

## DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

### **Tribal Affiliations, Gender Roles and their Influence on Work Life Balance Practice: The Case of the Kenyan Telecommunications Sector**

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# **Tribal Affiliations, Gender Roles and their Influence on Work Life Balance Practice: The Case of the Kenyan Telecommunications Sector**

**BY**

**SHEILLAH J. M. CHIMUNGENI**

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**PHD**

**9 January 2018**



# **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

**BY**

**SHEILLAH CHIMUNGONI**

**09 January 2018**



***A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of Coventry University's  
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy***

## DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

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## DEDICATION

*Dedicated to my late father, Mr. Alexander Austin Chimungeni, and my late mother, Mrs. Loise Chimungeni, whose wish was that I attend graduate school and whose legacy in human resource management was a source of inspiration for my ambition to become more professional and people oriented.*

*Also dedicated to my benevolent husband Kennedy Eshiwani Mbendo, and my two beautiful daughters, Daisy and Lakeisha Eshiwani, all who have been extremely supportive and motivating throughout my PhD journey.*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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I am particularly grateful to Safaricom and Telkom Kenya for allowing me to carry out my research with their organisation and for their support in linking me to relevant respondents through their organisations.

My thanks are extended to the employees (of all levels) who participated in the study. Their generosity and openness in providing insights into their work-life experiences made the data collection phase a pleasure.

I am also indebted to all the other lecturers from the Coventry University Faculty of Business and Law, and my fellow PhD students, for their positive criticism and contributions that have seen me through the successful accomplishment of my PhD.

My studies were also possible due to the love, encouragement and support of my patient husband Kennedy whose natural mindfulness spurred me on and to the patience of my daughters Daisy and Lakeisha.

## **ABSTRACT**

The intersection of peoples' paid work and non-work responsibilities has over the last twenty years received increased interest in the media, workplaces, and academic circles. The increased attention is driven by a realisation of the undesirable consequences of inter-role conflict, also referred to as work life conflict. A growing area of global societal concern relates to WLB policies and practices that are designed to improve peoples' ability to effectively carry out paid work and non-work responsibilities harmoniously. Employers and governments adopt WLB policies and practices to aid workers in successfully participating in labour market activity, family and personal life while also enhancing quality of life. Research attests to the benefits of employees and employers having good WLB practice. However, WLB research has considerably progressed in Western countries, fairly in Eastern Countries, while minimal attention has been given to African countries like Kenya, where WLB practice is less known.

**Purpose:** This study identifies and compares the WLB policies and practices in use within Kenya's telecommunications sector using Safaricom Kenya and Telkom Kenya as case studies. It critically evaluates the perspectives and experiences of managers and employees of the use of WLB policies and practices, particularly on the manner in which tribal affiliations and gender role expectations influence WLB practice.

**Methodological approach:** A mixed method approach was adopted for this study. Data was drawn from corporate policy statements, multi-level semi-structured interviews, and online questionnaires with managers and employees across both organisations, as well as bodies and organisations in Kenya's wider public and private sectors.

**Findings:** The findings indicated that: (1) Both organisations offered what they each interpreted as WLB policies. Safaricom offered statutory and organisation-specific WLB policies and practices while Telkom offered only statutory WLB provisions; (2) Political influence and tribal affiliations interfered with the equal use of WLB provisions, and autonomy in the decision making of line managers who played an integral role in the implementation of WLB policies and practices; and (3) Gender roles and expectations impacted on the designing, implementation, and use of WLB policies and practices, with increased attention directed towards women WLB needs.



**Research limitations:** First, the relatively small numbers of line managers in the sample's population meant that deeper quantitative analysis was not possible. Nevertheless, the line manager quantitative results were validated through triangulation with findings from interviews carried out with the same managers as well as outcomes from the other methods used. Secondly, only the head offices of Safaricom and Telkom located in Nairobi were examined. Hence, while the results can be generalised to Kenya, they cannot be generalised to other countries characterised by different cultures and contexts. However, the approach used to finding these results can be applied to a wide variety of situations, thus allowing the examination of external validity.

**Originality/value:** This study is one of the first to explore the effect/impact of tribe in the Kenyan telecommunications sector, and reflecting on the historic and traditional permeation of political practices and rivalry within organisations, as well as the impact this has on WLB practice. The study's definition of 'family' was conceptualized to suit that of a typical Kenyan 'extended family', reflecting the financial and gender role obligations that characterise the Kenyan society. Third, the concept of womanhood and related roles in the Kenyan setting are revealed as being critical and complex for the Kenyan woman who has to attend to paid work while at the same time balancing not only domestic responsibilities, but also religious and community obligations.

**Keywords:** Kenya, telecommunications sector, work life conflict, work life balance, culture, tribe, gender, politics, trust, commitment, job satisfaction.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ACAS</b>	Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service
<b>BBC</b>	British Broadcasting Corporation
<b>BERA</b>	British Educational Research Association
<b>BIS</b>	Bureau of Industry and Security
<b>BOS</b>	Bristol Online Survey
<b>CA</b>	Cronbach's Alpha
<b>CCK</b>	Communications Commission of Kenya
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CIPD</b>	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
<b>COTU</b>	Central Organisation of Trade Unions
<b>CROWF</b>	Centre for Research on Organisations, Work and Family
<b>CROWF</b>	Center for Research on Organizations, Work and Family
<b>DTI</b>	Department of Trade and Industry
<b>EAC</b>	East African Community
<b>GNP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GOK</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>HRL</b>	Human Resource Leader
<b>HRM</b>	Human Resources Management
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>KENPRO</b>	Kenya Projects Organisation
<b>KEPSA</b>	Kenya Private Sector Alliance
<b>KHF</b>	Kenya Healthcare Federation
<b>KIPPRA</b>	Kenyan Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis
<b>LM</b>	Line Manager
<b>MM</b>	Mixed Methods
<b>MMR</b>	Mixed Methods Research
<b>OCB</b>	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>PFP</b>	Perceived Fairness in Procedures
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private Partnership
<b>PSC</b>	Perceived Co-worker Support
<b>PSS</b>	Perceived Supervisor Support
<b>PwC</b>	PriceWaterhouseCoopers
<b>SID</b>	Society for International Development
<b>SMDP</b>	Safaricom Managers Development Programme
<b>SMS</b>	Short Message Service
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>TA</b>	Thematic Analysis
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>USA</b>	United States of America
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>WLB</b>	Work Life Balance
<b>WLC</b>	Work Life Conflict

**TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK  
LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

**CHAPTER 1: AN INTRODUCTION**

*“Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling some five balls in the air. You name them - work, family, health, friends and spirit - and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls - family, health, friends and spirit - are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life. Work efficiently during office hours and leave on time. Give proper time to your family and friends, and take a decent rest. Value has a value only if its value is valued” (Legge, 2010:3 ).*

**Brian Dyson, former President and CEO, Coca-Cola Enterprises during his speech at the Georgia Tech 172nd Commencement Address Sept. 6, 1996.**

**1.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This chapter sets out the nature, scope and aims of the research, presenting the reasons for examining the influence of tribe and gender on work-life balance (WLB) practices and providing a justification for conducting this research in a developing multicultural society – Kenya. The chapter commences with a concise introduction to work-life research (Section 1.2) and contends that the majority of research in this field has been heavily influenced by Western culture. However, differences in national cultures have led to varying conceptualisations of ‘family’, ‘gender’ roles, and ‘societal cohesion’ within Western and African societies (Section 1.3). These aspects may therefore influence fairness in the implementation of WLB policies and practices (Section 1.4). This gap in research has given rise to this study, which is driven by four aims and five objectives (Section 1.5). The significance of the research is then explained (Section 1.6), and the chapter concludes with a description of how the remainder of the thesis will be structured (Section 1.7).

**1.2 WORK LIFE BALANCE: AN INTRODUCTION**

Individuals do not give up their lifestyles just because they are engaged in formal employment. The intersection of work and life, both of which form key domains in workers’ lives, can result in undesirable consequences of *inter-role conflict*. This conflict is referred to as work-life conflict (WLC). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) have defined WLC as a form of role conflict in which the demands of the work role and the demands of the home role are

mutually incompatible. Hence, meeting the demands in one domain (e.g. work), makes it difficult to meet the demands in the other (e.g. home).

Recent years have seen academics, national governments, trade unions and employee representatives pay growing attention and devotion to the reconciliation of paid employment with the needs of personal life (Beauregard and Henry 2009). Within this broad agenda, specific emphasis has been placed on various organisational measures and management practices that create the conditions for, and support the implementation of, WLB policies and practices. Work-life balance means “*employers working constructively with their employees to put in place arrangements, which take into account the needs of the business as well as the non-work aspects of employees’ lives*” (Barrera 2007: 2). This study finds relevance in Barrera’s definition because it is not only broad and encompassing, but it also incorporates both employees and employers, who are central to the successful use and implementation of WLB policies and practices. While employees need WLB to harmonise their paid formal employment with their personal lives and responsibilities, employers require WLB to increase performance and productivity.

The dynamic nature of economies, fast-paced business environments, and 24/7 service expectations by customers can compel employees to work for long hours (Lewis et al. 2007). Research has also observed the growing diversity of family structures in today’s workplaces (dual-career families in particular), as a result of a rise in women’s participation in the labour force (Beauregard and Henry 2009; Farquharson 2012). Lewis et al. (2007) also suggest that the advancement in work-related technology, such as telecommuting, provides a platform for work-related matters to interfere with personal responsibilities. In many cases, social or family life may give way to the career of employees. Individual employers are however becoming more aware of the business case for integrating work and non-work domains. Most are therefore implementing policies and regulations intended to reduce the pressure of work on personal life (Den Dulk and Pepper 2009). There is a growing consensus that improved WLB brings important benefits for organisations, individuals, and customers (Beauregard 2014; Maxwell and Farquharson 2008).

Despite the increasing volume of Human Resource Management (HRM) literature focused on WLB issues, this thesis contends that there has been insufficient consideration of these matters in an African context and from an African perspective (specifically that of Kenya).

Work-life balance research has progressed considerably in Western countries (Ozbilgin et al. 2011), and become fairly well established in Eastern Countries such as China and Hong Kong (Zhang and Liu 2011; Lu and Chang 2014). However, despite some isolated exceptions (e.g. Aryee 2005; Mokomane 2014), the African perspective has been relatively neglected. Moreover, of the few WLB studies carried out in Kenya (e.g. Muli et al. 2014; Mukururi and Ngari 2014), none specifically examine the influence of tribal affiliations and gender<sup>1</sup> roles on WLB practice. Using two telecommunication organisations as case examples – Safaricom Kenya (a private multinational organisation) and Telkom Kenya (a public sector firm) – this thesis attempts to address this imbalance. Hence, the thesis investigates the influence that tribe and gender roles have on WLB practice. In so doing, it seeks to examine some of the important international and cultural diversity issues associated with the development and implementation of effective WLB policies.

### **1.3 WLB: WESTERN VERSUS AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES**

In Chang et al.'s (2010) systematic review of empirical WLB literature, more than half (58.3%) of WLB studies were from North America, approximately a third (30%) were from European nations, and 4.6% were from Asian countries. No examples were drawn from the African continent. Similarly, in Shaffer et al.'s (2011) systematic review of 219 articles on the diversity of WLB research outside the United States, no articles were drawn from African countries. Consequently, researchers have questioned the extent to which existing knowledge of WLB is applicable to non-Western contexts such as Africa (e.g. Shaffer et al. 2011; Mordi et al. 2013; Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre 2013).

This dearth of studies in non-Western contexts has meant that in both academic and policy discourse, the influence of African perspectives regarding 'family', 'gendered roles', and 'tribe' on WLB practice has been largely neglected. Most studies from Western countries have set 'family' firmly in the context of the nuclear family, encompassing only spouses and their children (e.g. Beauregard et al. 2009). Even for studies that have examined single-parenthood, family was defined in terms of a spouse and child/children (e.g. Bakker and Karsten 2013). African definitions of this concept are different. In sub-Saharan Africa (Dancaster and Cohen 2012) and among all North African countries (Smith-Greenaway and Trinitapoli 2014) family means members of a whole lineage.

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<sup>1</sup> Meaning men and women.

Kenya is a country situated in the Eastern region of sub-Saharan Africa, whose native inhabitants are perceived by Kimani and Kombo (2010) as holding ‘family’ as a central unit of society. Family forms the backbone that defines individuals’ tribal affiliations and it models the gender division of labour in the household (Mungai and Ogot 2012). The indigenous people of Kenya belong to 42 tribes whose different dialects are dictated by the family to which they belong. Hence, from a social perspective, individuals from the same tribe share the language, kinship, culture, and ancestry. On the other hand, from a political standpoint, Nothwehr (2008) suggests that individuals originating from similar geographical regions and sharing the same native dialects and geo-political locations regard themselves as belonging to the same tribe. The latter relationship gives rise to a concept referred to as *tribalism*. This means the “attitude and practice of one harbouring a strong feeling of loyalty and bond to those people connected to them through kinship, native dialects and geo-political location, excluding people who do not belong to that group” (Nothwehr 2008: 5).

Customarily, cultural norms significantly influence gender roles and expectations in native Kenyan families, where the male is the provider and holds power, while women are submissive nurturers and central pillars of family stability (Abele et al. 2011). While recent departures in work-life research in Kenya attest to the benefits of empowering women through education and their increased participation in business governance (e.g. Muli et al. 2014; Mukururi and Ngari 2014), it is imperative to note that while women take on extra duties as co-breadwinners, they still retain their other responsibilities, namely: wives, housekeepers, carers, members of communal groups and educators to their children (Ngubane 2010). Balancing all these roles becomes a matter of particular concern for women, yet maintaining stable households and their compliance to cultural gender role expectations are vital in moulding gender dynamics and in maintaining women’s paid work and social stability.

Six countries in the African Great Lakes region in Eastern Africa form the East African Community (EAC): Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan. Having been nominated as the hub of the EAC, Kenya emerges as a suitable foundation on which to base this study. According to Manda (2013), Kenya struggles with an increase in population, unemployment and underemployment. Some 42% of Kenya’s population of 44 million lives below the poverty line (UNICEF 2013), meaning that access to basic quality needs is a luxury for many people. Financial obligations that arise as a result of Kenya’s extended family

association make money an integral part of the lives of Kenyans (Lankeu and Maket 2012). Hence, many Kenyans view work as a means of not only enhancing themselves but also supporting and contributing to the family and community welfare (Mokomane 2014). Moreover, the country's patriarchal society and submissive expectations for women often limit female access to resources (e.g. occupational elevation) that can better their lives and those of their dependants.

Therefore, how do tribalism and gender role differences in the Kenyan context influence WLB practices in the workplace? This thesis seeks to answer this question.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Set against the context of the above issues and debates, this research has the following aims and objectives:

##### **Aims**

1. To identify and compare the WLB policies and practices in use within Kenya's private and public sector organisations, with particular reference to Safaricom Kenya and Telkom Kenya.
2. To critically evaluate the perceptions and experiences of line managers (LMs)<sup>2</sup> and employees concerning the implementation<sup>3</sup> of WLB policies and practices.
3. To critically assess the influence of tribal affiliations and gender roles on the implementation of WLB policies and practices.
4. To consider the implications of this study for employees, managers, Human Resource (HR) practitioners, and future research and policy.

##### **Objectives**

1. To ascertain the similarities and differences in the specific policies and practices in place to support WLB in Kenya's public and private sector organisations, with particular reference to Telkom and Safaricom Kenya.
2. To establish HR Leaders' (HRLs)<sup>4</sup> experiences of designing and overseeing these policies and assessing how they measure up to statutory obligations.

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<sup>2</sup> LMs in this research were the managers with employee supervisory responsibilities. They were responsible for communicating, approving and disapproving the use of statutory and non-statutory WLB provisions.

<sup>3</sup> Implementation also includes take up.



3. To determine the perceptions and experiences of the LM implementers of WLB policies.
4. To evaluate the perceptions and experiences of employees on the use of WLB policies and practices.
5. To examine how gender and tribal affiliations affect the distribution and use of WLB policies, practices and systems.

## **1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study responds to recent calls from scholars for WLB research to consider the national contexts in which WLB policies and practices are embedded (e.g. Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre 2013; Lu and Chang 2014; Mordi et al. 2013). As remarked by Phillips and Gully (2014) and Geppert and Hollinshead (2014), a global perspective distinguishes the alternative systems and meanings of other peoples and cultures, and in the case of this research may enable the identification of complex interrelationships between WLB practice and national contexts.

It is recognised that some studies on WLB have been carried out in Kenya (e.g. Oloitiptip and Gachunga 2014; Muli et al. 2014). However, these studies tend to provide recommendations for the improvement of WLB practice in Kenya based on Western models rather than tailored models that would better suit the Kenyan context. Mordi et al. (2013) have cautioned that WLB policies that are developed as a result of studies carried out in the West may prove incompatible with the needs of organisations, work and employees in Kenyan workplaces. Because of variances in national contexts, this thesis seeks to develop a WLB framework that is relevant to a non-Western, African context with particular reference to Kenya.

The findings of this study will therefore have important implications for employees, managers, HR practitioners, future research, and the Ministry of Labour in Kenya. For WLB research, this study will provide an expanded understanding of how national cultures shape WLB practice from an African-Kenyan perspective. For managers and HR practitioners in Kenya, recommendations suggested as a result of this study will inform the design and implementation of organisational WLB policies and practices that are compatible with the

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<sup>4</sup> HRLs in this study were the managers responsible for supporting WLB through compliance with employment law, the designing and evaluation of appropriate policies and guidelines to ensure employees' quest for WLB, the promotion and/or communication of WLB schemes, and creating training programmes to support and empower managers (McCarthy et al. 2010).

characteristics of the Kenyan workplace. For the Ministry of Labour, which is charged with the responsibility of formulating and implementing statutory WLB entitlements (Njoroge 2014), suggestions from the thesis will help to inform the establishment of employment legislation. Through a framework that addresses ‘family’, ‘gender roles’, and ‘tribe’ from a Kenyan perspective, together with tailored WLB policies, employees will also benefit from policies that fit their lifestyles.

## **1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS**

This thesis is divided into two main parts: *part 1*: the establishment of a theoretical, methodological and empirical context for the Kenyan study; and *part 2*: the empirical study itself. The latter part is subsequently divided into two main phases: *phase 1* investigates WLB practices within the two firms used as case examples, while *phase 2* tests the sector-wide credence of the results realised from phase 1. Overall, the remainder of the thesis is divided into seven further chapters.

**Chapter two** provides a **review of literature** on WLB. The review examines the current WLB debate and criticisms of the concept. The border theory, together with the role conflict and scarcity hypothesis theories, are explained and confirmed as the theoretical frameworks on which the study is grounded. It is argued that although WLB research is progressing, attention needs to be drawn to the fact that the structure of WLB models differs across national borders, because of political, socio-economic and socio-cultural differences; hence models cannot be universally applied. The review addresses the national contextual factors on Kenya as a case study, with particular reference to tribe, gender roles, a collectivist culture and power dynamics.

**Chapter three – Methodology**, has four purposes. First, it provides an explanation of the conceptual framework (the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that inform the research) which acts as a link between the literature, the methodology and the prospective results. The conceptual framework informs the research design and justifies the research. Second, this chapter puts forward an argument for a philosophical and methodological approach which enables the fulfilment of the research aims and objectives. The third purpose is to explain the data collection and analysis procedures undertaken in this research. And fourth, the limitations of the study are outlined.

**Chapter four – Corporate WLB strategies.** The chapter presents an analysis of the corporate policy statements and interviews with HRMs and aims to establish: (1) the similarities and differences in the specific policies and practices in place to support WLB at Telkom and Safaricom; and (2) HRMs’ experiences of designing and overseeing these policies and practices, and how they measure up to statutory obligations. The ‘official’ position of the companies regarding WLB practices will then be compared with the actual experiences of LMs, general employees, and various stakeholders within Kenya’s public and private sectors (Chapters 5, 6 and 7).

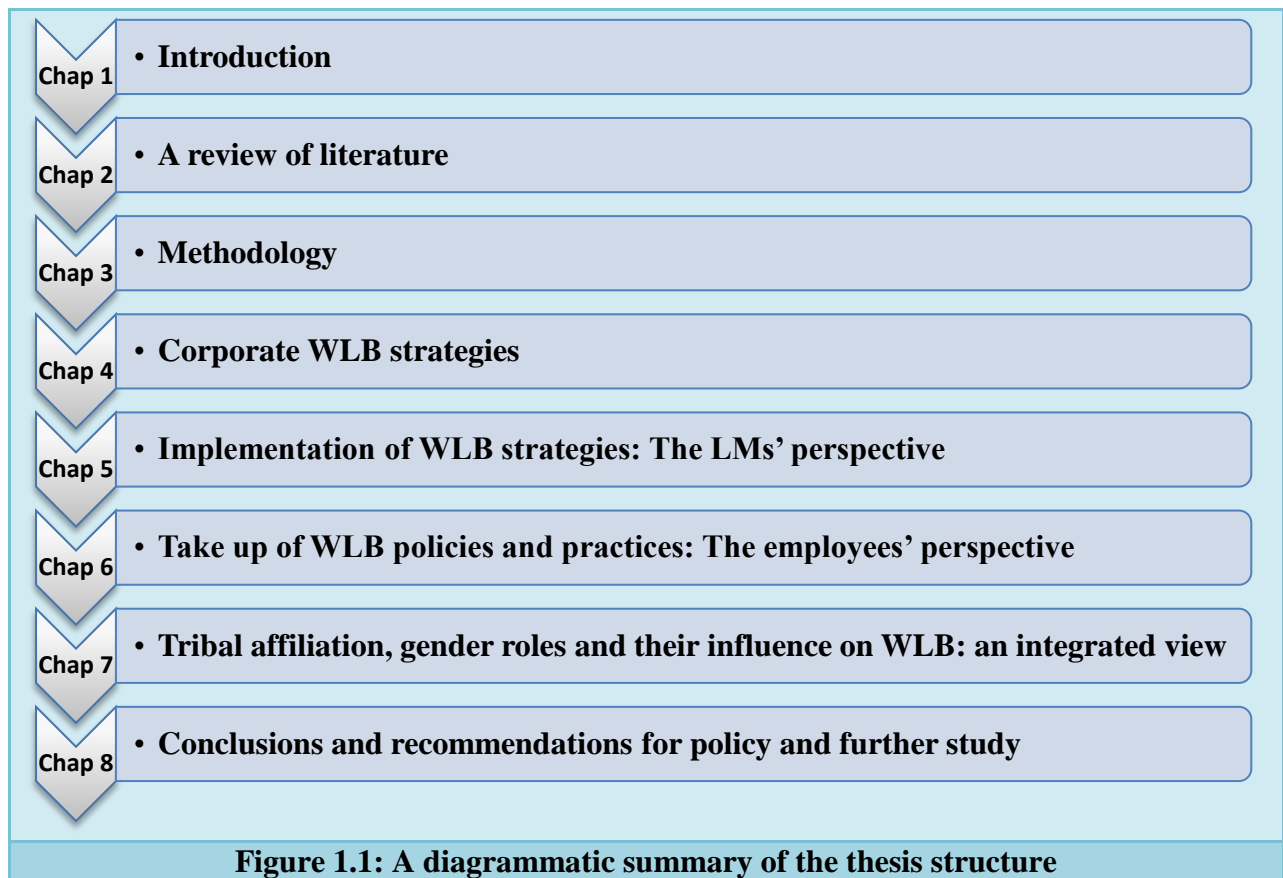
**Chapter five – Implementation of WLB strategies: the LMs’ perspective,** presents the results of the LM surveys (interviews and questionnaires). This part of the study examines and compares the work-life implementation experiences, beliefs and attitudes of the managers. The results from the questionnaires are validated by in-depth explanations from the interviews with the same managers.

**Chapter six – Take up of WLB policies and practices: the employees’ perspective** provides the results of the employee surveys (interviews and questionnaires). The intention of this part of the study is to evaluate and compare the perspectives and experiences of general employees on the use of WLB policies and practices. The questionnaire and interview results are triangulated to provide completeness and reliability.

**Chapter seven – Tribal affiliation, gender roles and their influence on WLB: an integrated view** brings together the key findings from phases 1 and 2 of the study. The discussion incorporates the results from additional semi-structured interviews carried out with various public and private sector stakeholders and managers to assess the wider implications of the research findings beyond the two case study companies.

**Chapter eight – Conclusions and recommendations for policy and further study,** summarises the main research findings. The contributions that the study makes to work-life research from the perspective of a developing multicultural country are also detailed. The salient findings are summarised and their implications to theory, policy and practice discussed. The chapter also includes forecasts for future trends and the need for further research.

Figure 1.1 is a diagrammatic summary of the above thesis structure:



A review of WLB literature is provided in the following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This chapter places the present research into the wider context of existing literature on WLB. The chapter is divided into three principal sections. The first section examines some of the key debates concerning the WLB concept, including criticisms regarding terminology and underlying assumptions. The second section grounds the study within three theoretical frameworks: *border*, *resource drain* and *role conflict theories*. Finally, the third section argues for the development of a WLB framework that addresses ‘family’, ‘gender roles’ and ‘tribe’ from an African perspective (and specifically that of Kenya). The chapter concludes with the introduction of the conceptual framework (the system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs and theories that inform the research, and, by implication, the theoretical and philosophical foundations of the research).

### **2.2 EXISTING DEBATES CONCERNING WLB**

#### **2.2.1 The definition of WLB**

WLB has been widely studied, yet researchers in the field have not reached an agreement on a standard definition of the concept. Attempts to provide a precise definition have floundered due to concerns about the existing conceptualisations of the term (Grzywacz and Carlson 2007; Valcour 2007; Frone 2003; Voydanoff 2005; Greenhaus et al. 2003). Stepanova’s (2012) chronological list of 12 scholarly definitions of the term from studies ranging from 1993 to 2008 illustrates the extent of this lack of agreement.

Frone (2003) regards WLB as a state wherein an individual’s work and family lives experience little conflict while enjoying substantial facilitation. This author suggested that WLB studies have focused on the negative aspects of WLC, yet there can also be bi-directional (work-to-life and life-to-work) facilitation and benefits. Voydanoff (2005) conceptualises WLB as “a global assessment that work resources meet family demands, and family resources meet work demands such that participation is effective in both domains” (p. 825). Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) raised concerns about existing conceptualisations and argued that there was little evidence indicating that adults think of WLB in terms of how well work-related resources satisfy family-related demands (or vice versa) as Voydanoff (2005) suggests, or ‘satisfaction’ as suggested by Greenhaus and Allen

(2011). In attempting to address the problems associated with existing conceptualisations, Carlson and Grzywacz (2008) theorised WLB into three categories: equality, fit and role performance.

These authors therefore defined WLB as ‘accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his/her role-related partners in the work and family domains’ (Grzywacz and Carlson 2007: 458). The *equality perspective* envisions work and life as equivalent and in order to achieve balance, individuals have to distribute resources such as time, attention, energy or psychological involvement equally between the two domains (Kirshmeyer 2000; Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw 2003). The *fit perspective* concludes that balance reflects the investments one makes as well as an individual’s satisfaction with different roles. Hence balanced investment in a role is arranged according to one’s values (Stepanova 2012) and is evaluated through an individual’s appraisal of his role performance across a variety of domains (Sheldon and Niemiec 2006). Lastly, the *role performance perspective* shifts the construct from the psychological domain into the social domain, thereby making it observable and subject to observation.

Kalliath and Brough (2008) reviewed the six most common conceptualisations of WLB that focused on the following aspects: multiple roles (Greenhaus et al. 2003), equity (ibid), satisfaction (Clark 2000; Kirshmeyer 2000), fulfilment of role salience (Greenhaus and Allen 2011), relationship between conflict and facilitation (Grzywacz and Bass 2003), and perceived control (Fleetwood 2007). In their own definition, Kalliath and Brough (2008) advocate that “work-life balance is the individual perception that work and non-work activities are compatible and promote growth in accordance with an individual’s current life priorities” (pg. 326). The emphasis in this definition is on “good balance” and the change in the level of balance depending on the stage of life that one is in and the demands at the time.

However, although “family” forms a major part of an individual’s life, there are other vital sections of life (e.g. spiritual beliefs, hobbies, self, social activities and health) (Byrne 2005) that have not been recognised in some of the definitions but acknowledged by Kalliath and Brough (2008). Despite differences in conceptualisations of WLB, these definitions share certain elements – the first is the notion of equality or near-equality between work and family role experiences. However, the perception of balance as an equal distribution of resources between the two spheres is not realistic (Lewis and Cooper 2005; Greenhaus et al. 2003). Balance varies for different people at different times of their lives based on the context in

which they operate. Secondly, personal resources such as attention, time, involvement or commitment must be applied in a balanced way. Third among the outcomes that are experienced in work and family roles is satisfaction (Clark 2000; Kirchmeyer 2000; Kofodimos 1993). Positive balance implies an equally high level of satisfaction with work and family roles (Greenhaus et al. 2003). Additionally, there is an emphasis on the freedom to decide where, when and how to work and the importance of following one's own priorities in fulfilling work and non-work responsibilities.

This thesis recognises that “life” is all inclusive because it accommodates the experiences and needs of all individuals regardless of familial composition, care responsibilities, age or gender (Redmond et al. 2006). In this regard, this thesis finds relevance in Barrera's (2007: 2) definition where WLB means “*employers working constructively with their employees to put in place arrangements, which take into account the needs of the business as well as the non-work aspects of employees' lives*”. This definition broadly encompasses and takes into account both employers and employees who are central to the successive use and implementation of WLB policies and practices. In a similar fashion to the definition of WLB, debates have ensued on *what truly constitutes 'balance'* as discussed in the proceeding section.

### **2.2.2 What is balance?**

*Work-life balance* is a contested term (Gregory and Milner 2009). Authors have questioned where the equilibrium of ‘balance’ should lie. McGovern et al. (2007) argue that what constitutes a balance for one person may be an imbalance for another. Lewis and Cooper (2005) state that balance as a notion is problematic since it suggests a 50/50 investment – however, some individuals might find a balance in a 60/40 arrangement, depicting the variance in what people regard as ‘balance’. A study by Greenhaus et al. (2003) found that employees spending more time on personal life matters experienced a higher level of quality of life, followed by those who spent equal amounts of time on both domains, and less for those who spent more time on work. Further, Lewis and Cooper (2005) have posited that the term suggests that work is not integral to life and implies a simple trade-off between the two spheres. WLB is implied as encouraging quick-fix solutions that do not address fundamental inequalities and that therefore shift responsibility for balancing work and home/private life onto individuals (Ibid; Burke 2004; Lewis et al. 2007).

In an endeavour to justify the mutual reinforcement of the two spheres (work and life), other concepts have emerged: *work-personal life integration* (Lewis and Cooper 2005); *work-life articulation* (Crompton and Brockmann 2007); *work-personal life harmonization* (Rapoport et al. 2002) and *work-life balance*. These terminologies remain contentious: ‘*integration*’, while creating the image of more positive organisational change, implies that the two spheres must be merged, leading to fears of a contamination or subjugation of personal life by the demands of paid employment (Lewis and Cooper 2005). ‘*Harmonisation*’ and ‘*articulation*’ though promising, have not been widely used in literature, leaving *work-life balance* as the winning term to be used throughout this research since it is most original, long-standing and an easily understood concept (Gregory and Milner 2009).

Similarly, there has been criticism about the “work-family” concept being restrictive and not including employees with responsibilities in other areas of life or employees who have no parental responsibilities (Lewis and Cooper 2005; Lewis et al. 2007; Haar and Spell 2003). Extending on Zedeck’s (1990, 1992) work, many societal changes have occurred (Kossek et al. 2012), compelling work-life research agendas to broaden from “family” to “life” (Kirchmeyer 2000). Byrne (2005), through his concept of ‘the balanced wheel of life’, emphasises that employees have eight vital sections of life, which he referred to as the ‘*eight spokes in a wheel*’, namely: work, finances, spirituality, hobbies, self, social, family and health. Likewise, Redmond et al. (2006) reiterate that the term WLB, as opposed to work-family balance (WFB), is preferred as “it encompasses the experiences and needs of parents and non-parents alike, and is a more progressive theoretical framework in which to think about new ways of living and working that are satisfactory to all” (pg. 15). In practice, this involves “adjusting work patterns so that everyone, regardless of age, race or gender can find a rhythm that enables them more easily to combine work and their responsibilities and aspirations” (Pillinger 2001: 1). Thus, the existing conflict between work and non-work demands will be referred to as *work-life conflict (WLC)*. *Work-life balance (WLB)* will be used in place of *work-family balance (WFB)*, and *work-life balance initiatives* in place of *family-friendly work practices*. However, when referring to the work of other scholars, the terms *work-life* and *work-family* will be used according to the citations.

The case for WLB accounts that individuals’ health, wellbeing and job satisfaction (McDonald et al. 2005) are improved, while businesses benefit from improved productivity and worker commitment (Gregory and Milner 2009), reduced absenteeism (Balmforth and Gardner 2006), and increased recruitment and retention rates (Waltman and Sullivan 2007).



Some authors dispute this. McGovern (2009) asserts that WLB policies do not necessarily achieve all they set out to and employees do not finally achieve the WLB they want. Furthermore, for employers and workers, the case for WLB is different. While organisations may be attracted to the efficiency gains and customer response improvements that WLB policies such as flexible working bring, for employees, the case for such policies needs to be based on what it will mean for their jobs, careers and their lives outside work. The world of work is seen to drain time and energy from employees, who also have home/private duties to account for (Warhurst et al. 2008). Primarily, the way that this occurs is through long working hours; therefore the most widely endorsed policy change is either for shorter or more flexible working hours (McGovern 2009).

Nevertheless, shorter hours mean less pay (McGovern et al. 2007). A national study in the UK by McGovern and colleagues (2007) on attitudes, conditions and experiences of employees regarding the reduction of hours through flexible working, revealed that employees' choice of long working hours showed that they preferred more money to more time at home. Similarly, a study by Maume and Houston (2001) found that substantial numbers of employees would like to work less while maintaining the same level of income. However, perceptions of working hours differ between Western countries and those within the sub-Saharan African region.

While researchers in Western countries relate employees' long working hours to high WLC (Lewis and Smithson 2001; Faggio and Nickell 2007), Aryee (2005) informs that in sub-Saharan Africa countries like Kenya, the concept of working hours is broadened to include hours spent in formal employment plus time devoted to other financially gainful activities. In addition to their formal jobs, employees engage in extra trades to generate additional money because of inadequate salaries and hefty financial demands. What this suggests is that earnings remain more important than time in sub-Saharan African countries. Given the collectivist nature of the Kenyan society and the financial burdens that accompany extended family support (Walumbwa et al. 2011), employees are locked into the long hours working culture. Aryee et al. (1999) clarified that in such collectivist societies, time devoted to income-generating activities is not considered as a sacrifice *of* the family but rather, as a sacrifice *for* the family. Individualistic societies emphasise personal accomplishment and achievement, therefore time devoted to work is considered as fulfilling personal ambition and therefore a sacrifice of the family (Yang et al. 2000).

From a different platform, technology advances, especially in telecommunications and information technology, have had significant effects on WLB practice (Kossek et al. 2010). Einstein (2014) estimates that presently over 28 million telecommuters in the United States have adopted telecommuting as an alternative work mode. Most telecommuters allocate their work time between an office and home (Beauregard and Henry 2009). Contrary to some studies that have hailed the positive role of teleworking in providing individuals with the chance to cope with the competing demands of work and life (Rau and Hyland 2002; Bailey and Kurland 2002), some researchers find opposite results. A survey carried out by the Robert Half Group (2014) on New Zealand finance and accounting professionals found that two-thirds (62%) of employees stay remotely connected to what is happening at work or do work-related tasks while on holiday. Most of them linked this to the fact that they found it impossible to switch off while on holiday, while others said that technology allowed them to access work from anywhere in the world. Other authors feel that teleworking increases WLB conflict because it places more demands on the home domain (Aryee et al. 2005) or that teleworking has no effect on WLB (Hill et al. 1998). Golden et al. (2006) nevertheless caution that the varied opinions could be as a result of different outcomes being addressed. The understanding of WLB in this thesis will be based on three theories discussed in the next section: the *border theory*, *resource drain hypothesis* and *role conflict theory*.

### **2.3 THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO WLB**

This thesis is grounded on Clark's (2000) *border theory*, which explains how individuals manage and negotiate the work and life dimensions and the borders between them in order to attain balance. The central idea of the border theory is that work and home are two distinct spheres that influence each other but differ in purpose and culture; as well as in the level of individuals' experiences of transitioning between the borders. Hence, in order to meet the demands of each of the domains, individuals tailor their focus, goals and interpersonal style. Though many aspects of the work and home spheres are difficult to alter, individuals can shape to some degree the nature of the work and home domains, and the borders and bridges between them, in order to create a desired balance. It is at this point that the border theory becomes relevant to WLB practice. From Clark's viewpoint, WLB has a different meaning to different people or means different things to the same person at different stages of their life (Chan 2008). This view corroborates that of Lewis et al. (2007) who view the discourse of WLB as being historically and culturally located, in the sense that individuals perceive such

debates and concerns differently at different periods of time. This is in addition to the national contexts in which people are embedded, which would vary such opinions even further (Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre 2013).

There are five more models that also explain the relationship between the work and non-work life of an individual: *spillover*, *segmentation*, *compensation*, *role conflict* and *the resource drain theories* (e.g. Zedeck and Mosier 1990; O'Driscoll et al. 1996). Although these models show the interdependence of work and personal life, they do not predict or solve problems that employees face in balancing the responsibilities between the two spheres (Clark 2000). For example, the *spillover theory* recognises that a person's attitudes, emotions, skills, and behaviours produced in one domain (work or non-work) flow into the other (Balmforth and Gardner 2006). This model was however criticised by Clark (2002b: 24) for having a limited focus and only addressing emotional linkages (i.e. satisfaction, expressions of frustrations). Clark also criticised the theory for giving little or no knowledge of spatial, temporal, social and behavioural connections between work and life, while assuming that the individual is reactive in that he/she does not have the ability to shape his/her environment.

Meanwhile, the *compensation theory* hypothesises that aspects (e.g. needs, experiences, pleasures) lacking in one sphere may be made up for the same factors lacking in the other. For instance, when a job follows a standard routine and is less demanding, an employee can compensate for this experience with a more weighty responsibility in community undertakings that are non-work related. This insinuates a bi-directional relationship between the domains (Edwards and Rothbard 2000). Nevertheless, researchers such as Martel and DuPuis (2006) have criticised this model on the basis that it implies the existence of an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and non-work satisfaction. Contrary to all, the *segmentation theory* denies any relationship between the domains, declaring that work and life are mutually exclusive, with each sphere not impacting on the other (Piotrowski 1979). This view is debatable because from a gender point of view, Andrews and Bailyn (1993) have shown that men separate their work and family roles due to societal expectations of women being more involved in their home duties compared to men. Hence, men segment roles while women integrate them. From a cultural perspective, Yang et al. (2000) declare that the 'self' is regarded as part of a whole, therefore congruence across both work and personal life roles is more prevalent in collectivist societies than in individualistic societies (Aryee 1999).

The *resource drain theory*, also referred to as the *scarcity hypothesis*, together with the *role conflict theory*, form appropriate theoretical partners for the border theory in this study. The *resource drain* theory declares that negative correlations between the work and life domains exist in a manner in which any personal resource (time, energy, and attention) expended on one domain reduces the amount of resources available for utilisation in the domain originally owning the resource (Bakker et al. 2009). When the remaining or unused resources become insufficient, or are depleted (or both), there is potential for negative consequences to employees and organisations (Michel et al. 2010). The *role conflict* construct gives understanding to the origin of WLC for the reason that employees' time, energy, and attention are limited and not able to fulfil both work and life requirements, resulting in undesirable outcomes (Hynes and Liu 2012).

Interestingly, there have been ongoing debates on whether multiple roles are beneficial to employees, resulting into two competing hypotheses: the *resource drain theory* and the *expansion hypothesis*. While the resource drain theory postulates that individuals have a limited amount of time, energy and attention to allocate to both work and life demands, the expansion hypothesis suggested by Marks (1977) posits that the rewards that accrue with multiple roles (e.g. recognition, self-esteem) offset the costs of multiples roles, and that these extra opportunities and resources can in turn be used to promote growth and enhance performance in work and life domains. This view is further supported by Rothbard (2001) who concurs that a person achieves greater fulfilment by taking up multiple roles, as the benefits overcome the costs. From a mental health perspective, Barnett and Hyde (2001) also assent that individuals' cognitive health and capacity is enhanced by taking up additional roles.

Therefore, the border theory, in conjunction with the resource drain and role conflict theories, will form the theoretical framework for this thesis. While the border theory sheds light on why conflict occurs as well as the outcome of situations, the resource drain theory will explain the determinants of inter-role conflict.

## 2.4 **WORK LIFE CONFLICT**

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985: 77) define WLC as “*the inter-role conflict in which the role demands stemming from one domain (work or family) are incompatible with role demands stemming from another domain*”. The use of the term *family* in this definition has however been overtaken by the fact that individuals have multiple roles outside of their ‘family’, such as leisure, community, religious roles and more (Byrne 2005). As explained in Section 2.2.2, ‘WLC’ will be used in place of ‘work family conflict’ since it is a much broader construct that encompasses all types of employee needs (Michel et al. 2010). The relationship between work and life has been conceptualised as a bi-directional construct where work roles affect non-work roles and vice versa (Gutek et al. 1991), meaning that the conflict can originate from either domain. For the purposes of this study, WLC will be examined regardless of the direction or source of conflict.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) categorised the conflict arising from the relationship between work and life into three types: strain-, time-, and behaviour-based conflict. Time-based conflict arises when roles pressures stemming from the two domains compete for an individual’s time. The conditions could include long work hours, schedule inflexibility, overtime, and shift work requirements (Parasuraman et al. 1996). Strain-based conflict occurs when the strain experienced in one role domain interferes with the effective performance of role behaviours in the other domain. Behaviour-based conflict stems from incompatible behaviours demanded by competing roles.

Research investigating the relationship between work and life points to an increase in WLC owing to a surge in dual-earner households and non-traditional gender roles as a result of increased female participation in the labour force (Kalliath and Brough 2008; Michel et al. 2011). Jobs are also becoming more demanding due to competitive business environments and demanding customers, forcing individuals to increase the number of hours that they work, while at the same time juggling multiple life domains (De Cieri et al. 2008). WLC has been demonstrated to have harmful effects on fundamental work outcomes (Michel and Clark 2013). Meta-analytic reviews have established significant work-related dysfunctions of WLC: stress, absenteeism, burnout, and performance (Casper et al. 2011; Michel et al. 2009; Amstad et al. 2011). Various meta-analyses have found several family-oriented variables to be significantly related to WLC, such as family-related stress, and family and marital

dissatisfaction (Michel et al. 2009; Michel and Hargis 2008; Ford et al. 2007). Similar relationships were found for individual-related variables such as affective and physical wellbeing, depression, and substance abuse (Lapierre and Allen 2012; Haemmig and Bauer 2009; Amstad et al. 2011).

Regardless of this advancement in the understanding of the relationship between WLC and its outcomes, some gaps in WLC research still exist. One of the gaps noted by Mordi et al. (2013) as well as Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre (2013) is for work-life research to consider the national contexts in which individuals are embedded. Lu et al. (2010) share the same views as work-life issues vary significantly across countries and organisations. Furthermore, differences have been established in the number of multiple paid and unpaid roles that employees have to juggle in Western and African contexts. For instance, Craig et al. (2012) inform of the sharing of household chores between men and women in Western countries. Mungai and Ogot (2012) and Mokomane (2014) reiterate that domestic duties are entirely a woman's job in Africa. Agbalajobi (2010) equally shares the latter's views of role loads and the high pressured and demanding nature of the lives of working mothers in Africa.

However, Aryee (2005) reiterates that men's breadwinner roles in African families compel them to engage in multiple jobs to maximise on earnings. Therefore, men also tend to commit to long working hours (Mapedzahama 2008). Nevertheless, while men enjoy the privilege of returning home from paid or unpaid work to be served by women, Mapedzahama argues that women return home to begin their second phase of the day's work. Notwithstanding, finding a balance between work and personal responsibilities is a matter of importance for men, women and employers (Lin et al. 2013; Lewis et al. 2007). This requirement makes the business case for the adoption of WLB policies and practices (Kossek et al. 2010; Matthews et al. 2014).

## **2.5 THE BUSINESS CASE FOR WLB INITIATIVES**

Ollier-Malaterre (2009: 160) defines organisational work-life initiatives as:

*“Formal policies and informal arrangements allowing employees to manage their roles, responsibilities, and interests in their life as whole persons, engaged in work and non-work domains. Non-work notably encompasses the family, the community, friendships, personal development, and life-long training projects, political, associative, spiritual and sports activities, and leisure”.*

Calls for organisations to embed WLB within their HR strategies have also nurtured modern workforces that express strong desires to have a harmonious balance between their careers and non-work activities (Carlson et al. 2009). The starting point of the institutional theory, according to Den Dulk et al. (2012), is the assumption that there is growing institutional pressure on employers from workforce changes, the public and governments, to develop WLB policies and practices. However, not all organisations respond in the same manner or capacity. Research has reported variations in the response from public and private sector organisations, including large and small enterprises (Smeaton et al. 2014; Felstead et al. 2012). Flexible working (e.g. home working), leave (e.g. maternity), dependent care assistance (e.g. child care arrangements and crèche), and general services (e.g. employment assistance programmes) constitute categories of established WLB arrangements (Fapohunda 2014).

Research attests to the benefits that employees and employers can derive from having good WLB practices. Moore (2007) argues that organisations that provide long-term WLB cultures benefit from employee-company loyalty, trust and positive employee attitudes to work. With good WLB and low WLC, organisations have the advantage of high employee satisfaction, commitment, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), and productivity (Balmforth and Gardner 2006; Waltman and Sullivan 2007; Houston and Waumsley 2009; Forsyth and Polser-Debruyne 2007). Employees' wellbeing benefits from lower job stress and burnout (Parkes and Langford 2008; Kelliher and Anderson 2010), while on a family level, employees enjoy more satisfaction and happiness in family, marital, leisure and relationship engagement and performance (Kinnunen et al. 2006; Voydanoff 2005). However, when the reverse occurs, Carlson et al. (2009) indicate that a high number of employees may decide to leave the organisation. Echoing the same view is Wood and de Menezess (2008) who found a positive correlation between the presence of WLB policies and practices in an organisation and the affective commitment of employees. They find that employee turnover intentions are lower in organisations that offer WLB policies and practices compared to those that fail to have a WLB system in place.

There are nevertheless other authors who acknowledge the benefits that come with good WLB practice, but also argue that there exist losses in WLB programmes (Smeaton et al. 2014). A significant negative association between the availability of WLB policies and WLC was raised by Thompson et al. (1999). Likewise, Frye and Breugh (2004) identified a

negative relationship between perceptions of the usefulness of organisational WLB practices and WLC. Premeaux et al. (2007) found that WLB initiatives had no effects on employees' WLC levels. Ashforth et al. (2000) attribute some of these negative repercussions to individual differences and preferences for integration versus segmentation of work and life roles. Therefore, some WLB arrangements may be ineffective in reducing WLC if they do not cater for a worker's individual values, needs and/or preferences for managing multiple roles. For instance, Loscocco (1997) found that participating in telework arrangements does not benefit workers with greater home responsibilities because it blurs the boundaries between work and home.

Considering the adoption of WLB policies from a developed country's versus a developing nation's viewpoint, Den Dulk and Peper (2009) contend that work-life policies are relatively new in many national and organisational contexts. In some nations, these policies may not be institutionalised yet. If institutionalised, they may differ in application, especially when public and private sector firms are compared (Felstead et al. 2012). These disparities may be further extended when organisations are based in different countries.

Muchiri (2011: 443) notes that "organisation structures in sub-Saharan Africa are known to be 'paternalistic'<sup>5</sup> with management systems permeated by 'patrimonial' behaviours"<sup>6</sup>. This is mostly observed within public sector organisations where rigidity to change, bureaucracy in decision making, and formal hierarchical structures do not necessitate creative thinking among staff (Njoroge 2014). Oloitiptip and Gachunga (2014) contend that the adoption of new HRM working practices is not synonymous with Kenyan public sector functioning. Conversely, Muinde (2012) observed that Kenya's private sector organisations had started adopting and implementing WLB policies. A survey by Strathmore Business School (SBS 2011) acknowledged a slow-paced adoption of WLB practice by private sector firms in Kenya. Hence, while Visser and Williams (2006) suggest that the public sector in the UK has a good reputation on WLB issues compared to the private sector, evidence from Kenya presents an opposite version. Based upon the above backdrop, it seems that the need for WLB policies and practices is vital. However, this issue may not be as simple in Kenya. To better

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<sup>5</sup> *Paternalistic leadership* is a managerial style where an authoritative approach used organisational power to control and protect employees. The leaders expect loyalty, trust and obedience from employees (Armstrong 2015).

<sup>6</sup> A *patrimonial system* is a form of governance based on personal and bureaucratic power exercised by an individual or a group of individuals (Neil 2007).



understand this phenomenon, the following section discusses the various dimensions of national contexts in relation to WLB practices.

## **2.6 NATIONAL CONTEXT AND WLB**

### **2.6.1 Cultural influences**

#### **Individualism-Collectivism**

The individualism-collectivism dimension of Hofstede's (1980) model has been applied to WLB studies in order to explain how work and personal life relationships are shaped in different contexts. Scholars have shown that disparities exist in the extent to which individuals in different cultures separate paid work from other parts of their personal life (Schein 1984; Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre 2013). Division between work and non-work roles is considered most common in individualistic societies, whereas integration of the two domains is most typical among collectivists<sup>7</sup>. Perceptions of role segmentation and integration create disparate avenues for the experience of WLB across varying cultural settings (Schein 1984). Segmentation of roles between work and non-work domains has been argued to decrease blurring between roles, making transitions between the spheres difficult, while integration of roles in the two domains have the opposite effects.

Yang et al. (2000) argued that in collectivist cultures, sacrificing family time for work could be regarded as neglect of the family in search of personal achievements, whereas in individualistic cultures, work is regarded as a means of supporting the family and less value is placed on personal and family time. Therefore, sacrificing family time for work may be regarded as a short-term cost for the long-term benefit of the family. Even more, the nature of demands experienced in work and personal life spheres, as well as the resources available in these domains, may be different in collectivist cultures from those in individualistic cultures. The expectation of people to maintain balanced relationships with extended family members in collectivist communities was noted by Hofstede et al. (2010). This means that family obligations, which also include financial and emotional responsibilities, would extend beyond self, one's own children and spouse (Powell et al. 2009). In this case, extended family demands may appeal for more time and energy resources from employees in collectivist

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<sup>7</sup> Hofstede's (1980) *individualism-collectivism* dimensions relate to societal characteristics and establish the extent to which individuals in a society are integrated into groups. Relationships in an *individualistic* society assume a loose connection while expectations in a *collectivist* society are for relationships to be strongly and cohesively integrated also involving extended family affiliations.

cultures. Conversely, since nuclear family relationships are common within individualistic societies, extended family obligations may be less demanding. Nevertheless, while family relationships in collectivist societies may have increased demands, they have reciprocal benefits as they serve as important sources of social support (Ibid). Such social support from family is not often available in individualistic cultures (Aycan 2008).

The strong family ties in collectivist societies manifest themselves in workplace HRM practices where relationships between employers and employees are often perceived in moral terms, “with mutual obligations for protection in exchange for loyalty” (Hofstede et al. 2010: 116). These work relationships contrast with those in individualistic societies where employer-employee relationships are assumed in transactional terms (Ibid). Consequently, organisational practices such as selection, appraisal, reward, and dismissal are influenced by people’s relationships with members of an organisation in collectivist societies (Gelfand et al. 2004). In this case, employees could receive direct support from immediate supervisors through the minimising of work demands; this form of support is not available in individualistic cultures as family-modelled relationships may be deemed unacceptable (Powell et al. 2009). Notwithstanding, as performance is not directly linked to rewards in collectivist cultures, nurturing favourable interpersonal relationships with people in higher positions at work is integral to achieving support from them, which at times incurs more demands on the employees’ part.

### **Gender Egalitarianism**

*Gender egalitarianism*, according to different researchers, concerns societal norms about the allocation of roles between men and women (Lyness and Judiesch 2008, 2014; House et al. 2004). Less egalitarian societies are characterised by greater differentiations in expected roles between genders. Here, men value objective material success and prioritise work over family while women are expected to focus more on the subjective quality of life and to prioritise family over work (Emrich et al. 2004). Conversely, greater gender egalitarian societies are typified by fewer distinctions between women’s and men’s social roles, as people of both genders are expected to participate in paid work and share in household duties (Ibid). These varying beliefs and expectations concerning gender roles impact on people’s positions in their private lives, in their interaction with the public, and in the division of housework (McDaniel 2008). Even though authors have indicated that women continue to bear a greater share of

housework (Bianchi et al. 2012; Ruppanner 2010), other researchers have found that men's participation in household activities is fundamentally higher in cultures that place less emphasis on the breadwinner role (Thebaud 2010). In this case, a society's level of gender egalitarianism impacts on the relative demands that men and women are responsible for.

Treas and Widmer (2000) have argued that egalitarian gender values have been associated with favourable attitudes towards female participation in paid work. Uunk et al. (2005) view countries higher in gender egalitarianism as having higher numbers of women in paid work, while Lyness and Kropf (2005) and Lyness and Judiesch (2014) found women in similar societies to have higher chances of occupying positions of high authority. In the process they have more influence on WLB policies and practices. These views are supported by Uunk et al.'s (2005) study, which found employers in nations that uphold gender equality to be more sensitive towards supporting employees to balance their work and non-work lives.

These thoughts are stepped further to a cultural platform where Powell et al. (2009) present the differences in cultural contexts and the probable implications that cultural settings would have on the manner in which men and women experience WLB practices. Drawing on Greenhaus and Beutell's (1985) suggestion that higher levels of involvement in one role (work or personal life), make it difficult to meet demands in another role, Powell et al. (2009) proposed that gender differences in WLB may be more evident in low gender egalitarian cultures where traditional gender roles are significant. Conversely, gender differences in WLB may be more favourable for employees in higher gender egalitarian cultures because of the coinciding roles of men and women. This means that when cultural norms are considered in low gender egalitarian societies, women may experience more WLC compared to men.

### **2.6.2 Institutional influences**

While cultural values and expectations influence the responses of people towards participation in the work and life spheres, Annor (2014) indicates that constraints and resources within institutional contexts could also define the daily realities of combining responsibilities in the two spheres. National family policies and working time regulations could therefore impact on WLB participation experiences.

## **Family Policies**

Among the varying options of policies that employers internationally have instituted to support the balancing of work and life demands are family-related statutory leaves such as maternity, paternity, parental, and sick leaves (Lewis 2009). Not only do countries differ in the strategies used to support employees' WLB, but also in the levels of support they offer (Lewis 1992; Korpi 2000). Drawing on Ingram and Simons' (1995) institutional theory, researchers have contended that, while having a broad range of statutory WLB entitlements could indicate state commitment to work-life matters, it could also create normative and coercive pressures on organisations to provide WLB support (Den Dulk et al. 2013; Lewis and Haas 2005). Lewis and Smithson (2001) argue that statutory entitlements may strengthen the overall sense of entitlement to support by employees, which may increase institutional pressures on employers to respond in ways that could be seen to be equitable (Lewis and Haas 2005).

Allen et al. (2014) bring to the fore two scenarios. First, they suggest that the positive impact of statutory entitlements on WLB experiences may be real for some policies but not others. However, these authors also demonstrate that statutory entitled policies are more beneficial when employees' perception of organisational and line manager support are higher, rather than when they are lower. Some studies have argued that when state-driven provisions lack, organisations are driven to adopt organisation-specific WLB policies and practices (Den Dulk 2005; Den Dulk et al. 2013). On the other hand, Seeleib-Kaiser and Fleckenstein (2009) posit that economic conditions influence the decisions of employers on when and what type of WLB policies and practices to adopt. While evidence exists for both views (Beham et al. 2014), it can be argued that chiefly, organisational characteristics influence the adoption of WLB policies and practices (Lewis 2009). Public rather than private, and large rather than small firms are more likely to adopt WLB arrangements (Den Dulk et al. 2012). While agreeing that large rather than small firms would invest in WLB practice, the view on public/private firms contradicts practice in Kenya, where private rather than public organisations are more likely to invest in WLB arrangements (Lankeu and Maket 2012).

In terms of gender, some researchers have examined the influence of statutory entitlements on gender relations in employment and concluded that national policies that support WLB have been linked with the increase in women's employment and economic independence,

especially that of mothers (Hegewisch and Gornick 2011). This way, female employment patterns are determined by lifestyle preferences (Hakim 2002). But other authors suggest that the presence of WLB policies and practices in workplaces promotes women's continuous attachment to the labour market (Petit and Hook 2005). In more advanced economies, the increased participation of women in work has been as a result of WLB policies that encourage men's participation in household work (Hook 2006). This is the reason why WLB models differ between and even within countries as they are founded on different models of work and life. This highlights the argument that the adoption of models from different countries may conflict in objectives and result in contradictory effects. Hence, additional insight is required by organisations when adopting cross-national models of WLB.

### **Working Time Regulations**

Researchers have suggested that national differences in working time largely reflect variations in the institutional frameworks for regulating working hours (Lee et al. 2007; Anxo 2004). Sometimes regulations of working hours may involve the universal application of statutory agreements such as ILO guidelines. The distribution of working time tends to be broader in countries with limited working hour legislation (Lee et al. 2007). While some authors argue that regulations limiting the amount of working hours can increase available time for personal activities (Sayer and Gornick 2011), some studies contend that reduced working hours equal less pay, which could constrain the fulfilment of financial obligations for employees from highly collectivist societies (Aryee et al. 1999; Aryee 2005).

Furthermore, the organisation of working time has effects on gender equality in paid employment and household labour. Figart and Mutari (2000) found that countries with reduced working hours have lower gaps between men's and women's labour market participation, thereby also influencing men's increased participation in household chores. This finding was also supported by Hook (2006) who reported that men's unpaid work time was positively correlated with women's employment. However, while Hook's finding can be generalised to contexts where part-time work accounts for increased working hours for women, these findings cannot be applied to countries where part-time working remains feminised such that reducing working hours for women reinforces their role as caregivers, while at the same time widening the gender gap in paid work (Gornick and Heron 2006). This would promote inequalities in employment.

### **2.6.3 Economic influences**

Macroeconomic conditions that relate to income and employment shape how individuals negotiate between work and life (Annor 2014). Levels of national wealth and unemployment rates have been related to the number of statutory entitlements that governments provide and the type of WLB models that organisations design. Fenwick and Tausig (1994) have pointed out that workers in affluent countries and those that have low unemployment rates report high levels of WLB. Fenwick and Tausig (1994) suggest the reporting of high levels of WLB by workers in affluent and low unemployment rated countries. On the reverse side, in difficult economic conditions such as a decline in economic growth or recessions, workers have been reported to register higher levels of WLC as organisations are compelled to downsize workforces. Workers are therefore constrained to endure poor working conditions such as increased workloads, unsocial working hours and reductions in remuneration due to a lack of alternative jobs or decreased bargaining power (Joplin et al. 2003; McGinnity and Russell 2013). These authors argue that companies based in the latter type of countries are less likely to invest in WLB practices.

Economic factors also relate to household income. Evidence suggests that because developed nations have stronger economies, the average household income is high, resulting in individuals affording basic needs, while economic security allows shorter working weeks (Spector et al. 2004; Lyness et al. 2012). It is typical for people from nations where average household income is low to work longer hours to raise additional income (Aryee et al. 2005). This has been evidenced by Stier and Lewis-Epstein's (2003) study of 27 countries, which found that the level of economic development was associated with employees' working time preferences. For example, the study found that workers from countries with high GNP per capita were more likely to work fewer hours than those from countries with lower GNPs.

In Uunk et al's (2005) study on changes in women's levels of work involvement before and after birth, these authors found a high likelihood that women in developed countries would reduce working hours after childbirth, while those in less developed countries remained in full paid employment because of economic requirements and minimal policy support. However, the reduced work involvement by women in developed economies was not as a result of difficulties in reconciling work and life responsibilities, but because organisations in

these countries had supportive WLB models, and because women also received financial support from their governments (e.g. child benefits) (Steiber and Haas 2012).

#### **2.6.4 African Perspectives and WLB Practices**

The most dominant perspective of WLB is that from the West, which defines ‘family’, ‘gender roles’ and ‘ethnicity (tribe)’ in relation to the Western context. These concepts have different meanings to people from different regions and cultures (Mokomane 2014). African perspectives of how the above three aspects impact on the practices of WLB have largely been excluded from existing literature.

##### **Family**

Universally, ‘family’ may be viewed as the central unit of society. However, the structures of what constitute a family unit differ between countries, cultures and even generations. From a marital and blood relationship point of view, cross-cultural definitions of ‘family’ differ. Beauregard et al. (2009) find nuclear families consisting of spouse(s) and their child(ren) to be common in the majority of Western countries. Individuals who originate from the pluralist culture of Kenya conceptualise ‘family’ as a complex entity designated as an ‘extended family’ (Dancaster and Cohen 2012). Furthermore, Kimani and Kombo (2010) suggest that the ‘extended’ nature of the Kenyan family even includes the broader community that have no blood relationships because the more extended the family unit is, the more the family gets a feeling of pride and security. Hence, individuals are defined by their families, operate within the spheres of the family, and have the obligation to maintain cohesion and solidarity between members (Ngubane 2010).

Even in the modern era, decisions are not taken individually, and at the same time solidarity is exhibited in the sharing of finances, sorrows and joys. Therefore, dissociating oneself or refusing to participate in family projects and contributions risks isolation (Ngubane 2010). Kimani and Kombo (2010) argue that although realities of modern life have partially eroded community practice, more so in cities where individuals are more individualistic, the ‘extended’ family model offered by the typical Kenyan still remains a source of support in good and bad times. It is therefore expected that the interactions between work and life will be experienced differently in Kenyan societies compared to other countries.

## **Tribe**

There is growing literature on tribalism and its impact on development and conflict (Carney 2012; Hiebert 2012; Jones 2013). However, the literature is largely silent on the relationship between ‘tribe’ and workplace operations. *Tribalism* (see working definition in Chapter 1, Section 1.3), is considered by Carney (2013) to be the bane of post-colonial Africa. Through tribalism, individuals are motivated to have a positive attitude towards people who are connected to them through kinship, family and clan, and/or geo-political affiliations, yet alienate other people who are not related to them by these categories (Nwaigbo 2005).

Using formal and informal networks, Okombo and Sana (2011) assert that rivalry over state power and national resources in Kenya lays the foundation for deep rooted inter-tribal tensions and/or conflicts. This endorses the entrenchment of power by dominant tribes. Similarly, Frank and Rainer (2009: 2) assert that tribal diversity fosters favouritism. Personalities from dominant tribes in positions of authority use tribal affiliations as an “exclusion tool” for access to state resources and services by minority tribes. Self-reinforcing structures of privilege that are difficult to dismantle are therefore built as a result (Musau 2008).

This does not mean that belonging to a tribe is wholly negative. Similar to the benefits that arise as a result of family structures, the more complex the tribe is, the more the members get a feeling of pride and security (Mureithi 2012). But the harm created by tribal affiliations can arguably supersede the benefits. This is because, as Frank and Rainer (2009) indicate, political parties are largely based on tribe rather than on ideology. The political party to which one belongs is of significance and magnifies the complexity of affiliations from *tribe-tribe* to *tribe-political party*. In this case, minority tribes seek to affiliate themselves with warring dominant tribes based on individual tribal interests. Consequently, inter-tribal tensions, conflict and/or mistrust are cultivated (Gumo et al. 2012). These tensions filter into workplaces, resulting in high levels of favouritism. Kenyan authors have highlighted the presence and drawbacks of tribalism in workplaces (Okombo and Sana 2011; Lankeu and Maket 2012). Although workforces are tribally diverse, public sector organisations can be argued to present a paradox by their insistence on recruiting staff on the basis of tribal backgrounds, while private sector firms strive to make their workplaces more multi-tribal (Carney 2012). While acknowledging Carney’s findings, Gumo et al.’s (2012) study on tribalism in Kenya’s public sector found that individuals at the centre of authority in



workplaces evaluated employees with regard to their specific effect on their own tribe in relation to others. Politicians as well as business owners, on the other hand, talk about business investments in terms of ethnic interests and areas. In so doing, employees constantly take tribal interests into account, often resulting in unfair practices (Asmussen et al. 2009).

### **Gender**

Sub-Saharan African societies, cultures and traditions have long defined men and women according to their roles and functions (Mouton et al. 2015). Boxes have been created in which males and females must fit: boxes that define people's opportunities in life, and even the kinds of relationships that one may have. These traditions create social norms in which the male is the provider and holds the power, while women are more submissive nurturers (Abele et al. 2011). Women are co-breadwinners, wives, housekeepers, carers, members of communal groups and educators to their children. In comparison to men, women usually have less personal autonomy, limited resources at their disposal, and little or no influence over the decision-making processes that shape the societies in which they live and their own lives (Ngubane 2010).

When compared to women in developing countries, Craig et al. (2012) support the notion that gender roles are more broken down and shared within Western countries. On the other hand, Hook (2006) suggests that in more advanced economies, the increased participation of women in work has been as a result of WLB policies that encourage men's participation in household work. Women also get the chance to access education and well-paying jobs. The reverse is the case in sub-Saharan Africa where women still have less access to education and sources of finances. Hence housework is synonymously a women's role, while reduced access to financial resources compel women to a life of being catered for financially by men (Kitching and Woldie 2004). The need to be under male care increases the submissiveness of women and manifests men's traditional need to dominate, painting an acceptable picture of women as, effectively, second-class citizens (Ibid).

Conversely, Mungai and Ogot (2012) argue that, when women step out of their prescribed gender roles through further education, occupational elevation or any form of economic empowerment, they challenge the male 'provider' and 'power' role. This invokes a need for men to defend the traditional gender hegemony, driving women back into their hereditary gender roles, through any means considered acceptable by society (Ibid). For instance,

Kimani and Kombo (2010) state that Kenyan society allows men to tame women through polygamy, where men can marry as many wives as they wish. While agreeing with Kimani and Kombo, Mungai and Ogot (2012) highlight the undermining of women in workplaces when women are allocated less prestigious jobs with fewer opportunities for advancement.

Mokomane (2014) further states that gender norms in sub-Saharan Africa strongly influence the central role that women play as nurturers in the extended families in which they belong. The complexity of women's roles is hence not only modelled by their belonging to extended families but also by being part of a tribe where the heaviness of women's roles differs. Even with 'westernisation', Mungai and Ogot (2012) argue that African society still places a premium on traditional female roles. Hence, while workplaces move towards equality in occupations, domestic responsibilities still remain essentially a woman's role. In general, women are more disadvantaged as they have to reconcile the twin roles of homemaker and money-maker. This often affects their work status, the length and structure of their workday, and their opportunities for advancement (Mokomane 2014).

The manner in which the above three aspects interact with WLB can be uncovered by examining the context in which WLB policies are delivered. The following section presents these scenarios.

## **2.7 CONTEXTS IN WHICH WLB POLICIES ARE DELIVERED**

### **2.7.1 Line manager support**

The role of LMs as well as HR is integral when developing and sustaining a work-life culture (McCartney 2002). However, researchers have shown that the role of implementing WLB policies and practices in most organisations has moved from being a HR duty and has been devolved to LMs (Daverth et al. 2016; Den Dulk and Peper 2009; Watson et al. 2007). Because of their close supervision of employees, LMs in particular have the most influence over the manner in which workers are enabled to negotiate WLB. LMs are therefore charged with the responsibility of deciding whether and when to approve employee requests for WLB arrangements.

As a result of the separation in delivery (from HR to LM), WLB practice can differ greatly across organisational departments and between employees because of disparities and inconsistency between the policies formulated at HR level, and the actual decisions taken by LMs (Parris et al. 2008; Maxwell and Farquharson 2008; Purcell and Hutchinson 2007).

Corroborating this result, Bond and Wise's (2003) study similarly found high levels of variability among LMs' understanding of particular WLB policies, leading to inconsistent application with different employees. The concern here is not only over the consistency of the implementation of WLB policies and practices, but also over the fact that, because LMs provide the link between senior management and employees, workers relate the actions of LMs to the organisation. These relationships therefore shape employees' views of organisational support on WLB issues, making LMs' role in enabling balance a challenging one (Kossek et al. 2011).

LMs are expected to exercise flexibility and thoughtfulness in employee welfare matters, and are charged with the role of deciding whether and when to approve employee requests for WLB arrangements (Daverth et al. 2016). However, they are also faced with demands from senior management for greater productivity (Hales 2006). Being caught in the centre point of increasing productivity, while exercising flexibility for employee WLB requests, creates a challenge for LMs. In most cases, these managers are compelled to take up uncovered duties leading to them working longer hours than those for which they are contracted (McCarthy et al. 2010). While covering the duties of absent employees enables the movement of work, such role expectations contradict LMs' responsibilities as role models of WLB. It is through role modelling that LMs demonstrate their commitment to WLB practice (McPherson 2006).

Research has however also shown that LMs do not always accept additional WLB responsibilities. Sometimes, LMs reject WLB policies that do not fit into their area of business (Glynn et al. 2002). Fisher (2000) on the other hand found that some LMs deny the responsibility of being the ones who enable the balancing of employees' work and personal lives, claiming that workers have a responsibility to manage their own lives. Even more, Visser and Williams (2006) have indicated that LMs view the WLB implementation role as a time-consuming task that increases their workload. Therefore, employee requests for the use of WLB arrangements act as additional pressure points that cultivate tensions between employees and their LMs (Glynn et al. 2002).

Training and development is considered an adequate mechanism through which LMs' commitment and attitudes towards WLB practice and their role as implementers can be shaped. Training sets the norms and standards that provide a roadmap to best WLB practice. LMs are able to understand and appreciate the business case of introducing WLB into the organisation (CIPD 2015). In the process, strong foundations of healthy organisational WLB

cultures are laid (McCarthy et al. 2010). In support of the improvement of LMs' capabilities, Lewis (2009) finds that the freedom of employees to request WLB provisions or to discuss issues related to their personal lives highly depends on the WLB skills of their LM. Colquitt and Rodell (2011) reiterate that LMs' capabilities and expertise in handling WLB issues can create and/or prevent an open communication culture of trust, as well as mould employees' perceptions of how fair/unfair a system is. Furthermore, these authors suggest that negative experiences by employees are not only blamed on LMs but generalised to the entire organisation. As discussed in the proceeding section, the relationship between LMs and employees affects employees' use or take-up of WLB initiatives.

### **2.7.2 Take-up of WLB initiatives**

Employees have a right to request for statutory WLB entitlements such as leave arrangements. However, research has shown that a gap exists between the options offered and take-up (Gregory and Milner 2011). Some employees are less likely to take up certain options of WLB arrangements because of the nature of their work (Visser and Williams 2006). For instance, departments that predominantly employ customer-facing staff have no options of working at home. Even in circumstances where people are able to work from home, some firms are unwilling to enable the use of teleworking because of the challenges associated with managing home working employees.

Differences in take-up also occur between men and women. Gendered perceptions of the household division of labour reduce men's sense of their rights to request for workplace WLB measures (Holter 2007). 'Corporate career cultures' also hinder men from openly choosing WLB over their careers (Lewis and Smithson 2001). Some authors have argued that the presence of children in employees' lives has diverted attention towards women WLB needs as women are mostly involved in child caring work (Mapedzahama 2008; Wheatley 2012). On the other hand, Smeaton et al.'s (2014) study portrayed a high percentage of male employees as avoiding the use of family-related leave (e.g. paternity leave), choosing instead to take other off-duty options (e.g. vacation or discretionary days off during the birth of a child or family event). The reason is that they wish to avoid being regarded by LMs or co-workers as having competing priorities, and therefore being discerned as uncommitted to their job.

In terms of LMs' knowledge of their WLB roles, Porter and Ayman (2010) insist that LMs are aware of the various WLB policies, under what circumstances they should be used, and the procedures for their use. Besides, McCarthy et al. (2010) call attention to the fact that there are factors that influence managerial attitudes and behaviours. The national context in which an organisation operates is one of these aspects. Hence, if a culture of unfairness and discrimination is widespread, there is a high likelihood for the same to permeate into workplaces. While agreeing with McCarthy et al., Den Dulk and Peper (2009) for instance indicate that close government involvement in the implementation of statutory WLB arrangements in Western countries gives rise to a social climate in which employers and their managers are expected to offer support to employees. In such circumstances, managers are obliged by law to act positively towards employee requests.

However, organisations are caught in the centre of being flexible towards employees' high WLB expectations, while at the same time dealing with competitive business environmental pressures that require collective sacrifice and commitment from employees. Employees therefore are discouraged from making use of WLB measures for reasons of being branded as 'uncommitted' (Kossek et al. 2012). Being visible at work, often for long hours, is seen as a sign of commitment and loyalty (Hammer et al. 2009), and would result in healthy relationships with co-workers and managers (Houston 2005). For example, teleworking has been associated with professional isolation and impeding professional development (e.g. interpersonal networking, informal learning, and participating in mentoring relationships) (Cooper and Kurland 2002).

Nevertheless, ACAS (2015) directs that considerations for the development and communication of WLB policies should include a statement that actively encourages employees to consider using the arrangements, provided that both the organisation's and the employees' objectives are met. And even once a policy is in place, ACAS recommends that employers continue to encourage workers to use policies by communicating their benefits and successes, and emphasising that no penalties will be incurred for using such provisions.

## **2.8 THE KENYAN PERSPECTIVE OF TRIBE AND GENDER**

### **2.8.1 Tribal dominance**

Ask a Kenyan "who he/she is", and you will get a tribal response: "I am Kalenjin", "I am Luo", "I am Giriama". This is because Kenyans are deeply tribal (Bannon et al. 2014). The country harbours 42 different tribes and multiple sub-tribes – each of these with its own

unique dialect and culture. However, a few intertwining cultural practices exist between tribes due to the close resemblance in languages, similar regional locations, and physical proximity of the tribes (Gumo et al. 2012). Tribal diversity consists of: Kikuyu 22%, Abaluhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, and other minority tribes 22% (GOK 2013). Individuals from different tribes can be identified by their surnames. Based on the context in which ‘tribe’ is depicted in this thesis, tribalism is defined as:

*“the attitude and practice of one harbouring a strong feeling of loyalty and bond to those people connected to him or her through kinship, native dialects and geo-political location, excluding people who do not belong to that group”*  
(Nothwehr 2008: 5).

Being the most populous tribe, Mureithi (2012) states that the Kikuyu, since the colonial times, have been known to wield a lot of political as well as economic influence in Kenya. “Kikuyunization” (the disproportionate distribution of resources to the Kikuyu), started with the founding President who originated from this tribe, and took over power from the colonialists (Gumo et al. 2012). His rule endorsed the entrenchment of Kikuyu power via a web of both formal and informal networks. By the 1970s, Lentz (2008) informs, security forces, senior civil service and private sector jobs, especially accounting and financial positions, were increasingly Kikuyu dominated. This dominance at the top filtered down to other levels benefitting people from this tribe (Mureithi 2012).

Despite the dominance of Kikuyu personnel, Barkan (2011) argues that the selected individuals were intelligent and competent persons, who had gone through elite educational institutions and knew each other well. However, personal loyalty to the President was critical. Each appointment generated power and income for its holder and a trickle-down to their home area through contracts, jobs for home area members, and preferential allocation of development funds (Ibid). The sitting President, the 4<sup>th</sup> since independence, is the son of the first premier. Kenya has had 4 presidents since independence, 3 of whom were from the Kikuyu tribe. Thus, Musau (2008) indicates that a self-reinforcing structure of privilege was built which no other ruler has successfully dismantled. In this sense, the first President is considered the pioneer of tribalism in Kenya (Lentz 2008).

Whereas ACAS (2015) advocates diversity in the workplace, stating that it is key to fostering new ways of thinking, reaching out to a wider range of clients, and growing business, Franck and Rainer (2009: 2) assert that the tribal diversity in Kenya fosters tribal favouritism where

the ruling majority use tribal affiliations as an “exclusion tool”. They design policies that exclude other tribes, and favour those in power when distributing national resources. This is a pattern that was evident in the regional distribution of natural resources such as land, where the Kikuyu were allocated the greatest share of the most fertile resources, flanked by not only some of the most popular tourism attractions in the country, but also regions with well-endowed cities which were in close proximity to the capital Nairobi. This provides one explanation of the dominance of the Kikuyu in workplaces within the Nairobi region (Lentz 2008).

Furthermore, the agricultural and tourism sectors are Kenya’s largest contributors to national income (KIPPRA 2013). Large fertile lands, enabling large- and small-scale farming, plus popular tourist attractions (e.g. Mount Kenya), extensively enhanced the Kikuyus’ financial resources, capabilities and prowess (Mureithi 2012). Even more, compared to other regions in the country, the Kikuyu-allocated localities are not prone to calamities (e.g. flooding, drought and banditry). Ironically, Barkan (2011) claims, the Kikuyu zones are exposed to landslides which, although a calamity, translate into commercial income by generating quarries from which rocks for construction are extracted. Kenya’s largest quarry mines, producing quality crushed stone, are located in Central Province – the Kikuyu region. Hence, Barkan (2011) argues that the uneven geographical pattern in economic development in the country has meant that some ethnic groups, particularly the Kikuyus, are relatively rich and others are extremely poor.

The disproportionate allocation of resources enabled the Kikuyu tribe to afford quality education in high-profile educational institutions as well as early access to international education. According to Lentz (2008), most of the elite educational institutions in the country are located in Kikuyu regions and are also owned by individuals from the same tribe. In this sense, sound educational qualifications enable the Kikuyu to access well-placed jobs, thereby providing a second reason for not only their dominance in workplaces, but also their domination of management positions in public and private sector institutions.

Nevertheless, much as the Kikuyus’ ruling majority is attributed to the unfair distribution of resources, their success can be associated with their background, which is business-oriented. They tend to be industrious, aggressive and hardworking, and possess the ability to quickly adapt to new realities (Barkan 2011). Kikuyus (even those living in rural areas) are more

successful than other tribes. They easily adopt and adapt many aspects of modern culture, giving them a collective advantage in employment (Frank and Rainer 2009: 2). For instance, Kikuyu “micro-savings groups”, a phenomenon which arose out of the idea of ‘harambee’, which means “all together”, are more development-inclined compared to those of other tribes, which are welfare based (Ibid). But still, the Kikuyu are characterised by corruption and the embezzlement of public funds; public sector fraud has negatively affected cash flow in this industry (Collier 2009).

### **2.8.2 Affiliation of tribe to politics**

The political party to which one belongs is important in Kenyan social life. Political parties are largely based on tribe rather than on ideology (Frank and Rainer 2009). These affiliations are significantly visible at election periods where tribal tensions are stirred, as different tribal groups seek to gain power in order to access state resources (Ibid). Most noticeably, the disputed 2007 elections brought Kenya to the brink of civil war and further endorsed tribal divisions that have polarised society, and in the process weakened the institutional foundation for economic development (Kimenyi and Gutierrez-Romero 2008). Lentz (2008) views tribal affiliations as being used as leverage by politicians when bargaining for positions, as politicians reward their supporters with better and more financially lucrative job opportunities, leaving the majority of those from marginalised or minority tribes with no employment. Kimenyi and Gutierrez-Romero (2008) further assert that even in employment, political supporters and relations receive favoured attention.

Deep rooted inter-tribal tensions and conflicts exist, more so between the Luo and the Kikuyu tribes because of biting rivalry over state power (Okombo and Sana 2011: 10). The genesis of this historic acrimony stems from past political betrayal, differences in political ideologies and resistance to unequal allocation of resources. The Luo continue to be and have always been more vocal about these alienations compared to other tribes (Okong’o 2008). Because of this, there is a tendency for the Luo tribe to be alienated in not only employment but also in access to state resources. Gumo et al. (2012) state that the church, which offered guidance on matters of national cohesion, is no longer trusted to be a neutral arbiter. Various churches are today allied with specific tribal parties. The remaining 40 tribes have therefore taken sides and affiliate with either of the two warring tribes (Kikuyu/Luo) based on what they view as the benefits of the relationship (political, economic, social). The tensions, conflict and mistrust that stem from these associations permeate workplaces and influence business



activities. This is particularly so within the public sector, which is vulnerable to political influence (Ibid).

Kenya's second President was from the Kalenjin tribe. He ruled Kenya for 24 years. The era of Kalenjin leadership resulted in mass employment of people from this tribe, more so at Telkom Kenya (Lynch 2011). However, whereas the first President employed well-educated tribesmen, from an able cadre of loyalists, the second President lacked this option as his tribe was marginalised and possessed only basic education (Barkan 2011). Twenty-four years of unqualified personnel in Telkom witnessed the downfall of the organisation due to poor management and the misappropriation of resources. Today, the Kikuyu and Kalenjin have merged to form a political party – Jubilee. Two more tribes who live in close proximity to the Kikuyu and therefore consider themselves as 'tribesmates', the Meru and Embu, have joined forces with these two tribes to form a powerful political coalition with the majority of followers from the Kenyan population. This leaves 38 tribes within the minority category. The social structures arising from these political/tribal affiliations wield disproportionate power, creating a 'win-lose' relationship between Kenyan tribes.

In this context, Asmussen et al. (2009) argue that tribalism is a stumbling block to fairness in organisations in Kenya, and is responsible for ills such as corruption and nepotism. Lynch (2011) has also linked poor governance and lack of accountability to tribalism, with employees never questioned by a manager from their tribe. Even in the face of mistakes, tribe members remain blindly supportive. As a result, a spirit of mistrust has been propagated between not only employees and their managers, but also amongst co-workers (Kenya Projects Organisation - KENPRO 2014). Tribalism is thus used as the basis for withholding or providing preferential considerations to selected employees (Ibid).

### **2.8.3 Gender roles and expectations**

In the Kenyan context, gender is defined according to roles and functions in society. It is what it means to be male or female that shapes the opportunities that individuals are offered in life, the roles one may play, and the kinds of relationships one may have (Kimani and Kombo 2010). Mungai and Ogot (2012) contend that despite Westernisation, Kenyan society still places a premium on the traditional female roles where women are submissive to men; the culture approves submissiveness, subservience and supportiveness (Kitching and Woldie 2004). These cultural values shape how women perceive the expectations of them in relation

to their traditional responsibilities and access to resources. Hence, whatever is valuable in society is placed under the direction of men; while whatever is considered less valuable is given to women to care for (Ibid).

Household duties are purely a woman's role, while men dominantly take the breadwinner role (Abele et al. 2011). Nevertheless, while men take on a single breadwinner role, Ngubane (2010) argues that the pluralist nature of women's roles, regardless of levels of education and social class, includes women being co-breadwinners, wives, housekeepers, carers, members of communal groups and educators to their children. Even more, Mungai and Ogot (2012) state that despite their increased participation in the labour market, women continue to work in less prestigious jobs and have fewer opportunities for advancement. In general, women are more disadvantaged as they have to reconcile the twin roles of homemaker and money-maker. This often affects their work status, the length and structure of their workday, and their opportunities for advancement (Mokomane 2014).

In addition to physical strain emanating from formal and informal work overloads, according to Mungai and Ogot (2012), emotional strain due to marital relationships forms part of a Kenyan woman's life. Polygamy is legal, and men not only enjoy the privilege of marrying as many wives as they may wish, but also have as many concubines as they may wish (Mouton et al. 2015). Mungai and Ogot (2012) consider that this situation subjects women to constant emotional distress because of the competitive nature of polygamous marriages. In the process, women are denied the power to choose between engaging in more formal work to improve the quality of their lives, and/or respecting their traditional marital expectations and forfeiting job opportunities to protect their social image. Besides, Manda (2013) highlights non-compliance among most private sector organisations in enabling WLB for women because of poor economic operating conditions, while the misappropriation of funds in the public sector disallows the development of modern HRM practices through which women would benefit more. The possible joint influence of tribe and gender role expectations will therefore be explored in the forthcoming empirical study.

#### **2.8.4 A collectivist culture**

Hofstede's (2001) measure of individualism and collectivism remains one of the influential frameworks for examining societal culture at an aggregate level (Yoo et al. 2011). His international measure of individualism and collectivism categorises Kenya as an in-group collectivist society/nation. According to Mungai and Ogot (2012), among the Kenyan people,

this tends to be evidenced in close and long-term commitments to family, extended family, tribe and communal groups. Loyalty is paramount and is fostered through strong relationships, where each person takes responsibility, cares for fellow group members and benefits from the membership (Akuloba et al. 2012). Group thinking tends to be closely intertwined. But the ‘togetherness’ in relationships does not end with social relationships – it extends to the workplace. In the work of Baka (2013), he posits that employer/employee relationships are perceived in moral terms (like a family link) where recruitment and selection, as well as career development opportunities are based on groupings (extended family, tribe). In addition, management is not only limited to managing people but also to managing groups (tribe, kinship), as managers identify themselves through these paradigms (Mungai and Ogot 2012). However, lifestyles within the major cities (Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu) have been identified as moving towards more individualistic behaviour. Nevertheless, the greater numbers of Kenyan communities remain largely collectivist.

#### **2.8.5 Gender and tribe as systems of power**

Castillejo (2011) insinuates that the interpretation of power depends on individuals. While others understand it as getting someone else to do what one would want (power-over), others view power as the ability to achieve an end (power-to). Castillejo continues to indicate that some individuals also view power in terms of actors and structures, where specific actors have the powers to act in certain ways or capacities, while others view power as sitting in wider historical, political, economic and social forces. Whichever interpretation individuals have, all instances, limit individuals’ opportunities for action. Within the Kenyan setting, the interpretation of power may shape how individuals understand themselves, their tribal origins and positions, as well as gender obligations in the wider Kenyan society.

Browne (2014) discusses visible, hidden and invisible power by explaining how some people focus on directly observable power relations that emanate from formal institutions and official decision making, while power is also exercised in hidden ways where powerful actors shape formal processes by having control over which individuals participate in decision-making and what can be discussed in various forums. However, Browne warns that the power that is exercised in less visible ways is the most supreme and indirect form of power. By shaping people’s sense of themselves and their world, this kind of power contradicts the agency requirements of empowering individuals’ independence by controlling what issues should be included on agendas as well as the minds of individuals. All in all, varying

perspectives and definitions of power have diverse standard implications which when exercised through processes could be perceived as oppressive or friendly, as passive or as forces for change. Hence, Browne (2014) asserts that power structures and relations can be reproduced, reinforced, challenged, and/or subverted by the manner in which individuals think about power. Whichever linkage of power is ascribed to individuals' processes, a fuller understanding of the same cannot be achieved without linking tribe, gender and power, particularly in the Kenyan context.

According to Koester (2014), gender shapes power relations at all levels of society. Orina (2014) in addition argues that existing sets of roles, behaviours and attitudes which societies in Sub-Saharan Africa consider as appropriate for men and women (gender in general) could be the leading continuing cause, consequence and mechanism of power relations from households to top political decision making. But important to note is that literally works use the 'gender' concept varyingly which open up different perspectives on how power interrelates with gender matters. However, most of these works have dominantly been developed from Western perspectives and may therefore provide a starting point for understanding gender and power dynamics in relation to other contexts like Sub-Saharan Africa, in this case, Kenya.

Koester (2014) continues to argue that inequalities between men and women are one of the persevering patterns in the distribution of power (both power-over and power-to). This is particularly apparent in circumstances where gender is considered by individuals being differentiated for being either 'male' or 'female'. Across literally works, women's lack of influence has been problematised as a leading, institutionalised and unfavourable power-over relationship in the world (Pettit, 2013) and the domination of women by men in Sub-Saharan Africa resulting in negative consequences for WLB (Mokomane 2014).

O'Neil (2016) and Kumar and Quisumbing (2015) consider gender roles as power relations and a base for power-over relations to thrive. O'Neil (2016) finds gender roles to be a mechanism through which power, 'invisibly' constrains and constitutes people in Sub-Saharan African social contexts. This is reflected in the manner in which individuals in Sub-Saharan African societies define appropriate masculine and feminine behaviour. According to Kumar and Quisumbing (2015), for men in these societies to get women to do what they want them to do, they define and perceive them through powerlessness, and make them to understand that they are considered feminine when they are quiet, accommodating and

obedient. These associations tend to draw social structures that naturally give men power over women thereby denying them the ability to exercise independent decision making (agency) and also access resources that would have improved their lives and the lives of those who depend on them. Orina (2014) claims that in Sub-Saharan African societies, men and women tend to perceive women's lack of power as natural and appropriate and in this case decreasing women's access to and level of decision-making. When WLB recognise these dynamics and institute them, women gain self-worth and self-knowledge (power-within<sup>8</sup>) as a crucial factor of the process of transformations.

Mureithi (2012) commented on how wider structures and institutions in Kenya shape the distribution of power by reinforcing and relying on tribal affiliations. Here, tribe is viewed as a characteristic of wider social structures and institutions. According to Mureithi, these social structures and the institutions in which they are embedded have been privileged for dominant tribes and therefore tailored towards benefitting these tribes (mainly Kikuyu) thereby increasing the unequal distribution of power between individuals from different tribes (dominant and minority tribes). The unequal distribution is even more pronounced when belonging to a tribe is affiliated to politics, resulting in wider structures and institutions (formal and informal) which promote the power of dominant tribes over minority tribes in places of work. Gumo et al. (2012) argue that power in Kenya is largely conceptualised and viewed from the perspective of privileged tribes compelling the 'tribe' and 'power' concepts to be derived from a "dominant tribe's" experience and point of view. Yet people from minority tribes are required and expected to comfortably exist/live in these environments and cohabit and construct social relations and lives with these men to survive. Instead of opposing their status quo, Mureithi (2012) in his study titled "Kikuyunization" , reiterates that people from minority tribes tend to accept their statuses and positions in society thereby affirming their positions as being inferior to dominant tribes.

Hence, six significant issues emerge from this background relating to Kenya's tribal, gender and collectivist contexts:

- ❖ Kenya is largely a collectivist society.
- ❖ Kenya is an unequally structured society when it comes to tribal and gender opportunities.

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<sup>8</sup> 'Power within' refers to gaining the sense of self-identity, confidence and awareness that is a pre-condition for action. It refers to the synergy which can emerge through partnerships and collaboration with others, or through processes of collective action and alliance building (Luttrell *et al.*, 2009).

- ❖ Kikuyu is the most dominant and influential tribe in the country.
- ❖ There is a strong affiliation between politics and tribal identities.
- ❖ Power dynamics and structures play a key role in understanding Kenya's organisational, social and household relations.
- ❖ Kenya is largely still a male-dominated country in terms of decision making and control.

The possible joint influence of tribe and gender role expectations will therefore be explored in the empirical study, which is presented in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7.

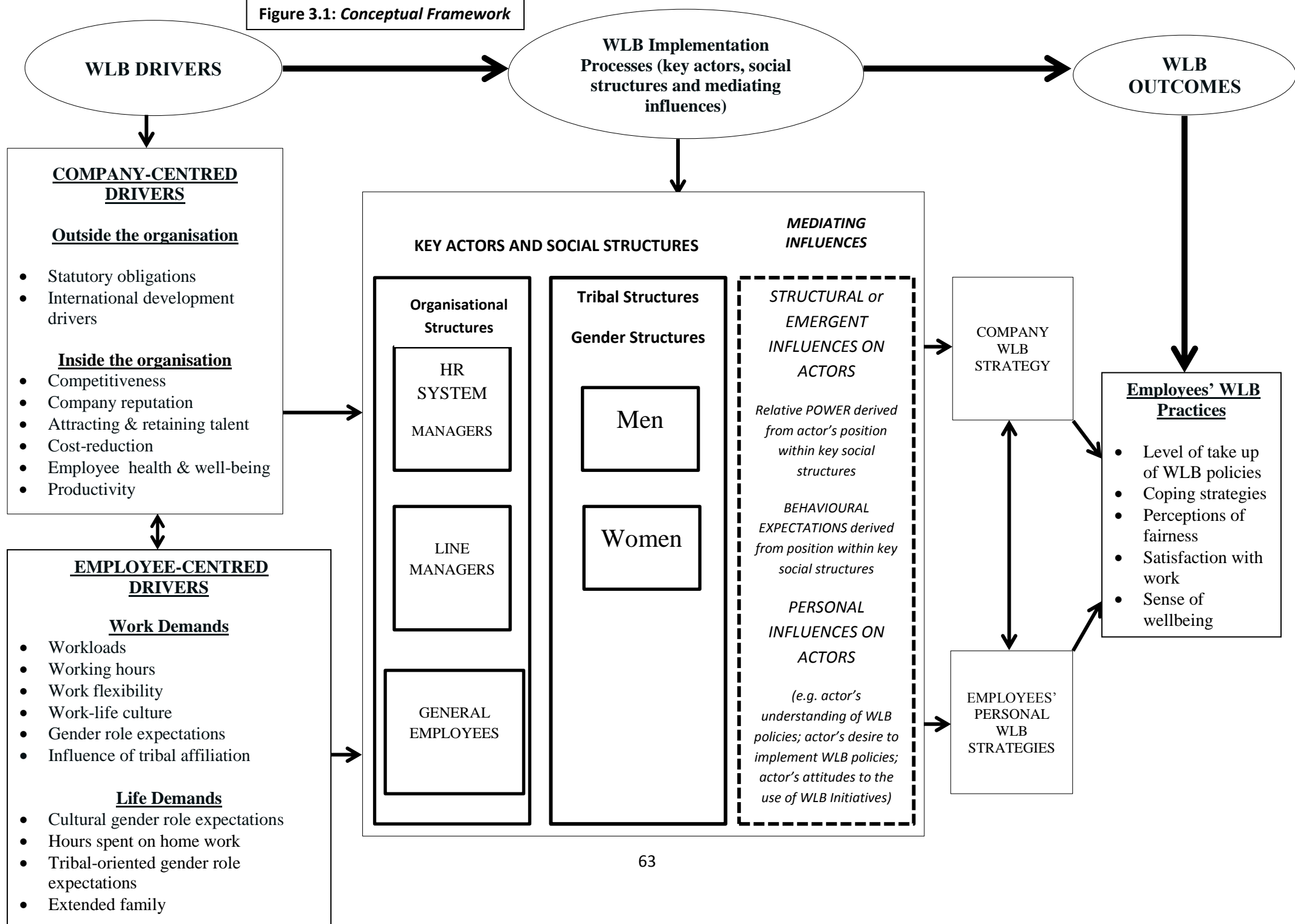
The proceeding section critiques the three frameworks on which this study is grounded, identifying where the gap exists thereby emphasising on the relevance of this study and laying ground for the introduction of the conceptual framework for this research.

## **2.9 RESEARCH GAP, CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND THEORY**

According to the resource drain and inter-role conflict theories (Section 2.3), demands between the domains of work and life compete for individuals' limited time, energy and attention, often resulting in undesirable outcomes (Bakker et al. 2009). While recognising this view, Clark's (2000) border theory not only adds that the borders that exist between the two domains divide the times, places and people associated with work versus personal life responsibilities. Clark's theory also acknowledges that the two domains differ in terms of purpose and culture. Instead of separating these two spheres, this Clark advocates for the integration of work and life to enable ease of role transitions. Clark (2000) therefore suggests that contextual factors (for the case of this study: WLB norms and policies, working hours, social support from LMs, co-workers, and home environments) can to some degree be shaped in order to create a desired balance. The author advocates that organisations should alter domains and borders to increase WLB. However, these domains and borders must work in tandem for balance to be achieved. Within this broad agenda, specific emphasis has been placed on various organisational measures and management practices that create the conditions for, and support, the implementation of WLB policies. The entire relationship of work and non-work demands and the choice of organisations to implement WLB policies is reflected in the 'WLB drivers' section of the conceptual framework (Figure 2.1). However, Clark argues that organisations not only tend to create WLB policies that serve their own

interests, and not those of employees and their social groups (families, friends, communities), but also that firms often fail to change work cultures and values to support the successful

Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework





implementation of WLB. In the same voice, Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre (2013) call for WLB policies to be adopted according to national cultures and/or contexts as different cultures and stakeholder groups within and/or across societies conceptualise and influence WLB differently. Together, these views affirm that when WLB policies fail to serve the interests of employees, they can lead to unrealised expectations and disillusionment (Clark 2000).

However, the three models (resource drain, inter-role conflict, and border theory) do not incorporate social structures and power relations in the WLB process. Considering the presence of social structures and various social actors in relation to tribal affiliation and gender expectation matters in the Kenyan context, these factors become of significance in examining WLB in workplaces. The conceptual framework on which this study draws its argument introduces power and social structures as a vital element in the WLB process. It is divided into three key sections: *WLB drivers*, *WLB implementation processes*, and *WLB outcomes*. The framework recognises that within Kenya's social systems, there exist key actors whose positions affect the level of independent decision making that individuals may have. According to Orina (2014), individuals and groups yield power in five different ways: (1) *Power over* someone signifying that power can be limited; (2) *Power in decision making and problem solving* implying an individual's ability to make independent decisions; (3) *Power with* other individuals, meaning, the capacity that one has in influencing people within social and political settings; (4) *Power in collectivity* which obligates common purpose and the capacity to unite; and (5) *Power within* which attributes to an individual's identity and assertiveness. Achieving WLB may require addressing some or all the forms of power as these power dynamics are what create social structures within various national contexts - political, economic, societal, and familial systems. Collectively, these power structures determine employee's positions within the Kenyan context (Mureithi 2012).

In this study, there are three key actors in organisational WLB implementation: the *HR team* who design and promote the policies, *LMs* who implement them and *general employees*<sup>9</sup> who are the end users of the policies. According to the border theory, the supportiveness of the

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<sup>9</sup> General employees included white- and pink-collar workers and excluded blue-collar workers, LMs, HRMs, as well as other senior managers. Blue-collar workers included unskilled and low skilled workers who performed simple tasks such as cleaning, office messaging, driving, cooking, unskilled maintenance, porters, among other support-oriented roles. They were excluded because: (1) they had minimal education; their literacy levels would have been a hinderance to adequately understanding of the interview questions, as well as responding to the online questionnaires, (2) employees in these job categories were not entitled to the use of company computers, and (3) their job levels excluded them from some WLB policies. According to Kossek et al. (2014), as company brand ambassadors, managers (LMs, HRMs, senior) tend to speak in the best interest of a company thereby protecting and defending the 'true' status of matters.

relationship between border keepers (managers and general employees) can aid in achieving balance. The discretion awarded to LMs, as stated by McCarthy et al. (2010), can encourage or dissuade employees from using WLB policies. Clark (2000) contends that LMs can choose to be flexible or not, bend rules or interpret them in a manner that accommodates individual employee circumstances. Meanwhile, it is anticipated in this study that central participation in the use of WLB policies will be an individual employee choice. However, the border theory recommends that employers can encourage participation by assisting employees to internalise the domain's WLB culture and to connect with co-workers.

One of the factors that influences the implementation and use of WLB policies is *social structuration*<sup>10</sup>, within and across organisations and societal contexts; it can also have wide contextual variations (Mordi et al. 2013; Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre 2013; Geppert and Hollinshead 2017; Geppert and Hollinshead 2014). Narrowing down on Kenya, the country is considered by The World Bank (2015) to be a highly unequal society with exclusion and stratification often being influenced by tribe, gender, geographical location, class/income, and even employment levels. This thesis will focus on the differential powers<sup>11</sup> of actors, situated in unequal relationships of dominance, submission and/or resistance in relation to organisational structures, tribal relations and gender relations. Power, in this thesis, is considered as positional<sup>12</sup> and is expressed as a contest of underlying social structures, and traditional social as well as cultural forces that shape human actors and their ways of relating or acting. In its broad definition, power relates to the ability of certain actors to influence or dominate others, and it can therefore be considered as partly being derived from both *emergent* and *personal* influences (Jarvis and Dunham 2003; Sayer 2011).

In this thesis, *emergent* influences pertain to the positions occupied by key actors within three key structures: *organisational, tribal affiliation and relations* and *gender relations*. The emergent influences are presented in two ways. First, actors derive power from their positions within the different structures. For instance, job expectations and roles permit LMs more power to implement WLB policies and practices than other managers. Second, there are

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<sup>10</sup> According to Porpora (1989), *social structures* are organised and enduring sets of power relations between organisations, individuals and/or groups where hierarchical stratifications are created. Social norms permit majority-minority relations within social structures that tend to favour the majority in the everyday operations of society. Those in the same group have feelings of togetherness. The notion of social structures has given rise to various forms of *structuralism*. In the study of organisations, structures of firms influence their capacity to change, and the ability of employees at different levels to exercise power and control among other factors. Gender and tribe are other forms of social stratification. Family structures involve defined sets of roles and relations that are affected by gender and tribe.

<sup>11</sup> Multiple dimensions of power exist. For this study, *power* is considered in the expression of 'power over' where the concept is seen as a win-lose relationship. Power is therefore defined as "the ability of an individual or group to influence and/or control the actions and/or behaviour of other people or groups of people against their interests, needs, and desires" (de Moll 2010: 22).

<sup>12</sup> Top-down power that arises from an individual's title and/or position of responsibility.

tendencies and liabilities for actors to conduct themselves in particular ways that are also linked to the positions that they occupy within particular social structures (Bhaskar 2010; Tyson 2006; Geppert and Hollinshead 2014). For example, as well as possessing the power to implement company WLB policies, the social structure of a business organisation also arguably imbues LMs with an obligation to do so. Similarly, within the context of a tribal social structure, Kenyan men and women from certain tribes tend to follow the need to fulfil their role expectations as dictated by culture. Emergent influences are not reducible to the individuals concerned, but relate to the position occupied within social structures, and they are therefore relatively generalisable across social populations (Jarvis and Dunham 2003).

*Personal* influences relate to the individual people who occupy positions within key social structures. Since these influences relate to individual people, they are less generalisable (Lipscomb 2014). Hence, in advance of the empirical study, it is not known how the idiosyncrasies of particular actors (HRLs, LMs and general employees – male and female, individuals from different tribes) might exert influence on WLB practice. For instance, as shown in the ‘WLB implementation processes’ phase of the conceptual framework (Figure 2.1), LMs differ in their level of understanding of company policy, what is expected of them, and how to implement the policies. LMs may also have their own personal views, perhaps prejudices concerning WLB policies. Even more, some LMs might be interested in challenging dominant role expectations in terms of their own attitudes to WLB policy and take-up. Similarly, the personal characteristics of individual actors might bring the emergent powers and liabilities associated with the positions they occupy in multiple social structures into intersection, the result of which again cannot be known in advance of detailed empirical investigation (Jarvis and Dunham 2003). For instance, as well as forming part of business organisations, LMs also belong to tribes and might therefore have strong/weak affiliations to tribal coalitions. These managers are also men and women who belong to families with particular role expectations. Their resolution of these potentially countervailing powers and liabilities, their attitudes towards WLB policy and their take-up in relation to their tribal and gender positioning are not knowable in advance of empirical research.

Perhaps, together, the above aspects (*one*, the relative powers and role expectations that are derived from social structures, and *two*, the personal beliefs and characteristics of individual people) have particular outcomes in relation to WLB. It is generally understood, as Bhaskar (2010) argues, that social structures exert powerful influences upon individuals, but outcomes in behaviour (e.g. in terms of take-up of WLB policies) cannot be viewed as a result of

structural influences alone. It is important to factor in the abilities, levels of understanding, personal beliefs and attitudes and/or motivations of individuals too. Relationships arising from these social structures together represent outcomes of social processes that are less well understood in relation to WLB. For Kenya, issues influencing the country's social, political, and consequently work contexts have largely been heavily shaped by historical and domestic tensions and contestations associated with centralisation and/or misuse of power (Owiti 2014). Similarly, tribes have overlapping social structures with win-lose relationships between dominant and minority tribes. Gender roles on the other hand are defined by cultural norms of male and female 'family' and household positions, where males are the providers and hold substantial power, while women are more submissive nurturers (Ibid). There are tendencies for these aspects to permeate the workplace. Therefore, one avenue of understanding these social processes and systems, and how they interact with WLB matters, is through institutions.

Debates have ensued on the supremacy of '*agency*'<sup>13</sup> and '*structure*'<sup>14</sup>. The debate between the two dimensions can be viewed as an issue of *socialisation* against *independence* in determining whether an individual is in control of their own actions or whether they are subject to particular social circumstances that determine their behaviour (Alsop et al. 2006). Of the two, Luttrell et al. (2009) contend that structure has a much bigger influence on the individual, than the individual has on the structures of society. Power can be linked to the evolving, interlocking and iterative dichotomies of *structure* and *agency*. Existing forms of power in a society are suggested by Archer (2003) as defining some of the features of agency in that they can form the basis on which individuals and groups trace their goals. Also, institutions and social relations (such as tribal groupings in this study) that define social power are also part of an existing structured environment, thereby (re)creating systems of winners and losers. These structured systems create subjectivities of power and relative powerlessness (Ibid). Furthermore, Archer (2012) suggests that social and political institutions set the context for individual and group behaviour, while also providing the resources individuals need to survive. Hence, individuals' actions and behaviours are often largely shaped by the social structures in which they exist. Indeed, in some cases, structured institutions are characterised by exploitation, exclusion and unequal access to resources due

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<sup>13</sup> *Agency*, according to Alsop et al. (2006: 6) is an individual's or group's capability to make independent choices, which can be translated into desired actions and outcomes.

<sup>14</sup> *Structure* is the repeated patterned arrangements, or organised and enduring sets of power relationships, which influence or restrain the choices and opportunities of individuals (Luttrell et al. 2009).

to power inequity, leading to individuals feeling trapped in particular social situations. For some people, social structural norms are internalised and have a negative impact on one's self-worth and esteem, seemingly compelling them to comply with these social norms.

However, as mentioned above, it is important to recognise that as a component of 'agency', human behaviour (in this case in relation to WLB practice) cannot simply be 'read off' from the existence and operation of social structures. The conceptualisation of WLB practice in terms of agency includes the ability of employees to not only have the capability to make purposeful choices (for instance, when to take time off work or which WLB policies to use), but to also participate in organisational decision-making as well as to challenge organisational decisions, policies and practices (Westover 2013; Geppert and Hollinshead 2017). For instance, organisations can put in place mechanisms that allow employee feedback on organisational WLB policies and practices, and their ability to influence organisational change in order to create a more unbiased social and working order. According to Hogarth and Bosworth (2009), employees' agency in WLB is considered to be enhanced when they have the capacity to make independent decisions on the use of opportunities for WLB, as well as having the power and capacity to influence decision making in their workplaces and households.

In this sense, there could be resemblance and/or variations in Safaricom and Telkom employees' perceptions of the fairness of WLB support allocation in their firms, and/or an individual sense of entitlement to support. Broadly, an assumption could be that employees' achievement of WLB is either enabled and/or constrained by their structural and cultural organisational environment. For instance, women and men should be able to be both earners and carers. These expectations mirror rising expectations of working individuals for a better quality of life and the tensions that ensue from these expectations within individual lives, households, work organisations and policy frameworks. Yet there could still be a gap between the ideal and the real capabilities of workers to exercise their right to statutory entitlements and use of other non-statutory WLB arrangements as seen by Wang and Walumbwa's (2007) attesting of a rising culture of long and unsocial working hours in a number of Kenya's private sector firms. However, the ability to bridge an agency gap depends on how richly these entitlements are incorporated into national and organisational policy frameworks, mediated through workplaces, and translated into beneficial opportunities for users. Hence, the core issue with agency in relation to WLB would not only be which policies employees choose to use, but the choices they would have made if they had the

capabilities to engage with WLB policies and practices in the manner that they personally preferred (for instance, autonomy in the choice of which shifts to work). Again, unless an empirical study is carried out, these subjective experiences will remain unknown.

Based on the above discussion, it can be seen that the workings of power relations (organisational, tribal and gendered) are undoubtedly important to the understanding of the final production and implementation of WLB practices at Safaricom and Telkom. According to Jarvis and Dunham (2003), critical theory offers a balanced perspective that grants significance to both societies and individuals. In support of the objectives for this study, and illustrated in the 'WLB implementation processes' phase of the conceptual framework (Figure 2.1), it would be imperative to establish whether HRLs, LMs and employees are affected by tribal and gender issues in the process of their implementing and using WLB policies and practices. A question that needs answering is *why do these outcomes favour some genders and tribes at the expense of others?* The mediating of structural, emergent, and/or personal influences on the above actors will definitely have implications for the evaluation and reviewing of WLB strategy as well as for the individual coping strategies that employees would adopt to enable them to balance work and non-work roles (see Figure 2.1). The reviewing of WLB strategy and the adoption of employee personal strategies as a result of the holistic experiences of the named three actors will have implications/outcomes for employees' WLB. For instance, as depicted in the 'WLB outcomes' phase of the conceptual framework, it may happen that there is a shift in the policy take-up habits of employees, or perceptions of fairness as a result of perceived LM or co-worker support, varied levels of satisfaction with jobs, or employee wellbeing.

In its recognition of the nature and importance of social structures, this study adopts a *critical theory* perspective informed by structuralism. Through the conceptual framework (WLB implementation processes level), the study recognises that the social world is structured and stratified rather than existing on a single atomistic level. And it contends that some of the most important phenomena that produce observable social outcomes are 'emergent' (and invisible) attributes that only exist when people/entities are combined together in social structures or relations of power. A critical approach seeks to reveal, theorise [and often challenge] the 'hidden' relations of power that give rise to inequality and disadvantage in particular societies and economies (Horkheimer 2002). And linked to this, it has a distinct research rationale, with the overall purpose of enquiry being not just to explain or understand the world, but to advocate change and/or improvement, typically by exposing and challenging

these unequal relations of power. However, a full understanding of how these social structures and power relations behave in relation to WLB can only be obtained through empirical investigation. *But how does one do this? What are the implications for method in this study?* The following chapter addresses these questions.

## **2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter aimed to capture the debates and criticisms within work-life literature. The chapter argued that efforts towards globalising WLB research may remain futile if African perspectives continue to be excluded from current research and literature on the work and life interface that is distinctly Western focused. The chapter highlighted various differences in the national contexts of countries that would lead to the interface between work and life being experienced differently. The Western bias of the WLB literature means that little is known about the extent to which people from African cultures (particularly Kenyan) perceive the interplay between ‘family’, ‘gender roles’, and ‘tribe’ with WLB practice. Drawing on this review of literature, the chapter concludes on the note that blanket WLB models cannot be uniformly applied in Western and African countries. Therefore, a WLB framework that would address the above three concepts from an African, particularly Kenyan perspective, would be more effective in enabling sustainable WLB in African workplaces. Moving on to Chapter 3, the methodological bases that enable the examination of how ‘gender roles’ and ‘tribe’ interrelate with WLB practice in Kenya are provided.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This chapter shows how the conceptual framework informs the research design and methodology that is employed in the empirical study that follows in chapters 4, 5, and 6. The review of literature in Chapter 2 revealed a Western bias in much of the published work on WLB to date. This has resulted in comparatively little being known about the extent to which African perspectives of ‘family’, ‘tribe’, and ‘gender roles’ influence WLB practice. This chapter explains how this research gap will be addressed in this thesis.

### **3.2 A CRITICAL THEORETICAL APPROACH**

A review of literature by Chang et al. (2009) on the methodological choices in WLB research demonstrated that, despite the increase in research interest in this field, most studies tend to use qualitative methods (largely defining the research world as a singular phenomenon) that elicit in-depth information of a particular situation from which generalisations may be difficult, while a few have marked the beginning of more quantitative studies (following positivist<sup>15</sup> assumptions) that are inclined to disregard social contexts (e.g. Greenhaus et al. 2003; Greenhaus and Powel 2006). Despite Poelman et al. (2013) indicating that most researchers are often trained in more than one type of research methodology, Chang et al. (2009) found a deficiency in the use of mixed methods (MM), which according to Creswell (2014) is one of the solutions to the paradox problem of competing methodologies.

The MM research design, underpinned by the critical theory (informed by structuralism) is a potential solution to these methodological dilemmas as it offers a philosophical critique of how knowledge is produced, perceived, analysed and interpreted (Archer 1995, 2003). The critical theory obligated the researcher to abandon viewing reality from surface appearances, and instead have a structured and stratified perspective. Not only does this philosophy offer a renewed way of addressing methodological dilemmas in the study of organisations in general by combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches (e.g. Edwards et al. 2014; Fleadwood and Ackroyd 2004), but it has been useful in some previous WLB studies (e.g. Abubakar and Bagley 2016; Munn 2013; Sullivan 2014). Hence knowledge of WLB

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<sup>15</sup> Reality exists externally and independently of the observer. Knowledge of reality is obtained by the measurement of its properties using objective methods such as experiments and observations (Creswell 2009). The researcher’s task is to ‘identify causal explanations and fundamental laws by conducting value-free research to measure social phenomena (Neuman 2011: 23).



practices in Kenya's public and private sectors together with employees' subjective perceptions (including decisions and actions), will be understood by a study of factors including: government regulations, existing social and cultural norms and expectations (tribe and gender), as well as organisational WLB initiatives and structures. When consolidated with experiential accounts of the social actors (HRLs, LMs and general employees), it will be possible to generate extensive recommendations that will inform policy together with WLB practices in Kenya's public and private sectors. The essence is for some change to be instituted from the findings of the thesis (Archer 2003).

Drawing on Yin's work (2009), using organisations as case examples in this research facilitated the understanding of real-life contemporary situations and the extension of methods. Using Safaricom and Telkom as case examples enabled the use of multiple sources of evidence, which allowed the researcher to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal and behavioural issues (documents, individuals). As Yin (2009) argues, triangulation forms the greatest strength of using multiple sources of inquiry as the conclusions drawn are more complete and accurate. Upon successful completion of this thesis, recommendations made to policy and practice will be presented to the case examples in the form of a report. In this way, the aims of the case study method and the critical theory of taking remedial action or making practical improvements will be improved. In Chapter 8, a suggestion is made and a proposal put forward for a WLB framework that is suitable for the Kenyan workplace – one that incorporates the understanding of 'family', 'tribe' and 'gender' from an African, particularly, Kenyan perspective. If implemented within the Kenyan business market, future research could review and assess the impact of the framework on WLB practice, and any changes observed. This intention of seeking for prospective change would be complementary to the aims of the critical theory of advocating for change and/or improvement. In addition, as Stake (1995) indicates, from the framework, researchers could build upon, produce, and/or challenge a theory, or explain a situation, and/or provide a basis upon which to apply solutions to situations.

### **3.3 WHY A MIXED METHODS APPROACH?**

For the purposes of this research, pairing quantitative and qualitative approaches offered advantages over singular techniques. However, Creswell (2014) points out that there are challenges in combining approaches that come from contrasting theoretical positions. The author highlights the fact that philosophical matters have practical implications since the

choices of approach that are made in research affect the quality of data and consequently the reliability of results. Other researchers dismiss the necessity of methodological prescriptions, arguing that a researcher's choice of method relies upon the circumstances of the phenomena under study (Teddle and Tashakkori 2010). This thesis takes up Lee and Sarker's (2008) call for researchers to regard acknowledged philosophical and methodological writings:

*"...not as bodies of rules, regulations, and other directives whose purpose is to receive our unquestioning obedience and complete submission, but instead as a source of other scholar's wisdom and insights inspiring us to innovate ways of looking at and combining different research methods, whether the differences are seen as quantitative versus qualitative, positivist versus interpretive, or otherwise" (2008: 3).*

While acknowledging the benefits and drawbacks of methodologies, this thesis surpasses methodological paradoxes in favour of exploring the value of critical theory as a foundation and partner for MM research. The philosophical and methodological choices for this study were informed and inspired by similar trends within some cross-national WLB studies which highlight the value of adopting the critical realism philosophy and mixing methods (e.g. Abubakar and Bagley 2016; Munn 2013; Sullivan 2014). In addition, beyond philosophical debates on the authenticity of using particular research methods, there are visionary deliberations on how mixing methods can be put into practice within the social sciences (Cohen et al. 2010). According to Venkatesh et al. (2013), the usefulness of a MM approach is that the methods tend to inform each other, highlighting relationships between actual practices and results emerging from different levels of analysis.

In this study, the methodology involved collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative (online questionnaires) and qualitative (corporate document analysis and semi-structured interviews) research and data. The intention was for the researcher to achieve a broader understanding or perspective, validation and corroboration of how tribal affiliations and gender role expectations and obligations affected WLB not only in breadth, but also in depth, while nullifying the weaknesses inherent to employing one single methodological approach alone. Hence, a mixed method approach lent itself to the use of qualitative methods to tease out the details of participants' WLB encounters while their insights also enriched the findings from the quantitative analyses. Through this, triangulation of data was achieved, allowing more accurate identification of tribal affiliated and gender role related matters that affected WLB at Safaricom and Telkom Kenya from not only a management point of view but also from a general employee perspective.

The use of online questionnaires was found to be weak in understanding the context or setting in which the employees of both firms behaved, which semi-structured interviews made up for as experiences were pegged on the tribal and gender expectations environment in which the participants lived and worked. On the other hand, semi-structured interviews were found to have been deficient because of the difficulty of findings lacking the ability to be generalised to a larger audience which quantitative research leads in. By using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the strengths of each approach made up for the weaknesses of the other. The reporting or communication of the results and/or findings included both words and numbers thereby appealing to a wider audience. While combining both methodologies also reduced the chances of personal researcher bias as objectivity that is synonymous with quantitative research was present.

As Zachariadis et al. (2013) highlight, the research benefitted from in-depth cross-referencing of data both between methods and between the different levels of employees/actors (HRLs, LMs, employees). Well-informed proposals for change were therefore drawn from the triangulated results and recommended at both policy and practice levels. Hence, there was a complementary focus on depth and breadth where quantitative research informed how widespread certain forms of behaviours and/or opinions were, while qualitative research gave the details that were needed to explain those behaviours and/or opinions in relation to the particular cases.

However, Collis and Hussey (2014) still caution that while combining methods is attractive to some researchers, there are impediments to employing MM in practice. As mentioned above, differences in worldviews in relation to the different paradigms make methodologies appear irreconcilable. Furthermore, Robson (2011) indicates that practical difficulties relating to culture, psychology and practical barriers also occur. For instance, cultural aspects can prevent researchers from employing some research methods, such as female researchers being required to interview male participants in a strong patriarchal society. On a practical level, Caruth (2013) contends that single-method research is tested and confirmed therefore adequate information to guide researchers is available, while debates on MM may confuse researchers. Nevertheless, this thesis aims to lend support to studies that have inspired the use of MMs by developing both its theoretical grounding and adding an empirical study to the growing body of WLB work, thus demonstrating the value of such an approach.

### **3.4 MIXED METHODS RESEARCH DESIGN**

This empirical study is divided into two main phases: *Phase 1* investigates WLB practice within the two firms used as case examples, while *Phase 2* tests the sector-wide credence of the results obtained from Phase 1. The primary data collection methods used in the first phase are three-fold and include: (1) corporate policy document analysis; (2) semi-structured interviews with employees at different employment levels (HRLs, LMs, and general employees); and (3) online questionnaires administered to LMs and general employees. Semi-structured interviews were used for the second phase. The following section explains how the data collection and analysis was sequenced in order to benefit from both exploration and analysis within the same study.

#### **3.4.1 Sequencing of methods**

The researcher acknowledges that there exist four different types of mixed methods designs: (1) sequential explanatory design, (2) sequential exploratory design, (3) concurrent triangulation, and (4) concurrent nested (Creswell 2014). Considering the overall purpose of this research (to explore how tribal affiliations and gender role expectations affected WLB practice in Kenyan public and private sector firms), a *sequential explanatory design* was found to have been the most suitable. According to Creswell, this design involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data.

Hence, online questionnaires were administered first (to line managers and general employees) to collect factual information on how widespread certain forms of behaviours and/or opinions were (see Tables 3.3 for LM questionnaire variables and 3.4 for the general employee variables). The questionnaires were followed up by the analysis of company documents and semi-structured interviews with individuals (Human Resource Managers, line managers, general employees, and industry stakeholders), who gave more detail about the survey responses. For instance, data collection among the line managers involved 10 participants who were involved in both the online questionnaires and the same people involved in the interviews. They were requested to complete an online questionnaire and later on interviewed after the questionnaire data were analysed, thereby providing a more thorough understanding of the results. Therefore, the questionnaire results were used to inform or determined the type of questions to include in the interview schedules.

This process was helpful in explaining, interpreting and contextualising the online questionnaire findings as well as examining in more detail unexpected results from the quantitative study. Although the process required a substantial length of time to complete all data collection given the two separate phases, the benefit of following a sequential explanatory design was the ease in describing and reporting the results as the qualitative findings offered answers to the quantitative dilemmas.

### **3.4.2 Data analysis and synthesing**

#### **Quantitative data analysis**

The completed data was downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet, re-categorised, and exported into SPSS<sup>16</sup> for analysis. Data were analysed using an SPSS windows package (version 22). Categorisation involved data classification and identification by tagging the data to codes. This differentiated between the data for the two companies. Safaricom was awarded **code 1** and Telkom awarded **code 2**. It is important at this stage to note that there was a difference in the manner in which the line manager and the general employee questionnaires were analysed. In particular, mean scores and reliability analyses were used in both cases. As a small number of line managers (n=10) were involved in completing the online questionnaire, analysis was restricted to mean scores and reliability analysis (please see Section 3.4.4 for explanation). The general employee questionnaires numbered to 266 welcoming a more detailed analysis involving mean scores, reliability analysis, linear regression analysis<sup>17</sup> and bivariate correlations (to establish trends and interrelationships between various variables).

*Reliability analysis* was used to measure how consistently the items in the scales used worked together to reflect the construct they were measuring. The *mean scores* guided the researcher on whether the participants were generally satisfied or not, by how high or low the mean was. *Bivariate analysis* was key in simultaneously examining the interrelationship between the various variables and how they influenced each other. Lastly, *regression analysis* attempted to determine the strength of the linkages between gender and tribe and the 4 variables: WLC, perceived supervisor support, perceived fairness in procedures, and perceived co-workers

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<sup>16</sup> An IBM manufactured software statistical package used to perform complex data manipulations and analysis.

<sup>17</sup> Linear regression attempts to explain the relationship between two variables by fitting a linear equation to observed data. One of the variables is considered to be an explanatory variable, and the other (could be more than one) is considered to be a dependent variable (Collis and Hussey 2014).

support. To validate the regression analysis, mean scores for each gender type and tribe were calculated (See Table 6.19).

Various variables were used to measure different aspects for the line manager and general employee questionnaires. Line manager questionnaires consisted of five variables while the general employee questionnaires had four variables (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4 respectively). Previously used and validated scales were used in both cases (see section 3.4.4 for explanations). Items that used a reverse-coded response format were identified from the literature and recoded into new variables to elicit reliable results (*e.g. I do not have any choice regarding my engagement in work-life duty*). The items in each scale were added together and a mean score calculated for each company. Reliability analysis was performed on items of each summated scale determined by the mean scores (see Tables 5.3 and 6.4 for the CAs after the analysis) to measure the internal consistency<sup>18</sup> of the items included in the scales. Reliability analysis also included assessment of how the alpha might be improved if an item was deleted. In three LM cases, these results indicated an improvement in scale reliability, and the older item was deleted as illustrated in the proceeding section. Detailed results of the mean scores and reliability analysis are presented in Tables 5.3 and 6.4 (in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively). Explanations of both analyses are provided in Section 3.4.4 below. The results from both line manager and general employee questionnaires informed the designing of the interview questions to gain deeper explanations to the questionnaire results.

### **Qualitative data analysis**

Thematic analysis (TA), which according to Braun and Clark (2006: 79) is “*a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns within data*”, was the method of analysis selected for the qualitative data for this study (both document analysis and interviews). Data were manually analysed. Computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) such as NVIVO has been seen as aiding researchers in their search for an accurate and transparent picture of data whilst also providing an audit of the data analysis process as a whole – an aspect which is considered as missing in manual processes of qualitative data analysis (Miles et al. 2013). Nevertheless, the researcher recognises that if NVIVO was used

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<sup>18</sup> According to Creswell (2014), *internal consistency* reliability is a measure of how well the items included in a summated scale measure the same construct. For instance, for the WLC scale in the general employee questionnaire, “*how well do the five items in the scale, which are proposed to measure WLC, produce consistent results?*”

in the present study, there would have been (1) instant and efficient access to transcripts; (2) more prompt searches of words and phrases; (3) easier creation and retrieving of codes; as well as (4) a more effective search of relationships between the codes (Patton 2015).

However, a manual interrogation of the qualitative data was selected despite there existing a debate on the reliability and validity in the data analysis process (Braun and Clarke 2006). In this case, the researcher aimed to retain the context of the data and in this way, facilitating the actual hearing of what the data had to say, thereby making sense of the research participants' accounts and subjective interpretation of their meanings to WLB experiences. Therefore, the researcher found favour in Miles et al.'s (2013) argument that software cannot understand the nuances of meaning of a text, yet qualitative analysis aims to thoroughly understand the experiences or opinions of the participants and extract deep and subtle meaning to their experiences. It was imperative for the analysis to consist of a comparison and contrasting of meanings associated with data emanating from the various qualitative data collection methods and groups (interviews and document analysis). Software could not provide this but instead could only be used to quantify and promote objectivity (Patton 2015).

Despite TA being employed for the analysis of all qualitative data, there were minor differences in the manner in which the analysis was approached for the analysis of corporate policy documents and semi-structured interviews:

1. ***Semi-structured interviews:*** The interviews were audio recorded. All recordings were downloaded onto a password protected university owned computer, before being manually transcribed by the researcher alone. The audio recordings were also backed up with note-taking by the researcher to guard against instrument malfunctions and flaws from the researcher as well as ensuring that all questions had been answered.
2. ***Corporate policy documents:*** No transcribing was required as data was obtained from published material.

Besides the above, the approach followed for both methods was identical. King (2004) notes TA's flexibility regarding a researcher's choice of theoretical framework, particularly with regard to a broadly critical theory framework (Munn 2013). Similarly, Creswell (2014) identifies that while other analysis methods are restricted to particular theories, TA can be

used with any researcher's choice of theory. This flexibility allowed rich, detailed and complex descriptions of data to be achieved, together with identifying, analysing, and reporting common themes within the data (Wesley 2010). Notably, previous comparative WLB studies have successfully used TA, thereby increasing its relevance in the present research (Gatrell et al. 2012; Kelliher and Anderson 2010).

The first step in this analysis was to uphold qualitative ethical considerations. Hence, the tape recorded interviews were downloaded to a password protected Coventry University owned laptop. All interview notes were scanned onto the same laptop and the paper copies kept separately in a secure cabinet on university premises. Corporate document notes and all transcribed interview notes/transcripts were all scanned and saved on a university owned computer for confidentiality purposes. Identification of participants was prevented by allocating each participant pseudonyms/codes and not names. This was achieved by having a grid at the top right corner of all field notes containing the allocated company code, tribe and gender whose meaning was only known to the researcher (e.g. Participant 6T: Kikuyu, female). The method of analysis was used in an inductive way, meaning that the themes were data driven and strongly linked to the contents of the documents (Bowen 2009). For this to be achieved, Braun and Clark's (2006) six-phase approach to TA was used which involved:

1. ***Familiarisation with data:*** To develop the final themes for all the subsets of qualitative data from corporate policy statements as well as the interview notes, a recurrent analysis approach was used. This involved thoroughly reading through each document to become familiar with the data, while identifying the parts that were relevant to the research aims and objectives. The researcher read and re-read through the documents while noting and looking for initial ideas, meanings, and patterns (Braun and Clarke 2006). Analysed data for each interview set focused on information that addressed the aims of that particular group (see Section 3.4.5). For example, analysis of the LM interviews concentrated on data that related to the LM experiences of the implementation role.
2. ***Generating initial codes:*** Company codes for Safaricom (S) and Telkom (T) were generated to differentiate between participant responses. Responses were also categorised based on tribe and gender to compare and contrast experiences and perceptions based on these characteristics.



3. ***Searching themes:*** An interpretivist stance was maintained in the analysis of data. While the researcher reflected upon her own preconceptions about the data based on her experience of the social national context in Kenya, these experiences were suspended and avoided in influencing the analysis of the data. Instead, focus was placed on grasping the experiential world of the research participants and what their perceptions of WLB practice in their organisations (in relation to tribal and gender role influences) were. Hence, the final themes of the study were generated from the data instead of using themes from literature. For each of the data sets (from the different methods), final themes were reorganised to allow a consistent reflection of the participants' views on tribal affiliations and gender roles and how these social structures impacted on WLB practice. This way, the researcher had the ability to compare the themes emerging from not only different methods but also from the different groups of participants (employees of different levels of work within their organisations).

Allocation of themes was undertaken by writing notes on the texts, highlighting potential patterns (using different colours to differentiate prospective themes) or underlining them to draw attention to significant sections. For the interviews, tables were created to facilitate the summarising of what each participant said in particular areas using the respondents' own language where possible. These approaches allowed for comparisons to be made between participants' perceptions and characteristics (e.g. company, gender, and tribe) in order to appropriately allocate responses to related themes.

4. ***Reviewing themes:*** The themes were reviewed based on their relevance to the aims and objectives of the study, as well as the amount of content that they had. They were re-modified, identifying relevant links and disparities, and eliminating themes with weak evidence bases or little relevance to the research aims and objectives. Themes that lacked enough data but had similarities were merged to form one detailed theme.
5. ***Defining and naming themes:*** The resulting themes were then categorised and organised to allow a consistent reflection of the WLB policy status of the organisations and the

participants' experiences. This allowed for a comparison of the differences in shared perspectives of different groups, as well as WLB policy structures between the two firms.

According to Kelliher and Anderson (2010), rigour is a fundamental constituent of qualitative research. Following this process, transcripts and the establishment of themes from all the interviews were discussed with the researcher's supervisors in favour of ensuring validity of the process before the final themes and sub-themes were identified for each interview group (see Table 3.8 below). The discussions involved retreating back to theoretical and empirical literature surrounding the area of WLB in order to develop explanations for the behaviour of the data and constant questioning of the same. The results are presented in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. Extensive direct quotes were employed in the presentation and discussion of the results to illustrate that they originated from actual data and were directly linked to the words of the participants (Wesley 2010).

6. ***Producing the research report:*** The findings from both the corporate policy documents and interviews were discussed under four chapters (Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7). In the reporting of the results, direct quotes extracted from the documents and interview responses were utilised to reflect raw participant answers and information on statutory and non-statutory WLB supportive policies. For the company document analysis, the developed themes were merged with those obtained from the transcribed HRL interviews to draw a conclusive list of themes relating to the similarities and differences in the WLB policies and practices that both Safaricom and Telkom offered (see Table 3.8). The validation of these themes plus the findings from Chapters 5 and 6 was achieved by seeking feedback from various stakeholders in Kenya's public and private sectors through semi-structured interviews that formed the second phase of this empirical study.

### **Synthesising of data**

Quantitative and qualitative data were collected, analysed and reported separately for each component to produce two sets of findings. The findings from the different methods were then triangulated<sup>19</sup> to accrue three key benefits, through two forms of triangulation: (1)

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<sup>19</sup> The social science definition of triangulation, which is the case for this study, is the use of two (or more) methods in a study to enhance understanding of a phenomena (Clark 2011).

methodological<sup>20</sup> triangulation, and (2) data<sup>21</sup> triangulation. First, the results from the online questionnaires were used to inform the designing of the questions for the semi-structured interviews in the first phase of the study (intensive case study). Second, qualitative data was used to assess the validity of quantitative findings through cross verification thereby shedding light on unexpected findings derived from the questionnaires and increasing the assessment of the multiple causes that influenced the quantitative results (Bryman 2006). Beyond validation, the third intention was to also deepen and widen the understanding of WLB practice within the Kenyan context by explaining more fully the richness of employee behaviour by viewing them from more than one standpoint (Creswell 2014). Hence, there was a complementary focus on depth and breadth where quantitative research informed how widespread certain forms of behaviours and/or opinions were, while qualitative research gave the details that were needed to explain those behaviours and/or opinions in relation to the particular cases.

Data from the different methods, and different levels of employees (Human resource managers, line managers, general employees, and industry stakeholders) was integrated at the interpretation stage of the study. Considerations were made on where the findings from each method agreed, offered complementary information on the same issue or appeared to contradict each other. Hence, consolidation of findings was achieved by the qualitative results being reported first and the quantitative findings discussed second in order to attain a consistent and clear explanation of the questionnaire results.

Before proceeding to explain the purposes of using various qualitative and quantitative methods, it is important to have an understanding of the two case examples, Safaricom Kenya and Telkom Kenya.

### **3.4.3 The Case Examples**

This thesis examines whether WLB policies identified in Western countries are available to employees in Kenya's public and private sectors. Using a critical theory approach, this research examines how WLB might be experienced differently in Kenya: how tribe and gender roles may influence the implementation of WLB policies; and how LMs and

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<sup>20</sup> Involving more than one option to gather data (questionnaires, document analysis, semi-structured interviews).

<sup>21</sup> Data from four sets of participants: (1) employees of different employment levels within the two organisations, and (2) managers from various public and private sector organisations

employees perceive the application and use of these policies. The research setting and subjects are a sample of the head office staff in Kenya's two largest public and private sector telecommunication organisations: Safaricom Kenya Limited (private) and Telkom Kenya Limited (public). Both organisations have their headquarters in the capital city, Nairobi, and both are situated in the central business district. The two firms currently work with international partner corporations hence investment and management decisions are on a large scale influenced by the foreign corporations, as some board members and CEOs are expatriates from the partner companies (KIPPRA 2013).

Three players exist in Kenya's telecoms industry: *Safaricom Kenya* is a private liability company with a 40% stake owned by Vodafone; *Telkom Kenya* is a public organisation partly owned by France Telecom (now Orange Group 70%); and *Airtel* (owned by India's Bharti Airtel Limited). The market shares are 77%, 10% and 13% respectively (KIPPRA 2013).

Safaricom services 19 million subscribers and 2700+ employees, while Telkom has 2.5 million subscribers but has employed 6500+ people (Deloitte 2015). Employees based at Safaricom's headquarters number 156, while there are 229 at Telkom. Regardless of the differences, both companies are leaders in their telecom submarkets. Telkom provides integrated communications solutions with the widest range of voice and data services as well as network facilities for residential and business customers, while Safaricom offers mobile and fixed voice services, SMS, internet, and mobile money (M-PESA) as well as data services on a variety of platforms (Beauchesne et al. 2014). Safaricom also commands the widest mobile network coverage enabling it to maintain its position as the region's mobile market leader.

Telkom operates as a state corporation, within the meaning of the State Corporations Act (Chapter 446) of the Laws of Kenya. This act defines a state corporation as a company incorporated under the Companies Act that is partially or fully owned by the government or a state corporation (CCK 2014). When the government sold 25% of its stake in Safaricom to the public in March 2008, this positioned this firm as a private limited liability company with no controlling interests from the government.

According to the Centre for Research on Organisations, Work and Family survey (CROWF) (2015), the telecoms industry in Kenya exhibits an employee dismissal rate of over 30%, of which 20% are linked to performance-related issues. Fierce competition within the telecommunications industry is pushing this sector towards the 24/7 economy (Deloitte

2013). Over time, business trends have shifted in this sector from a non-volatile, predictable and uncompetitive environment into one that is volatile, unpredictable and fiercely competitive (Oteri et al. 2015). Despite Safaricom dominating the market by a huge margin, there is intense competition, with each company innovatively positioning itself with HRM strategies designed to attract new dynamic talent while striving to retain their existing staff (Nyandege et al. 2013). Technological advancement, especially as all the three companies have foreign partners, has opened avenues of new ways of managing employees (Kithae and Keino 2016).

To remain competitive, organisations in this sector have introduced new products and yet have largely slowed down their recruitment of more staff (Muli et al. 2014). While the public sector maintains the traditional Kenyan 8am – 5pm working hours system, private sector telecom companies have increased opening hours and opened up new branches country-wide, necessitating more flexibility from employees. This flexibility includes not only working in between branches (Oteri et al. 2015), but also covering round-the-clock peaks (Mukururi and Ngari 2014). Furthermore, with the head offices located in the central business district, employees are exposed to longer commuting times because of heavy traffic jams (Mizala et al. 2007).

Only the head offices of Safaricom and Telkom located in Nairobi were examined in the current research programme. This is because, apart from Nairobi being the capital city, it is a well-established hub for business and the regional headquarters for several companies and international organisations (Bradford 2014). In the 2014 World Economic Forum, Nairobi was ranked among the top 10 “cities of business opportunity” in Africa (Ibid). The strategy of limiting the scope of the study to Nairobi was necessary as policy formulation emanates from the headquarters. Being Kenya’s capital city, workplaces in Nairobi have more cosmopolitan and diverse workforces (particularly in terms of tribe and gender) when compared to other regions of the country (Price Waterhouse Coopers 2014).

### 3.4.4 Quantitative Data Collection Method

#### Online Questionnaires

In research, there has been confusion in the use of the terms “*questionnaire*” and “*survey*”. This study will use the term ‘*questionnaire*’<sup>22</sup>. Factual information<sup>23</sup> was gathered in Phase 1 of this study, from LMs and general employees using online questionnaires. The *LM* questionnaires were issued to senior, middle and junior managers. They sought to unearth their personal views, attitudes and opinions on the implementation of WLB policies and practices, following the parameters displayed in Table 3.4 below. On the other hand, the purpose of the *general employees’* questionnaires was to examine their views, attitudes and opinions on WLB practice. Specifically, the Bristol Online Survey (BOS)<sup>24</sup> was used to facilitate the online questionnaires. Given that this study was based on organisations in Kenya, BOS made it possible for a large number of audiences to be reached at no cost to the researcher. This was because BOS and the internet were provided by Coventry University. In addition, the participants would have felt safer in the anonymous environment of the internet; hence, they were more likely to have opened up and given truthful responses, thereby increasing the credibility of the data (Schonlau et al. 2015). Furthermore, as some researchers have indicated, BOS enables the immediate accessibility and faster analysis of data (Rubin and Babbie 2010; Vehovar and Manfreda 2008).

Despite these advantages, Bell (2010) argues that the main weakness of a questionnaire is the difficulty and time needed for its creation, along with ensuring its validity and reliability. Bell further contends that the representativeness of questionnaires is dependent upon the accuracy of pre-set scales, which may not be accurate or up-to-date in relation to the research inquiry. Previously used scales were utilised. However, the reliability of the pre-set scales was evident from their Cronbach Alphas (CA)<sup>25</sup> obtained from the literature (all the scales had reliable CAs of between 0.70 and 0.94, see Tables 3.3 and 3.4). The reluctance of people to respond to or return a questionnaire is another limit; a weakness that was managed through the use of

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<sup>22</sup> Collis and Hussey (2014: 205) describe a questionnaire as “a method for collecting primary data in which a sample of respondents are asked a list of carefully structured questions chosen after considerable testing with a view to eliciting reliable responses and finding out what they think, do or feel”.

<sup>23</sup> Information collected in breadth to inform how widespread certain forms of behaviours and/or opinions were.

<sup>24</sup> BOS is a tool used to create online surveys and one which Coventry University has subscribed to.

<sup>25</sup> Cronbach’s Alpha provides a measure of internal consistency of a test or scale to measure reliability. CA is expressed as a number between 0 and 1 (Tavakol and Dennick 2011).

BOS, where responses were monitored and follow-ups made with slow respondents (Collis and Hussey 2014). Overall, the online questionnaire was most suitable for collecting data on the telecom employees' attitudes and opinions of WLB practice, given two aspects: (1) its usefulness in examining the frequency of occurrence of multiple variables at once, as well as (2) the online questionnaire's ability to test the existence of relationships between variables of interest (Saglam and Milanova 2013).

### Questionnaire Design

Both the LM and general employee questionnaires consisted of two parts. The first part was composed of structured and closed-ended questions (focusing on the main constructs under examination), while the second part was composed of open-ended questions pertaining to participants' personal characteristics (see Appendices 7 and 8). Gillham (2007) argues that data from open-ended questions are difficult to analyse. Creswell (2014) on the other hand is of the opinion that closed-ended questionnaires are more efficient because of their ease of analysis. However, the inclusion of open-ended questions in the questionnaires facilitated the discovery of rich data in this thesis. This is because open-ended questions arguably more accurately present what the respondent wants to say (Bryman 2011). The structured parts of the questionnaires and their related questions were adapted from previously predetermined and validated scales, seeking information on different constructs (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4 for the constructs) (Schoenfield 2007). As mentioned above, the review of the literature portrayed reliable CAs for all the scales. However, it was difficult to develop a new scale on tribe and gender to enable the correlation of responses to both constructs due to two reasons: (1) this thesis is breaking ground in research on tribe and gender, and (2) 'tribe' is a sensitive subject within the Kenyan community therefore any form of extended questioning on this subject would have emerged as intrusive and negatively affected participation. Nevertheless, correlations to tribal and gender responses were made from the interviews.

A cover page to both questionnaires explained participant confidentiality, the anonymity of responses, and the voluntary nature of participation (see Appendices 7 and 8). No participant was offered any form of incentive in order to participate. There were clear instructions for the closed-ended questions, and adequate space for answers to the open-ended questions (Collis and Hussey 2009). The respondents were required to rate a number of statements using response anchors such as: 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neither agree nor disagree', 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree', and give the answers a number (e.g. 1 for 'strongly disagree', 5 for

‘strongly agree’). Researcher bias was eliminated due to the highly structured nature of the questionnaire, as well as the transparency and control over the variables measured (Easterby-Smith et al. 2012; Neuman 2011; Zikmund et al. 2010).

### Participants and Sampling

The total populations of Safaricom and Telkom employees country-wide are estimated at 2700+ and 6500+ respectively (Deloitte 2015). The research samples were drawn from employees of the headquarters of both companies for reasons already stated in Section 3.2. The total number of employees (excluding LMs, HRLs, senior managers and blue-collar workers - see footnote 1) at both headquarters were 229 (Telkom) and 156 (Safaricom). Table 3.1 below displays the total number of employees to whom an online questionnaire link was sent within both companies, out of the actual number in each category.

PHASE 1			
	SAFARICOM	TELKOM	TOTAL
<b>LINE MANAGERS</b>	10 out of 11	10 out of 14	20
<b>EMPLOYEES</b>	140 out of 156	170 out of 229	310
<b>Table 3.1: Breakdown of questionnaire samples</b> <b>Total numbers (Telkom 229 and Safaricom 156)</b>			

Coordinators within the HR departments of both firms furnished the researcher with lists of employee names and their email contacts. All prospective participants were *purposively stratified*<sup>26</sup> to lend credibility to the research and to allow comparison (Patton 2015). As Patton (2002: 240) explains, the rationale of a stratified purposeful sample is to capture major variations in tribal and gender compositions of the sample. Therefore, the researcher elevated and/or lowered the gender and tribal numbers in order to enable adequate representation. For instance, in the general employee questionnaires, out of 229 Telkom general employee contacts, there were 56 females and 173 males. Therefore, following Collies et al.’s (2006) directive of increasing diversity within the sample, emails were sent to all the females requesting their participation, while the number of males contacted was 114 (total 170). On the other hand, out of the same number of Telkom contacts, there were 105 names belonging

<sup>26</sup> Sampling within samples where each stratum is fairly homogeneous (Patton 2002).



to the Kikuyu tribe. In a similar format, all the names of listed general employees from the following non-kikuyu tribes were contacted to ensure diverse tribal orientations: Kalenjin-43, Abaluhya-31, Luo-22, Kamba-8, Somali-9, other tribes-11. Individuals from different tribes in Kenya can be identified by their surnames (see Section 4.2 of Chapter 4 for an in-depth explanation of tribes in Kenya). The number of Kikuyu employees contacted was reduced to 46. A similar format was used when contacting the Safaricom prospective participants. Hence, each of the strata constituted a fairly homogeneous sample. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) prescription on selecting sample sizes (see Table 3.2), 10 questionnaires were administered to *LMs* in each company, while 140 *employee* questionnaire links were emailed to Safaricom general workers, and 170 sent to Telkom general employees. In total, 20 LM and 310 general employee questionnaire links were emailed to the participants of both firms.

Population	Sample size
10	10
100	80
200	132
300	169
400	196
500	217
700	248
1,000	278
2,000	322
3,000	341
4,000	351
5,000	357
7,000	364
10,000	370
20,000	377
50,000	381
75,000	382
≥1,000,000	384
<i>Source: Adapted from Krejcie and Morgan (1970: 608) as cited in Collis and Hussey (2014: 199).</i>	
<b>Table 3.2: Determining sample size from a given population</b>	

### Procedure

Preceding the actual execution, a pilot study was undertaken on the online questionnaires to test their performance using two snowballed<sup>27</sup> LMs and two general employees from different organisations in the private and public sectors in Kenya. A total of eight online questionnaires (two LM and two general employees) per sector were piloted to people who did not form part of the final study (Creswell 2009), with motives to assess:

1. The *length of time* that completing a typical online questionnaire would take. The researcher had estimated a 30-minute completion period for both questionnaires. However, from the employee pilot study, it was discovered that most of the general employee pilot-participants spent approximately 60 minutes on completing the questionnaire, but the time remained at 30 minutes for the LMs (given that the LM questionnaire had fewer questions). Three of the employee questionnaire participants attributed the length of time to the slow speed of the internet in Kenya. The researcher therefore altered the completion time for the general employees' questionnaire to 45 minutes from 30 minutes, but the LM completion time remained at 30 minutes.
2. How *easily the respondents understood the questions*, because failure to understand what they were being asked meant that the actual participants would give unreliable information. The pilot-participants identified some of the questions that were unclear. For example, on the LM questionnaire, question one, which was set to measure 'the desire to implement work-life practices' was not understood by all four pilot-participants. The initial questionnaire had the word 'HR' instead of 'work-life'. The respondents therefore failed to understand what was meant by 'HR' duties. Hence, 'HR' was replaced with 'work-life', for example, "*I think that this work-life duty is interesting*".

An initial email was sent to 25 pre-provided contacts for LMs (11 Safaricom and 14 Telkom), and to 310 pre-provided contacts for general employees (140 Safaricom and 170 Telkom), where the purpose of the study was explained and an insight into how to participate was provided using a participant information sheet (see Appendix 2). All participants were

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<sup>27</sup> *Snowball sampling* or *networking* is a purposive sampling technique used in studies where the sample of the study is rare or is limited to a small group of the population (Collis and Hussey 2014). This sampling method is essential when including people with experience of the phenomenon being studied in the sample, or when a researcher wishes to extend the sample of participants. Hence, participants would be selected by the researcher on the strength of their experience of the phenomenon under study (Sekaran and Bougie 2010).

assured of confidentiality, anonymity, and the voluntary nature of participation. The link to a questionnaire, administered via BOS, was included in the email where those who consented to participate could access a 59-item (LM) and a 103-item (general employees) questionnaire. The setup of the online questionnaire allowed for the respondents to save their answers if they needed to seek clarification on questions from the researcher, whose contact details were included in the participant information sheet. The questionnaire only allowed progression to the 'next' question upon full completion of the 'current' question. The researcher recognises that setting up the progression from one question to another with this restriction has been criticised by Schmidt (2009) for obligating participants to answer questions that they may not have wanted to answer. Nevertheless, this approach enabled the researcher to minimise incidences of 'missing data'.

### **LINE MANAGERS**

A 59-item BOS facilitated questionnaire was administered to 20 LMs (10 from each company). No cases had any missing data, as the online questionnaire only allowed progression to the 'next' question upon full completion of the 'current' question. It is important to note that the sample size of 20 (Safaricom = 10 and Telkom = 10) is representative of the total LM populations at both firms (see Table 3.1), therefore despite the small number, the results can be generalised to a larger management population.

The quantitative results were triangulated by comparing them with the responses obtained from LM interviews, and the results from Chapters 4, 5, and 6. However, the distinct views of 'junior' managers at Safaricom were considered with caution and not on their own as they applied to only one respondent who may be an outlier. Future research should therefore include more attention on this level in order to see if their views are more widely endorsed. The proceeding section discusses the five constructs examined in the LM online questionnaire to investigate the participants' personal views, attitudes and opinions on the implementation of WLB policies and practices.

### **Measures**

Previously used and validated scales were adopted in the structuring of the questionnaires with the literature showing that these scales had good reliabilities (Cronbach's alphas ranged

from 0.70 to 0.89, see Table 3.3 above). A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered “acceptable” in most social science research situations (Bryman and Bell 2015). The five scales are explained below.

### Work-life Culture

A twelve-item *Work-life Culture Scale*, adopted from Thompson et al. (1999) was used to assess LMs’ perceptions of the extent to which their organisations facilitated employees’ efforts to balance work and non-work responsibilities. Examples of sample items are: “*Employees are expected to take work home regularly and/or on weekends*” and “*In this organisation, employees who use flextime are less likely to advance their careers than those who do not use flextime*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after analysis were 0.89 and 0.86 respectively.

### Clarity and Ease of Use of HR Procedures

*Clarity and ease of use of HR procedures* was measured with a three-item scale – *Role Clarity Scale*, developed by Harris et al. (2002). The scale examined perceived clearness about HR responsibilities and the user friendliness of HR instruments and procedures. Examples of sample items are: “*The HR instruments I am provided with are clear and understandable*” and “*I find HR instruments easy to use*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.77 and 0.49 respectively. Notably, this is a small scale with a small sample which is likely to depress the alpha level hence the low CA score realised after the analysis (Tavakol and Dennick 2011). Notwithstanding, Nunnally (1978) advised that the satisfactory level of reliability depends on how a measure is being used.

### WLB HR Role Clarity and Ambiguity

*WLB HR role clarity and ambiguity* was measured with six items adopted from Rizzo et al.’s (1970) *Role Conflict* and *Role Ambiguity Scales* which centred on the organisation’s policies and procedures in relation to WLB. Sample items including a reverse coded item were: “*I have to break a HR rule or policy in order to carry out my work-life HR responsibilities*” and “*I know how much authority I have in performing my work-life HR related duties*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.85/0.86 and 0.16 respectively. Analysis indicated that the alpha of this scale could be increased to 0.732 if the item “*I perform HR tasks that are accepted by one person in my team but not by others*” was

removed. Therefore this item was removed from the subsequent analysis to create a more reliable 5-item scale.

#### Capacity to Implement Work-life HR Practices

*Capacity to implement work-life HR practices* was measured with eight items based on the *Role Overload* and *Occupational Self-efficacy (OSS) Scales* derived from the works of Reilly (1982) and Schyns and Von Collani (2002) respectively. This scale centred on the support that LMs received from HR in terms of training and their perceived ability to cope with these extra WLB duties. Sample items included: “*I have to perform work-life HR responsibilities which I do not really have the time and energy for*” and “*The training provided sufficient knowledge for performing my work-life HR responsibilities*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.88/0.81 and 0.27 respectively. Analysis indicated that the alpha of this scale could be increased to 0.528 if the following item was deleted – “*I have to perform work-life HR responsibilities which I do not really have the time and energy for*”. Therefore this item was removed from the subsequent analysis to create a higher alpha 7-item scale, though not at the acceptable mark of 0.70.

#### Desire to Implement Work-life Practices

The *desire to implement work-life practices* was measured by sixteen items from the *Situational Motivational Scale (SIMS)* adopted from Guay et al. (2000). The scale focused on the level of agreement regarding the LMs’ desires and ease of implementing organisational recommended WLB duties. Sample items included: “*I think that this work-life duty is interesting*” and “*I do this work-life duty but I am not sure if it is worth it*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the initial analysis were 0.70 and 0.67 respectively. Analysis indicated that the alpha of this scale could be increased to 0.742 if the following item was removed – “*I think that this work-life duty is good for me*”. Therefore the item was removed from the subsequent analysis to create an acceptable 15-item scale.

### **EMPLOYEES**

A 103-item BOS facilitated questionnaire was administered to 310 employees (140 Safaricom and 170 Telkom) to examine the four constructs shown in Table 3.4 below. A total of 266 respondents returned their questionnaires (average response rate 86%). Out of this

number, 116 (83%) were from Safaricom and 150 (88%) were from Telkom. The BOS questionnaire settings only allowed progression following completion of the ‘current’ question/section therefore there were no missing data as participants could not skip questions/sections. Hence, the final sample remained at 266. As explained above, SPSS, in particular, mean scores, correlational and reliability analyses were combined to enable a reliable analysis (following the procedure outlined in the ‘analysis’ section above). Triangulation enabled a comparison of the results with those obtained from the LM interviews, as well as those obtained from Chapters 4, 5, and 7.

	Section as per framework (1)	Question number	What each scale is measuring / construct being measured	Description	Type of Scale used	Cronbach's Alpha from literature	Adopted from
Line Managers' online questionnaire	Process	Q3	Work-life culture	Assesses LMs' perceptions of the extent to which their organisations facilitate employees' efforts to balance work and life responsibilities.	Work – life Culture scale	0.89	Thompson et. al. (1999)
		Q5	Clarity and ease of use of HR procedures	To measure perceived clearness and user friendliness of HR instruments and procedures.	Role clarity scale	0.77	Harris et al. (2002)
		Q4	WLB role clarity and ambiguity	The organisation's policies and procedures in relation to WLB.	Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scales (RCA)	0.85	Rizzo, House and Lirtzman (1970)
		Q2	Capacity to implement HR activities Training and experience	Capture the support that LMs receive from HR in terms of training and ability to cope with extra WLB duties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Role overload</li><li>• Occupational self-efficacy scale (OSS)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 0.88</li><li>• 0.81</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reilly (1982)</li><li>• Schyns and Von Collani (2002)</li></ul>
		Q1	Desire to implement work-life HR practices	Level of agreement regarding their desire and ease of implementing organisational recommended WLB duties.	Situational Motivational Scale (SIMS)	0.70	Guay, Vallerand and Blanchard (2000)
Table 3.3: <u>LM questionnaire scales and details for each of the parameters measured</u>							

Section as per framework (1)	Question number	What each scale is measuring / construct being measured	Description	Type of Scale used	Cronbalch's Alpha from literature	Adopted from
Input	Q1	Work-Life Conflict	Measuring the interference of work demands with home life.	Work-Life Conflict Scale	0.90	Netemeyer et al. (1996)
Process	Q2	Perceived supervisor support	Measuring the support that employees think they receive from the line managers or supervisors.	Supervisor support scale	0.94	Hammer et al. (2009)
	Q3	Perceived fairness of procedures	Find out how employees felt their line managers implemented WLB policies.	Procedural justice scale	0.86	Colquitt items adapted by Fugate et. al. (2008)
	Q4	Perceived co-worker support	Seeking to have participants reflect on the perceived level of support received from their fellow colleagues mostly within their departments.	Perceived co-worker support scale	0.85	Ducharme and Martin (2000)

**Table 3.4: Employee questionnaire scales and details for each of the parameters measured**



## Measures

Previously used and validated scales were adopted in the structuring of the online questionnaires. The literature showed that these scales had good reliabilities (CAs ranged from 0.80 to 0.94; see Table 3.4). The CAs for all the scales after the analysis were between 0.71 and 0.89, indicating that the data was behaving appropriately. The proceeding sections explain the five scales.

### Work-life Conflict

A five-item *Work-Life Conflict Scale*, adopted from Netermeyer et al. (1996), was used to measure the interference of work demands with home life. Sample items included: “*The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill non-work responsibilities*” and “*My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill non-work duties*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.90 and 0.83 respectively.

### Perceived Supervisor Support

*Perceived supervisor support* was measured with a twelve-item scale – *Supervisor Support Scale*, developed by Hammer et al. (2009). The scale examined perceived support received from the LMs. Sample items included: “*My supervisor takes the time to learn about my personal needs*” and “*My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.94 and 0.71 respectively.

### Perceived Fairness of Procedures

*Perceived fairness of procedures* was measured with five items adopted from Colquitt’s items adapted from Fugate’s (2008) *Procedural Justice Scale*, which centred on finding out how employees felt about their LMs’ implementation of WLB policies. Sample items included: “*Employee friendly procedures are free of bias*” and “*Employee friendly upheld procedures promote ethical and moral standards*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.86 and 0.77 respectively.

### Perceived Co-worker Support

*Perceived co-worker support* was measured by ten items from the *Perceived Co-worker Support Scale* adopted from Ducharme and Martin (2000), which focused on participants' reflections on the level of support that they received from their colleagues, mostly within their departments. Sample items included: “*My co-workers would fill in while I am absent*” and “*My co-workers assist with unusual work problems*”. The CAs for the scale in the literature and after the analysis were 0.85 and 0.71.

### **3.4.5 Qualitative Data Collection Methods**

This thesis used qualitative<sup>28</sup> corporate policy document analysis<sup>29</sup> and interviewing. The hierarchical structure of the organisation was reflected by interviewing HRLs, LMs, and general employees. Also, the significance of gender and tribal structures was reflected by ensuring a purposive stratified sample of men and women, and individuals from different tribes.

### **Corporate Policy Document Analysis**

Corporate policy records for both firms were used to draw together evidence to ascertain and compare the similarities and differences in the WLB policies and practices offered by both companies. These documents also provided a means of verifying how existing WLB programmes measured up to statutory obligations, as well as tracking changes and developments in organisational WLB policies and practices. The findings were incorporated with data obtained from HRLs (see Chapter 4) to reflect the organisations' official position regarding WLB. Progressively, the documented and stated official statuses of the organisations were compared with the actual experiences of LMs (in relation to implementation) and those of general employees (regarding the use of policies).

Data were derived from eight corporate policy documents (four from each organisation as shown in Table 3.5). These documents were officially obtained from the company HR

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<sup>28</sup> Bryman and Bell (2011) describe qualitative research as involving inquiry within a social setting and emphasising the qualities of entities, processes and meanings that are not examined through experiments, or that underlie and frame what might be quantified or measured in terms of amount, intensity or frequency.

<sup>29</sup> Bryman (2011) refers to document analysis as a form of qualitative research where relevant documentary evidence is obtained to support and validate facts stated in a research or project, which involves reading and reviewing written material.

departments and signed for by the researcher for safe keeping and confidentiality reasons (as per the requirements of the organisations). The suitability of the documents was dependent on how relevant the content was for addressing the research aims and objectives.

Safaricom Kenya	Telkom Kenya
Safaricom UNCOP Report 2011/2012	Kenya Employment Act 2007
Annual report 2013/2014	Amendment Bill to Employment Act 2015 Revised
Staff handbook	Public service code of regulations 2006
Supporting a mother friendly workplace flyer	Civil service staff handbook
<b>Table 3.5: List of Corporate Policy Documents</b>	

### Procedure

Prior to acquiring the documents, the researcher sent emails to the appointed company coordinators (from the HR departments), to enlighten them on the specific documents relevant to the study. Communication was facilitated through text messages and telephone calls. The researcher was provided with an assortment of documents from which only the WLB-related records were selected. The acquiring of the documents involved signing a ‘confidentiality and safe keeping’ agreement with the firms.

### **Semi-structured Interviews**

To capture rich, in-depth insightfulness into the perceptions of staff at different levels of employment, on their experiences of the manner in which WLB policies and practices were formulated, implemented and used, semi-structured face-to-face interviews<sup>30</sup> were used. It is acknowledged that McCann and Clark (2005) criticised semi-structured interviews for being more time consuming to administer and analyse. However in this thesis, semi-structured interviews gave the interviewer the flexibility and freedom to vary the course of the interviews, the order of the questions, and/or add more questions based on the participants’ responses (Cohen et al. 2007). Additionally, McCann and Clark (2005) have highlighted the difficulties of analysing semi-structured interviews due to varying information. Other researchers argue on the grounds of a lack of objectivity against the use of interviews (Bryman and Bell 2011), while others contend that interviews are susceptible to interviewer bias, which could compromise the reliability of the data (McNeill and Chapman 2005). To

<sup>30</sup> Interviews “are methods for collecting data in which selected participants (the interviewees) are asked questions to find out what they do, think or feel” (Collis and Hussey 2014: 133). They allow respondents to voice their views, experiences, attitudes, motivations, and beliefs in their own words (Guba and Lincoln 2005).

guard against bias, the interviewees were given the opportunity to express their views without being led (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008).

Four distinct sets of semi-structured interviews were carried out with: (1) HRLs, (2) LMs, (3) general employees, and (4) managers from various public and private sector bodies and organisations. The first three sets of interviews were carried out in Phase 1, while the fourth belonged to Phase 2. All communication was in English which is the language of business in Kenya, therefore there was no need for translations. From the various samples, this thesis aimed to achieve the below objectives:

- **HRLs** – to identify, explain and compare the existing policies and practices in place to support WLB between the two firms, as well as establishing how these policies measured up to statutory obligations.
- **LMs** – to examine the perceptions and experiences of LMs in the implementation of WLB policies and practices. The LMs' input and views were significant as their implementation role makes them key stakeholders in WLB practice. The results were compared with those obtained from HRLs, general employees, and industry stakeholder interviews. All the twenty managers from both firms had line management responsibilities.
- **General employees** – to evaluate the perceptions and experiences of employees on the use of WLB policies and practices. The implementation of WLB policies might have been perceived differently to how LMs thought. The results were compared to those attained from HRLs, LMs, and follow up interviews. The twenty employees were each selected from the 10 departments from which the LMs originated (see Table 3.7 below).
- **Phase 2 interviews** – these not only verified the applicability of the findings from Phase 1 to the wider Kenyan public and private sectors, but also assisted in obtaining a deeper interpretation and rationalising of the findings from Phase 1.

### Structure of the Interviews

The researcher utilised a pre-written interview guide with open-ended questions as open-endedness is not only recognised for allowing participants to contribute as much detailed information as they desire, but it also allows the researcher to ask probing questions as a means of follow-up and eliciting deeper explanations (Creswell 2012; Turner 2010). The

interviews were limited to a maximum of 1 hour, and were based around a broad set of topic headings that guided the interviews without “researcher-led constraints and preconceptions” (Wiebel et al. 2015: 5; Neuman 2011). The interview guide was delivered flexibly in the English language. There was no standard format or procedure of asking the questions – they varied from interview to interview (Easterby-Smith et al. 2008). Some questions were omitted in some interviews (but key material covered consistently), or modified, or re-composed to suit each distinct interview (Kvale 2007; Jankowicz 2005). However, most of the interviews started off with demographic information being asked first, to get the respondents into the ‘interview mindset’ and to create a rapport between the researcher and the participants (Spencer et al. 2003). Appendices 3, 4, 5, and 6 provide the interview schedules for the four interview groups.

### Participants and Sampling

Table 3.6 below provides a breakdown of the 68 interview participants by sample group. The 54 sampled respondents for Phase 1 all originated from ten departments of the two organisations. The 14 in Phase 2 were selected from diverse public and private sector bodies and firms.

PHASE 1			
	SAFARICOM	TELKOM	TOTAL
HR	7 out of 7	7 out of 11	54
LINE MANAGERS	10 out of 11	10 out of 14	
EMPLOYEES	10 out of 156	10 out of 229	
PHASE 2			
Ministry of Labour	2		14
KEPSA <sup>31</sup>	2		
Private Sector HRMs and/or LMs	10		
TOTAL INTERVIEWS			68
Table 3.6: Breakdown of interview participants			

SAFARICOM	TELKOM
1. Retail	1. Finance
2. Finance	2. Technical and information
3. Call centre operations	3. Human resources management

<sup>31</sup> Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

SAFARICOM	TELKOM
4. Human resource management	4. Corporate communications
5. Marketing	5. Sourcing and supplies
6. Risk management	6. Security quality and audit
7. Corporate affairs	7. Mass market
8. Technology	8. Marketing and strategy
9. Strategy and innovation	9. Customer care
10. Consumer business unit	10. Business marketing
<b>Table 3.7: Departments to which the LMs and General Employees belonged</b>	

Different *sampling techniques* were used in Phase 1 and 2. Following Onwuegbuzie and Leechs' (2005) argument that both *probability* and *purposive* sampling can be used in qualitative and quantitative methods, the participants in Phase 1 were purposively stratified, as Patton (2015) indicates, to lend credibility to the findings and to allow comparison. Safaricom and Telkom HR departments provided the researcher with employee names and email contacts, which facilitated the purposive stratified sampling. Although the sampling procedure required a lot of time and effort, purposive stratified sampling enabled the researcher to have a fairly homogeneous sampling in terms of gender and tribal representation.

*Snowballing* was considered to have been the most effective way to sample the Phase 2 participants as the researcher required managers with WLB implementation experience. The choice of snowballing was inspired by Collis and Hussey's (2014) directive<sup>32</sup>. The participants are busy professionals who were difficult to reach out to without being referred (Sekaran and Bougie 2010). Therefore, the KEPSA officials enabled referrals to all the ten private sector managers. The choice of private sector organisations for the industry stakeholder interviews was based on the CROWF<sup>33</sup> (2015) ratings of 40 private sector firms. CROWF is a research centre within Strathmore Business School in Nairobi, Kenya, which carries out annual studies on WLB practice in the country's private sector. The centre's research generates a 'work-life friendly' ranking for organisations. Using the CROWF (2015) ranking, managers from five companies were selected out of the top fifteen and five out of

<sup>32</sup> Collis and Hussey (2014:132) argue that in *snowballing*, "it is essential to include people with experience of the phenomenon being studied in the sample".

<sup>33</sup> Center for Research on Organizations, Work and Family at Strathmore Business School in Kenya. Strathmore University is one of the leading private universities in the country.

the bottom fifteen. The intention of selecting from the top and bottom tiers was to obtain a contrast of perceptions and experiences from the best and poor performers.

### Procedure

Prior to the actual interviews, skype facilitated pre-tests were carried out on all the interview sets, engaging employees in Kenya, who preferably were at the same level as the participants in the actual study (e.g. HR interviews were carried out with HR personnel from 2 private companies and 2 public companies). The snowballed employees and companies used in the pilot tests were independent of the ones under examination in the actual research. Additional pilot interviews were tested on the researcher's supervisory team to evaluate interviewer skills and knowledge of the topic.

Overall, the pilot study aimed to assess the following:

1. The *period of time* that a typical interview would take. Prior to the pilot studies, the researcher's target time per interview was set at 45 minutes. Some of the pilot tests lasted for 60 minutes, therefore the researcher practiced on fast tracking the interviews while staying focused and soliciting for deeper answers. However, some of the actual interviews lasted between 45 to 60 minutes depending on the time that was available for each individual participant.
2. The *suitability of the questions* in order to establish whether the interviewees understood them. The participants were asked to reveal areas where the questions needed adjustments, and to give remarks and feedback pertaining to the interviewer skills. From this pre-test, it was established that the participants understood some of the questions differently. For instance, the following question was directed at the HR personnel – "*What are the goals and vision of this organisation concerning work life balance?*" Both pilot study respondents talked about the overall company vision and mission. Instead, this question was rephrased to read, "*Does your work life balance programme aim to achieve anything in particular?*"
3. The *interviewer's interviewing skills* were tested prior to the fieldwork by members of the supervisory team who have vast research experience. Feedback from the assessor emphasised on the researcher taking notes at the end of each session to complement the recorded versions. In addition, the researcher's knowledge of the topic and the ability to provide detailed experiential information about WLB were assessed. Third,

the interview questions were reviewed by the supervisory team before being passed for ethics consideration by the Coventry University ethics team.

In advance of the interviews, emails and/or text messages were sent to all the Phase 1 and 2 respondents to book interview appointments using a pre-prepared itinerary. The procedure involved participants being provided with an interview timetable from which they selected a convenient slot. Further communication with the participants was facilitated through email, telephone calls, and/or text messages. A confirmation email was sent to each selected participant to affirm their participation and interview time slots. In addition, closer to the interview time, reminder emails were sent to all the employees who consented to participating to ensure their availability during the interview period.

As recommended by some authors, the participants were given the liberty to choose the venue of the interviews in order to cultivate a more relaxed atmosphere and free communication (Clarke 2006; Whiting 2008). All the Telkom interviews were conducted on company premises following Government policy/directives for such official events to be held on site. Safaricom participants were interviewed in venues convenient for them; mostly within close proximity to the head office. And lastly, interviews with the two Ministry of Labour officials were held at the Kenyan Embassy offices in London.

Interviewing the Telkom employees in company premises was convenient in terms of location. However, it was highly likely that because of the 'not neutral' premises, some participants may have felt more obliged to speak favourably of the company on its own premises. Nevertheless, when answers were considered to be vague or ambiguous, the researcher employed Bryman and Bell's (2014) recommendation of further probing to solicit more in-depth responses. Conversely, interview venues away from the respondents' work stations encouraged free communication from the Safaricom, Ministry of Labour, and follow up participants such that the researcher elicited richer information (Sekaran and Bougie 2010).

In advance of the interviews, all the participants (actual study and pilot tests) were informed that participation involved a semi-structured interview, to discuss WLB policies and practices in their firms, and the manner in which these provisions were influenced by tribal affiliations and gender roles and expectations. Confidentiality and the voluntary nature of the interviews were emphasised, and no incentives were offered for participation. Appendix 1 shows the



informed consent form that was presented to each participant for signing. With the permission of the respondents, all interviews were tape recorded to increase accuracy of the interview reports, although transcribing was time consuming (Kvale 2007). Notwithstanding, interview notes were also taken to check if all the questions had been answered, and to guard against a malfunction of the tape recorder, as well as a flaw on the researcher's side (Bryman 2012).

### Effect of researcher's positionality on interview responses

A researcher's *positionality* in research could, According to Foote and Bartell (2011) refer to a researcher's choice of position in a particular study, as well as a researcher's worldview (Baden and Major 2013). For this present study, 'the researcher's choice of position' by nature, was observed to have affected the participants' freedom to give information and the amount of information disseminated. This was due to three different factors: *nationality*, *gender* and *tribe*.

### *Nationality*

Being of Kenyan origin may have raised positive effects as the participants (both male and female) may have identified, accepted and embraced the researcher as a citizen and "member of the wider Kenyan community", and may therefore have been willing and enthusiastic to provide as much information as possible. Hence, regardless of the researcher's tribe or gender, the participants may have had the confidence and trust to freely share information on their experiences, beliefs and perceptions of WLB practice. This is because, as Mungai and Ogot (2012) posit, Kenyans have a tendency of trusting their own people under the "being one of us" notion, and therefore link fellow Kenyan citizens to having good intentions thereby increasing trust in their actions. In support of further freeness in communication, the researcher emphasised on her good intentions to the participants and supported interview questions with further extra probing to elicit richer responses and elaboration on matters. It was observed that the reaction was the same at both Safaricom and Telkom, and among the public and private sector stakeholders.

Also, because of being Kenyan, the researcher felt better placed to gain the trust of and develop a closer and faster relationship with the participants, thereby enabling the researcher to not only form a rapport with the people but also to respond to sensitive matters in an suitable and subtle manner (Shariff 2014). This had a positive impact on the production of good quality research fieldwork. This notion is supported by Banks (1998:

6) who claims that, *“only a member of their ethnic or cultural group can really understand and accurately describe the group’s culture because socialization within it gives them unique insights into it”*.

### **Gender**

By virtue of being a patriarchal society, Mungai and Ogot (2012) posit that women are held in low esteem in Kenya. It was notable that in view of being *female*, male and female participants responded differently to the researcher’s soliciting of information, particularly within Kenya’s public sector which is considered by Mungai and Ogot (2012) to be heavily patriarchal in gender composition and management. This finding lends support to Chiseri-strater (2006) who recognises that gender and nationality are among a number of factors in research which are culturally ascribed or fixed. However, with the advent of women empowerment initiatives in Kenya (a government-led initiative), Mungai and Ogot (2012) argue that Kenyan men find their relevance and ego challenged thereby making them lose a grip of their sense of power. Nevertheless, Mokomane (2014) holds that regardless of women’s elevation in Africa, men remain supreme. In addition, Orina (2014) indicates that in the process of exercising authority in society and households, it is presumed that men are more knowledgeable than women. While the male perceptions of women can be demeaning to women’s ego, the attitude positively elicited detailed discussions and information from the male participants, particularly among two groups: those at Telkom and the public sector officials. Both groups dominantly had participants of older ages and with strong patriarchal perspectives. The reason for their free dissemination of information can be attributed to having perceived the researcher as an ‘unknowledgeable woman’ who was being ‘informed’ by ‘knowledgeable men’.

At variance with the male participants, there was an easy flow of information from women participants in both the public and private sectors. These women may have perceived the researcher in positive light of her being an agent of reform for women’s status in society. Orina (2014) also argues that the negative experiences of women in Sub-Saharan African societies have encouraged oneness and supportiveness among women such that the elevation of a fellow woman is conceived as an elevation of women at large. Therefore, while the male participants found the researcher to be an ‘unknowledgeable woman’ who was being informed by ‘knowledgeable men’, the female participants viewed the researcher as a change agent within women employment empowerment initiatives and

processes thereby eliciting detailed discussions in both companies and even among the industry stakeholders. However, there was a markedly significant difference between public and private sector males. At Safaricom, both men and women easily provided detailed information. The possible reason could be because the participants were familiar with and were constantly involved in surveys within their organisation (evident from the interview findings). As mentioned above, the public sector males displayed a more patriarchal nature.

Observations on how male and female participants behaved towards the researcher lend support to Foote and Bartell's (2011) notion that power relations can be inherent in a research process. In this case, both parties displayed some form of power. While men displayed their patriarchal driven power, the females used the power of 'female supportiveness' to provide more information. However, the researcher upheld ethical responsibilities to conduct the research within laid down procedures and therefore had to observe ethical requirements. To avoid any discomfort due to the discussed statuses, the researcher maintained respect for cultural norms as is expected by Kenyan traditional and cultural norms.

### **Tribe**

Third and infact quite important, the research was conducted in a country that is heavily driven by favouritism based on tribes. For the reason that belonging to a political party has affiliations with one's tribe in Kenya, and also, on the basis that 40 tribes in Kenya choose to align themselves with either of the two warring tribes (Kikuyu and Luo) (See Section 2.8 in Chapter 2), the detail of information given by the participants may have been affected. This is because Masakhalia (2011) posits that Kenyans synonymously, without taking into account an individual's personal choice, link particular tribes to the two warring tribes and therefore perceive them as not belonging to their 'league'. 'Non-league' members are hence viewed with suspicion (Ibid). On this account, the researcher of this study argues that some participants, particularly those from the public sector, may have withheld information, especially because the study focused on 'tribe' which is a sensitive issue in Kenya (Lankeu and Maket 2012). This was however not observed among the private sector participants who voluntarily provided detailed information. Hence, the researcher's long-time disconnection with tribal backgrounds was used to establish neutrality. Blending this with further probing by the researcher allowed for the discovery and elaboration of issues (Alvesson 2011).

In conducting themselves this way, the researcher took a cultural insider, as opposed to a cultural outsider stance. This position, as argued by Edmonds-Cady (2012), was a strength that allowed the researcher to get closer to the participants and obtain in-depth understanding of their WLB practice experiences and perceptions. Although the cultural insider position necessitated the researcher to re-establish their position in the wider Kenyan tribal community, as well as the assumption of what the participants said and expected of the researcher, this position enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the tribal and gender contexts of the research setting. This contributed to the conceptual understanding of real life experiences in a heavily tribal Kenyan context at institutional, societal and household levels.

HR	LMs	Employees	Sector-Wide
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>WLB policies and practices</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Understanding of the WLB concept</li> <li>b. Strategies to enable WLB</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <b>HR's role in promoting WLB</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Creating awareness of WLB policies and practices.</li> <li>b. Monitoring the performance of WLB policies and practices.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. <b>Challenges in promoting WLB</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Political-tribal influence</li> <li>b. Incompatibility of WLB provisions.</li> <li>c. Telkom's part government ownership.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Knowledge of WLB Practice</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Understanding of WLB provisions.</li> <li>b. Training and development on WLB.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <b>Implementation of WLB policies and practices</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. LMs' involvement in policy development.</li> <li>b. Nurturing a work-life culture.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. <b>Challenges in implementing WLB strategies</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Political-Tribal influence</li> <li>b. Gender influences</li> <li>c. Cultural influences</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Understanding of WLB practice</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Knowledge of the WLB concept and provisions.</li> <li>b. Communication of WLB policies and practices.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <b>Work-life Conflict</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Workload and working hours.</li> <li>b. Gender roles and working hours.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. <b>Utilisation of WLB policies</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Procedure for requesting time off work.</li> <li>b. Perceived LM support.</li> <li>c. Perceived co-worker support.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. <b>Dissatisfactions with WLB practice</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Favouritism in the implementation of WLB policies.</li> <li>b. Underutilisation of WLB provisions.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. WLB policies and practices</li> <li>2. The influence of politics and tribal affiliations on WLB practice.</li> <li>3. Gendered influences on WLB practice.</li> </ol>
Table 3.8: Final themes and sub-themes for each of the interview groups			

A diagrammatic representation of the research process, distinguishing between the data collection methods in Phase 1 and 2, is provided in Figure 3.2 below.

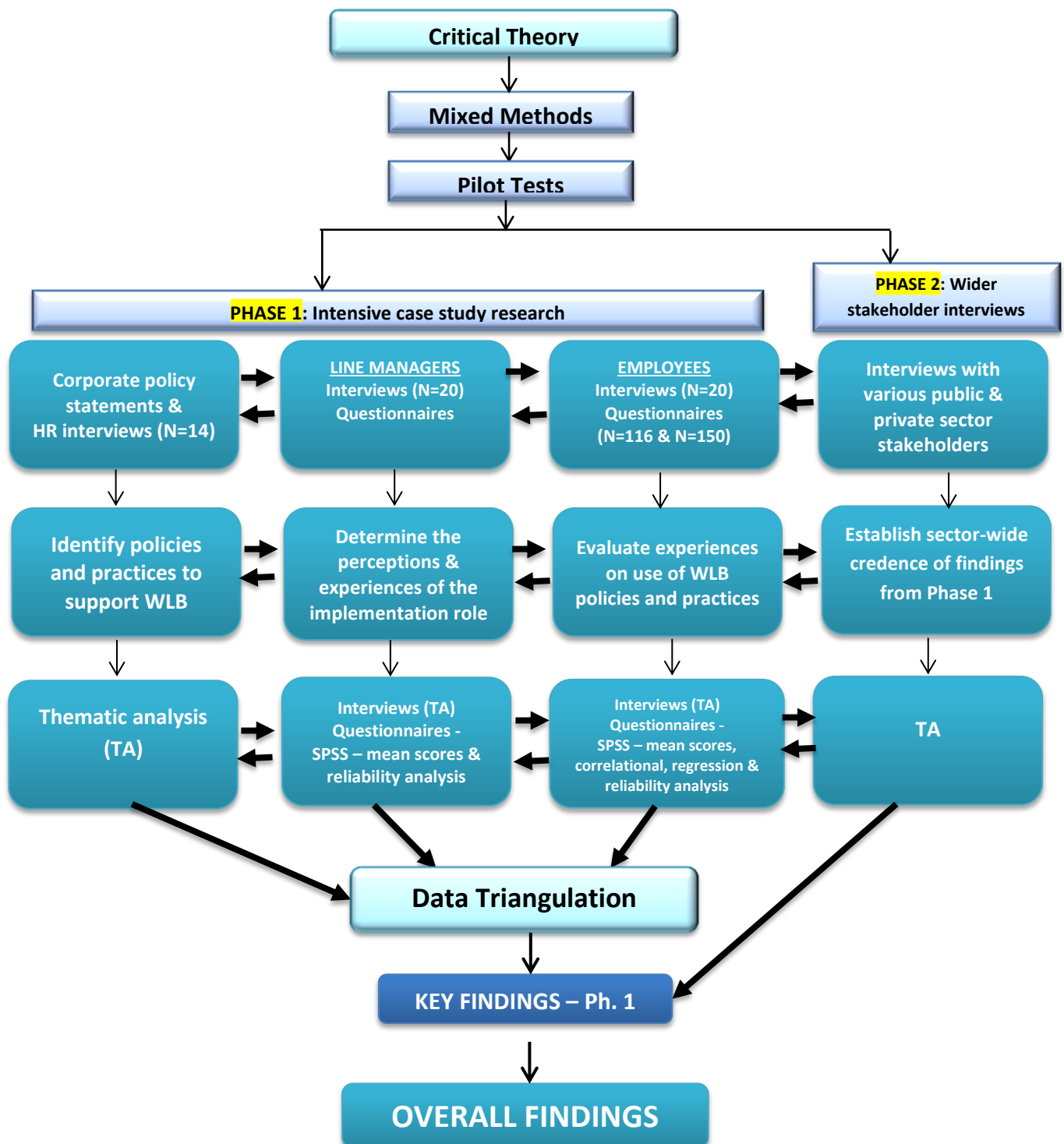


Figure 3.1: The Research Process

### **3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

As stipulated by The British Educational Research Association (BERA), this research was conducted within an ethic<sup>34</sup> of respect for the person, knowledge, democratic values, quality of educational research and academic freedom (BERA 2011). Hence, consideration was made of how the imposition of the research on individuals (with their consent or otherwise) was balanced with the benefit of making a positive contribution to the world. Given that this research followed the MM approach, ethical considerations that pertain to both the quantitative and qualitative designs were applied (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004; Lewis and Graham 2007). The following ethical considerations were taken into account.

#### **3.5.1 University Approval**

The research project was subjected to ethics approval from Coventry University. The following university-related guidelines were complied with: ‘Research Ethical Guidelines for Postgraduate Students’; the ‘Coventry University, Faculty of Business and Law Research Ethics Committee’ guidelines; and the ‘University’s policy on plagiarism’.

#### **3.5.2 Informed Consent**

- ❖ Official authorisation letters were issued to the researcher as a form of permission to undertake research at both Safaricom and Telkom Kenya (Cameron 2011). Progressively, permission was also obtained from each participant prior to the completing of the online questionnaires and prior to the start of the interviews. They completed and signed an informed consent form evidenced as Appendix 1 (Kvale 2007).
- ❖ As recommended by Zikmund et al. (2010), the overall purposes of the research, as well as the benefits of participation, were communicated to all participants in order to promote transparency and encourage participation. This was facilitated by the participant information sheet, listed as Appendix 2, which also included information on what was expected of the participants, and the researcher’s background. All explanations (written or verbal) were provided in the English language and in terms that were meaningful to the participants (Sekaran and Bougie 2010).

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<sup>34</sup> Research ethics is concerned with the moral norm in which research is conducted and how the results or findings are reported (Collis and Hussey 2014; Bell 2012).

### **3.5.3 Voluntariness of Participation**

As Cooper and Schindler (2008) and Driscoll (2011) direct, participants were made aware of the fact that the research was essentially for academic purposes and that participation was voluntary. They had the right to refuse participation whenever and for whatever reason, with no negative repercussions (Merriam 2009). However, the researcher specified that this was only applicable *“up until before collected data was analysed and before results were written up”* as any decisions made after this stage of the thesis would affect the findings.

### **3.5.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality<sup>35</sup>**

Burns and Grove (2005) insist on observation of the participants' rights of privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. Therefore:

- ❖ All collected data was stored on a computer with a secured password only accessible by the researcher (BERA 2011). This included: (1) the lists of names and email addresses of all the participants in the interviews and questionnaires, (2) email communication between the researcher and participants, and (3) transcriptions of the interviews, which were stored in a Word password-protected document and destroyed together with the interview recordings once the research was complete (Levine 1981).
- ❖ All participants were also assured that no one would be identified especially in the final reports that will be submitted to the companies. To facilitate this, the interviewer used pseudonyms (false names) to protect the identities of the interviewees as Burns and Groves (2005) stress that true anonymity exists only if the identity of the respondents cannot be linked to the collected data, even by the researcher. In addition, the use of the BOS afforded anonymity as none of the participants could be identified from the completed surveys.
- ❖ Official company documents entrusted to the researcher, as well as the audio recorder containing interview recordings, were securely stored in a locked locker, situated within the secured Coventry University premises, where only the researcher had access (Whiting 2008).

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<sup>35</sup> Collis and Hussey (2014) refer to anonymity as “the assurance given to participants and organisations that they will not be named in the research” (pg. 33). Whiting (2008: 39) describes confidentiality as “protection of study participants such that individual identities are not linked to information provided, and are never publicly divulged”.



### **3.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of this research should be considered with the following limitations in mind. The relatively small numbers of LMs in the quantitative sample meant that deeper quantitative analysis was not possible. Even though the study agreed with Sauro (2013) that ‘comparing means’ has been shown to be accurate for small sample sizes in quantitative research, the literature directs that the minimum recommended sample size varies between 100 (e.g. Gorsuch 1983) and 500 (e.g. Comrey and Lee 1992) observations. Therefore, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) argue that when in-depth statistical analysis is used, the results of small samples can be misleading. This view is in line with the quantitative research paradigm which emphasises the importance of generalisability and reliability. Therefore, future research using a larger sample of LMs is recommended. Nevertheless, the LM quantitative results for this study were validated through triangulation with the LM interview findings as well as the outcomes from the other data collection methods used. In addition, the distinct views of ‘junior’ managers at Safaricom were considered with caution and not on their own as they applied to only one respondent who may be an outlier. Future research should include greater focus on this level of managers (junior) in order to see if their views are more widely endorsed.

Secondly, this study illustrates that various contexts – national, organisational, socio-cultural and socio-economic – intersect, with implications for the practice of WLB. The limitation here was related with the selection of the region used for investigation. Only the head offices of Safaricom and Telkom located in Nairobi were examined and not other branches of the same companies, which are located in various parts of Kenya. The fourteen participants in the follow-up interviews with public and private sector stakeholders belonged to institutions whose head offices were also based in Nairobi. The findings and conclusions are therefore confined to the Nairobi region. This poses the question of how WLB practice might have been experienced differently if more distinct types of organisations, across various geographic areas in Kenya, had been sampled, and larger numbers employed. It is possible that the same perceptions and experiences of WLB practice are not shared by employees in similar organisations but based in other regions of Kenya. Despite being located in the same country, these areas differ in tribal compositions, and even gender role expectations. Also, although scholars have argued that business practice in all public sector organisations in

Kenya is identical (Manda 2013; Manda et al. 2011), it is possible that public sector firms based in other areas of the country are likely to have differences in practice.

However, this strategy of limiting the scope of the study to Nairobi was necessary as policy formulation emanates from the headquarters. Being Kenya's capital city, workplaces in Nairobi have more cosmopolitan workforce compositions in comparison to other regions (PwC 2014). Therefore, the approach used in finding these results can be applied to a wide variety of situations, thus allowing the examination of external validity<sup>36</sup>. Notwithstanding, it would be useful for research to examine larger samples from various geographic areas of Kenya. This will allow a comparison of regional WLB experiences, and the generalising of the findings across the whole of Kenya. Regardless of this limitation, the study still contributes significantly to addressing the dearth of WLB literature in the African continent, particularly Kenya.

### 3.7 **CONCLUSION**

This chapter described the rationale for underpinning the study under the critical theory philosophy, and the application of a MM approach. The use of a MM accordingly invited not only the use of varying sampling methods (purposive stratified and snowballing), but also varied data analysis techniques to identify, select and analyse information with the aim of answering the research aims and objectives. While observing validity, reliability and generalisability issues, as well as ethical considerations relating to both qualitative and quantitative studies, data was sourced from three locations: (1) the head offices of Safaricom and Telkom Kenya, together with (2) other public and private sector stakeholders in Kenya. The intention was for the researcher to lay a methodological foundation for the empirical study that ascertained the influence of tribal affiliations and gender role expectations on WLB. Table 3.9 below provides a summary of the methodology.

Phase	Purpose of phase	Methods used	No. of documents / participants	Which research objective(s) addressed	Was objective(s) addressed?
<b>PHASE 1</b> <b>Intensive research of</b>	To ascertain and compare the similarities and differences in the	Corporate documents	•4 (private) •4 (public)	1	Yes

<sup>36</sup> The extent to which the results of a study can be generalised to other situations and to other people (Collis and Hussey 2014).

Phase	Purpose of phase	Methods used	No. of documents / participants	Which research objective(s) addressed	Was objective(s) addressed?
<b>the case examples</b>	WLB policies and practices offered by both <i>companies</i> .				
	To identify, explain and compare the existing policies and practices in place to support WLB between the two firms, as well as establishing how these policies measured up to statutory obligations to perceptions from <i>HRLs</i> .	Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•7 (private)</li> <li>•7 (public)</li> </ul>	1, 2, 5	Yes
	To examine the perceptions and experiences of <i>LMs</i> in the implementation of WLB policies and practices.	Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•10 (private)</li> <li>•10 (public)</li> </ul>	1, 3, 5	Yes
	To unearth the personal views, attitudes and opinions of <i>LMs</i> on the implementation of WLB policies and practices.	Online questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•10 (private)</li> <li>•10 (public)</li> </ul>	3	Yes
	To evaluate the perceptions and experiences of <i>general employees</i> on the use of WLB policies and practices.	Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•10 (private)</li> <li>•10 (public)</li> </ul>	1, 4, 5	Yes
	To examine the views, attitudes and opinions of <i>general employees</i> on WLB practice.	Online questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•116 (private)</li> <li>•150 (public)</li> </ul>	4	Yes
<b>PHASE 2</b> <b>Wider stakeholder views</b>	To examine how widely applicable the findings from Phase 1 were to the <i>wider Kenyan business</i>	Semi-structured interviews	•14	5	Yes

Phase	Purpose of phase	Methods used	No. of documents / participants	Which research objective(s) addressed	Was objective(s) addressed?
	<i>sector.</i>				
<b>Table 3.9: Summary of the Methodology</b>					

Moving forward, Chapter 4 opens up Phase 1 of the empirical study. Preceding the empirical study is background on the Kenyan national tribal and gender context.

## **THE EMPIRICAL STUDY**

### **CHAPTER 4: CORPORATE WORK-LIFE BALANCE POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

#### **4.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

Drawing on data from 14 semi-structured interviews with Human Resource Managers (to be referred to as human resource leaders (HRLs) hereafter) and 8 corporate policy statements, this chapter addresses thesis objectives 1, 2 and 5. The chapter's purpose is twofold: **(1)** to ascertain the similarities and differences in the specific policies and practices in place to support WLB at Telkom and Safaricom; and **(2)** to establish HRLs' perceptions and experiences of designing and overseeing these policies and practices, and how they measured up to statutory obligations. The two aims provide the 'official' corporate positions concerning WLB policies and strategies. These findings will be compared in later chapters with the results from the actual experiences of LMs, employees, and various industry stakeholders (Chapters 5, 6 and 7 respectively).

Section 4.2 provides the demographic characteristics of the 14 HRL participants. The discussion following the analysis is based on three main themes: *WLB policies and practices* (Section 4.3), *HR's role in promoting WLB* (Section 4.4), and *challenges in promoting WLB* (Section 4.5). Under each main theme, some sub-themes were identified. Section 4.6 provides a concluding statement.

The initials HRL will refer to human resource leaders. For ease of reading, the initial 'S' will denote Safaricom and 'T' will be used for Telkom – e.g. participant 1S: Kikuyu, male, or document 1S: Safaricom UN 2012/2013 communication; and participant 1T: Luo, male or document 1T: Employment Act 2007.

The HRLs in this study were the managers responsible for supporting WLB through compliance with employment law, designing and evaluating appropriate policies and guidelines to ensure employees' quest for WLB, promoting and/or communicating WLB schemes, and creating training programmes to support and empower managers (McCarthy et al. 2010).

### 4.3 PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The interview sample consisted of 14 HRLs (seven from Safaricom and seven from Telkom). Corporate policy documents consisted of eight items (four from Safaricom and four from Telkom). Table 4.1 below illustrates the demographic characteristics of the sample.

		<b>Safaricom n=7</b>	<b>Telkom n=7</b>
		<b>n</b>	<b>n</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	4	6
	Female	3	1
<b>Tribe</b>	Kikuyu	4	4
	Luo	1	1
	Kalenjin	1	1
	Abaluhya		1
	Somali	1	
<b>Age</b>	19-39	1	
	40-49	5	1
	50-59	1	6
<b>Length of service</b>	< 6 years	2	
	6-8 years	2	1
	9-13 years	3	4
	14+ years		2
<b>Educational qualifications</b>	High school		5
	College		1
	Masters	7	1
<b>Table 4.1: Demographic characteristics of the sample of 14 HRLs</b>			

Telkom's results endorse Kiambati et al.'s (2013) declaration that public sector managers in Kenya are commonly of older ages, have worked in the sector for several years, and have risen up the ranks to attain their management positions. In their study, these authors also found public sector managers to have long years of service, and the majority of them were less educated compared to managers at the same level in the private sector. This finding was also reflected in the above results. The older employees at Telkom, all male, had over nine years of working with the organisation. However, they possessed basic education levels when compared to the Safaricom HRLs, who were younger and highly educated. Safaricom managers had an average working period of five years with the same organisation. Based on the results, Safaricom seemed to prefer a younger workforce, while Telkom had a predominance of older workers.

#### 4.4 **THEMES**

##### 4.4.1 **Work-life balance policies and practices**

###### **Understanding of the WLB concept**

All the Safaricom HRLs showed a high level of understanding of the *WLB concept*, including their knowledge of all the current and planned provisions under this scheme. The same level of understanding and practice was displayed in the corporate policy documents. In describing their knowledge of the WLB concept, some Safaricom HRLs stated:

*“To me, it means how the organisation assists me to manage my work and non-work matters. To Safaricom, it means what the organisation can do to help employees manage their work and home lives because they make employees more productive and committed to the company”* (Participant 3S: Kikuyu, female).

*“The ability to be productive at the office due to the opportunity given to me by the company of taking time to enjoy my personal life”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

There was a pronounced distinction between statutory WLB obligations for employers and Safaricom-specific arrangements. Not only did the Safaricom HRLs outline the identified needs of their employees (from senior management to job grades G, H, and J), but they also displayed adequate knowledge of the aims of the WLB programme. For example:

*“...presently, the goals of the WLB programme are five but they are reviewed on an annual basis. They include: enhancing employee overall health; improving attendance at work; boosting employee morale; enhancing employee job performance; and increasing productivity”* (Participant 7S: Luo, female).

The same results were not reflected at Telkom. Outcomes from the interviews with seven Telkom HRLs indicated that they were not familiar with the “WLB concept”. When the meaning of WLB was explained by the researcher, the HRLs related the concept to ‘*statutory paid leave entitlements*’. Hence, taking “time off work” was interpreted as “*leave*” and the policies in place to facilitate taking “time off work” were referred to as “*leave entitlements*”. For purposes of uniformity in this study, the term ‘***WLB policies and practices***’ will be used to refer to all WLB strategies offered by both Safaricom and Telkom.

*“...leave entitlements are what we call what you have just explained”* (Participant 6T: Kikuyu, male).

Despite the lack of knowledge on the WLB model, the Telkom HRLs clearly outlined the various policies and practices in place to support WLB. However, they lacked any knowledge on planned developments of the scheme, as well as clear objectives for their WLB programme. Six HRLs attributed this lack of knowledge to the fact that the responsibility to formulate and review ‘leave entitlements’ was mandated to the Ministry of Labour, who did not encourage participative decision making. For example:

*“We are not involved in formulating these policies. That is purely the work of the Ministry of Labour”* (Participant 3T: Luo, male).

Given that the Ministry of Labour formulates the statutory WLB policies and practices that govern Kenyan public and private sector institutions (Manda 2013), it was surprising that the WLB concept was not known to the Telkom HRLs. Some studies on WLB have been carried out in Kenya (e.g. Muli et al. 2014; Mukururi and Ngari 2014; Oloiptip and Gachunga 2014), and these studies have shown that the practice of WLB is more common within private sector firms in the country. It is also unrealistic that not only have studies on this topic been published in Kenya, but also that Kenya’s Labour Law borrows from foreign law, and yet the law makers remain unaware of the WLB concept. This dilemma in knowledge is explained by the findings of Lankeu and Maket’s (2012) study on perceptions of the introduction of modern HR practices in the Kenyan public service. According to these authors, public service administration in Kenya was characterised by an intentional lack of knowledge, poor ethics and resistance to change. However, embracing organisational change could steer Kenya’s public service organisations to adapt to change and develop modern HR policies and practices that would not only benefit themselves but also their employees. ‘Modern HR practices’, according to Foss et al. (2011), refer to high levels of delegation of decisions, extensive up-down communication, reward systems and wellbeing practices, which when deployed individually or collectively enhance organisational performance. Despite the differences, each of the firms offered WLB initiatives as evidenced below.

#### **4.4.2 Strategies to enable WLB**

This theme was related to the policies and practices that each of the firms offered to enable WLB and address *objective 1* of the research. As shown in Figure 3.1 (Conceptual Framework), the effects that employees’ work and non-work demands had on organisational operations steered the companies into formulating WLB policies and practices to mitigate the impact.



### Statutory<sup>37</sup> WLB provisions

From the corporate policy statements of both firms, it was established that employment relations in Kenya are regulated by labour laws, laid down in the Employment Act (2007, 2015). From 12 HRL interviews from both firms, it was recognised that the Ministry of Labour was mandated to formulate, review, set strategies and implement *statutory WLB policies and practices*. These policies govern national human resource planning and development across the public and private sectors. Additionally, responses from six Telkom interviews informed about the employment policies being uniformly applied across all public sector organisations in the country. Below is a list of statutory leave entitlements.

#### Leave entitlements

Analysis of the Employment Acts (2007, 2015) revealed 10 types of paid statutory WLB policies and practices. These were government-directed entitlements which employers (private and public) must afford employees indiscriminately and without consequences. The listed entitlements included:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. 24 days annual leave                  | 6. Leave for sportsmen/women                     |
| 2. Annual leave for hourly paid staff    | 7. Leave pending retirement                      |
| 3. 3 months paid sick/convalescent leave | 8. 35 days unpaid leave                          |
| 4. 3 months maternity leave              | 9. 5 days compassionate leave per year           |
| 5. 2 weeks paternity leave               | 10. Leave for special purposes, e.g. bereavement |

(Document 1T: Employment Act 2007, 2015)

A difference was noted between the two firms regarding how the number of leave days was calculated and allocated. This was based on the organisations' individual definitions of how many days constituted a working week. A 5-day working week was characteristic of Telkom (Monday to Friday only), while Safaricom's working week comprised 7 days. As weekends were excluded from Telkom's working days, their employees were reported as having enjoyed more off-work as well as leave days compared to their Safaricom counterparts. For example, when asked to calculate a typical 7-day annual leave period, two responses included:

*"Annual leave for 7 days equals 9 days because weekends are not counted"*  
(Participant 3T: Luo, male).

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<sup>37</sup> Required, permitted or enacted by law.

*“That is just 7 days. We work Monday to Sunday on shift patterns”*  
(Participant 2S: Kikuyu, male).

The HRLs were asked questions relating to how the Ministry of Labour (representing the government) monitored the implementation of paid statutory WLB policies to ensure compliance by all organisations. An anonymous confirmation of non-monitoring efforts by the government was retrieved from 13 out of 14 interviews. This finding confirms Njoroge’s (2014) and ILO’s (2011) results on Kenyan organisations failing to implement regulations under the Employment Acts (2007, 2015) because the government formulates, but fails to enforce, existing laws. In most cases, Njoroge (2014) states, the lapse in monitoring leads to exploitation of employees as they lack information on their rights. The below comments from the HRLs confirm a lack of monitoring activities by the Ministry of Labour.

*“...for the 11 years that I have worked with Telkom, I have never encountered any form of inspection or examination on how work-life balance is administered. The government is not bothered. To them, that would be a waste of money which should have gone into someone’s pocket”* (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, male).

*“No, they have never visited this office”* (Participant 2S: Kikuyu, male).

### Working time regulations

According to the resource drain and inter-role conflict theories (Chapter 2, Section 2.3), *time* is one of the elements that the demands between individuals’ work and life compete for, often resulting in undesirable outcomes (Bakker et al. 2009; Hogarth and Bosworth 2009). The Employment Act (2015) sets the standard working time at a maximum of 48 hours per week for daytime workers and 60 hours for those working nights. These hours are to be spread over a maximum of six days in a week. These details were extracted from staff handbooks of both organisations as quoted below:

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LAWS OF KENYA

=====

EMPLOYMENT ACT

CHAPTER 226

*“Section 27: ...the maximum hours of work per week are forty eight (48) hours over a maximum of six days in a week. Where a person is employed for night work, the maximum number of hours that they should work is sixty hours (60) ....”*(Document 1T: Employment Act 2015, pg. 9).

*“Every employee is entitled to a maximum of 48 working hours for daytime work and 60 hours for night shifts, over a period of 6 days in a week. This is inclusive of overtime”* (Document 3S: Staff handbook 2014, pg. 16).

Figure 4.1: Employment Act Article  
Cover Page

Differences however emerged on some paid statutory WLB provisions due to adjustments by Safaricom. Whereas Telkom uniformly implemented these provisions across all employees (as per the Employment Acts 2007 and 2015), Safaricom’s corporate policy statements and six interview responses showed that the company adjusted some paid statutory provisions to differentiate themselves from the competition. For example, annual leave for senior managers at Safaricom was increased to 40 days instead of the statutory 24 days; while maternity leave was established at four months instead of the statutory three months. These quotes represent responses from the HRLs while Figure 4.2 provides documentary evidence of Safaricom’s four-month maternity leave:

*“Statutory leave entitlements are standard and cannot be changed for anybody regardless of the level of employment”* (Participant 6T: Kikuyu, male).

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*“Women’s maternity leave is 4 months to enable them get enough rest and healing. Our senior managers get 40 days annual leave rather than the 24 days applicable to regular employees. This is because they are senior. They cannot be treated in the same manner as other employees”* (Participant 7S: Luo, female).

Figure 4.2: Excerpt from Document 4S:  
*Supporting a mother friendly workplace flyer*,  
pg. 3, showing maternity leave benefits for  
women

Questions can be raised regarding how the general employees would perceive an increase in senior managements' annual leave days considering that the employees carry the bulk of the groundwork. Male workers and childfree female employees, as Janasz et al. (2013) contend, also questioned the increase in paid maternity leave days, as they queried why they could not get what they are supposed to (i.e. not being able to make use of WLB policies and practices in the same way that women with child caring responsibilities did). However, when considering the increase in senior managers' annual leave, Lankeu and Maket (2012), as well as Manda (2012), argue that it differentiates positions in employment. Notwithstanding, Beauregard (2014) implies that the ability of WLB policies and practices to positively influence employee attitudes and performance, to some extent, depends on their perceptions of how proportionally distributed the WLB arrangements are.

When asked about how accessible the Employment Acts guidelines (2007, 2015) were to their organisations, the responses from both firms took separate directions. For Telkom, six HRLs reported being officially supplied with printed copies of these ground rules by the Ministry of Labour. From all Safaricom HRLs, it was established that the organisation individually sourced these guidelines from the ministry. For example:

<p>Some materials have been removed due to 3rd party copyright. The unabridged version can be viewed in Lancaster Library - Coventry University.</p>	<p><i>“...the Ministry of Labour supplies us with printed handbooks containing all this information”</i> (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, male).</p> <p><i>“Safaricom independently takes the initiative to get information from the Ministry of Labour on legal frameworks that we have to comply with. The government does not bother about what private sector organisations do. At times, the ministry officials intentionally withhold these documents and we have to “pay” them to obtain the guidelines”</i> (Participant 2S: Kikuyu, male).</p>
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When Kenya's Ministry of Labour's practice in availing statutory information to organisations is compared to similar practice in Western countries, it can be argued that the ministry's actions contravene similar efforts by Western governments. Studies from Western countries have shown that full action is taken for statutory information to be available on various

platforms for ease of access by organisations and even their employees (e.g. Glynn et al. 2002; Fleetwood 2007). Platforms such as the internet, training sessions, workshops, and printed material have been mentioned (e.g. Smeaton et al. 2014; OECD 2012). Another contradiction of government practice emerges here when the issue of Kenya's labour laws borrowing from foreign laws is taken into consideration. The practice of availing information on regulations to concerned parties should be one that Kenya's Ministry of Labour adopts.

### **Organisation-specific WLB initiatives**

An examination of Telkom's corporate policy statements and seven HRL interviews showed that the organisation's WLB policies and practices were limited to statutory provisions only, which were uniformly implemented across all public sector institutions and levels of employment. Conversely, Safaricom's range of WLB arrangements included statutory as well as non-statutory arrangements, as illustrated in Figure 4.3 above. This means that Telkom offered its employees fewer WLB provisions than Safaricom.

Safaricom's corporate policy statements and seven HRL interviews reflected ten extra non-statutory WLB initiatives designed by the organisation to enable employees' productive and satisfying work and personal lives. Throughout this study, these extra WLB provisions will be referred to as *Safaricom-specific WLB policies and practices*. Notably, unlike the statutory obligations, the policies and practice guidelines for non-statutory arrangements highlighted that managers had a legal right to decline a request for these provisions on the grounds of business priorities. Below is a list of Safaricom's organisation-specific WLB provisions as retrieved from the staff handbook. A detailed description of these provisions is provided in Appendix 10.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Flexible working schemes</i>       | 6. <i>Financial wellness programmes</i>              |
| 2. <i>Women wellness scheme</i>          | 7. <i>Medical scheme</i>                             |
| 3. <i>Nutrition programme</i>            | 8. <i>Chronic disease management programme</i>       |
| 4. <i>Health programmes</i>              | 9. <i>Resource and social centre schemes</i>         |
| 5. <i>Employee assistance programmes</i> | 10. <i>On-site fitness and relaxation facilities</i> |

(Document 4S: Staff Handbook 2014, pg. 18)

The provisions included under the WLB packages of the two firms significantly differentiated the efforts that each one of them undertook to ensure a balanced life for their employees. Safaricom's notable measures were evident from the comprehensive WLB programme that

was reported to constitute an extra 10 schemes in addition to paid statutory WLB entitlements. Among Safaricom's drivers to go beyond statutory obligations was employee wellness, which was perceived as key to Safaricom's success. Six HRLs emphasised the value that the organisation placed on its employees. However, the managers stated that these arrangements differed in complexity and quality depending on the employment level. For example, senior executives were exclusively entitled to "two-weeks fully funded family holiday each year"; travel, accommodation, entertainment and meal costs were fully covered by Safaricom. The two weeks were separate from annual leave, or any other form of statutory entitlement. The holiday was permitted to one of three destinations (South Africa, Brazil or Mauritius), in the company of four family members. According to the HRLs, the break was considered as a period for the senior executives to bond with their families. From Telkom, the HRLs pointed out that "*no employee was entitled to further 'special' treatment*" (Participant 2T: Abaluhya, male).

As discussed in the preceding section, the adjustment of statutory WLB provisions and the offering of extra prestigious arrangements to senior executives bring to the fore Kenya's tradition of social power structures (Lankeu and Maket 2012). The WLB privileges that individuals in senior positions benefit from, according to Kenyan understanding, are fit for their hierarchical positions. Manda (2013) also adds that it is within Kenyan work ethics that occupational prestige determines the manner in which, medical benefits, office layouts, leisure centres, among other WLB benefits are organised, regulated and distributed between job levels. Kamau (2013) similarly contends that the hierarchy of structures that characterises Kenya's workplaces appears firm and unchangeable. Kamau's logic confirms Telgen's (2011) view of Kenyan workplaces. Telgen argues that Kenyan employees (private and public) have learnt to accept their positions, roles and benefits as given, hardly questioning the set rules and regulations, thereby giving an indication that the relations between employees and employers have been set by a social structure that places general employees in a subordinate position to that of their seniors. Senior members of staff therefore benefit from these positions of power. In elaborating on senior executives' prestigious provisions, one Safaricom HRL explained:

*"2-week paid holidays with family and all costs paid for, company vehicles, company houses, a free cell phone, house helps, a driver, a farm boy, home security guards, body guards, are among the many extra WLB benefits that are only applicable to the very top and senior managers. The amount provided*

*for their medical cover is also higher than other staff members. Also, although other members of staff have gyms, lounge areas, etc., those awarded to this level of managers are far more sophisticated, equipped with imported state-of-the-art facilities, and located in very prestigious suburbs of Nairobi. But it is understandable because they are managers and high profile people within society – they have to be accorded respect and dignity” (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).*

When asked why they went out of their statutory obligations to offer a comprehensive WLB programme considering Safaricom’s ownership of 77% of the market share (Deloitte 2015), two Safaricom HRLs explained:

*“Our business market is volatile and extremely competitive. To remain ahead of other players, we have to invent, invent, invent; especially when it comes to taking care of our human resources” (Participant 7S: Luo, female).*

*“We are number one in our telecoms sector and ranked second overall countrywide on work-life practice. We attract some of the best talent in the market. We want to widen the gap between ourselves and our competitors so that we can expand to other markets in East and Central Africa” (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).*

And when Telkom HRLs were probed on why their firm only offered statutory obligated WLB policies, insufficient finances to support advancement of WLB practice was emphasised. Some typical responses were:

*“We have various types of leave which our members can benefit from. We cannot afford to invest in all these ventures that private companies do because we have no money. Besides, even if we obtained funds to finance such projects, the common habit in this sector of stealing would run down the project” (Participant 2T: Abaluhya, male).*

*“These people-friendly policies that you see private organisations adopt are very expensive to run and require a lot of time for managers to govern them. The government has no money to waste. What we offer is enough” (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, male).*

Such responses suggest that the public service managers were aware of the extra WLB efforts made by private sector firms, but the same achievements were limited in operation at Telkom due to financial inadequacies in the public sector (Society for International Development – SID 2012). However, given a situation where similar financial resources were made available to fund such provisions at Telkom, the introduction of the policies would still be challenged. Extracts from Njoroge’s (2014) study show that the approval of policies follows a lengthy procedure that eventually requires parliamentary and presidential endorsement. Furthermore, the findings as stated in the narrative above corroborate Manda, et al.’s (2011) view that the

sustainability of the introduced schemes would be questionable considering the long-term culture of misappropriating funds, and low accountability within the public sector. According to Manda and his colleagues, this is a habit that has in the past led to the collapse of employee welfare schemes. Even more, public service administration in Kenya has for a long time been characterised by poor ethics and resistance to change (Lankeu and Maket 2012).

Nevertheless, this is not to say that the above neglect of professional behaviour can hinder efforts to improve WLB practice at Telkom, as the same can be achieved through reform initiatives such as the newly introduced Public-Private Partnership (PPP) strategy. Through this initiative, the Kenyan government strives to use the private sector to offer a dynamic and efficient way to deliver and manage public sector infrastructure and processes (Diba 2012). Hence, as Lankeu and Maket (2012: 270) convey, through the introduction of modern HRL practices, efforts can be directed towards achieving a results- and efficiency-oriented public service in Kenya. Public service officials can be developed from being “less remote to more responsive”, “less bureaucratic to being more entrepreneurial, accountable, and results-oriented” (Ibid).

The use of these policies partly depends on how effectively they are promoted by the HR departments. The next section examines the organisations’ efforts in advancing employee knowledge of existing WLB policies and practices.

#### **4.4.3 HR’S role in promoting WLB**

##### **Creating awareness of WLB policies and practices**

This theme was evenly split across the two organisations as it was identified among 86% (n=12) of the respondents. It related to HR’s responsibility for promoting the WLB programmes with the intention of creating awareness (as also reflected in the process level of the conceptual framework – Figure 3.1).

##### **Line manager<sup>38</sup> training**

The HRLs were questioned on who was responsible for implementing WLB policies and practices. Both groups unanimously confirmed that LMs held the responsibility for

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<sup>38</sup> Line Managers in this research referred to all the managers responsible for communicating, approving and disapproving the use of statutory and non-statutory WLB provisions.



implementation. However, at Telkom, it was reported to be a shared duty between LMs and HRLs. At Safaricom, the responsibility was solely held by LMs. Therefore, HR's (n=12) first point of promotion of the WLB programmes was reportedly the LMs. As day-to-day supervisors of employees, LMs had to not only understand, but also commit to the programmes for there to be effective communication of the same to the employees. Twelve interview results drawn from both firms insinuated that compared to other employees (senior management and general staff), LMs' training was pitched a step higher in terms of content, understanding of the drivers, benefits and implementation expectations.

However, differences emerged on how rigorous the training was that the managers received. For instance, whereas induction training for the LMs took five days at Telkom, training at Safaricom took six to eight days. The frequency and the types of WLB-specific training also differed between the two organisations. These differences are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The below extracts from the interviews depict HR support for LMs' implementation roles at both firms, while Figure 4.4 shows the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Safaricom, Mr. Bob Collymore, during the inauguration of a breastfeeding training programme:

*"..line managers do not need much support in implementing the provisions of the Employment Act. They only need to append signatures to allow any form of leave; the rest of the process is our (HR) responsibility. The guidance they get at induction is sufficient enough to proceed with work"* (Participant 4T: Kikuyu, Male).

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Figure 4.4: Excerpt from Document 2S: *Annual report 2013/2014*, pg. 12 showing Safaricom's CEO opening up a training event on breast feeding thereby exhibiting commitment to the crèche services, offered to female employees with child caring responsibilities..

*"This work-life balance matter is very new to Kenya and it has taken our team (HR) a lot of training and investment to convince the line managers that it is a good strategy to help us boost employee morale, performance and productivity. Line managers and team leaders are offered support in the form of training and development around work-life balance matters. We hold workshops for them where they can share experiences with other line managers from other departments and even regional branches. This gives us an opportunity to identify the difficulties they are facing in order to institute amendments. Soft skills trainings are offered by us (HR) and some by external partners – topics centre around*

*workload planning, scheduling and flexible working skills, among other topics.” (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male)*

### Organisation-wide training

In addition to specific LM training, more WLB training was reported to have been offered to all the employees within both organisations as a whole. All the HRLs (n=14) acknowledged that training on WLB matters was mandatory during staff inductions. Again, recognition of organisational power structures was reflected in the manner in which induction trainings were organised and facilitated. The difference this time is that prestige and power were demonstrated in both firms. Citations from six and five HRL interviews from Safaricom and Telkom respectively acknowledged the holding of separate induction sessions for senior executives. However, the manner in which prestige was exercised differed between the organisations.

From Telkom, it was clear from the HRLs that the rules that regulate public service staff had to be internalised from the onset, as no further WLB-specific training was provided while in employment. One staff handbook, provided to each department and kept under the custody of LMs, was reported to cover information for all employees regardless of their rank. Nevertheless, it was considered honourable for the Chief Human Resource Manager to induct the executives as evidenced from the excerpts below.

*“...all new staff have to be taken through the civil service staff handbook and code of regulations. In these documents, HR policies including leave options are covered in detail. This takes 3 days maximum. We cannot afford any more training just for leave matters. We don’t have that kind of money. We cannot afford computers either because politicians have opposed the loss of jobs which can result through computerisation. But I would personally not want to go back to class and be trained to use a computer at this age” (Participant 4T: Kikuyu, male).*

*“Top managers have their induction carried out by the Chief Human Resource Manager because he is considered to be at their level” (Participant 1T, Kikuyu, male).*

Safaricom on the other hand was reported by five HRLs to have offered WLB training at induction and beyond, as illustrated in Figure 4.5 below. Guidance was extended to the departmental level where additional department-tailored training was provided. Similar to Telkom, independent sessions were arranged for senior management. Three aspects were reported to have led to this: (1) the WLB provisions that were offered to senior executives

differed from those offered to regular staff; (2) the company did not want other employees to know about the extra benefits that senior staff received; and (3) the senior managers' staff handbook was an electronic version rather than printed, and exclusively accessible to this group on an 'executive's intranet' platform. WLB induction for these managers was however stated to have been carried out by regular HR personnel. This practice reinforces the hierarchical divide.

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Figure 4.5: Excerpt from Document 1S: *Safaricom UNCOP Report 2011/2012*, pg. 6, showing staff during a training session on employee wellbeing matters.

*“Before new employees are engaged in any duties, they have to be trained on Safaricom’s policies, and each employee is issued with a copy of the staff handbook. They are informed about the code of regulations and key aspects of the Employment Act. Induction training takes 3 days while the departmental training varies by departments. Each department is allocated an IT expert who guides them through interaction with the staff intranet and other e-facilities such as the S-HUB database. Our wellness events are there to remind employees what is on offer. Line managers also provide proper education on reporting lines and procedures of requesting for time off work” (Participant 2S: Kikuyu, Male).*

*“The most senior managers have their own inductions and different handbooks because their work-life benefits have extra additions. Besides, they have to be awarded due respect – they cannot be mixed up with juniors” (Participant 6S: Kalenjin, male).*

The promotion of WLB programmes within both firms was delivered through various platforms.

### Modes of promotion

Significant differences emerged in the variety of mediums employed by each firm to promote their WLB programmes. Findings from Telkom showed that the organisation's communication system, which was based on a one-on-one and print media approach, consisted of: induction sessions, guidelines on regulations that were attached to employment

letters, the public service staff handbook, internal memos, and consultation with HR personnel. According to the HRLs, Telkom's non-computerised system was easy to use. However, they also criticised the system for being limiting in terms of speed and the breadth of transmission. For example:

*"We do not have enough computers – only managers are allocated computers therefore we cannot create a computer-based communication system. But new employees have this information attached to their appointment letters. Staff can visit the HR offices for information or they can access the same information through the staff handbook. We can only afford 1 handbook per department because of production costs. New policies are communicated through internal memos which are posted on departmental noticeboards and letters sent to departmental heads. But induction is the first"* (Participant 4T: Kikuyu, Male).

Conversely, Safaricom HRLs (n=6) named the CEO as the first source of information for any new policy. Through the CEO's email communication to all employees, new policies were defined, their purpose clarified and to whom the policy was applicable was explained. Seven interview extracts reported the provision of internet compliant mobile phones and monthly internet bundles for each employee. The payments of the bundles and mobile phones were recovered through an affordable monthly 'check-off' instalment payment plan. This meant that employees located in marginalised and non-marginalised areas could access the internet and could therefore acquire information from their emails, staff intranet and/or e-databases. For example:

*"During the induction of new employees, information on work-life balance provisions is communicated. Each employee is given an employee handbook which contains the same information. But we also encourage employees to communicate with the HR group where they would be informed about any benefits that they are entitled to. All the employees have official email accounts and log in details where they can access the same information from the staff intranet and S-HUB database. Also, we have quarterly staff bulletins, staff appraisal meetings, monthly review meetings, and group emails that are sent out to all staff members when any changes occur"* (Participant 3S: Kikuyu, Female).

*"When we advertise for jobs, we include our work-life balance information in the adverts because that is where the strength of Safaricom lies. When a new policy is introduced, the CEO sends out an email to all staff members to inform them and to also show support for the policy. When word is received from the CEO, employees take it seriously. Also, HR collaborated with the finance department to provide each employee with a mobile phone of their choice, that is internet enabled, with bundles which are recovered and*

*upgraded through a monthly check-off system – employees are connected 24/7” (Participant 6S: Kalenjin, Male).*

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The ‘wellness week’, ‘wellness month’ and staff bulletins were added platforms declared by six HRLs. Through these avenues, the profile of WLB at Safaricom was not only raised, but these events also acted as effective avenues for reminding employees about what was on offer. One-on-one consultations at

Figure 4.6: Excerpt from Document 2S: *Annual report 2013/2014*, pg. 23, showing the inauguration of Safaricom’s wellness facility.

Safaricom were reported to not only be limited to employee-HR but also to employee-LM. Team/departmental briefings and individual appraisal sessions were reported as additional channels used to promote the WLB programme (n=5).

Furthermore, upon the introduction of new policies, whereas Telkom sent out memos to LMs for onward posting on staff noticeboards - “....*If a new policy is introduced (like the paternity leave), we send out memos to departmental heads and they put them up on their noticeboards*” (Participant 7T: Kikuyu, female), Safaricom instead sent out HR personnel to raise awareness through departmental briefings, and in the process, encouraged an exchange of ideas - “.....*when a new policy is introduced, we also send someone from HR to the departments to educate staff so that we can also have observable reactions...*” (Participant 5S: Somali, male).

The above discussion demonstrates a significant difference in the efforts (physical ability and desire to implement) made by public and private sector firms in Kenya to create employees’ awareness of their WLB programmes. An effective internal organisational communication system becomes of importance given that organisational capabilities are developed and enacted through communicative processes. Keane (2008) has advocated for organisations to invest in computer technology as information technology (IT) enables a more cost-effective, accurate and speedy management of information. The speed of computerisation, which would

have made access to information easier at Telkom, was reported to have been delayed by resistance from politicians, who feared the loss of jobs with any subsequent electronic change. Furthermore, when interviewed, four HRLs resisted the option of obtaining computer training, for example, *“That is training meant for those younger ones who will come after us”* (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, male).

Ghidini et al.’s study (2014: 297) took note of a public service in Kenya that suffered from a weakness in spreading good practice, a lack of skills to innovate and systematic resistance to change and reform. Corroborating the findings of the present study and Ghidini et al.’s study, other researchers have similarly found that employees at management level in Kenya’s public sector were mostly of older ages and computer untrained (Tarus et al. 2015; Siambi 2008). However, while computer training for these managers is commendable, on the other hand it would impact negatively on Telkom’s financial status, which the HRLs consistently declared had been insufficient. For example, *“...we cannot afford to invest in all these ventures that private companies do because we have no money. Besides, even if we obtained funds to finance such projects, the common habit in this sector of stealing would run down the project”* (Participant 2T: Abaluhya, male).

In contrast to Telkom, computerisation and organisational communication at Safaricom had been simplified by the employment of a younger workforce (evidenced by all participants’ demographics in Chapters 4, 5 and 6). Younger workers are known for their technological expertise and are considered to be the most interconnected and technologically friendly age group (e.g. Cruz 2007; Bassett 2008; Erickson 2008). However, it has been argued that the electronic accessibility of information by this generation blurs the borders between work and home (McCrindle Research 2011). The fact is that the employee can never truly switch off because they have access to work all of the time. Nevertheless, this study agrees with Trunk’s (2007) view that their technology-prone characteristic enhances organisational communication, in this case, WLB communication.

Moving forward, this study agrees with Fitz-enz (2009) and Lankeu and Maket (2012) who contend that it is not only the acquisition of technology that would guide organisational communication success, but the effective integration of these assets into organisational change management processes. This also includes strategies on how to effectively resolve resistance to change (e.g. at Telkom). For example, in explaining the extent to which

Safaricom had devoted resources to a computerised communication system, one respondent stated:

*“....Everyone has an internet compliant phone and bundles. Some employees are supplied with ipads as part of their working requirements. Generally, Safaricom went fully digital in 2013 when the government passed a ‘no duty’ policy on the importation of computers”* (Participant 6S: Kalenjin, male).

With the above evidence exhibiting varied forms of investment in WLB training and communication platforms, it was important to assess and compare how the performance of the WLB policies and practices were monitored and evaluated within and between the two firms, as displayed in the next section.

#### **4.4.4 Monitoring the performance of WLB policies and practices**

As reflected in the conceptual framework (Figure 3.1), employee organisation-wide experiences of WLB informed the re-shaping of WLB strategy, and hence the reviewing and evaluation of policies and practices.

##### **Reviewing of statutory policies**

It is imperative that WLB policies be occasionally reviewed to ensure that they are not only achieving what they were designed for, but also to incorporate changes in the circumstances of the firm or employees. Evidence from the corporate policy statements of both firms showed that since its inception in 2007, the first changes to the Employment Act (2007) were made in 2015. Telkom HRLs (n=5) attributed the slow consideration of changes in statutory entitlements to the long process through which new policies had to undergo in order to finally receive presidential assent for implementation (Njoroge 2014). Both organisations incorporated changes in their policy documents; these were documented in their various staff handbooks. The Employment Act (2015) revealed four revisions as illustrated in Table 4.2.

	<b>Policy</b>	<b>Original</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
1.	<b>Working Hours</b> 27, sub-section (1)	Maximum hours 52 spread over 6 days a week.	48 hours spread over 6 days in one week
2.	<b>Equality and Discrimination</b> 27, sub-section (5)	No discrimination based on race, sex, pregnancy, marital status, health status, colour, age, disability, religion,	Tribe or social origin added to the list.

	Policy	Original	Amendment
		conscience, belief, culture, dress, language or birth.	
3.	<b><i>Paternity Leave</i></b> 29, sub-section (1)	Only maternity leave included.	Paternity leave added. Men can now claim time off work for two weeks.
4.	<b><i>Sick Leave</i></b> 30, subsection (1)	Sick leave only available to people who had worked for at least 12 months.	30 days sick leave with full pay allowed after 2 months of continuous service with an employer.

**Table 4.2: Amendments to Employment Act (2007)**  
*Source: (Document 2T: Employment Act Amendment Bill 2015)*

### Evaluation of WLB programmes

Here, the intention of the researcher was to ascertain how the HR departments of the two firms examined the content, implementation and impact of their policies and practices, in order to establish their merit, worth and utility. Significant differences were established. Telkom only offered statutory entitlements, and any changes and/or developments were dependent on government procedures. On the contrary, Safaricom's corporate policy statements demonstrated that there had been annual changes and developments to policies since the WLB concept was introduced within the firm in 2011. Figure 4.7, extracted from the company's annual report, depicts the policy formulation and implementation cycle followed by the company. As shown in Figure 4.8 below, surveys were a popular method of evaluation. Corroborating the policy documents, Safaricom HRLs (n=6) revealed the organisation's monitoring scheme at government, management and employee levels. HR reportedly checked on legal frameworks, employees' opinions on WLB practice, and changing needs (organisational and employee). Also, one HRL stated that there was an annual evaluation of WLB procedures to ensure that the policies and practices complied with up-to-date statutory legislation and practice guidelines. A detailed illustration and comparison of the revisions in the WLB programmes for both firms is presented as Appendix nine. In demonstrating evaluation initiatives, two HRLs stated:



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*“Our monitoring and evaluation toolkits are adopted from Vodafone UK. Being in HR, we have done a lot to introduce new HRM policies. The next step of evolution is awareness and monitoring of their effectiveness before adding any new ones. We are keen to know which of the policies are utilised the most, when and why; tracking any marked improvements in outcomes informs the redesigning of policies” (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, Female).*

*“...do they have time for this? They had better be in their offices thinking of how to steal money and not walking around in the hot sun” (Participant 5T:*

Figure 4.7: Excerpt from Document 1S: *Safaricom UNCOP Report 2011/2012*, pg. 11, demonstrating the policy formulation and implementation cycle followed by Safaricom.

Secondly, from the analysis of the interviews, it was established that whereas Safaricom encouraged employee feedback on WLB practice, Telkom failed to do the same. For instance, all Safaricom HRLs (n=7) uniformly acknowledged the use of company surveys, team briefings, monthly/weekly wellness campaigns, a staff council and employee appraisal sessions, as some forums through which the organisation obtained feedback from employees. The slogan, “*you said, we did*” was used by HR to report back action taken or matters that were in the process of being acted upon as a result of feedback gathered from these promotional/evaluation initiatives.

There was evidence of positive action as a result of employee feedback. For example, Safaricom HRLs (n=6) demonstrated that a staff council was formed in 2014 in response to staff requests for employee representatives. This council consists of general employee representatives, drawn from different departments. The council reportedly meets with the CEO at least once a quarter, not only providing a platform for the exchange of views across the organisation in the process, but also offering an avenue for staff to engage with

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management on issues affecting them. For example, this is what one manager expressed concerning staff surveys:

*“We find surveys to be the fastest and easiest way to monitor the progress of*

Figure 4.8: Caption from Document 2S: *Annual report 2013/2014*, pg. 50, demonstrating the use of surveys to obtain employee feedback at Safaricom.

*our work-life balance initiatives. We do online for line managers and paper ones for subordinate staff. This exercise is carried out by an independent organisation then the analysed results are discussed with top and senior managers before the information is rolled out to other managers and then employees” (Participant 6S: Kalenjin, male).*

### Future planning

This theme was related to HR’s forecasted plans in relation to WLB. None of the Telkom HRL responses revealed any form of future planning for WLB. The lack of this information could be attributed to responses reflected in Section 4.3.2 where the planning, forecasting developments and implementation of statutory policies were considered to be the Ministry of Labour’s role. Among the Safaricom responses (n=4), it was noted that commuting time, especially among general employees, was a contributing factor to long working days and less resting time. Furthermore, the same HRLs stated that employee safety was not guaranteed, as some workers lived in high risk suburbs. Early starting times were reported to expose such employees to risks of being mugged. Hence, the interviews uncovered forecasted plans for the construction of a staff housing scheme and a school, as demonstrated below in interview narratives, a newspaper extract (Figure 4.9), and pictures from the company’s 2013/2014 annual report (Figure 4.10). Living in close proximity to the company’s premises was intended to reduce employee commuting time and guarantee safety.



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Figure 4.9: Caption from the national newspaper: *Daily Nation*, pg. 7, and featuring Safaricom's efforts in managing employee WLB through a housing project built in close proximity to the company premises.

**Housing** – “2016 will see the launching of our staff housing scheme for job grades R to N that starts in Nairobi before progressing to other regions. This is in partnership with the staff pension scheme. The houses will be located in close proximity to company premises. Employees will not be required to pay for rent but a direct deduction will be made out of their house allowances as a check-off on salary. Most of our staff in this job grades come from very distant areas and are exposed to muggings because their duties begin as early as 6am” (Participant 3S: Kikuyu, female).

**School** – “A foundation has been laid for a primary school project; a joint initiative with a private school is underway. The institution will be open to staff members’ children; those within grades R to N. Fees will be subsidised. No transport costs will be incurred for children because the school is in close proximity to the houses. Therefore, no worries about children returning home late. In the event of a medical emergency, the children can be rushed to the on-site medical centre and their parents would also reach them easily” (Participant 7S: Luo, female).

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Figure 4.10: Caption from Document 2S: *Annual report 2013/2014*, pg. 50, exhibiting a primary school built close to the housing project to enable easy access by the Safaricom employees to their children while they are at work.

The above examples of the Safaricom initiatives are not only focused on the wellbeing of employees, but can also be argued to provide the company with a basis for control. To the employees, it may appear that Safaricom is helping them to reduce their commute and prevent muggings. But in reality, it helps them to control their staff – they know where they are, they can get to work quicker, and there would be no excuses for lateness, among more reasons. This merges employees’ domestic life with work, thereby blurring the borders between the two domains. Also, there could be a potential issue of employees from dominant tribes benefitting from prioritised allocation of housing given the level of tribalism in the Kenyan society. Therefore, the above discussed positive initiatives demonstrated by both firms were not without challenges. These are analysed in the following section.

#### **4.4.5. Challenges in promoting WLB**

The interviews revealed three main challenges encountered by the HRLs in promoting their WLB programmes. *Political-tribal influence* and *incompatibility of WLB initiatives* were

common to both firms, but differences occurred on contextual experiences. *Part government ownership* exclusively related to Telkom. Nevertheless, in tandem, the three sub-themes were directly related to *objectives two* and *five*. The mediating effects of tribal and gender structures on the implementation of WLB policies and practices, as reflected in the conceptual framework, are analysed and discussed.

### **Political-tribal influence**

According to the Kenyan context, Lankester and Market (2012: 16) define ***political influence/interference***, as “*the intrusion of government and politicians in peoples’ or organisation’s private business with an intention to influence decisions and exert pressure and fear*”. As explained above (see section on the background of Kenya), tribalism motivates people to align themselves with individuals who are connected to them through kinship and geo-political affiliations, and alienate other people who are not related to them by these categories.

The preliminary assumption at the start of this research was that there was a high chance that WLB in Kenyan workplaces was influenced by matters relating to tribalism. However, an examination of the HRL interviews revealed that ‘tribe’ and ‘politics’ were closely connected. The reason for this is explained in Frank and Rainer’s (2009) work. These authors indicated that political parties in Kenya are largely based on tribe rather than on ideology. According to Kimenyi and Gutierrez-Romero (2008), tribalism is the centre of governance and politics in Kenya; it is endorsed and promoted by political elites. Hence the theme *political-tribal influence*, which was outstandingly identified by 93% (n=13) of the participants. Responses on this theme were more dominant among the Telkom HRLs (n=7) in comparison to Safaricom. This means that the Telkom HRLs expressed more concern about the influence of government and politicians on their organisation’s business operations, given that the company is partially owned by the government.

Common to both firms, *political-tribal influence* was declared (n=13) to have affected the practice of WLB from the recruitment and selection level of employment, through to the implementation of policies and practices. In terms of recruitment and selection, the influence occurred through the increased hiring of individuals from dominant tribes. However, there were differences between the two firms on contextual experiences. For Telkom, political

pressure was reportedly directed towards the involuntary employment of large numbers of politicians' allies, who in most cases were underqualified and lacked the appropriate skills to perform duties. The result of this, as reported by the HRLs (n=4), was not only overstaffing, but also work overloads for those who had the skills and capabilities to perform duties. It was through the dominance of powerful tribes in employment that the HRLs felt a trend of favouritism in the approval of WLB policy requests. For example:

*“A job that requires 1 person has 4 people attached to it. Some of these people sit around and chat while others work. We have had cases of people in departments not being able to go on annual leave for a whole year because there is no one to do their duties”* (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, male).

Safaricom was not without similar experiences of involuntary employments of unqualified politicians' acquaintances. However, only small numbers were reportedly employed in comparison to the numbers at Telkom. The Safaricom HRLs (n=6) informed about the presence of organisational restrictions on over-employment which were highly upheld by management. Furthermore, being a private firm, its focus on profitability could not support excess staff. Safaricom's challenges concerning the hiring of unqualified political referrals were mostly related to the extra finances expended to upgrade their qualifications. The intention of the extra training was to maintain quality in all operations. However, the HRLs felt that such funds would have been better utilised on enhancing employee wellbeing. Furthermore, the managers complained of experiencing the involuntary allocation of time off work by LMs to politicians' allies, as demonstrated in the narratives below:

*“More leave days, impromptu times off work, and faster approvals of time off work requests is what we experience with politicians' relatives because they have “protection from above”. Our hands are tied. Everyone fears to be reported to the superpowers - people have lost lives, jobs and their families put at risk for rebelling against such instructions. This goes against our fairness policy but we have no say when it comes to politicians and their authority”* (Participant 7S: Luo, male).

*“Employing people from the same family is against organisational policy because that would be a breeding ground for favouritism. However, going against instructions from politicians is risky for the business, individuals, and our families”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

Leave allocation challenges were similarly reported by the Telkom HRLs. Since signing off employee requests for WLB policies was a shared responsibility between LMs and HR, Telkom HRLs (n=6) reported more complex difficulties in independent decision making

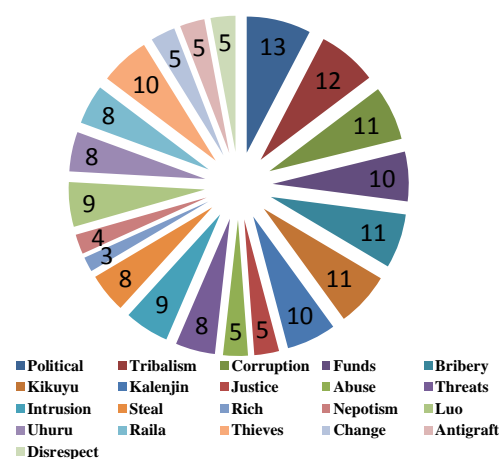
compared to their Safaricom counterparts. By virtue of being a public firm, politicians had easier and faster access to these managers and they therefore experienced direct control from politicians regarding their allies. It is at this stage that partiality in the implementation of statutory WLB policies was realised. Most of the HRLs (n=5) indicated that favouritism was tribally inclined. They recorded receiving threatening phone calls from politicians, even on their personal mobile phones, during and/or after working hours. According to the managers, it was also common practice for politicians to visit their offices without appointments, to threaten them in the presence of employees, as illustrated below. Also beneath is a word cloud showing the trend of words used in all the interview narratives relating to the political-tribal theme (Figures 4.11 and 4.12):

*“It is very difficult to progress in this environment where you cannot do anything unless a politician says so. We have to employ politicians’ relatives and friends who are not even qualified. Some of these people are strategically placed here as watchdogs to monitor and report all our movements – we have no full authority over the management of such people. Sometimes we disapprove leave requests and the employee comes back with an official letter from a much higher office instructing us to allow them leave – usually this is an order”* (Participant 3T: Luo, male).



**Figure 4.11: Analysed Political-Tribal Influence**  
word trends obtained from all interview quotes,  
showing the emphasis placed on political and tribal  
issues.

**Figure 4.12: Number of themed responses per size of word**



In addition to political influence, incompatibility of WLB provisions with employee needs, as discussed in the section below, was recorded.

#### **4.4.6 Incompatibility of WLB provisions**

The *incompatibility of WLB policies* was identified by both groups, and was associated with some statutory and Safaricom-specific WLB policies, and how suitable they were with employee needs and the nature of work.

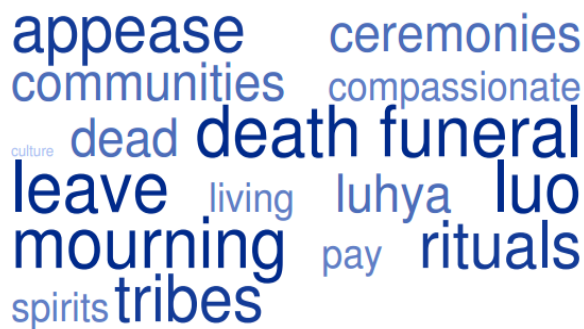
##### **Statutory entitlements**

Researchers such as McCarthy et al. (2010) have recognised that organisations cannot develop WLB policies that fully address the needs of each and every employee. However, in the present research, the adopting of WLB policies directly from foreign law without modifications was a foundation for challenges. For instance, two statutory WLB entitlements, namely *bereavement and paternity leave*, were found to be unsuited to employees' cultural beliefs and practices. The two entitlements also acted as breeding grounds for the unfair implementation of WLB arrangements. Most of the HRLs (n=11) admitted to being intermediaries in resolving complaints due to feelings of uneven allocation of *bereavement leave days* for tribal practices associated with mourning<sup>39</sup>. For instance, compared to the other 41 Kenyan tribes, the lengthy mourning periods of the *Luo tribe* were singled out. This community has multiple traditions that are unique to its origins. According to Perry et al. (2014), their burial rituals<sup>40</sup> are one of their most seriously practised traditions to date. The Luo are said to perform up to ten or more varying rituals for the deceased. Similarly, Gunga (2009) referred to death among the Luo as a 'crisis of life' and a key element in the life cycle of an individual. These ceremonies, which according to the HRLs were largely held in their rural homelands, necessitated an allocation of more days off work than the statutory seven days. The word trend below illustrates some of the common words used across all interviews regarding bereavement leave requests (Figures 4.13 and 4.14). At Safaricom, one manager stated as follows:

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<sup>39</sup> According to Nwoye (2013), the sub-Saharan African conception of mourning or grieving in death suggests a process that cannot be linked or limited to some time span as death is believed to mark the beginning of another phase of being. Hence, the death of an individual is characterised by a series of cultural rituals and rites of passage as the dead is believed to still 'live' among the 'living' as well as influence the actions of the living (King 2013).

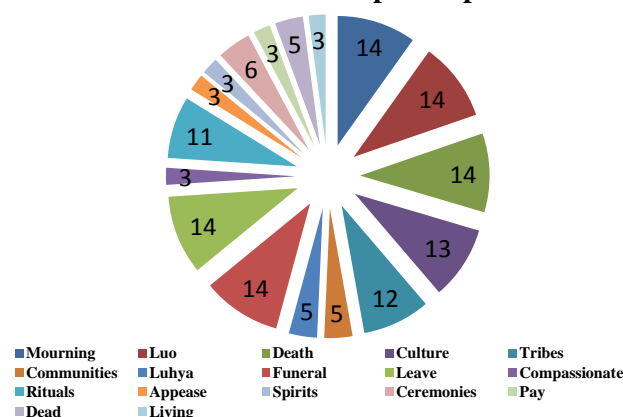
<sup>40</sup> Rituals are representations of cultural practices and rites of passage which mark a people's life experience (Gunga 2009). Specific to death, they are expressions and connections performed by individuals, groups of people and/or communities in communication with the living-dead and a Supreme Being. These depend on who the deceased's is within a community (age, gender, marital status, financial prowess, position of authority, among others) and how they died (Baloyi 2008). Examples of rituals include: shaving of the hair, slaughtering of a domestic animal, singing, dancing and chanting, various forms of wailing and more.



**Figure 4.13:** Analysed bereavement leave word trends retrieved from all interview narratives relating to this theme.

“Bereavement leave is seven days, but the Luos mostly need over 30 days to attend to mourning, burial rites, and many other rituals. We have huge problems fitting the requirements of these employees into our time-off work options. Even when they are asked to use part of their annual leave days, the time is not still enough to the extent that they begin interfering with other leave options such as calling in sick when we know very well that they are not sick. The most difficult issue is that the members of this tribe are quite vocal and tend to argue a lot in the name of fighting for their rights” (Participant 6S: Kalenjin, male).

**Figure 4.14:** Number of theme responses per size of word



On the other hand, *gender role expectations* and the legalisation of *polygamy* created difficulties in managing the newly introduced *paternity leave*. According to the Kenyan legal prescription, Nyandegge et al. (2013) explain, paternity leave is the opportunity given to men to take time off from work after the birth of a child, with intentions of encouraging men’s participation in their children’s lives from an early age. This way, the government sends a signal that both parents matter in the lives of their children. While acknowledging Nyandegge et al.’s definition, Mokomane (2014) contends that sub-Saharan African communities have yet to come to terms with this understanding because of lingering stereotypes about a father’s role in the family, which prohibits men’s engagement in child care. Corroborating this literature, the HRLs (n=12) made it known that despite the shifting of traditional housewife and breadwinner roles, male workers, particular within the public sector, were reluctant to take paternity leave because it was perceived as an ‘act of male weakness’. This means that men who partake in child care are considered to have been overpowered by their wives and can therefore not make independent decisions (Mungai and Ogot 2012).



However, some HRLs (n=9), particularly those from Safaricom, reported generational differences in paternity leave perceptions. At Telkom, it was stated that older workers related their presence at work to higher likelihoods of promotion. Yet reluctance in taking paternity leave meant that employees had to be compensated financially, and in the process exacerbated Telkom's financial uncertainty. On the other hand, the Safaricom HRLs noted that the younger generation was eager to make use of their paternity leave, attesting to Kossek et al.'s (2012) and Yeaton's (2008) assertion that younger workers prioritise their relationships and lifestyle over work.

Still in relation to paternity leave, *polygamy*, which was legalised in Kenya in 2014 (Mouton et al. 2010) posed further challenges. The introduction of this legislation was indicated by the HRLs (n=10) to have created difficulties in tackling disgruntled employees on matters related to the equitable use of WLB policies and women's wellness. Six Safaricom HRLs reported there being a rise in married women's requests to use WLB policies. A quarterly organisational survey attributed the change to demands based on 'domestic male care', especially because of the existence of wife rivalry. Some managers reported a rise in the number of female workers enrolling onto Safaricom's *employee wellness scheme* for issues related to emotional distress, emerging from polygamous marital problems. Even more, all the Safaricom HRLs (n=7) revealed increased levels of female domestic violence and employees' husbands engaging in extra marital affairs with house helps and/or boarding relatives (e.g. women's younger sisters). The reason for this was the failure of women to be present in their homes upon their husbands' return from work, and the negligence of marital obligations. For example:

*"Last month, we (HR) had to personally rush to a female employee's house to take her to hospital, in the early hours of the morning after she was beaten by her husband for returning home late. This is not an isolated case because several more have occurred with some ending up into separation"* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

Secondly, having multiple wives meant having multiple homes and children, calling for a man's diversified attention to numerous domestic matters. This means that polygamous men not only benefitted from more paid statutory paternity leave than monogamous and unmarried males, but polygamous workers were also reported by the HRLs (n=7) to request varied non-paternity related WLB arrangements (e.g. compassionate leave, leave for special purposes) more than their other male counterparts. This meant that the cumulative working time per

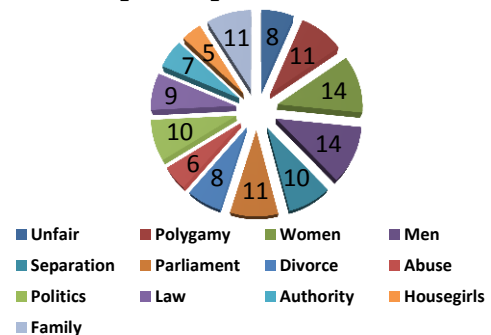
year of polygamous employees was also lower than that of the other males. In expressing their challenges of managing polygamy in WLB practice, one HRL stated as below while the proceeding word cloud typifies participants' common words (Figures 4.15 and 4.16):

*“We are throwing away company money and working time. For the private sector, this is unaffordable. A man with six wives is literally not at work half of the year. If each of the six women gives birth, that man would be out of work for 3 months out of 12 for paternity leave. This is without including 24-days statutory annual leave and other provisions that the employee will want to use (e.g. compassionate, sick or leave for special purposes)”* (Participant 2S: Kikuyu, male).



Figure 4.15: Analysed word trends retrieved from the interview narratives pertaining to the gender role expectations and polygamy themes.

Figure 4.16: Number of themed responses per size of word



### Safaricom-specific arrangements

According to the corporate policy documents, Safaricom's *women wellness scheme* was introduced in 2015 to support the numerous challenges that the organisation faced in managing women's WLB needs. From the analysed interviews, there were mixed views regarding the success of the programme. Some HRLs (n=4) lauded the scheme, particularly the baby crèche, for providing 'peace of mind' for breastfeeding mothers. However, six

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responses conceded that the benefits of the scheme were realised at the cost of staff shortages. The shortages came about as a result of the multiple benefits that the comprehensive scheme afforded women

Figure 4.17: Excerpt from Document 4S: *Supporting a mother friendly workplace flyer*, pg. 5, showing some of the benefits contained in the women wellness scheme.

(see Figure 4.17 above and Appendix 10). This led to the overworking of male employees, as well as childfree and/or unmarried female workers. Even more, as mentioned in the preceding section, leaving work late due to late shifts, as women enjoyed the benefits of having their babies at work, reportedly caused multiple problems on the home front. Hence, the women's wellness scheme had positive outcomes for Safaricom at work, but was a key cause of instability in female workers' marriages. For example:

*"The women wellness scheme has worked well for Safaricom, but in the past year, we have recorded a number of marriages turning into single marriages. Most of those involved are female employees on the evening shifts that end between 9 and 11pm. We do not want Safaricom to be the source of broken homes, but we cannot also have all the ladies on morning or afternoon shifts because we already have a problem with men (especially the younger ones) complaining about women being given too much attention yet they are paid similar salaries"* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

Notably, the women wellness scheme, including other WLB arrangements, were confirmed to have been adapted from Safaricom's foreign partner, Vodafone UK (n=7). These were implemented without adjustments and therefore failed to incorporate the national and work contexts, which influenced Safaricom's employee needs. For instance, Vodafone UK was reported to work with *temporary agency workers*<sup>41</sup> who filled up job absences. The temporary agency worker concept is non-existent in Kenya. Therefore, Safaricom grappled with staff shortages as they operated a lean workforce. This amounted to heavy workloads and long working hours as 'present' employees bore the burden of taking on extra workloads, working overtime, or being 'on-call'. For example:

*"I learnt about recruitment agencies while on my 8-month exchange programme at the Vodafone UK head office. This is a very good idea because employees truly get the chance to rest, and even those who remain at work only handle their own duties. Kenya has nothing of this sort. When women go off, we get into a total mess. But I also observed that the temporary employees supplied by the recruitment firms were not keen and committed to their work – they were only present to make money. Their work was poorly done and needed to be refined by a permanent member of staff every time"* (Participant 6S: Kalenjin, male).

The HRLs' dilemma revolved around making the WLB programme a success considering the level of investment. For example:

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<sup>41</sup> This is where job recruitment agencies use temporary workers to fill vacancies in companies if and when they are required. The contract of working is between the agency and the worker and not between the worker and the company.

*“The amount of time, effort and financial investment that has gone into making this venture a success is immeasurable. We are under pressure to make it work otherwise if it fails, it would be a huge loss to the company”* (Participant 7S: Luo, female).

*“...this work-life balance programme is very expensive and not many companies in Kenya can afford it. It is either you introduce it and shut down or ignore employee wellbeing matters and continue operating”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

Having discussed the similarities in *political-tribal influences* and *WLB policy incompatibility challenges* between the two firms, the proceeding section explains Telkom’s uncertainty owing to being partly state owned.

#### **4.4.7 Telkom’s part government ownership**

In section 3.4 of Chapter 3, it was stated that Telkom Kenya was partially owned by the Kenyan Government. This qualified the firm as a public organisation within the meaning of the State Corporations Act. The government owns 30% while France Telecoms has a 70% company stake. This status attracted dissatisfactions from five HRLs considering the low percentage of government ownership. The HRLs felt that the government’s controlling interests limited the firm’s development options. Their perceptions were that the benefits of having a private international partner (France Telecoms) were not felt in any circle of the business as there was no liberty and participation in policy decision making. For example:

*“Working under government directives is limiting in terms of growth because all our policies have to be passed through parliament. The changing or introduction of a simple procedure takes a very long time and to be approved. As the people on the ground, we are not consulted on what we could recommend for new policies”* (Participant 4T: Kikuyu, male).

Operating within the public sector was reported to subject the organisation and its employees to the malfunctions of the Kenyan public service. This purportedly constrained any efforts or vision to improve company operations. Six managers found decision-making processes to be rigid, old fashioned and changes in policies took years to be passed by parliament. More distressing to the managers was the fact that recommendations for the organisation to operate under the Private Companies Act had been refused for baseless reasons. Nevertheless, it was foreseeable that through the introduction of the Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Telkom would be able to benefit from modern HRL working styles and improved working standards

(KIPPRA 2013). The PPP is Kenya’s long-term development strategy, through which the private sector could offer a dynamic and efficient way to deliver and manage public sector infrastructure. Below are some of the HRLs’ thoughts regarding Telkom’s part government ownership:

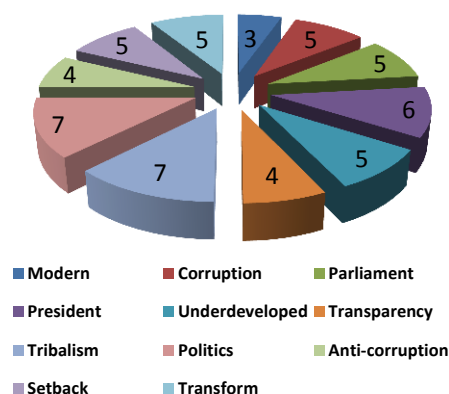
*“The current WLB policies are implemented by the government and the fact that the company is governed by the public companies act makes it difficult to introduce other measures. We operate in the old world” (Participant 7T: Kikuyu, female).*

In the same spirit, the participants’ feelings were demonstrated in a commonality of words reflected in the word cloud below:



**Figure 4.18:** Word trends obtained from interviews on the ‘part government ownership’ of Telkom.

**Figure 4.19:** Number of themed responses per size of word



A summary of the differences between Telkom and Safaricom as extracted from the corporate policy documents and transcribed HRL interviews as presented in Table 4.3.

	TELKOM	SAFARICOM
1.	Lacked an understanding of the “WLB concept”.	Had a clear understanding of the WLB concept.
2.	Offered only 9 statutory leave entitlements as WLB policies.	Offered 9 statutory leave entitlements plus 10 Safaricom-specific provisions.
3.	All statutory entitlements were equally applied to employees of all levels.	Statutory provisions adjusted for women and senior executives.
4.	One-on-one and print media formed the basis of communicating WLB information.	The communication system for WLB consisted of a combination of one-on-one, print media and electronic options.
5.	No mechanisms were put in place to monitor the performance of WLB policies and practices.	Annual evaluations of WLB policies and practices.
6.	Stagnation in WLB practice for being partly owned by the government.	Staff shortages, heavy workloads and long working hours for adopting and implementing WLB models from Vodafone

	TELKOM	SAFARICOM
		UK.
<b>Table 4.3: A summary of the differences between Telkom and Safaricom as extracted from the policy documents and HRL interviews</b>		

#### 4.5 **CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter sought to ascertain and compare the existing WLB policies and practices to support the management of employees' work and personal lives at Safaricom and Telkom. The chapter also aimed to establish the perceptions and experiences of HRLs on the designing and overseeing of WLB policies and practices, and how the policies measured up to statutory obligations.

The findings from 14 HRL interviews and eight corporate policy statements showed that both organisations offered nine statutory WLB policies but Safaricom offered an additional 10 organisation-specific WLB provisions. Second, political-tribal influence was found to have encouraged tribal affiliations in both firms, which was a drawback to independent organisational functioning. Third, paternity and bereavement leave were found to have been not only incompatible to WLB policies and practices, but also to the fair implementation of these arrangements. Lastly, whilst the advancement of WLB practice at Telkom was hampered by being partly owned by the government and shortages in financial resources, some provisions within Safaricom's WLB programme failed to holistically address organisational, work and employee needs, especially in relation to women's gender roles. Hence, the findings of this chapter contribute to the overall research argument that the insufficient consideration of African perspectives in work-life literature undermines the cultural diversity aspects of WLB.

## **CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF WLB POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

### **5.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

Having established from the HRLs' interviews in Chapter 4 that LMs were involved in the implementation of WLB policies, this chapter draws and analyses data from 20 semi-structured interviews and 20 online questionnaires involving 10 LMs from each of the two organisations. Objectives 1, 3 and 5 are addressed in this chapter. Following the conceptual framework, the analysis of this chapter relates to the WLB implementation processes. The chapter has two aims: **(1) Interviews** – to determine and compare the managers' perceptions and experiences of the WLB responsibility, and **(2) Questionnaires** – to establish the attitudes and opinions of the managers regarding their WLB role. The *interview* findings are presented first, followed by those obtained from the *questionnaires*. The interview findings were triangulated with those obtained from the questionnaires, and also with the results obtained from Chapter 4.

In **the interview findings**, Section 5.2 provides the demographic characteristics of the 20 participants. Three major themes were identified in the data, which illustrate WLB implementation gaps in work-life literature: *knowledge of WLB practice* (Section 5.3), *implementation of WLB policies and strategies* (Section 5.4), and *challenges in implementing WLB strategies* (Section 5.5). Within each theme, there were also sub-themes. The questionnaire results are discussed under five examined parameters (Sections 5.7 to 5.11). The concluding statement, which provides a synthesised summary of the interview and questionnaire findings, is provided in Section 5.12.

The initials LM will be used to refer to line managers. In the interviews, S will stand for Safaricom (e.g. Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male), and T for Telkom (e.g. Participant 1T: Luo, male).

LMs in this research were the managers with employee supervisory responsibilities. They were responsible for communicating, approving and disapproving the use of statutory and non-statutory WLB provisions. The next section provides the demographic characteristics of the LMs.

## 5.2 PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHICS

The interview and online questionnaire sample consisted of 20 participants (10 from Safaricom and 10 from Telkom). The same senior, middle and junior managers were all interviewed and also they all completed an online questionnaire. Regardless of their level, all of the participating managers had LM responsibilities. Table 5.1 below provides the demographic characteristics of the LMs.

		<b>Safaricom n=10</b>	<b>Telkom n=10</b>
		<b>n</b>	<b>n</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	6	7
	Female	4	3
<b>Tribe</b>	Kikuyu	3	4
	Luo	3	1
	Kalenjin		3
	Abaluhya	2	1
	Somali	1	
	Meru	1	
	Maasai		1
<b>Management Level</b>	Senior	3	4
	Middle	6	6
	Junior	1	
<b>Age</b>	29-39	1	
	40-49	6	3
	50-59	3	7
<b>Length of service</b>	< 2 years	1	1
	3-5 years	4	2
	5-10 years	5	4
	11+ years		3
<b>Education qualifications</b>	College		6
	Degree	3	3
	Masters	7	1
<b>Table 5.1: Demographic characteristics of the sample of 20 LMs</b>			

Notably, the above demographic characteristics emulate those found in the HRLs' results in Chapter 4 where: (1) there were more male than female managers in both firms; (2) there were four dominant tribes: *Kikuyu*, *Kalenjin*, *Luo* and *Abaluhya*; (3) Telkom had LMs of an older age compared to Safaricom; (4) Telkom LMs had more years of service; while (5) Safaricom LMs exhibited higher education qualifications.



## **Interview Results**

### **5.3 KNOWLEDGE OF WLB PRACTICES**

Consistent with the aims of *objectives one* and *three*, this theme illustrated the LMs' overall knowledge of the WLB practices in their various organisations. The knowledge also related to their awareness of organisationally arranged WLB-specific training and development initiatives.

#### **5.3.1 Understanding WLB provisions**

In a similar trend to that of the HRLs (see Chapter 4), the Safaricom LMs (n=10) were familiar with and clearly explained the WLB concept, while the Telkom managers (n=10) referred to WLB policies and practices as '*leave*'. For example:

*"Having a balanced personal life as well as healthy work-life"* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*"A day away from work is leave"* (Participant 4T: Maasai, male).

The LMs were then asked questions designed to reveal their awareness of the WLB policies and practices available in their firms. The aim was to verify information obtained from corporate policy statements and the HRLs' interviews in Chapter 4. A high level of understanding was displayed by all the LMs in three areas: (1) the various WLB provisions exclusively offered by their organisations; (2) where and how to obtain WLB information; and (3) the procedures for approving/disapproving requests for time off work. Whilst the Telkom LMs outlined the varied statutory WLB provisions, the Safaricom LMs satisfactorily differentiated between statutory entitlements and the range of Safaricom-specific WLB benefits. This finding confirms McCarthy et al.'s (2010) suggestion of manager awareness being a key ingredient for effective WLB management, as the role of LMs involves communicating and implementing these policies and practices. In describing their knowledge of existing organisational WLB provisions, some LMs stated:

*"Safaricom offers two types of provisions: those mandated by the government which we refer to as 'leave' options, and those that Safaricom offers to their employees to show appreciation for their hard work, and to support their lives out of work. We have projects such as the 24hrs clinic, baby crèche, mother's rest room, a gym facility, a resource centre/library and a policy for flexi work"*

*with shift clusters running from 7am-4pm, 6am-5pm and 9am-6pm”*  
(Participant 2S: Abaluhya, female).

*“Our leave options are those recommended by the Ministry of Labour: maternity, paternity, leave for sports people, bereavement, annual, sick leave, among many others”* (Participant 2T: Kikuyu, female).

Extracts from eight and nine Telkom and Safaricom LM interviews respectively showed that these managers were the first points of contact when employees requested time off work. Hence, the LMs were probed on how and where they obtained information relating to WLB. As highlighted by McCarthy et al. (2010), the ability of LMs to effectively direct staff on the use of WLB arrangements is highly dependent on their own awareness of how the WLB system works. Mirroring the results in Chapter 4, all the LMs (n=20) displayed adequate knowledge of where and how to obtain WLB information, displaying a variance on the media used to promote the WLB programmes. Whereas the Telkom information platform was reportedly one-on-one and paper based, Safaricom combined one-on-one, paper-based and online/electronic transmission. Telkom’s communication system contradicted Keane’s (2008) recommendation for computerisation to be prioritised in modern organisational change strategies. According to Keane, developing corporate computer technology enables a more cost-effective, accurate and speedy management of information. For example, one LM stated:

*“...computers are for senior managers only. But they are operated by their secretaries because most of the managers are not computer trained”*  
(Participant 5T: Kalenjin, female).

Regardless of Telkom’s non-computerised communication system, the LMs confirmed that they were at ease with using print media and were still able to communicate WLB information to their teams. This notion supports Kossek et al.’s (2012) campaign for organisations to provide managers with communication instruments that they best understand in order to ensure efficient communication. Based on Telkom’s financial constraints (as reported in Chapter 4, Section 4.3.2), the LMs’ basic education and a lack of computer knowledge, a non-computerised system was still appropriate. On the other hand, Safaricom benefitted more from the ability of a computerised communication system that afforded the sharing of information on a faster and broader scale. In elaborating on the communication channels used, some LMs stated:

*“We access information on several platforms – the staff intranet, S-HUB database, emails, memos, bulletins and more. Even departmental meetings and individual appraisal meetings are avenues for discussing WLB issues.”*

*Everyone has an internet supported mobile phone and internet bundles”*  
(Participant 7S: Meru, Male)

*“....information on all the leave options is in employment letters, in the staff handbook or staff can visit the HR office to seek information. The computer here is for the top manager. Besides, most of our staff have no access to a computer”* (Participant 6T: Kikuyu, male).

Awareness of WLB policies and practices was further provided through training programmes as discussed below.

### **5.3.2 Training and development on WLB**

*WLB training*, a similarly strong theme, was identified by 85% (n=17) of the respondents, with the majority of them being from Safaricom (n=10). Given the disparities in the WLB communication media discussed above, it was not surprising that differences also emerged between the two firms on WLB-specific training. Notwithstanding, both LM groups confirmed having received some form of *WLB training* which was directed towards enlightening them on WLB policies, processes, and their role as implementers of WLB policies. Nonetheless, there were contextual variations on the *frequency of the training* and the *type of training* received.

#### **Frequency of training**

Emphasis by most of the LMs (n=10 to Safaricom and n=6 to Telkom) was placed on the importance of the preliminary WLB training received during induction sessions. This finding was consistent with that obtained from the HRLs’ interviews (see Chapter 4). However, WLB training for Telkom was reported by seven LMs to have been provided only during inductions; no other training was provided for the length of time that the LMs were in Telkom’s employment. Further consultation with HR or the staff handbook for more information was however encouraged. Safaricom, on the contrary, offered its managers comprehensive training that extended beyond induction periods to not only department-specific work-life training, but also a mandatory annual refresher training that included regional inter-departmental work-life workshops. Some Safaricom LMs (n=6) reiterated the importance of constant training as the WLB programme was reviewed and amended annually. In explaining the *frequency of WLB training* in their organisations, some LMs stated:

*“The first training is at induction, then every year, but also as and when a new policy is introduced. I have personally attended regional WLB workshops and*

*an exchange programme with Vodafone UK and South Africa” (Participant 8S: Luo, male).*

*“...on the first day of work. No need for more training because we have the handbooks and HR” (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, female).*

The HRLs’ result in Chapter 4 powerfully demonstrated the critical role of LMs as facilitators and providers of WLB information to employees. The training at Telkom that was only limited to induction sessions is inconsistent with McCarthy et al.’s (2010) call for LMs to receive constant training in relation to WLB issues. According to Watson et al. (2007) and Purcell and Hutchinson (2007), consistent training of LMs enables the detection of anomalies and inconsistencies, allows for corrective action to be taken, and enables the actioning and setting of the norms and standards that provide a roadmap for WLB best practice. Through this process, the foundations of healthy organisational WLB cultures are laid down, as well as shaping LMs’ commitment and attitudes towards implementing WLB policies and practices. Furthermore, CIPD’s (2015) research suggests that the steps taken to support the effective implementation of WLB policies (e.g. through training, communication strategies, and embedding them in organisational systems and processes), determine the values and commitment of LMs.

### **Types of WLB training**

Following a similar pattern to the ‘frequency of training’, significant differences emerged on the types of training offered by both firms. All Telkom LMs (n=10) confirmed a classroom-based training at induction, compared to the Safaricom LMs (n=9) who identified differing types of training using diverse platforms. At Safaricom, training was stepped up to include inpatient exchange programmes between the Safaricom Kenya office and Vodafone offices in Europe. The aim, as explained by some LMs, was for the managers to experience first-hand how WLB was practised in overseas Vodafone offices. The below extracts from the interviews depict the differences in the WLB training types and options, while Figure 5.1 shows a regional management exchange workshop for Safaricom managers in session:

*“HR read out the policies during induction and asks us to question what we do not understand” (Participant 6T: Kikuyu, male).*

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*“We have HR briefings, headquarter and regional workshops plus travelling to other countries that have Vodafone offices to learn about their WLB” (Participant 9S: Luo, female).*

*“The Safaricom Manager Development Programme (SMDP) is mandatory and equips us with several soft skills. I have been trained in combining staff appraisals and WLB policy reviews” (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).*

Figure 5.1: Excerpt from Document 1S: *Safaricom UNCOF Report 2011/2012*, pg. 8, showing management staff in a regional development workshop.

Based upon the training received, the LMs found ease in implementing their various WLB policies and practices, as will be discussed in the next section.

#### 5.4 **IMPLEMENTATION OF WLB POLICIES AND STRATEGIES**

Identified by 95% (n=10 to Safaricom and n=9 to Telkom) of the respondents, the key element, *implementation of WLB policies and practices* affirmed the LMs’ role as facilitators of WLB (as also reflected in the process level of the conceptual framework – Figure 3.1). This theme conformed to the goals of *objectives 3* and *5*. Both firms demonstrated having significantly disparate structures of working in relation to the four identified sub-themes: *implementation role, the methods of processing time off work requests, LMs’ involvement in policy development and nurturing a work-life culture*.

Corroborating the HRLs’ findings, the implementation role was confirmed as a shared responsibility between HR and LMs at Telkom but wholly a LM responsibility at Safaricom. For example:

*“....I only sign request forms to consent or decline from a departmental point of view, but most deliberations on ‘why’ and ‘when’ one will be returning back are solely for HR” (Participant 2T: Kikuyu, female).*

*“It is me who enters all requests on the system, approves or disapproves” (Participant 8S: Luo, male).*

An additional disparity related to the methods used to process time off work requests. As mentioned in Section 5.3.1, an electronic system was characteristic of Safaricom’s

communication, while Telkom was reported (n=6) to have facilitated the processing of time off work applications using a paper-based application system. For example:

*“.....time off duty requests are submitted online and processed online. The turnaround period set by HR is 3 days maximum”* (Participant 9S: Luo, female).

*“We use leave applications forms which are designed and printed by Government Printers. The application procedure takes 1-2 weeks”* (Participant 8T: Kikuyu, female).

#### **5.4.1 LMs’ involvement in policy development**

When requested to reflect on their *involvement in policy development*, both groups demonstrated some form of involvement, with a more significant confirmation from the Safaricom LMs. Telkom LMs (n=8) revealed a disconnection between registering suggestions and proposed changes being endorsed. Propositions were reportedly heard by a central public sector board, who forwarded these matters to the Ministry of Labour before being introduced in parliament for debate. However, the parliamentary endorsement process was lengthy and undefined. For example:

*“Suggestions passed to HR are shared with other HR personnel from other ministries. Then the suggestions go to the ministry, then to the central public service board, who may approve or disapprove. If approved, the suggestion will be presented in parliament for debate. It can only become effective if passed by parliament and gets the Presidential assent. But it can also not be presented to parliament if it does not protect politicians’ interests. This whole process can take anywhere between two to three years. Is there really any need for suggesting anything?”* (Participant 7T: Abaluhya, male).

On the contrary, there was a strong perception among Safaricom LMs (n=9) that their recommendations on policy reviews, obtained through surveys and various feedback mechanisms, were acted upon in reasonable periods. However, some LMs (n=6) pointed out delays in the implementation of some suggestions, where the organisation was portrayed as being more ‘profit minded’. For example:

*“....we make our ideas known to HR managers. But the length of solving depends on how difficult the problem is. We leave that to the human resources and senior management teams”* (Participant 9S: Luo, female).

*“We have shouted so loud about the shortage of staff in covering absences, but four years down the line and nothing has been done. Safaricom has the*

*option of employing more staff to solve this problem, but the company refuses.....” (Participant 6S: Somali, male).*

The finding from Telkom extends Kenya’s tradition of strong centralised bureaucratic power structures and governance. Mukabi et al. (2015) contend that some decisions are not made for public interest but rather for individual political selfishness. LMs’ involvement in policy development is promoted by Maxwell (2005) for purposes of not only nurturing commitment and responsibility for the WLB programmes but also to mould perceptions of ownership by LMs (Huitt 2007). Drawing on Bardahan and Mookherjee’s (2006) proposal for the decentralisation of power in decision making by the Kenyan government, this study agrees with Manda’s (2013) suggestion that devolved governance is an integral part of guarding against the discretionary use of power by central elites, and allowing participative decision making. As LMs engage in constant supervision of employees, they have a greater understanding of the performance of WLB policies, and the need for reforms and/or additions. Hence involving them in policy development not only enhances their participation in decision making but also plays a key role in nurturing a healthy WLB culture, if at all their (LMs’) voice is heard.

#### **5.4.2 Nurturing a WLB culture**

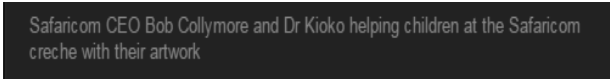
An important ingredient in preserving a culture supportive of WLB, identified by most LMs from both firms (n=8 to Safaricom and n=9 to Telkom), was endorsement from the top of the organisation by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and senior management. Support by senior management at Telkom was perceived by the LMs to have been ‘procedural’ and “expected” based on their offering only statutory entitlements. At Safaricom, sincerity in open verbal opinions, written communication, and actions in favour of WLB from the CEO and senior executives gave the LMs the independence to not only confidently make decisions on the allocation of Safaricom-specific WLB arrangements, but to also command respect for their opinions, as depicted from the interview narratives below. Endorsement from top executives at Safaricom is demonstrated in the picture below showing the firm’s CEO and a senior executive from the Ministry of Health assisting children in the crèche with their artwork. Glynn et al. (2002: 25) similarly acknowledge that “the role modelling behaviour of the most senior executives has a far more powerful impact on creating a culture where WLB needs are acknowledged and respected.”

*“Employees do not hesitate to walk past the Managing Director’s office when they are leaving work for the day even when he is personally still working”*  
(Participant 9T: Kalenjin, male).

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*“I joined this organisation in December when the annual organisation-wide Christmas family day party is held. I came to realise that this organisation supported WLB when the CEO announced all the new babies born to employees and referred to them as new entrants to the Safaricom family. It was heart-warming to see the kind of commitment that the company leadership placed on the lives of staff members’ families”* (Participant 2S: Abaluhya, female).

Figure 5.2:



Safaricom CEO Bob Collymore and Dr Kioko helping children at the Safaricom creche with their artwork

However, the majority of the LMs from both groups (n=10 to Safaricom and n=9 to Telkom) felt that more senior executives had lighter hands-on workloads and could therefore communicate and demonstrate a commitment to WLB. For themselves (LMs), having to manage workforces that were less qualified (at Telkom), and a lean workforce at Safaricom, led them to work longer hours due to heavy workloads. It was therefore reportedly problematic for the LMs to function as WLB role models to their employees as inevitably, they had to take on extra duties to ensure the completion of tasks for absent employees. Heavy workloads and long working hours were more significant among the Safaricom managers compared to their Telkom counterparts.

Researchers such as Russo et al. (2015) have found that the support that employees receive from their LMs is crucial in helping them to successfully manage their competing work and personal demands. The next paragraph and subsequent sections evidence the inability of the LMs, particularly those from Safaricom, to balance their own personal and professional demands. According to Straub (2012), this would affect their attitudes and behaviours towards encouraging or dissuading employees from using organisational WLB policies. Russo et al. (2015) found that employees with LMs who fail to act as role models fear to divulge their personal-related difficulties at work and/or seek for any form of assistance. Hence, the work of Hammer et al. (2015) advocates that LMs be considered as work-life supportive when they not only become WLB role models to their employees, but also when they are personally able to experience an appropriate level of balance between the numerous



spheres in their lives. In reference to the conceptual framework (Figure 3.1), it is evident that the LMs' emergent behaviours influenced their decisions to approve the use of WLB policies and practices (as it was expected of them) regardless of the consequences that they (LMs) encountered after making a decision to do this (heavy workloads, long working hours).

*"My department is badly short staffed and therefore makes us line managers work longer than our official hours. Employees in my department sometimes feel guilty of leaving the office while I am still working, but I stress that it is my own choice and that they were not obliged to do the same"* (Participant 6S: Somali, male).

*"The technical nature of our department's job cannot allow experiments with unqualified employees because the repercussions can be devastating to the organisation and employees. Unfortunately, my department is loaded with unskilled workers. The load of work therefore falls on myself and the few skilled workers that we have. Typically, we work for between 10-14 hours in a day"* (Participant 1T: Luo, male).

As a result, four Safaricom managers noted that their struggle to balance their own work and personal lives led to exhaustion, making them irritable and in turn negatively impacting on their staff as narrated below. These LMs confessed to enabling balance for their employees yet failing to achieve balance for themselves. Yet again, the same LMs felt that they had not succeeded in achieving balance for their employees. Instead, they considered Safaricom's WLB culture to have been more business focused such that the priority was 'to get the job done' and think about balance after. For example:

*"If the staff shortage menace is not resolved in the near future, the stress levels for managers will get worse and we might find ourselves unintentionally letting it out on employees"* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*"...we are only asked to monitor overtime so that departmental budgets are not depleted but the company would be very happy for people to work more for the benefit of profits"* (Participant 7S: Meru, male).

When queried about work-life culture from a *working hours* perspective, all the Telkom LMs (n=10) acknowledged a 9-hour day working pattern (with a one-hour lunch break), where staff worked from 8am to 5pm between Monday to Friday only (apart from some technical departments where the working pattern followed a morning and night 8-hour shift system). All workers were expected to be off duty on the weekend. This finding differed from that realised in Safaricom. Despite Telkom only offering statutory WLB entitlements, the firm's strict observation of stipulated working hours and days was reported to have afforded some

managers and employees adequate time to cater for their non-work responsibilities. Nevertheless, some LMs (n=7) still reported longer working hours due to heavy workloads arising from the shortage of qualified personnel. For example:

*“Our working hours are standard for all employees in public service. By 5pm, all staff are usually gone and we are shut on the weekend. If anyone wants to stay late, that is at their own discretion. We would find extended stays at work to be suspicious. But for me, I work even up to 10pm on weekdays”* (Participant 1T: Luo, male).

A significant difference was established in the working hours between the two firms. Most Safaricom LMs (n=9) reported adopting a long hours working culture for the purposes of completing workloads, as well as responding to customers around the clock. For ‘customer facing’ departments (e.g. retail), one LM talked about long working hours that were driven by the demands of providing a consistent service to clients. For the ‘technical’ departments, two LMs noted demands of being physically available on site. And for administrators, long hours were directed by a desire to be effective, hence LMs worked extra hours to clear pending work. In addition, different forms of training reportedly took place during working hours, thereby draining the already constrained working time. As a result, the traditional definition of the ‘working week’ and ‘weekend’ that existed at Telkom was not known at Safaricom. For instance:

*“At times the team members have to stretch and work longer to fill in the gaps left when some members are out for training within and/or out of the country. We sometimes have to work during the day and also at night yet still come to work the following day depending on project timelines, at times fault/crisis, or incidence occurrences at hand”* (Participant 7S: Meru, male).

Building on Wang and Walumbwa’s (2007) review of Kenya’s private sector, the long working hours practice at Safaricom can be argued to be characteristic of the private sector’s competitive market demands that focus on meeting customer demands. From a public-private sector point of reference, the disparities in working hours between Telkom and Safaricom corroborate other studies that have found public sector managers to work fewer hours compared to those in the private sector (Ibid).

## **5.5 CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING WLB STRATEGIES**

### **5.5.1 Political-tribal influence**

This sub-theme was directly related to *objective five* and was common among the HRLs and LMs. Corroborating the findings in Chapter 4 (see Section 4.5.1), there was a significant level of dissatisfaction among the LMs regarding the extent to which politicians influenced the implementation of WLB policies. A majority of the LMs (n=9 to Safaricom and n=9 to Telkom) registered a high level of influence along political and tribal lines. As explained in Section 4.5.1 of Chapter 4, political parties in Kenya are largely based on tribe rather than on ideology (Frank and Rainer 2009). Therefore, tribalism is not only embedded in governmental governance and workplaces, but is also endorsed and promoted by politicians (Kimenyi and Gutierrez-Romero 2008). Therefore, both firms were victims of this tension. However, the influence was more notable among the Telkom LMs who interpreted politicians' trespassing of work boundaries as being 'part of organisational processes and procedures'. Common to both groups, the influence encouraged favouritism for politicians' allies as they were allowed to use WLB policies more than other employees.

However, tribal favouritism was not only encouraged by politicians. Since tribalism was reported as a widespread societal practice in Kenya by the LMs (n=19), it also emerged that the practice naturally thrived among some of them (LMs). Hence, some of the managers resented the practice while others exalted it. This is consistent with the conceptual framework (Figure 3.1), which shows tribal structures and affiliations as a mediator of LMs' behavioural expectations, derived from their positions in and affiliations with their tribes, as well as their political-tribal affiliations. In terms of LMs' direct or indirect contact with the politicians, it was established that direct contact between Safaricom LMs (n=6) and politicians was buffered by senior managers who directly attended to politicians. However, by virtue of being a public sector firm, politicians had easier access to Telkom, therefore the contact between them and the LMs was reportedly more directly felt. With reference to the literature review in Chapter 2, Carney (2013) considers tribalism to be the bane of post-colonial Africa. For Kenya, Okombo and Sana (2011) contend that the involvement of politicians in tribalism handicaps workplace efforts to contain the practice.

A difference between the two firms was seen in the existence of organisation-specific policies to safeguard against discrimination and/or favouritism along tribal lines. Both firms observed the statutory guidelines on discrimination as stated in the Employment Act (2015):

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EMPLOYMENT ACT  
CHAPTER 226

Figure 5.3: Caption from Document 1T:  
Employment Act 2015, pg. 13

However, six Safaricom LMs reported the existence of a company-specific policy that prohibited staff engagement in any form of practices that would amount to tribal discrimination. Figure 5.4 below, extracted from Safaricom's staff handbook, demonstrates efforts to curb discrimination and encourage employee-manager communication. Telkom on the other hand only observed the statutory guidelines. According to Safaricom, the rigidly administered company policies aimed to protect laid-down foundations of employee cohesion. There was a general belief among some Safaricom LMs (n=7) that although little could be done by organisations in the country to sidestep political-tribal influence, their organisation had taken positive steps. Safaricom's initiative in setting up policies to specifically address tribal affiliations in the workplace was perceived as a good sign that the firm was committed to managing tribalism. This was reflected in a statement by one of the managers who had recently joined the company. This manager clearly perceived Safaricom to have been much further ahead in terms of managing organisational tribal inequalities compared to their previous employer. In addition, some LMs (n=4) recognised the positive impact that tribal cohesion and employee skills blending had on organisational performance. For example:

*"You will be shocked by the excellent results that our department gets when there are no elections and employees from different tribes are able to work together peacefully"* (Participant 7S: Meru, Male).

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Figure 5.4: Excerpt from Document 3S: *Staff handbook 2014*, pg. 28 demonstrating efforts to curb discrimination and encourage employee-manager communication.

Despite the efforts by Safaricom, traces of tribal affiliations were still purportedly evident in the approval of time off work within the firm. For example:

*“The decision to give permission to be away from work or to decide who is working what shift is at my discretion. But sometimes, politicians want to decide for us when their relatives should work or not. They belittle us in front of employees and make us powerless in terms of controlling the employees we are in charge of”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*“Tribalism is a national cancer that has infested all companies. We fight it at Safaricom through varied organisation-wide campaigns directed by the CEO but there are still traces of this trend. We commit in our job contracts that we will not engage in tribal favouritism and if caught, we would be sacked on the spot – this has happened before and every person is cautious”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

On the other hand, political-tribal influences were reportedly more strongly felt among the Telkom LMs. Direct telephone calls from politicians (on both landlines and mobile phones) and unarranged office visits were reportedly common (n=8). Similarly, orders (not requests) and threats (to LMs and their families) were customary (n=7). In contrast to Safaricom, Telkom LMs openly acknowledged the thriving of tribalism because of strong political interests in public sector organisations (Lankeu and Maket 2012). Seven responses reflected disclosures by LMs who admitted to supporting employees from their tribes as a form of “protecting their own”. Interestingly, three LMs consented to collaborating with HR personnel in prioritising leave applications from tribesmen (both men and women). This practice was reported to have been made easy by overstaffing, which allowed the easy coverage of duties as well as a paper-based leave application system where records were easily manipulated. Further, four LM responses confirmed that tribal representations at line management level enabled employees from dominant tribes (e.g. Kikuyu) to benefit the most compared to those from minority tribes who lacked tribal representatives at that level. Below

are typical responses from some Telkom LMs and newspaper excerpts demonstrating the level of tribalism in Kenya's public sector:

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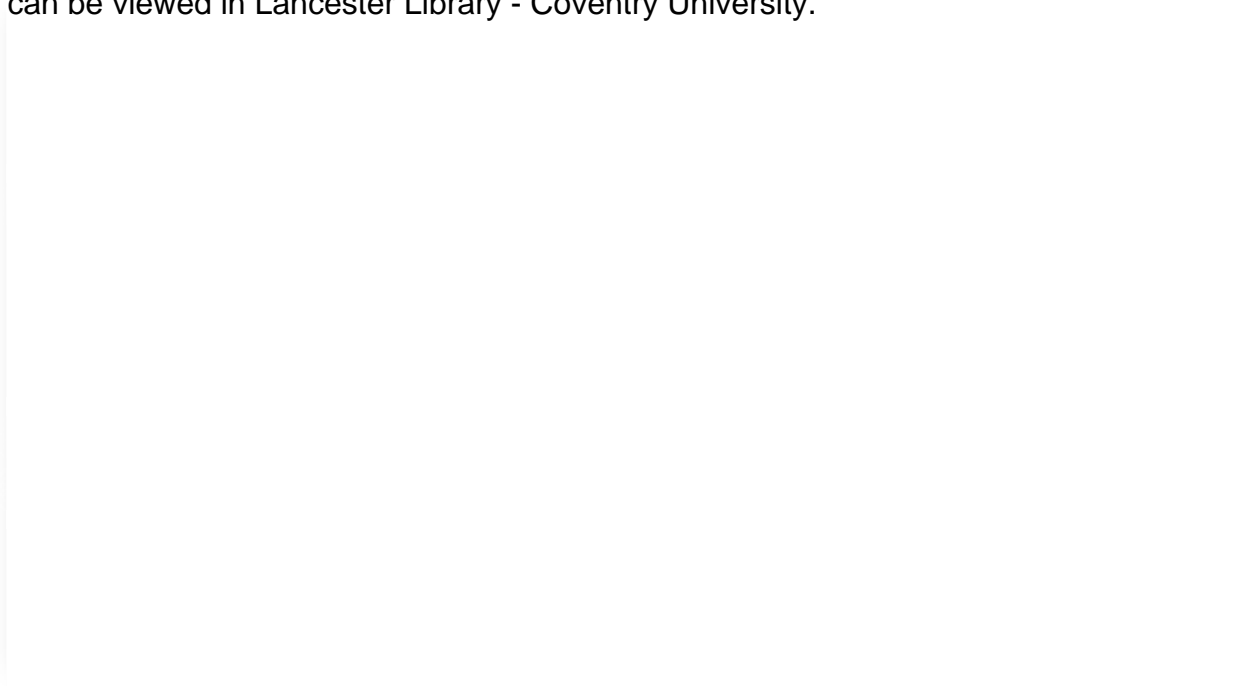


Figure 5.5: Captions from various national newspapers depicting the level of tribalism in Kenya's public sector.

*"I received a threatening telephone call from a senior politician warning me for not allowing the niece time off work to travel with the family for a holiday to their village. I had no option but to give my consent on telephone without any signed forms. I felt displaced. Some of our colleagues have been threatened with intentions to hurt their families"* (Participant 7T: Abaluhya, male).

*"I protect people from my tribe because they have no voice....no one has to know what I do for them apart from myself and them"* (Participant 4T: Maasai, male).

*"These people (employees from other tribes) do not like us therefore I take care of my own. As long as I am here, my people cannot suffer"* (Participant 6T: Kikuyu, male).

As implementers of WLB policies and practices, independence in working and decision making are key. Hammer et al. (2013) reiterate that when managers feel empowered by their organisations to allow independent WLB decision making, they are likely to encourage their employees to work in ways that would enable them to achieve work and personal goals. However, Koch and Binnewies (2015) argue that managers who lack self-governance in WLB-related decision making are inclined towards reluctantly administering WLB

initiatives. Their lack of empowerment is communicated to their employees through their uncertainty. In addition to political-tribal affiliation challenges, LMs were challenged on how to evenly allow the use of WLB policies between men and women, as will be discussed below.

### **5.5.2 Gender influences**

According to Keino and Kithae (2016) and Muchiti (2015), WLB in Kenya has been conceptualised as a dominantly woman-oriented initiative. From both Safaricom and Telkom, the same interpretation was reflected in the interview responses, particularly in relation to gender role expectations, thereby enabling the answering of *objective 5*. There were more similarities than differences between the two groups on the influence of gender role expectations on LM WLB decision making. Gender role expectations (in relation to cultural and societal expectations) were also linked to working hours and generational perceptions among the workforces. Hence, the majority of the interviews from both firms (n=17) had a significant indication that decisions to allow the use of WLB policies were heavily inclined in the favour of women.

Most of the LMs from both firms (n=18) acknowledged that the division of work in many Kenyan households was still profoundly influenced by cultural and societal gender role expectations. Men were still perceived as breadwinners who bore extended family financial demands and whose success was associated with their work. As stipulated by Aryee (2005), some LMs (n=11) indicated that there was a tendency of most male employees, especially those of the older generation<sup>42</sup>, to prioritise work over family socialising. Instead, they spent more hours in paid work to generate more income. Women, on the other hand, were reportedly associated more with home and familial caring concerns, and were therefore portrayed as having to divide their time between paid work and unpaid domestic responsibilities. For this reason, there was a higher demand for the use of WLB policies and practices from female employees compared to the males in both firms. For example:

*“Compared to men, women carry a heavy burden. They work and compete at the same level with men who are part of the group that women care for when*

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<sup>42</sup> These are the Baby Boomers. McCaffree (2007) refers to this generation as those born between 1943 and 1961, and are currently aged between 49 and 67 years old. This author characterises this generation with prioritising work over personal life and therefore they work hard and for long hours. They also have challenges accepting and adopting to change as well as new technology.

*they get back home from work. Women MUST bear children or else they will be considered as social misfits. They not only take care of their own families but also extended family members who include those from their husbands' sides. They are members of churches, self-help groups and women associations in their villages and urban towns. Taking care of men is the most strainous of all the jobs” (Participant 2S: Abaluhya, female).*

In support of the above statement, the work of Mungai and Ogot (2012) details the domestic role of a Kenyan woman, whether literate, semi-literate or illiterate, as being similar. Duties range from extended family responsibilities and community-based obligations, to paid work. Even for those with the financial capability to hire domestic helpers, supervision duties still prevail. Furthermore, six interview extracts indicated that women's workload was further intensified as roles differed by tribe. Some tribes have more demanding expectations of women than others. For this reason, 19 out of 20 interview responses indicated that the LMs in most cases prioritised women's requests for time off work compared to men's. Again, this demonstrates (from the conceptual framework – Figure 3.1) that gender structures and role expectations that are common in Kenyan households were embedded in the LMs and therefore influenced their decisions regarding the approval and disapproval of WLB policy requests. For example, reiterating the prioritisation of women's matters, one LM stated:

*“No male can understand the hardship of a woman. My being female and more so a working woman guarantees my understanding and total support for women matters being handled first” (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, female).*

However, differences occurred between the two firms on generational acceptability of prioritising female WLB matters. As reflected by the HRL and LM participants' demographics, most of the LMs in Telkom belonged to the older generation. According to Mungai and Ogot (2012), most men in Kenya's public sector still perceive women as being largely home carers. Hence resistance to the prioritising of female WLB needs was lower among Telkom male LMs. Safaricom had a younger<sup>43</sup> workforce and therefore attracted some resistance. Here, high WLB expectations of a younger workforce at Safaricom overtook gendered ideologies of older workers at Telkom. The younger males reportedly based their arguments on equity in the use of WLB provisions versus the equal payment of salaries for both male and females. Male LMs carried heavier workloads due to their limited use of WLB initiatives. This result attests to studies that have found that younger workers demand equal

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<sup>43</sup> They are the generation Yers. Also referred to as Millennials. They prefer more flexible working and a more rounded WLB. Hence, family life takes priority over the workplace. They are team players but also vocal about equality at work and their rights (McCaffree 2007).



rights at work more than older workers (Yeaton 2008; Armour 2005). Expressing their perceptions of the prioritisation of women's WLB requests, some LMs stated:

*"...men must work to feed their families therefore if I am to allocate leave between a male and a female employee, I will sign off the female employee first. Even for myself, I will let the madams take leave first"* (Participant 1T: Luo, male).

*"...all the mother wellness programmes give women peace of mind when working. But the increased use of WLB policies by women means they are mostly away from work. This does not please our young male employees including myself especially because our salaries are equal yet men carry the heaviest workloads in the absence of women"* (Participant 6S: Somali, male).

Not only were female matters an issue, but men's financial demands also posed a challenge to the LMs, although in different contexts. Most LMs (n=15) pointed to the fact that heavy financial demands compelled men to seek longer working hours in order to maximise income. At Telkom, the absence of overtime and low salaries reportedly drove staff to work more than one job. The second job, as Aryee et al. (1999) reported in their study, was in unpaid income generating trades. At Safaricom, male employees were reported to demand more overtime hours, leading to employee exhaustion.

Both experiences presented challenges to LMs in terms of monitoring working hours. Sneaking away from work to attend to extra income generating trades was common practice at Telkom. For this reason, Telkom LMs (n=8) registered frustrations in tracking down the presence of staff. On the other hand, Safaricom LMs (n=9) faced the challenge of monitoring the surpassing of statutory working hours, yet they worked with a lean workforce who had high demands for the use of WLB provisions. Therefore, on the one hand, LMs had an option of limiting employees' use of WLB policies. However, this would have amounted to LMs being perceived as being unsupportive and uncommitted to the WLB policy requirements. On the other hand, allowing the use of WLB policies while managing a lean workforce led to staff shortages, heavy workloads and longer working hours. Being caught in the centre point of increasing productivity while exercising flexibility for employee WLB requests has been found by Daverth et al. (2016) to create a challenge for LMs.

As provided by Walumbwa et al. (2011), this research shows that the collectivist nature of the Kenyan society and the financial obligations linked to extended family support mean that earnings remain a central part of this society. Notwithstanding, the combining of work with income-generating ventures and/or increased overtime hours fuels conflict between official

contracted working hours and the attention and time devoted to both. In the event that duties were not covered, Safaricom LMs (n=8) informed that they personally took up the duties to prevent underperformance in their departments. In the process, as revealed in Section 5.4.2, LMs ended up working for longer hours. This finding has also been supported by Western based studies which have found the long working hours of LMs (due to employee use of WLB policies) to undermine their role modelling functions (Straub 2012; McCarthy et al. 2010). The following are some narratives extracted from the interviews:

*“Our employees, especially the men, are under financial pressure. Many constantly ask for overtime. Although this helps in solving their financial requirements, it causes more damage than good, e.g. negatively affecting their health and increasing accidents at work and damage to property. But also, there will be no balance”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*“Salaries here are in shambles. Half of these workers run their own businesses to make extra money. The problem is the cat and mouse games we have to play with these mature people sneaking away from work”* (Participant 7T: Abaluhya, male).

### **5.5.3 Cultural Influences**

This sub-theme directly related with *objective five* and bears similarities with the results obtained from the HRL interviews (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2). This was mainly related to bereavement leave and the number of days required by staff from different tribes for mourning. However, whereas the HRLs mostly reported on the Luo tribe, extracts from the LMs’ interviews (n=15) identified four tribes that required long mourning periods, namely: *Luo, Abaluhya, Kisii and Kamba*. Nonetheless, the Luo tribe was still singled out as the most controversial. Furthermore, from the LMs, it was emphasised that the stretching of mourning periods depended on the closeness of relationships and one’s status in society. Hence, the closer the relationship was, and the higher the status in society, the longer the mourning period was (Mburugu and Adams 2004).

Despite both groups of LMs identifying bereavement leave management as a challenge, indications from the Telkom LMs insinuated that the coverage of jobs due to absence was easily managed as they admitted to having an overstaffed workforce. Instead, concerns among the LMs (n=5) centred on the impact that prolonged morning periods had on employees’ perceptions of fairness in the allocation and use of WLB policies. At Safaricom, lengthy mourning periods were reported (n=7) to exacerbate the LMs’ dilemma of managing

a lean workforce, adding to the challenges mentioned in Section 5.5.2 above. For example, in explaining their experiences of handling bereavement leave requests, some LMs stated:

*“Kikuyus ask for 7 days or less for bereavement leave, most other tribes request for 7 to 14 days, but Luos ask for 21 days and even more. The situation is worse when the deceased is a close relative, rich or an influential figure in society. I usually ask them to combine bereavement leave days with block booked annual leave, for example, straight 15 days annual leave”* (Participant 3T: Kikuyu, male).

*“We are supposed to make fair judgements on who goes off and who does not. But it is hard with bereavement leave. For example, official bereavement leave is 7 days but employees from different tribes need longer and some shorter periods because of their traditional tribal requirements. Now, who do we give 10, 16 or 25 days and still be seen as remaining consistent and fair to all?”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

Table 5.2 below provides a summary of the differences in LMs’ perceptions of the implementation of WLB practice between the two firms.

	<b>TELKOM</b>	<b>SAFARICOM</b>
7.	Lack of understanding of the “WLB concept”.	Had a clear understanding of the concept.
8.	One-on-one and print media formed the basis of communicating WLB information.	The communication system for WLB consisted of a combination of one-on-one, print media and electronic options.
9.	Paper-based system in place to facilitate leave applications.	Electronic system used to facilitate applications for time off work.
10.	Training on WLB matters offered at induction only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Departmental training offered in addition to training at induction.</li> <li>❖ Annual mandatory refresher programme offered on WLB matters.</li> <li>❖ A wide variety of training options incorporated in the WLB training programme.</li> <li>❖ International exchange programmes with Vodafone partners in Europe.</li> </ul>
11.	Suggestions on improvements made to HR but the process of final endorsement too long and not assured.	LMs’ feedback directly incorporated into WLB policy development.
12.	Stipulated working hours contributed to a healthy work-life culture.	A lean workforce led to an increase in workloads and prolonged working hours.
13.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Intense and direct political-tribal influence.</li> <li>❖ High level of tribalism and no policies in place to govern this practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Contact with politicians buffered by senior management.</li> <li>❖ Minimal levels of tribalism and strict policies in place to govern the practice.</li> </ul>

	TELKOM	SAFARICOM
14.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Women's WLB concerns favoured by LMs through prioritised approval of leave applications.</li> <li>❖ Most male LMs supported prioritisation of women's WLB needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Increased attention to and prioritisation of women's WLB concerns.</li> <li>❖ Resistance to prioritisation of women's WLB needs by younger male LMs.</li> </ul>

**Table 5.2: A summary of the differences between Telkom and Safaricom in relation to the implementation of WLB policies and practices**

## 5.6 SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

In conclusion, results obtained from twenty LM interviews contribute to perceptions by other researchers that LMs play a critical role in ensuring the successful implementation of WLB programmes (McCarthy et al. 2010; Kossek et al. 2012; Daverth et al. 2016). Despite having limited WLB provisions, Telkom was characterised by a supportive work-life culture where working time was controlled, as opposed to Safaricom's prevalent long working hours practice, attributed to the fact that LMs worked with lean workforces. Nevertheless, Safaricom was portrayed as having the financial capability to advance WLB practices to a higher level compared to Telkom, where financial constraints were prevalent. LMs' suggestions on the improvement of WLB practice were welcomed by both firms but the implementation of propositions was higher at Safaricom compared to Telkom, where approval processes were prolonged and biased towards politicians' interests. However, owing to different reasons, LMs from both firms worked longer hours than contracted because of heavy workloads. Although experienced in different contexts, LMs' independence in decision making and fairness in the approval of time off work were affected by political-tribal influences, gender role expectations and tribal cultural practices.

## Questionnaire Results

### Measures

A 59-item online questionnaire (see Appendix 7) examined LMs' personal views, attitudes and opinions of their WLB role under five parameters displayed in Table 5.3 below. A five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used for all items.

Previously used and validated scales were adopted in the structuring of the questionnaires with the literature showing that these scales had good reliabilities (Cronbach's alphas ranged from 0.70 to 0.89; see Table 5.3 below).

<b>n = 20</b>	<b>TELKOM MEANS n=10</b>	<b>SAFARICOM MEANS n=10</b>	<b>CA before (literature)</b>	<b>CA after (tested)</b>
<i>Work-life culture</i>	4.73	2.90	0.89	0.86
<i>Clarity and ease of use of HR procedures</i>	3.73	5.00	0.77	0.49
<i>WLB HR role clarity and ambiguity</i>	2.55	3.28	0.85	0.73
<i>Capacity to implement HR activities – training and experience</i>	3.78	3.85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0.88</li> <li>• 0.81</li> </ul>	0.53
<i>Desire to implement work-life HR practices</i>	3.21	3.86	0.70	0.72
<b>Table 5.3: Mean scores for the scales by company and Cronbach Alphas (CA) before the study (from literature) and after (tested)</b>				

## **5.7 WORK-LIFE CULTURE**

The *work-life culture* mean scores of 4.73 (Telkom) and 2.90 (Safaricom) signify a surprisingly large disparity between the two organisations regarding the LMs' perceptions of the organisations' efforts to afford employees a balanced work and personal life. The results reveal that Telkom LMs perceived their organisation as paying more attention to practices that would enable harmony in the work and non-work lives of their employees' compared to their Safaricom counterparts. However, from the interviews, the efforts by Telkom to enable WLB for employees were not related to the number of WLB policies and strategies that they offered, but to their practices.

Interestingly, when considering this matter from the LMs' and HRLs' interviews, compared to Safaricom, Telkom only offered the statutory WLB provisions and so was more limited in their overall policies in this area. However, the organisation had stipulated clear working hours: 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. No working was allowed on weekends, national public holidays and staying late at work was not considered in positive terms. Some studies

that have examined time expectations in relation to Work-Life Conflict (WLC) found that a supportive work-life culture, in terms of organisational time expectations: (1) reduces WLC (e.g. Fagan and Walthery, 2011b; Frone et al. 1997); (2) improves job satisfaction (Kossek and Lee 2008); and (3) increases productivity (Kelly et al. 2008). Extracts from the Telkom LM interviews attributed the ability of LMs to easily cover duties in the absence of staff to an ensuing overstaffing matter. But this does not mean that this study endorses overstaffing as good business practice. Collins (2013: 3) denounces overstaffing for being wasteful and expensive, and if sustained, overstaffing not only reduces the competitive efficiency of a business, but also becomes costly to eliminate because of modern legislation in respect of redundancy payments. But with respect to WLB and work coverage at Telkom, it worked for the positive.

Furthermore, Telkom reportedly permitted workers to take annual leave in ‘blocks’ (e.g. 15-20 days), allowing them ample time to rest and solve their non-work matters. In addition, evidence from the HRL interviews (see Section 4.3.2) showed that as weekends were not considered as working days at Telkom, they were discounted from leave days, thereby affording workers extra days of leave. For example:

*“Annual leave for 7 days equals 9 days because weekends are not counted”*  
(Participant 3T: Luo, male).

Even more, evidence from the HRLs’ and LMs’ interviews confirmed that Telkom’s systems, processes and procedures were non-computerised. While non-computerisation slowed down corporate communication, on the positive side, teleworking was eliminated, allowing workers time to rest when away from work. On the whole, telecommuting is rated as a beneficial workplace flexibility initiative for employers, employees and the society. With globalisation, African countries, in this case Kenya, are adopting Western systems of working. Previous studies (but Western based studies) have also shown evidence for the positive effects of teleworking on WLB, health, employee wellbeing and job outcomes (Nijp et al. 2012; Barber et al. 2016; Skinner and Pocock 2011). Elsewhere, however, evidence is mixed in respect to the impact of teleworking’s blurring of the work-life line (e.g. Allen et al. 2013; Amstad et al. 2011). Besides, three Telkom HRLs confirmed in their interviews that it was against public service policy (particularly with reference to confidentiality) for staff to take official material to non-official destinations, thereby completely disqualifying homeworking as an option for WLB. For example:

*“Unless you have been authorised to deliver official documents to another ministry or office, we are not allowed to take official documents out of the office”* (Participant 5T: Kalenjin, female).

The experiences at Safaricom were different. The Safaricom interview results demonstrated that managing a lean workforce challenged the LMs’ ability to cover the duties of individuals who were off duty, compelling the LMs to take up extra duties. The outcomes were work overloads and longer working hours for LMs. This result corroborates O’Connell et al.’s (2004) findings which highlighted that LMs often have the lowest levels of individual WLB as they are left filling gaps of their staff that result from the use of WLB arrangements. Echoing O’Connell et al., DTI (2004) and Scase and Goffee (1993) equally discovered that LMs consistently report the longest working hours. From the HRLs’ interviews (see Section 4.5.2), it was revealed that a large number of the Safaricom-specific WLB arrangements were adopted from Vodafone UK without being adjusted to suit the Kenyan workplace. The UK and Kenyan workplaces bear different characteristics. Particularly, the HRLs disclosed a model of hiring temporary agency workers at Vodafone UK to cover the absence of employees. This model is non-existent in Kenya. Hence, the inability of Safaricom to provide a lasting solution to the difficulty in staffing levels resulted in a cyclical engagement of LMs: working their contracted hours, taking up overtime, being on-call, having their booked leaves frequently cancelled, and being repeatedly called back to work when they were away on leave breaks.

In addition to the above challenges, Safaricom’s demographic results revealed a younger workforce made up of different generations compared to Telkom’s dominantly older managers. Hence, the Safaricom LMs’ expectations might therefore have been distinct and higher regarding WLB. A study by Ernst and Young (2015) in 90 companies across eight countries reiterates that younger workers see WLB as extremely important. The LMs acknowledged the presence of many schemes through which Safaricom demonstrated its efforts to assist employees to reconcile their work and non-work lives. However, being within the private sector, in a volatile and fiercely competitive market, Safaricom and its management had competing demands between business competitiveness, meeting customer demands and maintaining a sustainable WLB for themselves without breaking a statutory obligation, or HR rule or policy. Hence, despite the presence of a comprehensive WLB programme, heavy workloads and long working hours prevented the LMs from making

appropriate use of the WLB provisions. There were feelings among the LMs that Safaricom prioritised its own benefits over LMs'/employees' non-work needs (see the narrative evidence below). According to some authors, such feelings are likely to create perceptions of an undermined psychological contract<sup>44</sup> (Rousseau 1995, 2011; Clutterbuck 2003).

*“We have shouted so loud about the shortage of staff in covering absences, but four years down the line and nothing has been done. Safaricom has the option of employing more staff to solve this problem, but the company refuses. Profit is what they want but they are blind to what workers have to go through to make that money for them”* (Participant 6S: Somali, male).

In summary, the significant disparity in the work-life culture means scores between the two firms signify that the comprehensiveness of a WLB programme does not necessarily lead to a healthy work-life culture. Studies in work-life research also found that the mere availability of extensive and generous WLB policies does not necessarily translate into reductions in WLC (e.g. Brough and O'Driscoll 2010; Chang et al. 2010).

## **5.8 CLARITY AND EASE OF USE OF HR PROCEDURES**

In contrast with the perceived differences in work-life culture, the results regarding the clarity and the ease of using HR procedures revealed a similar but opposite direction. There was a large and significant disparity between the mean perceptions of Safaricom (5.00) and Telkom (3.73). LMs at Safaricom indicated how clear HR guidelines and instruments for WLB matters were. While it is clear that the Telkom LMs agree to some extent that guidelines and instruments provided by HR for effective WLB implementation were clear and understandable, endorsement by the Safaricom LMs was far higher.

These results corroborated the interviews. Although Telkom was reported to have had lesser facilities and resources compared to Safaricom, their LMs were at ease with using a non-computerised working system and accessing WLB information using one-on-one sessions with HR or using print media. For instance, evidence from the Telkom HRL interviews showed that only one handbook was supplied for use by individuals in an entire department (see Section 4.4.1). In addition, the demographic results portrayed the Telkom LMs as possessing basic education skills and being computer untrained hence their ease of use of the

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<sup>44</sup> According to Rousseau (1989), *psychological contract*, represents the mutual beliefs/expectations, perceptions, and informal obligations that shape working relationships between an employer and an employee. This differs from the formal written contract of employment which specifies duties and responsibilities of a job role.



available resources (Amutabi 2004; Siambi 2008). Telkom's communication mediums however limited the amount of information available and the extent to which it could be acquired and shared.

The high endorsement by Safaricom LMs emulates the results for the 'WLB role clarity and ambiguity' scale (see Section 5.9). The demographic results show a highly qualified team of LMs who had the capability to use computerised facilities. In view of the interviews, there was a consistent perception among the HRLs (see Section 4.4.1) and the LMs (see Section 5.3.2) that the training provided to LMs by HR was adequate to enable their understanding and use of multi-strand resources and facilities. Examples were the use of online platforms that enabled access to WLB information, and easy, fast and wide communication (e.g. the staff intranet and the S-HUB database).

## **5.9 WLB ROLE CLARITY AND AMBIGUITY**

A related scale, *WLB role clarity and ambiguity*, also revealed encouraging company means for Safaricom (3.28) compared to Telkom (2.55). The results illustrated that Safaricom LMs were more satisfied than their Telkom counterparts about the support and guidelines received from HR in understanding: (1) the relevance of the WLB scheme, and (2) their role as implementers of WLB policies.

Similar to *clarity and ease of use of HR procedures*, these results accredited the interviews. Induction sessions at the start of employment were reported as Telkom's only allocated time for one-on-one training. Further knowledge and uncertainties on WLB matters throughout the LMs' employment period with Telkom were managed through consultation with HR, communication through memos (when a new item was introduced, e.g. paternity leave), consultations with the staff handbook, and/or employing knowledge amassed during their long-term work experience. It could be argued that Telkom's fewer WLB provisions did not necessitate further training. However, given the constant changes in business operations and environments, together with shifts in workforce demographics, Yeandle et al. (2003) and Bossaert et al. (2012) reiterate that occasional checks are an important factor in tracking inconsistencies in policy implementation and instituting changes for effective WLB practice.

On the other hand, Safaricom's high mean score coincides with the HRLs' and LMs' interviews (see Sections 4.4.1 and 5.3.2 respectively) as regards a carefully designed WLB-specific training programme. Training reportedly commenced at induction, progressed to individual departments and also incorporated a mandatory annual refresher course. Guidance was also reported to have been offered upon the introduction of new policies. Not only were the trainings described to have been classroom based but workplace learning also included online and on-the-job training. For instance, inpatient exchange programmes were offered between the Kenyan office and Vodafone UK/Europe offices. These training and development programmes were reportedly supported by a robust communication system with WLB information made available to LMs through multiple sources (e.g. HR, company CEO, staff intranet, staff handbooks, staff bulletins, workshops, S-HUB databases, group emails, team briefs, memos, wellness week/month.). Nevertheless, Safaricom's mean score was not as high as *clarity and ease of use of HR procedures*. The difference in scores could be attributed to the LMs' dilemma in handling multiple roles alongside their management duties, which included the WLB implementation role and handling uncovered duties that resulted from employees using WLB arrangements.

#### **5.10 CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT WORK-LIFE HR ACTIVITIES – TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE**

Very little difference was evident between the LMs' means for Telkom and Safaricom regarding the perceived *capacity to implement work-life HR activities* (3.76 and 3.85 respectively, see Table 5.3). The small difference between the companies' capacities can be attributed to the difference between training versus experience. As outlined in the interviews and Section 5.9, although the Telkom LMs received training on WLB matters at induction only, they had the benefit of greater years of work experience and the advantage of managing a lower number of WLB provisions compared to Safaricom. It is surprising that given the comprehensive training and development on WLB issues at Safaricom, the difference between the firms was not higher.

That said, evidence from the interviews explains the small disparity. The WLB training programme at Safaricom was extensive. It not only included one-on-one sessions but also online learning, and not only Kenyan-based guidance but also inpatient programmes. However, drawing on the fact that the Safaricom LMs considered the adoption of Safaricom-

specific arrangements to have been within the introduction stage, ‘teething problems’<sup>45</sup> were expected. The LMs defined the *introduction stage* of the WLB initiative as the first five years since the inception of the Safaricom-specific WLB provisions. For example:

*“The first five years are counted as the introduction stage where we are trying to see whether work-life balance is really relevant in increasing productivity”*  
(Participant 9S: Luo, female).

A second reason for the slight difference in means between the two firms could be attributed to the comprehensiveness of the WLB programmes. Apart from their management duties, the Safaricom LMs had a broad range of WLB schemes to understand, communicate and implement, compared to their Telkom counterparts. Nevertheless, the training received by the Safaricom LMs was described in the interviews to have not only increased their awareness of administering WLB policies but to have also raised their support for and commitment to the policies. For example:

*“I was among the managers that first revolted against this work-life balance scheme because it is more work and tricky to incorporate. But now that HR gives us briefings on what the policies are all about, how to implement them, why the policies are important etc., my worries are reduced abit. Personally, I have benefited a lot from being able to manage my time and that of my team including stress levels as duties are fast moving and at times tempers could flare”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

### **5.11 DESIRE TO IMPLEMENT WORK-LIFE PRACTICES**

A narrow difference was found between the mean scores of LMs’ desire *to implement work-life practices* between Safaricom and Telkom (3.86 and 3.21 respectively, see Table 5.3). The scores however still indicate a fairly strong desire by the LMs from both firms to carry out their work-life duties. Insight into the marginally lower Telkom score could be attributed to citations from the LMs’ interviews (n=4) which exhibited the managers’ feeling that the work-life duty should have been assigned as a full HR responsibility rather than a shared one as the LMs felt overwhelmed by their management duties. From Section 5.4.2, the Telkom LMs reiterated the issue of managing an underqualified group of employees who lacked the required knowledge and skills to handle work, compelling LMs to take on extra duties. For example:

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<sup>45</sup> Short-term challenges that occur in the initial stages of a project.

*“These leave matters should be HR’s business and not ours. We have a lot to do”* (Participant 1T: Luo, male).

The majority of the Safaricom LMs (n=7) expressed the willingness to implement WLB practices upon receiving training in WLB matters. Through training, they reportedly gained an understanding of the relevance of the WLB policies and how they would be of benefit to Safaricom and the employees (see interview citation in Section 5.10). In addition, regardless of the LMs associating the presence of the Safaricom-specific WLB policies to increased workloads and long working hours, the LMs acknowledged Safaricom’s efforts in developing a WLB programme to ensure employees’ quest for WLB. Safaricom had the option of only offering statutory leave entitlements, as the firm operates in an economy that struggles with high unemployment levels, poor wage and work conditions, as well as a lack of job security (KIPPRA 2013; Manda et al. 2011). Following Omolo (2012), because of the economic conditions in which Kenyan organisations operate, firms take advantage to deny employees healthy working lives, as hiring and firing employees is not controlled by the government. In spite of the challenges raised by the HRLs (see Section 4.5) and LMs (see Sections 5.4.2 and 5.7) in implementing the WLB schemes, the CROWF (2015) survey, which rates organisations on how work-life friendly they are, ranked Safaricom second to British American Tobacco. Such institutional efforts may have contributed to an increased desire to implement the WLB policies and practices.

However, the not-so-high Safaricom score can be argued to have emanated from resentment by the LMs towards implementing WLB practices as increased use of WLB arrangements by employees resulted into extra workloads and longer working hours for the managers (see Section 5.4.2). Safaricom LMs’ perceptions in the same section showed that the majority of organisational training and development activities took place within working hours, draining the already constrained working time. As Glynn et al. (2002) indicate, LMs are under pressure to increase productivity while at the same time being expected to exercise flexibility for employees on WLB matters. It is acknowledged by Felstead et al. (2013) that a competitive culture among private sector managers to create added value to organisational performance is a determinant for career advancement. Hence, the outcomes that were associated with LMs encouraging employees to use WLB arrangements may have been of concern to the Safaricom managers, especially as regards remaining competitive in terms of skills and job performance.

## **5.12 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The purpose of this chapter was to determine the perceptions and experiences of the LMs in implementing WLB policies and practices using data obtained from 20 semi-structured interviews, as well as establishing the attitudes and opinions of the LMs on their work-life roles using data obtained from 20 online questionnaires completed by the same LMs.

The triangulation of the interview (HRLs' and LMs') and questionnaire results revealed that despite Telkom having limited WLB policies, the organisation exhibited a healthier work-life culture compared to Safaricom's comprehensive WLB provisions, whose implementation resulted in higher WLC. Nevertheless, Safaricom excelled more than Telkom in their LMs' clarity of their work-life roles due to a well-designed WLB training programme, and a robust computerised communication system.

The triangulated results identified problems with: (1) political-tribal influence where autonomy in LMs' decision making was undermined; (2) gender role differences where the paid and unpaid work demands of women influenced the LMs' decisions regarding prioritising the approval of female WLB requests; and (3) cultural practices whose requirements for time off work were incompatible with statutory WLB guidelines and unsuitable for organisational workloads (at Safaricom). Overall, the stated findings continue to emphasise that despite the increased volume of HRM literature focused on WLB issues, there is insufficient consideration of these matters in an African context and from an African (and specifically, the Kenyan) perspective, where workplace characteristics are different. The dominance of Western perspectives is evident in the number of studies that have been referenced in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6: USE OF WLB POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

### **6.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This chapter analyses data from 20 semi-structured interviews and 266 online questionnaires involving general employees from both case study companies. The term ‘*general employees*’ in this research, refers to individuals with non-management responsibilities. Data obtained from these methods are directly linked to *objectives one, four and five*. The aims of this chapter were three fold: **(1)** to determine and compare the employees’ perceptions and experiences of using WLB provisions; **(2)** to establish the effects of tribalism and gender role differences on WLB practice; and **(3)** to establish the attitudes and opinions of employees with regards to WLB practices and processes. The interview findings are reported first followed by the questionnaire findings. As the interview and questionnaire results are discussed, a comparison is made with those obtained from the Human Resource Leaders (HRLs) and Line Managers (LMs) (Chapters 4 and 5).

Section 6.2 provides the demographic characteristics of the 20 interview participants. Four major themes were identified in the interview data which illustrate gaps in the existing literature regarding the use of WLB policies, namely: *understanding of WLB* (Section 6.3), *WLC* (Section 6.4), *utilisation of WLB policies* (Section 6.5), and *dissatisfactions with WLB practice* (Section 6.6). Within each theme, there also were sub-themes. The **questionnaire results** are discussed under four examined parameters (Sections 6.9.1 to 6.9.3). The concluding statement provides a summary of the interview and questionnaire findings (Section 6.10).

In the interview analyses, the initial S will be used to refer to Safaricom (e.g. Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male), and T for Telkom (e.g. Participant 1T: Luo, male).

### **Interview Results**

### **6.2 PARTICIPANTS’ DEMOGRAPHICS**

The interview sample consisted of 20 participants (10 from Safaricom and 10 from Telkom). All the interviewees were general employees, originating from the same departments as those of the LMs in Chapter 5 (See Chapter 3, Table 3.7 for the list of departments). Table 6.1 below illustrates the demographic characteristics of the general employees.

		Safaricom n=10	Telkom n=10
		n	n
<b>Gender</b>	Male	5	8
	Female	5	2
<b>Tribe</b>	Kikuyu	4	2
	Luo	2	1
	Kalenjin		5
	Abaluhya	2	1
	Somali	1	
	Meru		1
	Kisii	1	
<b>Age</b>	29-39	6	1
	40-49	4	4
	50-59		5
<b>Length of service</b>	2-8 years	7	2
	9-12 years	3	6
	13+ years		2
<b>Education qualifications</b>	Diploma		2
	High School		8
	Degree	10	
<b>Table 6.1: Demographic characteristics of the sample of 20 general employees</b>			

There was a difference in the composition of male to female employees at Safaricom in comparison to the HRL and LM results. As illustrated in Table 6.1, an equal number of male and female employees at Safaricom was selected, while Telkom's results mirrored those found in the HRL and LM results in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, where there were more males than females.

Nevertheless, for both firms, personal characteristics relating to the tribe, age, length of service, and education qualifications of the general employees matched those realised from the HRLs' and LMs' demographics as follows: (1) *Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luo* and *Abaluhya* tribes emerged as dominant; (2) Telkom employees were generally older than Safaricom workers; (3) most Telkom employees had longer years of service; while (4) Safaricom employees exhibited higher education qualifications.

The age and education aptitudes of the Safaricom employees attest to Wausi et al.'s (2013) findings. These authors declare Kenya's private sector telecoms firms as being characterised by a young, highly qualified and technology savvy workforce. Being in the telecoms industry, where technological inventions are volatile, a younger workforce may have been perceived

by Safaricom as being valuable in moving the firm forward, since younger people are defined by their affinity with the digital world (PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2011).

### **6.3 UNDERSTANDING OF WLB**

This theme concerned the employees' knowledge and understanding of the WLB concept, policies and practices, as well as the sources of WLB information, and the procedures of requesting for time off work. These will be discussed as distinct sub-themes below.

#### **6.3.1 Awareness of the WLB concept and provisions**

Echoing the HRL and LM interview findings, WLB was a well-known concept at Safaricom but not at Telkom. However, when the meaning of WLB was explained, the Telkom respondents related the concept to their leave entitlements. The excerpts below demonstrate the understanding of the concept as explained by some Telkom and Safaricom interviewees:

*“Work-life balance is when you have time to work and give your required hours to the company and after that you switch off and tend to your private life”* (Participant 7S: Luo, male).

*“Is that about additional payments at work?”* (Participant 2T: Meru, male).

Despite not being familiar with the term ‘WLB’, the Telkom respondents (n=10) demonstrated sufficient knowledge of the policies and procedures that the company offered, which were mandatory under legislation. With the Safaricom employees (n=10), distinctions were made between statutory and Safaricom-specific WLB provisions. Some 15 (9 from Safaricom and 6 from Telkom) out of the 20 participants clearly outlined the procedures for requesting time off work and the avenues of sourcing WLB information. For instance, while Telkom leave applications were reportedly managed by both LMs and HRLs, Safaricom applications were administered solely by LMs.

It was also noted that the general awareness of WLB arrangements was highest among women as they easily recalled more provisions than men. This suggested that women had greater interest in WLB policies than men, hence their superior knowledge. In a similar vein, Hobson's (2014) study with employed men and women found women's knowledge of WLB policies to be higher than men's because they used these provisions more frequently. It may be inferred that given the lower awareness of men regarding the range of available policies in both firms, the perceptions of the use of WLB policies are on the whole still women-oriented



in Kenya. This affirms the LMs' prioritisation of female WLB requests (see Section 5.5.2 in Chapter 5).

Overall, employees from both firms demonstrated adequate knowledge of WLB provisions and procedures. This finding testified to the appropriateness of the methods used by HR to communicate and promote WLB programmes in both firms. The following statements typify the shared notions of some general employees on their knowledge of statutory WLB provisions:

*"I know of annual, study, sick, maternity and paternity, bereavement leave given when you have an emergency, leave when I am going to retire, and many others. My immediate supervisor signs me off and gives me the final consent then I just pick up my leave letter from HR"* (Participant 6T: Kalenjin, male).

*"Our line managers approve our leave applications which we apply online. For my leave rights, I can apply for annual leave, paternity leave for dads, sick leave, and I often apply for leave for sports people because I represent the country in athletics"* (Participant 2S: Abaluhya, male).

As illustrated in Chapter 4, Safaricom offered a broad range of provisions. All the 10 participants were able to outline the various Safaricom-specific arrangements, some more than others, but they still illustrated an effective promotion of the firm's WLB programme. For example:

*"All communication on work-life balance draws a line between what the government says Safaricom must allow us and what Safaricom is offering us as extra. For example, we have four months maternity leave but the government passed only three months. But paternity leave is just two weeks"* (Participant 9S: Kisii, male).

### **6.3.2 Communication of WLB policies and practices**

From a universal point of reference, ACAS<sup>46</sup> (2015) advocates employers promoting WLB programmes for the purposes of creating awareness and letting employees know that their employers regard the policies as a fundamental part of the organisational culture. Beauregard (2014) emphasises transparency and consistency when communicating WLB policies across the organisation. Participants were asked questions about their awareness of the right to information on statutory leave entitlements. All the participants (n=20) were aware of the

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<sup>46</sup> Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) provides information, advice, training, conciliation and other services for employers and employees to help prevent or resolve workplace problems.

right to request, as well as having access to information and the use of WLB policies. They found the channels of communication (explained below) employed by their companies easy to use and understand. Of these responses, nine Safaricom participants confirmed having the ability to easily access electronically stored WLB information. The below interview extracts depict some employees' experiences of WLB policy communication:

*"We are supposed to get information from our immediate supervisors but it is easier to go straight to HR. The staff handbook is one for everyone. Sometimes information is put on the notice board"* (Participant 1T: Kalenjin, male).

*"I knew about the Safaricom work-life balance policy even before I started working here from adverts on the website. I got more information during orientation, and the staff handbook. Official log in details are provided to us for access of this information on the staff intranet. We also talk to our line managers or HR in person or through email"* (Participant 3S: Kikuyu, male).

Corroborating the HRL and LM results, the general employee interview findings revealed that the communication channels at Safaricom were mostly electronic (e.g. emails, staff intranet, e-databases), as opposed to Telkom's predominantly paper-based means (e.g. staff handbook, memos, posters). Differences emerged between the two firms on the paper-based information sources. Whereas one staff handbook was available per department at Telkom, each individual Safaricom general employee (n=10) reported having their own copy of the staff handbook, which could not only be accessed in print but also on the staff intranet. Furthermore, unlike Telkom, seven Safaricom respondents confirmed the publishing of WLB information in quarterly staff bulletins. Financial restrictions at Telkom meant that it was not feasible to provide each employee with a copy of the company handbook (see Figure 6.1). There was only one available for staff to access. In explaining their sources of WLB information, some general employees explained:

*"Our staff handbook is located in the manager's office but anyone can collect and use it when they need to"* (Participant 1T: Kalenjin, male).

*"HR and IT train us on the use of emails, staff intranet, e-databases, ipads and our mobile phones to access WLB information. Most of the CEO's communication on WLB matters is sent electronically, for example, through email"* (Participant 8S: Luo, female).

One-on-one consultations on WLB matters (with HR and/or LMs) were common to both firms. However, unlike Telkom, at Safaricom these consultations were reportedly extended not only to individual appraisal sessions and briefings, but also broadened to email consultations. Promotional events such as the 'wellness week' and 'wellness month' were

also used as avenues to remind employees about the WLB provisions that were on offer at Safaricom. For example:

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*“Within 3 days of our induction, leave matters are discussed. We are explained to why we need to go on leave and the procedures of applying for time off work. Any other communication is usually on the noticeboard”* (Participant 6T: Kalenjin, male).

**HANDBOOK FOR CIVIL SERVICE STAFF  
INDUCTION**

Figure 6.1: Cover page for Document 4T: *Civil Service Staff Handbook* that is used during induction exercises.

*“Every year, for the past 2 years, I have assisted HR on their stand during the wellness month. Normally, we promote the WLB programmes and remind employees about what is on the WLB menu. If they have any questions, they can ask”* (Participant 10S: Kikuyu, female).

Disparities emerged between the two firms when the participants were further probed on how they communicated with the management about concerns relating to WLB practices. From eight Telkom interviews, it was discovered that the organisations had no mechanisms in place for feedback on the performance of WLB policies from employees. Complementary to the conceptual framework (structural influences), this depicts a greater control culture at Telkom where a top-down decision making structure is prominent. There was an opposite result from Safaricom. Nine out of 10 interview responses revealed a high level of employee participation in WLB decision making (e.g. see Figure 6.2). It is important to note that although Figure 6.2 does not specifically refer to WLB employee participation/feedback, it illustrates Safaricom’s efforts of involving employees in decision making (a top-down, down-up management style). This result corroborated that obtained from the HRLs’ interviews regarding the use of an up-down and down-up approach in evaluating WLB schemes, where various modes were used to solicit employee feedback (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.1). The narratives below provide typical responses from the participants:

*“No one asks us about what we think of leave entitlements. But we read posts on the noticeboard about changes, for example, the introduction of paternity leave”* (Participant 7T: Kikuyu, male).

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*“....staff surveys are done at least once a year to get feedback about work-life balance policies. Also, when the CEO informs us about a new policy, after six months, we receive questionnaires asking for our opinions on the new policy...”*  
(Participant 8S: Luo, female).

*“In a previous survey, we recommended for a staff council to be formed and it was done. The Council briefs the CEO and HR about all our concerns. Also, with the ‘Sema na CEO’ scheme, we can communicate any information to the CEO or HR director”* (Participant 6S: Kikuyu, female).

Figure 6.2: Caption from Document 2S: *Annual report 2013/2014*, pg. 50/51, demonstrating the use of surveys to obtain employee feedback at Safaricom.

As described under the ‘WLB drivers’ section of the conceptual framework, the motivations for firms to develop WLB programmes originate from the experiences that employees have in balancing their work and non-work responsibilities, and the manner in which these experiences affect performance. Therefore, it was imperative for Work-life Conflict (WLC) to be examined in this thesis to unveil the source of work-life imbalances, hence the theme WLC below.

#### **6.4 WORK-LIFE CONFLICT**

This theme was identified by 70% (10 from Safaricom and four from Telkom) of the participants. It related to how demands at work presented challenges to employees in meeting non-work demands (Greenhaus and Beutell 1985). Two sub-themes were linked to this theme: (1) *Workload and working hours*, and (2) *Kenyan gender role expectations and working hours*.

#### **6.4.1 Workload and working hours**

For the purpose of this study, standard *working hours* (in the workplace) were defined as not exceeding 48 hours over six days a week, in line with the Employment Act (2015).

A comparison of the extracts from the Telkom (n=10) and Safaricom interviews (n=10) revealed a large disparity in the extent of conflict experienced by the employees in juggling their work and non-work demands. Mixed responses were registered by the Telkom workers. Four responses from ‘technical’ (n=2) and ‘customer facing’ departments (n=2) (e.g. retail) recorded incompatibilities between the available WLB policies and the nature of the work. For technical departments, a shortage of skilled workers resulted in heavier workloads, out-of-station travelling and long working hours. Yet the use of WLB policies and practices (see citation below) was limited. Employees lacked sufficient time to take advantage of these policies and maybe felt under pressure to do their job, owing to the tight control within this organisation. Two out of the ten interviewees working within ‘customer facing’ departments attributed their long working hours to the demands of providing a consistent service to clients. The findings from these interviews, backed by the results of a survey by the Langley James HR and IT Recruitment group (2016), suggest that increased volume of work is a major cause of long working hours. Unlike Safaricom, the long working hours were reportedly not compensated financially at Telkom. Instead, employees were reimbursed by receiving extra leave days. However, the employees lacked the ability to make use of the leave days. Instead, the participants complained of accumulated leave days that resulted in an annual cyclical pattern, where amassed days of leave were deferred to the following year. This depicts that in theory, the staff can access policies to help them manage their WLB, but in reality they cannot. The organisation ticks a box because the policies are in place but in reality, they are not supporting their staff to do this (see Figure 6.3 for feedback on a survey carried out by Glassdoor on Telkom employees). Given the HRLs’ confirmation of a stipulated 8am to 5pm working time at Telkom, it is clear that these employees’ assessment of their long working hours was perceived as a significant departure from their normal working week. For example:

*“This department is full of people from one region, who do not have the qualifications for this job. This acute shortage forces us to work 70-72 hours a week. Remember, we also travel to other branches to work. Our annual leave just piles up each year. Things are even worse when we have the ‘politicians’*

*sacred cows*<sup>47</sup>, not turning up for work” (Participant 5T: Luo, male). **This statement is in tandem with the highlights of nepotism in the caption in Figure 6.3 below.**

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*“Managers insist that consistent customers must be served by the same person but we are few. I can’t remember the last time I got home when the sun was still up. And yet when I get home, I cannot sleep peacefully because the office keeps on calling me to ask one thing after another”* (Participant 4T: Kikuyu, male).

Figure 6.3: Caption from a survey by Glassdoor illustrating nepotism as a cause of the employment of unskilled staff at Telkom

In contrast to their fellow workers above, six Telkom participants indicated that they only worked between 8am and 5pm, while also managing extremely light workloads and idleness. Therefore, they did not have much work to do. This greatly contrasts with the dissatisfaction expressed by the ‘technical’ and ‘consumer facing’ workers through their responses. For instance:

*“We are many and there is not much work to do. Most of the time people just tell stories, knit, or move from one department to another to chat”* (Participant 7T: Kikuyu, male).

When compared to Telkom, incidences of heavy workloads and long working hours were higher at Safaricom. Nine out of the 10 interviewees at Safaricom were working long hours (over 48 hours in 6 days a week). Paid overtime was characteristic of Safaricom’s working pattern. Nine employees evaluated overtime as a source of ‘extra income’ and an important undertaking to enable the completion of work. Some participants made a clear association between the inadequacies of salary levels meeting their financial demands hence the engagement in overtime. This lends support to Aryee’s (1999), Aryee et al.’s (2005) and Mapedzahama’s (2008) views that it is typical for African people, who come from nations where average household income is low, to work long hours in anticipation of higher income. ‘Household’ in this case refers to the members of an extended family living within an individual’s house (Mapedzahama 2008). Yet at the same time, six participants, mostly men,

<sup>47</sup> Directly relates to nepotism and the favouring of certain individuals who know or are related to an influential individual within the organisation or society (e.g. politicians, senior tribesmen in this study).

admitted suffering from tiredness and sleep deprivation. This relates to the need for them to work long hours in order to make extra money.

The above results showed that Telkom had less WLB policies, only the statutory minimum compared to Safaricom's comprehensive WLB programme. However, it could be argued that having only statutory WLB policies at Telkom was justified. The results show that the job roles at Telkom are not as stressful and demanding as those at Safaricom. Safaricom have the extra policies that are needed but employees are portrayed as being too busy or too scared to make use of them. For example, Figure 6.4 below shows survey results on employee remuneration and dissatisfaction in WLB at Safaricom. Also, in explaining how WLB impressed on their lives, some of the Safaricom respondents explained:

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*“Being a team leader is very demanding especially when you have a family. Sometimes I have to stick around until all customers are served and at the same time be reachable 24/7. It is hectic and I get fatigued to do anything constructive when*

Figure 6.4: Excerpt from a Glassdoor survey with Safaricom employees reflecting poor remuneration and WLB at Safaricom

*I get home from work, which is a recipe for fights with my wife and children”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*“I am a single mother today because of my working schedule. I work late shifts and this makes it difficult for me to meet family obligations especially those which are male related. My husband could not cope and left me to fend for the children on my own – it is a hassle”* (Participant 10S: Kikuyu, female).

Furthermore, evidence from the HRLs, LMs, and general employees showed that Safaricom's effort to develop a comprehensive WLB programme was an excellent public image building tool. But proof from the interviews also revealed that operating a lean workforce made the use of these policies practically challenging. For example, all the 10 employees from different departments (see Chapter 3, Table 3.7 for the list of departments) complained of severe demands at work that made it impractical to easily take time off work, particularly for male and child-free female employees. Grievances ranged from being contacted by work

while at home, to cancellations of leave applications, being called back to work while on annual leave, or covering other people's duties. Responses from the customer facing (e.g. retail) and technical departments (n=3), implied the existence of a culture where 'being constantly present' at work was not only a sign of commitment, but also a platform for career advancement. Therefore, to outsiders, Safaricom's comprehensive WLB programme would appear attractive and also give the impression that the employer is supportive, but the reality of the situation is different (see Figure 6.5 for an interview extract and a caption from a survey response).

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*"Whenever I am on call, life revolves around responding to faults, even though one is at home, one is never really there. When I leave work, I constantly receive work emails and calls even after work where my immediate response is required"* (Participant 5S: Abaluhya, female).

Figure 6.5: Evidence from a survey carried out by Glassdoor showing dissatisfaction with WLB at Safaricom.

*"This work-life balance business is just a show. My working day is too packed with work for me to go gyming. And even on the weekends when I should be able to, I would be scheduled to work because most women would have taken time off. And if I refuse to work, I will not get a promotion"* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

Overall, the research findings show that employees working long hours at both firms did so because of organisational work demands. For Safaricom, further reasons were related to intentions to increase earnings through overtime.

## **6.4.2 Kenyan gender role expectations and working hours**

Under this theme, 'time' emerged as a key aspect in defining the length of individuals' working days. For both firms, there were clear gender differences in the time that men and women spent at work. Also, working matters relating to women's use of WLB policies and practices were significantly discussed by both the male and female participants in comparison to male issues. This dominance in women's matters loudly endorsed the previously identified notion that WLB matters in Kenya were largely perceived as mostly relating to women (see Section 6.3.1). For example:



*“If it were not for women, the government would not be disturbing companies with all these breast feeding, mother-friendly matters” (Participant 2S: Abaluhya, male).*

From the HRL, LM, and employee interviews, it was evident that women in both firms reportedly made use of WLB policies more than men, and were therefore assumed to have spent less time in paid work compared to men. Responses from 12 male interviewees (seven from Safaricom and five from Telkom) showed that men worked significantly longer hours than women. At Safaricom, it could be assumed that working long hours by men was triggered by earnings, which may have mattered to men more than women (e.g. increased household income). However at Telkom, the long working hours may not necessarily have been paid. The participants talked about long hours in order to get the job done and being contactable all the time. In addition, marital status among the men defined their working hours. Some talked about working longer unpaid hours because they were expected to do so and/or wanted to keep in favour with the manager. For example, there was evidence from both firms that married men reportedly worked longer hours than single males. This could be argued to have been the case because married men bore heavier breadwinner responsibilities. Below is one of the responses:

*“There are many people in our department who cannot do the job but they are employed. It is us trained ones to work. If you don’t, the boss will not even consider you when a job comes up” (Participant 1T: Kalenjin, male).*

For women, the responses revealed more similarities than differences between Telkom and Safaricom. Generally, female workers attended to their paid jobs and also tended to domestic non-paid responsibilities, which were defined by cultural tribal expectations. Among the domestic roles, it was commonly highlighted in five interviews that some roles were more demanding and challenging than others. For example, *‘husband caring’* caused the most difficulties for women in combining their paid work and non-work responsibilities. This finding was directly related to the ‘WLB implementation process’ section of the conceptual framework, where gender structures in Kenyan societies and families define male and female household roles. As breadwinners, men tend to hold a lot of power in decision making while women tend to play submissive nurturing roles. These power dynamics and their effects on roles impact on women’s working hours. The extracts below illustrate some of the challenges with ‘male caring’:

*“If I only had my children and a few dependants to cater for minus my husband, my life would be much easier. The attention that my husband needs tires me especially on week days when I have to go to work. My tradition forbids a maid from cooking for my husband. Therefore regardless of the time I spend at work, I have to cook his meals myself”* (Participant 8S: Luo, female).

*“Duty requires that we serve all clients who enter the shop before closing time. We officially are supposed to close at 9pm but in most cases we close between 10.30 and 11pm. By the time I get home, it is usually close to midnight. Today I have no husband but I have five children to cater for alone. He took off with my younger sister because I was busy working”* (Participant 3T: Kikuyu, female).

However, differences also emerged between married and unmarried females, as well as between women with children and childfree women. Married women with children had caring responsibilities (male and child caring respectively) added to their domestic duties. Therefore, they had a longer working day than single females or those without children. This was not the same for married men who worked long hours, but were traditionally excluded from household work. This might have partly been the explanation for why the Safaricom women were more dissatisfied than men with long working hours and incompatible shift patterns (as discussed below). Furthermore, as Mungai and Ogot (2012) contend, the time that some women spent on domestic chores was exasperated by their belonging to particular tribes. This was also mentioned in Section 5.5.2 of Chapter 5. Some tribes have more demanding expectations from women than others. For instance, despite having access to cheap or free domestic help, extracts from four interviews showed that for some female workers, tribal obligations prohibited husbands from being served by individuals other than their wives (including meal preparation, laundry work, welcoming them back home). In summary, heavy workloads at work presented difficulties for women in meeting their ‘male care’ responsibilities, particularly for the Safaricom workers who were faced with the working demands of a private sector business environment. Below are typical illustrations of male participants’ thoughts on women’s inability to fulfil domestic responsibilities:

*“I do not eat anybody’s food apart from that which has been prepared by my wife. If she is ill, my mother or aunt will cook for me. It is my wife’s duty to welcome me back home and relieve me of any luggage and coat. The children can take my shoes off though. She has to prepare my bath water and make me comfortable when I return home from work. She works too, religion demands that she must fulfil her wife duties. If she cannot manage, then I have to take another wife who can help her with this”* (Participant 3S: Somali, male).

*“There is a reason why women were born women. They should do the jobs that God entrusted them to do. If my wife does not live up to her home duties, I will marry another one. If that other one fails, I will marry another one. Polygamy is legal therefore I am free to be served by as many women as I want”* (Participant 10T: Kalenjin, male).

In terms of the time spent at work, the seven women participants were asked questions related to how many hours they spent on paid work. There were disparities between females from both firms in relation to workloads and working hours. Heavier workloads made the achieving of WLB a tougher goal to accomplish for the Safaricom employees. They worked longer hours compared to their Telkom counterparts who worked within the stipulated 8am to 5pm time schedule. Taking a private sector perspective, Wang and Walumbwa (2007) find Kenya’s private sector to be characterised by a culture of long working hours. Hence, a comparison of female working hours and workloads between the two firms showed that the Safaricom females had heavier workloads and longer paid working hours compared to the Telkom females.

In addition to heavy workloads and long working hours, distinct differences were identified between the two female groups in terms of working patterns. As identified in the HRL, LM and employee interviews, the Telkom employees followed a uniform working pattern between Mondays and Fridays (8am to 5pm). Although it emerged in the interviews that some departments at Telkom (e.g. retail and technical) worked unevenly, had heavier workloads and long working hours, on the whole, there were fewer complaints regarding working patterns at Telkom compared to Safaricom. Five Safaricom interviews revealed dissatisfaction with female working patterns and their WLB. On the whole, their domestic relationships were reportedly affected more negatively than those reported by their Telkom counterparts. Incompatible shift patterns and late finishing times were barriers to WLB at Safaricom (n=5). Females who worked long hours, combined with working shift patterns that failed to correspond to their lifestyles, reported: (1) disrupted family and social activities, and (2) for women with partners, an association between leaving a partner alone at night and marital strain and family dysfunctions. This analysis is evident in the following statements and survey results. It is important to note here that although the survey response excerpt in Figure 6.6 below does not specifically relate to shift patterns, it illustrates that WLB is a problem at Safaricom.

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*“The arrangement of shifts is really bad because it does not help solve our problems but messes up my situation even more. All shifts are organised around weekend and evenings. Therefore, I am in the office during the time I should be socialising like during weekends, evenings, and public holidays”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*“Shift working hours are not favourable for those with families as you leave the office as late as 11 o’clock in the night”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

Figure 6.6: Excerpt from a survey carried out by Glassdoor with Safaricom employees confirming difficulties in employees achieving WLB.

*“Shift job hinders me from planning my time and attend to some personal issues or hobbies”* (Participant 2S: Abaluhya, male).

*“I work in shifts hence it is difficult to meet family obligations. I don’t choose, the supervisor just gives whichever he wants”* (Participant 8S: Luo, female).

Shift working is a form of flexible working that is intended to assist employees to balance the demands between work and personal responsibilities. In Safaricom’s case, the evidence above presents a contradiction to the aims of a shift working pattern. However, domestic workloads were made lighter through assistance sought from hired househelps and boarding<sup>48</sup> relatives. Hired domestic labour was reported to have been cheap and affordable (n=12). In exchange for domestic help by boarding relatives, the interviews (n=9) showed that this help came with the price of financially supporting residing relatives (e.g. educational expenses, job hunting, starting up businesses). Therefore, the participants were required to work more hours in order to earn more and support residing relatives. This finding is consistent with that obtained from the LM interviews at Safaricom (see Section 5.5.2). Some LMs indicated that because of employees seeking to earn extra income from overtime to support their financial demands, there were challenges in dealing with disappointments when requests were turned down.

<sup>48</sup> Extended family members who live with employees. In most cases, the relationship is mutual; employees provide shelter and various support opportunities (e.g. paying school fees, financial support) and the boarders provide free household labour.

Female employees also indicated that they experienced challenges of their partners/husbands engaging romantically with househelps, and/or boarding relatives when they (employees) worked for longer hours (e.g. younger sisters and cousins) (n=5). Thus, whereas women's wellbeing increased with paid working hours (e.g. having their children at the baby crèche at Safaricom offered peace of mind), those who worked long hours while reserving their home duties were at risk of suffering marital and consequently emotional instabilities. For example:

*“Because my work starts at 3pm and finishes at 11pm, I hired a professionally trained househelp who would be able to offer top notch service. But I was particular about the looks. Therefore I hired an elderly unattractive one so that my husband could not get carried away. Regardless, my husband maintained a long term love affair with the lady without my knowledge. And when I found out and asked him, he bluntly told me she offered all he needed. Since polygamy is legalised, we have to compete with househelps over men”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

When considering men's support for the prioritisation of women's WLB requests, six Telkom responses from both men and women demonstrated strong support from male workers for the prioritisation of women's requests for time off work. This was based on women managing multiple roles. The same result was not reflected in the Safaricom interviews. Five responses showed resentment, particularly among the male workers, when women's WLB needs were given precedence over their own. This was particularly common among the younger males, especially because salary levels remained the same for both male and female workers, regardless of the amount of time spent at work, or away from work. Furthermore, the responses pointed to the fact that career advancements were rated on performance. Taking on more duties reduced the quality of work. Therefore co-workers were reluctant to take on extra duties for colleagues who were absent. Yet again, these perceptions by male employees fed into the stereotype that women were less committed to their careers. But surprisingly, when it came to making career concessions to achieve WLB, women declined giving up a promotion for the sake of WLB. This analysis is evident in the following statement:

*“I am mentally and physically exhausted. My work is strenuous and very fast paced. I have serious marital problems because I am not at home but empowerment has turned me into a career-obsessed woman. I cannot sacrifice my job for marriage because our Kenyan men are unpredictable”* (Participant 8S: Luo, female).

Debatably, the information above, which revealed the position taken by Telkom males to easily allow women's WLB needs to take precedence over their own was not only as a result

of empathy but also a patriarchal gesture. Justino et al. (2012) indicate that African men tend to transfer the power that they hold in their households into controlling and dictating activities in workplaces. Following Telgen (2011), public sector firms in Kenya are characterised by a paternalistic approach to governance. The work of Mungai and Ogot (2012) also provide valuable insight concerning how the empowerment of women (e.g. increasing the number of employed women in Kenya) challenges men's positions in organisations. Hence, men utilise a number of suppressing approaches to reaffirm women's subordinate positions in the workplace. In some instances, Mokomane (2014) indicates, such approaches present men as spoilers of work-life transformations in sub-Saharan Africa. However, in the case of this study, women used this situation to their advantage. For instance, the interview extract below indicates that women were controlled but they found ways to grab some of that control back and make the best use of the situation.

*“Men don't take us seriously at work. They think that we landed in jobs by the favour of the government and by our own choice, when our real positions are in the kitchens to cook for them. But this negative attitude helps us to easily get time off work”* (Participant 9T: Abaluhya, female).

Attaining WLB was arguably even tougher for Safaricom's male employees who covered most of the workload, worked the longest hours and yet had the least use of WLB policies. Safaricom's 'women wellness programme' afforded female workers more access to WLB arrangements thereby reducing their face time at work. Unfortunately, when it comes to men, WLB and career flexibility, Thebaud (2010) argues that “unwritten hierarchies” of rights in most firms exclude men from priority lists. But Mokomane (2014) contends that men's role definitions in sub-Saharan African societies put them at a disadvantage, and prevent them from being at the top of the WLB agenda in organisations. Notwithstanding, contradicting responses were recovered from the Safaricom male interviews (n=5). Whilst the same participants complained about heavy workloads and long working hours that caused them tiredness and deprived them of enough sleep, they also declared the will to invest in more overtime hours to meet their financial responsibilities. Some felt that using WLB policies or asking for time off work went against their perceived role at work and at home. By contrast, Aryee et al. (1999) and De Klerk and Mostert (2010) indicate that the assumption in sub-Saharan Africa remains that “real” men (single or married), do not need/want WLB as they are destined to work. The general assumption therefore is that the use of WLB policies by men is a sign of weakness; going against their macho image. However, as the results have revealed, dual career couples are now becoming the norm in the Kenyan society. Unlike in

Western contexts where Craig et al. (2012) state that household roles are shared, Mungai and Ogot (2012) assert that women in Kenya are prohibited from demanding a more active role from men at home as they pursue their career aspirations. For this reason, there is a high possibility that WLB arrangements in Kenya will largely remain women-focused for a while. This analysis is evident in the following statements and excerpts presented as Figure 6.7, showing the range of some of the WLB policies that female employees benefitted from at Safaricom.

<p>“Women are always asking for one leave after the other. I have on many occasions been asked by my immediate supervisor to let women colleagues go even when my application was first. I only agree because everyone else will see me as an inconsiderate person if I refuse” (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).</p>	<p>Some materials have been removed due to 3rd party copyright. The unabridged version can be viewed in Lancaster Library - Coventry University.</p>
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“When all the WLB provisions are put together, they would amount to women not coming to work but earning a free salary. Policies that are applicable to us men are also applicable to women. Then they have been added the ‘women wellness programme’ which allows them time off work because of so many matters. How can these women be earning the same salaries as us and yet they are not at work?”  
(Participant 9S: Kisii, male).

Figure 6.7: Excerpts from Document 4S: *Supporting a mother friendly workplace flyer*, pgs. 5 &6, showing various WLB benefits for female employees at Safaricom

Overall, the results demonstrated that the general employees (male and female) at Safaricom experienced a higher WLC compared to those at Telkom. When this matter was considered from the questionnaires, the WLC mean scores of 3.70 (Safaricom) and 2.50 (Telkom) (see Table 6.4 in the questionnaire results below) denote high work demands that created an unbalanced situation on the home front for Safaricom employees in comparison to Telkom. Overall, women were more disadvantaged by having longer working days because of the ‘life’ hours added to the beginning or end of their working day. Fagan et al. (2011) had a similar opinion to this finding. They found that when unpaid domestic work was included in the calculation of the total length of a day, women had a longer working day and week than men.

## **6.5 UTILISATION OF WLB POLICIES**

Discussed by 100% (n=20) of the interviewees, this emerged as the most prominent theme, forming the focus of this chapter, which is the use of WLB policies by employees. Three sub-themes were established from the data: *procedures for requesting time off work*, *perceived LM support* and *perceived co-worker support*.

### **6.5.1 Procedures for requesting time off work**

It was highlighted in Chapters 4 and 5, as well as in this chapter, that HRLs and LMs jointly administered applications for the use of WLB policies at Telkom, while this responsibility solely belonged to LMs at Safaricom. In the same chapters, it was also mentioned that Telkom maintained a paper-based application procedure, while Safaricom used an electronic approach. An analysis of the Safaricom interviews revealed significantly positive evaluations of the electronic application system among the participants. They felt that there was a high level of transparency in applications for time off work, while the system also enabled fast turnaround periods. For example:

*“Our leave requests are submitted online and approved online by the line managers. Usually the response comes back within a day or two. We do not use forms because we are allocated electronic signatures”* (Participant 5S: Abaluhya, female).

Conversely, the Telkom interviewees spoke of a slow and uncertain system (n=6). The paper-based approach presented an easy avenue through which transparency in the approval of time off work was undermined. Responses indicated a high level of loss or misplacement of application forms. This either caused delays or necessitated the submission of new applications. Interestingly, a large proportion of these anomalies were perceived to have been deliberate, with intentions to encourage tribal favouritism, as illustrated in the extracts below:

*“HR deliberately lose people’s forms to put their tribesmen’s applications through, especially when the application is for annual leave”* (Participant 5T: Luo, male).

*“.... approval can take close to 2 weeks and even longer. If HR lose your forms then you have to begin the whole process again”* (Participant 8T: Kalenjin, male).



The next section discusses the manner in which the support from LMs encouraged and/or dissuaded the use of WLB policies and practices.

### **6.5.2 Perceived LM support**

A study by Russo et al. (2015) found that a critical ingredient for employees successfully managing their competing professional and personal lives is the support they receive at work, particularly from their LMs. According to Russo et al., ‘support’ was directly related to the use of policies, such that perceptions of increased support from LMs consequently encouraged a higher use of WLB policies and practices. Some researchers argue that, as gatekeepers, LMs’ behaviours allow or disallow, encourage or dissuade employees from using WLB arrangements (Kossek et al. 2011; Daverth et al. 2016; Hales 2006). While this is partly true, mixed perceptions were obtained from the Safaricom and Telkom participants.

Telkom employees (n=9) talked of organisational norms and a culture that encouraged employees to freely talk about their personal life, and therefore share information on balancing their work and life. Low workloads and idleness at work presented a conducive environment for personal talk – “...people just sit gossiping. We know everything about everyone’s backyard. The manager even knows” (Participant 9T: Abaluhya, female). To capture their experiences in managing their work-life interface, interviewees were asked how supportive their LMs were. The responses showed that only three Telkom employees perceived their LMs as being supportive, compared to seven who felt that their LMs were unsupportive. However, the issue was not that the LMs were unsupportive of the employees using WLB policies and practices. Rather, supportiveness was in relation to facilitating unbiased approval of ‘leave’ applications. Two participants from the Kikuyu tribe and one from the Kalenjin tribe stated that they experienced high LM supportiveness. Noticeably, these tribes had a high representation of HRLs and LMs (see Chapter 4, Section 4.2 and Chapter 5, Section 5.2). Also, Kenya’s current President originates from the Kikuyu tribe, while the Deputy Vice President is from the Kalenjin tribe thereby impacting on the number of managers from these tribes based on political-tribal influences in employment opportunities. Evidence from seven Telkom interviews attested to tribal favouritism in the approval of leave applications. Notably, employees from dominant tribes (Kikuyu and Kalenjin), who benefitted from a higher number of LMs from their tribes, were favoured over the minority tribes with lower numbers of LM representatives. For example:

*“My manager will tell you where to get all the information you need but when it comes to deciding who will be off work and who will be in, if you do not belong to his tribe, your approval falls at the bottom of the list. Extensions of leave are even made without the correct paperwork being signed. Some people use up all their annual leave days but they are still allowed annual leave yet none of this is recorded”* (Participant 5T: Luo, male).

Employees from minority tribes were denied the right to easily use WLB policies and practices in the same way as those from dominant tribes. This inspired them to seek alternative measures to accelerate the processing of their applications. These employees found the provision of “financial and non-financial gifts” to LMs and or HRLs a faster way of influencing their approvals. Not only were financial gifts awarded to these managers, but also “*gifts in various forms*”, based on what the employees could afford. This finding was common to six Telkom interviews and confirms a breeding ground for malpractices such as bribery and bias (Mureithi 2012). This practice left LMs caught up in between basing their approval decisions on tribal allegiance or loyalty to “gifts”, as evidenced by the interview narrative below. Also, it is another example of how employees can gain some control over the ‘system’ to achieve what they want.

*“My supervisor does not reject bribes and yet he does not live up to his promises. Giving him money does not always guarantee approval because he must allow his tribesmen first before us or else they will uproot him from that seat. His tactic is to become very harsh when he is caught up between decisions”* (Participant 10T: Kalenjin, male).

*“... is it a secret? NO! I have my own lucrative business that earns me very good money. I purchase most of my goods from Dubai, Singapore, China and Hong Kong. My annual leave days are not enough to cover the time I spend on my business trips. I only manage because I take good care of “my brother”, the manager. I give him money and bring him free gifts for himself and his family. No one questions where I am because I am covered. This is ‘our time’ now”* (Participant 7T: Kikuyu, male). **“Brother” in this case refers to ‘belonging to the same tribe’, while ‘our time’ refers to the opportunity for the Kikuyu tribe to lead the country.**

Interestingly, at Safaricom, eight participants felt that the act of LMs encouraging employees to speak about their personal difficulties at work was conceited. Some claimed that the LMs only showed interest in employees’ life demands because their roles as implementers of WLB required them to do so. Others alleged that the LMs were in fear of being reported to the CEO or senior managers through the ‘Sema na CEO’<sup>49</sup> platform as shown in the interview caption

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<sup>49</sup> An online platform that allows employees the opportunity of directly, anonymously, and frequently communicating with the CEO on grievances, sharing opinions, and/or contributing strategic ideas.

below. Encouraging the use of WLB policies and practices generated more work and long working hours for LMs. However, Safaricom failed to provide LMs with adequate staff numbers to enable effective implementation and use of WLB policies and practices (see Chapter 5, Section 5.4.2). Studies conducted on WLB-supportive supervisors have shown that training LMs on employee supportiveness is effective in promoting a larger demonstration of WLB-supportive behaviours at work (Dumas and Sanchez-Burks 2015; Hammer et al. 2015). Below are some typical responses from the participants:

*“Line managers are under intense pressure to perform. The minute you start making excuses to be off duty, the manager hides his irritation because he knows you can report him to the CEO. Our absence is more work for these managers”* (Participant 9S: Kisii, male).

*“These line managers only pretend to listen to our problems because one, their job requires them to do that, and two, we can report them to the CEO. Otherwise it is more work for them when anyone is off”* (Participant 5S: Abaluhya, female).

In summary, most of the Telkom employees perceived their LMs as being unsupportive in terms of approval of ‘leave’ applications, while participants from Safaricom found their LMs to have been supportive, but only because their roles required them to do so as the end result was extra work for them and an extension of working hours beyond their contracted time. However, for an extended understanding on how employees were encouraged to use or not to use WLB policies and practices, it was vital to also examine how colleagues at work influenced employees’ use of policies. This is discussed in the next section.

### **6.5.3 Perceived co-worker support**

There was a strong *co-worker support* among the Telkom participants. This emerged as a surprising result considering the prevalence of tribalism reported by the participants in Section 6.5.2 above. Based on results from previous studies on tribalism in Kenya’s public sector, there was a pre-conceived assumption of a weak co-worker support system. For example, Masakhalia (2011) found that rampant levels of tribalism in Kenya’s public sector institutions cultivated hatred and animosity among/between employees. But surprisingly, most of the Telkom respondents (n=8) attested to co-workers being supportive of each other in the sharing of tasks during absences, while also being accommodating of individuals’ non-work related needs. Arguably, this could be attributed to a high level of idleness in the

following sense. Weinstein (1995) argues that idleness subverts the work ethic. However, Russell (2009) views idleness as the best investment for employee happiness and joy. Unravelling this dichotomy, the findings from the HRLs, LMs and general employee interviews showed that idleness caused by overstaffing at Telkom allowed extra time for workers to share information about their personal lives. Hammer et al. (2015) also suggest that speaking about personal life with co-workers can be crucial for a healthy management of the work-life interface, hence the strong co-worker support at Telkom. These workers were not overloaded when at work and the organisational culture supported the sharing of tasks when co-workers were absent because there was little to share. Therefore, it was not a heavy burden to pass work onto someone else because they would be able to cope and not be overloaded.

Secondly, Masakhalia (2011) also found that Kenya's public sector was characterised by a collectivist working culture. Employer-employee and employee-employee relations were perceived in moral terms like a family link (parent-child/sister-brother). Masakhalia reports that these relationships, which were nurtured over several years of working together, fostered strong co-worker supportiveness on matters of managing the work-life interface. Russo et al.'s (2016) perspective of such openness at work is the benefit that workers receive from unexpected guidance, emotional support and assistance to not only better manage their non-work demands, but also to aid them in experiencing more fit and harmony between their work and non-work roles. For instance, in explaining the contrasting implications of tribalism, one participant stated:

*“Tribalism and the public sector are sister and brother. Without one, the other cannot work. Managers clearly show that they favour their own tribesmen. But when it comes to we people (workers), in times of difficulties and needing time off work, we put the tribal thing aside and help each other. Most of us have worked together for over five years. We are friends at work and out of work. But when it comes to politics, no friendship”* (Participant 3T: Kikuyu, female).

A reverse result was obtained from the Safaricom interviews. There was overwhelming evidence of discontent for those who made high use of WLB arrangements, particularly among male and child-free workers. This displeasure contributed to a work environment where employees felt uncomfortable to use the available WLB provisions. As discussed in the HRLs' and LMs' findings, the increased use of WLB arrangements resulted in heavier workloads and longer working hours for those who were present at work. In addition, five interview extracts emphasised the fact that career advancement was based on performance.

There were general perceptions that increased workloads reduced the quality of individual work. The quote below demonstrates that employees were keen to protect their ability to grow within the organisation. This result brings into play Nyandegge et al.'s (2013) assertion that the private sector in Kenya is typified by employee preferences for challenges; therefore, competition between employees is high. There are high expectations for individual rewards for hard work, as opposed to team recognition, hence the resentment of co-workers at Safaricom.

*“My plate is full already. If the manager or my colleague asked me to cover their duties because they have to take time off work for any reason, I would refuse. Not because I don't respect them or I don't have empathy for their status, but because I will be marked down if I provide substandard work. No one will relate my low performance to having double work. Why Safaricom cannot sort this menace out, I don't know. This problem causes severe tension and strain between people”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

Consequently, workers who mostly utilised WLB policies felt resentment from co-workers. However, some policy users drew attention to the necessity for co-workers to recognise ‘use’ and ‘misuse’ so as to avoid misconceptions of policy users being perceived as less committed (see narrative and Figure 6.8 below). These findings are consistent with previous studies which have shown that co-workers can generate a barrier for their colleagues’ WLB if they experience feelings of resentment and irritation towards high benefit users. This is especially so when they have to assume additional workload and task coverage.

*“What can I do as a single mother who has to keep my eyes and attention on three children including a toddler? My colleagues are fed up of covering for me. I understand that the work is too much but I cannot run away from the fact that I am in this situation”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

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Figure 6.8: Excerpt from a survey carried out by Glassdoor with Safaricom employees confirming difficulties in working hours and co-worker relationships.

*“I have on several occasions been stuck to the extent of paying my colleagues to cover my work. This seems to work for me therefore I use money”* (Participant 8S: Luo, female).

The discontent with large workloads at Safaricom attests to Russell's (2009) theory, which holds that excessive hard work is counterproductive. This author directs that working less makes workers happier and enables them to achieve more. However, researchers such as Hsee et al. (2010) think that some individuals are happier when busy. Nevertheless, Hsee et al. differentiate between 'futile busyness' (busyness to prevent idleness) which they find to be unconstructive but less damaging than 'destructive busyness' (work overloads in organisations and long unsocial working hours). The latter reflects a typical Safaricom workplace. Therefore, while Russo et al. (2015) support the rich benefits that employers and employees derive from the existence of WLB programmes, these authors also caution that the success of WLB schemes not only depends on how supportive the organisational culture is towards WLB, but also the supportiveness of managers and co-workers. Collectively, they shape an organisation's WLB culture.

Disparities between Telkom and Safaricom's co-worker supportiveness was further corroborated by the questionnaire results where Telkom had higher mean scores (3.66) compared to Safaricom's 2.87 (see Table 6.4). The above results agree with Gray and Tudball (2003), who assert that a firm's offering of WLB policies and practices does not necessarily signify that: (1) all employees will equally be given the opportunity to use them; and (2) all workers will feel able and/or take advantage of such chances. Moving forward, Dumas and Sanchez-Burks (2015) advocate the establishment of organisational cultures that support WLB, as designing WLB schemes that are not utilised by employees undermines the effectiveness of the policies. Section 6.6 builds on the organisational support results (LM and co-worker) to unpick the discontent that employees had with their specific organisational WLB systems.

## **6.6 DISSATISFACTIONS WITH THE PRACTICE OF WLB**

The results discussed above showed that Telkom employees had a better work-life culture plus a strong co-worker support system compared to Safaricom. On the other hand, Safaricom employees had access to a broad range of WLB arrangements that consisted of not only statutory entitlements but also Safaricom-specific WLB schemes. Despite these positive WLB developments, employees from both firms registered some discontent with their specific organisational WLB practices. Therefore, this theme was identified by 75% (nine from Safaricom and six from Telkom) of the participants. On one hand, the results revealed a high level of dissatisfaction among the Telkom participants with the influence of tribalism on

WLB practice and a lower level among the Safaricom respondents. On the other hand, the Safaricom employees who were privileged to have a WLB scheme that consisted of a broad range of arrangements disapproved of their inability to make good use of them. Some Telkom participants (n=7) were dissatisfied with their ability to use WLB policies at the time they required to use them. Hence, *favouritism in the implementation of WLB policies* and *under-utilisation of WLB provisions* were established as sub-themes that were common to both firms.

### 6.6.1 Favouritism in the implementation of WLB policies

This was established as a sub-theme after being identified among 17 respondents (nine from Telkom and eight from Safaricom). However, the experiences of favouritism differed in context. At Telkom, the perception of favouritism was highly *tribal based* while the same at Safaricom was mostly *gender-related*. But this does not mean that there was no tribal favouritism at Safaricom and no gender favouritism at Telkom. There was, but the manner in which they were perceived and/or experienced, and the levels of bias, were minimal. For instance, partiality based on *tribal affiliations* was not completely disqualified at Safaricom as two interviewees mentioned ‘slight’ traces of tribalism in the approval of requests to use WLB provisions. However, the two interviewees felt that their LMs had lost their autonomy to decline such requests as the staff involved were closely associated with politicians who influenced LMs’ decisions. In addition, most of the Safaricom interviewees (n=7) praised their organisation’s implementation of anti-tribalism policies.

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On the contrary, biased approvals of requests for WLB initiatives were high at Telkom. These were associated with employees from dominant tribes and were registered by seven Telkom respondents. Although not related to Kenya and/or the telecommunications sector, but related to WLB, a similar result was realised by Mordi et al. (2013). These authors found ethnic favouritism to be a major issue in employees getting any form of WLB initiatives approved by employers and senior management in most Nigerian banks. Mordi et al. use the term ‘ethnic’

to refer to ‘tribe’ as they explain that Nigeria has over 150 tribes. However, favouritism was inclined towards employees of Nigeria’s three dominant tribes: *Ibo, Hausa and Yoruba*. The following statements highlight the practice of tribal favouritism in both firms, while Figure 6.9 illustrates media reports of increased tribalism in Kenyan workplaces:

*“A politician once landed here with a gun to threaten a manager because he cancelled someone’s annual leave. This is the reason why we now have electronic door cards”* (Participant 9S: Kisii, male).

*“If you are not Kikuyu, your leave application will be last on the list even if you applied first”* (Participant 5T: Luo, male).

Secondly, *gender influences*, particularly interest towards female employees’ WLB needs, emerged as a common experience among Safaricom and Telkom workers. However, whilst the prioritisation of approvals for female WLB requests caused less dissatisfaction at Telkom, it was a major source of discontent among male and child-free workers at Safaricom. Two main factors were recorded for the cause of unhappiness. First, the fact that those women with families and child caring responsibilities had access to more WLB arrangements compared to male and child-free staff. Second, the increased use of WLB arrangements by women with families and child caring responsibilities created higher workloads for male and child-free employees, yet salaries still remained the same, as shown in Figure 6.10 below. These experiences as depicted in the narratives below, representing a public sector with older generational mentalities and a private sector with a younger ‘rights conscious’ workforce. For example:

*“Our colleagues who have children benefit from the mother friendly programme and then they are also entitled to all other policies that we are entitled to. Generally, for seven days, these people are only present for four days. And who does their work? WE. And salary, we earn the same. Is this fair?”* (Participant 9S: Kisii, male).

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*“The paternity leave should be scrapped because it makes no sense. The weekend is enough for men to relax at home. And even which of these men sit with children even on the weekend? Instead, the 2 weeks for paternity leave should be added to maternity leave or given as extra leave days for women because they need it”*

Figure 6.10: Excerpt from a survey carried out by Glassdoor with Safaricom employees depicting dissatisfactions about overworking and underworking of employees



(Participant 1T: Kalenjin, male)

Favouritism in the implementation of WLB provisions was seconded by another theme, ‘under-utilisation of WLB provisions’, which is discussed below.

### **6.6.2 Under-utilisation of WLB provisions**

This theme applied to both Telkom and Safaricom, but a larger proportion of responses relating to the underuse of WLB policies were identified among the Safaricom responses. It was noted that employees from ‘technical’ and ‘customer facing’ departments (n=4) were dissatisfied with the lack of regard by Telkom to redesign their work in order to afford them appropriate use of WLB policies (see Section 6.4.1). It is also acknowledged from the results that due to tribalism, there was a promotion of bias in the approval of WLB policy requests at Telkom. However, the influence of tribalism did not deny employees access to use. The majority of the respondents still had access to, and could make use of, all the policies. What the employees from minority tribes lacked was making use of the policies at the time that they needed to use them.

Contrary to Telkom, the results discussed above revealed heavy workloads at Safaricom due to the presence of a lean workforce. Because of this, employees were compelled to work overtime, plus extra hours. They reportedly had little time left after working, to attend to their non-work concerns. But at the same time, as discussed in Section 6.6.1, the majority of the employees were denied effective use of WLB policies because of heavy use of the policies by a section of the employees. Nevertheless, the benefit was that those who engaged in overtime and/or worked extra hours were compensated financially. But according to the results, this created a new controversy.

According to the majority of the responses (n=8), overtime remuneration at Safaricom was discerned to have been incommensurate with the demands of work, as portrayed in the survey review below (see Figure 6.11). Overtime pay rates were pegged on job scales, yet according to the participants, the lower scaled the jobs were, the more workload individuals had. This does not mean that management and staff have to be paid similar salaries. Even Rowland and Hall (2014) highlight the importance of organisations differentiating between management and employee pay. However, responses from the eight Safaricom workers demonstrated perceptions of inequality in overtime payment considering that the organisation not only had a lean workforce, but also individuals at lower job scales had heavier workloads. As discussed in the literature review (see Section 2.5.3), money is of essence in Kenyan societies

and therefore a motivator to work (Aryee et al. 2005). Similarly, Holly and Mohnen (2012) acknowledge there being multiple benefits for organisations when increased employee satisfaction is positively linked to appropriate compensation of employee overtime.

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*“Overtime is calculated and pegged on employee job scales therefore a low salary means that your overtime payment will be lower. But this does not equate to the demand that overtime places on us, especially those of us at middle and lower job levels. We are called upon more and work harder compared to those at higher levels. Overtime should be reviewed such that it is not based on salary scales but on a standard charge with very little differences between job scales”*  
(Participant 9S: Kisii, male).

Figure 6.11: Excerpt from a survey carried out by Glassdoor with Safaricom employees depicting dissatisfactions about underpayment and salary disparities.

The majority of Safaricom employees (n=8) raised concerns about their shift patterns, as shown in Figure 6.12. They found them to be incompatible with their lifestyles. Rather than being afforded the liberty to select suitable shifts, LMs reportedly imposed shift choices on the workers. These discoveries contradicted the aims of the WLB programme as stated in the corporate policy documents (see Section 4.3.2), as well as the essence of carrying out company surveys to evaluate WLB initiatives (See Section 4.4.2). Although employees acknowledged witnessing changes as a result of feedback from surveys (e.g. the formation of the Staff Council), criticisms of delays in solving the lean staffing problem (Safaricom’s source of WLB challenges), were identified among seven responses. The same complaint was raised among the LMs (see Section 5.4.1). This agrees with previous studies, where researchers argue that organisations cannot satisfy the WLB needs of each individual employee (e.g. Kelly et al. 2010; Skinner and Pocock 2011). However, in this case, Safaricom could be viewed as gaining at the expense of employees, as depicted in the narratives below. These findings from the employee interviews corroborate those obtained from the LM interviews regarding Safaricom’s WLB culture being practically more business/profit focused than employee wellbeing oriented (see Section 5.4.2):

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Figure 6.12: Excerpt from a survey carried out by Glassdoor with Safaricom employees depicting dissatisfactions about shift patterns

*“Shift working hours are not favourable for those with families as you leave the office as late as 11 o’clock in the night. Line managers choose the shifts for us and not the other way round”* (Participant 4S: Kikuyu, female).

*“The arrangement of shifts is really bad because it does not help to solve our WLB problems but makes the situation worse. All shifts are organised around weekend and evenings. Therefore, I am in the office during the time I should be socialising like during weekends, evenings, and public holidays. Safaricom makes trillions in profits. I wonder why they cannot just employ new people”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

*“I wish we were allowed to choose our shifts. That would help me with children issues – I am in charge of eight children. Two of my own and six from my late sister. I don’t fit into the shift I work at the moment”* (Participant 8S: Luo, female).

Regardless of the challenges faced by employees from each company, the results indicated that employees wanted to remain in employment with their companies (nine from Safaricom and nine from Telkom). This can be explained in two ways. First, referring back to the employee demographics in Section 6.2, Telkom workers were portrayed as possessing basic education, in comparison to their Safaricom counterparts who were trained to degree level. Hence, some Telkom workers perceived themselves as unattractive for private sector employment (n=7), as depicted in the narrative below. Despite employees at Safaricom not making full use of WLB benefits, the majority (n=9) viewed the WLB programme as a privilege that most organisations in the country would not afford to offer their employees. For example:

*“This company respects my religious requirements to pray five times a day. We have a prayer centre and prayer rooms for five different faiths to which*

*staff belong. During our fasting period, we only work half day and if my half day is in the afternoon, meaning that I would finish in the evening after 6pm, the company provides us with the necessary food to break our fast. I am so committed to Safaricom and I cannot choose another company over this one”* (Participant 3S: Somali, male).

*“Private organisations do not look at us because we have no degrees”* (Participant 2T: Meru, male).

In summary, it can be concluded that offering a wide range of WLB provisions at Safaricom may have affected the perceptions of under-utilisation, as expectations regarding WLB were high. Table 6.2 below provides an overall summary of the differences in general employees’ understandings and views between the two organisations.

	<b>TELKOM</b>	<b>SAFARICOM</b>
<b>1.</b>	Lack of understanding of the ‘WLB concept’.	Had a clear understanding of the concept.
<b>2.</b>	One-on-one and print media formed the basis of communicating WLB information.	The communication system for WLB consisted of a combination of one-on-one, print media and electronic options.
<b>3.</b>	Paper-based system in place to facilitate leave applications.	Electronic system used to facilitate applications for time off work.
<b>4.</b>	Approximately 2 weeks for processing of applications for the use of WLB policies.	Turnaround period of 2-3 days for ‘time off work’ applications.
<b>5.</b>	Training on WLB matters offered at induction only.	❖ Departmental training offered in addition to training at induction. ❖ Training on the use of electronic communication gadgets.
<b>6.</b>	No feedback requested on WLB practice.	Employees’ feedback sourced and incorporated into WLB policy development.
<b>7.</b>	Stipulated working hours and co-worker support contributed to a healthy work-life culture and full use of WLB policies.	A lean workforce led to an increase in workloads, prolonged working hours, resentment from co-workers for benefits users as well as the inability to make full use of WLB arrangements.
<b>8.</b>	Significant levels of tribal bias in the approval of WLB policy requests.	Lesser significant traces of tribalism due to organisational policies.

**Table 6.2: A summary of the differences between Telkom and Safaricom general employees’ understandings and views on the use of WLB policies and practices**

## **6.7 SUMMARY OF EMPLOYEES' VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES**

To conclude, the above results lend support to studies that have raised attention to the gap that exists between documented corporate policies and the practical use of those policies (e.g. Russo et al. 2016; Dumas and Sanchez-Burks 2015; Gregory and Milner 2011). On behalf of the organisation, managers (in this case HRLs and LMs) portray an organisation's efforts in a good light to protect the image of the company. In reality, there could exist a mismatch between published policies and their use. This was evident within both firms, where the Employment Act (2007, 2015) outlaws discrimination on tribal grounds yet tribalism was apparent at Telkom. From Safaricom's corporate policy documents and managers' interviews (both HRLs and LMs), pride was taken in having a broad range of WLB arrangements, although most employees lacked the time to use them.

The results also upheld views from previous studies that have found co-worker support to be a key determinant of a workplace climate that encourages the utilisation or under-utilisation of policies (Lambert et al. 2008; Hammer et al. 2009). Whereas co-worker supportiveness nurtured a guilt-free climate for the use of WLB policies at Telkom, there was strong resentment from low users of policies at Safaricom for high-level users.

Notwithstanding, unlike Telkom, Safaricom's evaluation of WLB practices was characterised by an up-down and down-up communication approach where employees' feedback was incorporated in the review process. Regardless, a long working hours culture ensued at Safaricom due to heavy workloads and employees' endeavours to increase earnings through overtime. More men than women worked long hours, compared to a stronger work-life culture displayed by the Telkom results, where employees strictly worked within stipulated working hours. It is therefore evident from this chapter that the comprehensiveness of a WLB programme does not determine its effectiveness. More importantly, the results affirm that some WLB models that are borrowed from Western organisations are not compatible with Kenyan workplaces, unless re-modified, because of differences in national cultures and contexts.

### **Questionnaire Results**

The analysis and results of 266 online questionnaires (116 from Safaricom and 150 from Telkom) are presented in this section. The findings reflect the general employees' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs towards WLB-related practices and processes within their respective

organisations. The discussion of the results progresses with triangulation of the interview findings analysed above.

## 6.8 PARTICIPANTS' DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 6.3 below presents the demographic characteristics of the participants upon which the discussions below will be based. The results show a significant difference in gender representations between the two firms. There was a balance of male to female employees at Safaricom (58-58), while men dominated at Telkom (103-47). On the tribal front, the Kikuyu tribe dominated both companies (Safaricom=27 and Telkom=44). Of importance, the table shows the 'Somali' at Safaricom (6) and 'Kamba' tribes at Telkom (6) as having the least numbers within both organisations. However, it should be noted that minority tribes labelled as '*others*' should be considered as the least as they represent a conglomerate of 36 out of Kenya's 42 tribes.

		<b>Safaricom</b> n=116		<b>Telkom</b> n=150	
		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	58	50	103	68.7
	Female	58	50	47	31.3
<b>Tribe</b>	Kikuyu	27	23.3	44	29.3
	Kalenjin	18	15.5	40	26.7
	Luo	25	21.6	19	12.7
	Abaluhya	21	18.1	25	16.7
	Kamba	7	6	6	4
	Somali	6	5.2	8	5.3
	Others	12	10.3	8	5.3
<b>Age</b>	18-28	20	17.2	6	4
	29-39	55	47.4	4	2.7
	40-49	32	27.6	48	32
	50-59	9	7.8	88	58.6
	60+	0	0	4	2.7
<b>Tenure</b>	< 1 year	7	6	0	0
	2-4 years	54	46.6	6	4
	5-10 years	55	47.4	22	14.7
	11-20 years	0	0	120	80
	21+ years	0	0	2	1.3
<b>Qualifications</b>	High school	0	0	61	40.7
	College	21	18.1	80	53.3
	Degree	63	54.3	7	4.7
	Masters	32	27.6	2	1.3
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	33	28.5	3	2
	Married	70	60.3	138	92
	Divorced/separated	7	6	3	2

		<b>Safaricom</b> n=116		<b>Telkom</b> n=150	
		<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
	Widow/widower	6	5.2	6	4
<b>Living with someone employed or not</b>	Fulltime day only	56	80	139	92.7
	Fulltime including night shift	12	17.1	6	4
	No	2	2.9	5	3.3
<b>Dependent children</b>	Yes	93	80.2	147	98
	No	23	19.8	3	2
<b>Are these children the employees' children</b>	Yes	26	28	94	63.9
	No	67	72	53	36.1
<b>Who the children belong to</b>	Deceased sibling	26	38.9	18	34
	Deceased relative	7	10.4	9	17
	Low income sibling	12	17.9	17	32.1
	Low income relative	9	13.4	7	13.2
	Sick sibling	9	13.4	0	0
	Sick relative	2	3	0	0
	Friend	2	3	2	3.8
<b>Age range of children</b>	0-4 years	27	29	21	14.3
	5-10 years	26	28	67	45.6
	11-20 years	21	22.6	26	17.7
	20+ years	19	20.4	33	22.4
<b>Living with other dependants</b>	Yes	51	44	129	86
	No	65	56	21	14
<b>Who does household chores</b>	Self	2	1.7	9	6
	Partner	3	2.6	6	4
	Siblings	21	18.1	43	28.7
	In-laws	19	16.4	35	23.3
	Friends	2	1.7	4	2.7
	Domestic helpers	69	59.5	53	35.3
<b>Hours spent on household chores</b>	0	103	88.7	106	70.7
	0-4 hours	6	5.2	5	3.3
	5-9 hours	3	2.6	17	11.3
	10-14 hours	2	1.7	10	6.7
	15-19 hours	1	0.9	8	5.3
	20+ hours	1	0.9	4	2.7
<b>Hours spent commuting to work per day</b>	< 1 hour	26	22.4	46	30.7
	1-2 hours	87	75	92	61.3
	3-4 hours	3	2.6	12	8

**Table 6.3: Demographic Characteristics of the sample of 226 employees**

## **6.9 MEASURES AND BIVARIATE CORRELATION ANALYSIS**

A 103-item online questionnaire (see Appendix 8) examined employees' personal views, attitudes and opinions of WLB practice, processes and outcomes as a result of their

experiences. Four parameters reflected in Table 6.4 below were measured. A five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) was used for all items. Previously used and validated scales were adopted in the structuring of the questionnaires with the literature showing these scales had good reliabilities (Cronbach's alphas ranged from 0.70 to 0.89; see Table 6.4 below). Table 6.4 also provides the descriptive statistics, reliability coefficients and bivariate correlations between the four variables (n=266).

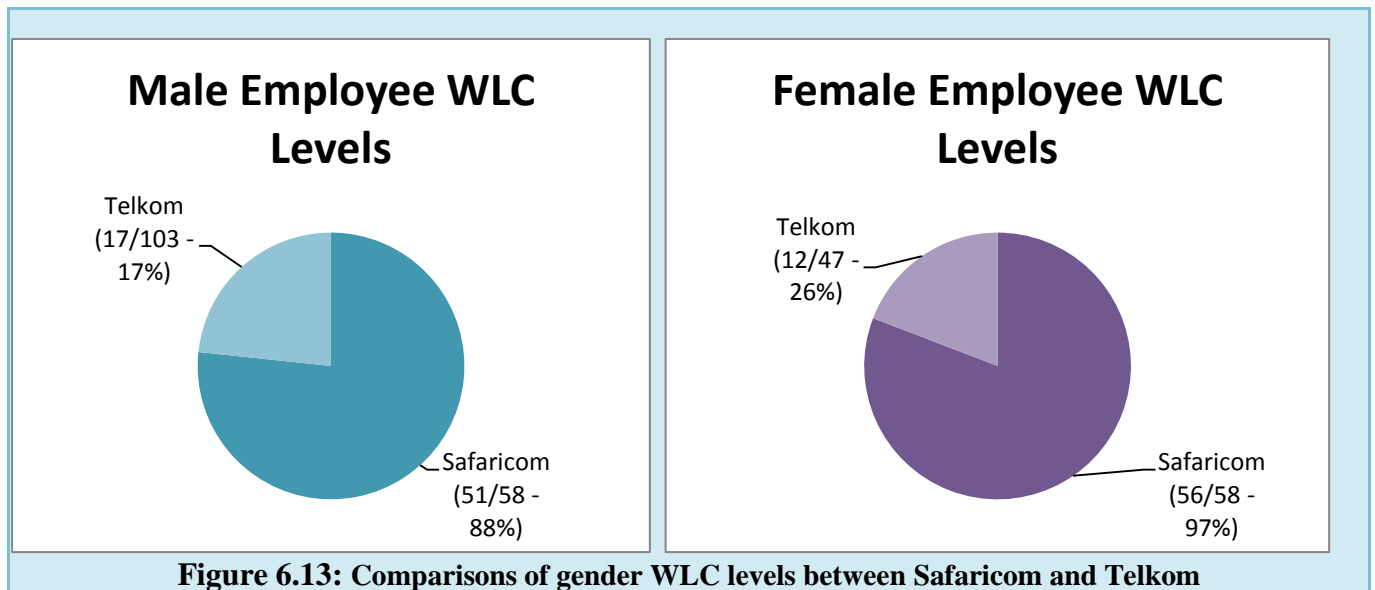
Variable	ORG	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
<b>1. Work-life Conflict</b>	SAF	3.17	0.72	<b>(.83)</b>			
	TEL	2.50	0.69				
<b>2. Perceived supervisor support</b>	SAF	4.22	0.32	-.68**	<b>(.71)</b>		
	TEL	2.97	0.50	-.62*			
<b>3. Perceived fairness in procedures</b>	SAF	3.60	0.66	-.55*	.58**	<b>(.77)</b>	
	TEL	2.75	0.68	-.53	.49**		
<b>4. Perceived co-worker support</b>	SAF	2.87	0.50	-.24**	.55	.10*	<b>(.71)</b>
	TEL	3.66	0.77	-.53**	-.91	.15	
<p><i>Note:</i> Cronbach's alphas are displayed on diagonal in parentheses  **<i>. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).</i>  *<i>. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).</i></p>							
<p><b>Table 6.4: Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Coefficients and Bivariate Correlations among variables (n=266)</b></p>							

### 6.9.1 Work-life conflict (WLC)

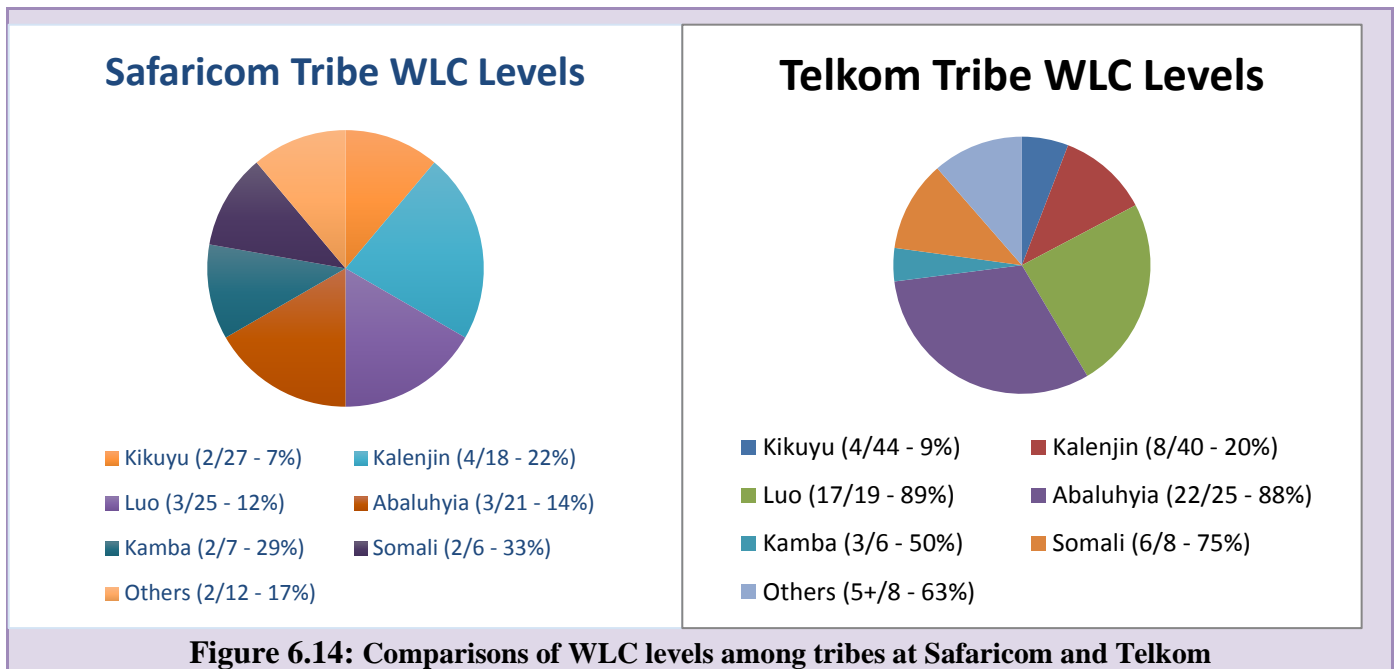
The WLC mean scores of 3.70 for Safaricom and 2.50 for Telkom were surprising, considering Safaricom's comprehensive WLB programme. Higher mean scores in this case denoted higher conflict of the cumulative demands of work and non-work roles. Compared to Telkom, the mean scores show a higher conflict between work and non-work demands among the Safaricom participants.

When WLC was examined from a gender point of view, the results showed 88% and 97% WLC levels among Safaricom males and females respectively, in comparison to 17% (male) and 26% (female) WLC levels at Telkom. These results are illustrated in Figure 6.13 below. Internal company comparisons show that more women than men experienced WLC in both firms.





On tribal experiences of WLC, the results showed high WLC levels among minority tribes and low WLC levels among the dominant two tribes at Telkom. For instance, while the conflict levels of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin were at 9% and 20% respectively, those for the Luo tribe were at 89% and those of ‘other’ tribes, which constitute 36 different tribes, were at 63%. The Safaricom results exhibited lesser variations in the WLC levels between tribes, as depicted in Figure 6.14. However, the WLC levels of the Kikuyu tribe (7%) still remained the lowest. Therefore, on the whole, the Kikuyu tribe experienced the lowest WLC in both firms. It is important to note that although the WLC mean score for Telkom was lower than that of Safaricom, the conflict levels experienced by employees from different tribes was higher at Telkom. This result pointed towards a culture of high tribal affiliation within the organisation. Figure 6.14 illustrates these results.



When considering the WLC matter from the interview results in Chapters 4, 5 and the current chapter, compared to Safaricom, Telkom only operated the statutory WLB provisions and so was more limited in its overall policies. Safaricom offered its employees a broad range of WLB policies and practices, not only consisting of statutory entitlements, but also Safaricom-specific arrangements. A logical expectation was for the Safaricom employees to experience more balance compared to the Telkom staff. But this was not the case for particular reasons, some of which were explained from the interview results above.

Telkom's working hours were clearly defined and observed, with employees working Monday to Friday for the hours between 8am to 5pm only (with a one-hour lunch break). Staff absences due to time off work were easily covered due to an overstaffing problem. The overstaffing difficulty also led to lower workloads for the majority of employees. Third, annual leave could be taken in 'blocks', hence employees had enough time to solve personal matters. In addition, according to Saylor (2012), non-computerisation slows down communication in today's workplaces, which benefit more from a faster communication system. Nonetheless, non-computerisation at Telkom had advantages for WLB as teleworking was eliminated. It is acknowledged that researchers have found teleworking to be a beneficial tool in enabling WLB (e.g. Lee-Kelley and Sankey 2008; Horowitz et al. 2006; Nedelko and Potočan 2007). But in Telkom's case, a lack of it was advantageous in eliminating homeworking. This is complementary to other researchers who have found teleworking to cause a blurring of the boundaries between working and non-working time

(e.g. Tremblay et al. 2006). Besides, the interviews (see Section 6.4.1) showed that company policies prohibited the removal of official material from company premises, also eliminating the possibility of employees working from home. Moreover, drawing from the employee interviews and questionnaire results, Telkom exhibited strong co-worker support where the use of WLB policies was encouraged (mean score of 3.66 as opposed to Safaricom's 3.07). It was reported that employees were understanding of each other's personal responsibilities and therefore willing to cover roles for absent individuals, thereby creating a guilt-free working climate for the use of WLB policies. However, high WLC levels among tribes may have been as a result of high levels of tribalism within the firm. This result is supported by findings from Chapters 4 (Section 4.5.1), 5 (Section 5.5.1) and this chapter (Section 6.6.1).

The same was not revealed in the Safaricom results. When *WLC* was considered from the Safaricom interviews, it emerged that a staff shortage formed the heart of Safaricom's unhealthy work-life culture. Lack of a longer-term and sustainable solution to staff shortages culminated in heavy workloads and long working hours. The general feeling among male and child-free employees (male and female) was that married colleagues and those with child-caring responsibilities were allowed to make more use of WLB policies and practices. In addition, male employees largely felt that their female counterparts not only enjoyed access to more WLB policies, but also had more prioritised time off work compared to them (see Section 6.6.1). But surprisingly, despite the high access and use of WLB policies by women, the interview and questionnaire results still reflected that women experienced a higher WLC compared to men. The reason for this was the double roles that women had to play between paid work and unpaid domestic roles. Furthermore, all the five Safaricom female employees raised concerns about the allocation of shift patterns that were not chosen by themselves but were imposed on them by their LMs, hence the higher WLC levels among the Safaricom females compared to their Telkom counterparts.

Moving on to a generational point of view, the demographics portrayed a young workforce who previous research has found to not only have distinct and high expectations regarding WLB (e.g. Sujansky and Ferri-Reed 2009), but to also seek individual as opposed to group recognition at work (Glass 2007). This individualist culture, combined with the difficulties of managing heavy workloads, were portrayed in the interviews as being a source of resentment for high benefits users, hence a weak co-worker support culture at Safaricom. For example:

*“My plate is full already. If my line manager or my colleague asked me to cover their duties because of going off work for a reason, I would refuse. Not because I do not respect them or have empathy for their status, but because I will be marked down if I provide substandard work. No one will relate my low performance to having double work. I wonder why the organisation cannot quickly solve this problem because it causes tension and strain between people”* (Participant 1S: Kikuyu, male).

In summary, while Safaricom displayed a comprehensive WLB programme, most employees lacked the time to make use of the arrangements. Telkom was portrayed as having nurtured a healthier WLB culture in comparison to Safaricom.

### **6.9.2 Perceived supervisor support and fairness in procedures**

The results on *perceived supervisor support (PSS)* and *perceived fairness in procedures (PFP)* revealed a similar result to *WLC*, but reversed directions. ‘Supervisor’<sup>50</sup> in this case means ‘LM’. This time, there was a large and distinguished disparity between the mean perceptions of Safaricom (4.22) and Telkom (2.97) employees on PSS as well as PFP (*Safaricom* 3.60 and *Telkom* 2.75). These results meant that employees at Safaricom felt that their LMs were flexible and sensitive to employees’ personal responsibilities. While it is clear that Telkom employees agree to some extent that LMs cared about their wellbeing, the endorsement of the Safaricom employees was far higher. The discussion of the results for the two variables was combined because it was at the implementation level (LM role) that perceptions of fairness in procedures and practices emerged. Therefore the two variables complement each other.

Bivariate correlations<sup>51</sup> produced similar results to the mean scores as there were relatively significant relationships between the following variables: ‘WLC’, ‘PSS’ and ‘PFP’ in the following ways. First, there was a negative correlation between *PSS* and ‘WLC’. Second, there was a negative correlation between *PFP* and ‘WLC’. This result indicated that the more participants received support from their LMs and perceived WLB procedures as being fair, the lower WLC they experienced. The results:

**Safaricom:**  $r(116) = -.68^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ; **Telkom:**  $r(150) = -.62^{*}$ ,  $p < .01$  (PSS)  
**Safaricom:**  $r(116) = -.55^{*}$ ,  $p < .01$ ; **Telkom:**  $r(150) = -.53$ ,  $p < .01$  (PFP)  
 (See Table 6.4)

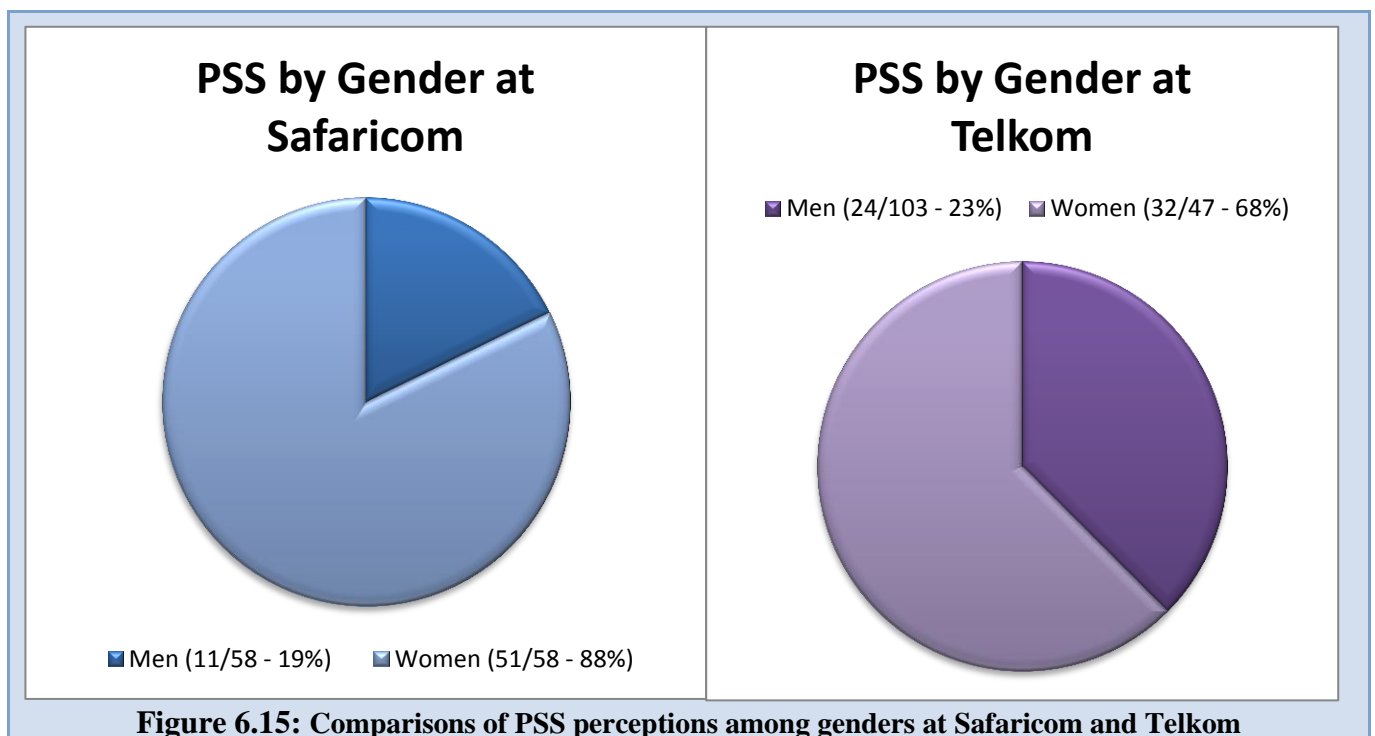
<sup>50</sup> The term used in the original scale.

<sup>51</sup> A simple statistical analysis that involves the analysis of two variables for the purpose of determining the empirical relationship between them.

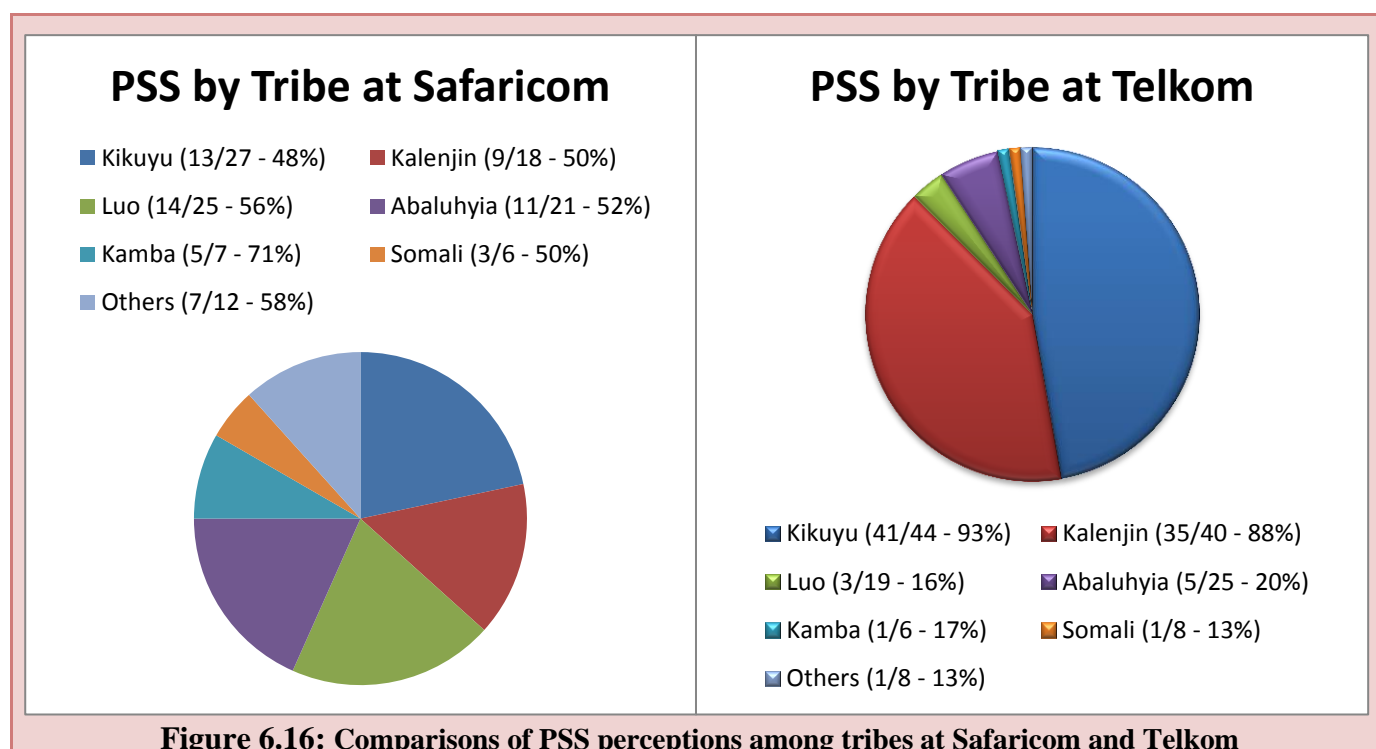
Third, there was a positive correlation between ‘PSS’ and ‘PFP’, demonstrating that the more LMs supported employees, the more they perceived the WLB procedures as being fair. Powell (2011) also found that LM support can mitigate the degree of WLC that employees experience and the consequences of such conflict. Powell goes on to stress that workers who have demanding jobs and personal responsibilities but have supportive LMs tend to experience greater job satisfaction, stronger job commitment, more loyalty to the organisation, and a healthy WLB. The results:

**Safaricom:**  $r(116) = .58^*$ ,  $p < .01$ ; **Telkom:**  $r(150) = .49^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$   
(See Table 6.4)

When PSS was considered from a gender perspective in relation to each individual company, the variations depicted the same results as the mean scores and correlations. 88% of women at Safaricom perceived their LMs as supportive in comparison to 19% of males. 68% of females at Telkom perceived their LMs as supportive compared to 23% of males. While there were differences between male and female perceptions when the two organisations were compared, on the whole, women perceived LMs to be supportive more than men. These results are provided below in Figure 6.15.



On the tribal experiences of PSS at Safaricom, the results indicate an almost balanced level of employee confidence in their LMs. Notably, the level of confidence of the Kikuyu tribe was the lowest (only slightly, 48%), while the Kamba tribe displayed the highest confidence in LMs support at 71%. Contrary to the Safaricom results, the Kikuyu displayed the strongest belief for PSS (93%), followed by the Kalenjin at 88%. However, all the other tribes had significantly low scores displaying a significant gap in PSS of between 70% and 80% when compared to the Kikuyu tribe.



**Figure 6.16: Comparisons of PSS perceptions among tribes at Safaricom and Telkom**

It is important to note that the results in two sections (6.9.1 and 6.9.2) were contradictory. Two questions arise from these results: (1) *how/why did the Safaricom employees experience a high WLC and yet not only rate their LMs highly on supportiveness, but also highly rate the fairness of WLB procedures?*, and (2) *how/why did the Telkom employees experience a low WLC and yet the majority not only rated their LMs low on supportiveness, but also rate WLB procedures low on fairness?* The answers came from the interviews.

The results from Section 6.9.1 confirm that Safaricom employees experienced a higher WLC and had a weaker co-worker support culture when compared to their Telkom counterparts. However, unlike Telkom, the interview findings (see Section 6.6.1) revealed a minute level of tribalism at Safaricom. As seen in the same section, tribalism was a major cause of favouritism in the implementation of WLB policies, a key role that LMs played. Firm

company policies prohibiting tribalism guided the behaviour of LMs at Safaricom. An additional matter to note is that this result was achieved disregarding the fact that male employees felt that female staff received more support and attention from LMs compared to them.

The reverse was the case at Telkom. Despite having a rich WLB culture that mitigated WLC, tribalism was prevalent. Strong tribal affiliations influenced LMs' decisions in the approval of WLB policy applications such that fairness was compromised. The interview results (see Section 6.6.1) showed workers from dominant tribes enjoying the privilege of prioritised processing of requests for WLB policies whilst employees from minority tribes offered LMs "gifts" (money, clothes, cars) as a coping strategy to entice them into expediting their leave applications. The Employment Act (2007, 2015) prohibits tribal discrimination. Despite being guided by this law, a large number of LMs at Telkom (who belonged to the dominant tribes) pledged allegiance to tribal affiliations rather than organisational policy (see the narratives in Section 5.5.1 of Chapter 5).

Overall, the PSS and PFP scales revealed encouraging results for Safaricom compared to Telkom. According to Cropanzano et al. (2007) and Li and Cropanzano (2009), when there is a lack of bias in the treatment of employees, they tend to feel respected and esteemed by the larger group.

### **6.9.3 Perceived co-worker support**

The results in Section 6.9.2 exhibited strong perceptions of LM support and fairness in procedures at Safaricom in comparison to Telkom. But the reverse was the case for co-worker support. While the mean score for Telkom was 3.66, Safaricom's was 2.87, thereby displaying a significant variation.

In support of the mean scores, bivariate correlations revealed the following results. First, 'WLC' and 'perceived co-worker support' (PCS) were negatively correlated. This result signified that as co-worker support increased, the levels of WLC reduced. There was a significant variance between Telkom and Safaricom as shown in the result below. However, evidence from the interviews explained the large disparity. Strong mutual relationships that had been established over long years of working together enabled Telkom employees to be considerate of each other's non-work needs. Therefore, they willingly covered duties for each other regardless of their tribal backgrounds (see Section 6.5.3). On the other hand, co-worker

support at Safaricom was challenged by: (1) the unwillingness for employees to take on more duties due to already heavy workloads, and (2) employees being conscious about their quality of work versus performance appraisals (see the same section).

**Safaricom:**  $r(116) = -.24^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$ ; **Telkom:**  $r(150) = -.53^{**}$ ,  $p < .01$

Second, PFP was positively correlated to PCS, indicating that the stronger co-worker support grew, the more employees perceived the procedures to have been fair. Notably, Telkom's result was stronger but the variation was not so significant. The 'not so significant' variation could have been influenced by perceptions of tribal favouritism at Telkom. In this sense, despite the strong co-worker support, Telkom employees may have still been conscious of the fact that they belonged to different tribes, and therefore had some resentment to those who were favoured by LMs or did not belong to their tribes. For Safaricom, the result may have been influenced by perceptions of male and childfree employees on the unequal use of WLB arrangements.

**Safaricom:**  $r(116) = .10^{*}$ ,  $p < .01$ ; **Telkom:**  $r(150) = .15$ ,  $p < .01$

Most notably, Telkom's PSS was significantly and negatively correlated to co-worker support compared to Safaricom's, which was positively correlated to co-worker support. This suggested that the more employees perceived supervisors to be unsupportive at Telkom (due to tribal favouritism), the more they created stronger working relationships among themselves and therefore felt that co-workers were an avenue through which they could meet their WLB needs. For example, co-workers accepted to cover duties for each other. Safaricom's positive correlation signified that the more support employees received from their managers, the more co-workers were encouraged to also support each other. However, it should be noted that despite the strong rating of supervisor supportiveness by the Safaricom employees, in Section 6.5.2 of the interviews, it was shown that the employees found their LMs to have been supportive but in a manner that they did not perceive to be genuine. According to the employees, when LMs allowed more use of WLB policies, they were faced with situations of extra workloads, requiring them to work for longer hours. The result:

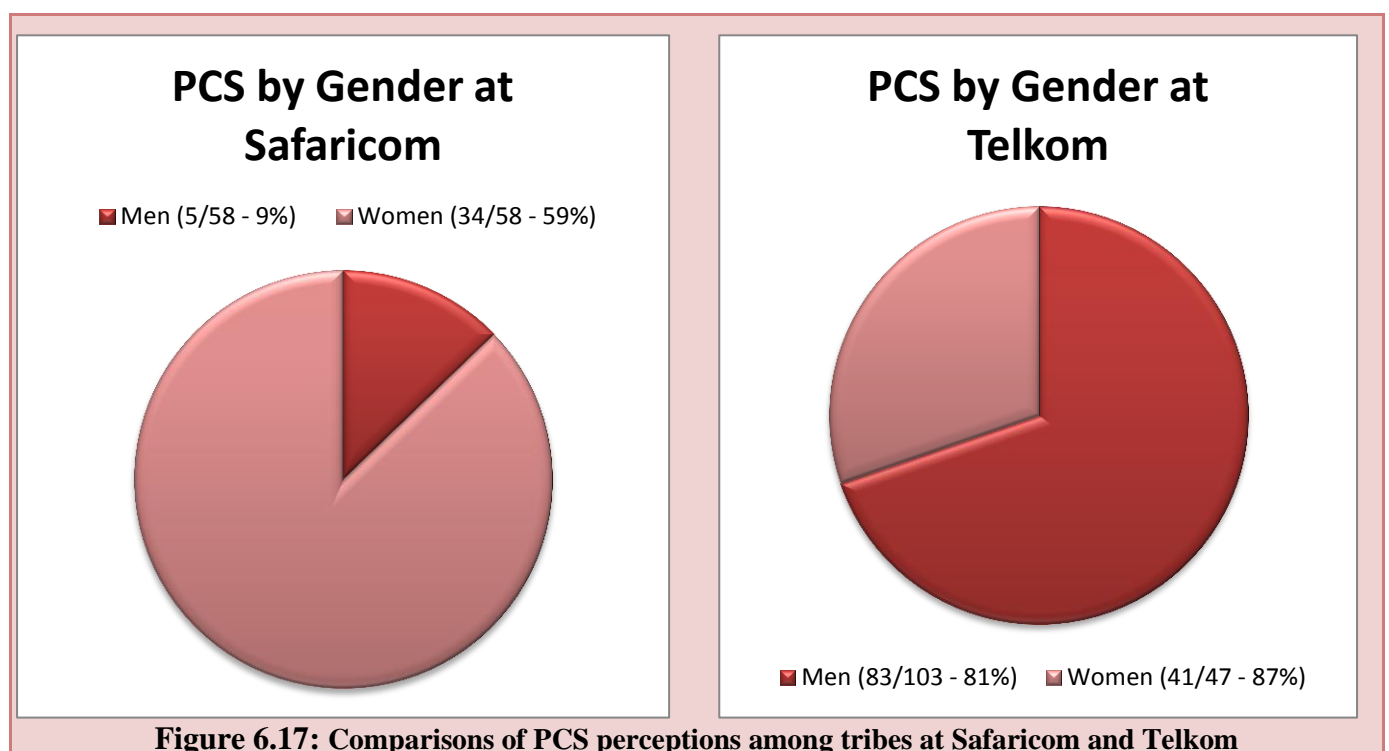
**Safaricom:**  $r(116) = .55$ ,  $p < .01$ ; **Telkom:**  $r(150) = -.91$ ,  $p < .01$

When the PCS matter was considered from a gender perspective, the results, displayed in Figure 6.17 below, indicated as follows. Safaricom females perceived their co-workers to have been more supportive (59%) compared to their male counterparts (9%). At Telkom,



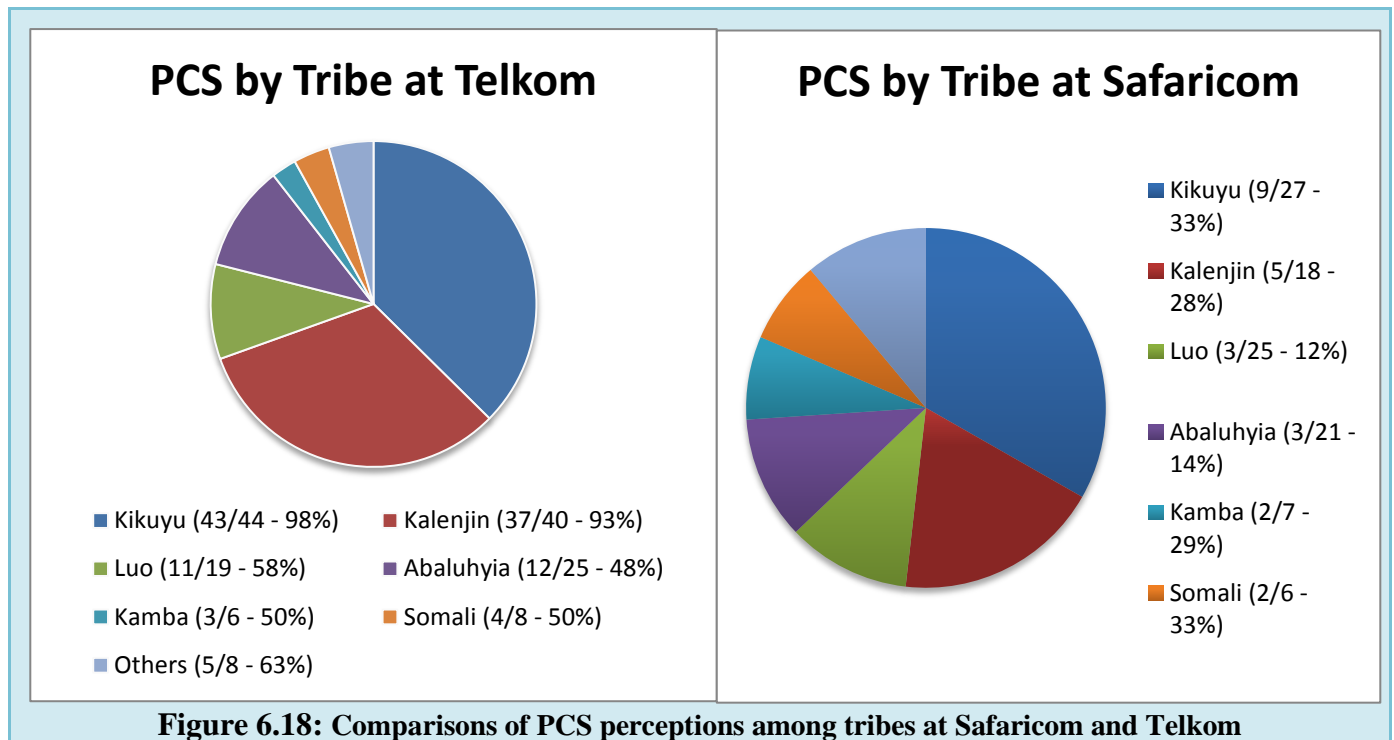
females also perceived their co-workers to have been supportive (87%) more than men (81%) but the variations were less significant than those reflected by the Safaricom results. Overall, PCS was higher at Telkom compared to Safaricom, while females in both firms received more support from co-workers compared to men. The answers to these dominant perceptions by women originate from the interview results. While the results reveal that WLB in Kenya is inclined towards supporting women in employment, it is also recognisable that Kenya is still significantly a patriarchal society where men are expected to spend most of their time at work (Aryee et al. 1999). An excerpt from the interview results in Section 6.4.2 supports this notion:

*“Men don’t take us seriously at work. They think that we landed in jobs by the favour of the government and by our own choice, when our real positions are in the kitchens to cook for them. But this negative attitude helps us to easily get time off work”* (Participant 9T: Abaluhya, female).



On the tribal experiences of PCS, the results were as follows. All tribes at Telkom exhibited high confidence levels in receiving support from their co-workers. Notably, the Kikuyu tribe exhibited significant levels of PCS (98%), followed closely by the Kalenjin tribe (93%). Although the difference between the Kikuyu and other tribes was significant, the scores were still high in comparison to Safaricom. The lowest score at Safaricom was from the Luo tribe (12%), while the Kikuyu and Somali tribes had 33%. When the percentages for both

companies were considered, those from Safaricom were noticeably low in comparison to Telkom's, which on average were high.



## 6.10 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Linear regression was conducted to check the linkages between gender and tribe and 4 scales: WLC, perceived supervisor support, perceived fairness in procedures and perceived co-worker support. Furthermore, to validate these results, mean scores for each gender type and tribe were calculated (see Table 6.19).

### 6.10.1 WLC

The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicate a strong significant relation between *WLC* and *gender* at both organisations. The results:

$$\text{Safaricom} = 0.179*** \text{ and Telkom } 0.181*** \text{ at the } p < 0.001$$

Specific gender means validated this finding:

3.16 (male) as opposed to 3.67 (female) to Safaricom in comparison to 2.41 (male) and 2.69 (female) for Telkom

This denotes that for both organisations, although the margins were narrow, female employees experienced fairly high WLC compared to male workers. This uniform result

could be attributed to the extra unpaid domestic roles that female staff have in addition to their paid work (see interview results in Chapters, 4, 5, and 6). However, the significant difference between the mean scores of the two firms could be connected with the private sector working environment which is competitive and established to meet commercial objectives, unlike the public sector. Performance in the private sector is key, meaning that the Safaricom employees had more workload compared to their counterparts at Telkom, meaning that they (Safaricom staff) had lesser opportunities to make use of the available WLB provisions. Nevertheless, Surbhi (2015) reckons that workloads keep employees active whereas monotony of work creates boredom in the public sector. All the same, when drawbacks are addressed, both organisations will prove suitable to their employees.

Analysis on the *tribes* established that *WLC* distinctly relates to tribe:

Particularly at Telkom (0.226\*\*\* at the  $p < 0.001$ )  
But not at Safaricom (0.06 at the  $p < 0.05$ )

Exclusive tribal mean findings revealed that:

The Kikuyu tribe experienced the least conflict (2.13)  
While other minority tribes recorded the highest (2.70) at Telkom

The results above were answered from the interview findings. First, the demographic results disclosed a dominant Kikuyu representation among the LMs, signifying that members of this tribe had the advantage of being favoured more (given the heavy inclination to tribal affiliations revealed across all employee level interviews) while those from minority tribes had less LM representatives. The reverse was realised at Safaricom as the Kikuyu and Somali tribes had an insignificantly higher WLC score (3.32) compared to ‘other’ tribes (3.29). This slight difference may not be associated with favouritism but the difficulty of combining paid work with personal commercial activities as the Kikuyu and Somali tribes are known to be industrious (see Section 2.8 in Chapter 2). For example, operating large scale farming and commercial businesses alongside work has been found to be common practice among these two tribes (Frank and Rainer 2009: 2). Nevertheless, the variation between all the tribes at Safaricom was very narrow; cancelling a causal effect on WLC based on tribe. This could be attributed to controlled tribalism practices at Safaricom (evidenced through company policies) which nullified the effect of WLC as a result of tribal affiliations.

### **6.10.2 Perceived supervisor support and fairness in procedures**

In a similar format to the bivariate correlations, these two themes were combined in the discussion of the regression analysis as fairness in WLB procedures/processes was more pronounced at the LM level. This is because LMs played a significant role in the implementation of the policies and practices given that they were in direct supervision of general employees.

Linear regression analysis of *perceived supervisor support (PSS)* and *fairness in procedures (PFP)* and *gender* revealed a significant relationship for both firms

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PSS - Safaricom} &= 0.117^{**} \text{ and Telkom } 0.075^{**} \text{ at the } p < 0.01 \\ \text{PFP - Safaricom} &= .003^{**} \text{ and Telkom } .019 \text{ at the } P < 0.01 \end{aligned}$$

Mean scores for each gender were:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PSS - Safaricom} &= 4.20 \text{ (male) and } 4.64 \text{ (female) and Telkom } 2.08 \text{ (male) and } 2.94 \text{ (female)} \\ \text{PFP - Safaricom} &= 3.19 \text{ (male) and } 3.92 \text{ (female) and Telkom } 2.60 \text{ (male) and } 2.62 \text{ (female)} \end{aligned}$$

Meaning that, female workers in both firms received more support compared to male employees. As explained above, the combination of paid work and unpaid home responsibilities increased working time and workloads for women. But as Mungai and Ogot (2012) assert, it is typical Kenyan culture, for women to be favoured at work by both men or by their fellow women because of their status in society, especially when they have child caring responsibilities. The interview results in this chapter revealed that because of the double role burden of women, there is a tendency for them to use WLB provisions more than their male counterparts. It is upon this backdrop that being allowed to use WLB provisions more than men may have been perceived by female employees to have been an expression of fairness from the LMs. The addition of non-statutory obligations, more specifically the 'women wellness program' by Safaricom may have accounted for the large disparity between the overall company means as the female employees at Safaricom had wider provisions to select from.

On the tribal front, *PSS* and *PFP* and *tribe* exhibited:

$$\text{PSS - a strong relationship at Telkom } (0.098^{**} \text{ at the } p < 0.01) \text{ but not at Safaricom } (0.92 \text{ at the } p < 0.05)$$

$$\text{PFP - Telkom } (0.002^{*} \text{ at the } P < 0.001) \text{ but not at Safaricom } (0.009 \text{ at the } P < 0.001)$$

Individual tribal mean scores for *PSS* and *PPF* presented a similar outcome to WLC where there were insignificant disparities between tribes. For example, at Safaricom, the Kikuyu, Luo, and ‘other’ tribes recorded a uniform 4.33 mean, indicating that employees from these tribes perceived themselves as receiving more support from supervisors compared to the Kalenjin, Abaluhya, Kamba, and Somali. Nonetheless, differences between the mean scores did not exceed 0.03 signifying perceptions of fair support from the LMs at Safaricom. On the other hand, at Telkom, the Kikuyu recorded the highest mean score for *PSS* of 3.29, followed closely by the Kalenjin (3.04) in comparison to the lowest mean for the Luo (2.83). Disparities between all the other tribes (other than the Kikuyu and Kalenjin) were narrow, not exceeding 0.05. *PPF* results followed a similar trend. This result meant that the Kikuyu, followed by the Kalenjin tribes received the most support from LMs given their dominance and larger LM representation (see demographics in Chapter 5). Being that the operations at Telkom were heavily influenced by government culture, the low mean score by the Luo lends support to Masakharia’s (2011) assumption that Kikuyus (who dominate management positions in public offices) are in constant rivalry with the Luos. This historical rivalry has reportedly always led to people from the Luo tribe being sidelined in workplaces because they are courageously outspoken. Their complaints sometimes have consequences of intimidation and discrimination. Apart from increasing the levels of unfairness and inequality, such trends also discourage employee voice at Telkom, an aspect that Safaricom showed progress in because of a robust communication process and platforms. The findings highlight the level of power that belonging to dominant tribes wields as far as access and use of WLB policies is concerned, especially within Kenya’s public sector to which Telkom belongs.

		REGRESSION		MEAN							
		Model 1	Model 2								
Dependent variable	ORG	Gender	Tribe	Gender	Tribe						
					Kikuyu	Kalenjin	Luo	Abaluhya	Kamba	Somali	Others
1. Work life conflict	SAF	.179***	.06	3.16	3.32	3.30	3.31	3.33	3.31	3.32	3.29
				3.67							
	TEL	.181***	.226***	2.41	2.13	2.27	2.50	2.46	2.45	2.67	2.70
				2.69							
2. Perceived supervisor support	SAF	.117**	.09	4.20	4.33	4.30	4.33	4.29	4.31	4.31	4.33
				4.64							
	TEL	.075**	.098**	2.08	3.29	3.04	2.83	2.97	2.95	2.96	2.92
				2.94							
3. Perceived fairness in procedures	SAF	.003**	.009	3.19	3.80	3.78	3.82	3.69	3.76	3.79	3.81
				3.92							
	TEL	.019	.002*	2.60	2.84	2.80	2.18	2.73	2.75	2.37	2.24
				2.62							
4. Perceived co-worker support	SAF	.09	.06	2.11	2.38	2.42	2.40	2.39	2.42	2.41	2.42
				2.05							
	TEL	.02**	.16**	3.09	3.97	3.81	3.15	3.18	3.20	3.23	3.25
				3.43							
Note: Mean – Gender <span style="color:blue">blue</span> denotes male and <span style="color:black">black</span> denotes female *p<.05 level, **p<.01, ***p<.001.											
Table 6.19: Tribe & Gender Descriptive Statistics and Regressions (N=266)											

### 6.10.3 Perceived co-worker support

Regression analysis for *perceived co-worker support (PCS)* and *gender* reported an insignificant relationship for Safaricom and a significant relationship for Telkom. The results:

Safaricom (0.09 at the  $p < 0.01$ )

Telkom (0.02\*\* at the  $p < 0.05$ )

Specific gender means validated this finding:

2.11 (male) as opposed to 2.05 (female) to Safaricom in comparison to  
3.09 (male) and 3.43 (female) for Telkom

It is notable that the differences between the two firms are distinct with Telkom showing strong signs of the existence of co-worker support. Women at Telkom displayed stronger experiences of co-worker support compared to women at Safaricom. These results portrayed a Telkom that nurtures friendliness between co-workers such that there was willingness for colleagues to cover roles for others who were in need of using WLB policies. The reasons for these results are evident within the interview results above and clearly explained in Section 6.9.2 of this chapter.

The same analysis reflected a significant relationship between *PCS* and *tribe* at Telkom (0.16\*\* at the  $p < 0.01$ ) but an insignificant connection at Safaricom (0.60 at the  $p < 0.05$ ). Inter-tribal mean scores at Safaricom were low while those at Telkom were high. At Safaricom, the differences between tribal mean scores were not above 0.04. These scores reflected on the effectiveness of Safaricom's anti-tribal company policies which mitigated against favouritism of employees on tribal grounds. However, there were noticeable disparities between the mean scores at Telkom. Prominently, the Kikuyu tribe scored the highest (3.97) followed closely by the Kalenjin tribe (3.81). The answer to these feelings among the staff may point to the dominance of tribes within Telkom where the demographics in Section 6.2 above showed a dominance of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin tribes. Meaning that employees from similar tribes aligned to support each other in job coverage when WLB policies were used. Given the perceived support that employees from the two tribes received from LMs, it is evident that the working environment (in terms of the tribal composition of staff) favoured these two tribes. This finding lends support to a report by KENPRO (2014) which asserted that Kenyan employees in the public sector who originate from well represented or dominant tribes are never questioned by managers from their tribes; even for

mistakes, tribe members remain blindly supportive of the organisation and managers, and as a result, a spirit of mistrust prevails between employees, their managers and co-workers. Here, tribalism is thus used as the basis for withholding or providing preferential considerations to selected employees.

## **6.11 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter first sought to determine the perceptions and experiences of employees on the use of WLB policies and practices. Secondly, it aimed to establish the effects of tribalism and gender role expectations on the use of WLB policies (using data obtained from twenty semi-structured interviews). Third, it strove to determine the attitudes and opinions of employees with regards to WLB practices and processes (based on data attained from 266 online questionnaires).

A convergence of the findings from the different methods and analyses showed high WLC levels at Safaricom compared to Telkom, caused by heavy workloads and long working hours that resulted from a staff shortage. On the same lines, women experienced higher WLC compared to men because of heavy workloads when their paid and unpaid domestic jobs were combined. For this reason, the results showed that women used WLB arrangements more than men in both firms. Safaricom employees felt that their LMs were highly supportive and their WLB processes were fair compared to their Telkom counterparts, whose opinions were largely the opposite. However, the influence of tribalism on LMs' decision making was found to have been a major impediment to the fair implementation and use of WLB policies within both firms. The influence was more significant at Telkom because of its affiliation to the public sector, and lesser at Safaricom because of firm company policies that prohibited the practice. Nevertheless, Telkom employees perceived their co-workers as being more supportive compared to the Safaricom employees.

Under-utilisation of WLB arrangements was common to employees in both firms. But only a small section of employees at Telkom were affected, whereas a larger number of Safaricom employees were. At Telkom, incompatibility with the nature of work was the main reason. Staff shortage and heavy workloads were the main causes at Safaricom. Following closely, incompatibility of WLB policies and practices applied to both some statutory and non-statutory WLB provisions and to both firms too. The common reason for the incompatibility



was the adoption of WLB policies and models from foreign countries without modifying them to suit the Kenyan workplace.

Mediating all the experiences of accessing or using WLB policies and practices were the notions of power and control, which emerged as a result of organisational and social structures. The implementation of WLB policies and practices was affected by emergent and personal influences pertaining to the positions occupied by key actors within three primary structures: *organisational, tribal affiliation and relations* and *gender relations*.

In summary, the results corroborate prior research that has argued that the sheer availability of WLB provisions does not necessarily translate into reductions in WLC (Bond 2009; Hochschild 2007; Okeke 2011). This is because there is still contention about the effectiveness of applying similar WLB models to diverse workplaces (De Bruin and Dupuis 2010). All the same, incompatibility can be largely resolved by subjecting WLB practice to constant reviews and aligning policies to organisational, work and employee needs. This can address not all, but a high percentage of employees' WLB needs. Therefore, the findings continue to reinforce the argument of this thesis, which is that WLB models designed as a result of studies carried out in Western countries cannot be universally applied because of disparities in the national contexts in which the WLB schemes are embedded. The results prove that failing to tailor an adopted WLB model to organisational, work and employee contexts and needs is prone to cause more conflict than balance.

The proceeding chapter discusses the empirical results obtained from Chapters 4, 5 and 6, while comparing them with the literature and the results obtained from Phase 2 of the empirical study.

## **CHAPTER 7: TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES, AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WLB: AN INTEGRATED VIEW**

### **7.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 provided insights into the WLB policies and practices of Safaricom Kenya and Telkom Kenya. These chapters also examined the perceptions and experiences of employees from three different employment levels (HRL, LM, general employee), regarding the implementation of WLB policies and practices. This chapter has two main objectives. First, it aims to explore in a considered way some of the underlying interplay between tribal affiliation, gender roles and WLB. It does so by synthesising the findings from the first (company case study) phase of the empirical study in relation to the first three aims of the thesis, namely:

5. To identify and compare the WLB policies and practices in use within Kenya's private and public sector organisations with particular reference to Safaricom Kenya and Telkom Kenya.
6. To evaluate critically the perceptions and experiences of LMs and general employees concerning the implementation of WLB policies and practices.
7. To assess critically the influence of tribal affiliations and gender on the implementation of WLB policies and practices.

The second objective of this chapter is to assess the wider applicability of these findings to the Kenyan public and private sectors beyond the two companies that formed part of this study. Phase 2 of the empirical research undertaken for the thesis involved semi-structured interviews (n=14) with various key stakeholders from selected Kenyan public and private sector organisations. These were designed to explore the wider implications of the principal findings that emerged from the case examples. This chapter thus brings together the results from Phase 1, highlighting areas of synergy and contradiction, before critically evaluating the key emergent themes with reference to published literature and the stakeholder interview findings obtained from Phase 2. In this way, it also makes a substantive contribution to the achievement of research aim 4:

8. To consider the implications of this study for employees, managers, HR practitioners and for future research and policy.

The achievement of this 4<sup>th</sup> aim is completed in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

## **7.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF KEY PHASE 1 FINDINGS**

Phase 1 examined three categories of employees in each company and their results (according to categories) separately reported. The synthesis of the results reveals nine key general features that characterise the two private and public sector firms. These are:

1. *WLB practice* was found to be a developing area within Kenya's business sector but one in which the private sector had advanced more than the public sector. The choice and formulation of WLB policies used by both firms was largely influenced by the offering of similar provisions in Western countries.
2. *Line managers* were identified as key links between policy development, interpretation, implementation and uptake.
3. *WLC*<sup>52</sup> levels were higher in the private sector compared to the public sector, arguably because of a healthier WLB culture within the public sector firm.
4. Employees from both the public and private firms accepted their organisation's shortfalls concerning WLB because of job insecurity.
5. *Co-worker support* emerged as a key element in the support or hinderance of the use of WLB policies. Stronger co-worker support was reflected in the public sector and there was a significantly weaker co-worker support in the private sector.
6. *Politics and tribe* were closely linked, hence *political-tribal influences* significantly affected the implementation processes. This influence was more dominant in the public sector compared to the private sector.
7. Employees from *dominant tribes* generally made more use of WLB policies than those from minority tribes.
8. *Women* generally had the dual role and responsibility of maintaining paid work and unpaid domestic work and therefore had to contend with longer working days.
9. *Male employees tended to prioritise work over family life* mainly because of breadwinner responsibilities.

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<sup>52</sup> Work Life Conflict

The above potential precepts concerning WLB policy and practice in the private and public sector firms were taken into the stakeholder interviews to gauge their wider relevance to the private and public sectors in Kenya. The following section discusses these precepts (those which appear to be generalisable beyond the two firms) in relation to the stakeholder interviews under the first three aims of the study.

### 7.3 **STAKEHOLDER DEMOGRAPHICS**

The selection of this sample was based on its representative nature of the wider public and private sector views. As government employees, the two Ministry of Labour officials were part of the ministerial team that formulates and implements statutory WLB entitlements. These policies are applicable to both public and private sector firms, and are uniformly applied across all public sector organisations, which are all managed by the government (see Section 7.4.1 below). KEPSA<sup>53</sup> is the only umbrella body that represents the voices of private sector organisations in Kenya to engage and influence public policy, and champion their interests in trade, investment and industrial relations. It currently has a membership of over 100,000 members organised through business membership organisations and corporate members (KEPSA 2016). As indicated in Section 3.4.3 of Chapter 3, the choice of private sector organisations was based on the CROWF<sup>54</sup> (2015) ratings of 40 private sector firms. CROWF is a research centre within Strathmore Business School in Nairobi, Kenya, which carries out annual studies on WLB practice in the country's private sector. Using the CROWF (2015) ranking, managers from five companies were selected out of the top fifteen and five out of the bottom fifteen; none belonged to the Telecoms sector. The intention of selecting from the top and bottom tiers was to obtain a contrast of perceptions and experiences from the best and worst performers. Table 7.1 below presents the demographic characteristics of the 14 snowballed stakeholder participants.

		<b>Ministry of Labour</b> n=2	<b>KEPSA</b> n=2	<b>Private Sector firms</b> n=10
		<b>n</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>n</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	2	1	6
	Female		1	4
<b>Tribe</b>	Kikuyu	1	1	4
	Luo		1	2

<sup>53</sup> Kenya Private Sector Alliance

<sup>54</sup> Center for Research on Organizations, Work and Family at Strathmore Business School in Kenya. Strathmore University is one of the leading private universities in the country.

		Ministry of Labour n=2	KEPSA n=2	Private Sector firms n=10
		n	n	n
	Kalenjin			1
	Abaluhya	1		2
	Kamba			1

**Table 7.1: Demographic characteristics of the sample of 14 participants**

It is notable from these results that a similar trend to the demographics obtained in Phase 1 continues. There is a higher representation of men than women, and a dominance of the four main tribes (Kikuyu, Luo, Kalenjin, and Abaluhya).

In the interview extracts, the initials PB will be used to refer to public sector managers (e.g. Participant 1PB: Kikuyu, male); KEP for the KEPSA representatives (e.g. Participant 1KEP, Kikuyu, male), and PR for private sector managers (e.g. Participant 1PR: Luo, male).

#### **7.4 SYNTHESIS OF PHASE 1 and 2 RESULTS**

This research examined WLB through the lens of Clark's (2000) work/life border theoretical framework. It did so by examining the demands of employees' work and life domains as well as internal and external organisational pressures as drivers for the adoption and implementation of organisational WLB policies and practices. The policies and practices were assumed (based on the literature) to be geared towards not only assisting employees to manage the demands between the two spheres, but also towards enhancing organisational functioning and performance. The findings of the two research phases (company case studies and stakeholder interviews) are synthesised here in order to establish the wider applicability of the precepts above to the wider Kenyan public and private sectors.

##### **7.4.1 Policies and Practices to Support WLB (Aim 1)**

The first aim sought to identify and compare the specific policies and practices in place to support WLB at Telkom and Safaricom. The stakeholders were asked whether they were aware of any policies and practices to support WLB in their organisations. There was a clear difference in response between the public and the private sectors. Similar results to those in the case study companies were obtained. The formulation of statutory WLB policies was confirmed by the public sector officials (n=2) as a responsibility mandated to Kenya's Ministry of Labour and the policies were confirmed as being uniformly applied across all public sector organisations. While agreeing with the Ministry officials, all (n=10) private

sector managers and KEPSA officials (n=2) indicated that private sector firms were at liberty to offer additional WLB arrangements. This also confirmed that private sector firms went above their statutory obligations to offer their employees more WLB provisions than their public sector counterparts. However, it was emphasised that the affordability of these provisions was determined by the financial capabilities of the companies. The interview extracts below affirm these findings:

*“All policies are similar in all public sector organisations. What we give is all that the government can afford. There are more important things to use money for than add more and more leave”* (Participant 2PB: Abaluhya, male).

*“All statutory entitlements are a must. We only afford to offer three extra schemes where one is purely for women only”* (Participant 3PR: Kalenjin, male).

In Phase 1, the ‘official’ corporate positions surrounding existing WLB policies and strategies were assessed. The presence of various WLB policies and practices to support the management of employees’ work and life demands within both case study firms were confirmed from the results. However, it was evident that the practice of WLB was more widely adopted and developed in the private than the public sector, and this was confirmed in the stakeholder interviews. A lack of sufficient finances to develop WLB practice was the main reason for the lack of advancement in the public sector. For example, *“when you start introducing too many things in the system, people will begin asking for more. Where is the money?”* (Participant 1PB: Kikuyu, male).

Matters relating to the lack of government monitoring of organisations and how they implemented paid statutory WLB provisions arose in most of the stakeholder discussions. This was also confirmed by the two Ministry officials. It emerged that while the government, through the Ministry of Labour, provided both public and private sector firms with guidelines on statutory WLB entitlements, there were no monitoring procedures in operation to ensure that proper implementation was taking place. Six private sector managers similarly confirmed a lack of evaluation procedures to measure the performance of the statutory WLB provisions. According to the Ministry officials, compliance checks only arose in the event of an incident that attracted public attention. This showed laxity on the government side and it would definitely have had implications for employee WLB as there was no monitoring of whether or not employees exercised their right to use paid statutory WLB provisions. These findings endorse Gitonga’s (2013) study on the Kenya flower industry where the researcher found

that, out of a sample of 90 women, 53% indicated that they had no access to paid maternity leave or that they were only allowed less than the statutory three months maternity leave. Similar findings obtained from Dolan et al. (2016) indicated that maternity leave for women within the Kenyan flower industry was allowed at the discretion of supervisors, who dictated the duration based on their relationship with the employees. Typical statements from the stakeholders regarding non-monitoring and evaluation of statutory WLB entitlements included:

*“.....there is no time to start walking around supervising people like little children when they know what they are supposed to do. We only go to investigate a company when there has been an incident which politicians are interested in, and mostly because they want to pin down a company and extract money from them. Not because they care about what happens to the workers”* (Participant 2PB: Abaluhya, male).

*“The government does not bother about us and whether we implement these policies or not. But we do it because we want to attract good workers”* (Participant 8PR: Luo, male).

Nonetheless, this study supports Potts and Kastle's (2010) suggestion for both public and private sector organisations to adapt to change and develop HR policies and practices that are consistent with societal and workforce changes as well as rapid technological advancements. Manda (2013) suggests that the Kenyan public sector's WLB practices can be enhanced through joint efforts between the public and private sectors, here referred to as the *public-private partnership (PPP)*. This initiative, according to KIPPRA<sup>55</sup> (2013), offers ways of introducing private sector technology and innovation into the public sector, with the aim of improving HRM practices.

These findings contradict studies carried out in Western countries where the public sector has been found to have a wider range of WLB policies compared to the private sector (e.g. Skinner and Chapman 2013; Den Dulk and Groeneveld 2010). Smeaton et al. (2014) outline considerable evidence from the UK and USA where governments have introduced broad ranges of initiatives designed to promote and ease the labour market participation of people from different backgrounds, and those with varying domestic responsibilities. This is in addition to WLB campaigns and constant legislative changes through which the governments ensure the participation of all employers (Ibid). Some governments lead the way for other organisations to emulate. This not only creates a society in which work and personal lives

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<sup>55</sup> Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis

complement each other, but also the implementation of WLB policies contributes to creating an environment where employers have the ability to recruit and retain the skilled labour they need to develop their businesses. That said, Potts and Kastle (2010) argue that with national governments leading the way in advancing WLB practice in Western countries, employees no longer have to choose between a rewarding career and a fulfilling home life. However, the private sector's ability to go beyond statutory obligations and provide extra organisation-specific WLB provisions was not surprising considering the competitive nature of the private sector. Smeaton et al. (2014) argue that it is in the nature of the private sector for innovation to prevail in order for competitiveness to be maintained. Nevertheless, public or private, the wellbeing of employees is important for organisational functioning and performance and is therefore recommended to be prioritised in organisations.

#### **7.4.2 Perceptions and Experiences on the Implementation of WLB Policies** **(Aim 2)**

The second aim attempted to critically evaluate the perceptions and experiences of LMs and general employees concerning the implementation of WLB policies and practices. In line with this aim and the findings from the first phase, the stakeholders were asked about the WLB policy implementation responsibilities and their experiences of policy application. Support was again lent to the results from the first empirical study, reaffirming the fundamental role of LMs in linking policy and real employee use of WLB policies. Within the public sector, it was confirmed (n=2) that WLB policy implementation responsibilities were shared between LMs and HRMs, while most private sector managers (n=8) indicated that LMs were empowered to solely manage requests for WLB provisions. It is important to note that the shared responsibility within the public sector represents elements of power and control embedded in the responsibility structures of the sector's organisations. That said, all the findings underlined the key role of LMs in the enactment of WLB policies and practices. LMs were found to have been essential in sustaining a WLB culture, consistent with the findings of Den Dulk and Peper (2009). The extract below from one KEPSA official illustrates their experience of responsibility for WLB policy implementation lying within the private sector:

*“In a few of the companies we oversee, line managers are in charge of supervising work-life balance arrangements but in some, line managers handle this role together with team leaders who work under them, or their*



*human resource departments. But most of the time, it is the line managers or supervisors who decide what leave is given to who and when” (Participant 1KEP: Kikuyu, male).*

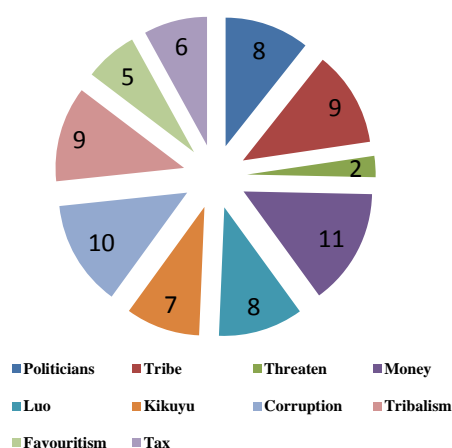
Inconsistencies in the implementation of policies at LM level were commonly reported in both phases. LMs’ decisions to allow or not to allow use of WLB policies were significantly influenced by political-tribal forces and/or demands arising from gender roles (these will be discussed in detail in the following section). McCarthy et al. (2010) and Wise (2005) both identified the likelihood of there being inconsistencies in the interpretation and application of policy at LM level. However, from all the results, inconsistencies were not related to the interpretation of policy but to its implementation. This was evident in two ways. First, LMs tended to support employees from their own tribes. Secondly, LMs tended to support women based on their dual roles of balancing paid work and unpaid domestic work. The extract below illustrates typical political-tribal scenarios presented by one of the Ministry officials. Also beneath is a word cloud showing the trend of words used in all the interview narratives relating to the political-tribal theme (Figures 7.1 and 7.2):

*“Corruption and tribalism within the Kenyan public sector today is at record high. We have found out that there are employees who only appear at work 3 months in a year and yet they earn full salaries. The rest of the year, they would be engaged in their personal businesses whether in country or out of the country. Their bosses cover their absences by indicating for example, that they would be working on projects out-of-station. But the rewards to managers are high. Some get cars, free fuelling of their cars, their monthly house shopping fully paid for, others get office wear, and so on. Why? Because they come from the same tribe. The cartels are uncontrollable” (Participant 2PB: Abaluhya, male).*



**Figure 7.1: Analysed Political-tribal influence word trends obtained from all interview quotes, showing the emphasis placed on political and tribal issues.**

**Figure 7.2: Number of themed responses per size of word**



LM training on WLB-specific matters still emerged as a contentious issue within the public sector. The reason given by the Ministry officials to justify the need for limited training was the lack of constant revisions in statutory WLB provisions. According to one Ministry official, changes occurred within a span of 2-3 years. This official felt that the methods used to communicate the changes (memos) were sufficient for the LMs to be able to understand the revisions. The other Ministry official attributed the limited training to shortages in financial resources, which they felt could be better allocated to more pressing matters. For the private sector firms, LM training on WLB-specific matters was also considered as an expensive exercise that required considerable investment in time and money. For instance, seven interview responses pointed to the fact that companies had to consider balancing the expenditure of funds on LM training as opposed to investing funds in other income generating ventures. Some (n=2) indicated that they invested in training LMs to guard against the collapse of their WLB programmes in which they had invested heavily. It is notable that the commonality between the public and private sector firms in this matter was whether/how to balance finances between LM training and increasing investments. While this uncertainty continues among Kenyan companies, on a general note, McCarthy et al. (2010) advocate LM training on WLB matters so that they not only understand the provisions under the WLB programmes, but also commit to the programmes and effectively communicate the same to employees. Typical statements included:

*“...after induction, line managers cannot get any more training. Where is the money to do that?”* (Participant 2PB: Abaluhya, male).

*“...if our WLB programme flops it would be disastrous because of the amount of money that has gone into this project. Whichever way, line managers must get special training that focuses on WLB”* (Participant 5PR: Kamba, male).

Referring back to the WLB implementation stage of the conceptual framework, LMs were found to ‘wear two hats’. As key actors in organisational WLB, LMs were obliged by their roles to implement their company’s WLB policies (Sayer 2011). However, these LMs were also men and women who belonged to tribes and might have had strong/weak affiliations to tribal coalitions, which hold different positions of power in Kenya’s society. They belonged to households and therefore their actions may have been influenced by their positions and experiences as members of households with particular role expectations and positions of authority. As explained above, this finding is consistent with Bhaskar (2010: 11) who states that the “personal characteristics of individual actors might bring the emergent powers and

liabilities associated with the positions they occupy in multiple social structures into intersection with personal beliefs and characteristics”. It is therefore highly likely for LMs to have been caught in a moral dilemma of pledging loyalty to social influences or devotion to effectively implementing WLB organisational policy. Nevertheless, the expectations of the WLB role permitted LMs more power to implement WLB policies and practices than other managers.

It could also be argued that LMs have their own personal views, perhaps prejudices, concerning WLB policies and practices. Even more, some LMs might be interested in challenging dominant role expectations in terms of their own attitudes to WLB policy and take up. For example, responses from managers in both phases dominantly revealed reluctance in allowing the use of WLB policies. There was an unpleasant fear of increased workloads leading to LMs working longer hours when employees were allowed to use WLB policies. This was because (as also established from the stakeholder interviews) operating with lean workforces was common practice within most private sector firms – *“we employ only the number we need. Staffing decisions have to be made with profitability in mind”* (Participant 5PR: Kamba, male). The implication for WLB was a lack of sufficient personnel to cover the duties of the employees who were absent. In summary, there were policies but in reality, they were not always adhered to as they should have been, and one of the reasons was the dilemma faced by LMs and also the power or lack of power they had.

#### **7.4.3 Influence of Tribal Affiliations and Gender on the Implementation of WLB Policies and Practices (Aim 3)**

The third aim critically assessed whether tribal affiliations and gender roles had an influence on the implementation of WLB policies and practices. The stakeholders were asked about their perceptions concerning the use of WLB policies and practices in relation to tribal affiliations. They were also asked how, in their experience, gender roles affected WLB practices. The responses were largely complementary to those revealed in the first phase, as discussed in the sections below. The significance of each variable with regard to WLB practices differed between the public and private sectors.

## **Tribe**

The use or limited use<sup>56</sup> of WLB policies by employees was heavily linked to the tribal group that their LMs belonged to within the public sector. This finding was consistent across the interview responses of both the managers and officials from the Ministry and KEPSA. They aligned with Ojo's (2012) findings within Nigerian banks. Although Ojo's results were related to Nigerian banks that were mainly within the private sector, they still evidenced that, in the African context, LMs' and employees' 'ethnicities' (term used by Ojo to refer to tribe) were determinants of the utilisation or limited utilisation of WLB policies and practices. In Ojo's study, employees from dominant tribes (Hausa, Ibo, and Yoruba) had a higher representation of LMs from the same tribe and therefore had easier use of WLB arrangements. However, while Ojo's study only talked about 'ethnic' affiliations, this study revealed close ties between politics and tribe, hence *political-tribal affiliation*. Therefore, belonging to a particular tribe tends automatically to affiliate an individual with a certain political party. General employees from the same tribal group as their LMs therefore had easier access to WLB policies. The extract below is a direct quote from one of the Ministry of Labour officials:

*"After an investigation by PricewaterhouseCoopers at one public sector organisation revealed that underperformance was due to unqualified employees, we have now started experiencing a trend where public sector workers who are imposed on organisations by politicians possess fake academic certificates from local as well as foreign educational institutions. However, nothing can be done about the issue because opposition politicians who are supposed to keep a check on the government are also involved and the individuals are their tribesmen. Politicians only fool the public when ruling and opposition parties dramatize having verbal fights in public when behind the curtains they are friends in crime"* (Participant 1PB: Kikuyu, male).

Furthermore, from both research phases, it was shown that, although general employees with a large tribal representation of LMs tended to belong to Kenya's four dominant tribes (Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Abaluhya, and Luo), the majority originated from the Kikuyu tribe. These four dominant tribes tended also to be linked to 'powerful political personalities'<sup>57</sup> who had considerable influence on LMs' decisions. In addition, the two Ministry officials attested to solving cases where LMs were 'rewarded' (monetarily or materially) by politicians to

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<sup>56</sup> Not able to use policies at the time employees needed to use them.

<sup>57</sup> Politicians from both the ruling and opposition parties who wield substantial political power in the country.

allow selected employees time off work to engage in election campaigns. However, this practice was highlighted as only being rampant during election periods. Notably, the employees involved were reported to have belonged to the same tribes as the politicians who requested their release from work. In most cases, the tribes involved were the dominant tribes. The implication for equal access of using WLB provisions in this case was the surpassing of legally entitled annual leave days. For example, one Ministry official stated:

*“Now that elections are around the corner, politicians will either be paying managers to allow their tribesmen to go and campaign for them, or they would be threatening managers with sanctions if they refused. These people finish all their annual leave plus all other complimentary ones and yet still get extra days off. But no one is allowed to comment or else you get into serious trouble”* (Participant 2PB: Abaluhya, male).

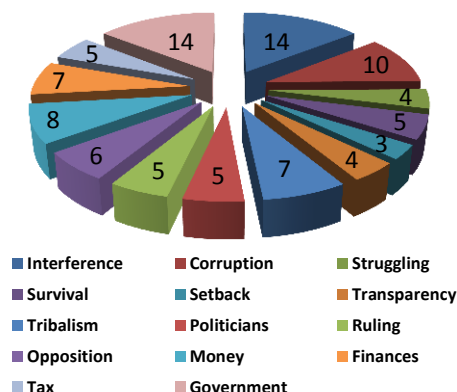
Such discoveries are also evidenced by the work of Frank and Rainer (2009), which states that political parties in Kenya are largely based on tribe rather than on ideology. Masakhalia (2011: 9) suggests that the *“marriage between politics and tribe in Kenya requires the intervention of a panel of international lawyers to enable a divorce”*. Similar views are shared by Lankeu and Maket (2012), who add that the connection between politics and tribe in Kenya provides avenues through which state and organisational rewards and favours can stream down from those in powerful positions (government and/or organisational) to their tribesmen. However, some authors argue that the public sector’s affiliation to the government is the main cause for the high level of tribalism: a practice that is argued to be characteristic of the Kenyan government (e.g. Manda 2013; Kiprop 2012). Overall, the deeply ingrained nature of political-tribal affiliations in the Kenyan culture proves to be inseparable from workplaces. This feeds into Gumo et al.’s (2012: 6) reference to tribalism as *a cancer that could eat Kenya to the bones and a major problem behind disunity in the country*. Gumo’s thoughts are supported by the narratives below from the Ministry of Labour and KEPSA officials. In conclusion, Baka (2013) cautions that businesses in Kenya are normally advised to be prepared to deal with the interference of government politics, but it is also important that business operations are insulated from political-tribal influences except on matters of national policy. A combination of business autonomy and political responsibility, as Kiprop (2012) argues, would go a long way in reducing the pressures on business operations and consequently on managers. The interview extracts below and word trends derived from the interviews and displayed as Figures 7.3 and 7.4 below illustrate the difficulties of organisations operating in a challenging business environment.



**Figure 7.3: Word trends obtained from interviews on the experiences of businesses operating in a challenging business environment**

*“Corruption is widespread in Kenya at the moment. Political interference and patronage in business hinders medium and small levelled companies in particular from growing. When too much money is drawn from companies by the same government that should be supporting them, welfare systems cannot grow” (Participant 1KEP: Kikuyu, male).*

**Figure 7.4: Number of theme responses per size of word**



*“If politics and business were separated in the public sector, all will be well. It is these politicians that encourage tribalism in this sector” (Participant 2PB: Abaluhya, male).*

*“The hugest supporter of the government and politics just won a multi-billion contract to install CCTV cameras in the whole of Nairobi. This firm has a WLB programme that is very expensive to run. We cannot afford to support the government to such lengths therefore we do not get anything in exchange but struggle through the system to survive. The WLB programme that we offer contains provisions that we struggle to finance. When surveys for the best companies are run, they overlook the fact that ‘contributions to government’ matter. This is what makes those who are always ranked at the top remain in the same positions for every annual survey. The more you support the government, the more your business grows, and the less tax your organisation pays” (Participant 3PR: Kalenjin, male).*

### **Gender roles**

Consistency in the stakeholder findings and those from the case study firms concerning gender roles and how they affected WLB practice in both the public and private sectors confirmed the degree to which WLB practice in Kenya is/was largely focused on women. However, the results in the first research phase did not clearly indicate that WLB was a government-led initiative for empowering women in employment. It was revealed in the stakeholder interviews that private sector firms went above their statutory obligations to offer non-statutory WLB provisions to not only support their employees’ WLB demands and establish a positive public image, but also to be considered as ‘supporting a government initiative’. This is noted in the extracts below from Ministry and KEPSA officials.

*“The Government’s campaign for gender equality marked a new beginning for women rights in Kenya. In the formulation of the Employment Act, we seek to remedy the traditional exclusion of women in workplaces and promote their*

*full involvement in every aspect of workplace growth and development by incorporating policies that would support this progress. We educate ministerial heads and their HR teams about these developments in the public sector. KEPSA oversees the same in the private sector” (Participant 1PB: Kikuyu, male).*

*“Organisations that are seen to support women matters in the workplace are considered to be pro-government. We therefore work in collaboration with different organisations like the Ministry of Health, USAID, UNICEF, WHO, International Medical Corps, Kenya Red Cross, among others, to ensure that private sector companies provide a supportive work environment for women workers” (Participant 1KEP: Kikuyu, male).*

Many stakeholder interviewees referred to WLB policies as ‘*a mother friendly working environment/scheme*’. This outcome supports Okonkwo’s (2012) indication that WLB, more so in the sub-Saharan African setting, is an issue that is mostly centred on women in employment. In addition, women reported a higher work-life imbalance compared to men. Overall, women’s roles were perceived to have been more complex and time demanding when their paid work and unpaid domestic responsibilities were combined. This was more prevalent within the private sector compared to the public sector. By virtue of belonging to the private sector, there were high incidences of atypical and unpredictable working hours (shift work, weekend work, and night work) that failed to positively align with the women’s domestic responsibilities. Mungai and Ogot (2012) argue that Kenya is a heavily patriarchal society where men’s time is expected to be largely spent at work and women’s on domestic roles. However, both sets of findings showed a major shift from the traditional Kenyan male breadwinner trend to a shared one in which women were co-breadwinners. A key point from the stakeholder interviews was the outward attention to ‘women-focused WLB initiatives’ such as the breastfeeding programme (see comment below) which was established to have been government-led to support women’s growth in employment. Mokomane (2014) argues that sub-Saharan African women (Kenyans included), particularly working women, tend to manage extremely demanding and heavier workloads such that extending similar support to men would be unrealistic. Below is an interviewee summary and pictorial representation (Figure 7.5) of joint government-led and KEPSA initiated interventions directed towards ensuring women’s WLB, with particular reference to private sector firms:

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*“In 2010, 30 private sector employers, under the auspices of KEPSA signed to a commitment of better business practice for women which involved: providing support for breastfeeding mothers at the workplace, complying with the statutory 3 months maternity leave (some companies were only allowing about 2-4 weeks for maternity leave), and constant reviewing of workplace policies on flexitime, including short breaks for mothers to express milk, and a clean private area for mothers to breastfeed their babies. The private areas were to provide a supportive environment which included: appropriate furniture, access to clean water and soap to clean storage items. Our audit and inspection teams have checks and controls to ensure adherence. In 2014, we embedded work-life balance within the KEPSA constitution”* (Participant 2KEP: Luo, female).

Figure 7.5: Caption from the KEPSA website showing joint efforts between the Government and KEPSA on promoting breastfeeding in the workplace.

In the spirit of the government empowering women by encouraging their increased involvement in employment, an additional paid work responsibility was added, while their domestic role demands and expectations remained unchanged. The result of this was women experiencing longer working days in total compared to men. Agarwal et al. (2005) similarly argue that women who are laden with the double burden of paid work and unpaid domestic work tend to experience poor WLB because of home responsibilities such as child care, elder care and cooking; roles that cannot be postponed. However, Agarwal et al.’s study originates from an Indian perspective and only identifies particular domestic jobs ascribed to women. Extra roles were emphasised in both research phases to be part of women’s domestic roles in Kenya: (1) demanding extended family responsibilities, and (2) male care which appeared to be a particularly significant source of work-life imbalance for married women. Overall, rigidity in culture and male domination in Kenya are key contributors to working women’s poor WLB. These factors not only create difficulties for women at work but also at home. As long as culture and a patriarchal society continue to be strongly observed in Kenyan societies, organisations in the country would still fight to win the battle against women’s work-life imbalance. Put simply, the transition of gender roles in Kenya is yet to address the complex relations of domination and subordination between men and women within an unbending patriarchal system (Mouton et al. 2015).



Based on the stakeholder interviews, the concentration on female matters was therefore not portrayed as favouritism towards women, as depicted in the Safaricom results. Instead, the KEPSA representatives, and most of the managers (n=8), interpreted support for women as: (1) promoting a government initiative and (2) a show of respect and deference for women, including the building of families. In Kenya, long-established customs, traditions, and values hold “family” in high regard and women are considered to form the pillars of family stability (Kimani and Kombo 2010). A slogan in the Swahili language, initiated by the government to drive the initiative to support women at work reads: “kutukana mama, ni kutusi nchi”, meaning “insulting a woman equates to insulting an entire nation”. Figure 7.6 below illustrates inspections by KEPSA to assess and evaluate workplace support for working women within private sector firms. Included is a statement from one private sector manager.

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KEPSA FOUNDATION DOCUMENTS BEST BUSINESS PRACTICES FOR CHILDREN

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Figure 7.6: Caption from the KEPSA website illustrating inspections carried out by the organisation to assess and evaluate workplace support for working women.

*“Inspections from KEPSA first concentrate on which WLB provisions organisations have put in place to support women. As KEPSA is recognised by the government for representing private sector firms, they must be seen to support government-led initiatives. Providing the right support for women results in happy families too. For this reason, private sector firms have no option but to support this “kutukana mama ni kutusi nchi” initiative”* (Participant 1PR: Abaluhya, female).

### **Synthesising political-tribal and gender role influences**

At the centre of gender roles and political-tribal issues is a power play and dynamic that portrays Kenya as a country whose social and organisational practices are conditioned by rigid social structures. This takes us back to the ‘implementation process’ level of the conceptual framework where it was argued that the positions that men and women (both

managers and employees) occupied within social and organisational structures can influence the manner in which they behave and how decision making takes place. From a gender perspective, power is manifested in household leadership, particularly with respect to the household division of labour and decision making. Wamue-Ngure and Njoroge (2011) state that Kenyan families tend to be organised along gender relations that stem from patriarchy. Decision-making structures and the household division of labour afford considerable power and less roles to men, placing women as subordinates and heavily burdened. These cultural norms and gender roles (as well as the relative lack of power) that women were revealed to have adversely affected the work and life demands for women, obliging men and women to behave in certain ways because of the positions they occupied in these social structures. Studies have also found that in general, giving women increased access to the workforce, especially for those originating from traditional gender-role attitudes, is not always positive and increases their daily work requirements (e.g. Ay et al. 2009; Rocca et al. 2009). As mentioned above, the immediate nature of their 'life' commitments means they cannot delay their duties until later or another day. As Seybolt's (2010) work, which draws upon women empowerment, usefully asserts, as long as the traditional female ideals persist, increased income or female empowerment through WLB initiatives in employment will not necessarily translate into increased power/control for women in Kenyan households.

The perspectives that appear to predominate in the discourse on political-tribal power are broadly speaking confined to management versus general employees in the form of hierarchical structures. In the same light, theories such as those by Kahn (1964) and Jackson and Carter (1991) suggest that organisations cannot exist without such relations of power. In this study, problems surface in the way that 'power' is used particularly at political-tribal and line management levels in the process of implementing WLB policies. A key assumption in functionalist/behaviourist conceptions of power is that, despite Dahl (2006) expressing the power equation in terms of individuals (in this case politicians, LMs), power is equally able to be utilised by groups. In this view, power can be employed by collective actors such as politicians, tribal groupings and LMs, to cite the case of this research. One particular assumption, implicit in Dahl's (2006: 1) definition of power is "power as a property of social relations, mostly linked with resource allocation in organisations". Dahl's thoughts are also shared by Bacharach and Lawler (1980) and Geppert and Hollinshead (2014) who state that "organizational life is dominated by political interactions; politics in organizations involve the tactical use of power to retain or obtain control of real or symbolic resources". Hence, the

exercising of power over the control of organisational resources may benefit some individuals and groups and prejudice others. The thesis that emerges from the present study (based on the above empirical results) is thus to call for the development of a context-specific framework that reflects the complexity of WLB policy and practice within Kenyan workplaces. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **7.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter sought to establish the wider applicability/relevance of the company case study findings using the first three aims as criteria. The overall results demonstrate marked agreements between the findings in the two research phases. It emerges that female roles (both work and domestic) – as well as political-tribal affiliations – presented particular challenges for organisations and were heavily influenced by deeply ingrained societal practices. However, while gender role challenges were predominantly inclined towards female matters, challenges associated with political-tribal affiliations involved not only male and female general employees but also managers too. Therefore, the latter significantly stood out as the most challenging factor for organisations. Their origins were found to have been deeply embedded in, and conditioned by, relations of power that define social and organisational structures and lines of decision making.

Based on these results, the regional uniqueness of workplace practices, based on socio-cultural and socio-political influences, clearly emerges. It is therefore questionable as to whether WLB models that are used in Western countries can be adopted and applied in Kenyan contexts without modifications to suit local workplace requirements. It is from this position that the study proposes a best practice framework that would be suitable for the Kenyan workplace: a framework that seeks to address ‘political-tribal’ and ‘gender role’ matters of WLB from an African, specifically Kenyan, perspective. This framework is developed and discussed in Chapter 8 under the fourth aim of this study.

## **CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND FURTHER STUDY**

### **8.1 CHAPTER INTRODUCTION**

This multi-layered (employees at different levels) empirical study is one of the first to examine the influence of tribal affiliations and gender roles on the practice of WLB. It has highlighted the relative influence of both these aspects on employees' experiences of WLB in the Kenyan context. Moving beyond the standard tribal associations and differences in gender roles, the study has illustrated the impact of tribe and politics, as well as female employment empowerment initiatives, on employees' interpretation of the interface between work and life. The study has also supported previous calls from Mordi et al. (2013) and Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre (2013) for WLB research to consider the national and cultural contexts in which WLB policies and practices are embedded.

This chapter summarises the main findings of the thesis. The conceptual framework presented in Chapter 3 is revisited and modified based on the findings of the empirical study. The implications of the study for work-life literature, policy and practice, as well as methodology, are then evaluated. The chapter concludes with some recommendations for further research. In so doing, the chapter completes the accomplishment of research aim 4, namely:

4. *To consider the implications of this study for employees, managers and HR practitioners and for future research and policy.*

### **8.2 REVISITING THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This research has examined the influence of tribal affiliations and gender roles and expectations on WLB from the lens of Clark's (2000) work-life border theory. Embedded in the conceptual framework is Clark's assertion that "*though many aspects of work and home are difficult to alter, individuals can shape to some degree the nature of the work and home domains, and the borders and bridges between them, in order to create a desired balance*" (p. 751). This shaping of domains (work and life) by individuals and organisations differentiated the work-life border theory from the other models explained in Section 2.3 of Chapter 2. The latter tend to assume that individuals are purely reactive to their situations. The central tenets of the work-life border theory were embedded into the conceptual framework by considering the organisational and employee drivers of adopting organisational WLB policies to support employee balance. The effects of possible influences to the WLB

implementation process by social aspects of the environments in which the key actors (HRLs, LMs, and general employees) operated have been demonstrated. Experiences from these processes have been found to have had three impacts: (1) they inform the development of company WLB strategy, (2) they impact on employees' choice of personal coping strategies, and (3) they influence employees' perceptions of the WLB systems in their firms.

The study findings strongly support Clark's theory, and they also suggest and extend Clark's theory by acknowledging that, while individuals and companies can to some degree shape the nature of their life (personal coping strategies) and work (WLB policies and practices) domains respectively, the national context in which organisations operate can affect implementation of WLB policies and practices in workplaces. In this case, particular reference was made to tribal affiliations and gender roles and expectations in relation to the power of influence in decision making derived from positions that people hold (managers, people from different tribes, and men).

The assumption at the start of the study was that public and private organisations were affected in the same way. However, the empirical study findings revealed important differences between public and private sector firms as is discussed in the section below.

### **8.2.1 Empirical findings and conceptual framework**

Using the two case examples (Safaricom and Telkom) as a point of reference, differences in operations between public and private firms was reflected across the three stages of the conceptual framework (WLB drivers, WLB implementation processes and WLB outcomes).

#### **WLB drivers**

At the WLB drivers stage, differences occurred in the employee-centred work demand drivers and the internal company-centred drivers for adopting WLB policies and practices. The results showed that being a private organisation, Safaricom's working environment and operations were themed around being competitive to meet the commercial objectives of earning profit in the private sector. This was unlike the working pattern at Telkom which was government-owned and whose main objective is to serve the citizens of the country. Employee centred work demand drivers at Telkom were: maintaining a work-life culture based on statutory requirements; a patriarchal driven gender work role expectation where men were

expected to dominate roles and therefore cover for the absences of women; and influences of tribal affiliations (given dominance in tribal inclined employment within the public sector). This differed with Safaricom where demands were centred around heavy workloads, long working hours, the demand for flexibility at work and high WLB expectations by a younger generation (which was dominant in numbers). Although both companies displayed gender role expectations and the influence of tribal affiliations as demand drivers, they differed in context. Whereas Telkoms' gender role expectations were patriarchal inclined (where men expected to dominate roles and cover responsibilities in the absence of women), those at Safaricom were more inclined towards the increased support that women needed or received which exerted pressure on men at work. Also, while the influence of tribal affiliation at Telkom was heavily felt and emanated from within and from outside the firm, Safaricom's pressure was largely external from political forces as internal company policies mitigated against tribal favouritism. Nevertheless, both companies shared the same life demands considering that the social context in which they operated was similar. The influencers included cultural gender role expectations, the number of hours that women particularly spent on work at home, tribal-oriented gender role expectations and the financial support demands of extended family which necessitated commitment to more working hours by employees.

Industry competitiveness was further reflected in the company-centred drivers as Telkom was more poised towards setting up a 'leave scheme' that would protect and increase employee health and well-being while also increasing productivity. On the other hand, Safaricom's WLB programme's aims were to increase competitiveness, company reputation, attract and retain talent (which is vital for the technology-driven firms), as well as reduce costs (e.g. in recruitment and selection processes due to a lower staff turnover). Despite the differences, both companies were driven towards improving the health and well-being of their employees as well as increasing productivity. In addition, the choice of developing WLB policies was influenced by forces beyond the two companies' control which included statutory obligations and Sustainable Development Goals<sup>58</sup> (SDGs) which the Kenyan government is obligated to fulfil. The government-led women empowerment programme spearheaded through the Ministry of Labour and the Employment Act (2007, 2015) was part of this initiative.

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<sup>58</sup> A set of 17 "Global Goals" with 169 targets spearheaded by the United Nation covering a range of sustainable development issues within which gender equality (goal 5) and decent work and economic growth (goal 8) are included.

### **WLB implementation processes**

There was a unanimous agreement in the results on the important role that LMs played in the implementation of WLB policies. The results from both companies showed that even though HRMs played the major role of designing and overseeing the policies, LMs held more power in policy interpretation, implementation and uptake. The power held by LMs is signified by the thicker borders in the proposed WLB framework for Kenya (Figure 8.2). However, in terms of tribal social structures, influences arising from the positions of power of key actors (managers and people from dominant tribes), particularly in relation to tribal affiliations, differed considerably between Safaricom and Telkom, depicting a public sector that was dominated by favouritism on tribal grounds and a private sector that had insignificant levels of tribal preferential treatment. This is depicted by the thick borders on the public sector in Figure 8.2. Differences in gender roles appeared to impact employees in both companies in the same way, such that men were more powerful (especially in decision making processes of WLB and holding positions of authority and leadership) than women, portraying a soundly patriachal Kenya. The thick borders around men in Figure 8.2 illustrate this finding.

Overall, at the centre of all the social structures (organisational, tribal and gender), is a power dynamic that encourages supremacy and subordination between managers and employees, dominant and minority tribes, as well as between men and women (transporting what happens in households to workplaces). This is because the power that was invested in specific actors undermined the agency of the less powerless actors. The expectations of these social structures compelled the key actors to act in ways perceived to be acceptable by their in-groups based on their roles in the group while also going through personal influences that determined their choice of inclination (respecting company policy, supporting members of their own tribes, or favouring women because of their heavy dual role responsibilities).

### **WLB outcomes**

Findings from the empirical study discussed in Chapter 4 revealed that the two firms differed on their monitoring of the effectiveness of WLB programmes. While Safaricom carried out various types of evaluations to inform reviews at corporate WLB strategy level and for employees to adjust their privately arranged mechanisms to manage their work and life responsibilities, Telkom showed no evidence of the monitoring. For Telkom, the reviews of statutory WLB policies (which governed WLB practice in the public sector) were driven by

political interests by the government. However, the proposed WLB framework for Kenya recommends for a change in the way government views the monitoring of WLB practice and policy. Given that the government develops the WLB policies that umbrella the WLB activities and decisions in both public and private sector firms, improvement in policy monitoring would lead to beneficial outcomes for workers. Some of the outcomes that emerged from the findings included: (1) Increased use of WLB policies in a guilt-free working environment (especially for women); (2) Better management of workload in the private sector; (3) Enhanced perceptions of fairness in access to and use of WLB policies for men, women, and employees from different tribes; (4) Increased satisfaction with work (by both employees and managers); and (4) Elevated sense of wellbeing as stresses and strains would be better managed.

Much prior work examining WLB matters has been carried out in Western economies, whose national contexts differ from those within African settings. Evidence from this study showed a tendency for public and private firms to adopt Western developed WLB policies, practices, and/or models. However, the findings reveal inconsistencies and consequences when these policies, practices, and/or models were applied to the Kenyan context. On account of differences in national contexts (e.g. socio-cultural and socio-political), some of the adopted policies were inconsistent with the needs of employees in a multicultural Kenyan workplace (Geppert and Hollinshead 2017). For instance, the use of baby crèches in private sector firms enables women to stay at work for longer but has negative consequences for marital satisfaction and quality (Kinnunen et al. 2006; Voydanoff 2005). Also, tribal affiliation, a major source of influence on LM decision making, is a concept that is not consistent with Western social contexts. Contrary to Western cultures – for which Craig et al. (2012) assert that household roles are relatively shared between men and women (including childcare) – domestic roles in Kenyan homes tend to exclude men from home chores. Furthermore, the results show that the use of positions of power in Kenyan households and workplaces mingle with tribal associations and norms to influence the practice of WLB in a fashion that is not evident in Western-oriented work-life literature. Washington and Patterson (2011) argue that organisations can adopt similar practices to remain competitive. However, this largely reflects organisations that operate in the same environment with similar challenges and pressures. This study endorses Grawitch and Barber's (2008) directive for HR practitioners to tailor a WLB programme to national (for statutory entitlements), organisational and employee contextual needs. Specifically, it advocates the development of a best practice framework



suitable for the Kenyan workplace: a framework that seeks to address ‘political-tribal’ and ‘gender role’ dimensions to WLB in a Kenyan public and private sector context. Below, the conceptual framework is revisited to introduce and discuss such a structure.

### **8.3     KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study findings add to existing cross-national literature within the WLB field. They also have implications for policy and practice. By virtue of using a mixed-method approach, the study makes an additional contribution to methodology within the WLB field. These various contributions to knowledge are detailed below.

#### **8.3.1   Theoretical Contributions**

The research has contributed to theory in three main respects. First, the focus on the WLB policies and practices of multi-levelled employees in Kenya has added to established knowledge and contemporary perspectives on WLB from a non-Western cultural context. Secondly, WLB research has been enhanced by an emphasis on the diversity of perceptions of Kenyan managers and employees concerning the practice of WLB in relation to tribal affiliations and gender role differences, expectations and obligations. The research has contributed to knowledge in the work-life literature, particularly in terms of the differences between work-life contextual matters in African and Western settings. This research is one of only a few studies to have examined how tribe and gender roles within African contexts can affect WLB practice. And political-tribal affiliation, a significant determinant of the use of WLB policies and practice in this study, has emerged as an important addition to work-life knowledge.

Thirdly, the below framework of WLB practice (Figure 8.2) has been proposed. This is predicated on the assertion that the continued use in literature and in practice of Western-oriented models and policies impedes a full understanding of the issue in the African context. The preliminary conceptual framework has been modified to incorporate the results obtained from the empirical study (see Section 8.2.1). It is proposed that the framework is now tested in more Kenyan workplaces. It develops the work of Deery (2008), which proposed strategies to reduce employee turnover from a Western perspective (see Figure 8.1). Deery focused on the role that balancing employees’ paid work and unpaid personal lives can play in these strategies. His framework also addressed organisational and industry attributes. The framework developed here extends Deery’s framework by incorporating additional complexities in both WLB drivers and influencing social structures. It also demonstrates how

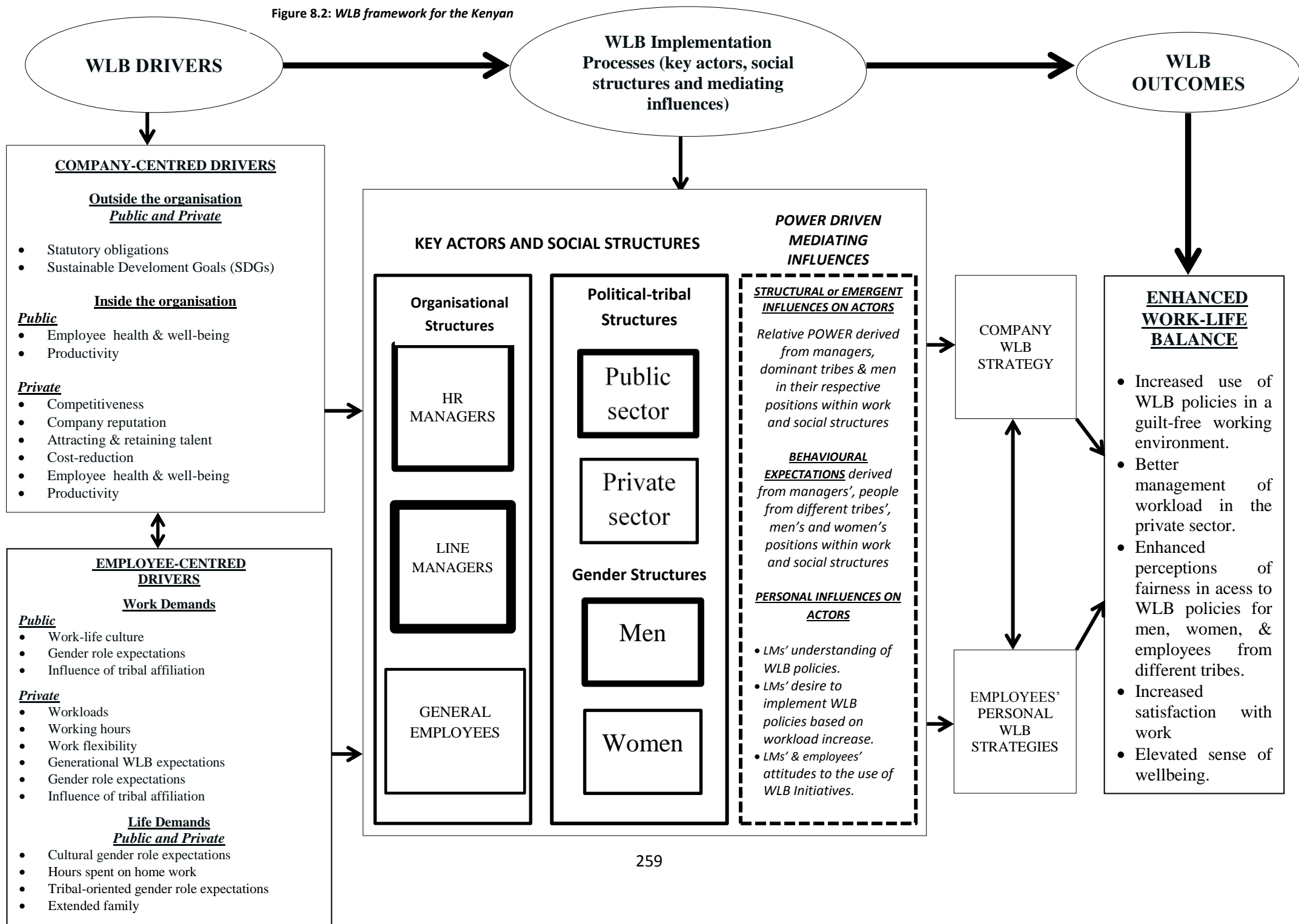
different national contexts and social structures (employment levels, tribal, and gender) can impact on WLB practice in both the public and private sectors.

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The below framework (Figure 8.2) indicates that Kenyan employees within the public and private sectors tend to experience similar life demands but very different work demands. Private sector workers are depicted as experiencing heavier workloads, longer working hours and requiring more flexibility, arguably because of the fast-paced and competitive nature of the private sector. These employee-centred drivers encourage organisations to adopt WLB policies and practices propelled by external and internal organisational objectives. For both sectors, statutory obligations and international development initiatives are common. However, private sector firms tend to exhibit more eagerness to engage WLB policies and practices for reasons linked to firm competitiveness, public image, attraction and retention of staff, and cost-reduction agendas. Employee health and well-being as well as productivity intentions are common to both sectors. While WLB implementation on both sides has been found to be influenced by similar key actors, social structures and various mediating influences (tribe and gender), some of the determinants are strongly embedded in systems and practices between: (1) the public and the private sectors, and (2) employees of different genders. For both sectors, LMs have emerged as the actors who hold the greatest power with regard to influencing the use or non-use of WLB policies and practices. Tribal affiliations and their impact on the use or non-use of WLB policies and practices are also strongly felt within the public sector compared to the private.

In both sectors, men appear to possess more power in households than women, and thus largely determine the division of labour in households. This is reflected in the thickness of the borders in the 'WLB implementation processes' level of the framework, which signifies the level of strength of the influencing factors involved. Structural, emergent and/or personal influences on key actors, based on their positions of power, impact on individual perceptions and experiences of WLB practice. The development of a company WLB strategy and employee personal coping strategies are dependent on these experiences. If corrective action was concentrated around the influencing factors marked with thicker borders (LMs, tribal influences in the public sector, and men's positions of power in households), the outcome would arguably be an enhanced WLB for employees. Such corrective action should not only emanate from organisations (e.g. LM training on the importance of fairness in implementation), but also from employees themselves (e.g. job sharing of household roles) and, most importantly, from a national level (e.g. national cohesion to mitigate tribal favouritism).

Figure 8.2: WLB framework for the Kenyan



### **8.3.2 Policy and Practice Implications**

On a practical level, this research has some important managerial implications. It suggests that LMs and other managers with supervisory roles should focus their efforts on those employees who are in most need of WLB support. Being a work-life supportive manager is a vital ingredient in WLB practice. However, especially in the public sector, managers, particularly LMs, may not be sufficiently aware of the needs of their staff or their company policy. By contrast, the study has shown that training LMs on WLB is effective in promoting work-life supportive behaviours and attitudes at work. HR practitioners should centre training programmes on the most effective work-life supportive habits exhibited by LMs, and on the need to shed light on the impacts that these practices can have on employee performance. In other words, the benefits of a positive WLB should be highlighted to LMs. Training of LMs is also arguably needed on how to identify the signs of work-life imbalance and to offer support. HR practitioners will understand the importance of monitoring implementation processes to ensure consistency between policy, practice and intended objectives. But they need in particular to guard against the emergence of favouritism, and to ensure that there is consistency and transparency in the implementation and take-up of policy.

Evidence from the private sector has highlighted a potential disconnection between having a comprehensive WLB programme and employees' actual use of the arrangements. HRLs<sup>59</sup> have noted the consequences of formulating a WLB that is incompatible with organisational and employees' needs for WLB (e.g. increased WLC, lack of co-worker cooperation). The impetus is for organisations to formulate policies and practices that conform to organisational, work and employee WLB needs. However, Potts and Kastle (2010) indicate that WLB arrangements cannot be designed to meet all needs of individual employees, but have to be readjusted and formulated to meet the most demanding of their needs. Anything that hampers the realisation of these aspects in the workplace is a potential liability for employers and employees. High WLC for an organisation's workforce is likely to compromise organisational effectiveness (Karatepe 2013; Kossek et al. 2013) in both the public and private sectors.

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<sup>59</sup> Human Resource Leaders

The comments of the research participants suggest that public sector employees are often frustrated with the 'tribal' nature of organisations and by a sense that they are constrained by procedures and prevented from accessing or making use of WLB policies and practices when they need them. Public sector organisations could therefore examine possibilities for strategies to support managerial autonomy and decision making, and the formulation of policies to discourage tribalism and encourage organisational cohesion. The private sector organisations could learn lessons from the public sector in addressing the following issues: (1) reducing employees' WLC as a means of encouraging well-being, (2) developing strategies to improve employees' control over workplace arrangements such as shift patterns, (3) exploring ways to reduce employees' and managers' work hours, and (4) developing a work-life culture that is more conducive to WLB. Overall, empirical evidence to support the business case for WLB is growing. Hence, both public and private sector organisations should be more aware that organisational functioning is more likely to run smoothly when employees' WLB is satisfied and balanced.

This study also provides some empirical evidence of value to the Kenyan government and public administration. The negative effects of political-tribal influence on effective WLB policy implementation are now better understood. The origins of the practice are also well-known and offer a foundation on which preventive measures can be taken while also putting mechanisms in place to promote national cohesion. According to an OECD (2012) report, governments are expected to take a role-modelling lead in WLB policy formulation and stewardship. Preventive measures to counteract the negative effects of political-tribal influence on organisational functioning cannot be directly shaped by organisations. The onus and the moral obligation are arguably on the government to modify their working practices, to initiate national 'tribal healing' and oneness and to promote business independence. A cross-national study by Wang (2013) showed that when the government promotes business autonomy, economic development benefits are enhanced. Evidence from the private sector participants indicates that organisational effort through LMs as gatekeepers/agents can also promote tribal cohesion in workplaces. With the incorporation of this aspect into LM training, principles of tribal togetherness can translate into real practice. In addition, evidence has been found of employee assistance programmes within the private sector that offer counselling or a series of tribal cohesion seminars to assist in the

reduction of tribalism in the workplace. A government-led initiative could arguably encourage a rollout of these within organisations.

### **8.3.3 Methodological Implications**

The study has made two key methodological contributions to knowledge. First, as mentioned in Section 3.3 of Chapter 3, Chang et al.'s (2009) review of methodological choices in WLB research reveals an inclination by most researchers towards using either single qualitative or quantitative methods. Chang et al.'s results suggest a deficiency in the use of mixed methods (MM). This study is one of a few work-life related projects that highlight the benefits of engaging a multiple methods approach. WLB is predominantly a subjective and individual phenomenon for which quantitative research methods are unlikely to provide a sufficiently rich understanding. However, qualitative methods have also been criticised for their focus on small and specialised sample sizes (Creswell 2014). The research design employed here has provided valuable insights from both the employee and manager perspective by employing a range of quantitative and qualitative methods/techniques: document analysis, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) also highlight the benefits of such a MM approach, through which the qualitative dimension can provide deeper knowledge, and the quantitative element greater breadth. Triangulation of both data and methods has provided rich insight into the participants' experiences of the work-life interface that is arguably impossible to gain from a single methodological approach. Cross-verifications have also assisted in the development of an in-depth understanding of the interactions between WLB practice, tribal affiliations and gender role expectations. This has enabled a holistic appreciation of WLB experience and practice to be obtained. A positive methodological contribution to the work-life field has therefore been made, which echoes Gregory and Milner's (2009) similar thoughts on engaging a MM approach in WLB research.

Secondly, the study has shed further interesting light on Hooker's (2008) assertion that researcher and participant identities, and cultural differences in communication, can affect data collection processes. Hooker explains how cultural attitudes towards factors such as power, gender, wealth, and job security (among other country-specific influences) can shape transparency in communication between the researcher and the researched and the amount of

information that is gathered. In Chapter 3, Section 3.4.3, it was pointed out that the researcher's positionality in terms of gender and tribe affected the amount of information that was given by the participants. For instance, many women identified with the researcher as a potential agent of change and thus gave more information, while many men also gave much information, but from the patriarchal perspective that the researcher was a 'less informed' female. Participants from tribes that are less affiliated to the researcher's tribe of origin tended to be cautious about the type of information given and thus answered questions more succinctly. By contrast, those whose tribes were affiliated to the researcher's tribe tended to be more forthcoming with in-depth information. Whichever the direction of influence, it is evident that socio-cultural norms and behaviours can affect the collecting of data in research. This lends support to the findings of Chiseri-strater's (2006) study on Women Economic Empowerment in Rwanda. This author recognises that *gender*, *tribe* and *nationality* are among a number of factors in research that are culturally ascribed or fixed and can affect participants. This opens up a case for future research to examine how such cross-cultural norms can affect data collection.

The above reflections lead into a discussion of recommendations for future research that can develop further the understanding of the topics explored in this research and suggest other areas of potential interest that emerged during the research process.

#### **8.4 AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

This study has made a critical contribution to existing literature on WLB by identifying context-specific factors for Kenya that may potentially be applicable to other sub-Saharan African countries. According to Mokomane (2014), countries within the sub-Saharan African region tend to share socio-cultural and socio-political characteristics. This opens up potential avenues for wider research on the management of WLB in a broader African context. It is estimated that there are over 1500 tribes among the 29 Sub-Saharan African countries who have socio-cultural practices that are unique to themselves and which may have an influence on workplaces and WLB practices (Bowden 2007). It is also reported by various authors that these states share similarities in terms of the cultural influences on gender role expectations and the division of labour in households (Mokomane 2014; Mapedzahama 2008; Aryee 2005). The United Nations (UN) feels that tribal identity as a concept and practice shows little evidence of decreasing in



vigour within sub-Saharan African states in the near future, even among the most progressive countries such as South Africa and Nigeria (UN 2013). It is also observed by the UN that socio-environmental factors tend commonly to affect women disproportionately from these countries, as long as gender-differentiated roles and expectations in the household, ‘family’<sup>60</sup> and community life are maintained. It would thus be interesting to increase the scope of research to incorporate a larger number of Sub-Saharan African countries and organisations (both public and private). This would help to uncover additional cross-national experiences of balancing work and life interfaces in contrasting organisations.

A related and potentially valuable line of enquiry would be to explore further the role of sub-Saharan African governments in WLB policy development and implementation. The results from this research point to a government that lacks innovation in HRM and WLB practices. Emphasis has been laid on statutory WLB policies, with limited evidence of innovation to adhere to contemporary HR practice. It is not widely known how other sub-Saharan governments manage national WLB development and growth. It would be interesting to examine government operation in this area within other non-Western countries that share similar characteristics with Kenya.

One particular topic emerging from this research which would arguably be worthy of future inquiry concerns the differences in generational perspectives on WLB and on the use of policies and practices. The existence of multi-generations in public and private sector firms has been shown here to elicit differences in perceptions and attitudes to WLB, particularly regarding the use of policies. Younger workers appear to place a greater premium on WLB while many older workers perceive sacrificing their personal time for work as evidence of their commitment to the organisation. Yet young workers are often torn in between their demands for a balanced life and societal expectations to fulfil religious, community, cultural and familial financial obligations. They often have to work more, to earn more.

It would be valuable for future research to investigate generational differences in WLB within the Kenyan context, particularly because young people in Kenya are considered by Mungai and

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<sup>60</sup> Extended family

Ogot (2012) to be torn between the two worlds of Kenyan culturalism and Westernisation. It could be that experiences of younger people in African and Western contexts where most WLB studies have been carried out may differ or have some similarities. The composition of Kenyan workforces is considered by Manda (2013) as experiencing a rapid shift towards a higher proportion of younger workers. This demographic change may influence WLB policy formation and practice in the future as more young people enter the labour market. It would also be interesting to see how this plays out in Kenya's public sector, which has been revealed here to consist of a dominantly older workforce. In both the private and public sectors, demographic and cultural change has potentially significant implications for the management of diverse WLB needs and expectations across a range of generations.

## **8.5 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

WLB has shown itself to be a phenomenon that is influenced by more than organisational cultures. The intention of this thesis has been to enhance the understanding of the links between the practice of WLB and tribal affiliations as well as gender roles and expectations. Clark's (2000) border theory has underpinned the understanding of how organisations and individual employees re-shape their lives in order to manage the interface between their paid work and domestic needs and responsibilities. The study has highlighted the value of viewing WLB practice as being characterised by marked variations in implementation linked to the national and cultural context in which a company operates. Its dimensions varied at social, company, structural, individual and cultural levels. WLB has been found not only to be intertwined with political-tribal affiliations, gender roles and expectations, but also with various power structures operating at organisational, societal and individual levels. Tribal affiliations are closely linked to political influences. Consequently, the influence of tribe has been found to erode LMs' adherence of company policy in favour of political-tribal affiliations; a practice that deters the effective use of WLB policies and practices by general employees. Yet for women, paid work has been found to be only one activity alongside multiple other domestic activities in which they need to participate, in order to fulfil domestic role expectations and responsibilities.

Previous studies have contributed much to the understanding of WLB. However, there is very little evidence of studies that have examined WLB in direct relation to tribal affiliations and

gender roles, especially involving a comparison between public and private sector firms (e.g. Ojo 2012). In support of Clark's (2000) border theory, the study has revealed that, within public sector firms, general employees who perceive their LMs as supportive often belong to dominant tribes that enjoy close affiliation with political public figures. The benefit to them is easy access to, and use of, WLB policies and practices. This finding represents a new and important contribution to the understanding of cross-cultural WLB issues. Additionally, women in general, particularly those with caring responsibilities (child and male caring) have been perceived to enjoy higher LM support compared to men and childfree employees. Their benefit is also higher access to, and use of, WLB policies and practices. This finding is important in that it demonstrates that WLB practices and the formulation of policies and practices in Kenya are still inclined towards female WLB needs and wants.

WLB research has arguably reached a stage in which the deployment of both qualitative and quantitative methods is valued. This has coincided with calls for WLB research to consider the national contexts in which WLB policies and practices are embedded (e.g. Mordi et al 2013; Kossek and Ollier-Mallaterre 2013). The usefulness of a MM rather than a single method approach has been seen in the validity and wider applicability of the research findings, as well as in the development of a more holistic understanding of the topic. Critical theory has been found to be a valuable way of gaining knowledge through intensive and extensive research methods that support the understanding of power relationships and social structures associated with political-tribal affiliations and gender role expectations. Cross-verification of data in the analysis of information has revealed areas of congruence and contrast between public and private sector firms. By virtue of their close association with the government, public sector firms have been shown to face higher levels of political-tribal influence compared to their private counterparts. Yet the latter tend to experience higher WLC and unhealthy work-life cultures, particularly in relation to women employees.

It is time to situate WLB in a Kenyan context, and see its current form of practice in the country as partially incompatible with personal, life, and organisational needs and wants. This thesis has challenged the tendency in some existing studies to place emphasis on the typical nuclear family structures evident in Western countries. A traditional Kenyan extended family formation has

been foregrounded here: one that consists not only of employees' own nuclear families, but also other members of a family's lineage. Moreover, while some existing research has focused on the promotion of gender equality and men's use of WLB policies, this study has suggested that various forms of paid and unpaid workloads for women have compelled WLB practice to be focused more on women than men in Kenya. A conceptual framework has been proposed that reflects the country's WLB practices, processes and systems. This has highlighted some of the potentially negative consequences of WLC and could be used to reduce these in a range of contexts and settings. It is now recommended that the framework be tested in a wider range of Kenyan and sub-Saharan workplaces in order to verify fully its practicability.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: Informed Consent Form**

**Title of the Project:** Tribal affiliation, gender roles and their influence on work life balance practice:  
The case of the Kenyan telecommunications sector

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

1.	I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and I understand that I can withdraw at any time (up till before collected data is analysed and before results are written up) without giving reasons. I will not be penalised for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	I understand that I also have the right to change my mind about participating in the study for a short period after the study has concluded.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I agree to be recorded as part of the research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	I agree to take part in the research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant :	Signature of Participant :
Date :	

Name of Researcher :	Signature of Researcher :
Date :	



## **APPENDIX 2: Participant Information Sheet**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Tribal affiliation, gender roles and their influence on work life balance practice: The case of the Kenyan telecommunications sector

### **What is the purpose of this study?**

This research aims to evaluate the perceptions and experiences of managers and employees on existing policies designed to promote work life balance in the public versus the private sector. It also aims to examine the influence of tribal affiliations and gender roles on work life balance practice.

To achieve this, the study will take both an individual and an organisational perspective. On the individual level, managers and employee experiences of WLB will be explored while on the organisational level the study will investigate work life balance practices and the documented organisational policies within which these practices, perceptions and experiences are formed.

### **1. Why have I been chosen?**

You have been selected to participate in this survey because you work in a telecommunications company in Kenya.

### **2. Do I have to take part?**

No, participation in this research is voluntary; meaning that you will participate at your own free will. If you do participate, it may take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete a questionnaire or go through an interview. However, in the event that you change your mind and wish to withdraw at any point, please contact the researcher on the email provided at the bottom of this sheet. You will not incur any consequences and any information provided by yourself will not be used, it will be destroyed.

### **3. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?**

There are no disadvantages or risks associated with this research because your survey will be completed online / interview will be face-to-face. *Any information provided that would be compared to what management say WILL NOT be disclosed to any individual within the organisation therefore your job will be safe.*

### **4. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

The results of this study will be beneficial to all employees within your organisation. Not only that, the organisation will also benefit from constructive recommendations for work-life strategy improvement which will be provided by the researcher at the end of the project. In return, company performance and hence productivity will be improved which will impact positively on employee well-being.

### **5. What if something goes wrong?**

The researcher's and supervisor's contact details are at the bottom of this sheet. In case you have any concerns with the research or any aspect associated with it, please contact the researcher or supervisor.

### **6. What will happen if I do not want to carry on with the study?**

At any point of the process (up till before collected data is analysed and before results are written up), if you decide not to participate, you will freely be allowed without the need for any explanations. Any information received from you will not be used at all and will be destroyed.

#### **8. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

Yes it will. Any information provided will be securely stored in a PC that is password protected therefore no one apart from the researcher can have access to any information. Matters pertaining to feedback obtained from any participant will not be discussed with anyone out of the circle of the researcher and the researcher's supervisory team at Coventry University.

#### **9. What will happen to the results of the research study?**

The results of the study will be written out and presented by the researcher in the form of an academic dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Coventry University School of Business, Doctor of Philosophy qualification. In addition, the results will be communicated to participating organisations in form of a business report so that any recommendations given by the researcher would be implemented by the organisation for the benefit of both employees and the organisations.

#### **10. Who is organising and funding the research?**

This project is not externally funded. It is funded personally by Sheillah Chimungeni; the Researcher studying a Doctor of Philosophy programme under Coventry University School of Business, Human Resource Department.

#### **11. Who has reviewed the study?**

The researcher is answerable to a supervisory team consisting of four academic staff from Coventry University's Faculty of Business and Law, Human Resource Department, who have reviewed this study and approved it under the Coventry University's research Ethics approval policy.

*I would be very grateful if you can participate in the survey / interview. Please direct any queries to:*

#### **Researcher**

**Sheillah Chimungeni**

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### **APPENDIX 3: Interview schedule for HRMs**

#### **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

##### **Information and Respondent Consent (HR)**

Hello, my name is Sheillah. I am a PhD research student at Coventry University in the United Kingdom. I am presently conducting a research on the perceptions of employees on work life balance in the public versus private sectors in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.

The results of the study will be presented in the form of an academic dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Coventry University School of Business, Doctor of Philosophy qualification. In addition, the results will be communicated to participating organisations in form of a business report for the benefit of employees and the organisation.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I also need to point out that this conversation will be recorded and later transcribed. I would now like to ask you a series of questions that will not take more than one hour of your time.

##### **Interview aim**

The aim of this interview is to find out about this organisation's work life policies, practices, and systems.

### **Personal Information**

1. What is your age range?

☐ 18-28

☐ 29-39

☐ 40-49

☐ 40-59

☐ 60+

2. To which tribe do you belong? .....

3. Please tell me about your position and your role in this organisation?

***Probe:***

a) *Give a brief description of your responsibilities.*

b) *How long have you been with this organisation?*

c) *What is your education level?*

### **Understanding of the work life balance concept**

4. Are you familiar with the term “Work life balance”?

If NO - *Work Life Balance is about how we combine work with other areas of life such as children, family, friends, spirituality, leisure, health, pleasure and more outside of work interests.*

If YES - What does the phrase ‘work life balance’ mean to you individually? What about to your organisation?

### **Work life balance policies and practices**

5. How does your organisation assist employees to achieve a balance between their work and personal demands?

***Probe:***

a) *Policies and practices in place to support work life balance.*

6. What are your reasons for introducing a work life balance programme?

7. Does your work life balance programme aim to achieve anything in particular?

8. How do your policies relate to government guidelines?
9. Are there any areas where you go beyond your statutory obligations?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If yes, how and what are your reasons for doing so?

If no, what are your reasons for not doing so?

10. How do you decide on which work life balance policies to adapt?

**Facilitating awareness of work life balance policies**

11. How do you promote your work life balance programme?

***Probe:***

a) *Channels used to communicate WLB policies and practices.*

**Implementation of work life balance policies and practices**

12. How do you facilitate the implementation of work life balance policies and practices?

***Probe:***

a) *Whose is responsible for the implementation of the policies and practices?*

b) *What support do the implementers receive to ensure effective implementation?*

c) *Do the implementers receive specific training on work life balance matters?*

**The Influence of tribal affiliations and gender roles on work life balance practice**

13. Within your organisation, do equal levels of both male and female employees make use of your WLB policies?
- If no, why not? What effects does this have on the organisation and employees?
  - If so, why do you think this is the case? What is the impact?
14. In your opinion, do tribal affiliations have any impact on WLB policies/practices within your organisation? If yes, explain how and why? If no, explain why not.
15. Are there any other key issues that arise in the implementation of these policies?

### **Suitability of the work life balance programme**

16. Do the work life balance policies fit in with the working patterns of all employees from different departments?
17. If you were to review these work/life strategies, are there any you would change or think differently about? If yes or no, why?

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

18. How does the organisation evaluate the effectiveness of these policies?

***Probe:***

- a) Methods used to monitor the performance of work life balance policies and practices.*
- b) How often evaluations take place.*

19. Do you find the work life balance programme beneficial?

***Probe:***

- a) Specific benefits of the work life balance programme to employees and the organisation.*

20. What do you feel are the challenges that work life balance issues present to the organisation and employees?

***Probe:***

- a) What the organisation is doing to solve these challenges.*
- b) The organisation's vision for work life balance.*

21. Is there anything else that you would like to add about work life balance policies in your organisation?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

#### **APPENDIX 4: Interview schedule for LMs**

### **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

#### **Information and Respondent Consent (Line Managers)**

Hello, my name is Sheillah. I am a PHD research student at Coventry University in the United Kingdom. I am presently conducting a research on the perceptions of employees on work life balance in the public versus private sector in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.

The results of the study will be presented in the form of an academic dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Coventry University School of Business, Doctor of Philosophy qualification. In addition, the results will be communicated to participating organisations in form of a business report for the benefit of employees and the organisation.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I would now like to ask you a series of questions that will take not more than one hour of your time.

#### **Interview aim**

The aim of this interview is to find out about your role as an implementer of work life balance policies and practices in your organisation.

### **Personal Details**

1. What is your age range?

☐ 18-28

☐ 29-39

☐ 40-49

☐ 40-59

☐ Above 60

2. To which tribe do you belong? .....

3. Please tell me about your position and your role in this organisation?

***Probe:***

- a) Which department do you manage?*
- b) Give a brief description of your Responsibilities.*
- c) How long have you been with this organisation?*
- d) How many people are under your supervision?*
- e) What are your education qualifications?*

### **Understanding of the work life balance concept**

4. Are you familiar with the term “Work life balance”?

*If NO - Work Life Balance is about how we combine work with other areas of life such as children, family, friends, spirituality, leisure, health, pleasure and more outside of work interests.*

*If YES - What does the phrase ‘work life balance’ mean to you individually? What about to your organisation?*

### **Work life balance policies and practices**

5. How does your organisation assist employees to achieve a balance between their work and personal demands?

***Probe:***

- a) Policies and practices in place to support work life balance.*

6. What were the reasons for your organisation introducing a work life balance programme?



7. Does your work life balance programme aim to achieve anything in particular?
8. How do your policies relate to government guidelines?
9. Are there any areas where you go beyond your statutory obligations?

☐ YES

☐ NO

➤ Any particular reasons why?

10. How does the organisation decide on which work life balance policies to adapt?
11. What is your role in these policies?

### **Support from Human Resources Management**

12. How do you get to know about the work life balance policies and practices?
13. How would you rate the methods used by HR to communicate these policies?
14. What support do you get from HR to facilitate your work-life role?
15. Have you undergone any management training specifically on work life balance?
  - If yes, please specify the type / kind of training that you have had.
    - Have you found this training to be beneficial / relevant in executing your work-life duties?
    - How often do you undergo training?
    - How recent was the last training?
  - If no, what are the reasons?

### **The Influence of tribal affiliations and gender roles on work life balance practice**

16. Within your organisation, do equal levels of both male and female employees make use of your WLB policies?
  - If not, why not? What effects does this have on the organisation and employees?
  - If so, why do you think this is the case? What is the impact?
17. In your opinion, do tribal affiliations have any impact on WLB policies/practices within your organisation? If yes, explain how and why?
18. Are there any other key issues that arise in the implementation of these policies?

### **Suitability of the work life balance programme**

19. Do the work life balance policies fit in with the working patterns of your department?
20. If you were to review these work/life strategies, are there any you would change or think differently about? If yes or no, why?

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

21. Does the organisation evaluate the effectiveness of these policies and practices?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- If yes, please specify how this is done.

***Probe:***

a) *How effective are the methods used?*

- If no, why not?

22. Are your opinions sought regarding the effectiveness of policies and practices?

a) If yes, how is the feedback that you give used?

b) If no, why not?

23. Do you find your firm's work life balance programme beneficial?

***Probe:***

b) *Specific benefit to employees and the organisation.*

### **Challenges**

24. Do you experience any challenges in your implementation role?

☐ Yes

☐ No

- If yes, please specify the types of challenges you experience.

***Probe:***

- b) From your experience, why would this happen?*
  - c) How supportive are HR in such challenges?*
  - d) What is the impact of these challenges to employees?*
- If no, why not?

25. If you were to review the work/life balance strategy in your department, what would you change and why?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **APPENDIX 5: Interview schedule for General Employees**

### **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

#### **Information and Respondent Consent (Employees)**

Hello, my name is Sheillah. I am a PHD research student at Coventry University in the United Kingdom. I am presently conducting a research on the perceptions of employees on work life balance in the public versus private sector in the telecommunications industry in Kenya.

The results of the study will be presented in the form of an academic dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Coventry University School of Business, Doctor of Philosophy qualification. In addition, the results will be communicated to participating organisations in form of a business report for the benefit of employees and the organisation.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I would now like to ask you a series of questions that will not take more than one hour of your time.

#### **Interview aim**

The aim of this interview is to discuss your perceptions and experiences of using the existing work life balance policies and practices in your organisation.

### **Personal Details**

1. What is your age range?  
☐ 18-28  
☐ 29-39  
☐ 40-49  
☐ 50-59  
☐ Above 60
2. To which tribe do you belong? .....
3. Please tell me about your position and role in this organisation?  
**Probe:**
  - a) Which department do you work for?
  - b) How long have you worked for this organisation? In the same position?
  - c) What are your education qualifications?

### **Work life conflict**

4. Do the demands of your work interfere with your home and family life?
5. Do you ever have to make changes to your personal activities due to work related duties?
6. Are you contactable by work when at home?
7. Have you ever been recalled back to duty during your leave days?
8. How is this compensated?
9. Has your approved leave application ever been cancelled?
10. Do you work from home?

### **Understanding of the work life balance concept**

11. Are you familiar with the term “Work life balance”?

If NO - *Work Life Balance is about how we combine work with other areas of life such as children, family, friends, spirituality, leisure, health, pleasure and more outside of work interests.*

If YES - What does the phrase ‘work life balance’ mean to you individually? What about to your organisation?

### **Work life balance policies and practices**

12. How does your organisation assist you to achieve a balance between work and personal demands?

***Probe:***

*b) Policies and practices in place to support work life balance.*

13. Of these policies, are you aware of any which are statutory entitlements?

☐ YES

☐ NO

➤ Can you please name them?

14. How did you find out about these policies?

15. How would you rate the methods used to communicate work life balance policies?

### **Use of work life balance policies and practices**

16. Do you make use of organisational work life balance policies and practices?

17. How easy or difficult is it to obtain time off work?

18. What is your opinion of your organisation's "time off work" application procedure?

### **Suitability of work life balance policies and practices**

19. From your experience in using work life balance policies, do you think that these policies assist you to attain a balance between your work and non-work demands?

***Probe:***

*a) Are the numbers of leave days enough?*

20. Do you have any concerns on the policies that promote work life balance in your organisation?

21. Does your organisation request you for any feedback on the policies and practices?

### **Fairness in the use of work life balance policies**

22. What is your opinion on how work life balance policies are implemented in your organisation?

23. In your opinion, do tribal affiliations have any impact on WLB policies/practices within your organisation? If yes, explain how and why? If no, why is it so?

24. Within your organisation, do equal levels of both male and female employees make use of work life balance policies and practices? If yes, explain how and why? If no, why is it so?

25. Are there any other key issues that arise in the implementation of these policies/practices?

26. Is there anything that you would like to add on work life balance policies to this discussion?

.....

.....

.....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **APPENDIX 6: Interview schedule for Stakeholder interviews**

### **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

#### **Information and Respondent Consent (Stakeholder interviews)**

Hello, my name is Sheillah. I am a PHD research student at Coventry University in the United Kingdom. I am presently conducting research on the perceptions of human resource personnel and line managers on work life balance in the public versus private sector in Kenya.

The results of the study will be presented in the form of an academic dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Coventry University School of Business, Doctor of Philosophy qualification.

The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. I also need to point out that this conversation will be recorded and later transcribed. I would now like to ask you a series of questions that will take not more than 1 hour of your time.

#### **Interview aim**

The aim of this interview is to ascertain whether tribal affiliations and gender role expectations have an influence on work life balance practice in Kenyan public and private sector organisations.



## **QUESTIONS**

1. Are you familiar with the term work life balance?
2. What does it mean for you? What does it mean for your/an organisation?
3. Can you please outline the specific policies that you have in place to support WLB?
4. On a practical basis, who implements WLB policies/practices in your organisation?
5. Do the implementers receive specific training on work life balance matters?
6. Are the WLB policies/practices applied consistently across the whole organisation?
7. How do you ensure that WLB programmes are consistently applied?
8. Have you ever experienced any challenges in ensuring that there is consistency, transparency, and fairness in the way the WLB policies/practices are applied?
9. Within your organisation, do equal levels of both male and female employees make use of your WLB policies/practices?
10. If not, why not? What effects does this have on the organisation and employees?
11. If so, why do you think this is the case? What is the impact?
12. In your opinion, do tribal affiliations have any impact on WLB policies/practices within your organisation? If yes, explain how and why? If no, why is it so? What is the impact?
13. Are there any other key issues that arise in the implementation of these policies/practices?

## **APPENDIX 7: Questionnaire for Line Managers**

### **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

#### **What is this survey?**

This is a survey of your views and experiences of working at Safaricom/Telkom Kenya Limited.

This is not a test and there is no right or wrong answer. We want to know your personal views on the issues raised in the survey. The survey consists of questions about yourself and your job and refers to your attitudes and opinions. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time by closing your web browser. If you stop answering the survey half way through the questionnaire your answers will not be recorded in our database.

#### **How long will it take?**

The questionnaire typically takes no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

#### **How do I fill in this survey?**

Please read each question carefully and give your immediate response by ticking (✓) the response which best describes how you feel.

#### **Who will see my answers?**

The information you provide is **completely confidential**. No one, other than the researcher will see your answers. Your answers will provide data for this study, and aggregated results may be published in academic journals and in a report for your organisation. However, no individuals or teams will be identified in this report.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Sheillah Chimungeni, at [chimungs@uni.coventry.ac.uk](mailto:chimungs@uni.coventry.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns or queries about this survey please contact the supervisor – Dr. Randhir Auluck, at [aa9948@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:aa9948@coventry.ac.uk).

**Please tick this box if you are willing to participate in this survey**

☐

1. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement with the following statements as concerns your duties in implementing organisational recommended work-life policies and practices: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>DESIRE TO IMPLEMENT WORK-LIFE HR PRACTICES</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	I think that this work-life duty is interesting.					
2.	I think that this work-life duty is pleasant.					
3.	I feel good when doing this work-life duty.					
4.	I am doing work-life duty for my own good.					
5.	I think that this work-life duty is good for me.					
6.	It is a personal decision to engage in work-life duty.					
7.	I am supposed to engage in work-life duty.					
8.	Work-life duty is something that I have to do.					
9.	I do not have any choice regarding my engagement in work-life duty.					
10.	There may be good reasons to do this work-life duty, but personally I do not see any.					
11.	I do this work-life duty but I am not sure if it is worth it.					
12.	I do not know; I do not see what this work-life duty brings me.					
13.	Work-life duty the people in my team to develop themselves.					
14.	Work-life duty creates a good work atmosphere.					
15.	Work-life duty helps me to treat employees in a fair and consistent way.					
16.	Work-life duty helps me to motivate people in my team.					

2. The following questions ask for your views of the degree to which your work-life related duties are compatible / incompatible with your management duties. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT HR ACTIVITIES – TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	I work under incompatible HR policies and HR guidelines.					
2.	I have to break a HR rule or policy in order to carry out my work-life HR responsibilities.					
3.	I perform HR tasks that are accepted by one person in my team but not by others.					
4.	I know how much authority I have in performing my work-life HR related duties.					
5.	I know what my work-life HR responsibilities are.					
6.	I am uncertain as to how my work-life HR responsibilities are linked.					

3. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement with the following statements: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>WORK-LIFE CULTURE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	I have to perform work-life HR responsibilities which I don't really have the time and energy for.					
2.	I need more hours in the day to perform all the work-life HR responsibilities which are expected of me.					

<b>WORK-LIFE CULTURE</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
3.	I feel I have to perform work-life HR responsibilities hastily with less care.					
4.	When I am confronted with a problem in performing my work-life HR responsibilities. I can usually find several solutions.					
5.	Whatever comes my way in performing my work-life HR responsibilities I can usually handle it.					
6.	My past experiences in my job have prepared me well for performing my work-life HR responsibilities.					
7.	The training provided sufficient knowledge for performing my work-life HR responsibilities.					
8.	The development provided has given me sufficient knowledge to undertake my work-life HR responsibilities.					

4. On a scale of 1 – 5, please indicate by ticking (√) to what extent you agree with the following statements: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>WLB HR ROLE CLARITY AND AMBIGUITY</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	This organisation is capable of meeting its responsibilities.					
2.	This organisation is known to be successful at what it tries to do.					
3.	This organisation does things competently.					
4.	This organisation is concerned about the welfare of its employees					
5.	Employees' needs and desires are important to this organisation.					
6.	This organisation will go out of its way to help its employees.					
7.	This organisation would never deliberately take advantage of its employees.					
8.	This organisation would not hesitate to achieve its own goals at the expense of its staff.					

5. Please indicate by ticking (√) your level of agreement with the following statements: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>CLARITY AND EASE OF USE OF HR PROCEDURES</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	The HR instruments I am provided with are clear and understandable.					
2.	I find HR instruments easy to use.					
3.	The guidelines I get help me to perform my HR responsibilities.					

**Personal Details (Demographic factors)**

6. Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

7. Tribe: .....

8. Age Range

- ☐ 18-28
- ☐ 29-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ Above 60

9. Department?

.....

10. What is your level in your organisation?

- ☐ Top management
- ☐ Senior management
- ☐ Middle management
- ☐ Junior management
- ☐ Non-management

11. How long have you been in your organisation? ..... (years – round off to the nearest whole number).

12. What is your highest level of qualification?

- ☐ High School
- ☐ College
- ☐ Degree
- ☐ Masters
- ☐ PhD

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

## **APPENDIX 8: Questionnaire for General Employees**

### **TRIBAL AFFILIATION, GENDER ROLES AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON WORK LIFE BALANCE PRACTICE: THE CASE OF THE KENYAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR**

#### **What is this survey?**

This is a survey of your views and experiences of working at Safaricom/Telkom Kenya Limited.

This is not a test and there is no right or wrong answer. We want to know your personal views on the issues raised in the survey. The survey consists of questions about yourself and your job and refers to your attitudes and opinions. *Participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time by closing your web browser. If you stop answering the survey half way through the questionnaire your answers will not be recorded in our database.*

#### **How long will it take?**

The questionnaire typically takes no longer than 45 minutes to complete.

#### **How do I fill in this survey?**

Please read each question carefully and give your immediate response by ticking (✓) the response which best describes how you feel.

#### **Who will see my answers?**

The information you provide is **completely confidential**. No one, other than the researcher will see your answers. Your answers will provide data for this study, and aggregated results may be published in academic journals and in a report for your organisation. However, no individuals or teams will be identified in this report.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact Sheillah Chimungeni, at [chimungs@uni.coventry.ac.uk](mailto:chimungs@uni.coventry.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns or queries about this survey please contact the supervisor – Dr. Randhir Auluck, at [aa9948@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:aa9948@coventry.ac.uk).

Please tick this box if you are willing to participate in this survey

☐

1. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement with the following statements (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>WORK-LIFE CONFLICT</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	The demands of my work interfere with my home and non-work life.					
2.	The amount of time my job takes up makes it difficult to fulfill non-work responsibilities.					
3.	Things I want to do at home do not get done because of the demands my job puts on me.					
4.	My job produces strain that makes it difficult to fulfill non-work duties.					
5.	Due to work-related duties, I have to make changes to my plans for activities outside of work.					

2. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement with the following statements: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>PERCEIVED SUPERVISOR SUPPORT</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	My supervisor is willing to listen to my problems in juggling work and non-work life.					
2.	My supervisor takes the time to learn about my personal needs.					
3.	My supervisor and I can talk effectively to solve conflicts between work and non-work issues.					
4.	I can depend on my supervisor to help me with scheduling conflicts if I need it.					
5.	I can rely on my supervisor to make sure my work responsibilities are handled when I have unanticipated non-work demands.					
6.	My supervisor works effectively with workers to creatively solve conflicts between work and non-work.					
7.	My supervisor is a good role model for work and non-work balance.					
8.	My supervisor demonstrates effective behaviors in how to juggle work and non-work balance.					
9.	My supervisor demonstrates how a person can jointly be successful on and off the job.					
10.	My supervisor thinks about how the work in my department can be organized to jointly benefit employees and the company.					
11.	My supervisor asks for suggestions to make it easier for employees to balance work and non-work demands.					
12.	My supervisor is creative in reallocating job duties to help my department work well as a team.					

3. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement with the following statements: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

<b>PERCEIVED FAIRNESS IN PROCEDURES</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.	Employee friendly procedures are applied consistently by my line manager.					
2.	Employee friendly procedures are free of bias.					
3.	Employee friendly procedures are based on accurate information					
4.	I have been able to appeal the (outcome) arrived at by employee friendly procedures.					
5.	Employee friendly upheld procedures promote ethical and moral standards.					

4. Please indicate by ticking (✓) your level of agreement with the following statements: (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly agree).

PERCEIVED CO-WORKER SUPPORT		1	2	3	4	5
1.	My co-workers really care about me					
2.	I feel close to my co-workers					
3.	My co-workers take a personal interest in me					
4.	I feel appreciated by my co-workers					
5.	My co-workers are friendly to me					
6.	My co-workers would fill in while I am absent					
7.	My co-workers are helpful in getting my job done					
8.	My co-workers give useful advice on job problems					
9.	My co-workers assist with unusual work problems					
10.	My co-workers will pitch in and help					

**Personal Details (demographic factors)**

5. Gender

☐ Male

☐ Female

6. Tribe: .....

7. Age Range

☐ 18-28

☐ 40-49

☐ Above 60

☐ 29-39

☐ 50-59

8. Department:

.....

9. What is your level in your organisation?

☐ Top  
Management

☐ Middle  
Management

☐ Non  
Management

☐ Senior  
Management

☐ Junior  
Management

10. How long have you been in your organisation? ..... (years – round off to the nearest whole number)

11. What is your highest qualification?

☐ High School

☐ College

☐ Degree



☐ Masters

☐ PhD

12. Marital status

☐ Single

☐ Married

☐ Life partner

☐ Divorced/ separated

☐ Widow/widower

13. If living with someone, is that person also in employment?

☐ Fulltime  
day only

☐ Fulltime  
including  
night shift

☐ No

14. Do you have any dependant children that live with you and have to be looked after?

☐ Yes, numbers: .....

☐ No

15. Are all the children your own?

☐ Yes

☐ No, numbers: .....

16. If no, please state who those that are not your own belong to:

.....  
.....  
.....

17. Which age range do the children fall into?

☐ 0 – 4, how many? .....

☐ 11 – 20, how many? .....

☐ 5 – 10, how many? .....

☐ Above 20, how many? .....

18. Do you live with other dependants (e.g. parents, grandparents, etc) apart from the children mentioned above?

☐ Yes, numbers:  
.....

☐ No

19. Who does chores in your household? (*You can tick more than one*)

☐ Myself

☐ Partner

☐ Siblings

☐ In-laws

☐ Friends and  
neighbours

☐ Baby sitters

☐ Parents

20. How long do you spend commuting to work per day?

- ☐ Less than 1 hour, specify.....
- ☐ 1 – 2 hours, how many .....
- ☐ 3 – 4 hours, how many .....
- ☐ Over 5 hours, how many .....

21. How many hours do you spend on household chores per week?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ 0 – 4 hours, how many .....
- ☐ 5 – 9 hours, how many .....
- ☐ 10 – 14 hours, how many .....
- ☐ 15 – 19 hours, how many .....
- ☐ Over 20 hours, how many .....

### **APPENDIX 9: Evidence of WLB policy reviews at Safaricom and Telkom**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Safaricom</b>	<b>Telkom</b>
<b>2007</b>	Introduction of the Employment Act (2007) - Statutory employment obligations. Standard for both organisations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 24 days annual Leave</li> <li>2. Annual Leave for Hourly Paid Staff</li> <li>3. 3 months paid Sick/Convalescent Leave</li> <li>4. 3 months maternity Leave</li> <li>5. 2 weeks Paternity Leave</li> <li>6. Leave for Sportsmen/women</li> <li>7. Leave Pending Retirement</li> <li>8. Unpaid Leave</li> <li>9. 5 days Compassionate Leave per year</li> <li>10. Leave for special purposes, e.g. bereavement.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 24 days annual Leave</li> <li>2. Annual Leave for Hourly Paid Staff</li> <li>3. 3 months paid Sick/Convalescent Leave</li> <li>4. 3 months maternity Leave</li> <li>5. 2 weeks Paternity Leave</li> <li>6. Leave for Sportsmen/women</li> <li>7. Leave Pending Retirement</li> <li>8. Unpaid Leave</li> <li>9. 5 days Compassionate Leave per year</li> <li>10. Leave for special purposes, e.g. bereavement.</li> </ol>
<b>2011</b>	Introduction of work life balance at Safaricom Kenya.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Medical treatment scheme with a clinic at Safaricom headquarters only where all staff within the Nairobi region were treated.</li> <li>▪ A gym for only management staff at Safaricom headquarters.</li> </ul>	No changes in Employment Act.
<b>2012</b>	An expatriate team from Vodafone UK was sent to Safaricom Kenya to assist in the development of various HR strategies.	<p>The following programmes were introduced:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financial wellness programme.</li> <li>2. Resource and social centre schemes.</li> <li>3. On-site fitness and relaxation facilities.</li> </ol>	No changes in Employment Act.
<b>2013</b>	A team of HR in-patriates from Safaricom headquarters in Nairobi were sent to Vodafone UK, New Zealand and South Africa for 6 months to learn from the HR teams in the various countries.	<p>The schemes below were included under the WLB docket to add onto the ones above:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nutrition programme</li> <li>2. Health programme</li> </ol>	No changes in Employment Act.
<b>2014</b>	To curb the stigmatisation of HIV and aids employees among other chronic and long	<p><b><u>Chronic disease management scheme</u></b>  Expansions to the medical scheme but with</p>	No changes in Employment Act.

Year	Description	Safaricom	Telkom
	term diseases.	particular focus on the protection of HIV positive employees and the management of other chronic medical conditions (cancer, asthma, diabetes) while still helping them to maintain their employment status.	
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in the Employment Act</li> <li>Introduction of the women wellness programme at Safaricom</li> </ul>	<p>In its bid to be an employer of choice, Safaricom went ahead to make sure that the needs of its working mothers were well taken care of by introducing the <b>“supporting a mother friendly workplace”</b> which encompassed the following WLB programmes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Facilities to support mother and baby</li> <li>2. Comprehensive medical insurance</li> <li>3. Best practice in HR practices</li> <li>4. Among other interventions listed in Appendix 10.</li> </ol>	<p>Employment Act (2007) amended in the following sections:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amendment to Section 5 of the Employment Act, 2007 – equality and discrimination.</li> <li>2. Amendment to Section 27 of the employment Act, 2007 – working hours.</li> <li>3. Amendment to Section 29 of the employment Act, 2007 – paternity leave.</li> <li>4. Amendment to Section 30 (1) of the employment Act, 2007 – sick leave.</li> </ol>

### **APPENDIX 10: A detailed description of Safaricom-specific policies**

Work Life Balance Provisions	Description	Details of Scheme
<b>FLEXIBLE WORKING SCHEMES</b>	Flexible working is a way of working that suits an employee's needs (GOV.UK 2014). They provide an alternative to the traditional eight-hour to five-day work pattern. FWAs allow employees to vary the arrival and departure time depending on the circumstances and the workload, without compromising the expected hours at the end of the day. An alternative is the ability to work from locations other than the office. As such, the employee can work from home but meet the agreed targets.	A flexible working arrangement policy is in place. The policy covers the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Time-off in lieu of overtime worked.</li> <li>2. Flexible Start/End times (flexi-time).</li> <li>3. Telecommuting / Remote work schedules.</li> </ol>
<b>WOMEN WELLNESS SCHEME</b>	Leading the way in the campaign for gender balance in employment and the support of women at work.	In its bid to be an employer of choice, Safaricom went ahead to make sure that the needs of its working mothers were well taken care of by introducing the <b><i>“supporting a mother friendly workplace”</i></b> campaign which encompassed the following WLB programmes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. <b>Facilities to support mother and baby</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. State of the art child day-care facility fully equipped (play and sleep areas) run by childcare professionals.</li> <li>b. Mothers can leave babies under the care of the professionals at no charge.</li> <li>c. Doctor on site should the children fall sick.</li> <li>d. A mother's room: Fully equipped in a hygienic and private environment for expressing of milk and breastfeeding.</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. <b>Comprehensive medical insurance for:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pre-delivery</li> <li>b. Ante natal clinics and scans covered including both natural and caesarean deliveries.</li> <li>c. Post-delivery</li> <li>d. Immunizations are catered for up to 9 months solidly ensuring the child's healthy start in life.</li> </ol> </li> <li>7. <b>Best practice in HR</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 4 months Maternity Leave + Annual Leave.</li> <li>b. Creation of mother friendly working hours for the employees on shift based positions. Such mothers work shifts that support breastfeeding up to 7 months after delivery.</li> </ol> </li> <li>8. <b>Others</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Gymnasium to keep the working mothers fit and healthy.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Work Life Balance Provisions	Description	Details of Scheme
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Games Room – To relieve stress, assist to unwind and socialize.</li> <li>c. Cafeterias with healthy food choices to accentuate faster recovery and good health.</li> <li>d. Children can join the working mother for lunch or any meal.</li> <li>e. Libraries to research on all materials including working mothers' roles.</li> </ul>
<b>NUTRITION SCHEME</b>	Programmes designed to manage employee health, well-being, happiness and eating healthy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excellent In-house cafeteria services that promote healthy eating at subsidised rates.</li> <li>2. Nutritional awareness and healthy eating campaigns.</li> <li>3. Outsourced nutritional talks by a service provider.</li> <li>4. Counselling services at employee's disposal on strain, stress and related difficulties.</li> <li>5. Cafeterias that offer easy access to healthy snacks and meal options which are manned by catering companies that have a wide range of experience in the industry. High hygiene standards are maintained at the cafeterias.</li> </ul>
<b>HEALTH SCHEME</b>	Employee wellness programmes that promote healthy living.	<p>These wellness programmes incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alcohol and drug abuse programme.</li> <li>2. Financial Wellness programme.</li> <li>3. HIV/AIDs Workplace programme.</li> <li>4. Active and well-trained wellness champions across the company.</li> <li>5. Employee and Family medical assistance programme.</li> <li>6. Nutritional talks, health campaigns and counselling.</li> <li>7. Safaricom Annual Wellness month and health check-ups.</li> </ul>
<b>EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SCHEME</b>	Organisational initiatives that assist in the identification and resolution of productivity problems associated with employees impaired by personal concerns, including but not limited to health, marital, family, financial, alcohol, drug, legal, emotional, stress, or other personal concerns which may adversely affect employee job performance.	<p>Examples of programmes implemented under the Employee Assistance Programme include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In-house Employee and Family Counselling services – a professional has been contracted to handle this.</li> <li>2. Incorporation of stress management in training programmes.</li> </ul>
<b>FINANCIAL WELLNESS SCHEME</b>	<p>This refers to workplace initiatives, programmes or resources designed to provide employees with information on how to manage their financial resources effectively for a lifetime of financial wellbeing (SHRM 2014).</p> <p>Safaricom recognises that financial problems are a major cause of medical</p>	<p>These programmes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Financial literacy and money management offered by an outsourced company.</li> <li>2. Working in collaboration with banks to enable employee accessibility to loans for development.</li> <li>3. Housing schemes with mortgage companies to enable employees buy houses with an easy check-off payment system.</li> </ul>

<b>Work Life Balance Provisions</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Details of Scheme</b>
	stress-related conditions, injuries on duty, absenteeism, poor quality work, low morale and high turnover. The risks associated with financial problems negatively impacts on the employee as well as the company. Therefore, financial wellness programmes help employees manage their finances and improve their living standards.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Mobile telephone scheme which enables employees to take phones of their choice from the company and pay in manageable instalment payments.</li> <li>5. Household apparatus scheme with retailers to enable employees' access to household goods for home improvement.</li> <li>6. Transport scheme with vehicle organisations to enable employees to buy cars or motorcycles on an arranged check-off payment system with Safaricom.</li> </ol>
<b>MEDICAL SCHEME</b>	Medical cover for employees.	<p>Medical Treatment Cases (MTCs) and Medical Injuries (MIs) that are work-related are catered for by the company.</p> <p>A fully fledged clinic with a doctor, laboratory, a pharmacy, triage, and doctors' room are available within all Safaricom company premises. This allows staff easy, convenient and quick access to medical attention without leaving the premises. In addition to this, the clinics offer low cost medical treatment to staff and are also managed by experienced professionals and service providers.</p>
<b>CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT SCHEME</b>	Health promotional programmes given ageing populations and the prevalence of chronic diseases and the needs to maintain a productive and competitive workforce.	<p>Safaricom has partnered with AON Kenya, a leading global provider of risk management, insurance and reinsurance brokerage, and human resources solutions, to develop and implement a comprehensive Chronic Disease Wellness Programme as an additional benefit to staff, under the medical scheme.</p> <p>One of the major components of this wellness programme is the Chronic Disease Medical and Group (family) management with last the Last Respect scheme. The scheme benefits are graduated according to job groups/levels.</p>
<b>RESOURCE AND SOCIAL CENTRE SCHEMES</b>	A centre within company premises with facilities that allow all company staff members to meet and socialise away from the workplace.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Game rooms equipped with pool tables, darts boards, table tennis equipment, TV, etc.</li> <li>2. Lounge area for relaxing fitted with comfortable sofa sets and TVs.</li> <li>3. Cyber café equipped with computers which staff can use to access the internet at their convenience.</li> <li>4. Cafeterias that offer easy access to healthy snacks with facilities designed to offer both comfort and meals.</li> <li>5. Resource centre with in-built library equipped with books, magazines, videos, audio tapes, DVDs, computer aided programmes and all other resources that may be availed for learning and development purposes.</li> <li>6. Prayer room with segments for employees of different faiths to allow quiet prayer time.</li> </ol>



Work Life Balance Provisions	Description	Details of Scheme
<b>ON-SITE FITNESS AND RELAXATION FACILITIES</b>	Physical exercising initiatives that save employees expenses and time to seek the same elsewhere.	<p>Within all company branches and premises, there is a centre referred to as the Jambo Call Centre which has various sporting and relaxation facilities. The company also sponsors various sporting events in which the staff members and their families are involved. Such facilities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Active Sports clubs – football, basketball, volleyball, pool, chess etc.</li> <li>2. Annual Sports/Family fun day.</li> <li>3. State of the art gyms and swimming pools across all company offices.</li> <li>4. Lounge area to relax and socialise</li> <li>5. Sponsorship and participation in the Lewa Marathon amongst other national marathons.</li> </ol>

## **APPENDIX 11: Ethics approval certificate**



### **Certificate of Ethical Approval**

Student:

Sheillah Chimungeni

Project Title:

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON PERSPECTIVES OF EMPLOYEES ON WORK LIFE  
BALANCE IN THE PUBLIC VERSUS PRIVATE SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF  
THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR IN KENYA

This is to certify that the above named student has completed the Coventry  
University Ethical Approval process and their project has been confirmed and  
approved as Medium Risk

Date of approval:

09 March 2015

Project Reference Number:

P32370