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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between work–life balance (WLB) and organisational performance of female construction professionals in the Nigerian construction industry.
Design/methodology/approach – The study empirically examined WLB of female professionals in medium- and large-sized Nigerian construction organisations. The data collected were analysed using partial least square structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).
Findings – The findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between WLB and organisational commitment, and that organisational commitment mediates the impact of WLB on organisational performance.
Research limitations/implications – One of the limitations of this research is the cross-sectional nature of the study and the nature of data collected, which is related to female gender. Efforts should, therefore, be made to further this study by examining the impact of WLB on both male and female professionals in construction.
Originality/value – This paper presents an empirical research on the significance of family-friendly initiatives within construction organisations in Nigerian context, and the results of the study have implications for industry practitioners and academics.

Keywords Integration, Organizational performance, Work–life balance, Construction professionals
Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The construction industry globally is known to be an unfriendly industry for workers, basically because of work stress associated with excessive workloads, time constraints and associated deadlines (Leung *et al.*, 2007; Lingard *et al.*, 2012). Work stress in the industry has been considered to have a detrimental impact on the productivity and often results in the decrease in the levels of performance of construction employees (Leung *et al.*, 2008). Previous studies such as Haynes and Love (2004) as well as Ng *et al.* (2005) have identified long working hours, huge workload and work–family conflict as the most severe stressors suffered by construction workers. In Australia, Lingard *et al.* (2010) found that interference between work and family is higher among workers in the construction industry than among other occupational groups. Similarly, Watts (2009) underscored the predominant and inflexible culture of long working hours as having consequential upsurge in the level of work–family

Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management

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conflict, and this constitutes an obstacle to women's career involvement and success in the construction industry. However, female participation in the construction industry is said to be at the lowest ebb (Adogbo *et al.*, 2015) and is disproportionately diminutive, which may be due to the barriers of combining work and family duties. Greenhaus *et al.* (2003) stated that work–family balance is the extent to which an individual is satisfied on the basis of the level of time devoted, level of involvement and the level of satisfaction derived from work and family roles concurrently. International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2007) revealed that family responsibility is an important part of the life of women professionals, especially those involved in construction activities, since it mostly requires long working hours on site. More so, Amaratunga *et al.* (2007) noted that the experience of construction professionals in relation to the struggle between work and family responsibilities is more applicable to women than men. As a result, the life of working employees, especially female workers, in construction is very challenging and oftentimes demanding. It is characterised with many ups and downs, and this could be likened to a web of numerous responsibilities and affiliations. Therefore, maintaining a balance between work life and family life is becoming more and more difficult because many companies desire workers to work for longer hours, perform more intense workload, and this requires trade-offs from a lot of workers, particularly working women in the construction industry globally (Lingard *et al.*, 2012). More recently, the level of awareness amongst companies on the need to have policies and practices that can guide sustainable workforce, embrace the concept of work–life balance and appreciate its significance as a means to improve worker performance, job satisfaction and less job turnover is high (Parakandi and Behery, 2016). However, work–family conflicts appear to be a significant problem for workers in the construction industry (Lingard *et al.*, 2012). Previously, researchers in construction management field have theorized and investigated the work–life balance (WLB) of workers in construction industry. Since this issue is of obvious relevance to construction companies, increasing attention has been paid to the relationship between policies/strategies and organisational commitment in the construction industry. For example, Lin developed a conceptual framework explaining the relationship between work–life conflicts in construction organisations in the Indian construction industry to improve their effectiveness. However, the nature of how the availability of WLB practices improves organisation effectiveness still remains ambiguous.

However, most of the studies on the WLB that focused on the construction industry are conducted within the Australian or the US construction industry; interestingly, a large number of these studies were from the same authors (such as Lingard and Sublet, 2002; Francis, 2004; Lingard and Francis, 2004a, b; Lingard, 2008; Lingard *et al.*, 2008; MacKenzie, 2008; Brown *et al.*, 2009; Lingard and Francis, 2009; Lingard *et al.*, 2010; Bradley *et al.*, 2010; Malone and Issa, 2013; Malone and Issa, 2014; Lingard *et al.*, 2015). Also, in New Zealand, Morrison and Thurnell (2012) examined construction employee preferences for work–life benefits in a large construction company and their findings suggest that work–life conflict could be associated with long working hours as well as weekend work. In spite of the huge research works and evidence that clearly showed that project managers have little or no guidance on how to maintain the family well-being and WLB of the workforce throughout the duration of a construction project (Bradley *et al.*, 2010), none of these studies, except Malone and Issa (2013) as well as Malone and Issa (2014), examined the elements that led to enhanced organisational commitment and increasing likelihood that a female employee will stay with her employer. Although Malone and Issa (2013) argued that an individual's level of organisational commitment can be a predictor of employee turnover, but the study did not examine the nexus between organisational commitment and WLB of employees on organisational performance of female construction professionals. This study sets out to address this gap by investigating the role of organisational commitments in predicting employees' performance within the context of the Nigerian construction industry.

Literature review

Construction industry and work-life balance of workers

In Nigeria, the construction industry is almost exclusively project specific and presents a complex environment made up of different combinations of investors, clients, contractual arrangements and consulting professions (Marx, 2012). Despite the enormous constraints facing the industry and pressures experienced by workers, it continues to play an indispensable role through making significant contributions to the country's economy (James *et al.*, 2012). However, workers in the Nigerian construction industry have to contend with work pressures arising from cultural orientation from two fronts. These are the narrower culture of the construction industry and the all-embracing culture of the wider society (Adogbo *et al.*, 2013). These challenges often times leave women with one of two choices – focus on family and limit career development; or focus on career at the expense of family. According to National Institute of Public Health of Quebec (2007), women who attempt to make the best of both career and family face the more difficult task of finding ways to balance the time required to take care of family obligations while continuing to engage in professional work; this situation could be found in both developing and developed countries. Noon and Blyton (2007) viewed WLB as the ability of individuals to successfully maintain an equilibrium with their work and non-work responsibilities, without unnecessary stresses from one weakening the satisfactory experience of the other. The study of WLB becomes necessary as a result of shift in the societal traditional model of work, requiring both genders to contribute to family common purse for upkeeps (Morrison and Thurnell, 2012), which in both domains is triggering prevalent work–life imbalance (Lewis *et al.*, 2007). This is when WLB policies come in handy. Although it has been reported that some employers within the Nigerian construction industry sometimes allow some degree of flexibility for a woman to handle her work in a manner that accommodates her family obligations (Adogbo *et al.*, 2013), but how this has improved their commitment and productivity is unknown.

Dainty and Lingard (2006) stated that although pressure on women to work for long hours has a negative impact on their family life, yet women must come to terms with the situation by making necessary adjustments. In a similar study, project resourcing, workplace culture, and time demands have been identified as the major barriers for achieving WLB within the construction industry, whereas flexible working hours, alliance or collaborative contracts as well as project management have been considered as support for WLB (Turner *et al.*, 2009). The stressful nature of the construction industry in managing projects and stakeholders who often come together on *ad hoc* basis differentiates it from other industries (Lingard and Francis, 2004b). Leung *et al.* (2008) asserted that work stress within the industry could be associated to lower levels of performance of construction project managers. However, research has shown that availability of social support initiatives is capable of reducing the negative effects of work-related stressors and work–family conflict (Thomas and Ganster, 1995).

As underlined by Kim (2014), management of WLB has become one of the most crucial managerial strategies for guaranteeing workers' commitment and organisational performance improvement. Considering the evidence from the studies conducted within the Australian construction industry (e.g. Francis and Lingard, 2004; Lingard *et al.*, 2007, 2010), there is a momentous amount of work–life imbalance in the construction industry. However, research effort to confirm whether work–life imbalance is an issue within the Nigerian construction industry does not exist. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to examine the WLB experience of female construction professionals in commitment to their organisation and performance, as well as the mediating role of employees' commitment in the Nigerian construction industry context.

Organisational commitment

Al-Meer (1989) categorised organisational commitment into three main elements: identification with the organisation's objectives and values; involvement in the organisation through

effort; and loyalty to the organisation. In a similar research, Meyer *et al.* (1991) theorized the three elements of organisational commitment: affective, continuance and normative commitment. The affective commitment narrates the employee's emotional attachment to his/her organisation. Continuance commitment explains an employee's perception of the potential risk and costs associated with leaving his/her current organisation. Randeree and Chaudhry (2012) observed that there are two aspects of continuance commitment – the aspect that considers individual sacrifice that leaving an organisation would involve and a lack of alternatives available to the individual, whereas normative commitment ensues when an employee continues to remain with the organisation because he/ she feels an obligation and responsibility to his/her employing organisation for some reason or another. Randeree and Chaudhry (2012), therefore, reported that the basic element of commitment in various explanations relates to the desire of employees to remain in their organisations or to their unwillingness to change organisations for reasonable personal benefit. It is believed that employees develop a stronger organisational commitment when they experience a greater job satisfaction. The focus of this research is on affective commitment. Affective commitment explains employees' willingness to remain in an organisation by believing in the goals, values and norms of the organisation, and becoming more emotionally attached to the organisation (Allen and Meyer, 1996; Glazer and Kruse, 2008). In fact, affective commitment is considered as the key driving force that makes individual contribute to the improvement of the organisation's performance (Meyer *et al.*, 1989). Affective commitment is the dimension of commitment that is most strongly and consistently associated with employee performance, whereas continuance commitment has been negatively related to the employee performance and positively linked to the voluntary absence (Meyer *et al.*, 1993; Francis and Lingard, 2004). Hence, the choice of commitment used or employed will determine the expected outcome of organisation (Meyer *et al.*, 1989).

Work-life balance, organisation commitment and performance

Several researchers have examined the relationship between affective commitment and organisational performance, and evidence have shown that affective commitment is a determinant of organisational performance (e.g. Casper *et al.*, 2002; Kim, 2014). For instance, Casper *et al.* (2002) examined the impact of both work-to-life and life-to-work on affective and continuance commitment amongst employed mothers. Their findings showed that a positive relationship exists between work-to-life and affective commitment. Also, some researchers (such as Wood and de Menezes (2008) asserted that the availability of WLB initiatives has also been linked to increased affective commitment and decreased turnover intentions among employees. However, a number of studies (such as Thompson *et al.*, 1999; Netemeyer *et al.*, 1996) have reported that a negative relationship exists between work-to-life and affective commitment. The nature of the relationship as espoused in the literature remains inconclusive. Nonetheless, the results of a research conducted by Kim (2014) suggested that affective commitment increases as a result of the WLB experience of an employee, which, in turn, has a positive influence on his/her in-role performance. This finding affirms the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationship between WLB and organisational performance. Based on the foregoing statement, the study hypothesised the following:

H1. Organisational commitment (Affective) will positively relate to organisational performance.

H2. Organisational commitment would mediate the relationship between WLB and organisational performance.

Sakthivel and Jayakrishnan (2012) variables viewed work and family as the most vital domains in lives and they argued that the two roles are often in conflict. Lingard *et al.* (2012) stated that there is an increasing attention in the provision of work–life programme within organisations in

the construction industry. This is premised on the findings from previous studies that suggest that organisations that provide a "family-friendly" work environment benefit significantly in terms of performance through decreased turnover intentions and increased organisational commitment (Grover and Crooker, 1995; Thompson *et al.*, 1999). These growing interests across the industries have generated more research evidences that offer support to the relationship between WLB programs and improved employee performance and commitment (Hyman and Summers, 2007). This implies that the WLB experience increases feelings of loyalty of employees to their organisation, which, in turn, increases affective commitment. Affective commitment occurs when employers provide such opportunities that the employees wish to remain with the organisations and contribute their best to improve performance (Allen and Meyer, 1996). Various number of empirical studies have shown that WLB experience is positively related to employees' performance as well as organisational performance (e.g. Parkes and Langford, 2008; Harrington and Ladge, 2009). Muse *et al.* (2008) and Casper *et al.* (2011) asserted that WLB has a positive influence on employees' affective commitment to their organisations, whereas some researchers are of the opinion that work–life conflict can have negative repercussions for employee performance (e.g. Beauregard, 2006). Perry-Smith and Blum (2000), in a study conducted in the US using a national sample of 527 firms, found that organisations that offer a higher range of WLB practices enjoyed greater perceived market performance, profit–sales growth, and organisational performance. Tunji-Olayeni *et al.* (2017), in a study in Lagos, Nigeria on work–life balance of women in male-dominated fields, concluded that women face conflicts both at home and at work, but they are, however, committed to their jobs for the fear of losing their jobs and not being able to secure another one. However, Allen (2001) as well as Schutte and Eaton (2004) observed that the way by which the provision of work–life practices affects both employee behaviour and organisational performance remains under-researched and unclear to scholars and practitioners in various industries including the construction sector. This study thus stated the following:

H3. There is a significant relationship between WLB and organisational performance.

H4. There is a significant relationship between WLB and organisational commitment (affective).

Based on the various constructs examined, WLB can be seen as a term used to situate the various initiatives of firms put in place with the aim of reconciliation of employees' work and personal lives such as employee-centred flexible work practices, working hours, paid and unpaid leaves, and access to childcare (McCarthy *et al.*, 2010; Skinner and Chapman, 2013). Davis (1984) noted that culture is about shared beliefs and values among people in a firm, which affects their behaviour over time. WLB policies of an organisation affect the organisational commitments and eventually the performance of an employee, which over time becomes part of the culture of such organisation.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of the study indicating the relationship among the constructs.

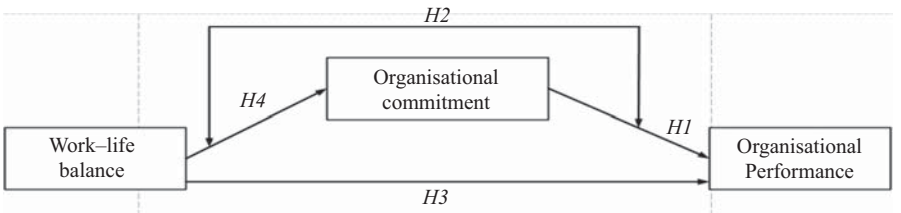

Figure 1.
Proposed model

Research methods

Sample and data collection

This paper is part of a larger research in which mixed methods approach was used. However, the results of the quantitative research approach, wherein a well-structured questionnaire was used to obtain information on the impact of WLB from female construction professionals, are presented in this section. The emphasis was on female professionals because of the need to examine how WLB enhances organisational performance through their organisational commitment. These are categories of people with tertiary education in a relevant field in the built environment and are considered to be the most appropriate respondents in order to obtain useful data. It is premised on the belief that they have the broadest and deepest understanding of the organisation family-friendly policies that could enhance WLB as a whole. The population of female construction professionals being the unit of analysis could not be determined as a result of the fact that professional associations do not publish membership list based on their work location or gender. As a result of this, the study adopted snowball sampling technique or respondent-driven approach, which is a non-probability sampling approach (Heckathorn, 2002). This technique has been described to be greatly useful in studying hidden populations (Kalton and Anderson, 1986) and in providing statistically dependable sampling behaviour in a wide range of situations (Salganik and Heckathorn, 2004). Data were obtained through 133 self-administered questionnaire survey on female construction professionals in the study area. In situations wherein only one respondent was in an organisation and subsequently surveyed, efforts were made to reduce, to a greater extent, the possible risk of common method biases often associated with a single respondent (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). By doing so, it was ensured that the respondents remained anonymous and they were guaranteed that there were wrong or right answers; this enabled them to be very open and as honest as possible in responding to the survey (Pertusa-Ortega *et al.*, 2010). This method followed the approach used by Pertusa-Ortega *et al.* (2010) to reduce their fright of being assessed and to prevent them from giving publicly required or appropriate responses.

In preparing the questionnaire for the survey, three stages were involved. An extensive review of the literature on WLB, organisational commitment and performance was conducted. This was followed with note taking, which assisted in the preparation of the initial draft of the questionnaire. To improve content validity of the draft, the study adapted previously used scales for the questionnaire. However, because the scale was used for study outside the construction management field, which made the study different from the backgrounds from where the scales were used, there was a need for the adaptation and modifications to fit the environment in which it was administered. Also, the items used in the questionnaire were designed to remove any likely ambiguities that might have hindered a better understanding of the survey by asking questions that were brief as well as providing respondents with definition of terms. Afterwards, a pilot survey was conducted among five married female lecturers who practiced, taught and researched within the construction industry to test whether the questionnaire was comprehensive and would easily be understood by the prospective participants by considering the environment in which the scale was used. Few modifications were made to the questionnaire after the initial draft was tested through the pilot study. For example, items for measuring work–life balance were separated from work–life policy items. In some cases, some questions were altered, the wordings of some were improved, whereas some were broken down to make the questions concise and meaningful. After this stage, the questionnaire was considered good for the field survey.

Of 133 questionnaires that were administered, 120 were retrieved and found usable for the analysis presented in this paper. The sample size was considered sufficient for analysis based on the principle of partial least square of structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) tool employed for the analysis in this study. Moreover, structural modelling

methods such as PLS and LISREL were suitable in preventing response biases that have been identified to be difficult at item level analysis because multiple-item constructs were involved in this study (Pertusa-Ortega *et al.*, 2010; Oke *et al.*, 2012).

Measures for the study. Work–life balance. The measures used for WLB were adapted from previous studies (e.g. Francis and Lingard, 2004; Norton, 2009; Lingard *et al.*, 2007, 2010; TCWLS, 2010). This was measured using 15 items. The items were used to assess the level of female employee's work life within their organisations in the last five years. The sources of the measures further assisted in enhancing the validity of the adapted measures and in extending the previous research work on WLB from the developed country to the Nigerian context. Cronbach's α was 0.80 circa.

Organisational commitment (affective commitment). Organisational commitment was measured using a 13-item adapted from Meyer *et al.* (1993), Francis and Lingard (2004) and Norton (2009). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree (5). Cronbach's α was 0.61 approximately, which was considered good for an exploratory research.

Organisational performance. Organisational performance was measured using 23 items classified into individual and organisation levels of employee's performance. Performance here was viewed as the accomplished outcome of trained employees in some particular circumstances (Prasetya and Kato, 2011). These items were derived from an extensive review of literature and adapted from Beauregard and Henry (2009) and TCWLS (2010). These items were assessed on the basis of a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Cronbach's α was 0.93.

Data analysis

This section presents the results of partial least squares (PLS) analytic method, using SmartPLS version 2.0 M3 software – as also adopted by Ringle *et al.* (2005) – to test the hypotheses postulated in this paper. PLS is a structural equation modelling technique that generates loadings and weights between items and constructs, and also estimates standardized regression coefficients for paths between constructs (Croteau and Bergeron, 2001). PLS was employed in this study for several reasons: first, it employs a least squares estimation technique that offers the required flexibility in denoting both formative and reflective latent constructs (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2006). Second, it places minimal condition on the required sample size and remaining distributions to realise sufficient statistical power, being a component-based approach (Hair *et al.*, 2012; Elbanna *et al.*, 2013). The third reason is that it permits the study to model latent variables and simultaneously assess both measurement and structural models (Elbanna *et al.*, 2013). Fourth, it is seen as one of the most suitable techniques for developing new theory. Finally, it is capable of being used to assess the impact of common method bias (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003). This study followed the procedures used by Elbanna *et al.* (2013), Hair *et al.* (2014) and Sarstedt *et al.* (2014) in applying and reporting the PLS-SEM technique.

Measurement model

In order to determine the best indicator for the individual construct, exploratory factor analysis was conducted to ascertain the number of indicators to be retained for each of the three latent variables included in this study: WLB, organisational commitment (OC) and organisational performance; these are indicated in Tables I–III. For WLB construct, four indicators were retained; two indicators were identified with respect to OC, whereas three were retained for organisational performance. In assessing the measurement model from the PLS results, the following criteria are required to be examined: indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Variables	WLB measures	Components 1	2	3	4	Communalities (*h*)
Self and family support						
WLB6	I have external support I need (e.g. family, friends, etc.)	0.684				0.574
WLB9	I spend sufficient time with the important people in my life (e.g. family, friends, etc.)	0.701				0.783
WLB10	I am fully present and I enjoy the time when I am with the important people in my life (e.g. family outings, gathering with friends, etc.)	0.872				0.789
WLB11	All in all, I am satisfied with the relationship I have with the important people in my life (e.g. family, friends, etc.)	0.841				0.749
WLB12	I have an area of focus outside of myself that brings me peace (e.g. spiritual practice, community development, etc.)	0.791				0.710
WLB13	I am able to extend my help to people around me when they need it	0.884				0.825
WLB14	I have a sense of control over important things in my life	0.903				0.871
WLB15	I can effectively manage both my work responsibilities and personal aspirations (e.g. personal life goals, family planning)	0.862				0.826
Work and life influence						
WLB2	While I am at home I am free of worry about work matters		0.622			0.596
WLB3	While I am at work I am free of worry about my day- to-day personal matters		0.539			0.663
WLB7	I am satisfied with my life outside of work		0.724			0.628
Self-satisfaction						
WLB8	I have enough time to pursue my own interests and hobbies			0.834		0.889
WLB1	I feel well physically			−0.718		0.596
Job satisfaction						
WLB4	I am satisfied with my job				0.903	0.831
	Eigenvalue	6.504	1.703	1.556	1.035	
	% Explained variance	43.360	11.352	10.374	6.902	
% Total explained variance: 71.88						
Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin measure of sampling adequacy: 0.739						
Bartlett's test of sphericity						
			Approx. χ^2			1,316.987
					df	105
					Sig.	0.000

Table I.
Rotated factor analysis of WLB

For indicator reliability, the square of factor loadings of each individual indicator was examined and it was observed that almost all the indicators had values nearer to the acceptable minimum value of 0.7 (Oke and Ogunsemi, 2016); however the values, as shown in Table IV, were larger than 0.4, which was considered as the minimum threshold for exploratory research of this nature (Hulland, 1999). The model showed that all the individual constructs had internal consistency higher than the acceptable 0.70; the composite reliability values ranged from 0.83 to 0.95 for the latent constructs. Therefore, the composite items of the measurement model had

Coding	Organisational commitment measure	Components 1	2	Communalities (h)
Self-assessment				
OC4	I feel myself to be a part of the organisation	0.586		0.385
OC5	This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	0.901		0.851
OC6	I really care about the fate of this organisation	0.905		0.834
OC7	I sometimes feel like leaving this employment for good	0.631		0.492
OC10	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation	0.652		0.637
OC11	There is much to gain by sticking with this organisation indefinitely	0.830		0.698
OC12	I could just as well be working for a different organisation as long as the type of work was similar	0.776		0.716
OC13	There will be a very little change in my present circumstances if I leave this organisation.	0.738		0.557
OC8	I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar	0.606		0.677
OC1	I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organisation	0.556		0.567
Committed to the organisation				
OC2	I am willing to put in a great deal of effort, beyond what is normally expected, in order to help this organisation in becoming successful		0.874	0.797
OC3	This organisation deserves my loyalty		0.750	0.624
	Eigenvalue	6.670	1.610	
	% Explained variance	51.307	12.384	
	% Total explained variance	63.639		
Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.819			
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity				
		Approx. χ^2		1,167.487
			df	78
			Sig.	0.000

Table II. Rotated factor analysis of organisational commitment

an adequate internal consistency reliability. Convergent validity of the model was evaluated and the values of the average variance (AVE) explained were higher than 0.5, as shown in Table I (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988).

Two main criteria are used in PLS analysis to evaluate discriminant validity, as shown in Table V. First, the square root of each average variance explained by the reflective construct should be larger than the level of correlations involving the latent variable (Chin, 1998) and, second, items should load more strongly on their corresponding construct than on other constructs (Elbanna *et al.*, 2013). The results presented in Table I indicate that all the latent variables indicators have loadings that are greater than cross-loading, and the constructs have more variance with their items (AVE) than with other constructs. Hence, it was inferred that the measurement model presented here has satisfactory validity and reliability required to carry on with assessment of the predictive and explanatory power of the structural model.

Coding	Variables	Components 1	2	3	4	5	*h*
Reduced work-life conflict							
PM15	Improved employee perception of quality of life	0.64					0.83
PM17	Reduced resignation intention rate	0.81					0.81
PM18	Reduced work–life conflict	0.92					0.90
PM19	Improved job-related attitude	0.84					0.79
Reduced Staff turnover							
PM1	Turnover rate		0.75				0.79
PM2	Turnover costs		0.66				0.81
PM6	Productivity rates		0.63				0.71
PM11	Profitability		0.78				0.71
PM22	Overall customer satisfaction		0.54				0.71
Improved job-related attitude							
PM3	Absenteeism rate			0.70			0.79
PM4	Costs from stress-related illnesses/absence			0.71			0.79
PM9	Time required to fill open positions			0.71			0.67
PM10	Job rejection reasons offered by interviewees at recruitment stage			0.84			0.74
Perceived organisational support							
PM5	Rate of return from maternity leave				0.59		0.65
PM21	Reduced work time				0.65		0.75
PM23	Customer retention rate				0.76		0.81
Improved recruitment and retention							
PM7	Attraction of quality talent					0.92	0.88
PM8	Retention of quality talent					0.89	0.86
PM14	Reduced employee stress and resilience levels					0.78	0.82
PM16	Improved programme utilisation levels					0.59	0.79
PM20	Reduced absenteeism					0.90	0.88
PM13	Improved employee satisfaction and engagement levels					0.66	0.47
	Eigenvalue	6.477	2.88	2.73	1.67	4.21	
	% Explained variance	26.99	11.9	11.38	6.95	17.5	
% Total explained variance		74.85					
Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.620					
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity							
Approx. χ^2				2,001.04			
	df			276			
	Sig.			0			

Table III.
Rotated Factor analysis of performance measures

Structural model results

From the measurement model, the reliability and validity of the construct measures have been established; hence, the next step is to test the postulated hypotheses by evaluating the developed structural model results. Path coefficients of a PLS model were interpreted the same way as standardized beta weights in a regression analysis. However, prior to this interpretation, Mooi and Sarstedt (2011) as well as Sarstedt *et al.* (2014) suggested that there is a need to examine the model for collinearity because the estimation of the coefficients of the paths is hinged on ordinary least square regression. Hair *et al.* (2014) asserted that the presence of collinearity in the results of these analyses could be interpreted as being bias. Therefore, this research followed the approach used by Wong (2013) and Sarstedt *et al.* (2014) in examining if there is a collinearity between the constructs. In order to evaluate

collinearity issues of the inner model, the latent variable scores were used as input for multiple regression in which the exogenous latent variables (i.e. WLB and organisational commitment) were constructed as the independent variables, whereas performance was configured as the dependent variable. The VIF value of the analysis was 2.520, which was fewer than 5, and the tolerance was 0.397, which was higher than 0.2, as a rule of thumb, to avoid the collinearity problem (Hair *et al.*, 2011).

Afterwards, the predictive power of endogenous latent variables was examined and the significance of the structural model relationships was established, as shown in Table VI, as well as Figures 2 and 3. The results of the structural model shows that the R^2 values of the model are acceptable because the values are greater than the recommended threshold of 10 per cent, as reported by Elbanna *et al.* (2013): organisational commitment ($R^2 = 60.3$ per cent) and

Latent variable	Indicators	Loadings	Indicator reliability (i.e. loadings2)	Composite reliability	R^2	AVE	Cronbach's α
Commitment	Self-assessment	0.8965	0.8037	0.8321	0.6032	0.8727	0.6067
	Commitment to organisation	0.7893	0.6230				
Work–life balance	Self and family support	0.8019	0.6430	0.8791	0.0000	0.7133	0.7985
	Work and life influence	0.8622	0.7434				
	Self-satisfaction	0.8590	0.7379				
Performance	Reduced work–life conflict	0.8867	0.7863	0.9536	0.8188	0.7081	0.9263
	Reduced Staff turnover	0.9773	0.9551				
	Improved recruitment and retention	0.9364	0.8769				

Table IV. Results summary for reflective outer models

Latent variable	Organisational commitment	Work–life balance	Performance
Organisational Commitment	*0.9342*		
Work–life balance	0.8884	*0.8446*	
Organisational Performance	0.7767	0.7984	*0.8415*

Note: Diagonals represent the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE), whereas the other entries represent the correlations

Table V. Discriminant validity of constructs

Path analysis	Original sample	Sample mean	SD	SE	*t*-statistics
Improved recruitment and retention ←Performance	0.9364	0.9377	0.0109	0.0109	85.8664
Attachment to organisation ← Commitment	0.8965	0.8980	0.0091	0.0091	98.2559
Reduced Staff turnover ← Performance	0.9773	0.9774	0.0047	0.0047	209.6711
Reduced work–life conflict ← Performance	0.8867	0.8894	0.0202	0.0202	43.9573
Self-assessment← Commitment	0.7893	0.7871	0.0438	0.0438	18.0010
Self and family support ← Work–life balance	0.8019	0.8026	0.0348	0.0348	23.0750
Self-satisfaction ← Work–life balance	0.8622	0.8646	0.0233	0.0233	36.9933
Work and life influence ← Work–life balance	0.8590	0.8581	0.0288	0.0288	29.8662

Notes: *t*-statistics value of 2.58 for a significance level of 1 per cent ($p \leqslant 0.01$); *T*-statistics value of 1.96 for a significance level of 5 per cent ($p \leqslant 0.05$) and *T*-statistics value of 1.65 for a significance level of 10 per cent (all two-tailed)

Table VI. Summary results of the model constructs

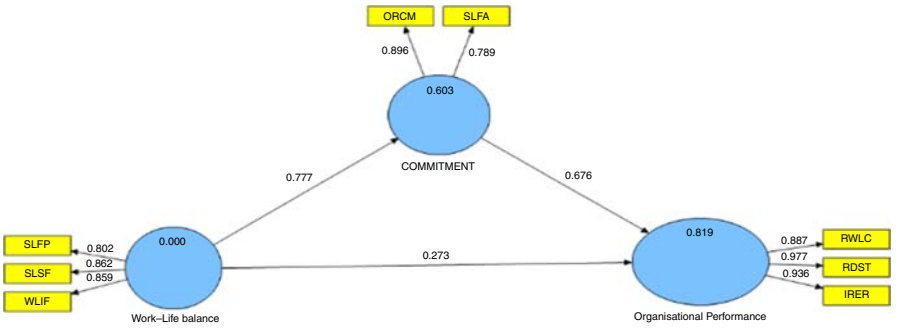

Figure 2.
PLS model with R^2 values

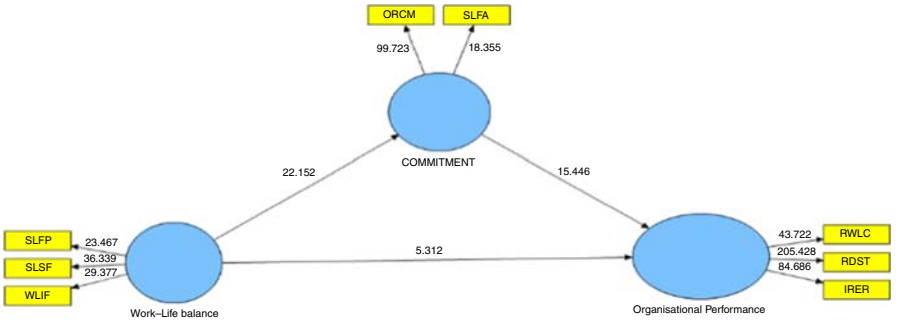

Figure 3.
Bootstrapping results of the model

organisational performance ($R^2 = 81.9$ per cent). *H1* projected that organisational commitment (affective) will positively relate to organisational performance. As shown in Table I, the results underscore that there is a strong positive relationship between organisational commitment and performance (path = 0.676, $t = 15.446$, $p < 0.000$), and this gives support to *H1*. *H3* stated that WLB will positively relate to organisational performance. This is also supported as WLB was found to be positively and significantly related to the organisational performance; however, the path coefficient indicates the effect is rather weak (path = 0.273, $t = 5.312$, $p < 0.000$). *H4* was tested, which postulated that WLB will positively relate to the organisational commitment. The results confirmed that positive and significant relationship exists between work–life balance and organisational commitment (path = 0.777, $t = 22.152$, $p < 0.000$). Hence, *H4* was supported. In order to assess the predictive relevance of the structural model, blindfolding was used for each of the latent variables. The blindfolding procedure was conducted by omitting distance of seven yielded variables (Sarstedt *et al.*, 2014); the cross-validated redundancy values for all three constructs were then examined and they exhibited values greater than zero (WLB: 0.403; organisational commitment: 0.428; organisational performance: 0.713). Thus, it provides support for the predictive relevance of the structural model. Table VII shows the hypothesised paths and the significance of the structural paths demonstrated in the model.

Further examination indicates that WLB has a stronger direct effect on organisational commitment (0.777 vs 0.273). When the indirect effect of WLB is examined via the mediator organisational commitment, a diverse picture appears. This emerges when the equivalent total effect is calculated using the formula given by Sarstedt *et al.* (2014):

$$\text{Total effect} = \text{direct effect} + \text{indirect effect} = 0:273 + 0:777^{*}0:676 = 0.798.$$

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient	*t*-statistics	Supported
H1	Organisational commitment (affective) will positively relate to organisational performance.	0.6762	15.6119	Yes
H2	There is an indirect relationship between work–life balance and organisational performance through organisational commitment (affective)		na	Yes
H3	Work–life balance will positively relate to organisational performance	0.2731	5.3569	Yes
H3	Work–life balance will positively relate to organisational commitment (affective)	0.7767	22.5681	Yes

Notes: *t*-statistics value of 2.58 for a significance level of 1 per cent ($p \leqslant 0.01$); *t*-statistics value of 1.96 for a significance level of 5 per cent ($p \leqslant 0.05$) and *t*-statistics value of 1.65 for a significance level of 10 per cent (all two-tailed)

Table VII. Path coefficients and hypothesis testing

As is indicated, this total effect is much stronger than the direct (total) effect of WLB on organisational performance (0.676), underscoring the important role of organisational commitment in improving organisational performance. Furthermore, these outcomes suggest that organisational commitment mediates the relationship between WLB and organisational performance. The next section presents the mediation analysis from the model.

Mediation analysis

The approach used here follows the procedure used by Sarstedt *et al.* (2014). The results from the examination of total effects of WLB on organisational performance suggest that organisational commitment mediates the relationship between WLB and organisational performance. It is therefore essential to clearly test this latent mediating effect. To achieve this, and drawing on Hair *et al.* (2014) in evaluating the effects, there is a need to provide solutions to the following three research questions:

RQ1. Is the direct effect between WLB and performance significant when the mediator variable is excluded from the path model?

RQ2. Is the indirect effect via the mediator variable significant after innovation has been included in the path model?

RQ3. How much of the direct effect is absorbed by the indirect effect via the mediator?

In answering Question 1, organisational commitment was removed from the path model and bootstrapping procedure was conducted following the previous specification earlier explained. As a result, the direct effect between WLB and organisational performance was 0.833 and it was significant at $p < 0.000$. This aligns with Hair *et al.* (2014), who posited that the direct effect should be significant if the mediator is excluded from the model. In an attempt to provide answer to the second question, the full model was estimated by including the mediator to test the significance of the indirect effect. The equivalent bootstrapping results showed that the indirect effect of 0.676 was significant at $p < 0.000$. In determining how much direct effect was absorbed by the indirect effect through the mediator, the variance accounted for (VAF) was calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{VAF} = \frac{\text{indirect effect}}{\text{total effect}}.$$

According to Hair *et al.* (2014), as a rule of thumb, if VAF > 80 per cent, it is full mediation, if $20\% \leqslant \text{VAF} \leqslant 80\%$, it is partial mediation and there is no mediation if VAF < 20 per cent.

The results of this final analysis step yield a VAF value of 0.652, which suggests that organisational commitment partially mediates the relationship between WLB and organisational performance. This finding partly supported *H2* that organisational commitment of employees would mediate the relationship between their WLB and organisational performance.

Discussion

A plethora of research works have examined the significant role of WLB in improving workers' mental well-being and its influence on organisational performance improvement (Wang and Walumbwa, 2007; Kim, 2014). In spite of the propositions in literature that WLB has a positive impact on organisational performance, both at individual and organisational levels, its level of implementation by many managers/owners of construction organisations in Nigeria is still unknown. Although maintaining a balance between work and family responsibilities of construction workers is important and it is a difficult task, some researchers posited that the introduction of WLB practices could be more cost intensive and difficult to implement in small- and medium-sized organisations than in large organisations (Cegarra-Leiva *et al.*, 2012). However, the present study argued that when the relationship between WLB and organisational performance is mediated by organisational commitment, performance will improve.

In this paper, four hypothesised statements were empirically tested and the findings fully provided support for the propositions. The first hypothesised statement highlighted that organisational commitment will positively relate to organisational performance. This proposition was confirmed by the path analytic results, which showed that organisation commitment is positively and significantly linked to the organisational performance. The paper provides support to previous studies such as Kim (2014) wherein in-role performance of employees was found to be significantly affected by organisational affective commitment. This is also supported by the research of Chen and Francesco (2003) and Swailes (2004) who stated that the increased level of affective commitment of employees to their organisation often results in high or improved organisational performance.

The second hypothesis explored if organisational commitment mediated in the relationship between WLB and organisational performance. This hypothesis was upheld as the analysis revealed that it partially mediated the relationship. This finding is consistent with Kim's (2014) findings in which WLB was reported to have no direct effect on in-role performance. However, it was established that employees' WLB experience increases affective commitment, which, in turn, has a positive influence on in-role performance (Kim, 2014). These findings attest to the mediation role of organisational commitment. Casper and Harris (2008) also concluded that with respect to women, the readiness of work–life practices within the studied population showed a positive link with commitment, mediated by observed organisational support. This is because views of women regarding organisations with WLB practices as being family supportive mediated the link between availability of work–life practice and both affective commitment and job satisfaction (Allen, 2001). However, the report from a few of the previous studies (such as Shepard *et al.*, 1996; Apgar, 1998; Allen, 2001) available in literature suggested that WLB practices could not engender improved organisational performance, except through other means, such as decreased overheads or enhanced productivity with respect to workers working from home, at their peak hours, evolving from perceptions of family-friendly support from the organisation.

Third, it was proposed that WLB will positively relate to organisational performance. Although a positive relationship existed between the two constructs and the path was significant, but the effect on organisational performance was weak. Thus, the hypothesis was supported. This indicated that WLB experience is positively linked to employees' performance and organisational performance in agreement with the findings of Harrington and Ladge (2009) as well as Parkes and Langford (2008). In fact, studies such as Magnini

(2009) and Cegarra-Leiva *et al.* (2012) particularly stated that experience of WLB has been revealed to yield positive results, such as performance improvement, decreased absenteeism, low job turnover and high job satisfaction.

Finally, the study revealed that a strong and positive relationship exists between WLB and organisational commitment. This result aligns to Casper *et al.* (2002) who reported that employees with supportive or family-friendly policies experience less conflicts between work and family responsibilities, thus exhibiting higher affective commitment towards the organisation. This finding is also corroborated by Wood and de Menezes (2008), who stated that accessibility of WLB practices could be linked to improved affective commitment and reduced turnover intentions of workers. In fact, Nelson *et al.* (1990) and Scandura and Lankau (1997) opined that for women and all other employees with family responsibilities, the presence of organisational supportive measures such as flexible work hours has been found to be associated with job satisfaction and increased organisational commitment, even if the supportive measures are not being implemented. Therefore, the implications of the results for owners and managers of construction organisation are that to ensure continuous improvement and commitment of their employees, there is a need to exhibit an organisational culture that is supportive of WLB. This will guarantee that family-friendly initiatives are implemented to reduce spillover effect from the work sphere and the family sphere, and result in improved employees' commitment and low job turnover.

Implications of the research

This study presents a number of theoretical and practical implications for the academics and industry practitioners. First, this study presented hypothetical study about impact of WLB on organisational commitment and organisational performance. There has been a dearth of research on this subject within the Nigerian construction industry, and also there is no known research on the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between WLB and organisational performance. This current study provides a basis for researchers who are interested in conducting further research on impact of availability of WLB initiatives on both individual and organisational outcomes, especially within the construction management field. Efforts should, therefore, be made by researchers to examine the impact of WLB on both men and women professionals in construction. Second, it is assumed that the study will offer necessary and required information that will motivate owners of construction organisations to develop a number of WLB initiatives that will be considered relevant and apposite to meet the demands of employees. Therefore, experience gained from this research can provide owners or employers with understanding of how family-friendly initiatives, which make employees perceive that their workplace supports their family, can be employed by organisations to develop competitive advantage that will generate higher returns than their competitors. Bearing in mind the role of perceived organisational supportive initiatives in improving the level of employees' affective commitment and job satisfaction, employers should take supportive resources to create a family-friendly culture. Also, considering the level of relationship between WLB and organisational performance, and the mediating role of organisational commitment in their relationships, employers need to recognise that their importance of the association is a multifaceted one. At the level of the organisation, top management should make available necessary family-friendly support programs and implement policies that will enable employees to always put their organisations' goals above their personal interests. This will increase their affective commitment by working together to realise superior organisational performance.

Conclusion

There is no known research within the Nigerian construction industry that examines the impact of WLB on organisational commitment of female construction professionals.

This study, therefore, endeavours to address the dearth of research in this area by examining the mediating role of organisational commitment in WLB of female professionals in construction. The research makes known construction organisations' efforts to enhance productivity by applying WLB programmes. However, the study reveals that participants involved in this research experienced WLB initiatives, currently provided to them by their respective organisations, and also identified factors motivating the use of these initiatives and how the implementation of these programs could make the practices of WLB an effective instrument for ensuring continuous improvement in the organisations.

Nonetheless, the study was conducted within the Nigerian construction industry; hence, there is a need for caution in interpreting the findings of the study because the result might be country specific. The study has its own limitations. First, it is essential to note that this research only considered female professionals who worked with construction organisations in the study area. Thus, findings presented here are from the data gathered from those female professionals who volunteered from different companies, which makes it difficult to generalise that work–life practice are entrenched or being practiced in all the organisations and for both genders.

Second, the research used cross-sectional data that were collected over a limited time frame, and this reduces the likelihood of testing the effect of time on the underlying relationships. Also, it did not explore when the practices of WLB were instituted within their respective organisations. Longitudinal data are more appropriate, as stated in literature, if one is to properly conclude on the role played by WLB experience in improving organisational performance. Future research could overcome these limitations by implementing a longitudinal design and employ a larger sample in testing the hypotheses.

Finally, further research is required not to only assess WLB experiences among female construction professionals, in drawing inferences on their commitment and performance, but also to show that there is a need to have a broad picture that encapsulates the basic work assumptions, organisational norms or values and WLB practices in order to identify their impact on organisational performance.

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