

### UB Non-Teaching Personnel's level of agreement with the compressed workweek scheme

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#### Abstract

Organizations worldwide are constantly challenged to costeffectively hire, train and retain their staff. Among the concerns on staff retention is work-life balance (WLB). Employers must foster a culture that promotes the employees' WLB. A strategy for attaining WLB is the compressed workweek scheme. This descriptive study was conducted to determine the level of agreement of non-teaching employees of the University on the benefits and drawbacks in the implementation of the compressed workweek scheme. The 116 respondents consisted of office staff, laboratory custodians, maintenance personnel, technical support group, deans, principals, office heads, and directors who were employed in the University during the 1st semester of 2018-2019. Majority of the respondents were in favor of the implementation of the compressed workweek and strongly agreed that it increases productivity and efficiency, raises morale, and provides more time for employees to handle responsibility related to community outreach, extension services, and activities outside the workplace. Moreover, majority agreed that the scheme cannot be applied in

all departments since longer work hours may result in increased risks of injuries or errors. T-test for independent samples and analysis of variance revealed no significant differences in the respondents' level of agreement on the benefits and drawbacks of compressed workweek according to gender and age, respectively. Recommendations are made based on the results of the study.

**Keywords:** compressed workweek, gender, age, non-teaching personnel, University of Baguio

#### Introduction

uman Resource professionals must find ways to cost-effectively recruit, train, and retain employees. For the said reasons, organizations are cultivating a culture that supports work-■ life balance through programs that help employees keep an equilibrium between their professional and non-professional lives (Tariq, Aslam, Siddique, & Tanveer, 2011). Work-life balance (WLB) is described as "a state of equilibrium in which the demands of both a person's job and personal life are equal" (The Word Spy, 2002). Work-life balance is based on the premise that everyone should have a full life with sufficient time for personal interests such as continuing education, social or community work, sports, hobbies, and family responsibilities, among others (Doherty & Manfredi, 2006). According to Lockwood (2003), work-life balance has different meanings depending on the context in which it is used. Various terms are used regarding work-life balance, such as work/family, work/family conflict, family-friendly benefits, work/life programs, work/life initiatives, and work/family culture.

Work-life balance is a pertinent issue for Human Resource Management (HRM) as it is a key element of recruitment and retention strategies (De



Cieri, Holmes, Abbott, & Pettit, 2005). There is evidence suggesting that poor work-life balance leads to low morale, poor performance, and risks to mental and physical health (Townsend et al., 2003; Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2006). There is some evidence that where WLB initiatives are introduced successfully, there can be a positive association with reduced absenteeism, organizational performance, and productivity (Allen 2001; Konrad and Mangel 2000; Perry-Smith and Blum 2000). Work-life balance has become a challenge for organizations due to a growing need to improve employees' morale, maintain and retain those with valuable company knowledge, and keep up with current workplace trends. "There are three important factors which lead to the need to highlight the emerging issue of work-life balance: global competition, family values/personal lives, and aging workforce" (Lockwood, 2003).

Due to the constantly changing economic conditions and demands of society, work has changed its role all over the world. Work not only contributes to survival but also personal satisfaction. Work provides personal and professional satisfaction as well as goal attainment, which creates the need for work-life programs and benefits in an organization (Joshi et al., 2002). Work-life harmony is the broader term for work-life balance. Work-life balance concentrates on one's mindset, while work-life harmony create synchronization within and through which one can start helping others (Anon, 2011).

Three work/life approaches were found to help employees build harmony and flexibility between their work and non-work lives, "flexible options for work, specialized leave policies, and dependent care benefits" (Morgan & Milliken, 1992; Ministerial Taskforce on Work and Family, 2002). Such approaches include the work/life balance initiatives summarized as compressed workweeks, flexi-time, job sharing, part-time work, home telecommuting, work-at-home programs, shorter workdays for parents, paid maternity leave, bereavement leave, paid leave to care for sick family members, paternity care of ill dependents, re-entry scheme, childcare programs during



school vacation, phased retirement, sabbatical leave, life skills programs, professional counseling, subsidized exercise for fitness center, relocation assistance, and work and family resource kit or library (Hudson, 2005). According to Dunne and Teg (2007), efficient work-life balance initiatives can take various forms as job sharing, compressed workweeks, part-time working, etc. Joshi et al. (2002) listed common work-life initiatives or programs such as job sharing, employee assistance programs, in-house store/ services, gym subsidies, vacations, and concierge services.

A survey of 3,728 employees conducted by Spherion in 2003 revealed that 96% of the respondents mentioned care of the employees' family concerns through flexi-time options, and compressed workweeks, etc. as attractive factors of their companies. The study also revealed that employees are 20% more expected to stay with their employers for the next five years when they have been offered work-life balance benefits and enjoy various initiatives (Spherion, 2003). Work-life conflict, on the other hand, has a damaging effect on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity turnover, and absenteeism. On an individual level, work-life conflict is associated with employee burnout, mental health issues, substance abuse, and diminished family functioning (Bilal, Zia-ur-Rhman, & Raza, 2010). Radcliff Public Policy Center conducted a survey in 2011 in which "men and women with 82% and 85% having ages 20-39 rated family time at the top of the list of their work/life concerns".

Compressed workweeks are the arrangements in which workers fulfill their allotted (standard) workload in fewer working days (Business link, 2011). Compressed workweeks aim to create a more flexible system in which employees can assimilate their personal and professional lives and get time to work through the issues of pursuing education, eldercare, commuting, and childcare, etc. There has been an increase in interest in compressed workweek schedules because of the opportunities for enhanced organizational efficiency and more work-life balance roles.



The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) in the Philippines issued an advisory in 2009 to assist and guide employers and employees in implementing various flexible work arrangements as one of the coping mechanisms and remedial measures in times of economic and national emergencies. In the said advisory, DOLE defined compressed workweek as "one where the normal workweek is reduced to less than six (6) days, but the total number of work-hours of 48 hours per week shall remain. The normal workday is increased to more than eight hours but not to exceed twelve hours, without corresponding overtime premium."

Two models show how compressed workweek schedules can affect outcomes for employees and organizations. The first model uses a biological perspective, which focuses on circadian rhythms. This approach hypothesizes that there are only a few hours each day when employees can perform at optimal levels. The second theoretical model is the job characteristics theory. This model proposes that there are core job characteristics (e.g., the amount of job autonomy) that induce positive psychological states, which, in turn, lead to positive effects on work-related outcomes. Using these models, a theoretical argument can be made about how compressed workweek schedules affect the most important organizational outcomes: productivity and performance, absenteeism from work, and job satisfaction or satisfaction with one's work schedule (Psychology Research and Reference, n.d.).

Deery, Walsh, Zatzick, and Hayes's (2017) study indicated that satisfaction with compressed work hours was associated with lower absenteeism. This relationship was mediated sequentially through physical health and emotional exhaustion. Although there was no significant difference between women and men in the indirect effect of compressed work hours satisfaction on absenteeism through emotional exhaustion and physical health, the relationship between compressed work hour satisfaction and physical health was positive for women but not for men.



The study of Joyce, Pabayo, Critchley, and Bambra (2010) tentatively suggests that flexible working interventions that increase worker control and choice (such as self-scheduling or gradual/partial retirement) are likely to have a positive effect on health outcomes. In contrast, interventions that were motivated or dictated by organizational interests, such as fixed-term contract and involuntary part-time employment, found equivocal or negative health effects. The studies of overtime work, flexitime, and fixed-term contracts found no significant effects on physical, mental, or general health or any of the wellbeing outcomes examined. Importantly, however, the study on overtime failed to provide detailed information on either the amount or duration of overtime worked, as such it is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding the effects of overtime on workers' health and wellbeing (Joyce, et al., 2010).

Wadsworth and Facer's (2016) study revealed that there were no significant differences in work-family balance or the impact of schedule for employees on the 4-day schedule by gender. Women have, however, shown slightly more positive attitudes towards the 4-day schedule. Workers with children at home reported lower work-family balance and a greater impact on the 4-day schedule. By contrast, there was no difference in attitudes toward the 4-day schedule by age, although work-family balance differed between age groups. There were differences between the employees on the 4-day schedule and those on the traditional schedules in work-family balance.

The results of the preceding studies show the varied effects of compressed workweek on job performance. Performance either improves or stays the same after the implementation of a compressed workweek schedule. However, some studies found that performance does decrease, as predicted by the circadian rhythm model. Research that found a decrease in productivity also showed that fatigue played a role in the effect. Specifically, as fatigue increased, performance decreased. Narrative reviews concluded that absenteeism decreased following the implementation of a compressed workweek, although the results are mixed (i.e., some studies found no



change in absenteeism, whereas others found a reduction). Finally, for job satisfaction and satisfaction with one's schedule, the narrative reviews concluded that the results are mixed (i.e., sometimes they increase, and sometimes they decrease) (Psychology Research and Reference, n.d.).

Hence, a common problem identified from the research literature is that there is no coherent theory on how, directly or indirectly, different work time arrangements influence the productivity of employees (Kelly et al., 2008). However, most of the relevant research, especially concerning the implications of flexible working time arrangements, has been carried out at the company level (Golden, 2009).

Because of the diverse results of research on the compressed workweek, this study is conducted to provide the University of Baguio (UB) Management one dimension by analyzing the perception of non-teaching employees on the effect of the proposed compressed workweek scheme in terms of the employee's needs, morale, and productivity, as well as UB's performance in serving its clientele. Specifically, the study determined the level of agreement of the non-teaching employees on the benefits and drawbacks of compressed workweek. Further, it compared the perceptions according to the employees' gender and age.

#### Methodology

#### **Research Design**

The researchers used the descriptive survey method to determine the perception of the non-teaching employees of the University on the proposed compressed workweek scheme.

**Population and Locale**A total of 173 questionnaires were distributed to the office staff, laboratory custodians, maintenance personnel, technical support group, deans, principals, heads of offices and directors who were employed in the University during the first semester of 2018-2019. Of the

173 questionnaires, 130 were retrieved but only 116 were utilized for data analysis. Fourteen questionnaires were disregarded since some were not completely accomplished and had incomplete information on gender, age, and years of service. Majority (n = 73 or 63%) of the respondents were female and work full time in the University (n = 115 or 99%) for 48 hours/week (n=109 or 94%). Tables 1, 2, and 3 present the profile of the respondents in terms of work assignment, age, and years of employment.

#### Table 1

Profile of the respondents according to work assignment

| Work Assignment               | Actual No. of<br>Respondents | %     |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| Office Staff                  | 94                           | 81.03 |
| Maintenance                   | 2                            | 0.86  |
| Technical Support             | 4                            | 3.45  |
| Head of Office/Dean/Principal | 16                           | 13.79 |
| Total                         | 116                          | 100   |

#### Table 2

Respondents according to age

| Age Actual No. of Respondents |    | %     |
|-------------------------------|----|-------|
| 21-30 Years old               | 53 | 45.70 |
| 31-40 years old               | 37 | 31.90 |
| 41-50 years old               | 19 | 16.40 |
| 51 years and above            | 7  | 6     |

#### Table 3

Respondents according to years of employment

| Years of Employment | Actual No. of<br>Respondents | %     |
|---------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| 0-5 years           | 61                           | 52.60 |
| 6-10 years          | 20                           | 17.20 |
| 11 years and above  | 35                           | 30.20 |

#### **Data Gathering Tools**

A survey questionnaire made by the researchers was utilized to answer the research problems. The indicators were gathered from the related literature. Three members of the Tool Validation committee of the University validated the tool.

#### **Data Gathering Procedure and Ethical Considerations**

The Vice President for Institutional and External Affairs' approved the study before the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. The researchers assured the said office that all data gathered will only be used for the current research. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents through their respective deans, principals, directors, or heads.

The questionnaire contained a letter clearly stating the objectives of the study, that participation is voluntary, and that all responses will be held confidential and will be used for research purposes only. The respondents were not required to disclose their names to maintain anonymity.

The results of the study will be disseminated through research journal publications and public lectures with the different stakeholders of the University. No names will be revealed in the presentation of results. The information obtained from each employee will be kept private and confidential. The personal information will not be revealed, and only the generalization in the recommendations shall be disclosed.

#### **Treatment of Data**

Mean values were computed to determine the level of agreement of the non-teaching employees on the benefits of a longer work day and compressed workweek, and the level of agreement on the possible problems in the implementation of the said scheme. The mean values were interpreted as follows: 3.26 - 4.00 (strongly agree), 2.51 - 3.25 (agree), 1.76 - 2.50 (disagree), and 1.00 - 1.75 (strongly disagree).

T-test for independent sample was used to determine whether there is a significant difference in the level of agreement between male and female non-teaching employees on the benefits and drawbacks of compressed workweek. Analysis of Variance was used to compare the respondents' perception according to age.

#### **Results and Discussion**

#### Respondent's perception on the benefits of a compressed workweek

The survey revealed that the majority of the respondents (91 or 78.40%) were in favor of the compressed workweek. Although 57 out of 116 (around 50%) of the respondents were not using flexi-time at work, mostly had a positive perception of the benefits of the compressed workweek. Table 4 presents the respondents' level of agreement on the benefits of compressed workweek. As gleaned, the respondents strongly agreed in almost all indicators on the benefits of compressed workweek. Specifically, the top three indicators with the highest level of agreement are "compressed workweek provides more personal time" (M = 3.58, SD = 0.74), "extra free time to handle responsibility outside of the workplace" (M = 3.50, SD = 0.74), and "for the employees to be mentally rested" (M=3.39, SD=.74). The data are interpreted as strongly agree. Results indicate that if the University is to implement a compressed workweek scheme, respondents see it as an opportunity to balance their responsibilities within and outside the workplace, leading to a work-life balance. The most common workshift schedule of the study respondents is 7:45 AM to 5:30 PM (Monday to Friday), and 8:00 AM to 12NN (Saturday). A compressed workweek for non-teaching staff means working for only five days, with an additional free day in a week that can be used to fulfill non-work-related obligations. This includes requirements for graduate school, family engagement, personal relaxation, among others. Data from the Payroll office of UB show that in the School year 2017-2018 alone, the total absences incurred by the non-teaching employees of the University reached 1,315.24 days of which, 177.81 days (14%) were filed as



sick leave. The said data stressed the need for the University administration to explore programs or policies that promote wellness among its employees. As Yuile et al. (2011) pointed out, the inability of workers to balance work and non-work related duties has increased stress-related illnesses.

#### Table 4

Level of Agreement of the Respondents on the Benefits of Compressed Workweek in the University

| Ben | Benefits                    |   |      | SD   | Interpretation | Rank |
|-----|-----------------------------|---|------|------|----------------|------|
| 1.  | Extr<br>resp<br>wor         | ra free time to handle<br>ponsibility outside of the<br>rkplace | 3.50 | 0.74 | Strongly Agree | 2    |
| 2.  | Incr                        | eased job satisfaction  | 3.24 | 0.80 | Agree          | 14   |
| 3.  | Incr<br>wor                 | reased productivity because of<br>rk schedule                   | 3.28 | 0.77 | Strongly Agree | 10.5 |
| 4.  | Imp                         | proved employee morale  | 3.28 | 0.76 | Strongly Agree | 10.5 |
| 5.  | Imp<br>sch                  | proved efficiency because of work edule                         | 3.27 | 0.77 | Strongly Agree | 12   |
| 6.  | Exte                        | ended hours of service to                                       |      |      |                |      |
|     | a.                          | Students  | 3.34 | 0.76 | Strongly Agree | 8    |
|     | b.                          | External clients  | 3.36 | 0.69 | Strongly Agree | 4    |
|     | c.                          | Co-workers  | 3.35 | 0.70 | Strongly Agree | 5    |
| 7.  | Red                         | luced fuel expenses   | 3.22 | 0.85 | Agree          | 15.5 |
| 8.  | Red                         | luced energy costs  | 3.35 | 0.79 | Strongly Agree | 6    |
| 9.  | Red                         | luced absenteeism   | 3.22 | 0.89 | Agree          | 15.5 |
| 10. | Reduction in overtime costs |   | 3.34 | 0.88 | Strongly Agree | 8    |
| 11. | Less                        | s traffic congestion concerns                                   | 3.34 | 0.84 | Strongly Agree | 8    |
| 12. | Les:<br>pro                 | s stress from work related<br>blems                             | 3.18 | 0.90 | Agree          | 17   |
| 13. | Mo                          | re time for research  | 3.10 | 0.84 | Agree          | 18   |
| 14. | Mo<br>and                   | re time for community outreach<br>l extension services          | 3.26 | 0.80 | Strongly Agree | 13   |
| 15. | Mo                          | re mentally rested  | 3.39 | 0.86 | Strongly Agree | 3    |
| 16. | Mo                          | re personal time  | 3.58 | 0.74 | Strongly Agree | 1    |
| Ove | Overall Mean                |   |      | 0.64 | Strongly Agree |      |



Promoting work-life balance benefits not only the staff but also the University. The majority of respondents in this study perceived that compressed workweek increases productivity (74 or 64%) and increases morale (89 or 77%). These results validate the data presented in Table 4 which show that aside from achieving work-life balance, the respondents strongly agreed that compressed workweek affects work performance with how it increases productivity (M = 3.28, SD = 0.77), improves employee morale (M = 3.28, SD = 0.76) and efficiency (M = 3.27, SD = 0.77).

The findings can be framed within the efficiency wage or exchange theory which suggests that practices that give employees more working time flexibility affect productivity because employees make a more considerable effort in exchange for working in a more supportive environment. As Golden (2009) points out, better work-life balance activities, such as providing employees with flexibility in their work schedules, are generally associated with significantly higher productivity. There is also substantial evidence that employers who offer work schedule flexibility to their employees are likely to improve the recruitment of new staff and the retention of existing staff, resulting in cost savings to the enterprise.

Facer and Wadsworth (2008) found that employees working a 4/40 schedule was relatively more productive than those not working 4/40 schedules but did not have higher job satisfaction. In a study of professional and technical workers with flexible work schedules, Eaton (2003) noted that the perception of flexibility is what makes the difference. Control over time, flexibility, and pace of work were positively related to job commitment and job productivity. In a survey of over 1,500 employees and managers in six US corporations, enabling employees to vary their working hours daily was much more likely than traditional work schedules to be associated with self-reported positive impacts on productivity and quality of work.

The respondents likewise strongly agreed on the economic benefit of the compressed workweek in terms of reducing energy costs (M = 3.35, SD =



0.79). A majority (62 or 53%) of the respondents spent more than 30 minutes going to work. At the same time, a higher proportion (74 or 64%) spent more than 30 minutes going home from work. Both cases may be attributed to the distance of the workplace from home and the worsening traffic condition in Baguio City. Thus, reducing fuel expenses (M = 3.22, SD = 0.85) and lessening traffic congestion (M = 3.34, SD = 0.84) were found to be additional benefits of the compressed workweek. For the respondents who commute, another advantage to consider is the possibility of saving money on their fare. By cutting the workweek from six days to five days, it would mean fewer days spent commuting. Working longer hours a day also means that employees will skip the usual rush hours to and from work. Wadsworth, Facer, and Arbon's study (2010) showed that government workers' productivity gains were sustained and that employers have made other improvements such as lower energy costs due to compressed workweek schemes.

Fulfilling corporate social responsibility was another reason why the non-teaching employees were in favor of the compressed workweek. As shown in Table 4, the respondents strongly agreed (M = 3.26, SD = 0.80) that compressed workweek provides more time for them to be involved in community outreach and extension services. "More time for research" got the lowest mean level of agreement from the respondents, as shown in Table 4 (M = 3.10, SD = 0.84). A possible reason for this is that research is not among the main functions of non-teaching personnel.

In general, the results presented in Table 4 are similar to the findings of Wadsworth et al. (2010) in a research conducted in the United States involving Human Resource (HR) directors as respondents. HR directors reported that the most commonly perceived employee benefit was improved work-life balance (74%). Tied as the second most frequently reported employee benefits were decreased stress (39%) and reduced personal costs, such as commuting and dry cleaning (39%). The fourth and fifth most commonly reported employee benefits were increased job autonomy (33%) and reduced daycare costs (32%). Sixteen out of the 85 respondents (19%)



indicated that employees experienced other Alternative Work Schedule (AWS) benefits not identified in the survey. These additional benefits include being able to enjoy their time off more, increased educational opportunities, and increased job satisfaction.

## Comparison of the perceived benefits of the compressed workweek according to gender

Table 5 summarizes the level of agreement of male and female respondents on the benefits of compressed workweek. In general, considering the 16 indicators, the t-test for independent samples showed that there are no significant differences (p > .05) in the mean values except for indicators 13 and 14. In particular, the female respondents indicated significantly higher agreement than the male counterparts that compressed workweek provides "more time for research" and "community outreach and extension services." The results imply that in addition to fulfilling regular office responsibilities the female respondents also give more importance to performing the two functions of the higher education institution (i.e., research and extension services) than the male respondents.

The overall mean, as shown in Table 5, indicates that the female respondents gave a higher level of agreement on the benefits of compressed workweek (M = 3.36) than the male respondents (M = 3.19). The result connotes a higher need to achieve work-life balance among female respondents as compared to the male group. This can be explained by the study of Walia (2015), which showed that females perceive higher interference of work with personal life as compared to males. The reason probably being the dual role played by females who are both home-makers as well as earners. Thus, as revealed in the study of Smith and Gardner (2007), female participants were significantly more likely to use Work-Life Balance (WLB) initiatives than male participants. Further, Subramaniam and Selvaratnam (2010) concluded that Family Friendly Policies (FFPs) and flexible work are very relevant as women are gradually spending more time in doing paid work on top of managing child and elderly care. Despite working life reflecting a more widespread and inclusive set of issues, however, childcare and elderly



care tend to be women's responsibility. In a gendered division of labor, it is usually the responsibility of a woman to sacrifice her career to take care of the home. In this regard, Matuska and Erickson (2008) noted that women realize the importance of avoiding stress and achieving balance between work, rest, leisure, and time for the self.

#### Table 5

Level of agreement on the benefits of compressed workweek according to gender

| Ben | efits   | Fema | le | Male (n | =43) | p-value |
|-----|---|------|----|---------|------|---------|
|     |   | Mean | I  | Mean    | I    |         |
| 1.  | Extra free time to handle<br>responsibility outside of the<br>workplace | 3.56 | SA | 3.40    | SA   | .244    |
| 2.  | Increased job satisfaction  | 3.30 | SA | 3.14    | А    | .293    |
| 3.  | Increased productivity because of work schedule                         | 3.30 | SA | 3.26    | SA   | .759    |
| 4.  | Improved employee morale  | 3.34 | SA | 3.19    | А    | .283    |
| 5.  | Improved efficiency because of work schedule                            | 3.32 | SA | 3.19    | А    | .388    |
| 6.  | Extended hours of service to  |      |    |         |      |         |
|     | a. Students   | 3.32 | SA | 3.19    | А    | .697    |
|     | b. External clients   | 3.33 | SA | 3.42    | SA   | .501    |
|     | c. Co-workers   | 3.33 | SA | 3.40    | SA   | .623    |
| 7.  | Reduced fuel expenses   | 3.32 | SA | 3.05    | А    | .102    |
| 8.  | Reduced energy costs  | 3.41 | SA | 3.26    | SA   | .312    |
| 9.  | Reduced absenteeism   | 3.29 | SA | 3.12    | А    | .316    |
| 10. | Reduction in overtime costs   | 3.41 | SA | 3.21    | А    | .237    |
| 11. | Less traffic congestion concerns  | 3.37 | SA | 3.28    | SA   | .578    |
| 12. | Less stress from work related<br>problems                               | 3.26 | SA | 3.05    | A    | .218    |
| 13. | More time for research  | 3.25 | А  | 2.86    | А    | .016*   |
| 14. | More time for community outreach and extension services                 | 3.42 | SA | 2.98    | А    | .003*   |
| 15. | More mentally rested  | 3.40 | SA | 3.37    | SA   | .880    |
| 16. | More personal time  | 3.55 | SA | 3.63    | SA   | .574    |
| Ove | rall Mean   | 3.36 | SA | 3.19    | Α    | .296    |

Notes. SD- Strongly disagree, D-Disagree, A-Agree, SA-Strongly agree

\*significant at .05 level



In line with the above research findings, the studies of Parasuraman and Greenhaus (2002) and Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw (2003) stressed that the growing diversity of family structures represented in the workforce had increased the relevance of balancing work and life roles for a substantial segment of employed men and women. These family structures include dual-earner couples, single parents, blended families, senior-care workers and an increasing number of individuals who choose to live alone. These societal developments have made the interface between work and life roles significantly more complex.

Despite the female respondents showing a higher level of agreement, the mean difference was not statistically significant, as revealed by the independent sample t-test, t(114) = 1.049, p > .05. The said result is close to the results of Wadsworth and Facer (2016), which showed that there were no significant differences in work-family balance or the effect of schedule for workers on the 4-day schedule by gender. Females have, however, demonstrated slightly more positive attitudes towards the 4-day schedule. Employees with children at home reported lower work-family balance and greater impact of the 4-day schedule. On the other hand, Deery et al.'s (2017) study showed that the relationship between satisfaction with compressed work hours and physical health was positive for women but not men.

## Comparison of the perceived benefits of the compressed workweek according to age

As reflected in Table 6, the overall level of agreement on the benefits of compressed workweek decreases from the first age group (21-30 yrs) to the third age group (41-50 yrs). On the other hand, the highest level of agreement was among the 50 years and above age group, (M = 3.49, SD = 0.45).



#### Table 6

Level of agreement on the benefits of compressed workweek according to age

| Benefits |   | 21-30 yrs.<br>old (n=53) |    | 31-40<br>old (n= | 31-40 yrs.<br>old (n=37) |      | 41-50 yrs.<br>old (n=19) |      | 50 yrs and<br>above (n=7) |      |  |
|----------|---|--------------------------|----|------------------|--------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|--|
|          |   | Mean                     | Т  | Mean             | Т                        | Mean | Т                        | Mean | Т                         |      |  |
| 1.       | Extra free<br>time to handle<br>responsibility<br>outside of the<br>workplace | 3.60                     | SA | 3.43             | SA                       | 3.32 | SA                       | 3.77 | SA                        | .464 |  |
| 2.       | Increased job<br>satisfaction   | 3.28                     | SA | 3.19             | A                        | 3.16 | A                        | 3.43 | SA                        | .830 |  |
| 3.       | Increased<br>productivity<br>because of work<br>schedule                      | 3.26                     | SA | 3.27             | SA                       | 3.26 | SA                       | 3.57 | SA                        | .795 |  |
| 4.       | Improved<br>employee morale   | 3.26                     | SA | 3.30             | SA                       | 3.32 | SA                       | 3.29 | SA                        | .994 |  |
| 5.       | Improved<br>efficiency because<br>of work schedule                            | 3.26                     | SA | 3.22             | A                        | 3.32 | SA                       | 3.43 | SA                        | .912 |  |
| 6.       | Extended hours of<br>service to   |                          |    |                  |                          |      |                          |      |                           |      |  |
|          | a. Students   | 3.34                     | SA | 3.38             | SA                       | 3.21 | A                        | 3.43 | SA                        | .866 |  |
|          | <ul> <li>External<br/>clients</li> </ul>                                      | 3.36                     | SA | 3.38             | SA                       | 3.32 | SA                       | 3.43 | SA                        | .982 |  |
|          | c. Co-workers   | 3.36                     | SA | 3.41             | SA                       | 3.21 | А                        | 3.43 | SA                        | .787 |  |
| 7.       | Reduced fuel<br>expenses  | 3.32                     | SA | 3.11             | A                        | 3.11 | A                        | 3.29 | SA                        | .629 |  |
| 8.       | Reduced energy<br>costs   | 3.43                     | SA | 3.35             | SA                       | 3.11 | A                        | 3.43 | SA                        | .487 |  |
| 9.       | Reduced<br>absenteeism  | 3.38                     | SA | 3.14             | A                        | 2.94 | A                        | 3.29 | SA                        | .280 |  |
| 10.      | Reduction in overtime costs   | 3.34                     | SA | 3.32             | А                        | 3.26 | SA                       | 3.57 | SA                        | .892 |  |
| 11.      | Less traffic<br>congestion<br>concerns  | 3.38                     | SA | 3.41             | SA                       | 3.06 | A                        | 3.43 | SA                        | .462 |  |
| 12.      | Less stress from<br>work related<br>problems                                  | 3.21                     | A  | 3.11             | A                        | 3.21 | A                        | 3.29 | SA                        | .941 |  |
| 13.      | More time for<br>research   | 3.28                     | SA | 2.95             | A                        | 2.95 | А                        | 3.00 | A                         | .213 |  |
| 14.      | More time for<br>community<br>outreach and<br>extension services              | 3.38                     | SA | 3.24             | A                        | 3.00 | A                        | 3.14 | A                         | .353 |  |



| rested<br>16. More personal | 3.62 | SA | 3.59 | SA | 3.37 | SA | 3.71 | SA | .579 |
|-----------------------------|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|----|------|
| time<br>Overall Mean        | 3.36 | SA | 3.29 | SA | 3.19 | A  | 3.40 | SA | .746 |

Notes. SD - Strongly disagree, D - Disagree, A - Agree, SA - Strongly agree

The indicator on "extra free time to handle responsibility outside of the workplace" got the highest mean (M = 3.77), which was derived from the 50 years and above age group. The findings suggest that the respondents belonging to the oldest age group perceived that compressed workweek would provide them opportunities to balance work and non-work responsibilities. The Career stage model, as discussed in Allen (2000), indicates that younger employees are likely to have less external demands on their time as they have not developed their families as opposed to mid-life employees. Younger employees may also not have the burden of caring for aging dependents. It has been found that older employees make greater use of dependent care resources such as childcare, paid maternity and paternity leave, and elder care than younger employees. The result is further supported by the finding of Richert-Kaźmierska and Stankiewicz (2016) which identified that older age groups are more likely to indicate the maintenance of Work-Life Balance (WLB). More often, older workers do not agree that all workers have equal opportunities to benefit from flexible solutions aimed at ensuring WLB's maintenance. On the contrary, the study of Smith and Gardner (2007) proved that younger respondents used more WLB initiatives than older respondents. However, there were no significant age differences in the extent to which any of the individual efforts were used.

Despite differences in the mean values, the analysis of variance proved that the mean differences were not statistically significant, F(3,112) = .410, p > .05. This implies that the perceived benefits of compressed workweek are similar among the four age groups. The finding corroborates the study of Wadsworth and Facer (2016) which revealed no difference in attitudes toward the four-day schedule according to age, although work-family balance differed among age groups.



# Drawbacks of the compressed workweek scheme as perceived by the respondents

Table 7 presents the level of agreement of the respondents on the drawbacks a compressed workweek scheme. The respondents agreed with two out of eight indicators used in the survey. In Wadsworth, et al.'s (2010) study only a few respondents reported disadvantages compared to the relatively higher frequency of perceived benefits.

#### Table 7

**Possible Problems** М SD Interpretation 1. Not all departments can participate 2.91 0.87 Agree 2. Longer work day is taxing on the employees 2.48 0.88 Disagree 0.89 3. Customer service coverage will be affected 2.41 Disagree Personal leaves will be affected 4. 2.47 0.84 Disagree 5. Some positions may not be suitable for longer 2.60 0.85 Agree hours because of increased risks of injuries or errors 6. Creates difficulties scheduling meetings 2.22 0.86 Disagree 7. Employees could be working unauthorized 2.26 0.79 Disagree overtime 8. Longer schedule could cause lower productiv-2.45 0.82 Disagree ity at the end of the day

Level of agreement on the drawbacks of compressed workweek

The respondents agreed that not all departments could participate in the compressed week schedule (M = 2.91, SD = 0.87) and that some positions might not be suitable for longer hours due to increased risk of injury or error (M=2.60, SD = 0.85). This may be true for employees who do physically straining jobs like in the case of the general services and carpentry departments in the University of Baguio. Working more than 9 hours a day can be physically and emotionally draining. Thus, it may be risky to the employees' health. As a consequence, productivity might suffer, impacting performance and career.



The perceived drawbacks, as revealed in the survey, are supported by the findings of Scott, Hwang, and Rogers (2006) whose study showed a substantial increase in fatigue and errors experienced by employees working beyond a 12-hour shift. Also, there is a wealth of studies showing that long or irregular working hours are associated with a range of physical and mental health risks which limit long-term capacity to remain productive at work (Sparks, Faragher, & Cooper, 2001; Dembe, Erickson, Delbos, & Banks, 2005; Grosch, Caruso, Rosa & Sauter, 2006; Beckers, 2008; Burke, 2009). For example, workers with long hours face elevated risks of health complaints (Fenwick & Tausig, 2001). Workplace practices that lead to longer work time doing repetitive tasks can raise the risk of cumulative trauma disorders (Brenner, Fairris, & Ruser, 2004). Working beyond the usual or normal hours, in particular, heightens the risk of on-the-job injuries and accidents, typically via fatigue toward the end of a long workday or week (van der Hulst, 2003). The risk of occupational injury doubles when employees work more than 12 hours per day and go up by over 40 percent over 10 hours in a given day (Salminen, 2010). In addition, workers returning to work after fatigue-related injuries typically work shorter hours than previously (Dong, 2005). This illustrates how long hours ultimately prove to be a potential indirect inhibitor of productivity.

On the contrary, studies of overtime work, flexitime, and fixed-term contracts, as summarized by Joyce, Pabayo, Critchley, and Bambra (2010), found no significant effects on physical, mental, or general health or on any of the wellbeing outcomes examined. Importantly, however, the study on overtime failed to provide detailed information on either the amount or duration of overtime worked, so it is difficult to draw a conclusion on the effects of overtime on workers' health and wellbeing.

Although the respondents agreed that not all departments could participate in the compressed week schedule due to increased risk of injury or error, they did not agreed that longer workday is taxing on the employees (M =2.48, = 0.88) and longer schedule could cause lower productivity at the end



of the day (M = 2.45, SD = 0.82). This implies that despite some drawbacks on the applicability of the compressed workweek, the longer workday does not lower productivity among the majority of the non-teaching employees of the University. Instead, as presented in Table 4, the compressed workweek scheme is believed to increase productivity because of the work schedule.

As presented in Table 8, the respondents "disagreed" that customer service coverage will be affected. Instead, as clearly shown in Table 4, the respondents strongly agreed that compressed work week provides extended hours for students (M = 3.34), external clients (M = 3.36), and co-workers (M = 3.35). The said indicators are ranked 8th, 4th, and 5th, respectively, among the perceived benefits of compressed workweek. These findings corroborate with the results of Wadsworth, et al. (2010) whose study showed that the third most frequently identified organizational benefit of alternative work schedules was improved customer service (46%) followed by increased productivity (41%).

Scheduling meetings does not seem to be a possible problem in the implementation of the compressed workweek since, for offices in the University, meetings can be easily scheduled within the five-day work week during office hours. Working unauthorized overtime was not considered by the respondents as a drawback as well. The said result coincides with the finding presented in Table 4, wherein the respondents strongly agreed that compress work week reduces overtime costs (M = 3.34). In the University, there are times that non-teaching employees end up working longer than they should just to get a task done within the day, but do not get paid for it. With the compressed workweek, those who work longer hours can be compensated. McCarthy (2008) reports that employees tend to work longer than their contracted hours. Approximately one-third of the global workforce (36%) works more than 48 hours per week. The proportion of workers working such excessively long hours is more than double in developing countries compared with developed countries. In the former, such long hours of work are driven mainly by low wages, which means that



workers often need to work long hours to make ends meet (Lee, McCann & Messenger, 2007).

#### Comparison of the level of agreement on the drawbacks of compressed workweek according to gender

Table 8 shows a comparison of the level of agreement on the drawbacks of compressed workweek between female and male respondents. Overall, the mean difference between the two groups was not statistically significant, t(114) = -0.606, p > .05. Both groups' mean values revealed the same interpretation in all indicators except in number 2. The female group disagreed that "longer work day is taxing on the employees" while the male group perceived otherwise. This may be explained by the type of work performed by the male non-teaching employees in the University. Most of the male employees' work is physically demanding. Thus, longer work days may cause fatigue among them.

Amendola, et al. (2011) evaluated the impact of different work schedules on performance and fatigue among 231 police officers. The researchers reported no significant differences between those who work eight hours/5 days vs. 10 hours/4 days vs. 12 hour/3 days + 18 hour day every other week. However, when police officers worked the 12 hour shift/3 days schedule, they were more likely to report a significantly lower average level of alertness than the average alertness levels among officers on the 8 hour shift/5 days schedule but not the 10 hours shift/4 day schedule.



#### Table 8

| Level of agreement on a | he drawbacks | of compressed | workweek | according |
|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------|-----------|
| to gender               |              |               |          |           |

| Indi | cators   | Fema<br>( <i>n</i> = 7 | ale<br>73) | Mal<br>(n = 4 | <i>p</i> -value |      |
|------|--|------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------------|------|
|      |  | М                      | 1          | М             | 1               |      |
| 1.   | Not all departments can participate  | 2.91                   | А          | 2.91          | А               | .986 |
| 2.   | Longer work day is taxing on the employees   | 2.40                   | D          | 2.63          | A               | .139 |
| 3.   | Customer service coverage will be affected   | 2.37                   | D          | 2.49          | D               | .489 |
| 4.   | Personal leaves will be affected   | 2.47                   | D          | 2.47          | D               | .997 |
| 5.   | Some positions may not be suitable for<br>longer hours because of increased risks<br>of injuries or errors | 2.59                   | A          | 2.63          | A               | .802 |
| 6.   | Creates difficulties scheduling meetings   | 2.14                   | D          | 2.37          | D               | .154 |
| 7.   | Employees could be working<br>unauthorized overtime  | 2.26                   | D          | 2.26          | D               | .977 |
| 8.   | Longer schedule could cause lower productivity at the end of the day                                       | 2.23                   | D          | 2.21          | D               | .883 |
| Ove  | Overall Mean   |                        | D          | 2.49          | D               | .546 |

*Notes.* 1.00 - 1.75 (Strongly disagree, SD), 1.76 - 2.50 (Disagree, D), 2.51 - 3.25 (Agree, A) 3.26 - 4.00 (Strongly agree, SA)

### Comparison of the Level of Agreement on the Drawbacks of Compressed Workweek According to Age

Table 9 shows the level of agreement on the drawbacks of compressed workweek among four age groups. All groups agreed that not all departments could participate in the implementation of the compressed workweek. On the other hand, only the younger age groups agreed that a more extended work day is taxing on the employees. The result is the opposite of what Tucker and Folkard (2012) discovered in their study that age was negatively correlated with normal working hours, such that, on average, older workers worked fewer hours per week. Thus, any association between working hours or schedules and many chronic (or longterm) health outcomes may be confounded by age.



#### Table 9

Level of Agreement on the drawbacks of compressed work week according to age

|      |   | 21-30 31-40 |     | 41-5   | 50          | 50 y   | p-      |      |    |       |    |  |  |
|------|---|-------------|-----|--------|-------------|--------|---------|------|----|-------|----|--|--|
| Indi | cators  | yrs. o      | old | yrs. c | bld         | yrs. o | old     | and  | ł  | value |    |  |  |
|      |   | (n=5        | 3)  | (n=3   | (n=37) (n=1 |        | 19) abo |      | /e |       |    |  |  |
|      |   |             |     |        |             |        |         |      |    | (n=7  | 7) |  |  |
|      |   | M           | 1   | M      | 1           | M      | 1       | M    | 1  |       |    |  |  |
| 1.   | Not all departments<br>can participate  | 3.09        | A   | 2.86   | A           | 2.53   | A       | 2.71 | A  | .090  |    |  |  |
| 2.   | Longer work day<br>is taxing on the<br>employees  | 2.55        | A   | 2.51   | A           | 2.37   | D       | 2.14 | D  | .643  |    |  |  |
| 3.   | Customer service<br>coverage will be<br>affected  | 2.58        | A   | 2.38   | D           | 2.00   | D       | 2.42 | D  | .101  |    |  |  |
| 4.   | Personal leaves will<br>be affected   | 2.45        | D   | 2.57   | A           | 2.32   | D       | 2.43 | D  | .763  |    |  |  |
| 5.   | Some positions<br>may not be<br>suitable for longer<br>hours because of<br>increased risks of<br>injuries or errors | 2.81        | A   | 2.41   | D           | 2.42   | D       | 2.57 | A  | .110  |    |  |  |
| 6.   | Creates difficulties scheduling meetings  | 2.32        | D   | 2.08   | D           | 2.16   | D       | 2.43 | D  | .533  |    |  |  |
| 7.   | Employees could<br>be working<br>unauthorized<br>overtime   | 2.30        | D   | 2.22   | D           | 2.26   | D       | 2.14 | D  | .939  |    |  |  |
| 8.   | Longer schedule<br>could cause lower<br>productivity at the<br>end of the day                                       | 2.36        | D   | 2.05   | D           | 2.16   | D       | 2.29 | D  | .374  |    |  |  |
| Ove  | erall Mean  | 2.56        | Α   | 2.39   | D           | 2.28   | D       | 2.39 | D  | .341  |    |  |  |

Notes. 1.00-1.75- Strongly disagree (SD), 1.76-2.50-Disagree (D), 2.51-3.25-Agree (A) 3.26-4.00-Strongly agree (SA)

The youngest age group agreed on four of the eight possible drawbacks of the compressed work week, while the rest agreed on two or three items only. Thus, in general, the respondents disagreed on the majority of the possible drawbacks enumerated in Table 9. The results imply that regardless of



age, the respondents perceived more benefits than disadvantages from the compressed work week. Further, analysis of variance proved that there is no significant difference in the perceived drawbacks of compressed workweek according to age, F(3,112) = 1.128, p > .05

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The respondents strongly agreed on the benefits of compressed workweek, mostly concerning the attainment of work-life balance. The results imply that even if the compressed workweek scheme is not yet implemented in the University, the respondents perceived it to bring about equal benefit to the employees and the other stakeholders. This further suggests the need for the University to initiate programs promoting WLB among non-teaching employees.

Although the mean difference was not statistically significant, the female respondents gave a higher level of agreement on the benefits of compressed workweek than the male group, as the older compared to the younger group. The results suggest considering work-life balance policies that address the specific needs of the female workplace as well as the aging working population in the University.

The survey results proved that the respondents, regardless of gender and age, perceived more benefits than disadvantages of the compressed work week scheme. Thus, such can be implemented in some University departments considering that there are positions that might not be suitable for long hours due to increased risk of injury or error.

Based on the findings, the following specific recommendations are given:

 The University may implement a five-day workweek among nonteaching personnel. For offices with more than one staff, a day off of each personnel can be arranged such that customer service will not



be affected. Besides, flexible workday schedules may be permitted to provide the employees with opportunities to fulfill both office and personal responsibilities or needs.

- 2. If a compressed workweek is implemented among non-teaching personnel, a study must be conducted to determine the impact of the policy on the different stakeholders such as the employees, the University administration, faculty, students, and external clients.
- 3. The University may also consider other work-life balance policies that can be applied for teaching personnel and members of the management.



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