

## ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS, WORK LIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEES' EFFICIENCY: EVIDENCE FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA'S (BiH) IT SECTOR

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### ABSTRACT

Today's business environment is more dynamic due to vast technological growth. This growth is most visible in the IT industry. Efficiency, together with work-life balance, is found to be one of the most important factors of success at workplace. Positive impacts of work-life balance include: retention of employees towards their employer, better motivation, and increased efficiency due to an increased employee satisfaction. Recent literature findings show a direct positive relationship between efficiency and work-life balance. Flexible work arrangements have positive impact on work-life balance and efficiency. This study analyzes the impact of flexible work arrangements on employees' work-life balance and efficiency, using a non-random convenience sample selected from BiH's IT employees. In the initial phase of data collection, quantitative survey instrument was adopted based on the original one from Mount Holyoke University. It was translated and back translated from English to Bosnian and again back to English and then verified as the part of pilot testing on 40 IT employees. The study was conducted in a cross-sectional time manner in the period June-July 2016. A modified, 18 questions, primary quantitative survey instrument with a 5-point Likert scale was conducted on 503 Bosnian IT employees. Fourteen questions covered inferential and last four descriptive statistics. The study aims to test if there is a significant relationship between flexible work arrangements, work-life balance, and employee efficiency with respect to their gender, age, time they travel to work and their children status. The results indicate that flexible work time and location

can have a positive impact on employee work life balance and this opinion is shared by all the employees surveyed. Although 64.80% of participants stated that their work life is balanced with their personal life, there is always place for improvement. Participants agree that better work life balance, caused by flexible work time and flexible work location, will improve their efficiency and reduce stress.

**Key words:** IT, efficiency, flexible work arrangements, work-life balance.

**JEL:** J530, M150.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Today, in the globalization era, pressure on companies to make business running and stay competitive is constantly increasing. Businesses have to be available almost constantly while projected delivery times are increasingly becoming shorter. As company consists of human resources (HR), rather short-task completion time frames have direct impact on employees' lives. In addition, IT business is often classified as a very dynamic and expanding business sector. Besides that, it is the most innovative sector of today. High demand for innovation is putting employees under big pressure to complete projects in a timely and quality manner. Besides that, the IT sector is often characterized as "support sector", so IT companies are usually located in large cities. For employees, this means that they need to spend a lot of time traveling to work each day. Additionally, IT employees usually collaborate with people located worldwide, in different time zones. To satisfy all the mentioned business requirements,

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employees are usually requested to work longer. In addition, if they collaborate with people in different time zones they need to work until midnight or even later. All the mentioned facts make the line between work and personal life becoming thinner and thinner. For employees, balancing between personal and work life is becoming harder and harder. Employees' private lives suffer and employees' work-life balance skills are severely challenged. Significant body of research has shown that employees' private life has a big impact on his/her happiness and motivation. As less motivation means less efficiency, employers need to find a way to help employees to improve their work-life balance. One of the latest trends in improving work life balance is represented by flexible work arrangements. A recent study of the Government of South Australia (2012) shows that these flexible work arrangements are efficient in improving employee-child relationship and making those more satisfied with their lives. The International Labor Office noticed that there is no more a clear line between personal and work life, which leads to destroying employees' personal lives. They recognized flexible work arrangements as a great possibility to prevent this (Fagan et al., 2011).

Flexible work arrangements were suggested by Forbes as the strategy to reduce pressure from employees caused by poor work life balance (Hewlett 2009). Recently, Sweden has introduced six-hour working days in order to improve employees' work life balance. Now, after the testing phase has shown this concept as very successful, employees in other neo-liberal capitalist countries are expecting this change to happen in their countries. Meanwhile, numbers of companies, especially in the IT sector, are trying to improve employees' work-life balance by enabling flexible work arrangements. This research should test the previously mentioned studies and show that flexible work schedule and location will impact employees' work life balance and efficiency (Martharu 2015). The presented study was designed to explain impact of flexible work arrangements on

employees' work life balance and efficiency in IT companies. Two main flexible work arrangements are considered:

- Flexible work location, and
- Flexible work place;

Keeping in mind IT business environment and the fact that private life quality can have a huge impact on his/her motivation and efficiency, work life balance strategies are becoming more important than ever. This study should confirm that the mentioned flexible work arrangements could improve employees' work-life balance and their motivation. The main objective of this study is to analyze and assess if there are differences in employees' perceptions of flexible work arrangements and their work-life balance (WLB) regarding employees' age. It is a general opinion that, as people become older, family becomes more and more important. As far as gender is concerned, recent research shows that possible different preferences between male and female employees for work life balance can be expected. Here, we should consider nominal data and check differences between these two categories. Again, employees who have children will change the amount of time, which they would like to spend with their families. The results of this study could shed some light for future studies in the field and could provide the contribution to shaping future work-life balance practices.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the past decade, technology has rapidly expanded. Besides the number of advantages that come with technology expansion, there are also multiple drawbacks. One of major drawbacks for employees is that they become always available. This fact makes the line between personal and professional life thinner than ever. Thus, employees are under extreme pressure to balance between personal and professional life. Two large international surveys also support these statements. First, the survey made by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) shows that, in after

work hours, many people still do worry about work related problems. In addition, some employees are unable to do leisure activities in that time. Another survey made by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work noticed an increasing trend of constant accessibility for many German workers and recognized this as the potential health hazard. According to this, two-thirds of workforce is regularly employed overtime, while every fifth person feels overloaded, and every fourth person states that they will be available for performance of employer's duties during their free time. In addition, every fourth person claims that it has experienced reduced time for family and friends, thus, making it less able to rest (Groll 2014).

As for employers only productivity matters, these findings become important once when we understand how they impact employees' productivity. According to Riordan (2013) a numbers of studies show that employees, according to their own feelings, do not have sufficient time for their personal lives, feel exhausted and distracted at work. In addition, this imbalance can cause job burnout, which causes problems in their relationships with family and friends, sadness and increased stress exemplified in a vicious circle of stress. For employers this clearly means that, if they want to have fully efficient workers, they do not only need to pay them well, but also have to help them improve their work-life balance. This topic is so important that some countries even created the recommendations for their employers. For example, the Government of South Australia recommended family friendly work arrangements that can make these innovative Human Resource Management (HRM) businesses to become attractive to new applicants, assist to retain valued workers, and enable higher levels of productivity from more committed workers. The significance of formulating the best schemes for work life balance by management can never be overlooked. Family-friendly work provisions are usually defined as the actions or resources that tend to aid workers to better balance their work and family obligations by making the workplace more flexible. These incentives

can aid the employers to attract and keep valued employees, by decreasing overall turnover costs, as well as by retaining the skills and knowledge within the business entities (Government of South Australia 2012).

Until present time, the common practice was to look at work and personal time like devoted parts of available time. Now, the experts are more focused on its effectiveness aspect. Riordan (2013) stated that researchers Gary Powel and Jeffry Green House emphasized that: one should look at work-life balance as one topic. Differences coming with different roles - as a parent, partner, friend, and professional - could enhance the physical and mental well-being - especially when all these roles are of high quality and are designed together. This will also avoid negative spillover from personal to private life and vice versa (Riordan 2013). According to the Global Generations Survey, 33% of workers stated that having a life and full time job has become tougher over the past years (Morgan 2015). Not only that family and social life is intruded by ever increasing work demands, but also the family pressures affect work performance (Fu & Shaffer 2001). As technology tends to be growing more and more, it is expected that awareness about and need for work-life balance will increase in incoming years (Heidenberger 2001). Experts agree that the compounding stress from the never-ending workday is damaging. It can hurt relationships, health, and overall happiness (Jian 2014).

This is a great starting point for us to examine how all the above mentioned facts can really be applicable to Bosnia and Herzegovina's (BiH's) IT sector.

### 3. METHODOLOGY, DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This primary research study was conducted on a sample of 540 BiH's IT employees. All employees were accessed using LinkedIn business network. The key criteria for selecting employees were that they were related to IT business and that they were currently employed in any Bosnian town. The survey instrument consists of the total of 18 questions/items, out of which four depict descriptive and the remaining 14 inferential statistics. This study utilized non-random convenience sampling methodology since the reliable and identifiable sampling frame was not available. This study analyzes the impact of flexible work arrangements on employees' work-life balance and efficiency, using a non-random convenience sample selected from BiH's IT employees. The study was conducted in a cross-sectional time manner in the period June-July 2016. The study aims to test if there is a positive and significant relationship between flexible work arrangements, work-life balance and employee efficiency with respect to their gender, age, time they travel to work and their children status (Creswell 2009).

The above mentioned 18 research questions were divided as follows:

- Three questions (Yes/No questions) are measuring:
  - Availability of flexible work location for users;
  - Availability of flexible work time for users; and
  - User opinion about their current work-life balance.
- One question is an open ended question, used to examine user's out of the box opinion;
- Ten questions based on 5-point Likert scale were used to make direct measures of user

opinions about topics. They are organized into three main groups in order to measure:

- Flexible work location impact on users' job efficiency, stress level, availability of time for family and users' work-life balance improvement;
- Flexible work time impact on users' job efficiency, stress level, availability of time for family and users' work-life balance improvement; and
- Direct relationship between better work-life balance and employee job efficiency and time for family.
- The last four questions are about demographic-personal information of the surveyed participants, such as gender, age, children status, and time they travel to work. In this question we made two main simplifications:
  - To simplify the analysis by age employers were divided into two groups: employees under and over 35 years of age. The prediction is that until they are 35 years old, employees are more focused on building their careers, and after they are 35 years old, employees' focus shifts to family building.
  - The time employee need to travel to work is divided into two main groups: employees who spend less than one hour commuting daily, and the ones who spend more.

All the survey questions, except the personal ones, are shown in Table 3.2.

#### 3.1. Primary data descriptive statistics

Table 3.1 presents the descriptive statistics of personal characteristics of the surveyed participants.

Table 3.1: Demographic Characteristics of Survey Participants

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	69.00	13.70
Male	434.00	86.00
<b>Age Distribution</b>		
>=35	311.00	61.90
<35	192.00	38.10
<b>Time they travel to work (door to door, in both directions in minutes)</b>		
>60	456.00	90.70
<60	47.00	9.30
<b>Have children</b>		
Yes	284.00	56.40
No	219.00	43.60

The utilized survey instrument contains two parts. In the first part, three general Yes/No questions provide us with current availability of flexible work arrangement and employees' work-life balance. The second part consists of ten questions arranged in 5-point Likert scale providing information about employees' views regarding flexible work arrangements and work-life balance (where provided answer choice "1" indicates "strongly disagree" and "5" indicates "strongly agree").

The third part is used to collect personal information of the surveyed participants, such as gender and age. Table 3.2 provides the summary of the results for these ten questions, in terms of their means and standard deviations. The responses have the mean value of 4.09, where four of the statements/questions received lower than average value and six statements received the above average value.

Table 3.2: Survey Questions and Summary of the Responses

Questions	Mean	Std. Dev.
1) With flexible work location, I have better work-life balance:	4.03	0.83
2) With flexible work location, I am more efficient at work:	3.95	0.84
3) With flexible work location, I have more time for my family:	3.97	0.88
4) With flexible work location, it is less stressful for me to balance between work and personal life:	3.95	0.90
5) With flexible work time, I have better work-life balance:	4.19	0.72
6) With flexible work time, I am more efficient at work:	4.12	0.76
7) With flexible work time, I have more time for my family:	4.09	0.82
8) With flexible work time, it is less stressful for me to balance between work and personal life:	4.13	0.76
9) With better work-life balance, I would be more efficient at work:	4.25	0.64
10) With better work-life balance I will have more time for my family:	4.24	0.64
<b>General questions about availability of flexible work arrangements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Flexible work location is available in my company:	44.50%	55.50%
Flexible work time is available in my company:	45.80%	54.20%
My work life is balanced with my personal life:	64.80%	33.20%

Using Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) test the reliability of these ten survey questions was checked. According to this particular reliability test:

- if  $\alpha < 0.5$ , the test is not reliable at all;
- if  $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ , the reliability of the test is poor;
- if  $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ , the reliability of the test is at a questionable level;
- if  $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.8$ , the reliability of the test is at an acceptable level;
- if  $0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ , the reliability of the test is good, and

if  $\alpha \geq 0.9$ , the reliability of the test is excellent (George & Mallery 2003).

For this survey, Cronbach's Alpha test result is  $\alpha = 0.89$  and therefore it can be concluded that the survey questions are highly reliable and consistent.

Table 3.3 below, presents the summary of the results for the same question with respect to employees' gender, age, time they travel to work, and their children status.

Table 3.3: Mean values for the responses by sub-groups

Question:	Gender		Age		Travel time:		Have children	
	Female	Male	$\leq 35$	$> 35$	$< 60$ min	$> 60$ min	Yes	No
1	4.05	3.93	4.05	4.01	4.03	4.02	4.02	4.04
2	3.98	3.78	3.93	3.98	3.95	3.98	3.99	3.92
3	3.98	3.91	3.97	3.97	3.95	4.19	3.95	3.99
4	3.97	3.81	3.94	3.96	3.95	3.96	4.00	3.90
5	4.19	4.20	4.20	4.18	4.21	4.00	4.17	4.20
6	4.11	4.19	4.13	4.11	4.13	4.09	4.13	4.12
7	4.08	4.12	4.05	4.15	4.07	4.19	4.11	4.06
8	4.12	4.20	4.13	4.13	4.12	4.21	4.16	4.10
9	4.25	4.26	4.26	4.24	4.25	4.30	4.23	4.27
10	4.24	4.26	4.24	4.23	4.25	4.15	4.24	4.24

\* Significantly different at 5 percent significance level.

The primary collected quantitative data was analyzed by using Microsoft Excel real-stat add-in function. Three dimensions of work life balance (WLB) (i.e. WLB and satisfaction, flexible work time and WLB and flexible work location and WLB) were investigated in the context of four independent variables (e.g. gender, children status, age, and time they travel to work). In order to check if these ten statements can be grouped under one or more explanatory factors and create causal relationship between these statements and perceptions of the employees work life balance, factor analysis method was applied. To determine if factor analysis will be useful, the measure of sampling adequacy using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistical test (KMO) was calculated. In general, KMO values greater

than 0.50 indicate that these statements can be grouped under some common factors. Thus, factor analysis could reduce the potential multi-co linearity issues.

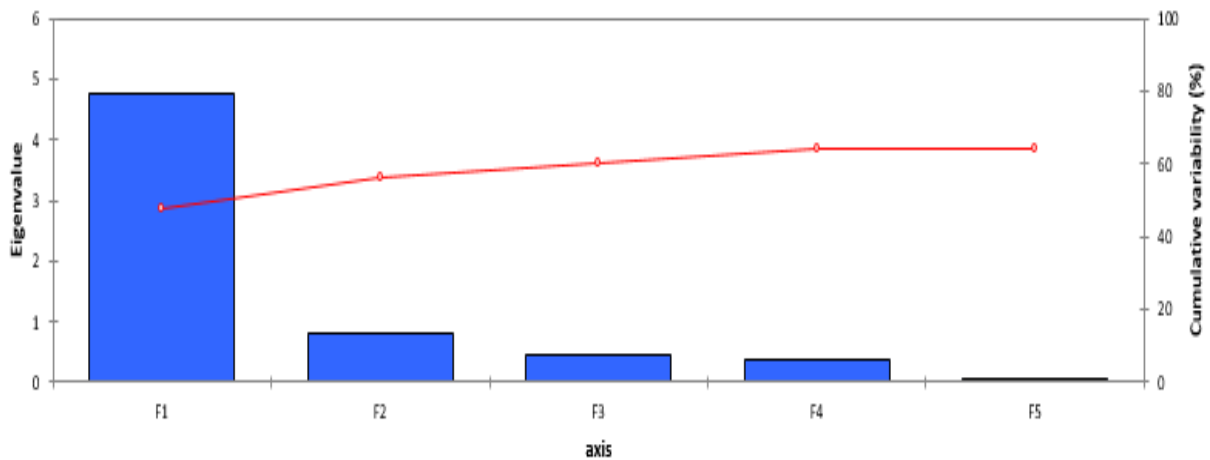
#### 4. FACTOR ANALYSIS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE

As KMO value was calculated to be 0.84, it was confirmed that the factor analysis could be utilized. Data analysis proceeded with principal component analysis method by calculating common values. The results are shown in Table 4.1 below. The lowest common variance value was found for the statement number 1 (0.31). The highest common variance value was found for the statement number 3 (0.50).

Table 4.1: Factor Analysis, Communalities

Question:	Initial communality	Final communality	Specific variance
1. With flexible work location, I have better work-life balance:	0.65	0.69	0.31
2. With flexible work location, I am more efficient at work:	0.61	0.52	0.47
3. With flexible work location, I have more time for my family:	0.55	0.49	0.50
4. With flexible work location, it is less stressful for me to balance between work and personal life:	0.59	0.66	0.33
5. With flexible work time, I have better work-life balance:	0.57	0.55	0.44
6. With flexible work time, I am more efficient at:	0.62	0.55	0.44
7. With flexible work time, I have more time for my family:	0.60	0.51	0.48
8. With flexible work time, it is less stressful for me to balance between work and personal life:	0.58	0.55	0.44
9. Great work-life balance helps me to be more efficient at work:	0.56	0.54	0.46
10. Great work-life balance helps me to have more time for my family:	0.54	0.51	0.48

Afterwards, the appropriate number of factors is determined using XLSTAT program. Graph 4.1 shows the results of Eigenvalues.



Graph 4.1: Eigenvalues' Statistics

As Eigenvalues' statistics alone is not sufficient to determine the correct number of factors needed, rotated component matrix was calculated using the principal component

analysis, with Varimax method, under Kaiser Normalization. This is shown in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2: Factor Analysis Correlation

Question:	F1	F2
1. With flexible work location, I have better work-life balance:	0.76	0.33
2. With flexible work location, I am more efficient at work:	0.68	0.23
3. With flexible work location, I have more time for my family:	0.65	0.25
4. With flexible work location, it is less stressful for me to balance between work and personal life:	0.70	0.40
5. With flexible work time, I have better work-life balance:	0.73	-0.12
6. With flexible work time, I am more efficient at work:	0.73	-0.12
7. With flexible work time, I have more time for my family:	0.70	-0.14
8. With flexible work time, it is less stressful for me to balance between work and personal life:	0.73	-0.11
9. Great work-life balance helps me to be more efficient at work	0.60	-0.41
10. Great work-life balance helps me to have more time for my family:	0.58	-0.42

Due to the presence of similar or partially overlapping questions, the factor analysis was considered to be the first step in our analysis. Due to high correlation among some of the statements, the results of the analysis indicated that all ten existing statements/questions can be grouped under one factor. Thus, in this part of the study the hypotheses were tested under one group. This group was named "flexible work arrangements".

All responses of the employees were considered as being part of four major groups and analyzed disregarding their gender, age, time they travel to work, and children status. Using t-test for difference of two population means, gender, age, children factor and time employees travel to work were tested for the difference in means for different subsets.

#### 4.1. Hypotheses tested under factor analysis

The following null hypotheses were tested (statistical significance level: 0.05 or 5.00 percent):

a. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference between male and female survey participants in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance;

b. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference among survey participants with respect to their age groups in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance;

c. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference among survey participants with respect to time they travel to work in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance and

d. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference among survey participants with respect to their children status in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance.

Additionally, according to the secondary-literature review, direct positive relationship between employees' work life balance and their efficiency was noticed. The survey question number "9" which directly measures this has the mean value above 4.23. This directly indicates a strong positive relationship and supports other research findings. Using t-test for difference of two population means, it was tested as to how employees' perception about impact which work life balance has on their efficiency was changing in respect to their gender, age, children factor, and time employees travel to work. All the mentioned factors were tested for the difference in means for different subsets.



#### 4.2. Hypotheses tested based on statement number "9"

The following null hypotheses were tested (significance level: 0.05):

- e. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference between male and female survey participants in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency;
- f. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference among survey participants with respect to their age in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency;
- g. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference among survey participants with respect to time they travel to work in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency; and
- h. H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference among survey participants with respect to their children status in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency.

### 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1. Results from factor analysis hypothesis testing

- a. **Fail to reject H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference between male and female survey participants in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance (p-value: 0.67);
- b. **Fail to reject H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference among survey participants with respect to their age groups in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance (p-value: 0.88);
- c. **Fail to reject H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference among survey participants with respect to time they travel to work in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance (p-value: 0.81); and
- d. **Fail to reject H<sub>0</sub>**: There is no significant difference among survey participants with respect to their children status in their view on the impact of flexible work arrangements on work life balance (p-value: 0.58).

The results indicate that employees agree in their opinion about the impact which flexible work arrangements have on their work life balance in respect to their gender, age, children status and time they travel to work. Relatively high averages for questions directly related to flexible work location (i.e. Qs 1, 2, 3 and 4) indicate that employees believe that there is a positive impact of flexible work location on their work life balance. If we consider mean values according to gender, we will notice that female employees have larger values than their male colleagues. Thus, it can be concluded that for female employees flexible work location can have a better impact on their work life balance. This can be explained by their natural mother's role. Unexpectedly, the study has also shown that travel time and children status do not make a huge difference in employees' opinions regarding benefits which flexible work location can bring to their work life balance. From Table 3.3 even stronger positive impact between flexible work time and work life balance (e.g. Qs 5, 6, 7 and 8) can be noticed. By taking a look at the results of the analysis for these questions, it can be understood that all of these questions have a mean value over 4.00. This situation clearly indicates a strong opinion about a positive impact which flexible work-time arrangements can have on the work life balance. In addition, the results of testing the hypotheses indicate that this perception is at the same level for all the participants. The mean values for the mentioned questions did show small differences between employee's opinions about the impact which flexible work arrangements can have on their work life balance regardless of their gender age, children status and time they travel to work. In our 18-item quantitative survey instrument, statement number "1" measures direct impact of flexible work location on work life balance and statement number "5" measures direct impact of flexible work time on work life balance. By taking a look at their mean values (4.03 and 4.19 respectively), it can be noticed that all the participants agree in their opinions that flexible work time and flexible work location positively improve their

work life balance. An additional unexpected finding is represented by a rather large percentage of general availability of flexible work arrangements comparing to the overall BiH's economy. According to the survey, the availability of flexible work location is measured at 44.50%, which can be considered as very good, keeping in mind that BiH's IT industry is mostly concentrated in two cities (i.e. Sarajevo and Banja Luka) which are not extremely populated and that most of the IT employees (485 out of 503 employees surveyed, or 96.00%) spend less than one hour daily commuting to and from work. On the other hand, a respectable percentage of general availability of flexible work time (45.80%) is expected and confirmed by this survey. This percentage can be explained by the general flexibility of IT projects and the fact that a large number of IT companies, especially the software developing ones, work for worldwide customers. Finding or not finding a significant difference between the perceptions of sub-groups does not necessarily prove the improvement of employees' work life balance, once employees have available flexible work arrangements. It merely suggests that there is a perceptual difference among the groups.

## 5.2. Results from testing efficiency hypothesis

e. **Fail to reject H0:** There is no significant difference between male and female survey participants in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency (p-value: 0.87);

f. **Fail to reject H0:** There is no significant difference among survey participants with respect to their age groups in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency (p-value: 0.76);

g. **Fail to reject H0:** There is no significant difference among survey participants with respect to time they travel to work in their view on the impact of work life balance on efficiency (p-value: 0.60); and

h. **Fail to reject H0:** There is no significant difference among survey participants with respect to their children status in their view

on the impact of work life balance on efficiency (p-value: 0.43).

The results indicate that employees agree in their opinion about the impact which work life balance has on their efficiency in respect to their gender, age, children status, and time they travel to work. As it was already noticed that there is a direct positive relationship between flexible work arrangements and work life balance. Relatively high averages for questions directly related to flexible work location (i.e. statement number 2) indicate that employees believe that there is a positive impact of flexible work location on work life balance. With regards to the mean values according to gender, it can be noticed that female employees have larger values than their male colleagues. Thus, it can be seen that for female employees flexible work location can lead to higher efficiency. Again, this can be explained by their natural mother's role. Unexpectedly, this study has also shown that travel time and children status do not make a big difference in employees' opinions regarding efficiency improvement which flexible work location can bring to their job roles.

From Table 3.3, even stronger positive impact between flexible work time and work life balance (statement number 6) can be noticed. With the mean value of 4.12, this question clearly indicates a strong opinion about the positive impact which flexible work-time can have on work life balance. In addition, Table 3.3 indicates that this perception is at the same level across the variety of participants. The mean values for the mentioned questions did not show us difference between employee's opinions regardless of their gender, age, children status, and time they travel to work.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This study strived to analyze the impact of flexible work time and flexible work location on employees' work life balance and efficiency. Additionally, it also analyzed the perception of various types of employees on the impact which flexible work time and

flexible work location have on employees' work life balance and efficiency. In the literature, it is well established that any flexible work time and flexible work location strategy will positively impact employees' work life balance and employees' efficiency. This study only reflects the opinions of a small group of IT employees from BiH's IT sector. Therefore, the caution is needed during the result interpretation. For better understanding and analyzing the impact which flexible work time and flexible work location have on work life balance of employees in BiH's IT sector, larger, more representative and more reliable sampling frame should be utilized.

Better work life balance is desirable for all employees and employers are expected to deal with it in order to improve employees' efficiency. Possible actions from employers can be listed as:

- Allowing employees to use flexible work time. Today's common practice is to define "core time" which represents approximately 50.00% of employees' work time. During core time all employees should be at their work sites. However, employees should have flexibility to schedule the remaining 50.00% of their time. In this way, according to literature findings, employees will have less stress and feel happier. Our survey statement number 4 directly measures this, and the measured mean value of 3.95 directly supports previous research findings;
- When possible, employers should allow employees to use flexible work location, at least for part of their working time. This will allow employees more flexibility and, according to literature, employees will feel that employer takes care about their well-being. Our survey statement number 8 directly measures this, and the measured mean value of 4.13 directly supports previous research findings; and
- Managers need to be trained, so they can measure employees' efficiency according to their work not according to time they spend in the office. Recent literature

findings point to the worrying allegations whereby line managers are blocking flexible work arrangements even if they already exist as company policies.

The results of this study indicate that flexible work time and location can have a positive impact on employees' work life balance and this opinion is shared by all the employees surveyed. Although an unexpectedly large percentage of participants (64.80%) stated that their work life is balanced with their personal life, there is always place for improvement. Additionally, all participants agree that better work life balance, caused by flexible work time and flexible work locations will improve their efficiency and reduce stress.

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