

**The Impact of Washington State's Paid Family
and Medical Leave law on UW Policies**

By

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A capstone project presented for partial fulfillment of the degree requirements for the

Master of Arts in Policy Studies

School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences

University of Washington Bothell

Summer 2019

Abstract

Many employers in America today have not put in place parental leave policies that guarantee paid leave, especially to expectant mothers. One such employer is the University of Washington (UW), which has more than 25,000 workers. In 2017, the Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) Act was signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee. Some welfare recipients cheat because of the available limitations in the qualification criteria and other opportunities to earn money honestly. This research project sought to establish how the new law impacts the university's parental leave policies. Two research approaches were used: an analysis of UW's policy on maternity leave, and an online survey research. Fifty faculty and staff members from the University of Washington Bothell (UWB) participated in the survey. The findings reveal that the institution's leave policies will be impacted by the PFML Act in that the policies will need to be modified to comply with the newly passed law and guarantee paid maternal leave to pregnant female workers. There are three recommendation leave policies that UW can implement. They are the Paid Family and Medical Leave such as the one implemented by the Eastern Washington University, Paid Family and Medical Leave at Washington State University, and Faculty Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave Policy like the one adopted by Gonzaga University in Washington state.

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1.0 Introduction

Paid Family and Medical Leave law is very important to employees working in any organization. On July 2017, Jay Inslee, the Governor of Washington state, signed the Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) bill that has now become law. The law mandates every employer to provide paid family and medical leave. The University of Washington (UW) is among the public employers that would be affected by this new law. Even so, the exact impact that the law will have on UW is unknown. Therefore, the purpose of this project is to establish the impact of PFML on the University of Washington's leave policies.

1.1 Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (WA PFML)

WA PFML guarantees paid parental, maternity, and medical leave. Thanks to the enactment of this law, Washington State will be the country's fifth state to provide workers within its borders with medical and family leave benefits. According to the clauses of this law, employees are allowed to take a maximum of twelve weeks of paid leave whenever they have to take care of a family member who is sick, adopt a new child in their household, or a particular military-related family needs in a year (Employment Security Department 1). Moreover, WA PFML allows employees to take a maximum of twelve weeks for the worker's severe health condition. If this condition is related to pregnancy, the female worker can take two extra weeks of paid leave. Furthermore, if an employee experiences several events within a period of 12 months, leave entitlement is restricted to a total of sixteen weeks to all leave reasons, or a maximum of eighteen weeks if the worker's severe health condition is related to pregnancy (Employment Security Department 1). It is notable that this law has created an insurance fund that both workers and employers pay into, with a payroll tax of 0.4% (Society for Human Resource Management 1). Payroll deductions started on 1/1/2019 and the benefits will become available to workers on 1/1/2020. WA PFML is applicable to most public employers and all private employers within the state.

The benefits are transferrable between employers. Businesses within the state should understand that the benefits can be transferred between different employers hence salaries and hours worked are cumulative to all employment. Employers in Washington State have the option of applying to administer their own voluntary plan for medical leave, family leave, or both, so long as the plan surpasses or meets the benefits of the state plan and the cost to workers is less (Employment Security Department 2). Concerning the amount that the eligible workers will get, the benefits would be a percentage of the worker's average weekly wage in the two highest quarters within the qualifying period. In essence, \$100 is the minimum weekly benefit amount whereas \$1,000 is the maximum (Employment Security Department 2). For-profit businesses, local and state government agencies, as well as non-profits are all affected by the new law.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Many states across America do not offer maternity leave and financial assistance for child care. This issue is as a result of the lack of rights that mandate a paid or unpaid leave to expectant mothers to deliver and recover from childbirth. Consequently, there is no common law that dictates the rules on what a company should do when their expectant female workers take time off from work to deliver, for instance whether they should be given unpaid or paid leave. However, various states have adopted policies to suit their constituents and created a favorable law that protects female staff when they go for delivery and offer financial compensation during their absence.

The new law has formed an insurance fund. In Washington State, WA PFML has created an insurance fund that requires staff and employers in the state to pay into. The maternity leave basis is on firm size according to the Family Leave Act and the employee is eligible according to the guidelines outlined in the Act. The Act requires business owners with a company size of more than 8 employees and those that have 50 or more workers to implement

the new changes. UW is one of the employers whose maternal leave policies need reviewing to ensure that they comply with the conditions stipulated in the Act. This project seeks to find out how UW's policies concerning maternal leave are impacted by the state's WA PFML.

The WA PFML will greatly affect the University of Washington. UW has over 25,000 employees that work in three campuses and dozens of remote sites. The biggest problem for the university is to incorporate the new law in its maternal leave policies with minimum impact on the productivity of its workforce. It will be important to comprehensively study WA PFML and identify specific clauses that affect UW's leave policies. In tackling the issue, an objective and independent analysis of the problem facing the university will be performed.

1.3 Hypotheses

Alternate Hypothesis (H_1): To comply with the newly passed Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave Act will require the University of Washington to change its current policies on maternal leave and assistance towards reproductive health and childcare.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): To comply with the newly passed Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave Act will not require the University of Washington to change its current policies on maternal leave and assistance towards reproductive health and childcare.

The researcher will seek reject the Null Hypothesis and accept the Alternate Hypothesis. In other words, the researcher aims to prove the Alternate Hypothesis as true.

2.0 Literature Review

Family leave and maternity leave policies are of great importance. This is due to the fact that they allow mothers to take time off work for the purpose of preparing for and recovering from childbirth (Rossin-Slater 2). In addition, such leaves enable mothers to take

time off work to care for their new children and individuals to be able to care for their family members who are very sick (Rossin-Slater 2). It is worth mentioning that family leave and maternity leave policies are aimed at helping employees to balance competing family and job responsibilities, with the ultimate objective being to foster career continuity and improve family well-being. Furthermore, because women often carry out more child care and family duties than men, such policies impact gender inequality not only in the home, but also within the labor market (Addati, Cassirer and Gilchrist 27). Paid maternity leave is guaranteed to new working mothers in most countries globally.

There are also other sorts of leave that can be offered to employees. Firstly, there is family leave which can be taken for the purpose of caring for new children and family members who are sick. There is also parental leave which is taken by both new fathers and new mothers. Additionally, there is paternity leave offered, particularly to new fathers. These policies differ considerably in terms of eligibility, financing, benefit amounts and structure, duration of the leave provided, coverage, as well as the absence or presence of job protection (Rossin-Slater 5). America is an outlier in this policy setting since, unlike the vast majority of developed nations, it does not guarantee paid family, parental, or paternity leave to its employees at the national level (Addati, Cassirer and Gilchrist 34). At the state level, very few states guarantee paid leave.

2.1 History of Reproductive Health Benefits

The history of reproductive health benefits in America dates back from the early 1990s. There is the need for parents, both the mother and father, to be present for their children in the first few months after childbirth. However, this requirement was not embodied in a formalized policy as it is today. The U.S. Congress enacted the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in 1993 with the aim of promoting a balance between workplace and family demands (Isaacs, Healy and Peters 2). This federal law provides job-protected leave for specified familial and

medical reasons to parents of both genders. However, the directives for public and private policies under FMLA have not sufficiently catered for the needs of mothers in the American workforce (Isaacs, Healy and Peters 1). This is because they have always failed to guarantee paid leave for mothers who take a leave to take care of their new children or take a leave for medical reasons.

They are also not sufficient as inadequate funding has been allocated to them. It is notable that partisan politics has often interfered with the effective application of job-protected leave through inadequate federal funding. A federal longitudinal survey from 2000-2008 found out that 66.7% of first-time mothers worked while pregnant compared to 40% in the 1960s (Isaacs, Healy and Peters 3). While there are fewer options for paid leave today, there is also the disparity problem. FMLA often fails to meet the health requirements for low-income, less educated women. Additionally, researchers have reported that unlike the lower-earning workers, employees in America who earn higher salaries are much more likely to have access to employer-provided paid family leave (Gault et al., 2014). This suggests that many American workers lack access to paid family leave. FMLA differs greatly with WA PFML. The differences between these two laws are shown in the following table:

Table 1: Differences between FMLA and WA PFML

	FMLA	WA PFML
Type of law	Federal law	State law
Year of passage	1993	2017
Benefits assured	Unpaid maternity/parental leave. Provides job-protected leave for specified familial and medical reasons to parents of both genders. The group health benefits of the workers are	Paid maternity/parental leave. Guarantee paid leave for new mothers

	upheld throughout the period of the leave.	
Aim of law	To promote a balance between workplace and family demands by allowing workers to take realistic unpaid leave for particular medical and family reasons	To provide paid medical and maternity/parental leave to employees in Washington State.
Length of leave	Up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave annually without the threat of job loss.	Employees allowed to take, in a period of one year, a maximum of 12 weeks of paid leave.
Job-protected leave	Offers job-protected leave	Does not offer job-protected leave
People applicable to	Employee should have worked for the firm for no less than one year, and no less than 1,250 hours in that one year	The worker should have worked for at least 820 hours within the initial 4 of the last 5 completed calendar quarters.
Amount the workers will get	\$0 since it is unpaid leave	The benefits would be a percentage of the worker's average weekly wage in the two highest quarters within the qualifying period.
Organizations affected	Applicable to private employers with a minimum of 50 employees. Also applicable to all public agencies including schools.	Applicable to most public employers and all private employers within the state. For-profit businesses, local and state government agencies, and non-profits.

2.2 Reproductive Health and the Welfare State

Reproductive health has not significantly benefited from welfare states. According to research carried out by Rossin, 87% of pregnant women in the U.S. reported having worked for the last month (51). The unfortunate reality of American mothers is the lack of time to go for prenatal checkups, for bonding with the newborn baby, and for providing prolonged breastfeeding to their young children. The high number of challenges is a testament as to why

Burtle and Bezruchka through their research found out that there is a direct correlation between access to paid parental leave and lower infant mortality rates (30). The United States has more than twice the infant mortality rate of Sweden (Burtle and Bezruchka 32). However, a significant portion of this margin is due to the high levels of preterm infant deaths. In Sweden, the national government there has enacted laws that ensure the mother and father are both entitled to 16 months or 480 days of paid parental leave at around 80% of their salary, plus additional days if the parents have twins (Kane 2). Owing to this paid parental leave, infant mortality rate in Sweden at 2.3 deaths for every 1,000 live births are much lower than in America where the rate is 6.8 deaths for every 1,000 live births. Paid parental leave in Sweden contributes to the low infant mortality rate in the country. According to a study by Rossin (53), lack of antenatal leave is associated with three times the risk level for preterm infant death in the United States. The research findings prove that lack of antenatal leave is part of the complex nature of infant mortality in the United States healthcare system.

Welfare programs in America are associated with the stigma of poverty. Many welfare policies these days are far removed from the fundamental objectives of ensuring the well-being of households. Such policies are instead aimed at punishing welfare cheating, guarding against misuse, and deterring the use of welfare (Gustafson 1). These days, the welfare system treats American citizens who utilize public benefits and those who apply for benefits as dormant criminals. Recipients of welfare throughout the nation are treated as presumptive thieves, cheaters, and liars (Gustafson 12). In addition, the lives welfare recipients are significantly regulated and surveilled by both the criminal justice system and the welfare system. In essence, changes in government practices and public attitudes have resulted in the criminalization of poverty (Gustafson 14). In spite of this criminalization of America's welfare system, low-income households continue to break the rules of welfare receipt and continue to hide information from welfare officials (Gustafson 15). Nevertheless, lack of option for people

lacking a stable income leads to cheating. The stringent qualification criteria make it harder for persons in need of welfare assistance to qualify genuinely. Nonetheless, there are little opportunity to earn a living honestly. Many welfare recipients do cheat by giving false information and obtain money because of limitations in the available opportunities.

Disparities are common in social states. In essence, a state that is more social tends to provide a set of resources for reproductive health than a less social state. Disparity is even further reproduced and minimized by state by state laws and then of course, only those who are employed by employers that are required to follow the guidelines of laws such as PFMLA. Moreover, the problem in welfare programs is not based only on poor workplace policies on leave, but also growing health disparities in the country. There is a huge class difference in access to parental leave benefits and childcare packages in the United States (White 185). Low-income earners have less access to paid leave opportunities, which is a factor that plays a role in the higher infant mortality rates amongst the working class (Clark and Gallagher 464). While the federal government encourages economic self-sufficiency through market participation, there is little support for maternal employment (Stover et al. 1). Pregnant women in the workplace need to be provided with more support such as paid maternal leaves.

Maternity leave affects both the quality and quantity of time that the mother is able to spend with her new child. During the leave period, she will have adequate time to breastfeed the baby, take good care of the child, and seek quick medical care as necessary (Rossin 54; Bartel et al. 8). This ultimately helps to reduce infant mortality rates in the country as it improves birth outcomes.

Also, paid family leave has different impacts than unpaid leave since wage replacement allows parents facing financial difficulties to take more time off work (Bartel et al. 6). Besides, the lack of wage replacement assumes a normative family structure; it presumes that the

employee who is taking the unpaid parental leave has a husband/wife or partner who will provide financial support. It fails to consider the fact that many parents are single mothers. At the moment, America lags behind other industrialized nations in providing paid leave to new parents. Only five states countrywide have set up laws offering paid leave to new parents. Only five states countrywide have set up laws offering paid leave to new parents. These are California that offers 55% pay throughout the period of the leave, while New York, and Rhode Island offer about 60% pay each. New Jersey offers two-thirds pay similar to Washington state (Burtle and Bezruchka 34). In 2007, the State of Washington enacted a law that sought to offer family leave at partial pay. Even so, this law remains not in effect because it has never been funded (Burtle and Bezruchka 34). Therefore, new parents in Washington State may not benefit from the State's 2007 law on maternity leave. However, they can appreciate the recently passed PFML law which is, in fact, funded. Washington State's Paid Maternity Leave has been found to result in lower rates of using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for low-income women with no maternity leave benefits (Kan, Meyers and Romich 3). As such, UW's leave policies should also offer paid leave.

2.3 Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education

Reproductive health is one of the least inclusive and equitable sectors of public health. There are financial, psychosocial and demographic factors that impede the use of reproductive health services in colleges (Bersamin et al 155). According to the random survey involving 212 college students from Northern California University, it was found out that while both men and women make use of school-based health services, both genders had minimal contact with reproductive health centers (Bersamin et al 159). Majority of the respondents argued that medical mistrust, lack of health insurance and social disapproval were the reasons behind their non-use of RH services. Another policy concern is that most of the respondents inferred to sex

education in class as the only source of information regarding reproductive health (Bersamin et al 159). Important to note is that lack of health insurance relates to state provided welfare resources and the racial and gendered disparity in those resources, which has historically impacted communities of color and immigrant communities.

The identified gaps have significant implications. An institution that offers more comprehensive RH services is bound to have a more diverse student and faculty population. This demonstrates the importance of an institution of higher learning such as the University of Washington providing RH services to staff and students. However, in order to increase access to the RH services, a policy must address the factors impeding the dissemination of RH information. Revision of reproductive health policies is imperative to increasing the access to RH services and ensuring sexual and reproductive health equity.

3.0 Research Questions

The central research question for this project is as follows:

- What is the potential impact of the new Paid Family and Medical Leave Act on the UW's parental leave policy?

Sub Questions

The first sub-question seeks to find out whether the UW has to review its parental policies to comply with PFML. Secondly, can the UW supplement PFML with other benefit payments? Thirdly, should the UW assess its parental leave policies to determine whether the level of generosity of the benefits as compared to those provided by the PFML? The last sub question is: should the UW hire a legal counsel to review its parental leave policies or the institution has the internal capacity to do it?

4.0 Methodology

The methodology that will be used in this project will be based on two approaches. The first one will be an analysis of the UW's policy on maternity leave. The policy analysis process will involve analysis of the University of Washington's current policy on maternal/parental leave, providing recommendations regarding whether the institution should or should not adopt the new law, and describing policy models from comparable institutions. According to UW's policy on maternity leave, the institution offers parental leave for every monthly paid professional and classified employee, including fathers, mothers, non-birth, and birth parents, no matter the length of time they have been working at the university (University of Washington Human Resources 1). If the university's staff member qualifies for FMLA, his/her FMLA and parental leave will run simultaneously.

The second approach entails conducting an online survey research. The purpose of the study's survey is to gather data on attitudes and beliefs of the University of Washington Bothell (UWB) faculty and staff members with institutional benefits and resources for reproductive health, maternity and family leave, and financial needs for child care. The specific aim of the survey questions is to find out about the experiences of the faculty and staff members who have utilized both institutional and non-institutional resources. The research gives an opportunity to determine the opinions of University of Washington Bothell (UWB) faculty and staff members of all genders, orientation, race, ethnicity and age that in their experiences with institutional and state policies related to maternity/family. The questionnaire survey will have a total of 22 closed-ended questions and can be filled in less than 10 minutes. A total of 52 faculty and staff members at UWB will take part as respondents.

5.0 Results

The aim of this study was to assess the impact of paid family and medical leave law of Washington State on University of Washington policies. A total of 52 faculty and staff of University of Washington Bothell (UWB) participated in the survey. The results as shown in Figure 1 below indicate that most (50.0%) of the participants were full-time staff members at University of Washington Bothell. This was closely followed by full-time faculty members at 38.46% while the rest were part-time staff members (9.6%) or part-time faculty members (1.9%) on temporary employment contracts.

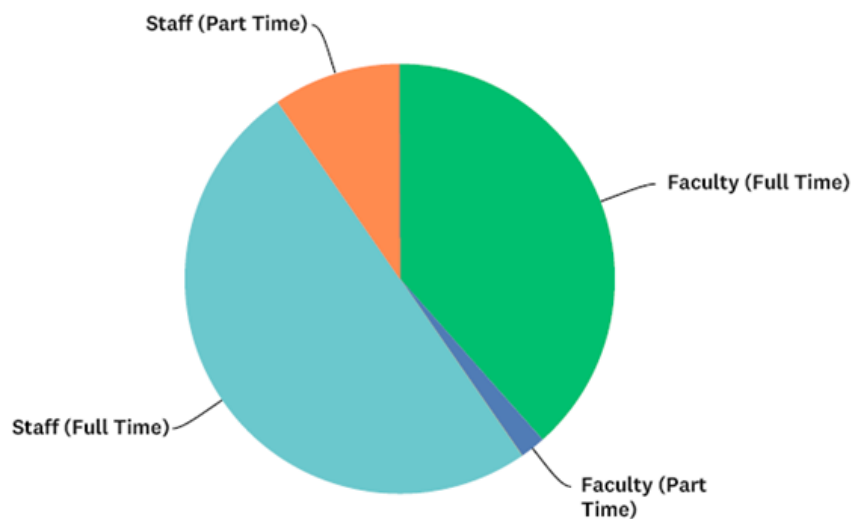


Figure 1: Nature of employment of staff and faculty members at UWB

The divisions within the faculties at which the staffs belong indicated that most of them were from Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences (28.0%) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) at 28.0%. Also, a significant proportion (28.0%) belonged to other disciplines within the university mainly student affairs and others from DEM and campus library. Meanwhile, participants in the business faculty were 10.0% as shown in the bar chart below.

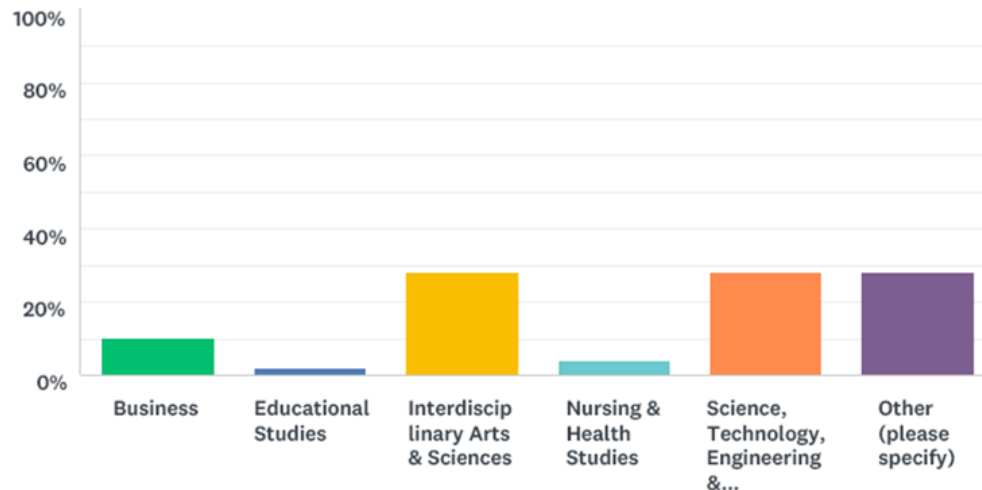


Figure 2: Academic divisions within the university

On age of the participants, the results showed that most of them were aged between 30 and 39 years (42.0%) and closely followed by those aged between 40 and 49 years (26.0%). Fewer participants were aged 50-59 years (14.0%) and 21-29 years (10.0%). There were no participants aged between 17 and 20 years as shown in the chart below.

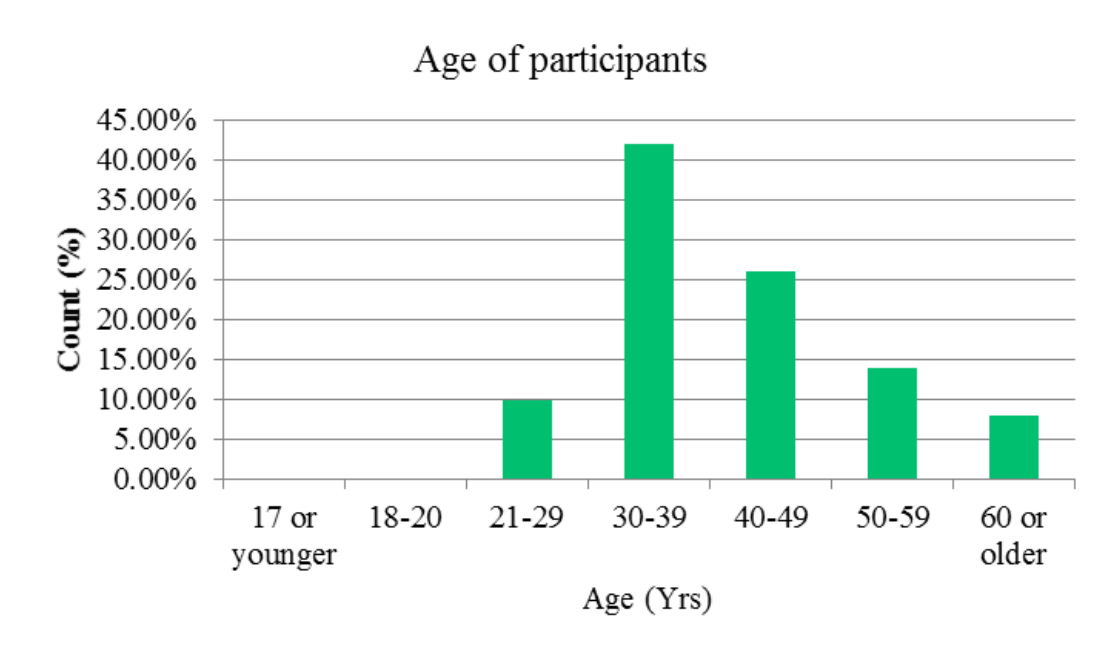


Figure 3: Age of participants

Regarding racial composition of the participants, majority of them (76.0%) were White followed by a distant second being Asian and Latino (12.0%) each. Fewer participants were

Alaska Native or American Indian (4.0%) and African-American (2.0%). The study had no participants self-identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander as shown in the chart below.

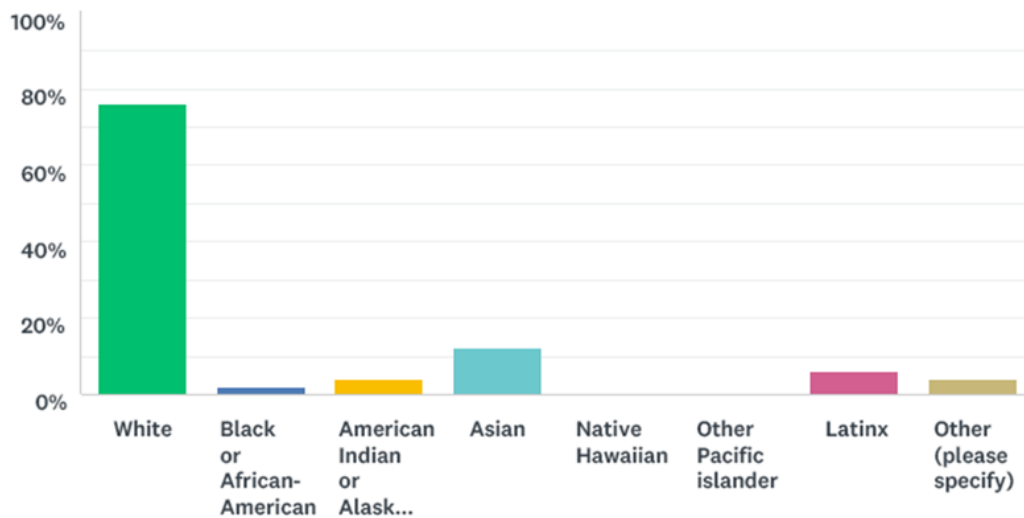


Figure 4: Racial composition of participants

On gender, the study results showed that most of the participants were female (73.47%) while the males were 28.57%. There was 2.04% considered as other as shown in the chart below.

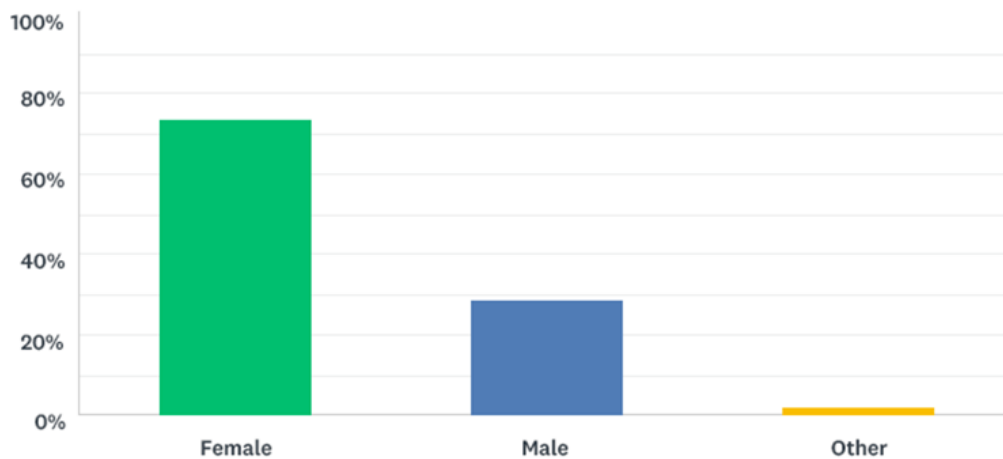


Figure 5: Gender of participants

Going by the duration of service at UWB, most of the participants had worked in the university for more than five years (48.0%). Still a sizeable number had been employed

between 1 and 3 years (20.0%) and 3-5 years (14.0%). A few of them were less than 6 months in employment (8.0%) as shown in the bar chart below.

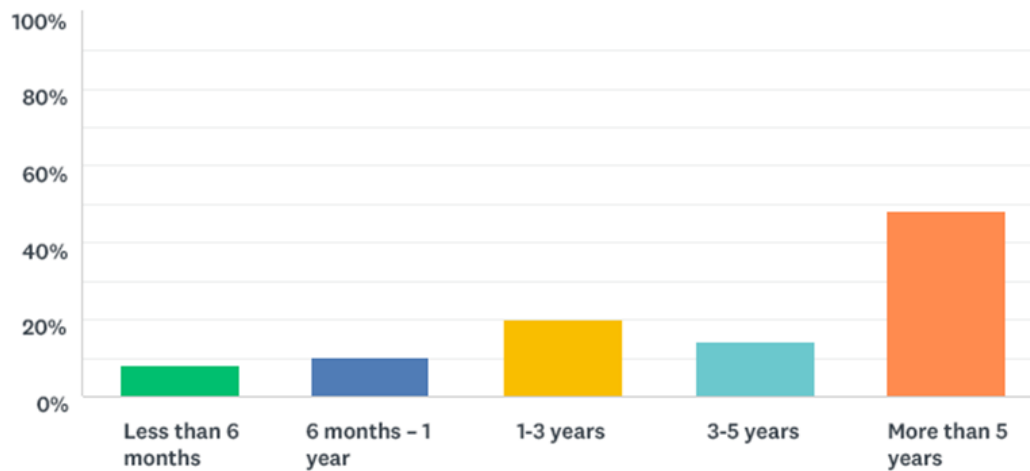


Figure 6: Duration in employment

UWB employed participants were asked if they had utilized any childcare assistance services. Overwhelmingly, most of them (94.0%) had not used these services. Only 6.0% had used the childcare assistance services as shown in the chart below.

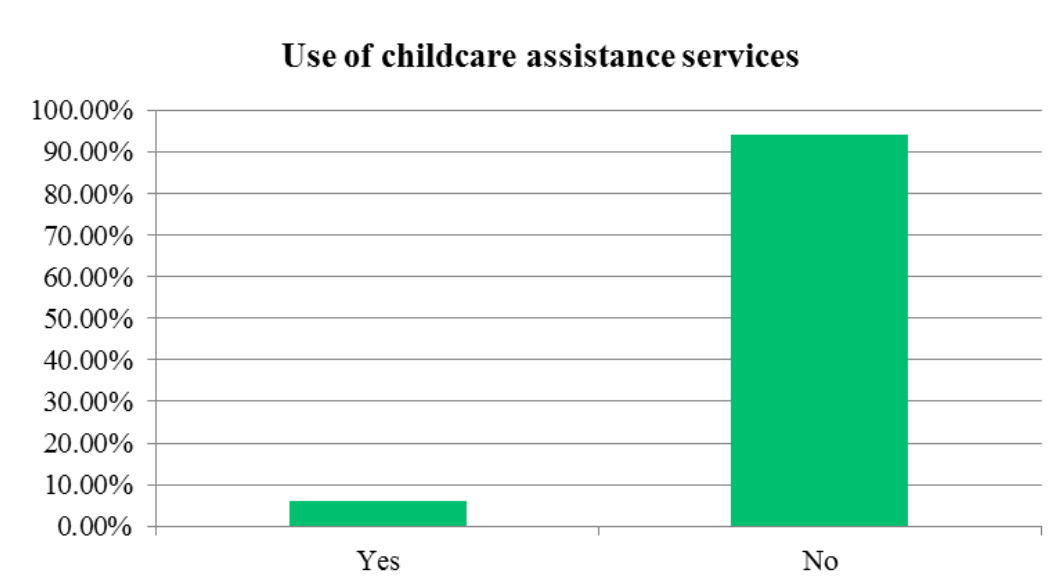


Figure 7: Use of childcare assistance services

Only three participants mentioned that they had used childcare assistance services in the previous question. One of them was a female full-time staff member aged between 21 and 29 year working in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics UWB division. She

associated childcare assistance services to discounted childcare counts or higher salary. Another participant, a temporary staff member, said that she was given an additional 3-month maternity leave after the lapse of the 6-month leave. She was happy to use the FMLA provisions to reduce the FTE substantially from 5% time to full time under paid terms. The third participant was a male full-time faculty member aged above 60 years and working in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics UWB division. He was delighted to have used the UW Bothell Discount that KinderCare offered as well as information from the WHOLEU. This showed that some participants had benefited from UW employee benefits relating to reproductive health. On the frequency of using the provided assistance services, most of the participants above (66.7%) said that they often utilized as needed while one of them used it on daily basis (33.3%). The results are shown in the figure below.

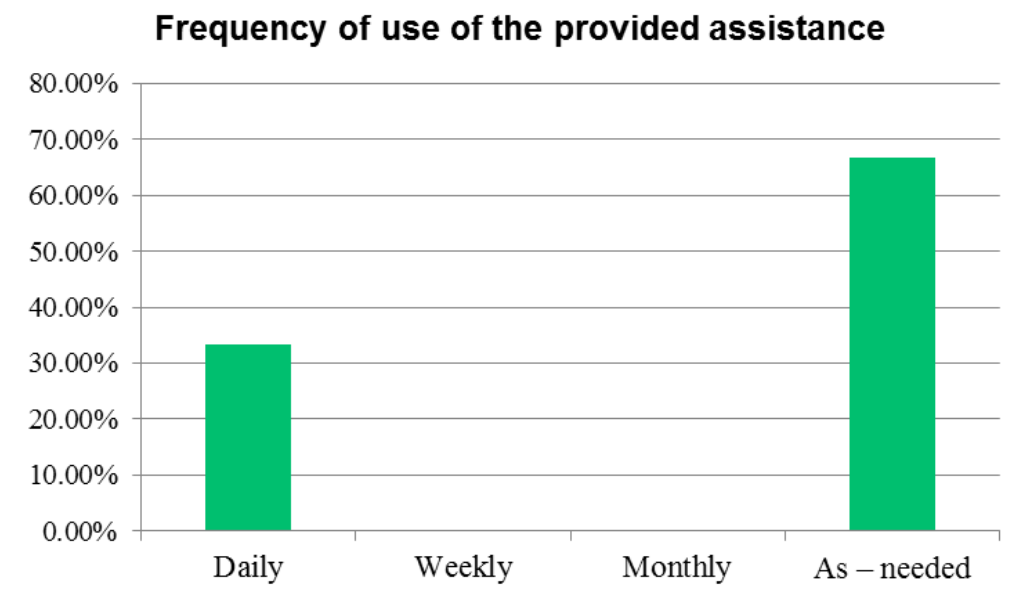


Figure 8: Frequency of use of provided assistance

Again, the three participants were asked to give their thoughts on the level of satisfaction of the services offered. All of them responded that they were somewhat satisfied as shown in the figure below.

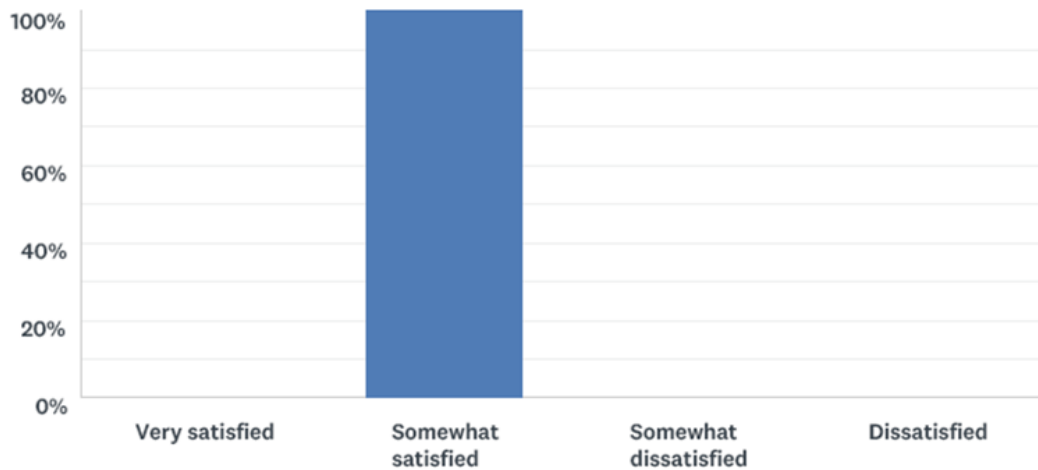


Figure 9: Satisfaction levels of participants

The three participants described earlier offered suggestions on how to improve the childcare assistance services provided. The first participant mentioned that there was need for larger discount and childcare on campus. She commented that the paid maternity leave was great because they needed more time to recover. The childcare assistance services provided more options to save money and get the children in school. Meanwhile, the third participant said that childcare was expensive especially in Seattle and thus discount options were a necessity.

When all the sampled participants were asked about use of childcare assistance services from other institutions, organizations, and family or community networks, 72.9% said that they had not utilized them. Only 25.0% had used the childcare assistance services from these providers as shown in the figure below.

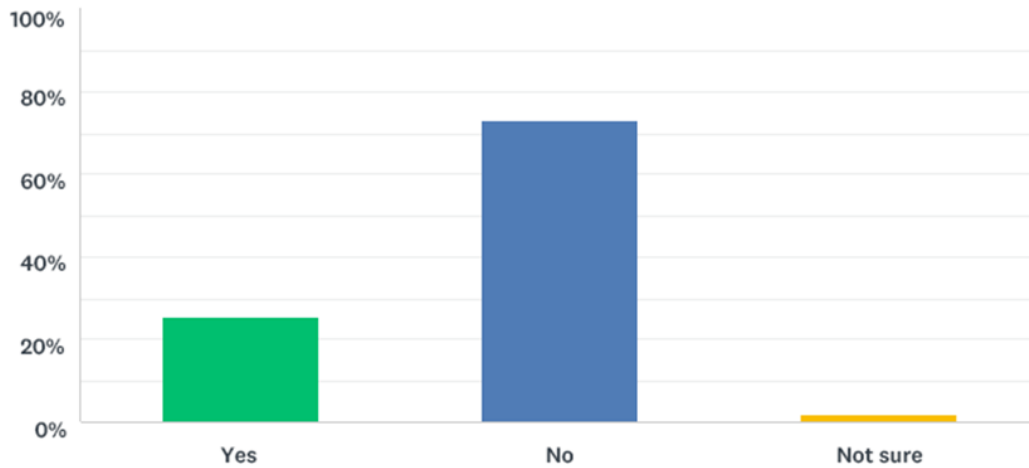


Figure 10: Use of childcare services from other providers

In the figure above, 25.0% of the participants said that they had access to same kind of assistance from providers outside UWB. Some of the responses included partner's maternity leave, family support, organized or paid for daycare and home caregivers. Others mentioned WAS childcare facilities, family leave, in-home daycare and pre-K and after school camps.

Most of the participants (53.2%) were not sure if UWB had provided employee benefits related to reproductive health. Some 29.8% were not sure if the benefits were related to reproductive health as 17.0% confided that UW had provided such benefits. These results are shown in the chart below.

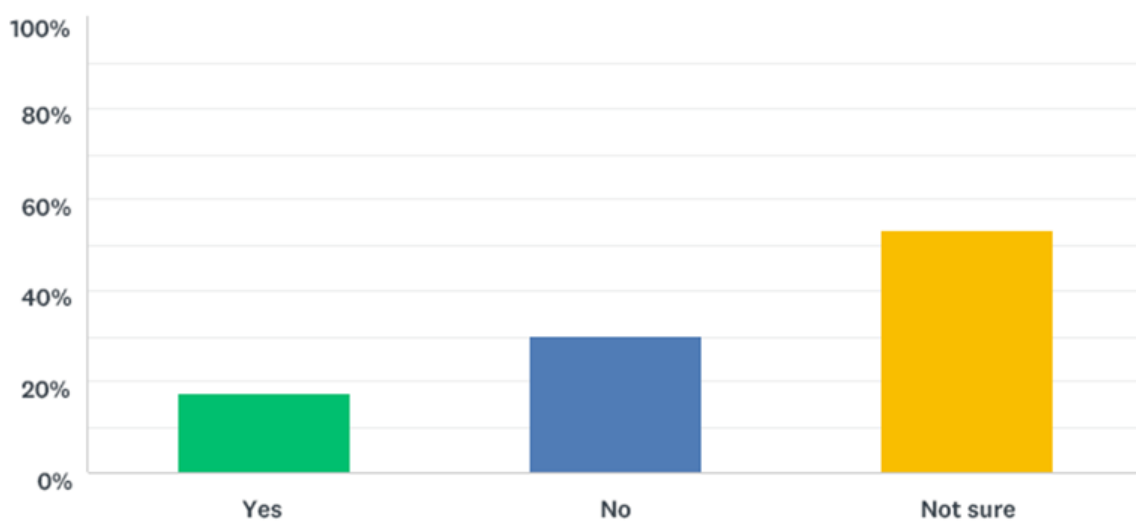


Figure 11: UW employee benefits relating to reproductive health

From those who said that UW had provided employee benefits related to reproductive health, most of them received information from their insurance providers and occasionally PEBB newsletters. This is because their health insurance covered most of the conditions associated with reproductive health. Others applauded the UW healthcare benefits to employees as provided in the FMLA law.

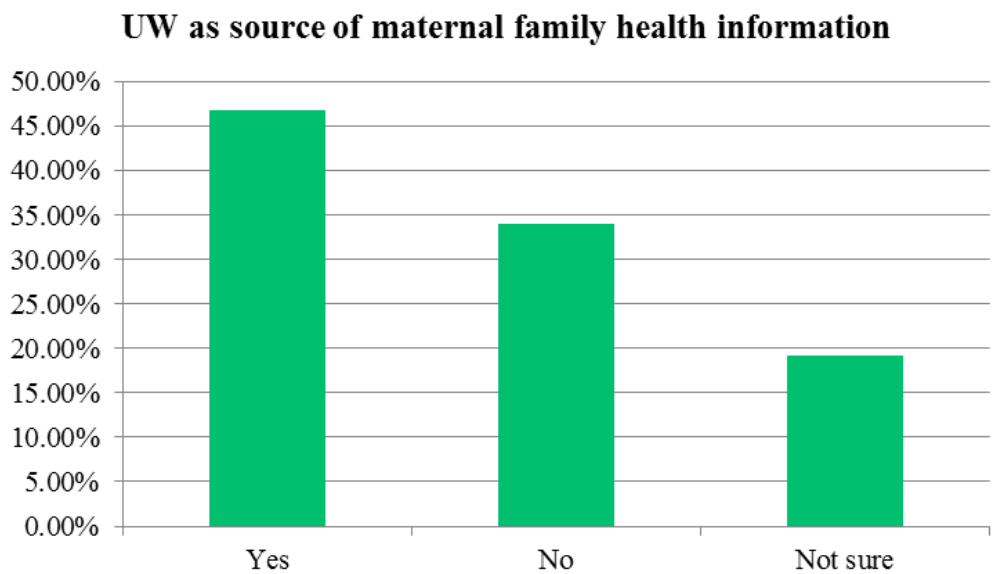


Figure 12: UW as sources of maternal family health information

As shown in the figure above, majority of the participants (46.8%) agreed that UW had provided them with information related to family planning, maternity leave or childcare assistance. A significant proportion of the participants did not agree (34.0%) while a few of them were not sure (19.2%). They got the information from emails and campus distributed flyers and brochures. Some received from tax shelter information, campus HR and benefits website, parent union and from supervisors. Others obtained the information during the new staff orientation, maternity leave assistance program and newsletters. From the information given by the participants, it shows that UW website and especially the HR web pages provided in-depth information on the childcare assistance services.

On past maternity or family leave, majority of the respondents (53.1%) had had maternity or family leave needs in the recent past. Only 46.9% had not considered taking a maternity or family leave in the past or at present as shown in the chart below.

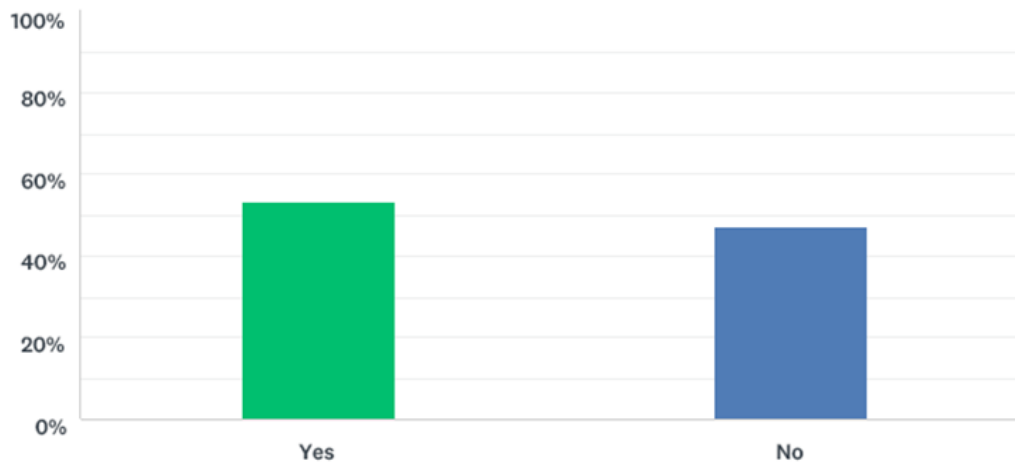


Figure 13: Maternity or family leave needs in the recent past

Furthermore, 25.0% of the participants had taken maternity or family leave within the last 2 years and also 25.0% of them within the last 5 years. A sizeable proportion of participants (20.8%) had considered maternity or family leave in the current time and within the last 15 years (20.8%). A few of them had considered a maternity leave over the last 10 years (16.7%) and more than 15 years ago (16.7%) as shown below.

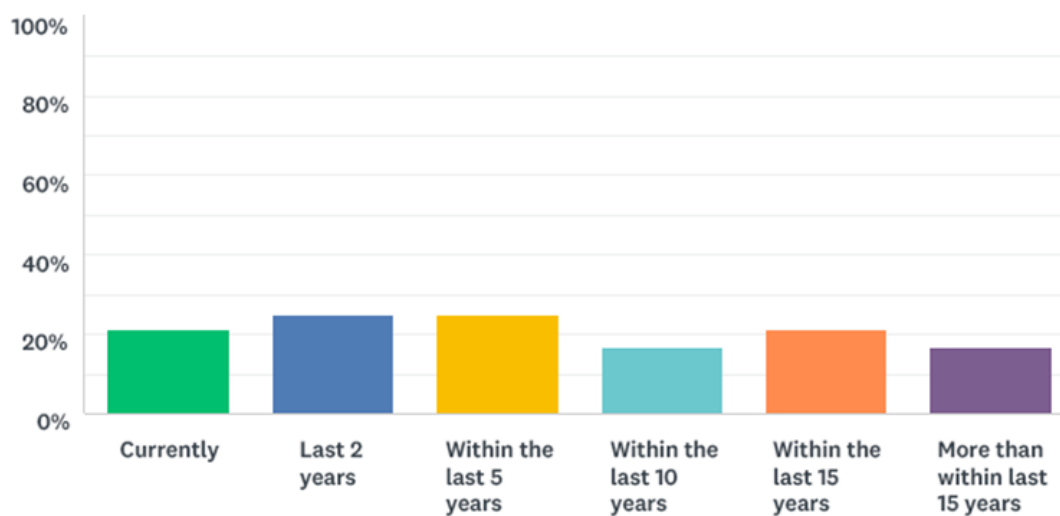


Figure 14: Length of time since taking maternity or family leave

The participants who had taken maternity or family leave showed that most of them (72.7%) had taken paid leave and was followed closely by those who went for unpaid time off (45.5%). Others had taken a reduced or adjusted service load (27.3%) and adjusted or reduced teaching load (18.2%) as shown below.

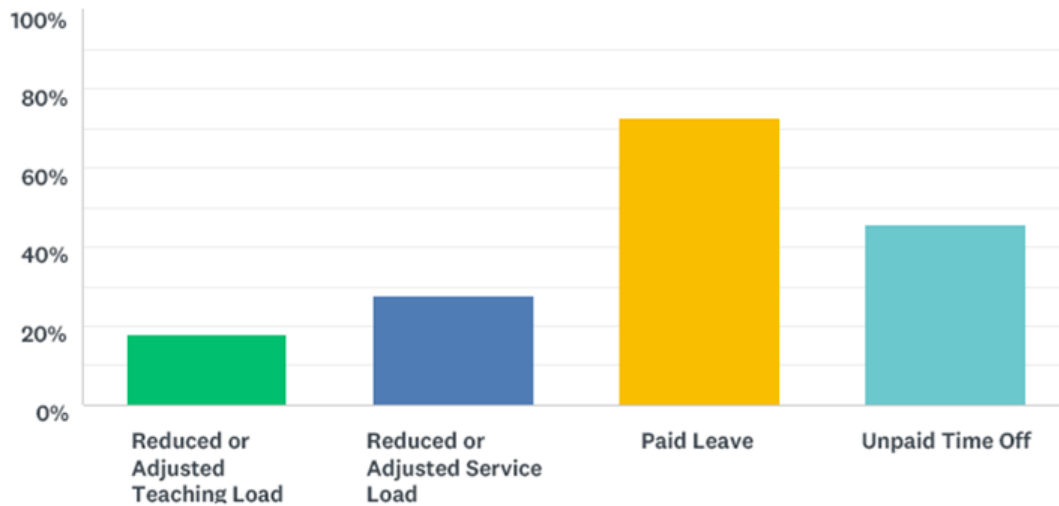


Figure 15: Arrangement with UW division or department

When asked to explain the arranged strategies on how they met any needs related to maternity or family leave, some mentioned that the time off was sufficient to handle any medical issues arising after maternity. Maternity leave is given to staff or permission from the supervisor is granted to allow the UW employee work from home. However, some participants were not satisfied with their supervisors but they were happy to get support and encouragement from colleagues. One participant said that they worked closely with the Dean to negotiate for a 5% workload so as to maintain health benefits. The participant further said that they rearranged for a lighter teaching schedule then transit to a heavy service load later. Working with the supervisor and HR were possible strategies to make leave arrangements as well as with staff support personnel within the unit. A participant mentioned work teams were beneficial in making work easier through telework while the UWB HR office facilitated leave plans using paper calendars. Supervisors approved prefilled forms and reduced workload by 50% as the HR office played received approvals from the supervisor and directions from the

doctor. Good time was given to arrange for leave after the HR and supervisors recommended for a time off before a staff could resume to regular hours in office. A participant mentioned that they had to teach night classes so as to get more time to be with kids at home or bring them to campus. Nonetheless, one respondent complained of being denied paternal leave and could not have the teaching schedule adjusted forcing the participant to reduce the service load on their own.

Majority of the participants (86.9%) said that UW should provide paid maternity and family leave benefits for the faculty and staff. This is based on the premise that UW currently lacks maternity leave benefits for faculty and staff across all campuses within the UW system. The results are as shown in the chart below.

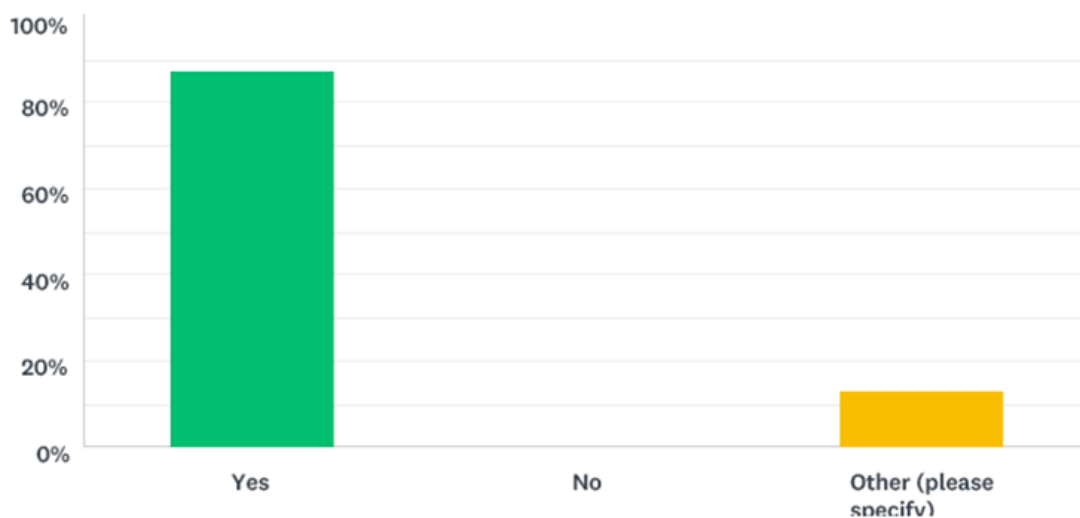


Figure 16: UW to pay maternity and family leave benefits

From the figure above, a small portion of respondents suggested that maternity leave need to be inclusive and should be changed to ‘parental’ leave. One respondent said that all workers should have their leave days harmonized and not to be restrictive. UW needed to have public support and not merely employer-based policies for benefits. While some urged UW to offer parental leave, another requested for 6 months fully paid leave to be able to meet household expenses.

Most of the participants (84.8%) thought that proper maternity leave is an extended leave with normal salary payment. Fewer participants (4.4%) were of the opinion for short leave with additional salary payment. Others specified a one quarter leave for faculty with normal payment or an extended maternity leave plan for both parents. Individuals could be allowed to choose the most suitable plan as well.

Majority of the participants (95.9%) believed that diversity, equity, and inclusion contributed to an overall excellence and good campus environment for an academic institution. The results are as shown in the figure below.

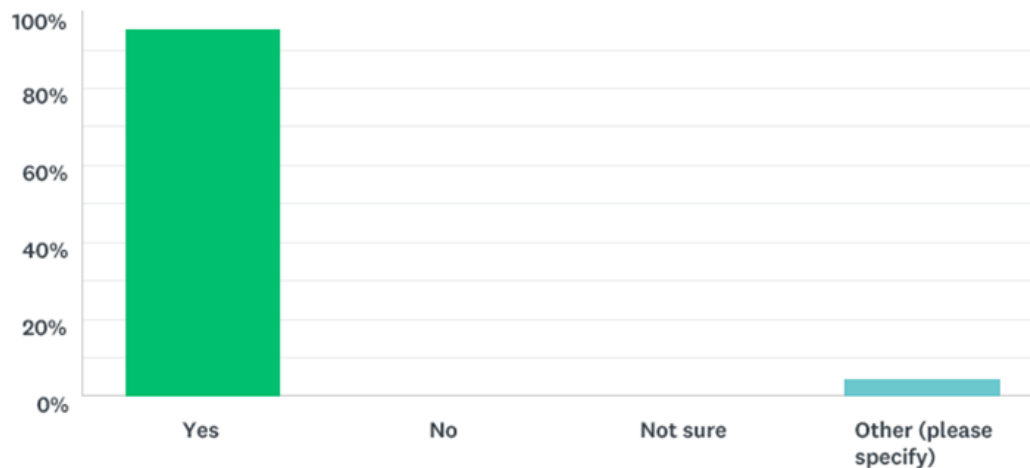


Figure 17: Need for diversity, equity, and inclusion

One participant, 38 and married with two children, was of the opinion that diversity, equity, and inclusion should not be over-emphasized while another said that most diverse organizations become dysfunctional as they pursue inclusive policies. Most of the respondents (82.6%) were of the opinion that policies on maternity or family leave as well as childcare had significant impact on recruitment and diversity retention among faculty and staff. About 8.7% were not sure while 4.4% said no to new policies on maternity or family leave as well as childcare. Another participant mentioned that the least diverse organizations such as technology firms were the most socially responsible. Another respondent said that the maternity leave policies had no impact on recruitment and retention of any candidate.

The results further showed that policies on maternity leave and child assistance have an impact on recruitment and retention of faculty and staff and so UW should provide paid maternity and family leave ($\chi^2 (3) = 17.23, p = 0.001$). The results were statistically significant, and as such, the null hypothesis is rejected. These results support the alternative hypothesis that Paid Family and Medical Leave Act will require the University of Washington to change its current policies on maternal leave and assistance towards reproductive health and childcare.

The significant results of the nominal regression model ($\chi^2 (3) = 11.86, p = 0.008$) shows that policies on paid maternity leave and child assistance have an impact on recruitment and retention of faculty and staff. Therefore, UW should change its current policies on maternal leave and assistance towards reproductive health and childcare. The odds ratio ($OR = 11.67$) indicates that the participants who wanted UW to provide paid maternity leave and child assistance were 11.67 times more likely to be of the opinion that policies on maternity leave and childcare assistance have an impact on recruitment and retention of diversity amongst faculty and staff. The results indicate that the new law on Paid Family and Maternity Leave (PFML) has a higher likelihood to impact the university's leave policy. These results indicate that Paid Family and Maternity Leave stand a higher chance of being designed for federal FMLA. The law will obligate employers to grant paid family and maternity leave to their employees. Notably, employees can choose to accrue paid leave benefits or supplement for paid family and maternity leave. The implication on UWB as an employer indicates that employees will be paid more time off than earlier practice. These results indicate that PFML has significant impact on the management of human resources especially on recruitment and retention of faculty and staff.

6.0 Discussion

The results of this study have shown that family leave and maternity policies of UWB are similar to those of leading higher education institutions in Washington State. These family leave and maternity policies if implemented well help employees to balance competing family as well as job responsibilities. Participants in this study were faculty members and staff to whom majority of them had not utilized childcare assistance services. The reason for not using the services is the unpaid time off or leave which is disadvantageous to the UWB employee. However, some faculty and staff members are somewhat satisfied with the level of services offered. These findings are consistent with the arguments of Addati, Cassirer, and Gilchrist (34) that American public institutions does not guarantee paid family, parental and paternity leave to its employees at the federal level. Even after the passing of the FMLA law in 1993 by the US Congress passed, few employees have benefited from job-protected leave. The results confirm that childcare assistance services benefit employees through discounted childcare counts and additional time off after the lapse of the 6-month maternity leave. FMLA provisions can reduce the FTE substantially from 5-50% time to full time under paid terms.

The study also showed that UWB employees rarely exploit the KinderCare discounts, The WHOLEU information, and other provisions of UW employee benefits relating to reproductive health. UW does not comply with the newly enacted PFML and FMLA either. The study is consistent with the findings of Rossin (51) that over 87 percent of pregnant working women in the US neither enjoy employer-provided paid leave nor attend prenatal checkups. Owing to the pressure to earn and support the family, such mothers return to work early without bonding with the newborn baby or providing sufficient breastfeeding to the child. Poor reproductive health means that the country will continue to report high preterm infant deaths (Rossin 53; Burtle and Bezruchka 32). The study indicates that UWB welfare programs require a total overhaul as they do not support the fundamental objectives of ensuring well-

being of its employees. The low utility of the welfare programs has been aggravated by increased stigma and criminalization of those who utilize public benefits. According to Gustafson (12), majority of welfare recipients are often stereotyped as manipulative of the welfare system and thus become subjects of condescending government and public attitude when they request for parental leave.

The results further agree with Bartel et al (6) that paid leave has greater impact on nursing mothers than unpaid family leave. Some of the UWB faculty and staff believe that the childcare assistance services offer larger discount and childcare on campus. Meanwhile, paid maternity leave is great because the mother needs more time to recover while providing more options to save money and get the children in school. Childcare is expensive especially in Seattle and thus discounted options are a necessity to substitute for additional family income required. The low levels of implementation of UWB paid family leave policies after enactment seem consistent with perceptions by other institutions, organizations, and family or community networks. Since many employees have not utilized them either, they showed that the FMLA law and policies were not being followed to the latter. Elsewhere, few employees have had to seek their own alternatives without the support of their employers. Such people find the parental leave system inefficient and less accommodative. For instance, some mothers of newborns choose to use partner's maternity leave, seek family support, or organize for daycare and home caregivers just to hold on to work. Others have had to turn to WAS childcare facilities, family leave, in-home daycare and pre-K and after school camps.

The study showed that majority of the employees, faculty and staff, were not sure if UWB had provided employee benefits related to reproductive health. However, they are certain that the recently passed PFML would guarantee benefits of family leave and maternal reproductive health. These results will help lend support to the arguments of Kang, Meyers and Romich (3) that Washington's Paid Maternity Leave did not offer maternity leave benefits to

low-income women. These authors had shown that nursing mothers from the low-income group exhibited low enrolment to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP) (Kang, Meyers and Romich 3). This shows that apart from providing paid leave, it is a necessity for UW to offer employee benefits related to reproductive health. Faculty and staff should be encouraged to seek more information from their insurance providers, PEBB newsletters, and UWB HR office or website on healthcare benefits to employees.

The study also showed that majority of the faculty and staff believed in diversity, equity, and inclusion as part of overall excellence and good campus environment. However, it was the feeling of some staff that diversity, equity, and inclusion should not be over-emphasized. Others termed it catastrophic as it was likely to render the organization dysfunctional as they pursue inclusive policies. These arguments mirror those of Bersamin et al (159) that school-based health services had minimal impact on reproductive health due to social disapproval, lack of health insurance and medical mistrust. There is need for comprehensive reproductive health services because UW institution has diverse student and faculty population. Policies on maternity or family leave as well as childcare had significant impact on recruitment and diversity retention among faculty and staff. The study shows that faculty and staff support the implementation of new policies on paid maternity or family leave as well as childcare assistance. While a staff member noted that least diverse organizations such as technology firms were the most diverse, UWB reproductive health policies need to address psychosocial and demographic factors impeding flow of information.

Majority of UWB staff and faculty believe that current maternity leave alongside other strategies have an impact on recruitment and retention of any candidate. Paid family medical leave is just one of many other ranges of resources such as housing, child care and tuition credits needed to recruit and retain faculty and staff. UW had provided them with information

related to family planning, maternity leave or childcare assistance. The study showed that UWB needs to adhere to the parental leave policy by implementing the new paid FMLA to the latter. The study further showed that faculty and staff are not concerned about access to information but rather the implementation of the paid leave policies. They can access information from emails and campus distributed flyers and brochures. Some received from tax shelter information, campus HR and benefits website, parent union and from supervisors. Others obtain the information during the new staff orientation, maternity leave assistance program and newsletters. Besides, UW website and especially the HR web pages are rich in providing in-depth information on the childcare assistance services.

Although fewer faculty and staff had benefited from past maternity or family leave, the study revealed that there is a huge potential for the university's maternity leave policy to impact recruitment and retention of employees. The policy makes it lawful for employers to grant paid leave for their employees on parental leave. Employees have the option of supplementing for PFML benefits or using accrued paid leave benefits. The implication on UWB as an employer indicates that more employees will be paid more time off than earlier practice. These results show that PFML has significant impact on the management of human resources especially on recruitment and retention of faculty and staff. If the maternity leave policies are well implemented, a sizeable number of them will consider taking a maternity or family leave going into the future. Earlier, most felt that the policies and attitude of UWB management was not encouraging and sufficient to guarantee maternity leave benefits. This behavior of UWB management was inconsistent with the view of Employment Security Department (2) that policy alternatives should guarantee paid leave whenever a staff or faculty member is unwell or gives birth. The findings indicate that most of the faculty and staff members who had taken maternity or family leave were on unpaid leave. Yet, UWB leave policy alternatives guarantee benefits and compensation relating to child birth, maternal reproductive health and physical

welfare of its faculty and staff. Given that a significant percentage of faculty and staff still take unpaid time off, it means that the new policy for the University of Washington is not considered as satisfactory. This is because many of the faculty and staff not taking paid leave can only resort to reducing or adjusting service loads and adjusting or reducing teaching load.

UWB faculty and staff who participated in this study are eligible for paid family leave under FMLA for 12 weeks. Nevertheless, the leave policy is not supportive enough to balance family and work environments because faculty and staff still have to work at reduced workload. This explains why faculty and staff pursued additional arranged strategies on how they are to meet any needs related to maternity or family leave. With unpaid FMLA leave or unpaid parental leave, some seek time off to handle any medical issues arising after maternity. At the moment, UWB policies on maternity leave negatively impact on recruitment and retention of candidates. This follows a number of reasons. First, the study shows that maternity leave is given to staff or permission from the supervisor is granted to allow the UW employee work from home with no pay. Even though some staff and faculty were not satisfied with their supervisors, they were happy to get support and encouragement from colleagues. Second, some faculty and staff seek permission from Deans of faculties to negotiate for a percent off their workload so as to maintain work benefits. The various departments facilitate lighter teaching schedule then transit to a heavy service load afterwards, which can be strenuous. Lastly, seeking alternative strategies to make leave arrangements remains expensive as the staff or faculty member is on unpaid leave.

UWB is best placed to implement the new policies on Paid Family and Maternity Leave. This will cater for well-being and welfare of faculty and staff members. As many find it tempting to seek jobs in other organizations, UWB HR office has been steadfast in facilitating leave plans using paper calendars and coordinating with supervisors to approve prefilled forms. The learning institution understands that satisfied employees encourage higher retention within

the organization and as such increased output to organizational goals. The new maternity and leave policies will make it easier for faculty and staff to arrange for leave upon the recommendation of HR and supervisors.

This study showed that maternity and parental leave policies of UWB do not encourage recruitment and retention of employees. This follows the realization that the new Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave law will require UW to change some of its current policies. Majority of the faculty and staff suggested that UW should provide paid maternity and family leave benefits for the faculty and staff. This is based on the premise that UW currently lacks maternity leave benefits for faculty and staff. Some suggested that maternity leave need to be inclusive and should be changed to 'parental' leave or all workers to have their leave days harmonized without restrictions. The study shows that UW needs to have public support and not merely employer-based policies for benefits. Some leading academic institutions like Lewis and Clark College in Oregon have successfully implemented paid maternity and parental leave policies. UWB can take the opportunity to also implement fully paid leave for its faculty and staff members. The most proper maternity leave is an extended leave with normal salary payment or short leave with additional salary payment

The study results showed that UW faculty and staff who desire policies paid maternity leave and child assistance are more likely to become beneficiaries of Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The findings confirm that policies on maternity leave and child assistance constitute key strategies that impact on recruitment and retention of faculty and staff. The study concludes that UW should assess its current parental leave policies so as to comply with the Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave Act. To do so, it will have to change its current policies on maternal leave and assistance towards reproductive health and childcare. The rationale here is that policies on paid maternity leave and child assistance have an impact on recruitment and retention of faculty and staff.

Despite the limitations of sample size and gender representations in this study, leave-taking among faculty and staff members mirror results from other studies. The results of the nominal regression model discussed earlier are significant based on the qualitative and quantitative data. Most of related studies have made attempts to address the family leave policies and retention within the organization. For example, the results of this study are consistent with the findings of Nandi et al. (441) who established that Washington State and New Jersey may have entered enterprise-level bargaining for leave but are yet to have the policies take effect. Based on a sample of 87 studies on parental leave policies, leave policies in Washington State are influenced by employer size requirement for leave eligibility. Employees who have worked less than 1250 hours or working for smaller employers are not eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave.

Further to that, Zuckerman (11) discussed the results found in the longitudinal Census report that female employees at the University of California were more likely to return to work under paid leave terms within 3-5 months compared to those on unpaid leave. The author further hinted that the University had saved money relating to training of new employees and other employee retention programs. The study also reported that 99 percent of working fathers desired paid paternity leave. University staff exhibit increased occupational stress due to low morale, poor quality of work, high student to staff ratios and diminished resources. Zuckerman's report also showed that parental leave policy guides the operations manual of University of Iowa despite the state lacking legislative history on paid family leave. The report reiterates that the university upholds breastfeeding rights and pregnancy-related disability. Sick leave and vacation leave caters for any disability that is pregnancy-related.

Lundquist, Misra and O'Meara (343) used the mixed methods approach of data collected between December 2008 and February 2009 to survey 349 faculty and staff at the University of Massachusetts. Using regression and descriptive statistics, the authors found that

male leave-taking is of legitimate concern as many fear being accused of ‘milking the system’ or being less dedicated to their spouses and care-giving responsibilities. The university recognizes that primary parenting can be offered by more than one parent in the household. This encourages working fathers to feel comfortable while taking the leave hence overcoming the stigma associated with parental leave use. The authors further reiterate that men and women faculty members can devote to child rearing but undermining paternity leave inhibits the child-father bonding. Most US employers are not compelled to pay maternity leave under the federal law.

7.0 Limitations of Study and Recommendations for Future Research

The main limitation of this research study pertains to its sample size. Only 52 study subjects participated in the study making it a rather small sample size considering that the University of Washington has a workforce that exceeds 25,000 employees. The use of a small sample size was mainly due to the limited time frame for conducting the study, given the fact that the survey was posted for only two weeks online. Even so, this has an adverse impact on the generalizability of the study findings to other populations and settings. It is therefore recommended that future studies on the topic should strive to enlist a larger sample size from the target population. The data also had gender limitation as the sample collected constituted majority women. This had the effect of providing a one-sided perspective of parental leave policies from working mothers and least from working fathers. Future research can look into gender perspectives in the implementation of Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) when adjusted for childcare costs, job satisfaction and burnout.

8.0 Policy Analysis

8.1 Analysis of UW Current Policy

The University of Washington has put in place policies on maternity leave. At the moment, this institution has in place Medical and Family Leave Without Salary. This is offered to both male and female faculty members for the purpose of caring for their babies, children whom they have recently adopted, and family members who are very sick, including domestic partners (University of Washington 2). It is notable that when Family Care Leave or Faculty Sick Leave is not applicable or is completely exhausted, the University of Washington faculty or staff member is allowed to apply for a leave of absence with no salary. Faculty and staff members are granted both Leave Without Salary and Parental Leave without wages (University of Washington 2). This means that they are not paid for the duration of the leave period. The employee can go back to his/her job after the Leave Without Salary or Parental Leave ends. Overall, the institution offers 16 weeks of unpaid maternity leave but not even a single week of paid maternal leave.

Details of UW's policy indicate that it does not guarantee paid maternity leave. In essence, the university's maternal leave policy shows that the policy lacks maternity leave benefits not just for staff members, but for faculty as well. This is a major problem for UW as it can negatively affect employee morale and staff retention (Casper 12). The University of Washington needs to consider offering maternity and family leave benefits to its employees. The features of the institution's current policy are shown in the following table:

Table 2: Features of UW's Current Policy at a Glance

	Features	University of Washington's Existing Leave Policy
1	Type of leave	Medical and Family Leave Without Salary
2	Unpaid	Those who qualify for the leave are not paid for the duration of the leave period.
3	Beneficiaries	Male and female faculty members

4	Purpose of leave	To allow the employees to care for their newborn babies, children whom they have recently adopted, and family members who are very sick.
5	Maximum length of the parental/ maternity leave	16 weeks

8.2 Establishing Criteria for Evaluation

The criteria for evaluation and determining alternatives entail answering the following questions: firstly, does the policy alternative offer family and maternity leave benefits for staff members and faculty? This means that for the policy alternative to be considered acceptable, it has to at least guarantee female workers at the university who are expecting a new child leave benefit. The second question that would be used to evaluate the policy alternative is as follows: Does it comply with the newly enacted PFML? Does it comply with FMLA? In other words, the policy will be expected to be in compliance with both the newly passed law and the FMLA. It is notable that part of the compliance to PFML denotes that the policy alternative must guarantee paid leave whenever the university staff or faculty member has to take care of a family member who is feeling unwell or get a new child (Employment Security Department 2). The leave period can be offered for a maximum of 12 weeks.

The third question is: Does the policy alternative provide employee benefits related to reproductive health? This means that the new policy for the University of Washington has to guarantee such benefits for it to be deemed adequate. Otherwise it will not be considered as satisfactory. Fourthly, the policy alternative will be assessed by asking the question: Does it entail providing information pertaining to child care assistance, maternity leave, and family planning? It is expected that the new policy will offer these crucial information to new parents who are seeking parental leave. Furthermore, the policy alternative will also be evaluated by asking: Does it take into consideration inclusion, equity, and diversity? A good policy has to consider the issues of employee diversity, equity, and inclusion. Overall, the optimal policy

alternative should meet these criteria. It has to include diversity, inclusion and equity due to the fact that these three are the principles of the University of Washington campus based on the institution's mission. The three are not mentioned in the state's newly enacted law.

8.3 Recommendations

The policy recommendation is for UW to quickly adapt and comply with WA PFML Act. This is due to the fact that the newly enacted law is a good law to implement as it is adequate in guaranteeing paid parental/maternity leave particularly to mothers with new born children or who have just adopted a child. Besides, the 2017 WA PFLM Act has effectively addressed the problem of the state law enacted in 2007 intended to offer family leave at partial pay. The 2007 law was ineffective because it was not funded hence family leave at partial pay was never paid to parents who had a new child. The UW should thus take the new law right away. However, in implementing it, there are quite a few policy models that the University of Washington can follow. The policy models are from other educational institutions in the State of Washington that have created parent leave policies which are in compliance with the new Paid Family and Medical Leave Act. These are described below:

8.3.1 Policy Model 1: Eastern Washington University's Paid Family and Medical Leave (EWU PFML)

The first policy model is the PFML offered by the Eastern Washington University (EWU). At this institution, the leave policy was designed to be in line with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The paid leave is aimed at providing a supportive environment for every faculty member to balance family and work commitments. The basic leave entitlement includes the worker's own serious health condition; birth and care of an infant; caring for a child, parent, or spouse of the university worker suffering from a severe health condition; and placement for foster care or adoption of a child (Eastern Washington University

1). To qualify, the worker must have been hired at EWU or another university/college or agency in the state of Washington for a period of no less than one year.

The paid leave cannot be substituted for unpaid FMLA leave. Employees that qualify to take the leave may take up to twelve weeks of leave in a one-year period. If both the mother and father work for EWU, they are allowed to only take a combined total of twelve weeks of paid parental leave in a one-year period. In this way, this policy is not only compliant with the federal FMLA law, but also with the State's new WA PFML Act (Eastern Washington University 2). The University of Washington can design its maternity leave policies to resemble this one being implemented at Eastern Washington University.

8.3.2 Policy Model 2: Washington State University's Paid Family and Medical Leave (WSU PFML)

The second policy model is Washington State University's (WSU) PFML. It can be abbreviated as WSU PFML. This university, whose main branch is located in Pullman, WA, is in the final stages of developing the WSU PFML considering that the State's new law, namely PFML, is relatively new as it was passed quite recently in 2017. Washington State University's paid policy is completely in line with the new law and therefore offers a great policy model that the University of Washington can follow. As described in the official website of WSU, the institution's policy on paid family and medical leave would be funded by both the university itself as the employer and the employees who comprise staff and faculty members (Washington State University 2).

There are specific conditions for eligibility. For employees at WSU to be eligible for the paid family and medical leave, they should have worked for at least 820 hours within the qualifying period. It is worth mentioning that the qualifying period, according to WSU PFML policy, refers to the initial four of the past five completed calendar quarters beginning from the day that the employee is intending to take leave (Washington State University 2). For the

benefit to be taken by the worker, there must be a qualifying leave event, which can either be medical or family. A medical leave is one that a WSU employee takes for the purpose of caring for himself or herself because of a medical event or sickness (Washington State University 3). On the other hand, a family leave is a leave taken for the purpose of: caring for a family member who is sick or is experiencing a medical event; caring and bonding after the birth of an infant or the placement of a child aged below eighteen years; and particular events that are connected to the military (Washington State University 3).

The leave provides 12-18 weeks of leave. Washington State University's employees covered by WSU PFML policy will enjoy up to twelve weeks, or three months, of paid leave. In some situations, they may get up to eighteen weeks, or four and a half, months of paid leave. The benefits are a percentage of the worker's average wage per week. It is notable that the benefit wage replacement is up to ninety percent of weekly pay (Washington State University 3). The maximum per week is \$1,000 whereas the minimum is \$100.

8.3.3 Policy Model 3: Gonzaga University's Faculty Maternity, Adoption and Parental Leave (GU FMAPL) Policy

The third policy model is that used by Gonzaga University. This learning institution adopted it in the year 2016. The policy is known as Faculty Maternity, Adoption, and Parental Leave (FMAPL) policy. It is notable that this educational institution is a humanistic, Catholic, Jesuit university (Serantes 2). Its main branch is located in Spokane, Washington. According to the policy, members of the faculty who qualify for the leave have a full semester of paid leave for the purpose of bonding with their newly adopted child or newborn infant. The policy effectively puts the university on the cutting edge as Gonzaga is a leader in offering this type of leave not only among Jesuit and Catholic universities, but also amongst all learning institutions within the State of Washington (Serantes 2). It is worth mentioning that GU FMAPL policy is in line with the school's mission.

GU FMAPL policy replaces the institution's previous policy. The old policy did not have a comprehensive standard. The previous policy was not implemented partly because top officials at the university were seeking a more equitable outline which was inclusive of both faculty and staff members (Serantes 2). The old policy complied with the Washington Family Leave Act and Protection Discrimination Law that offer up to eighteen weeks of unpaid leave when used consecutively. In addition, it was in compliance with the federal law FMLA that guarantees twelve weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave (Serantes 2). The new parental leave policy at Gonzaga University not only offers leave consistent with these federal and state statutes, but it also provides compensation to all faculty members, who are on parental leave. Additionally, GU FMAPL policy offers paid leave for the primary caregiver in situations of adoption where the adopted child is below five years old (Serantes 3). In essence, the fact that this policy offers paid medical and family leave of up to 12 weeks implies that it is in compliance with the new state law PFML. As such, GU FMAPL policy is one of the best policy models considering that nearly all schools, colleges and universities in Washington State do not offer paid parental leave currently.

These three are examples of policy models. They show how comparable institutions of higher learning within Washington State have provided paid parental leave to new parents. Each of these universities is smaller than the University of Washington not just in terms of student population, but in terms of endowment as well. For example, UW has an endowment of over \$2.8 billion, Washington State University's is about \$1.2 billion, Gonzaga University's is \$276 million, and Eastern Washington University's is roughly \$52 million. If Gonzaga, WSU, and ESU with their relatively smaller endowments can offer paid family and medical leave to their staff and ensure compliance with WA PFML, the University of Washington can also offer the same. All in all, what is happening currently is that universities, colleges, and schools throughout Washington State, just like other employers, are preparing to implement the

mandatory state-mandated insurance program, WA PFML. The law requires that beginning the year 2020, employees across Washington would start utilizing the benefits. Therefore, employers, including learning institutions, are currently creating their own leave policies that are consistent with WA PFML Act, or modifying their existing policies to comply with the new law.

9.0 Conclusion

The WA PFML will have far reaching impact on UW. As employers in Washington State prepare for one of the biggest changes of employment law in the state's history, they should understand how it will affect the productivity of their workforce. The University of Washington is a large employer within the state, and it may have to review its strategies of managing its human capital to avoid shortages of labor at any given time. This research paper explored how the university's leave policy will be impacted by the new law WA PFML. The findings reveal that WA PFML will affect some of the policies designed for federal FMLA. The new law does allow employers to ask employees to utilize accrued paid leave during parental leave. Employees have also been given a choice on whether to use accrued paid leave benefits as supplement for PFML benefits. The impact of this on UW as an employer is that it shall be paying more time off than intended. Therefore, the new law will have significant impact on the management of human resources at the University of Washington.

There are three policy models that the UW can follow to implement WA PFML. These include the Paid Family and Medical Leave of the Eastern Washington University; Faculty Maternity, Adoption, and Parental Leave (FMAPL) policy of Gonzaga University; and Paid Family and Medical Leave of Washington State University. They provide great examples of how similar institutions of higher learning within Washington State have provided paid parental leave to new parents.

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