silverman, 2006; Tucker, Powell, & Meyer, 1995). One of the key advantages of employing the qualitative methodology is that its use enables researchers to modify and improve research concepts as an inquiry proceeds (Tucker et al., 1995). Hunt (2011) noted that exploring the meaning of an area of human experience is the core of qualitative research. Researchers utilize the qualitative method to obtain a deep understanding of a

phenomenon (Tracy, 2010). For this purpose, qualitative researchers collect information on an experience, phenomena, or subject to increase their understanding (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

Accordingly, the utilization of the qualitative method is to comprehend the forces at work behind experiences that do not necessarily involve statistical analysis (Applebaum, 2012). The qualitative method enables the researcher to describe and illuminate the environment and experiences of the researched phenomenon (Birkinshaw, Brannen, & Tung, 2011). For that reason, it is essential that researchers ensure that the questions are appropriate for participants to assist in addressing the research questions when conducting a qualitative research study (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). A qualitative research method connects to real issues; thus, the right questions could lead to the answers that are beneficial in developing foundational and tangible solutions (Lămătic, 2011).

I did consider both quantitative and mixed methods in the beginning of the selection process. However, after careful consideration, I decided to utilize the qualitative method because its use allows researchers to characterize and capture the complex nature and life experiences of the phenomena being researched (Birkinshaw et al., 2011). Both quantitative and mixed methods support numerous means for analyzing, collecting, and decoding data (Bartholomew & Brown, 2012; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2010).

Quantitative research is helpful for answering questions of *where*, *how many*, *how much*, *who*, and *what* the relationship is between variables (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013).

However, the quantitative approach is not best for answering *why* and *how* questions

(Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). Quantitative research is suitable when the investigators wish to understand experiences of a large population (Bluhm, Harman, Lee, & Mitchell, 2011). In general, researchers employ the quantitative method when interested in testing hypotheses (Bansal & Corley, 2012). In this manner, researchers utilizing the quantitative method develop a robust research design to assure the statistical validity of results obtained (Goertz & Mahoney, 2013).

There are significant dissimilarities between the research results obtained from quantitative research and those of qualitative research (Barnham, 2012). The two methods have distinctive approaches and their objectives are not identical (Barnham, 2012). Furthermore, the methods have opposite concepts of what comprises *truth* (Barnham, 2012). In spite of these differences, scholars continue to use both methods effectively while conducting research. Both, qualitative and quantitative methods enable researchers to capitalize on the respective strengths of each approach (Barnham, 2012). In other words, qualitative and quantitative methods provide researchers with a tradeoff between breadth and depth, and between targeting specific populations and generalizability (Barnham, 2012).

Mixed methods research is the third major research methodology (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013). The benefits of using mixed methods are that researchers can take advantage of the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods and counteract their weaknesses (Caruth, 2013). The objective is to give insight into a phenomenon under exploration and examination to capture information that the researcher may not be able to obtain by utilizing the quantitative or qualitative method alone (Caruth, 2013). Overall,

the mixed method approach provides researchers with innovative ways to include an abundance of information by enabling researchers to collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data (Cameron, 2011; Palinkas et al., 2011). In conclusion, the mixed method enables researchers to answer research questions from a quantitative viewpoint stemming from qualitative data (Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins, 2011). Even though the mixed method can be an effective research approach, I did not select this research method because it is complex, time consuming, and requires knowledge of both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2011).

Although both quantitative and mixed method research methods were applicable to investigate the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance, the qualitative approach was most suitable for this particular study. The qualitative approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of the views and experiences of employees as well as the views, experiences, and decision-making processes of managers from one charter school pertaining to the organization's work-life balance programs. In quantitative research methods, objective measurements of data such as surveys provide means for testing a predetermined hypothesis (Silverman, 2010). For that reason, the quantitative approach to investigate this phenomenon, whether by itself or in combination with qualitative research method, was not appropriate for this research study.

### **Research Design**

There are different research designs to choose from for qualitative research such as case study design, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, or phenomenology

(Roberts, 2013). The design provides crucial indications about the information that a researcher is trying to assess (Yin, 2012).

When exploring the phenomenon, I performed the necessary qualitative research methods (face-to-face interviews and note taking) to gather information from the interviewees on their views and experiences (Connelly, 2010). I conducted this study to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. Therefore, I selected a case study research design (Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2012).

Case studies are typically exploratory designs to explore the *how* and *why* for gaining an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon (Cao & Hoffman, 2011; Walshe, 2011; Yin, 2009). Yin (2014) indicated that qualitative case studies are exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. In general, the purpose of the case study design is to concentrate on obtaining data that are from real-life surroundings that describe and explore experiences to reach a better understanding of a phenomenon (Amerson, 2011; Applebaum, 2012; Arghode, 2012; Walshe, 2011; Yin, 2012). Furthermore, researchers utilize case studies for analysis of individuals, a small group of participants, programs, policies, organizations, or events by studying holistically using one or more types of data (Reddy & Agrawal, 2012; Roberts, 2013; Yin, 2012). In this manner, case study research pertains to creating the topic foundation and developing concepts that contribute to present-day literature (Reddy & Agrawal, 2012). In addition, the case study research design is advantageous in a natural setting to obtain a greater appreciation of an issue or event of importance (Crowe et al., 2011). For this reason, employing a case study design

helps researchers to reflect on the participants' views and discover how the participants' perspectives contribute and influence the course of the study (Sangster-Gormley, 2013). Additionally, a single case study can produce a substantial amount of data (supportive details and quotations) that are indispensable to the progress (addressing the research question or questions) of the research topic (Barratt, Choi, & Li, 2011; Easton, 2010; Lalor et al., 2013). I employed an explanatory case study design for this study. Yin (2014) noted that an explanatory case study is appropriate when a researcher seeks to answer a question to explain causal links related to the intervention. The other types of case studies considered were exploratory and descriptive (Yin, 2011; Yin, 2014). Researchers employ an exploratory case study to gain a better understanding of a broad phenomenon or to generate new ideas and hypotheses (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, researchers employ a descriptive case study design to describe an intervention or phenomenon within the context that it occurred (Yin, 2014). My goal was not to conduct a study to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon to generate new ideas and hypotheses, or to conduct an in depth scrutiny of the situation under research. Therefore, exploratory and descriptive case study designs were not appropriate for the study.

I did consider other qualitative research designs. However, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, and phenomenology were not suitable designs to answer the research question for my study. When researchers want to focus on cultural groups and provide a thorough description of everyday life and practices, they employ the ethnography research (Boddy, 2011). In this manner, ethnographers strive to explain the social patterns of groups (Hays & Wood, 2011; Macgilchrist & Tom, 2011; Prior &

Miller, 2012; Venzon Cruz & Higgingbottom, 2013). Likewise, researchers employ grounded theory to study the interactions of individuals in social settings (Fernández & Lehmann, 2011; Halaweh, 2012; Sbaraini, Carter, Evans, & Blinkhorn, 2011). However, the main distinction between grounded theory and other qualitative research designs is the methodology to theory development (Dunne, 2011). The development of a theory comes from the data gathered, which is a significant element of the design (Brady & Loonam, 2010). As a result of using the grounded theory design, researchers indicate repetitive interactions between data collection and analysis (Tolhurst, 2011; Urquhart, Lehmann, & Myers, 2010).

Researchers use the narrative research design to provide order and reason to an individual's experiences by collecting stories to construct a narrative about the experiences and the meanings he or she attributes to the experiences (Etherington & Bridges, 2011; Holley & Colyar, 2012; Kajamaa, 2012). The narrative research design is a lens through which individuals comprehend their lives within cultures and time. The course of revealing, documenting, and interpreting personal life accounts can be an emotional instrument in understanding how individuals give meaning to their lives (Patsiopoulos & Buchanan, 2011). The phenomenological research design allows researchers to explore the essence or qualities of an experience through interviews, observations, or stories with individuals who are having the experience of the researcher's interest (Arghode, 2012; Cilesiz, 2011; Connelly, 2010; Englander, 2012; Flood, 2010; Pringle, Hendry, & McLafferty, 2011). Overall, the phenomenological design assist researchers in the comprehension of social realities that build on



individuals' experiences and the meanings attached to those experiences (Flood, 2010; Roberts, 2013; Smith, Bekker, & Cheater, 2011).

The fact that I did not select any of the aforementioned designs does not imply that they are not good designs. The case study research design was more meaningful and beneficial because by employing it, I was able to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. The case study research design is the choice for investigating one or a small number of situations where researchers collect and use *multiple sources of data* to understand the phenomenon being researched (Barratt, Choi, & Li, 2011; Lalor et al., 2013; Popil, 2010).

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for my study was one charter school located in Harlem, New York. My sample comprised 20 participants who included: (a) one chief academic officer, (b) chief financial officer, (c) chief operations officer, (d) comptroller, (e) head principal, (f) assistant principal, (g) human resource manager, (h) development manager, (i) information technology manager, and (j) office manager. The other participants included: (a) two teachers, (b) senior administrators, (c) security officers, (d) food service workers, (e) and maintenance technicians, married or single, with or without dependents who have been working 3 years or more in their position, from one nonprofit charter school organization.

The purpose of sampling is an act, process, or method of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of the population for determining characteristics or

parameters of the whole population (McCabe et al., 2013). The utilization of purposeful sampling is appropriate for qualitative inquiry because by using purposeful sampling the researcher can select participants who can address the goals and objectives of the study (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008; Mason, 2010; McCabe et al., 2013; Turner, 2010). Equally important, in qualitative research, investigating behaviors, experiences, and views are relevant. For this reason, I selected purposeful sampling, which enabled me to explore a full range of perspectives from participants (Patton, 1990). For the selection of the participants, I used purposeful sampling (Hanson, Balmer, & Giardino, 2011; McCabe, Stern, & Dacko, 2013). When employing purposeful sampling, the researcher is looking for qualities or peculiarities of a targeted population that has experienced a phenomenon (Patton, 1990). Purposeful sampling requires quintessential individuals in the environment who can help in identifying information-rich cases (Draper & Swift, 2011; Suri, 2011). Information-rich cases are events from which individuals can learn a great deal concerning issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry (Patton, 1990).

Hanson, Balmer, and Giardino (2011) posited that a researcher may choose to select a sample of participants or even documents to achieve a specific goal and to gain the insight most relevant to the research question. Therefore, the researcher could decide to sample criterion, critical, extreme or deviant, homogeneous, intensity, maximum variation, or typical cases (Hanson et al., 2011; Patton, 1990; Suri, 2011) and elaborate on why the sample of participants or documents could provide data that address the question that guides the study (Hanson et al., 2011). The purpose of homogenous sampling is to describe a specific subgroup in depth (Patton, 1990). Furthermore, using

homogenous samples can help facilitate important comparisons across studies (Suri, 2011). Overall, utilization of purposeful sampling leads to the development of a greater and clearer understanding of a research study (Dongre, Deshmukh, Kalaiselvan, & Upadhyaya, 2010; McCabe et al., 2013). Most important, as a study progresses, the researcher may find more documents or additional participants to corroborate or challenge emerging insights in an effort to develop a greater understanding and to explain themes or categories in the data (Hanson et al., 2011). For this reason, the purposeful sampling method (homogeneous sample) was instrumental for conducting research on charter school managers and employees who were part of the targeted population.

Examining the views and experiences of 20 charter school managers and employees did not permit the generalization of findings to other organizations yet allowed other researchers to ascertain *transferability* (Cao & Hoffman, 2011). The purpose of selecting 20 participants was to ensure there were sufficient data to conduct the study (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2006; Suri, 2011). For that reason, selecting 20 participants from a group of experienced charter school workers aided me in gaining a clear and concise understanding of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. In general, observing procedures for qualitative studies require a minimum of 20 participants (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). Mason (2010) noted 20 participants for a case study are sufficient to obtain rich data to understand the dynamics of job related problems. For a case study, as indicated by Yin (2012), there must be a degree of information shared from participants' unified experience. In this case, because of the participants' experiences, I

was able to gather data to answer the research question. The objective of conducting individual interviews was to achieve data saturation, the point where there are no new patterns or themes observed with additional data collection (Mason, 2010). I achieved data saturation by the 17<sup>th</sup> interview. However, I continued to interview managers and employees until I had interviewed a total of 20.

I selected interview locations that were comfortable for the participants as well as being appropriate for the study. The settings could affect the participants' responses and the clarity of the recordings. Since I was conducting face-to-face interviews, choosing a quiet location (room, office, participant home, etc.) was imperative to utilize professional recording equipment to enable the quality recordings in a quiet environment. Thus, I also minimized distractions by calling participants the day before the interview and politely conveying the importance of putting their cell phones on vibrate or silent mode during the 60 minute interview. Furthermore, if participants wanted to interview at their place of business, I requested they put a *do-not-disturb* sign on the door informing people not to interrupt.

### **Ethical Research**

Data collection took place after the IRB approved the research proposal by issuing approval number 02-04-15-0312640. The most important requirement for conducting research is to ensure ethical integrity (Haahr, Norlyk, & Hall, 2013). Therefore, I maintained the highest ethical standards throughout the study required by Walden University and Institutional Review Board (IRB). Furthermore, I provided study participants with consent forms in person and electronically. The consent forms included

the purpose of the study, procedures for the interview process, and confidentiality safety measures. Most important, I stated in clear and concise language that participants' consent was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time.

To ensure my adherence to the four principles of informed consent, which include (a) autonomy, (b) justice, (c) non-maleficence, and (d) voluntariness (Rodrigues, Antony, Krishnamurthy, Shet, & De Costa, 2013), I informed potential participants about the purpose of the study, the benefits, and the risks of participation prior to obtaining consent (Rodrigues et al., 2013). The consent forms were essential for the research conducted for the study (Cole, 2012). Therefore, before the interviews, I provided a consent form with all information pertaining to the study, which identified the requirements for both participants and me. All participants had a voluntary right to agree or decline to participate in this study. Consent indicates a discussion of trust, and it involves unceasing dialogue with the participant of the study (Kiguba, Kutuyabami, Kiwuwa, Katabira, & Sewankambo, 2012). Once the participants signed and dated their consent forms, it was my responsibility to create an atmosphere of trust and accountability. In this sense, to establish and solidify the cohesiveness of the human connection, I ensured that participants felt enthusiastically involved in the study. Therefore, for this research to be effective, the information provided before and after the study mirrored what the participants expected and wanted to know about the doctoral study.

The justification for the consent forms was to obtain the consent of each participant as well as to reassure each participant that proper safeguards were in place to prevent accidental disclosure of sensitive data (names or identity) attained during the

study (Pletcher, Lo, & Grady, 2015). Equally important, I understood that conducting in-depth interviews may bring out personal suppressed feelings or experiences (some beneficial and embarrassing). For that reason, to protect the privacy of the participants along with their organization, I assigned alphanumeric codes and coding numbers to each of the participants after verifying their availability.

The data generated during the interview process is a vital part of the research. The data are of great importance to the researcher while conducting the investigation, which may prove to be an indispensable resource of continuing value to the researcher in the present and to future researchers (Cliggett, 2013). It is my responsibility to document and securely store all research data for approximately 5 years in a safe place to prevent unauthorized access, disclosure, or loss. Furthermore, during the 5-year period, all data will be available for review to comply with the laws and regulations governing the conduct of research (Cliggett, 2013). However, after 5 years, I will shred all documents (transcripts, field notes, etc.) and destroy all electronic recordings (removable hard drives, thumb drives) by using a heavy-duty metal shredding machine.

No electronic data (protected by password) during the research (addresses, names, business, or personal telephone numbers) were disclosed. Confidentiality is vital for both the participants and the organization in the study. Hence, the identity of individuals or their employer was not included in the study. Most important, only I have access to all recordings and notes that will remain secured on a computer storage file (thumb drive) and stored in a safe for 5 years. However, participants will receive a copy of the research findings to keep for review and their records. In addition, I listed all agreement

documents in the (a) text of the study, (b) appendices, and (c) table of contents to ensure compliance.

### **Data Collection**

Gibbs et al. (2007) conveyed that sampling and the data collection process are important in determining the quality of a study and the generalizability of the results. Therefore, as the researcher, I had the responsibility to conduct my research within the parameters of the goal of the study. Furthermore, because of emerging theoretical considerations, I had to cover relevant perspectives of participants by clearly outlining an explanation of my study's limitations (Gibbs et al., 2007).

### **Instruments**

I was the primary data collection instrument for this case study. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) noted the concept of humans acting as a research instrument to communicate the uniqueness of the researcher's role throughout the qualitative data collection and analysis process as only people can bring the sensitivity, flexibility, and responsiveness, needed for scientific inquiry. The criteria for the selection of the instruments for this study came from reflective thinking on obtaining high quality data, being able to probe, availability and familiarity, having flexibility, and comparability because selecting appropriate instruments is a vital part of conducting good quality research and evaluation.

The sources of evidence that I used were face-to-face interviews, organizational performance track indicator documents (employee absenteeism and turnover), work-life balance program and policy guidelines, as well as archived organizational records on

work-life policies and programs. Qualitative research entails exploring the process of how individuals attach meanings or conceive of actions, events, or programs taking place in a real-world setting (Yin, 2012). Qualitative researchers explore how individuals perceive certain actions, events, or processes toward a critical exploration of how the specific setting has played a role in shaping an individual's perceptions and meanings to events, actions, or processes (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). When conducting qualitative case study researchers can use the six sources of evidence proposed by Yin (2012): (a) interviews, (b) archival records, (c) direct observation, (d) documentation, (e) participant observation, and (f) physical artifacts. Yin (2009) noted interviews enable researchers to explore individuals' perceptions of events, actions, or processes.

The qualitative interview method is a technique researchers employ to capture people's experiences and to comprehend how they give meaning to those experiences (Rabionet, 2011). Conducting face-to-face interviews is advantageous for researchers because of the opportunity to establish rapport with participants, and thereby obtaining their support. To ensure that the face-to-face interview is successful, I followed five strategies developed by Hunt, Chan, and Mehta (2011):

1. Think critically and reflectively on prior interview experience.
2. Prepare prudently for the interview.
3. Be mindful of the power dynamics within the interview.
4. Be diligent by being attentive to the language and verbal cues.
5. Evaluate the progress of the entire process on an on-going basis.



By following these strategies, I ensured that all participants felt comfortable and that the data (notes and recordings) were acceptable and trustworthy. Conducting an interesting and productive interview requires skillful execution without consciously influencing participants' ideas (Hunt et al., 2011). In general, as the interviewer, I controlled the quality of the research results. Therefore, training (e.g., tolerances and sensitivity) became essential (Pastore et al., 2011). In this manner, it was important to practice the interviewing process before beginning this study to ensure that I achieved the 5 interview strategies.

As indicated by Schultze and Avital (2011), interviewing enables exploring meanings of experiences in qualitative research. To ensure that the interviews were effective in collecting data, I asked only open-ended questions, which provided information for addressing the research question.

### **Data Collection Technique**

The main issue for qualitative researchers is having the ability to gain as many facts as possible concerning the research phenomenon with respectful and compassionate questioning (Haahr et al., 2013). Equally important, I had to recognize and avoid bias by thoroughly checking for biased interview questions, and rephrase or remove them to attain data to answer the research question (Schultze & Avital, 2011). For this reason, as I contemplated developing my interview questions, I reflected on my responsibility as a qualitative interviewer. According to Rossetto (2014), qualitative interviewers strive to comprehend human behavior, obtain information and meaning, and learn from participants. I wanted to build rapport with, listen to, and understand my participants

(Rossetto, 2014). For that reason, I created a unique atmosphere for the interview so that I was able to pay sensitive attention to the integrity and well-being of the participants and to the boundaries for what questions to ask (Haahr et al., 2013). In this sense, this offered an open, impartial space for in-depth interaction and reflection that promoted positive change while also strengthening the validity of the data (Rossetto, 2014). Nonetheless, after reflecting on the topic of my study, I realized that each interview would be different, which may offer unexpected moments that would require me to be an ethical, knowledgeable, and sensitive human being (Haar et al., 2013). Therefore, to focus attention on key issues and objects of the investigation with respect to a given specific business problem, I took the time to develop interview questions that were thought provoking as well as clear and concise.

The data collection in the case study method includes different qualitative research techniques such as interviews, various forms of observation, and documents analysis, as suggested by Gibbert and Ruigrok (2010). The data collection process for this study included open-ended questions articulated by me in a face-to-face semistructured interview session, field notes, organizational track indicator documents (employee retention and commitment), archived organizational records on work-life balance programs, and the investigation of current work-life balance programs and policies guidelines.

Evaluation refers to the process of gathering information and analyzing it to make decisions about how to improve programs and achieve goals (Carman, 2011). This process provides the means for determining whether organizational policies or programs

are effectively achieving stated objectives and anticipated results (Carman, 2011). For this reason, I reviewed the organization's work-life balance programs and guidelines and evaluated their organizational track indicator documents (i.e., employee absenteeism, motivation, job satisfaction, productivity, and turnover) before and after implementation of the programs; then I evaluated the data to assess the effectiveness of the policies and programs, activities, and services. Most important, I used these metrics for methodological triangulation (Guion et al., 2011). Nonetheless, writing an evaluation memo was a critical aspect of evaluating qualitative data (document reviews, interviews, and observations) and helped in documenting the research findings (Jeanfreau & Jack, 2010). Essentially, writing an evaluation memo provided the basis of the analyses that I included in Section 3. In this sense, evaluating the organization's work-life balance policies, program's activities, and other data from the organization provided me with new information that I used to do a follow-up with interview probes that produced responses regarding the different components of the WLB programs. For example, when asking about suggestions for enhancing the policies and programs, it was advantageous to jog the participant's memory by listing the various policies and program activities (health and wellness programs, flexible work schedules, and paid time-off).

Semistructured interviews offer a means for researchers to gain an understanding of how others view their life, the environment, and the world (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2009). In addition, semistructured interviews provide a flexible approach to the interview process because the method permits for unexpected responses and concerns to surface in the course of using open-ended questions (Pathak & Intrat, 2012).

The purpose of a semistructured interview is to concentrate on details of the participants' experiences and the significances the participants attribute to those experiences (Adams, 2010). This technique provides direction and structure to the dialogue while permitting participants to express their perspective and ideas on the issue. Furthermore, this approach allows more freedom to explore issues (Pathak & Intratat, 2012).

However, a good qualitative study centered on semistructured interviews depends on the capabilities, competencies, integrity, vision, and wisdom of the researcher doing the analysis. For this reason, preparation and practice were crucial for this endeavor (Rabionet, 2011). Therefore, I practiced to improve my interview skills to ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of the research findings (Tracy, 2010; White & Drew, 2011). Overall, practicing helped me achieve the goal of conducting a high-quality case study with credible findings (Roberts, 2013).

Using the semistructured interview method, I discovered the advantages and disadvantages of the work-life balance phenomenon from the viewpoint of the individuals (Chenail, 2011). When employing this method of data collection, I attempted to gain a clear and concise understanding of the life experiences of participants to provide clarifications of the individual or individual's life experiences that they conveyed (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Additionally, to understand the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. I created an atmosphere of trust that enabled the participants to be comfortable and free to be themselves. Using semistructured interviews created the atmosphere in which the

participants had the opportunity to provide their views on work-life balance during their face-to-face interviews. Overall, this encouraged truthful responses that added essences to the interview and final write up as well as giving the participants an outlet (Casey & Houghton, 2010; Doody & Noonan, 2013). Most important, I offered participants the opportunity to review their interview transcripts to ensure authenticity.

The qualitative interview method is a technique used to capture people's experiences and to comprehend how they give meaning to those experiences. For that reason, preparation and practice were crucial for this endeavor (Rabionet, 2011). This study involved semistructured interviews of charter school managers and employees to understand the work-life balance strategies and derivative programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. To ensure effectiveness of the interview process, I listened, was non-judgmental, and thought reflectively and critically without swaying participants to give answers (Turner, 2010). Furthermore, I thoroughly reviewed the interview data daily to ensure trustworthiness and examined the data to look for themes (Ivey, 2012; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). Equally important, besides conducting semistructured interviews and analyzing the charter school documents, I reviewed archived organizational records on work-life balance policies and programs and government documents, to obtain facts pertaining to work-life balance programs' effects on organization performance. Reading additional collaborative data from other sources helped me in ensuring the authenticity and trustworthiness of the study findings. In this sense, the use of both interview data and documentary evidence helped triangulate the findings for this study, and assure the study's validity.

To establish and ensure that the foundation of this study was trustworthy, I developed an interview guide (Appendix C) to obtain the data that were essential to the foundation, the objectives, and purpose of the study. This guide ensured during the interview process that I did not lead the conversation; rather, it helped the participants to describe their lived experience without feeling pressured into giving particular responses (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2009).

The interview exploration had seven stages: (a) thematizing, (b) designing, (c) interviewing, (d) transcribing, (e) analyzing, (f) verifying, and (g) reporting (Kvale, 1996). In other words, I had to formulate the purpose, plan the design of the study, interview with a reflective approach to the knowledge sought, prepare the interview for analysis, decide on the appropriate analysis, determine the generalizability, reliability, and validity of the interview results, and convey the results (Kvale, 1996).

An efficient research strategy involves meticulous planning and pilot studies. Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I conducted a pilot study to collect information prior to conducting the true research study. I interviewed five individuals who did not participate in the original study. The pilot test provided insight into (a) the research design and method, (b) the research instrument, (c) recruitment of potential participants, and (c) modification of the interview questions if necessary. For that reason, I conducted the pilot study using the interview questions developed for this study (Appendix B).

A pilot study can bring to light flaws in the design of the research procedures, helping to address them before time, and resources become exhausted (Arain, Campbell,

Cooper, & Lancaster, 2010). Conducting a pilot study enables the researcher to test the interview protocol in order to improve the quality and efficiency of the main study (Chenail, 2011).

Conducting a pilot study was a great opportunity for me to administer the interview questions in the same manner as in the subsequent actual study. In general, the pilot study was beneficial in helping me to identify participants' emotions, develop greater appreciation of the challenge to share life events, discover hidden bias, learn the importance of patience in the interviewing process, and gain an appreciation of participants' opinions (Chenail, 2011). Nonetheless, after following up with the pilot study participants and collecting their feedback on the effectiveness of the interview questions, I did not have to make any changes to the interview questions. However, if I did discover, after conducting the pilot study, that the interview questions were not effective, I would have revised the interview questions. Equally important, I would have requested an IRB review and approval prior to adding new interview questions or revising some or all of the existing interview questions. In such cases, researchers must submit a *Request for Change in Procedures* form along with any other supporting documents affected by these revisions.

### **Data Organization Techniques**

I used interviews to gain knowledge of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance at one charter school organization. Furthermore, I enforced the confidentiality and anonymity contract of the research participants before and after the

data collection process. In addition, I sincerely thanked each participant before and after each interview for making the study a reality by being a contributor. Additionally, I implemented alphanumeric codes to protect each participant's identity and name. Therefore, I provided each participant with a letter code after their position (Manager=M, Employee=E) followed by a number (Manager 1=M1, Employee 1=E1). The codes ranged from M1 to M10 and E1 to E10 (representing a total of 20 participants). I carefully transcribed the interview data to ensure that the interview transcripts and audio recordings matched. Transcribing the interviews was essential to understanding the data collected during the interview process. The more knowledge concerning the data, the more recognizable the data becomes to the researcher, the more likely the researcher will pay attention to and listen to what the data reveals (Hoflund, 2012). Because of confidentiality and the nature of the study, information that was deemed sensitive to participants (emotional responses pertaining to family) was not included in the final write up. All consent forms, field notes, interview transcripts, MAXQDA files, recordings, and thumb drives, which only I have access to, will remain locked in a secure location for approximately 5 years according to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines (Walden, 2013). After the 5 year storage period, to protect the confidentiality of all research participants and avoid inappropriate usage, I will destroy all research data by using a facility that has a heavy-duty metal shredding machine.

### **Data Analysis Technique**

The analysis of case study data involves both the researcher and participants. Therefore, I followed the qualitative process of coding, categorizing, and interpreting to



give meaning to the phenomenon under investigation. I therefore analyzed the rich descriptive data to identify the essence of the themes that started to emerge. At this phase of the analysis, I was fully engaged to ensure both an authentic and an in-depth description of the phenomenon (Fade, & Swift, 2011; Pringle, Hendry, & McLafferty, 2011).

The data that I collected for this study provided the foundation for the analysis and final write up. Participatory analysis and interpretation is a two-way form of feedback and reflection that shifts back and forth between the comprehension of the researcher and the verification of authenticity by the participants (Bradbury-Jones, Irvine, & Sambrook, 2010). According to Yin (2012), data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, or testing evidence to address the initial propositions of a study. In this sense, the data collection and analysis processes tend to be simultaneous with analytical steps guiding the process. For this reason, I followed the data analysis procedures as suggested by Wesson (2005):

1. Review all interview notes and listen carefully to each recorded interview to gain an initial understanding of the participants' responses.
2. Organize and code the data attained, while extracting significant key words and statements from the interviews.
3. Group themes and meanings from the data collected.
4. Formulate preliminary interpretations.
5. Meet with participants and go over interpretations.
6. If there are no discrepancies, use the themes and meaning to form a holistic

interpretation of the data.

7. Meet with the participants again for further validating of the interpretations.
8. Perform a final write-up.

Although the data analysis process was time consuming, it was essential to ensure validity and reliability of the findings. It was imperative to use appropriate validation procedures. The findings and the methods by which they originated need the support of scholars and the academic community so that the new and validated knowledge can become a factor in enhancing daily practice that eventually contribute to the welfare of society (Lucko & Rojas, 2010).

In exploring the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance, one research question set the foundation for this study. Besides the research question, there were a total of 25 interview questions (Appendix A) that I asked managers and employees (chief academic officer, chief financial officer, chief operations officer, comptroller, etc.) concerning their experience and views on the issue of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at this charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance:

#### Interview Questions (Leadership)

1. How would you describe your work-life balance programs?
2. How do employees react to those work-life balance programs?
3. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee absenteeism?

4. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee turnover?
5. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee retention?
6. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee motivation?
7. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee job satisfaction?
8. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee productivity?

#### Interview Questions (Employees)

1. What are your opinions on the work-life balance programs offered by this organization?
2. What are your views on the need for work-life balance programs in this organization?
3. In your opinion, what are the most rewarding parts of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs?
4. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work schedule programs?
5. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the job-sharing programs?
6. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the health and wellness programs?
7. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the paid time-off programs?
8. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work arrangement programs?

9. Based on your experience, how would you describe the importance of you having access to each of these work-life balance programs?
10. Which of the programs, if any, affected your motivation? What was the nature of the contribution?
11. Which of the programs, if any, affected your job satisfaction? What was the nature of the contribution?
12. Which of the programs, if any, affected your productivity? What was the nature of the contribution?
13. Which of the programs, if any, affected your absenteeism? What was the nature of the contribution?
14. Which work-life balance programs incentives, if any, affected your decision to continue working for the organization? What was the nature of the contribution?
15. In your opinion, what are the limitations of the organization's work-life balance programs?
16. In your opinion, what are the failures of the organization's work-life balance programs?
17. What type of alternative programs to improve employee motivation, job satisfaction, absenteeism, retention, turnover, and productivity would you like to see the organization implement, and why?

After collecting the data from the interviewees, I used MAXQDA, a qualitative analysis computer program to help in analyzing the data accumulated during qualitative research. The program enabled me to code, organize, and transcribe all data (recordings

and notes) taken during the interview process. In this sense, I was looking to identify themes within the interview transcripts and recordings that relate to the research question in the study. Themes are common ideas and patterns that I repeatedly observed as I read the data collected (Lămătic, 2011). For this reason, I reviewed the data several times to identify all of the themes. Furthermore, I interpreted the data by attaching significance to the themes and patterns observed. Followed by, writing a list of key themes and reviewing the data again (Lămătic, 2011). I was looking for differences in responses that I recorded in the data collection process.

I used participants' perspective codes to illuminate questions that related to the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. I also used (a) alphanumeric codes, (b) numbers, and (c) color codes to identify participants. Equally important, I used methodological triangulation to assure the validity of the findings by collecting data through different methods and gathering various kinds of data on the studied phenomenon (Titko & Lace, 2011). Reviewing evidence from different types of data sources such as interviews and company records enabled me to analyze information related to my study as well as increase the credibility of the research findings. Therefore, I analyzed interview responses and archival data such as records on (a) employee job satisfaction, (b) motivation, (c) absenteeism, (d) turnover, (e) productivity, and (f) retention before and after program implementation. Furthermore, I reviewed each individual program including flexible work schedule, job sharing, health and wellness, paid time-off, and flexible work arrangements. The goal, in terms of this evaluation, was

to obtain an accurate understanding and assessment of the perceived and actual effectiveness of the work-life balance programs and their contribution to improving employee performance. In general, methodological triangulation enabled me to identify the similarities and discrepancies between what nonprofit school leaders and employees state in the interviews regarding their daily work and the actual outcomes from the use of the work-life programs.

### **Reliability and Validity**

Reliability and validity are two factors that researchers must address while designing studies, analyzing results, and assessing the quality of their studies (Tracy, 2010). For this reason, I took the necessary steps to assure reliability and validity of the findings of this study by conducting a thorough examination of the data to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity, which were crucial for demonstrating the reliability, validity, and relevance of my findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

#### **Reliability**

There have been many scholarly debates, definitions, and interpretations associated with the term *reliability*. However, quantitative researchers use the term reliability when testing and assessing their findings. Whether qualitative or quantitative, reliability refers to the consistency of the results of a study that would be identical if conducted by different individuals or repeated over time (Pilnick & Swift, 2010; Yin, 2009). In general, reliability deals with the consistency, dependability, and replicability of the findings obtained from a study (Yu, Jannasch-Pennell, & DiGangi, 2011).

There are many reasons why reliability is crucial to the success of a study. First, reliability is a pre-cursor for validity because anything not reliable may not be valid (McManus, Ferguson, Wakefor, Powis, & James, 2011). This demonstrates that one of the essential requirements of any research design is the reliability of a study's data and results. In qualitative research, there are numerous explanations of purpose and significances given to situations and experiences (Oluwatayo, 2012). Reliability in qualitative research is a link between the researcher data and events stemming from, and happening in the natural surroundings (Oluwatayo, 2012). To assure the reliability of a study, the researcher explains clearly the different processes and phases of the inquiry (Zohrabi, 2013). The researcher thereby justifies every part of the study including the purpose of the study, design, method, and topic (Zohrabi, 2013). For example, feedback from participants also brings reliability, validity, and credibility to the clarification process. The following benefits can result from member checking participants' feedback (Johnson & Christensen, 2010; Thomas & Magilvy, 2011):

1. Allow participants to rectify and question falsifications and misunderstandings.
2. Decrease the likelihood of participants' assertions that the researcher misinterpreted their information.
3. Make available chances for the researcher to clarify certain information.
4. Permit for further information gathering.
5. Give participants the opportunity to verify the correctness of data.
6. Allow participants to help form research summary and conclusions.

Even though benefits come from participant's feedback (new data integrated into findings, conclusions, and recommendations), there is a possibility of problems. For instance, there may be participants who want to please the researcher and agree with everything, never questioning the beginning, the middle, or the conclusion of the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2010).

Overall, to assure reliability in qualitative research, examination of trustworthiness is important. For example, a researcher can summarize the different processes and phases of the inquiry such as the methodological context and the approaches employed within the study (Ali & Yusof, 2011). It is also essential to keep a record of analytical ideas and meanings that derive from data, with the methodological approach and procedures the researcher employed for producing data. This includes specifying descriptions of phenomena with appropriate sequence of events of the social context in which they occurred, specifically in terms of events, individuals, and places (Ali & Yusof, 2011).

By using the four aspects of trustworthiness (i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability), I was able to illustrate qualitative rigor. In addition, I used procedures that included transcript checking to ensure there were no errors made during transcribing. I also used procedures that included categorizing, member checking, through confirming results and interpretations with participants (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002). The documentation of procedures facilitates consistency, replicability, as well as taking responsibility to assure the study's reliability.



Marshall and Rossman (2011) indicated that research reliability concerns the degree to which measures are free from error and yield consistent results. To ensure reliability, I properly documented the procedures for this study and recorded as many steps as possible (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, I recorded all the data and improved the validity of the responses by asking clear and concise interview questions and member checking (White & Drew, 2011). Equally important, I followed specific procedures to minimize mistakes in the data transcription process and repeatedly checked for new emerging themes related to the research question (Yin, 2009). I repeatedly compared the audio recordings to the transcribed interview notes to ensure the accuracy of data. Using these strategies, I assured the reliability of findings for this study.

### **Validity**

The concept of study validity has evolved during the last century, expanding from a method that focused on fundamental assessment of test instrument validity to construct validity, which has transpired as the main concept of study validity currently (Colliver, Conlee, & Verhulst, 2012). However, this does not detract from the basic concept of validity (a measurement instrument, or a test, measured what it purported to measure), which is widely held to be the most important criterion for assessment (Colliver et al., 2012). Overall, validity is not a solitary metric but rather entails integrated effort on numerous fronts to justify my conclusions as authentic (Roe & Just, 2009). For this reason, I ensured the quality by viewing all information that would substantiate and corroborate my findings and conclusions addressing the research question.

Validation is a significant foundation of research in social sciences and is a representation of research quality and rigor. In qualitative studies, validity is the extent to which data collected were believable, convincing, dependable, and defended when contested (Venkatesh et al., 2013). Venkatesh et al. (2013), identified three types of validity in qualitative research including descriptive (the accuracy of reporting), interpretive (interpreting the views, thoughts, and experiences of participants), and theoretical validity (explanation addresses the theoretical framework making it credible and defensible).

Thomas and Magilvy (2011) recommended four criteria for judging qualitative research: (a) truth–value (credibility), (b) applicability (transferability), (c) consistency (dependability), and (d) neutrality (confirmability). As noted above, there are various opinions on the best practices to ensure validity in research. To ensure validity of a study, it is imperative to employ credible techniques, methods, and strategies. The vigor of this qualitative case study depended on credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

To establish credibility I reviewed all transcripts, looking for similarities within and across study participants (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). I utilized reflexivity, member checking, and peer debriefing. Member checking refers to meeting with participants and sharing the data to ensure that the researchers' interpretations (reported as categories and themes) are accurate representations of participants' experiences (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Furthermore, to establish transferability I provided a clear and concise description of the population studied by providing descriptions of demographics and geographic

boundaries of the study (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). In addition to establishing dependability, I repeated the analysis process, conducted a thorough review of the research method, and repeated my study procedures to ascertain that the original findings were accurate. Furthermore, repeating the research steps also allowed me to assess the extent to which I followed proper research practices (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). To establish confirmability, I wrote and recorded all personal feelings, biases, and insights. Most important, I followed, instead of leading the interviews by asking participants for clarity of definitions, metaphors, and sayings (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011).

To increase my understanding of the research as well as add vigor to the study, I employed methodological triangulation principles. Methodological triangulation is a way of cross-verifying data from several sources (Wynn & Williams, 2012). This aided in establishing validity within the study (Rennie, Venville, & Wallace, 2011). Most important, using the technics of data triangulation to collect data helped in utilizing the procedure of examining and showing the prominence (Rennie et al., 2011) of understanding the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. I implemented practices such as validation, probing, and analysis of all data I obtained from the participants of this study.

The purpose of methodological triangulation is twofold. First, critical realism enables researchers to investigate complex organizational phenomena in a holistic manner and allows them to develop and support an in-depth explanation for the outcome of a specific phenomenon (Wynn & Williams, 2012). The second is to control the

influence of various biases on the research process and the results generated by the process (Wynn & Williams, 2012). In general, methodological triangulation pertains to utilizing various sources of evidence such as archival data, documentation, interviews data, and physical artifacts (Wynn & Williams, 2012; Yin, 2012).

The methodological triangulation process begins when collecting information from participants (Finfgeld-Connett, 2010). Since I employed a qualitative explanatory case study, methodological triangulation was essential to assuring the validity of the findings by collecting different types of data on the phenomenon (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011; Titko & Lace, 2011). Employing methodological triangulation required me to utilize multiple types of data that included: (a) researcher' perspectives, (b) theoretic lenses, and (c) analysis to examine diverse problems, increase opportunity, create an understanding, and initiate constant clarification (Carlson, 2010; Tracy, 2010). To validate my findings, conclusions, and recommendations, I collected data from 4 sources (i.e., charter school human resource and archive departments, benefits management company, work-life management company) and evaluated them to determine the extent of the verification of the results (Houghton et al., 2013). The participants of this study answered questions about the strategies, procedures, and processes that nonprofit leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance.

### **Transition and Summary**

Section 2, I repeated (a) the purpose statement, (b) role of the researcher, (c) participants, (d) research method and design, (e) population and sampling, (f) ethical

research, (g) data collection, (h) instruments and techniques, (i) data organization techniques, and (j) reliability and validity. In Section 3, I will discuss (a) the overview of the study, (b) presentation of the findings, (c) applications to professional practice, (d) implications for social change, (e) recommendations for action, (f) recommendations for further study, and (g) reflections.

### Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

In this section, I discuss (a) the overview of the study, (b) presentation of the findings, (c) applications to professional practice, (d) implications for social change, (e) recommendations for action, (f) recommendations for further study, and (g) reflections. This section concludes with my reflections stemming from completing the study and with my conclusions.

#### **Overview of Study**

The purpose of this explanatory qualitative case study was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. The primary research question was as follows: What work-life balance programs do leaders utilize in this organization to improve employee performance, and what are the perceived contributions? I conducted in-depth interviews of managers and employees (totaling 20) who have spent at least 3 years in an administrative, directorial, managerial, operational, supervisory, or teaching position at one charter school organization provided the data for the study. Other sources of data used were field notes, peer-reviewed journals, organizational performance track indicators, archived organizational records on work-life balance programs (commitment, turnover, productivity), and current work-life balance programs and policies guidelines (e.g., master enrollment, WLB programs employee handbook) that enabled me to investigate the main research question. Prior to the interviews, participants reviewed and signed consent forms, which I presented to them in person with an option to provide a manual or electronic signature as acceptance for participation in the study. Each

interview lasted 60 minutes and all interviews took place at the participants' place of business, within Harlem, New York. I used 25 questions to gain an understanding of the contributions of work-life balance programs. Eight of the interview questions were for managers and 17 for employees (see Appendix A). Participants' names and locations were not part of the interview transcripts but were represented as codes. For example, *M* represented manager and *E* represented employee. Furthermore, each manager and employee was assigned numbers from 1 through 10. For instance, *MI* represents participant manager one while *EI* represents participant employee one in the organization. The analysis of data collected from the participants' responses revealed how interviewees viewed the current work-life balance programs in their organizations. The analysis of the archival data gathered from the school revealed that prior to the implementation of the WLB programs employee absenteeism, turnover, motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, and retention were serious issues within the charter school organization. Nonetheless, the responses to the open-ended interview questions resulted in similar themes from the participants. The 7 themes that emerged from the data analysis regarding the work-life balance programs nonprofit leaders at one charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance were:

- Some work-life balance programs are effective
- A supportive work environment is important
- Employee commitment and motivation increased
- Health and wellness programs improved employee well-being and productivity
- Employee job satisfaction and quality work life increased

- Culture changed through increased worker control the job
- Participation in the job sharing was low and decreased over time

### **Presentation of the Findings**

The overarching research question that guided this study was: What work-life balance programs do leaders utilize in this organization to improve employee performance, and what are the perceived contributions? The subsidiary research questions were:

- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee motivation?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to reducing employee absenteeism?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to reducing employee turnover?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee job satisfaction?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee productivity?
- How do work-life balance programs at a charter school organization contribute to improving employee retention?

In this section, I will discuss how I conducted the interviews and gathered data from the school as well as the triangulations of the archival data. Furthermore, I will discuss the participants' responses, data analysis procedures, emerging themes, and the



extent to which the job demands-resources model ties to the study findings. I will conclude the discussion with the conclusions that help to address the research question and the subsidiary research questions.

I conducted semistructured interviews to understand the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. I created an atmosphere of trust that enabled all participants to be comfortable and free to be themselves, which added essence to the interview process. I asked all interview questions in a way that would allow for a focused, relaxed, two-way communication allowing the participants and me the flexibility to probe for details and discuss issues. The information from the semistructured interviews not only provided me with answers to the main interview questions, but also the reason for the responses. Using semistructured interviews created the atmosphere in which all participants had the opportunity to provide their views on the contributions of the WLB programs on themselves as well as on their work environment during their face-to-face interviews. Most importantly, using the semistructured interview method, I discovered the advantages and disadvantages of the current work-life balance programs from the perspective of both managers and employees. Overall, this approach allowed me to explore the contributions of the WLB programs in improving employee performance.

To gain a better understanding of the problem at the charter school organization prior to the implementation of the WLB programs the archival data that I gathered from the school provided me with the background information on:

- Employee absenteeism

- Employee turnover
- Employee motivation
- Employee job satisfaction
- Employee productivity
- Employee retention
- Employee commitment
- Employee performance

Overall, the archival data were crucial in assessing the contributions of the current WLB programs in improving employees' performance. Although the benefits of archival sources are considerable, there was a need to evaluate the quality of the data itself. To triangulate the archival sources collected, I made comparisons between data and claims of a number of reputable sources, which included human resource and archive department personnel. In this sense, I evaluated the reliability of the archival data as well as the validity of the data collection method.

The credibility verification for this study emerged from the outcomes stemming from the data analysis by way of:

- Participant interviews
- Field notes
- Organizational track indicator documents
- Archived organizational records on work-life balance programs
- Existing literature on work-life balance and work-life programs
- Current work-life balance programs and policies guidelines

To form one body of data and validate the research findings, I used Guion et al.'s (2011) approach and thoroughly reviewed the above documents and used methodological triangulation to assure the validity of the study findings. To establish reliability of the research results I conducted transcript checking, categorizing data into themes, member checks, and verified findings with participants.

The interview sessions enabled me to learn which programs the participants (employees) found beneficial, underutilized, and what programs they would like to see offered by their employer. The managers' responses revealed that they understood their roles in helping employees strike an effective balance between their personal and professional lives. The managers felt that supporting the implementation of the WLB programs would lead to improving employee performance. Overall, the participants' responses to the interview questions revealed that some of the implemented work-life balance programs contributed positively to employee performance.

A qualitative research approach was appropriate to gain a better understanding of the contributions of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit leaders at one charter school organization utilized to improve employee performance. This study was explanatory, and the participants were encouraged to elaborate on their views honestly and provide as much insight as possible. Reviewing and analyzing the archival data during and after the interview process helped me in gaining a better understanding of the contribution of the work-life balance programs as well as the conditions at the charter school before and after the implementation of the programs. For this reason, to strengthen the primary data as well as the validity of the study (Guion et al., 2011), I conducted a

thorough analysis of the archival data. In general, the archival data were a valuable source of information for gaining insights and knowledge about the phenomenon. Nonetheless, after the interview process, I entered all information into Microsoft Word and used MAXQDA software to organize, code, and transcribe all data (archival data, recordings, and field notes). For this reason, I followed the data analysis procedures as suggested by Wesson (2005):

1. Review all interview notes and listen carefully to each recorded interview to gain an initial understanding of the participants' responses;
2. Organize and code the data attained, while extracting significant key words and statements from the interviews;
3. Group themes and meanings from the data collected;
4. Formulate preliminary interpretations;
5. Meet with participants and go over interpretations;
6. If there are no discrepancies, use the themes and meaning to form a holistic interpretation of the data;
7. Meet with the participants again for further validating of the interpretations;
8. Perform a final write-up.

I carefully transcribed the interview data to ensure that the interview transcripts and audio recordings matched. Reading transcripts while listening to interview recordings helps to ensure that the transcripts accurately reflect the interviewees' words and meaning (Revsbaek & Tanggaard, 2015). I thoroughly reviewed the interview data daily to ensure

trustworthiness and explored the data to look for themes. Most important, I offered each participant the opportunity to verify the transcription of the interviews (transcript review) to ensure accurate responses and my interpretation of the responses. The managers' responses to the open-ended interview questions revealed that they all believed that the 5 implemented programs would contribute to improving employee performance. However, the employees' responses revealed that they perceived that 4 out of 5 programs had contributed to improving employee performance. The employees' responses to the open-ended interview questions resulted in similar themes regarding the perceived contributions of the work-life balance programs on employee performance. The interview data contain elements that revealed some work-life balance programs improved employee performance at a charter school organization in Harlem, New York. Upon the conclusion of the data analysis, seven themes emerged:

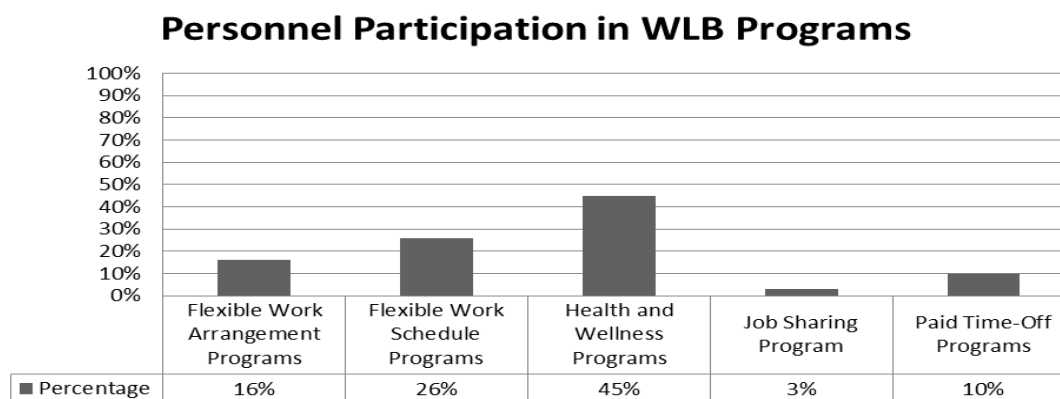
- Some work-life balance programs are effective
- A supportive work environment is important
- Employee commitment and motivation increased
- Health and wellness programs improved employee well-being and productivity
- Employee job satisfaction and quality work life increased
- Culture change through increased worker control over the job
- Participation in the job sharing program was low and decreased over time

**Theme 1: Some Work-life Balance Programs are Effective**

That some of the charter school's work-life balance programs are effective was a theme that emerged more frequently from participants' responses than all other themes. Participant E1 mentioned, "Some programs are effective." Participant E2 stated, "I think that some of the programs are effective and represent what having a balance is truly about." The rest of the participants stated that the programs were a good investment in workers, which helped employees inside and outside of the organization through better management of their physical and mental health, time, family relationships, and job responsibilities. These findings were consistent with Miryala and Chiluka (2012) and Thulasimani et al. (2010) findings. The authors found that work-life balance programs are long-term investments in workers. The purpose of the programs is to assist employers in attracting and retaining highly skilled workers by providing support to balance their personal and professional lives (Wang & Verma, 2012) inside and outside of work (Thulasimani et al., 2010).

To gain an understanding of the utilization of the current programs, I reviewed the organization work-life balance programs master enrollment. Figure 1 reflects the

percentage of personnel enrolled in the organization's WLB programs.



*Figure 1.* Percentage of organizational personnel participation in WLB programs.

According to some participants' responses to the interview questions some programs, like the health and wellness, flexible work schedules, flexible work arrangements, and paid time-off programs, are more effective than the job sharing program at improving employee performance, motivation, job satisfaction, productivity, reducing absenteeism and turnover, and increasing retention (E1,E4, E5, and E8). Participant E3 stated, "The health and wellness and flexible work schedule programs are effective and beneficial to the staff because they help to improve employee performance, commitment, confidence, and decrease the high turnover in the organization." Some of the participants used phrases like *advantageous, blessing, helpful, useful, valuable, and strategic* to describe the effectiveness of the health and wellness, flexible work schedules, flexible work arrangements, and paid time-off programs on employee motivation, job satisfaction, retention, and productivity (E1, E6, and E9). The job-sharing program was the only program that participants E2 through E10 did not find effective. All participants noted the importance of effectiveness and use of four of the work-life balance programs.

Two of the participants expressed that the programs are necessary for educating employees on effective work-life flexibility practices for balancing professional and personal responsibilities. Employees having control over their work schedules will enable them to meet their work and personal responsibilities (E7 and E10). These findings were consistent with those of Galinsky et al. (2011) who conducted a study using the 2008 national study of the changing workforce data to explore 28 different aspects of workplace flexibility. Galinsky et al. found that that 62% of the participants' schedules and shifts met their needs and 37% had complete control over their schedules. Furthermore, 45% had control over when their workday began and ended, 84% were able to make short-notice changes to their schedules, 16% worked some regular paid hours at home, and 36% worked compressed workweeks at times (Galinsky et al., 2011).

Participant E7 stated, "Workers demonstrate the effectiveness of the programs through their overall performance inside and outside of the workplace." Participant E10 indicated:

Many of my colleagues since participating in some of the programs have learned to work smarter and reduce their stress levels. The best part is being able to spend quality time with their families and friends. The goal and objective of the programs were to create more balance and value every day for employees, and this illustrates effectiveness. I believe the most effective programs are those that meet diverse needs of workers, and those are well worth the investment.

All managers expressed that the WLB programs were the best alternative to doing nothing. Giving employees some measure of control over their work schedules might



make it easier for them to manage non-work responsibilities and maintain a balance between work and their personal lives, thereby improving their overall performance (M1 through M10). As part of the school's ongoing commitment to the health and well-being of their personnel, leadership implemented a variety of programs focused on healthy lifestyles and balancing the responsibilities of work and personal life.

When asked about how the current WLB programs contribute to reducing employee absenteeism, turnover, and improving employee motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction. Some of the participants articulated that there were some serious issues with unscheduled absences, low motivation and productivity rates, high turnover rates, and decreased job satisfaction rates among staff members *before* the decision to implement the current programs (M1, M4, M6, M7, M8, M9, and M10). To triangulate participants M1, M4, M6, M7, M8, M9, and M10 responses, I reviewed the organization's tracking indicator documents on employee absenteeism, motivation, turnover, job satisfaction, and productivity from 2009 to 2014. The data from the documents supported participants' M1, M4, M6, M7, M8, M9, and M10 responses pertaining to the issues of unscheduled absences, low motivation and productivity rates, high turnover rates, and decreased job satisfaction rates among personnel before implementation of the WLB programs. I used the data to create the charts below, which reflect the percentages of absenteeism, motivation, turnover, job satisfaction, and productivity rates in each department before and after implementation of the work-life balance programs.

I abbreviated the departments as followed:

- Adm=Administration
- Ath=Athletics Department
- Bus=Business Department
- CS=Counseling Services
- CI=Curriculum and Instruction
- Dvp=Development
- Fclty= Faculty Department
- F=Fiscal Department
- HR=Human Resource Department
- Ops=Operations

Figure 2 shows the absenteeism rates from 2009 to 2011 before implementation of the work-life balance programs. All rates decreased after the implementation of the programs between 2012 through 2014.

### Worker Absenteeism Rates by Department

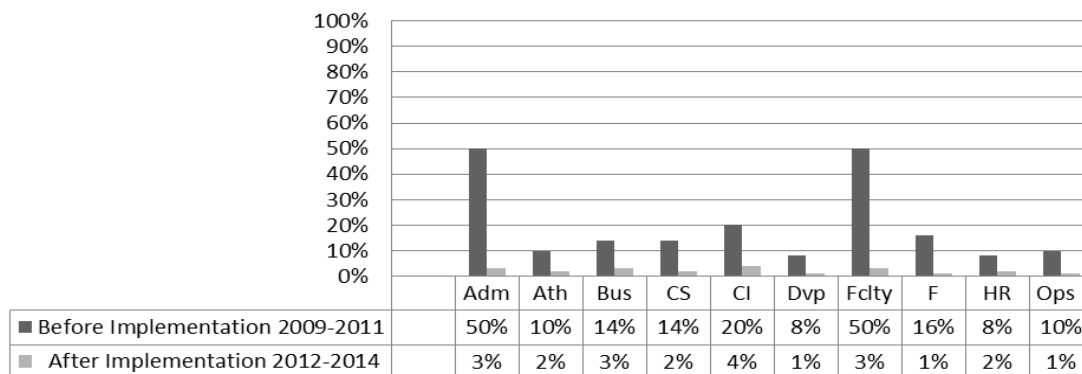


Figure 2. Departmental absenteeism rates.

Figure 3 depicts the motivation rates before (2009-2011) and after (2012-2014) implementation of the work-life balance programs. Disengaged employees were those who were irresponsible, distracted, or lacked enthusiasm. Not engaged employees were those who were not supportive, disgruntle, or lackadaisical.

### The Organization's Statistical Data on Employee Motivation

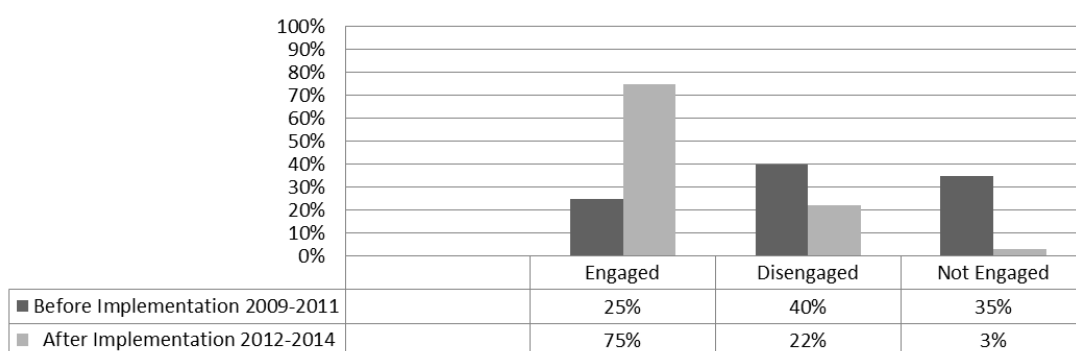
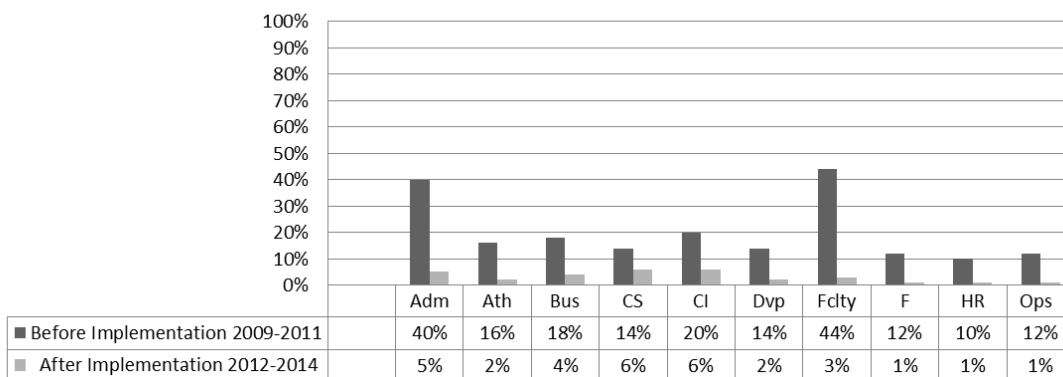


Figure 3. Organizational statistical data on employee motivation.

Figure 4 depicts the turnover rates from 2009 to 2011 before implementation of the work-life balance programs. Again, turnover rates in all departments decreased after the implementation of the WLB programs from 2012 through 2014.

### Worker Turnover Rates by Department



*Figure 4.* Departmental turnover rates.

Figure 5 reflects the organization's statistical data on employee job satisfaction from 2009 to 2011 before and after implementation of the work-life balance programs. The number of employees satisfied with their jobs increased while the number of dissatisfied decreased after implementation of the WLB programs from 2012 through 2014.



*Figure 5.* Organizational statistical data on employee job satisfaction.

Figure 6 reflects the employees' productivity rates during (2009-2011) and from (2012-2014) after implementation of the work-life balance programs. The productivity rates of all departments increased after the WLB programs' implementation. The data illustrates that during the first two years of the WLB programs implementation there was incremental increases within all of the school departments. These positive progressions were an indication that some of the programs were contributing to improving employee performance throughout the school.

## Worker Productivity Rates by Department

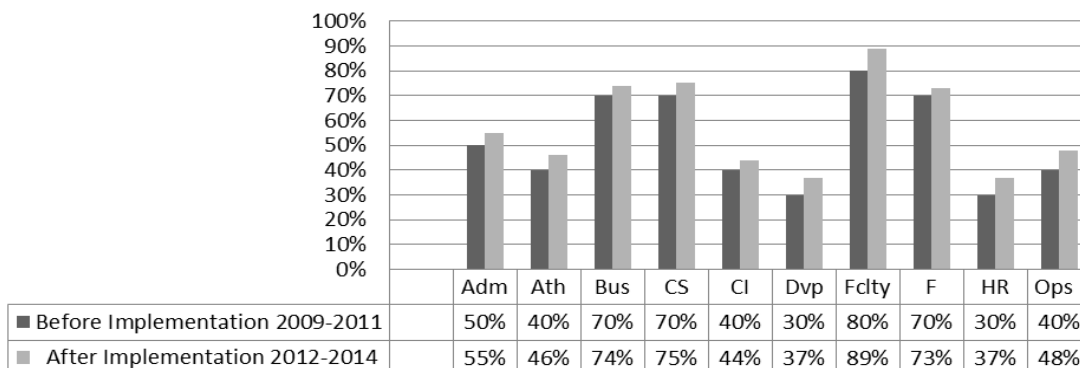


Figure 6. Departmental productivity rates.

According to participant M5, “It only took our board of directors two months to vote unanimously that the organization’s leadership team should undertake the work of selecting effective work-life balance programs.” In the words of participant M2, “We as leaders had the responsibility to select effective programs in order to help our personnel to properly maintain a balance between their personal and professional lives.” Participant M3 stated:

I am not just an advocate of the programs but a participant because I believe as a leader you lead by example. I needed to participate in such effective programs to maintain a balance between my professional and personal life.

The charter school leadership implemented different WLB programs in the charter school including the job sharing program, flexible work arrangement programs (flextime, reduced-time, part-time, and compressed workweek), flexible work schedule programs (mariflex, variable week, and variable day). The offered health and wellness programs were:

- Nutrition education
- Mental health
- Onsite fitness and disease preventive screening
- Stress management
- Weight control
- Hypertension education
- Walking meetings
- Discount gym membership
- Meditation workshop
- Support groups
- Mentoring
- Mental fitness activities
- Reward and recognition
- Personal and career development
- Team building

The paid time-off programs included:

- Vacation time with pay
- Sick days with pay
- Personal days with pay
- Bereavement with pay
- Mental health days with pay
- Family leave with pay

- Maternity leave with pay
- Paid time-off bank
- Unlimited leave with pay

To promote work life balance for their employees, the charter school leadership provided the different programs to help employees toward this endeavor. Having access to the programs means that employees have time to plan, prioritize, execute, and focus on their most important day-to-day activities as well as improving both their physical and psychological well-being. Work-life balance was one of the most prominent issues in the charter school. Many of the employees were working longer hours, work demands increased dramatically, and access to technologies allowed employees to work a 24-7 work schedule (M1, M2, M4, M5, and M9). The organization's leadership emphasized the importance of every employee having the support to meet the organization's and personal demands (M1, M7, M8, M9, and M10). The WLB programs were the resources implemented to ensure meeting these demands. Theme 1 relates to Bakker and Demerouti's (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) specifically indicated the importance of employees having enough resources to meet organizational demands. When there is a balance between the resources and demands, both employees and employers tend to benefit (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006). Each of the participants (M1 through M10) supported the implementation of the current WLB programs. The overall message was that employee engagement, while important, is not sufficient to maintain maximum levels of performance, but by utilizing effective WLB programs, could help improve and support employee performance. The findings in this

study are similar to those of Aryee et al. (2012), who concluded that while employers may implement family-friendly policies, it is the leaders who are responsible for the actual enactment of these policies. Therefore, the leaders have a critical role in the effectiveness of these policies. Overall, the WLB programs provided by the charter school leadership collectively defined the organization's strategy to attract, motivate, and retain workers. Some of the WLB programs provided employees with different methods that helped to change their work and life ethics. Participants focused on adjusting their lifestyle for better health and work outcomes.

### **Theme 2: A Supportive Work Environment is Important**

A supportive work environment was the second theme that emerged from exploring the perceptions of all participants. Participant M3 stated, "Creating a supportive work environment was essential to the charter school leadership, especially considering the pressures placed upon workers by the New York State Department of Education." Therefore, addressing the work environment played a critical role in selecting the current work-life balance programs. According to participants M4, M6, M7, and M10 "Promoting an encouraging supportive working environment in which employee morale, coworker and manager support is high, is important to our personnel motivation and productivity." These findings were similar to those of Prieto and Perez-Santana (2014). They found that management support and coworker support are specific dimensions of a supportive work environment that act as situational antecedents of innovative job behaviors by broadening workers' self-perception of their role and their proactive motivational state.



Specifically, participants M1 through M10 mentioned that before implementation of the current programs the work environment was unsupportive which contributed to employee stress and burnout, absenteeism and high levels of employee turnover, which, in turn, compromised the quality of service the organization provided. These findings were consistent with those of Shaheen et al. (2013). The authors concluded that the impact of work-related stress on organizations includes increased employee absenteeism and turnover, low productivity, and financial damages. Furthermore, when employees suffer from the impact of stress, this can also have an impact on employers' output and profitability. The managers clarified how imperative it is to create and sustain a healthy, productive, and supportive work environment. Some of the participants conveyed that the work environment represents an important factor in the recruitment and retention of personnel, and the characteristics of the work environment affects the quality of service provided by both managers and employees (M1, M2, M3, M5, M8, and M9). The non-managerial employees expressed the benefits of a positive supportive work environment. Some mentioned that the work environment was a key determinant of the quality of work and their level of motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity (E1, E3, E5, E7, E8, and E10). Two of the participants noted that aside from the work-life balance programs, one factor that significantly influenced how they felt about work was the environment within the school (E4 and E9). In the words of participant E6, "Having a supportive work environment as well as the work-life balance programs makes me feel great about working for this school, and this provides the motivation to sustain me throughout my workday." In general, by implementing the WLB programs, leadership created a

supportive working environment within the school where the principles and values of both managers and non-managerial workers are consistent with each other and highly respected (E2, E6, E8, M3, and M10).

For the charter school leadership, the WLB programs were also a recruiting tool and retention strategy. A couple of the participants indicated that some of the WLB programs were the reason for choosing to work for the charter school rather than a private or traditional public school that was not family-friendly (E1, E2, E7, E8, and E10). Participant E10 further explained that certain programs such as “the health and wellness and paid time-off programs played a significant role in deciding to stay with the organization as well as the employer being family friendly.” Two of the participants articulated how the employer created a supportive work environment when deciding to implement the current programs, which illustrates that the employer is family-friendly and cares about the well-being of employees inside and outside of the workplace (E6 and E9). These findings were similar to those of Vuksan et al. (2012). The authors concluded that workers who place a great value on having access to WLB programs might decide to work for organizations that are *family-friendly* and may take a pay cut in salary to work in a flexible work environment.

Some of the participants noted that given the complexity of the charter school work-environment before the implementation of the WLB programs, the issue of inflexible work arrangements was the primary reason top talent left the school (E2, E4, E7, and E9). Participant E6 indicated that “leadership support for the current WLB

programs demonstrates that the employer will do what it takes to make sure workers are satisfied with and successful in their jobs.” In the words of participant E3:

The purpose of the employer implementing the current programs was to provide a pleasant and supportive work environment to create incentives for recruiting and increasing employee retention by creating an atmosphere where employees can increase their knowledge, skills, and competencies. To be honest, leadership realized that retention was a serious problem, and it only would get worse if they did not do something to entice employees to stay.

To triangulate participant E3’s response I reviewed the organization’s performance track indicator documents on worker retention rates. Figure 7 depicts the retention rates before (2009-2011) and after (2012-2014) implementation of the work-life balance programs. The data shows that during the first two years of the WLB programs implementation there was incremental increases within all of the departments. These positive progressions were an indication that some of the programs were contributing to improving employee performance.

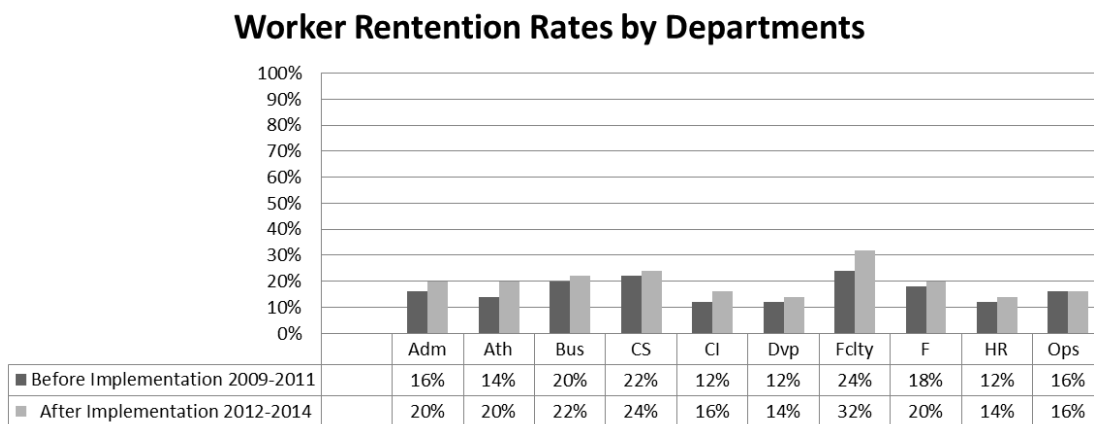


Figure 7. Departmental retention rates.

Participants articulated that having the current WLB programs and other benefits strengthens the school's recruiting and retention strategies (M7, M8, and M10). The organization's leadership team wanted to create and maintain a supportive work environment and decided to develop a financial incentive program where employees who had no absences throughout the school year would receive a \$1000 cash bonus. Employees who had only one absence at the end of the school year would receive \$500 and employees with two absences would receive a \$250 cash bonus, which the board of director's sponsors (E3, E4, and M2). Data from the organization's employee work-life balance programs handbook supported participants E3, E4, and M2 responses. Incentives listed in the organization's employee WLB programs handbook, which were part of the school's supportive work environment initiatives and meeting minutes of January 2015 (M1-M10). Participants M1, M3, M10, E7, E9, and E10 revealed that the charter school leadership and board members used promotions, free family outings, and financial incentives as a representation of a few programs for implementing the organization's greater retention efforts to create a supportive work environment.

When participants (employees) were asked what were the most rewarding parts of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs, participants E1 through E10 mentioned that they work in demanding roles and having access to the programs helped them to excel inside and outside of the workplace. Some of the participants acknowledged that the school leadership was supportive by providing a comfortable supportive working environment not just by implementing the WLB programs but by mentoring and offering development opportunities and providing positive feedback on

their job performance which was encouraging (E2, E4, E6, E7, and E9). Theme 2 relates to Bakker and Demerouti's (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) noted that even when people work in demanding roles, they can experience less stress if their employer provides resources to support them. The charter school leadership provided the WLB programs (resources) to help improve employee performance. The findings in this study are similar to those of Taylor's (2008) who concluded that people are less likely to evaluate potentially stressful incidents as threatening if they are in a supportive environment. Rather, people are more than likely to interpret incidents as challenging and seek resources to address the stress (Taylor, 2008). Overall, issues of imbalance between employees work and personal life caused the leaders in the charter school to redesign strategies in creating a supportive work environment. In this sense, how well the employer engaged employees' affected their level of motivation and productivity to perform. Wiley (2012) noted that when workers are motivated to put in extra effort to accomplish tasks that are central to the goals of the organization, the outcomes are lower absenteeism, higher productivity, and greater employee retention.

### **Theme 3: Employee Commitment and Motivation Increased**

Employee commitment and motivation was the third theme that emerged from all participants' responses. Participant E3 stated, "Since taking my partners advice to enroll in the health and wellness, my motivation has increased and I feel much better about myself personally and professionally." Participant E9 expressed, "After enrolling in the flexible work schedule programs my commitment level improved, but after reaping the benefits of the programs my motivation increased. This is why I am so grateful to work

for this school.” The rest of the non-managerial participants stated that their commitment and motivation levels improved by following procedures that they learned utilizing some of the current work-life balance programs to improve their work skills (E1, E2, E3, E4, E6, E7, E8, and E9). These findings were consistent with Mulvaney’s (2014) findings. Mulvaney concluded that employees working for organizations with family friendly benefits programs (time off, stress management, health promotion programs, and support groups) have higher levels of commitment compared with personnel working for organizations without such programs.

Low employee commitment and motivation were serious issues that the school leadership faced before the implementation of the WLB programs (M1, M3, M9, E1, E7, and E10). Participant M3 said “the departure of high performing workers had a significant impact on the school business plans and eventually led to a decline in productivity.” In the words of participant E4, “Before the implementation of the work-life programs, my stress levels were high and my morale was extremely low to the point that I was ready to resign. I believe that my health and sanity is worth more than money.” To effectively motivate and improve employee commitment, leadership started asking employees questions, listening, and working together with work-life benefits managers to gain a better understanding of the concerns of faculty members, operations staff, and support staff (M1 through M10).

The work-life balance programs implemented by charter school leadership did not just improve the work environment, the programs also enabled the employer to achieve and maintain a more committed workforce (M1, M3, M5, and M7). In general, the

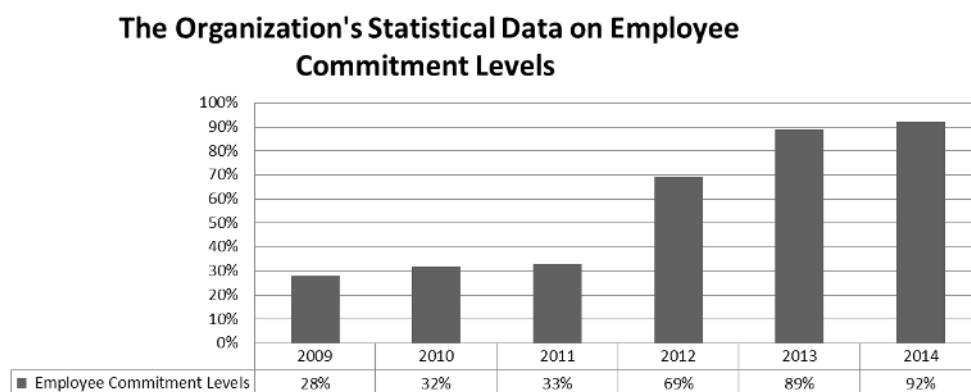
charter school leadership utilized the programs as an instrument to increase (a) employee commitment and (b) retention, and to reduce employee (a) absenteeism, (b) turnover, and (c) stress. According to participant M1, “The commitment and motivation of our personnel is essential for performance and the continuous improvement of the services we provide to the community.” Some of the participants expressed that their task when deciding on which WLB programs to implement was to create an appropriate setting in order to enable all personnel to develop their skills and abilities (M3, M4, M7, M8, and M9). Two of the participants indicated that before agreeing on the current WLB programs it was imperative to ensure that the programs would aid in helping personnel perform their job tasks in a motivated and committed way, not the opposite (M2 and M5). These findings are similar to Fernet, Austin, and Vallerand’s (2012) study results. Fernet et al. (2012) found that for employers to attract and retain competent as well as qualified workers, employers would need to create work environments that promote and sustain workers motivation and well-being.

Some of the charter school leaders believed that by implementing the current 5 programs as well as different programs would motivate employees to enroll in the programs (M2, M5, and M8). Participant M10, stated, “I encouraged my subordinates to participate in the WLB programs because I understand burnout. Commitment is what has kept me when my motivation level was low because commitment without motivation is definitely a path to burnout.” In the words of participant M3:

Employee commitment levels were low for a couple of years because of uncertainties and the lowering of expectations. It was to the point in the 2010 that

the board members were ready to close the school because some of the members felt that an ineffective charter schools would quickly lose not just their faculty but also their students. However, since 2012 our personnel commitment levels have improved because of some of the current programs offered.

To triangulate participant M3's response, I reviewed the organization's archived work-life balance program documents on employee commitment levels from 2009 to 2014. The data in the documents supported participant M3's response, pertaining to the improvement of employee commitment levels. The data in figure 8 shows that from 2009 through 2011 employee commitment levels increased by only 5%. However, with the implementation of the WLB programs, employee commitment levels increased by 59% from 2011 through 2014.



*Figure 8.* Employee commitment levels.

There were factors including lack of support from supervisors, low confidence, and personnel inability to manage stress that affected commitment and motivation within the school for about four years (M1, M7, E1, E7, E9, and E10). Some of the participants noted that it was extremely important to understand the factors that could hinder and help



increase employee commitment (M1, M7, and M10). These findings were consistent with those of Battistelli, Galletta, Portoghese, and Vandenberghe (2013). The authors suggested that employers take into account the importance of individual factors (e.g., intrinsic and extrinsic motivation), which may help increase commitment and motivation while reducing turnover of their workforce. It became clear from the participants' responses that they perceived the WLB programs as the key motivators that fueled their commitment. Participant E9 stated, "The health and wellness programs gave me the confidence to change my lifestyle, and as a result, my motivation levels have increased and I feel more committed to organization." In this manner, motivation is what started employees on their path to achieving work-life balance, and commitment helped them to stay the course to see it through to the end. In the words of participant E7, "Four out of the five programs helped in maintaining workers commitment and motivation levels because uncommitted and unmotivated workers are unproductive workers, which will affect the organization's productivity." The employees learned through success and failure what to ignore and what to pursue. They decided on what to magnify and what to minimize as well as to focus on the possibilities instead of the negativity surrounding work-life balance programs. Participant E6 stated, "In my opinion, the most rewarding part of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs is that I'm able to reduce my stress level. I am happier, productive, motivated, committed, and more receptive to take on new challenges." According to participant E1, "The programs are the best solution for this employer to increase employee motivation and commitment." Participant E2 noted,

“The programs are advantageous to me and my team because they help to increase our motivation and commitment levels.”

When participants (employees) were asked about their opinions on the work-life balance programs offered by this organization, some articulated that their stress levels were high and their motivation levels were low. However, after implementation of WLB programs, their motivation levels increased and their stress levels decreased which was one reason why they did not seek employment elsewhere (E1, E3, E4, E5, E8, E9, and E10). Theme 3 relates to Bakker and Demerouti’s (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) communicated that when job demands are high and job resources are low, burnout and stress are a common occurrence. However, having appropriate job resources may help to offset the effects of extreme job demands, and encourage motivation and engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006).

The work-life balance programs offered by the charter school leadership taught participants how to focus on their strengths and to take better care of their well-being. In addition, participants learned how to keep family first and to take chances by stepping out of their comfort zones. The findings in this study are similar to those of Nwagbara and Akanji (2012) who concluded that commitment and motivation are central to work-life balance for organizational performance as well as commitment to work. Furthermore, the same authors noted that WLB can influence an individual’s commitment to work and has a positive impact on employees’ motivation and organizational productivity. Overall, the charter school benefited from these programs, which helped to develop a more committed and motivated workforce (M3, M4, M5, M7, and M10). Armache (2013) noted that

leaders who implement work-life balance practices enable their personnel by increasing commitment, motivation, and reducing stress levels, which in turn increases productivity.

Collectively, the organization's leaders believed that WLB programs brought together elements of comprehensive health management, family management, personal change management, stress management, and strategies to help participants' to recharge and stay focused. Some of the participants noted that when the employer implemented the WLB programs, their performance levels, and work attitudes changed in a positive way (E2, E5, and E9). Participant E7 mentioned, "Since enrolling in two of the work-life balance programs, I am more focused, enthusiastic, and willing to commit the time and energy to maintain a balance between my professional and personal lives." The body of literature primarily supported these finding. Herzberg et al. (1959) defined two types of factors (motivation and hygiene) as determining employees' working attitudes and level of performance (Yusoff et al., 2013). Herzberg et al. (1959) mentioned that the motivation factors would increase satisfaction whereas the hygiene factors serve to reduce dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg et al. (1959), meeting hygiene factors of an individual would not motivate him or her to apply effort; rather it will only prevent the individual from being or feeling discontented. For this reason, to motivate individuals and increase performance or productivity, higher-level needs (motivation factors) must be met (Yusoff et al., 2013). Ebrahimabadi et al. (2011) noted that motivation symbolizes those psychological processes that cause the awakening, guidance, and determination of voluntary activities that are goal oriented. In this sense, people must be enthusiastic,

focused, stimulated, and willing to commit their energy for a long period to realize their objective (Ebrahimabadi et al., 2011).

#### **Theme 4: Health and Wellness Programs Improved Employee Well-Being and Productivity**

To create a healthier and more vibrant work environment, improve employees' health and productivity, the charter school leadership selected the health and wellness programs as one of their work-life benefits for their personnel. Employee well-being and productivity was the fourth theme that emerged from all participants' responses.

Participant E5 stated, "Having access to the health and wellness programs improved my health and attendance, reduced doctor visits, increased my productivity, and boosted my morale in the workplace." Participant E6 mentioned, "The health and wellness programs helped me to learn how to maintain a healthy lifestyle inside and outside of the workplace that have contributed to improving my attendance, productivity, and well-being." The other participants used phrases such as improved, helped, alleviated, and eased to describe the nature of the effects of the health and wellness programs (E1, E2, E3, E4, E7, E8, E9, and E10). Baicker et al. (2010) conducted a meta-analysis on the cost and saving associated with organizations' wellness programs. They found that medical costs declined by approximately \$3.27 for every dollar spent on wellness programs and absenteeism costs fell by \$2.73 for every dollar spent. The researchers noted that the positive return on investment might encourage the wider implementation of wellness programs that may prove beneficial for organizations' budgets and productivity (Baicker et al., 2010).

Participant M1 stated, “Some of the employees who enrolled in the health and wellness programs reported improving both their well-being and productivity.” Some of the participants articulated that the purpose of implementing the current programs especially the health and wellness was to restore full employee engagement, reduce absenteeism, medical cost, and improve employee productivity, morale, well-being, performance, job satisfaction, and retention (M2, M4, M5, M9, and M10). These findings were similar to those of Michaels and Greene (2013). The authors found that wellness programs are important interventions to promote and protect workers’ health as well as reduce absenteeism and health care costs, and improve workers’ quality of work life and morale.

All of the programs are part of the school leadership’s sustainable strategies to keep the organization competitive. In the words of participant M8, “As a leader in this organization, I do not agree with every decision made pertaining to our personnel but I can say that the health and wellness programs have helped to improve some of our employees’ health and productivity.” Three of the participants expressed that in the school there is nothing more important than our personnel well-being because having a healthy and productive workforce is a crucial component of a productive, successful organization in the long-term (M3, M6, and M7).

When the participants (employees) were asked *What are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the health and wellness programs?* All of the non-managerial employees articulated that they were thankful that the school leadership implemented the programs because their job positions are psychologically and physically draining at times

because of the job demands placed upon them by the school leadership in addition to the New York State Department of Education (E1 through E10). Theme 4 relates to Bakker and Demerouti's (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) articulated that high job demands exhaust employees' mental and physical resources and, therefore, can lead to health problems and the depletion of energy. However, this was not the case with the subject charter school employees because of the WLB programs implemented by their employer. In this manner, joining specific programs helped participants in attaining organizational goals, decreasing job demands and the associated psychological and physiological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006) as well as encouraging personal development, and growth.

Participant E1 stated, "I believe that the health and wellness programs improved my health and productivity." Participant E2 and P3 mentioned, "The health and wellness affected their productivity and improved their well-being." Having the health and wellness programs as well as health promotions boosted participants' morale, improved their health, and increased their productivity in the workplace. Some of the participants mentioned that having access to the health and wellness programs boosted their self-confidence and morale, improved their physical condition, and increased their productivity on job (E4 and E7). Participant E8 noted, "The health and wellness programs affected my productivity. It took some time, but I learned that if I were not healthy physically this would affect my performance and decrease my productivity at work." By starting healthful consuming habits such as exercising and being health conscious about the type of foods to consume, participants not only enrolled in the health

and wellness programs, participants stayed consistent in their endeavors in improving their productivity and well-being. Participant E9 articulated, “The health and wellness programs affected my health and productivity. I don’t feel as stress as I did months ago, and I am more productive at work and home due to changing my diet and exercising every day.” In the words of participant E10, “The health and wellness programs affected my productivity, health, and performance. I can honestly say that I have achieved a balance between my job and home life as well as feeling twenty years younger.”

LeCheminant and Merrill’s (2012) results were similar to these findings. The authors concluded that health promotion interventions that target employees in a jobsite setting help to increase healthy behaviors that often translate into positive health outcomes and improve employee productivity.

Before deciding on which WLB programs to implement, the charter school leadership started the process by reviewing the status of the school. Instead of focusing on activities, leadership developed performance plans based on established elements and values that address accomplishments that could lead to improving employees’ overall performance (M1 through M10). The leadership team wanted to address effectively employees’ work-life issues as well as improve their productivity and wellbeing. During member checking procedures, I asked participants if they wished to change any of the data presented or add to their interview responses and all managers and non-managerial employees indicated that they did not have anything further to add. All participants mentioned that the reflections captured within the member checking documents were an accurate interpretation and representation of their responses to the interview questions.

Some of the participants reiterated that they were all grateful to work for an employer who cares about their well-being on the job and outside of the workplace (E1, E5, E6, E8, and E10). Baral and Bhargava (2011) concluded in their study that employers that offer flexible work schedules and arrangements and generous family-leave policies create an atmosphere of assurance that illustrates to workers that leadership does care about their well-being beyond their work scope.

### **Theme 5: Employee Job Satisfaction and Quality of Work Life Increased**

Employee job satisfaction and quality of work life was the fifth theme that emerged from the participants' responses. Some of the participants faced heavy workloads, long work hours, high levels of stress for meeting deadlines, low motivation, and had less control over their work schedules, which conflicted with their life outside of the organization (M1, M4, M7, M8, M9, and M10). When the managers were asked how the work-life balance programs affected employee job satisfaction, some participants mentioned that implementing the work-life programs was not just to improve employee job satisfaction but also to enhance the overall quality of their personnel work life (M2, M3, M5, M8, and M10). Participants M1 used phrases such as "gratification, fulfillment, and contentment" when describing the impact of the programs on employees job satisfaction. The school's leadership encouraged personnel to review all program material carefully so that personnel could find the program or programs that best fitted their needs (M1, M3, M4, M5, and M9). Some of the participants mentioned that helping our personnel live healthier lives inside and outside of the school is our priority. This is why



leadership implemented the work-life balance programs to ensure that our personnel are satisfied with their jobs (M2, M5, and M7). Participant M3 conveyed:

Most schools are looking for ways to save more and deliver less. This is why we implemented the programs to give our staff a little more beyond their insured benefits they receive at no cost to improve their job satisfaction.

Participant M9 indicated, “Employee job satisfaction and quality work life is important to leadership but their well-being is also important to their overall job performance. This is why we advocate for enrollment in the current programs” Similar findings were found in Jang et al. (2011) study. The researchers found that the availability of work-life balance programs were positively associated with job satisfaction. Furthermore, the researchers noted that organizations in which work-life balance programs are available may be perceived by workers as family friendly and more supportive and that those views, in conjunction with employer practices, affect job satisfaction, which promotes psychological well-being (Jang et al., 2011).

After reviewing the school’s document entitled *Job Satisfaction and Work-life Balance Programs Satisfaction*, which is part of the charter school current work-life balance programs and policies, I gained a better understanding of the dedication and determination set forth by the school leadership to help personnel achieve and maintain a balance between their professional and personal lives. The following is an excerpt from the school WLB policy:

Wherever practical, the school will provide flexibility to personnel as a means to promote work-life balance and position us as a family-friendly employer for

which to work. Subject to approvals, flexible work arrangement, flexible work schedule, health and wellness, paid time-off programs, and the job sharing program may be available to personnel in meeting their personal work performance goals and family needs.

I comprehended the importance of employees' job satisfaction and the connection to the charter school success and at that very moment, I understood why the school's leadership took the initiative to work towards enhancing employees' overall job satisfaction and quality of work life. According to participant E3, "The health and wellness programs affected my job satisfaction. I am more engaged and the quality of my work life has increased" Participant E4 stated, "The flexible work arrangement, flexible work schedule, and the health and wellness programs affected my job-satisfaction. Just having the flexibility increased the quality of my work life...I have a new perspective on the work that I do daily." In the words of participant E1:

My job satisfaction is not linked solely to compensation. Sure, a promotion would improve the quality of my work life, at least temporarily, but the health and wellness programs will have a long-term impact on my satisfaction and work life.

Participant E9 articulated:

Before enrolling in the health and wellness programs the job was nothing more than a source of income. However, after about a year the job became a place to improve the quality of my work life and my job satisfaction."

Some of the participants mentioned that their job satisfaction, the quality of their work life, and work relationships have improved since participating in different work-life

programs (E2, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, and E10). Participant E5 expressed, “I have better working relationships with my supervisors and fellow colleagues since enrolling in the health and wellness programs. My work environment is much peaceful and this is why I can truly say that my job satisfaction has increased.” These findings are similar to those of Herzberg et al. (1959). Herzberg et al. noted that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are unique issues. Herzberg et al. argued that there are motivators (job-satisfiers) related to the job contents and hygiene factors (job-dissatisfiers) associated with the job context (Herzberg et al., 1959). In this sense, motivators include advancement, recognition, responsibility, growth, whereas, the hygiene factors do not play role in motivation or satisfaction but can help prevent dissatisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). Therefore, motivators are contextual such as company policies, supervision, employee-boss relationships, working conditions, wages, and co-workers relationships (Herzberg et al., 1959). In this explanatory case study, the results clearly indicated that the charter school work-life balance programs and policies can positively influence employee job satisfaction and quality of work-life. When I asked the employees, *Based on your experience, how would you describe the importance of you having access to each of these work-life balance programs?* one of the most reflective responses came from participant E6 who stated:

I appreciate my employer for understanding the importance of balance because every employee’s obligations outside of the workplace are different. The work-life balance programs were a great way to improve employee job satisfaction and increase the quality of work life.

The majority of the participants mentioned that having access to programs was a blessing because of the mental and physical stress they were experiencing before the implementation of current programs (E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E7, E8, E9, and E10). Participant E2 articulated, “Having access and enrolling in programs that met my needs increased my job satisfaction, which has spilled over to my personal life in positive ways.” Participant E4 stated, “If I did not have access to particular programs, I do not think that my job satisfaction or the quality of my work life would have improved, every day I am thankful to be able to utilize the programs.” Similar findings were found in Konrad and Yang’ (2012) study. The researchers concluded that the availability and utilization of work-life benefits allows workers to perform effectively in both their professional and personal roles. Based on this finding, Konrad and Yang also concluded that equal balance or harmony in fulfilling both roles can produce productive and positive outcomes.

In the subject charter school, success depends on dedicated workers because they are the most crucial and valuable forces of their work environment (M1 through M10). To improve employees’ overall job performance as well as eliminating job stress, role ambiguity, role conflict, and role overload, the employer made efforts to be aware of the job demands and workloads by implementing the current work-life balance programs (M5, M7, and M9). Participant E1 mentioned, “Before the implementation of the work-life balance programs that many of the staff members were admitted into the hospital for stress related illnesses.” Participant E2 expressed:

Before the implementation of the work-life balance programs, I almost lost my family because I was spending so many hours working. I knew that I had to do something because I was experiencing conflict at work as well as home.

Participant E1 mentioned that “before the implementation of the current programs that many of the staff members were admitted into the hospital for stress related illnesses.” Participant E4 stated:

I was suffering from mental exhaustion to the point that I was having panic attacks because I felt overwhelmed and burnt out. However, after enrolling in the wellness programs, I was able to reduce my stress level and blood pressure.

Some of the participants expressed that working in an educational institution you definitely need different kinds support to maintain life inside and outside of the workplace (E3, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, and E10). Theme 5 also relates to Bakker and Demerouti’s (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) indicated that elevated levels of pressure, and conflicting requirements, tend to provoke burnout. However, job resources such as support and feedback can encourage engagement as well as mitigate the adverse consequences of undue job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006).

In general, participants E1 through E10 felt a stronger connection between the work that they do daily, the enjoyment of what they do, and the blessing of working with people who motivated them to do and be better at their jobs. This characterization was similar to Fisher’s (2010) findings that people could be more authentically satisfied if they feel a connection between what they do on the job, the satisfaction that they place on

what they do, and pleasure of working with people who add value to their work and the organization. Furthermore, two of the participants made a profound statement noting that there is interrelationship between employee job satisfaction and quality of work life because both complement each other as well as create a synergy between what employees do inside and outside of the workplace (E2 and E10). This finding was similar to those of Emadzadeh et al. (2012). The authors concluded that a person's quality of work life is his or her psychological perception of the job environment where he or she works (the favorableness or unfavorableness of a job environment). In this manner, the quality of work life pertains to workers' welfare and is entirely different from job satisfaction, yet connected. Hence quality of work life can affect employees job satisfaction, whereas, it can also influence their personal lives outside of the workplace (Emadzadeh et al., 2012).

The satisfaction or dissatisfaction of employees is essential to the charter school leadership as well as the workers themselves since improving employee retention can bring about savings for the school. For this reason, the employer created an atmosphere of growth to reduce the impact of work-life conflict by providing training and learning opportunities to increase job satisfaction and improve the quality of work life in the organization that created a win-win situation for both employer and employees (M1, M4, and M9). The findings in this study are similar to the findings of Martin and MacDonnell (2012) who concluded that workers who have more control over their work schedule and location generally experience greater job satisfaction, increased productivity, and less work-life conflict. Overall, job satisfaction and the quality of work life are extremely

significant for developing and retaining continuous commitment and productivity from the staff of the organization.

### **Theme 6: Culture Changed through Increased Workers' Control over the Job**

Organizational culture and job control was the sixth theme that emerged from the participants' responses. According to some of the participants, every manager within the school knows that the culture of an organization can affect an employee's job performance no matter where he or she is employed (M2, M3, M6, M8, and M9). Some of the participants articulated that there was a consensus for the school leadership to move beyond traditional HR solutions in 2011 and partner with work-life benefits managers to remove barriers to employee performance that exist in the school while changing the school's culture (M1, M4, M7, and M10). In the words of participant M5, "The first thing we had to do was accept the fact that our employees' performance levels were decreasing and develop strategies to help improve their job performance. The second was to select suitable programs to improve employees' job performance."

Participant M2 conveyed:

I had to acknowledge that the school's culture had a negative impact on our employees' performance. But I felt that the work-life balance programs were the solution to improve our employees' job performance while changing the culture of the school.

All of the managers communicated that there was a strong connection between the culture of the school and their employees' job performance (M1 through M10). These findings were similar to those of Shahzad, Iqbal, and Gulzar (2013). The authors obtained

data via surveys and formal and informal interviews, and based on regression and correlation results identified a positive relationship between an organization's culture and employee's job performance. The authors also indicated that a strong culture within an organization could increase employees' commitment towards achieving organizational goals and improve employees' overall performance (Shahzad et al., 2013). According to participant M4:

Employee performance levels were exceedingly low from 2009 through 2011 because of the school's culture. However, since 2012 our employees' performance levels increased because of participation in some of the current programs offered and the change in the school's culture.

Some of the participants communicated that leadership took the time to think, create strategies, and identify different work-life balance programs to utilize to improve employee performance was the first step towards assisting personnel to make changes to improve their overall job performance (E1, E4, E8, and E10). Participant E6 expressed, "The paid time-off programs helped many of my colleagues alleviate the financial burden when taking off from work. This contributed to improving employee performance and attaining a balance between their profession and personal life." Participant E7 articulated, "I love that the school leadership implemented various work-life balance programs. This allowed personnel to discover different ways to manage their personal and professional lives, finances, and their physical and physiological well-being. I believe this improved employees performance." In the words of participant E4:



I am glad that leadership implemented the flexible work schedule programs. I have a parent with disabilities that I care for. Having the flexibility over my work schedule improved my job performance. I am a witness because these programs do help improve employee performance.

These findings were similar to those of Moon and Jongho (2010). The authors examined the relationship between family-friendly policies and job performance, and concluded that a balance between work and family is the strongest predictor of employees' job performance. The authors also noted that organizations may want to consider the implementation of family-friendly policy programs to help workers balance work and family.

Some of the participants communicated that the school leadership gave the personnel more job control by implementing the current WLB programs by redesigning their processes around the chain of command (E1, E2, and E3). The goal behind personnel having control over work was to improve employee performance while stimulating growth and development (M1, M7, M8, and M10). According to participant E1, "I am grateful to have more control over my job and work schedule because this has helped to improve my job performance as well as reducing the anxiety that I was feeling for months that was affecting my health." In the words of participant E2, "I had so many problems, if not dealt with, problems that I considered small could have become bigger and affected my performance. Participating in the flexible work schedule programs improved my job performance because I have more job control." Participant E3 stated, "My job performance improved due to me having some control over my job. If I didn't

participate in the flexible work arrangement programs, I don't believe that I would be the person that I am today." Participant E4 articulated:

I was content with just having a supportive work environment, but I feel truly blessed to work for an employer who implemented work-life balance programs to give employees the opportunity to have some job control to improve their job performance.

Participant E5 conveyed, "I am enthusiastic to be able to utilize programs where I'm able to have some control over my job while improving my overall job performance. To be honest, just being in a supportive work environment, I feel less stress." Participant E6 mentioned, "Having control over my job improved my job performance, but I know that leadership took a big risk by granting personnel this perk because many people can mistake kindness for weakness and abuse a blessing." Participant E7 communicated, "I am sure, that the reason that my job performance improved is due to leadership granting me job control and not listening to the naysayers and enrolling in the flexible work arrangement and health and wellness programs." Participant E8 stated, "I am glad that the leadership implemented programs that give employees' more control over their jobs as well as providing a supportive work environment. I believe that this has increased employees' job performance." Two of the participants expressed that working for a school that is not unionized and to be granted with the opportunity to have some job control. I believe this is why employees' performance levels have increased over the years (E9 and E10). These findings are similar to the findings of Nagami, Tsutsumi, Tsuchiya, and Morimoto (2010). The authors examined the prospective association of

psychosocial job characteristics with employee job performance in Japan among 777 full-time workers at a manufacturing company, utilizing data from a 1-year follow-up survey. After analyzing the data, the authors found that it was worthwhile to increase employees' job control and provide a mutually supportive environment to ensure positive employee job performance.

Theme 6 relates to Bakker and Demerouti's (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) articulated that the model can be used as a tool for management to discover the strengths and weaknesses of people, work groups, departments, and organizations, and concluded the JD-R model can be applied to a wide range of professions and be utilized to assess an organization culture (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006).

Overall, the participants were extremely grateful to work for this particular nonprofit educational institution (E1 through E10). There was a strong consensus that the school's leadership demonstrated supporting their strategy by providing ample resources for personnel to perform their jobs by offering (a) job flexibility, (b) opportunities for personal development and growth, (c) encouragement and motivation to maintain a balance between work and nonwork activities, and (d) a healthy and supportive work environment (M1-M10 through E1-E10). The findings in this study are similar to those of Fakruddin Ali and Sivasankar (2013). The authors collected data from 300 respondents from two companies (150 from one public company and 150 from one private company) to describe and analyze the experience of work environment factors that interfere with (a) job performance, (b) job satisfaction, (c) job security, (d) job stress, and (e) well-being.

The authors concluded that companies that have effective work environments provide (a) clean and well-organized work environments, (b) provide better opportunities, (c) encourage their people, (d) provide good work-life balance, (e) increase job satisfaction, and (f) provide less work stress by providing adequate resources for workers to do their jobs effectively (Fakruddin Ali & Sivasankar, 2013).

The charter school leadership was in a situation where their employees' performance levels were low and affecting the overall school's performance and productivity (M1-M10). By implementing (a) the flexible work arrangement programs, (b) flexible work schedule programs, (c) health and wellness programs, (d) paid time-off programs, and (e) the job sharing program, leadership felt that the programs would help to improve employees' performance (M1-M10). Some of the participants communicated that they participated in the current programs because of the challenges, crises, difficulties, and problems they faced in both their professional and personal lives (E1-E10). Overall, the majority of the participants just wanted more flexibility in their daily lives. Decisions and values shaped the choices some of the participants made in their lives and understanding them helped in making better choices they could live with, both for their professional and personal life.

#### **Theme 7: Participation in the Job Sharing Program was Low and Decreased Over Time**

Low utilization of the job sharing program was the seventh theme that emerged from the participants' responses. The charter school leadership implemented five different work-life balance programs to improve the level of performance of their

employees. The leaders committed to their employees and believed that if personnel utilize different programs would lead to higher levels of performance (Participants M1-M5). Participants M1 through M10 and E1 had positive responses while participants E2 through E10 had mixed views on the job sharing program. Participant M1 mentioned that the job sharing program helped to decrease absenteeism and retained workers who were ready to accept employment at other schools. Participant E1 stated, "I found the job sharing program to be a blessing especially since I had to reduce my hours at work for personal reasons which increased my chances of achieving a balance between my job and personal life." These findings are similar to those of Rogers and Finks (2011). The researchers concluded that benefits from job sharing not only help workers by providing a more suitable work-life balance, but also help employers to decrease absenteeism, reduce workloads on full time workers, and retain experienced workers who have a wide range of skills. All participants (M1-M10) supported the implementation of the job sharing program and spoke highly of the program. One of the managers mentioned that the job sharing program is promising (participant M2). Participant M3 expressed the job sharing program is beneficial. Some of the participants articulated that the job sharing program is conducive to employees' family life (M4, M5, M6, M7, M8, M9, and M10). However, some of the *non-managerial* workers felt that the disadvantages of the job-sharing program outweigh the advantages. Eight participants viewed the job sharing program as underutilized (E2 through E10). Four of the participants indicated that due to the confidentiality of the job that they perform, they are unable to utilize the job sharing program (E2, E3, E4, E8, and E10). Participant E9 expressed that the job sharing

program can work, but the challenges and obstacles outweigh the benefits and this may be the primary reason for the low utilization of the program.” Participant E5 stated:

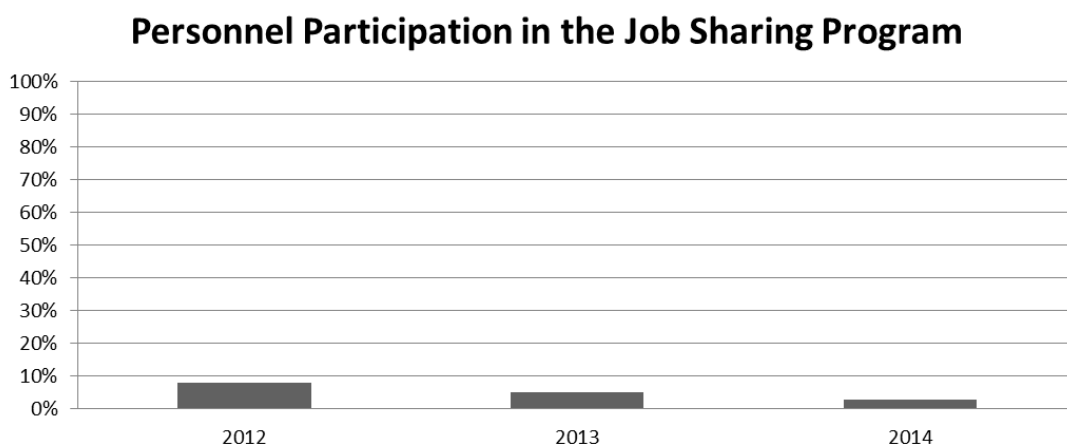
The job sharing program is useful in positions where turnover has been a problem because the program can help to improve coverage and continuity. Yes, turnover was a serious issue a couple years ago but all of that has changed.

Participant E7 articulated, “Leadership launched good work-life balance programs but I think that the job sharing program is less effective because of low utilization.” In the words of participant E6, “I feel that the job sharing program is underutilized, and a total waste of money. Ultimately, the job sharing program is only worth keeping if it benefits the school financially and strategically.” These findings were consistent with those from Branine (2004). Branine concluded that many employers have established policies on job sharing. However, there is still a very limited amount of workers, often only about one to two percent, benefiting from job sharing arrangements (Branine, 2004).

After the non-managerial workers expressed their views on the job-sharing program, I asked the participants, *What were the failures of the job sharing program?* Eight participants acknowledged that the job sharing program was underutilized because of the various programs offered by the employer, and because many of the school employees are fulltime (E2 through E10). Some of the participants did mention that the flexible work arrangement, flexible work schedule, health and wellness, and paid time-off programs have more subprograms employees can participate in. The job sharing program is just two people trying to handle a position as efficiently as one person (E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, and E10). Participant E7 stated, “I would like to see the job sharing program

removed.” In the words of participant M8, “The job sharing program is problematic and unnecessary because participation in the program caused power struggles between personnel over job positions that were eventually merged into fulltime positions.”

To gain an understanding of the low utilization of the job sharing program, I reviewed the organization’s work-life balance programs master enrollment from 2012 through 2014. Figure 9 reflects the percentage of personnel who participated in the organization’s job sharing program. The data indicated that during 2012 through 2014 there was a decrease in the participation rate from 8%, 5%, 3% respectively. This illustrates that the program did not contribute to employee performance.



*Figure 9.* Percentage of personnel participation in the job sharing program.

Theme 7 relates to Bakker and Demerouti’s (2006) job demands-resources model. Bakker and Demerouti (2006) articulated that the model explains the advantages and disadvantages of many policies and initiatives in the workplace. In this case, the job-sharing program (resource) that the charter school leadership implemented to improve employee performance was underutilized. However, this does not negate the fact that the

program when used properly may help to facilitate a more effective balance between work and other commitments for workers while delivering benefits for employers (Lafferty, Bohle, & Giudice, 2002). Overall, the charter school leadership devised and introduced the job sharing program based on improving employee performance. They were confident that the program was at the highest level (M1 through M10). Personnel were working 10 to 12 hours a day trying to get as much work done as possible to meet deadlines. Many were attempting to finish their job assignments in a 40-hour workweek, which turned into a 50 to 60-hour workweek that impinge on their personal time (M3, M5, M7, and M8). However, four of the participants deemed the job sharing program as underutilized unless fully utilized by the charter employees (M4, M7, M8, and M10). Some participants suggested that leadership should try to encourage employees to actively utilize the programs and implement measures to monitor participation (E3, E5, M7, M9, and M10). The findings in this study are similar to the findings of Williams, Blair-Loy, and Berdahl (2013). The researchers found that despite the increased availability of flexible work arrangements on the books of many employers in the United States, there is a perplexing underutilization of these arrangements in light of American workers strong desire and desperate need for such flexibility.

Literature on the work-life balance programs indicates that, when properly designed and consistently implemented, the programs can provide organizations with a competitive edge in attracting and retaining a high performing workforce (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011; Stout, Awad, & Guzmán, 2013; Thulasimani et al., 2010; Vuksan et al., 2012). The flexible work arrangement programs, flexible work schedule programs, health



and wellness programs, and paid time-off programs implemented by the charter school leaders helped to lower turnover and decrease absenteeism (Boushey, 2011; Howard-Quarley, & Buenar-Puplampu, 2012; Marzec et al., 2011; Neely, 2012). In addition, the same programs also increased worker's quality of life (Kaspin et al., 2013).

The participants expressed how particular programs boosted their commitment and motivation, well-being and productivity, job satisfaction and the quality of their work life, and their overall job performance (E1-E10). Although participants' responses illustrated a strong support for work-life balance programs (Kang, 2013; Lee & Hong, 2011; Moon & Jongho, 2010; Subramaniam & Selvaratnam, 2010), there was skepticism pertaining to the job sharing program (E2-E10). Overall, the employer took the workplace seriously and created an organizational culture and climate that reflected concern for the charter school employees' lives inside and outside of the workplace (Loveday, 2012; Jyotbi & Jyotbi, 2012; Thulasimani et al., 2010).

### **Conclusion on WLB Programs and Employee Performance Findings**

The conclusions from this study stem solely from the results of the data analysis. The conceptual framework provided the basis for the review of the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance and the conceptual framework of the job demands-resources model. Many of the responses made by the participants supported the job demands-resources model. Using the job demands-resources model helped me to gain a better understanding of the demands (pressure from the DOE, state and federal government) that participants experienced and the resources (work-life balance programs) they

utilized. Based on some of the managers and non-managerial employees' responses the resources (WLBP) implemented by the charter school leadership was essential to deal with job demands. Within this study, I viewed the job demands-resources model as it relates to the connection with the findings in order to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of the WLB programs and other critical factors that contribute to improving employee performance. In general, I utilized the job demands-resources model to explore programs and policies and to understand employee performances. To ensure the credibility of this qualitative case study and establish that the results are trustworthy from the participants' view, I compared the study's findings to those within the existing literature pertaining to work-life balance and work-life programs. I also talked to benefits managers, human resource managers, and a work-life program manager who understood the potential benefits from the programs on employee performance. The findings are similar to feedback received from employees.

### **Applications to Professional Practice**

Ueda and Musashino (2012) noted that the objectives for work-life programs are to reduce the behavioral and psychological burdens on workers resulting from the competing norms and obligations of the domains of work and family. For that reason, employers implement work-life balance policies and offer various programs to ensure a healthy and sufficient workforce (Durga & Joyce, 2011). Equally important, organizational leaders and business professionals' perceptions of whether or not work-life programs have a positive return on investment (ROI) determines their commitment to such initiatives (Sarwar & Aftab, 2011). Therefore, assessing the design and

implementation (Lee & Hong, 2011) as well as the impact of work-life balance programs on an organization's bottom line is imperative in evaluating the costs versus benefits of such programs (Wang & Verma, 2012). However, even in the absence of work-life balance programs, there are costs associated with unresolved conflicts between workers professional and personal lives (Yasbek, 2004). These costs are borne by organizations (through reduced productivity) as well as by workers and their families and communities (Yasbek, 2004).

I conducted this qualitative case study to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders at a charter school organization utilize to improve employee performance. The interviews and archival study data provided information on the potential benefits of the work-life balance programs on employee performance. Based on data collected, all participants affirmed that there were prior issues with (a) employee absenteeism, (b) employee turnover, (c) employee motivation, (d) employee job satisfaction, (e) employee productivity, and (f) employee retention before implementation of the WLB programs. Overall, the charter school leadership made a commitment to maintaining a family-friendly work environment that is supportive of the obligations to home and society as well as the changes that accompany various life events. By implementing a variety of WLB programs, the charter school leadership gave their personnel the option of selecting appropriate programs to balance their professional and personal responsibilities.

The findings in this study may provide organizational leaders and business professionals with information that may allow them to make better decisions when

implementing work-life balance programs to improve employee performance to attract the best talent and maximize productivity and profitability. Furthermore, the findings from the study might contribute to business practice by offering employers in different industries ways in which they approach the development, implementation, and utilization of work-life balance programs to promote employee engagement, commitment, and overall job satisfaction. In addition, the findings from this study may be instrumental in helping school leaders in assessing the consequences of turnover, absenteeism, motivation, and organizational productivity. Additionally, the findings from this study may provide implementable information that human resource directors and benefits managers could use in designing and implementing work-life balance programs to increase their employers' day-to-day operations and maximize employee performance. Furthermore, the information stemming from this study might provide a new way for viewing work-life balance programs as a means to concurrently improving employees' overall performance and organizational sustainability through proper stakeholder engagement.

### **Implications for Social Change**

Organizational leaders are under constant competitive pressure to improve their work environment to get employees and managers to perform better (Ben-Ner & Lluís, 2011). Having a committed and high performing workforce is an indispensable asset that contributes to the organization's sustainability and competitive edge (Ansari, 2011). The substantial changes in the demographic composition of the United States workforce (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002; Caillier, 2012; Haar & Roche, 2010) are behind the

move to embrace work-life programs (Lazar, Osoian, & Ratiu, 2010). Work-life balance programs benefit both employees and employers (Lee & Hong, 2011). Implementing the programs can provide workers with relief from non-work concerns through (a) flexible work arrangement programs, (b) flexible work schedule programs, (c) health and wellness programs, (d) paid time-off programs, and (e) job sharing programs.

Furthermore, implementing the programs can be beneficial for employers because the pressures of workers' personal life can directly affect their job performance, and workers who perceived their employers as unsupportive on family issues show higher degrees of anxiety (Lee & Hong, 2011). Participation in suitable arrangements that involve work flexibility promotes a sense among workers that they have the ability to manage work-related responsibilities affecting their lives, and this option contributes to less occupational stress and burnout (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2004; Severn, Searchfield, & Huggard, 2012).

The findings in this study can promote social change by providing organizational leaders and business professionals with insight on the effectiveness of their current programs and policies (Miryala & Chiluka, 2012) as well as selecting programs that align with their business goals and objectives (Wang & Verma, 2012). Furthermore, vast numbers of workers seek work-life balance, but their desire to be successful in their profession draws them into situations where they are working longer hours and experiencing conflict at home and work (Chandra, 2012). For this reason, the implications for a positive social change include a better understanding of the effectiveness and importance of some work-life balance programs, their impact on

various outcomes in the workplace, and some work-life balance programs' contribution in decreasing employee absenteeism, reducing turnover rates, and improving employee overall performance.

Equally important, the study data supported the conclusion that when effectively implemented, some work-life balance programs may be beneficial in improving (a) employee well-being, (b) job satisfaction, (c) productivity, (d) motivation, (e) retention as well as reducing (f) absenteeism, and (g) turnover. Findings and conclusions from this research may raise awareness in support of developing and implementing related programs and policies that could benefit employers, employees, families, and communities.

### **Recommendations for Action**

The intent of my research was to explore the work-life balance programs that nonprofit leaders at one charter school organization in Harlem, New York utilize to improve employee performance. The findings provided evidence that the flexible work arrangement programs, flexible work schedule programs, health and wellness programs, and the paid time-off programs are associated with improved employee performance. The only program underutilized was the job sharing program, and this was for a variety of reasons (e.g., confidentiality of job positions, bad experiences, skepticism, and no interest). As the findings revealed, the issue of work-life balance was so significant that the employer developed and deployed strategies to reduce the imbalance between employees work and personal lives. The employees were expressing severe anxiety over the amount of work and the pressures that accompanied those workloads. The

implementation of the WLB programs was the first step that illustrated that the employer cared about personnel lives inside and outside of the workplace (Jyotbi & Jyotbi, 2012; Loveday, 2012; Thulasimani et al., 2010). However, employee participation was key in improving (a) morale, (b) job satisfaction, (c) well-being, (d) productivity, (e) lowering turnover, and (f) decreasing absenteeism (Boushey, 2011; Howard-Quarthey, & Buenar-Puplampu, 2012; Marzec et al., 2011; Wang et al., 2011). The WLB programs were also a recruiting tool and retention strategy (Briscoe & Kellogg, 2011; Stout, Awad, & Guzmán, 2013; Thulasimani et al., 2010; Vuksan et al., 2012) to retain high performing workers as well as increasing employees' quality of life (Kaspin et al., 2013). For these reasons, I recommend that organizational leaders and business professionals complete organizational culture assessments as a part of an ongoing effort to ensure the efficient, effective, and responsive delivery of programs and services they provide to their employees. The goal of these assessments is to focus exclusively on evaluating areas where the business may be experiencing organizational obstacles that affect the culture and disrupts daily operations. Culture is unique for every organization and could be about employee performance, job satisfaction, motivation, retention, and well-being. In other words, culture is an observable, powerful force in any organization and is comprised of beliefs, behaviors, and shared values (Shahzad et al., 2013). Therefore, I recommend that organizational leaders and business professionals create and sustain a healthy organizational culture to achieve its mission objectives. To that end, these assessments should focus on factors that are internal to the organization, which impede or contribute to less than optimal performance. Overall, the purpose of these organizational culture

assessments is to help facilitate a thriving internal environment for organizational success. Equally important, I recommend that organizational leaders and business professionals implement sound strategies for improving employee performance by aligning their people, activities, and processes. In this sense, organizational leaders and business professionals should ensure that they clearly define, effectively communicate, monitor, and execute strategies throughout all levels of the organization to succeed.

I also recommend that organizational and business professionals build employee commitment illustrating that they are genuinely concerned about their employees' opinions on work issues that may affect daily operations. Furthermore, I recommend that organizational and business professionals create a supportive work environment where managers support employees in their work and growth by providing education and learning opportunities, coaching, mentoring, training, and programs that support employees' personal development. In addition, I recommend that organizational leaders and business professionals identify barriers to employee performance by conducting surveys to gain an understanding of exactly what is getting in the way of performance. Most importantly, I recommend that organizational leaders and business professionals' conduct town hall meetings to understand why employees might be dissatisfied because employees' well-being directly influences attendance, job performance, and work behavior. Understanding the barriers to employees' overall performance could guide the knowledgeable allocation of resources.

As the researcher, I am personally committed to informing organizational leaders and business professionals of the findings from this study as they relate to organizational



practices. In general, organizational leaders and business professionals play a significant role in helping to assess and enact where appropriate, work-life balance programs that maximize workers job performance, while addressing workers quality of life outside of the workplace. For this reason, organizational leaders and business professionals can review the information in this study and consider its potential efficacy for designing, implementing, and monitoring the effectiveness of appropriate work-life balance programs for improving employee motivation, job satisfaction, productivity, and reducing employee turnover, absenteeism, and increasing retention of talented workers. Furthermore, using the information as a resource provided by successful organizational leaders and business professionals may prove inspirational to business success as well as increasing their business or organizations' bottom line.

My goal is to publish the findings of this study for the broader audience. I will submit the findings of this study to the following professional journals: (a) *Human Resource Management Journal*, (b) *International Journal of Current Research*, (c) *Journal of Management & Strategy* and (d) *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence*. Additionally, I intend to publicize the research findings using appropriate and professional platforms such as other charter schools, private and public schools, nonprofit multi-educational organizations, professional development workshops, and conferences. In essence, the findings of this study indicate that there is a need for committed organizational leaders and business professionals' engagement to improve employees' overall performance.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This study on the work-life balance programs that nonprofit leaders utilize to improve employee performance at a charter school organization is important to business practices. The results from this study, while interesting, come from a single charter school. For this reason, I recommend that similar case studies to be conducted at other schools as well (private, public school, or a college). By researching the WLB programs that leaders at other educational institutions utilize and comparing those to the programs that the charter school utilized (e.g., flexible work arrangement programs, flexible work schedule programs, health and wellness programs, job sharing program, and paid time-off programs) could contribute to a better understanding of the best practices for WLB programs on improving employee performance. Thorough investigations could take place to study if the issues (i.e., decreased motivation, job satisfaction, high turnover and absenteeism, and low productivity) the charter school organization employees in Harlem, New York were experiencing occur at other educational institutions. These follow-up case studies would include other workers' views to compare and contrast research findings. Furthermore, researchers might use those findings to compare the views of managers from this study to analyze similarities and differences with managers' perspectives at other types of organizations.

Equally important, researchers could explore additional work-life balance policies and programs with the intent of establishing new innovative ways of assessing employees' work-life needs and measuring the effectiveness of WLB programs. Effective WLB programs may help establish mutually beneficial relationships between employers

and workers (Mayerhofer et al., 2011). Workers who are better able to balance the demands of work and their personal time are more content and satisfied. As a result, this improved balance can lead to real benefits for employers in terms of productivity gains (Vuksan et al., 2012), lower turnover rates (Kumar & Chakraborty, 2013), and workers loyalty (Wang & Walumbwa, 2007). I also recommend that future researchers investigate the role organizational board members' play when it comes to the design and implementation of work-life balance programs.

### **Reflections**

Although I learned from my own experience pertaining to work-life imbalance, I realized that it is far more efficient to learn from other people experiences because, I could learn something new, if I just allocate the necessary time to listen and observe carefully. For this reason, my role in this qualitative explanatory case study was to gather data without bias. In this sense, my role as the researcher was to comprehend and learn about human views and experiences as well as present the findings and recommendations in an organized, ethical, and objective format (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The experience of working in a nonprofit multi-educational organization, at times can be frustrating dealing with bureaucratic red tape, antiquated technology, to working long hours with fewer resources has broadened my view of the need for a balance between a person's professional and personal life. The experiences of (a) executive directors, (b) business managers, (c) chief financial officers, (d) human resource directors, (e) security managers, and (f) supervisors reinforced my view on how individuals tend to

underestimate the extent to which maintaining balance contributes to living life productively and successfully.

In spite of my extensive experience in nonprofit educational management, I was inspired after meeting and interviewing intelligent educational professionals. My doctoral study experience provided an opportunity for me to learn from my study participants. The participants' (a) wisdom, (b) knowledge, (c) views, (d) experiences, (e) humility, (f) commitment, and (g) passion gave me greater understanding of the educational industry. Conversely, the study participants may have learned the importance of research, and how their views and experiences played a significant role in my study and in the community they serve.

### **Summary and Study Conclusions**

The results from the case analysis revealed that four out of the five work-life balance programs implemented by the charter school leaders were associated with improving employee performance. While not surprising, the health and wellness programs surpassed the other WLB programs as having the perceived highest contribution in improving employee motivation, productivity, job satisfaction, absenteeism, and retention; followed by flexible work schedule programs, paid time-off programs, and the flexible work arrangement programs.

Many of the programs are low-cost to employers and highly valued by employees. With the rapid changes and uncertainty in the business environment, organizational leaders and business professionals must continually evaluate their work environment to identify employee needs, and keep abreast with work-life trends. An organization's

success rests, in part, on how well management can anticipate change, demonstrate effective leadership, increase productivity, and embrace social responsibility.

Organizational leaders and business professionals have the responsibility of influencing the direction that their employees will take. This responsibility calls for organizational leaders and business professionals to assess their workplace conditions when setting organizational priorities. When leaders cease to evaluate their work and life ethics, then employees will suffer the consequences. In this sense, organizational leaders and business professionals should also align work-life balance programs investments with business goals and objectives, and reiterate the importance of the programs to their employees while fostering a positive workplace culture. Readers and practitioners are encouraged to use my findings, conclusions, and recommendations for improving both their professional and personal practices.

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## Appendix A: Interview Questions

### **Interview Questions (Charter School Leadership)**

1. How would you describe your work-life balance programs?
2. How do employees react to those work-life balance programs?
3. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee absenteeism?
4. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee turnover?
5. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee retention?
6. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee motivation?
7. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee job satisfaction?
8. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee productivity?

### **Interview Questions (Charter School Employees)**

1. What are your opinions on the work-life balance programs offered by this organization?
2. What are your views on the need for work-life balance programs in this organization?
3. In your opinion, what are the most rewarding parts of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs?
4. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work schedule programs?
5. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the job-sharing programs?
6. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the

health and wellness programs?

7. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the paid time-off programs?
8. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work arrangement programs?
9. Based on your experience, how would you describe the importance of you having access to each of these work-life balance programs?
10. Which of the programs, if any, affected your motivation? What was the nature of the contribution?
11. Which of the programs, if any, affected your job satisfaction? What was the nature of the contribution?
12. Which of the programs, if any, affected your productivity? What was the nature of the contribution?
13. Which of the programs, if any, affected your absenteeism? What was the nature of the contribution?
14. Which work-life balance programs incentives, if any, affected your decision to continue working for the organization? What was the nature of the contribution?
15. In your opinion, what are the limitations of the organization's work-life balance programs?
16. In your opinion, what are the failures of the organization's work-life balance programs?
17. What type of alternative programs to improve employee motivation, job

satisfaction, absenteeism, retention, turnover, and productivity would you like to see the organization implement, and why?

## Appendix B: Pilot Study

Hello, my name is George Sheppard. I am a doctoral student attending the College of Management and Technology at Walden University. Your participation and feedback in this interview is crucial and greatly appreciated for understanding issues associated with the work-life balance programs that nonprofit school leaders utilize to improve employee performance. First, we will have to come to an agreement on an interview time that is suitable according to your schedule. Second, you will have to sign a consent form acknowledging that you understand the purpose and the duration of the interview prior to beginning the interview. Third, during the 60-minute interview process, there will be recordings, in addition to note taking.

### **Pilot Study Questions**

1. What are your opinions on the work-life balance programs offered by this organization?
2. What are your views on the need for work-life balance programs in this organization?
3. In your opinion, what are the most rewarding parts of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs?
4. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work schedule programs?
5. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the job-sharing programs?
6. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the

health and wellness programs?

7. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the paid time-off programs?
8. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work arrangement programs?
9. Based on your experience, how would you describe the importance of you having access to each of these work-life balance programs?
10. Which of the programs, if any, affected your motivation? What was the nature of the contribution?
11. Which of the programs, if any, affected your job satisfaction? What was the nature of the contribution?
12. Which of the programs, if any, affected your productivity? What was the nature of the contribution?
13. Which of the programs, if any, affected your absenteeism? What was the nature of the contribution?
14. Which work-life balance programs incentives, if any, affected your decision to continue working for the organization? What was the nature of the contribution?
15. In your opinion, what are the limitations of the organization's work-life balance programs?
16. In your opinion, what are the failures of the organization's work-life balance programs?
17. What type of alternative programs to improve employee motivation, job

satisfaction, absenteeism, retention, turnover, and productivity would you like to see the organization implement, and why?

## Appendix C: Interview Guide

### **Introduction**

Now that you have completed the consent form, I will now ask you a couple of questions. I would like you to express your views and experiences about the current work-life balance programs implemented by your employer whether the programs contribute to improving employee performance. With your permission, I will be recording this session as well as writing down what you say for my records but these notes will be kept securely, and your name will not be used anywhere in the study. Your responses will be compared to those of other participants, and you will not be identifiable in the study when published. It is crucial for me to hear your views and experiences because you have experience working for this employer that can give me greater insight to the contribution of the work-life balance programs. I hope you will be able to spend extra time (if needed) to complete this interview. I am going to turn on the voice recorder now. Do not forget, you can ask me to turn off the recorder at any time.

Do you have any questions before we start?

### **Interview Procedures**

- Ask participants clear, open-ended interview questions, such as how, what, and why questions.
- Elicit detailed responses to the interview questions.
- Follow up on key expressions.
- Listen carefully (active listening).
- Use appropriate follow-up probing questions.

### **Charter School Leadership Interview Questions**

I used the following four questions to get some background information before asking participants the primary interview questions:

- What is your name?
- How long have you worked for this employer?
- What is your Job title?
- What primary functions does your job involve?

### **Leadership Primary Interview Questions**

1. How would you describe your work-life balance programs?

2. How do employees react to those work-life balance programs?
3. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee absenteeism?
4. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee turnover?
5. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee retention?
6. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee motivation?
7. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee job satisfaction?
8. How have those work-life balance programs affected employee productivity?

### **Charter School Employees Interview Questions**

I used the following four questions to get some background information before asking participants the primary interview questions:

- What is your name?
- How long have you worked for this employer?
- What is your Job title?
- What primary functions does your job involve?

### **Employees Primary Interview Questions**

1. What are your opinions on the work-life balance programs offered by this organization?
2. What are your views on the need for work-life balance programs in this organization?
3. In your opinion, what are the most rewarding parts of being able to utilize the work-life balance programs?
4. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work schedule programs?
5. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the job-sharing programs?
6. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the health and wellness programs?
7. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to use the paid time-off programs?
8. In your opinion, what are the most satisfying parts of being able to utilize the flexible work arrangement programs?
9. Based on your experience, how would you describe the importance of you having access to each of these work-life balance programs?



10. Which of the programs, if any, affected your motivation? What was the nature of the contribution?
11. Which of the programs, if any, affected your job satisfaction? What was the nature of the contribution?
12. Which of the programs, if any, affected your productivity? What was the nature of the contribution?
13. Which of the programs, if any, affected your absenteeism? What was the nature of the contribution?
14. Which work-life balance programs incentives, if any, affected your decision to continue working for the organization? What was the nature of the contribution?
15. In your opinion, what are the limitations of the organization's work-life balance programs?
16. In your opinion, what are the failures of the organization's work-life balance programs?
17. What type of alternative programs to improve employee motivation, job satisfaction, absenteeism, retention, turnover, and productivity would you like to see the organization implement, and why?