

## A STUDY TO INVESTIGATE TEACHER WORK LIFE BALANCE THROUGH THE LENS OF SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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### Abstract

This paper explores the multifaceted nature of work-life balance (WLB) by examining the complex interplay of independent, dependent, mediating, and moderating variables that influence employees' experiences and outcomes. We discuss key independent variables such as organizational practices, individual characteristics, and external demands, along with dependent variables including job satisfaction, psychological well-being, and employee retention. The role of mediating variables—such as job satisfaction and coping strategies—is highlighted, emphasizing their significance in elucidating the mechanisms through which WLB affects employee outcomes. Additionally, moderating variables like individual differences and organizational culture are identified as crucial factors that shape the effectiveness of WLB initiatives. The study concludes by identifying critical gaps in current WLB research and provides recommendations for future studies. These recommendations include cross-cultural comparisons, longitudinal studies, sector-specific research, a focus on diverse demographic factors, the impact of remote work, evaluation of interventions and best practices, and a mental health focus. By addressing these areas, future research can enhance the understanding of WLB, facilitating the development of effective organizational practices that promote employee well-being and improve overall productivity.

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## INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance (WLB) is a multifaceted concept that reflects the equilibrium between personal life and professional responsibilities. The modern society faces growing work demands together with quick advances in technology and globalization which creates substantial concerns about maintainable personal and professional life balance (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Organizational efforts to increase productivity through business objectives often push employee well-being to a secondary status which produces both organizational and personal disadvantages (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998).

Work-life balance surpasses basic time management by representing stressful interactions between work obligations and family and personal responsibilities (Hill et al., 2001). A failure to achieve work-life balance results in job dissatisfaction and burnout along with reduced physical and mental health according to Kahn et al. (1964) and Williams & Alliger (1994). Work-life balance understanding has become vital for business leaders and government officials and broader social groups for modern times.

Work-life balance has developed its meaning through both societal and economic changes in history. During the initial period of the 20th century most workers in the labor force were male full-timers while female responsibilities primarily focused on household duties and child care according to Duncan and Morgan (1989). Women starting to work outside the home during this period started to merge their work responsibilities with their duties at home. The work-life balance paradigm shifted because it required more extensive views about how different family types along with changing gender positions and life situations need to be supported (Frone et al., 1992). The increasing number of dual-income and single-parent families complicates workplace and home life integration (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). The changing family environments create intensified workplace-home demands that prevent most people from reaching work-life harmony (Voydanoff, 2005). The analysis of work-life balance determinants has become a primary focus through research studies because Ten Brummelhuis and Bakker (2012) identify organizational culture together with job demands as well as individual characteristics.

The establishment of balanced life-work harmony stands as an essential necessity for various important reasons. The implementation of balance between professional responsibilities and personal sphere leads employees to better health and satisfaction in their jobs and their entire lives (Gonzalez-Morales et al., 2014). Higher quality personal life experiences outside work lead workers to demonstrate strong commitment levels and higher productivity and organizational dedication (Haar et al., 2014). Employees who face high workloads combined with scarce personal downtime often find themselves stressed out and exhausting due to which they frequently leave their positions (Higgins et al., 2000).

When organizations perceive work-life harmony differently from reality it affects their general public standing. Firms that offer support for employee work-life balance development tend to maintain an edge in attracting qualified applicants and holding onto valuable personnel (Ford et al., 2011). The job market shows stakeholders that organizations which fail to support work-life balance miss out on talented Millennial and Generation Z candidates (Hewlett & Sherbin, 2011).

Work-life balance promotion yields benefits for operational success according to Baral and Bhargava (2011). According to Allen et al. (2013) data shows family-friendly organizational practices lead to better employee morale and loyalty together with decreased absenteeism. Organizations that develop work-life balance supportive environments create more motivated staff members leading to higher productivity rates.

Individuals who want to achieve work-life balance need job characteristics combined with personal traits alongside support systems to do so (Bakker et al., 2008). Job demands that involve workload along with hours spent at work and job complexities play a major role in how people experience and view the attainment of balance. Work-life conflict develops when high job demands prevent workers from performing their family and personal responsibilities (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985)..

Conversely, job resources—such as autonomy, support from supervisors, and flexible work arrangements—can alleviate work-life conflict and enhance balance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). For instance, flexible work options, such as telecommuting and flexible hours, have gained traction in recent years as employers recognize their potential to support employee well-being and productivity (Hill et al., 2001). Research suggests that employees with access to flexible arrangements often report higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of stress (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

Additionally, individual characteristics—such as personality traits, coping strategies and family responsibilities—play a crucial role in determining work-life balance (Demerouti et al., 2001).

- *The current study tries to investigate the concept of WLB research related to employee's perception in education sector.*
- *The current study also tries to find out the independent, dependent and mediating variables of work life balance research related to employees perception in education sector.*
- *Its also tries to link the relationship between WLB and employees psychological behavior through meta-analysis.*

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### LITERATURE REVIEW ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Work-life balance (WLB) in the education sector has garnered increasing attention as educators face unique challenges that impact their ability to maintain a healthy equilibrium between their professional and personal lives. The combination of classroom teaching activities with administrative tasks and emotional dedication to student engagement typically causes major stress and burnout among educational personnel (Haar et al., 2014). Satisfactory work-life balance stands essential for educational staff because it leads to better job satisfaction and reduces staff turnover and produces better well-being outcomes (Baker et al., 2019).

The characteristics of educational work constitute a fundamental element that affects workers' life balance in this sector. Elementary teachers commonly extend their professional work beyond regular office hours to develop lessons and assignments as well as participate in mandatory development activities (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Educators find it increasingly difficult to fulfill family duties and practice self-care because their work schedule exceeds normal hours. Work-life conflict at high levels results in lower job satisfaction and higher stress among teachers according to Baker et al. (2019) in their studies.

Educational institutions serve as fundamental agents that enable educators to manage professional and private life better. Schools together with universities which implement flexible work arrangements and mental health resources and foster well-being culture enable their staff to achieve balanced lives (Higgins et al., 2000). Educational institutions that create individualized professional development plans along with flexible

work scheduling options demonstrate improved educator perceptions about their work-life balance.

Work-life balance effectiveness among educators depends on personal elements consisting of their coping methods and their available social networks in addition to institutional components. Educational professionals with effective coping strategies who maintain good relationships at school and home demonstrate stronger abilities to handle their vocational responsibilities. The work environment and personal resilience development contribute to better work-life balance outcomes within the educational field (Haar et al., 2014).

### **WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN THE ASIAN CONTEXT**

The concept of work-life balance in the Asian context is shaped by cultural, economic, and social factors that differ significantly from Western perspectives. Traditional Asian cultural values stress collective living and family responsibility as well as respect toward those in authority positions but these affect how people view their work-life balance according to Hofstede (2001). Working excessive hours is commonly interpreted as a sign of organizational commitment in Japan and South Korea so these nations maintain an excessive work culture that impedes achievement of personal work-life balance (Kawanishi et al., 2019).

Employees throughout Asia experience widespread work-life conflict mainly in education together with technology and finance industries according to Kawanishi et al. (2019). When employees must do work before personal matters the stress rises and satisfaction at work declines which affects their mental health state and overall quality of life (Haar et al., 2014). The absence of supportive work-life balance practices including flexible work arrangements and parental leave worsens the problems experienced by people who attempt to balance work and life in Asia (Hofstede, 2001). Information and communication technologies plays vital role in education and especially teaching learning process because it is quite helpful in time saving of an individual to more and more work in a short time (Irfan Ullah Khan et al., 2022) Khan et al. (2020) explored EFL learners' perceptions regarding the use of WhatsApp in language learning. Similarly, Khan et al. (2020) examined the influence of demographics on leadership, commitment, and motivation which is very much important in setting work life balance to perform all the activities well in time properly. Khan et al. (2020) discussed teachers' perceptions of online in-service training because training is very much important for work life balance of activities and development of well being.

The Asian world increasingly acknowledges the necessity of maintaining equilibrium between work and personal aspects of life. Organizations together with governments create new policies which strive to enhance worker happiness and minimize work-life conflicts within these organizations. Japanese companies receive encouragement through the "Work-Life Balance Promotion" program to implement flexible work systems while providing support for employee management between personal and professional duties (Kawanishi et al., 2019). The expansion of remote work and digital communication platforms has formed new avenues that enable people to customize their work arrangements which strengthens their work-life balance according to Haar et al. (2014).

While progress continues to be made there are persisting difficulties. Culture-based work-centered approaches continue to apply substantial pressure on people making it hard to accept complete work-life balance programs (Kawanishi et al., 2019). As such, ongoing research is needed to explore the unique factors influencing work-life balance in the Asian



context and to identify effective strategies for promoting employee well-being in this diverse region.

## **WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN THE PAKISTAN WORK CONTEXT**

In Pakistan, work-life balance is increasingly recognized as a critical issue, particularly as the workforce becomes more diverse and the demands of modern life intensify. Women in Pakistani society must bear extreme duress due to cultural gender expectations that force them to maintain their professional obligations while fulfilling their household responsibilities (Tahira et al., 2019, Farooq et al., 2022; Saif et al., 2019; Saif and Shaheen ., 2022;Shah et al., 2020). The combination of work and home responsibilities generates increased stress and work-life conflict that primarily affects female education sector employees together with other industry professionals (Haar et al., 2014).

Research demonstrates that organizational culture together with established policies strongly control how work-life balance develops within Pakistan. The absence of formal work-life balance policies including flexible hours and parental leave and childcare benefits exists in numerous organizations (Shah et al., 2020). Women face intensified work-life conflict because Pakistani society expects them to handle family obligations despite inadequate company policies for work-life support (Abbas et al., 2024; Alam et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2022;Haar et al., 2014). The difficulty to promote work-life balance progresses because both workers and employers remain uninformed about its significance (Shah et al., 2020).

Youth workers in Pakistan now recognize the importance of maintaining work-life balance after the country has started to acknowledge this necessity. Employee understanding about health and wellness continues to rise which drives them toward selecting careers that emphasize work-life balance in their career decisions (Shah et al., 2020; Saif et al., 2022a; Saif et al., 2022b; Saif et al., 2020a; Saif et al., 2020b;). Organizations implementing family-friendly policies and well-being creation initiatives will better draw and maintain staff especially the younger generation who prioritize dual flexibility and the integration of professional and personal life (Haar et al., 2014). In conclusion, while challenges remain in achieving work-life balance in Pakistan, there is potential for positive change as organizations and individuals increasingly recognize the importance of this issue. Continued research and advocacy efforts are essential to promote work-life balance and support the well-being of employees across various sectors.

## **INDEPENDENT VARIABLES USED FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE (WLB)**

Independent variables related to work-life balance (WLB) are factors that influence the ability of individuals to successfully integrate their work and personal lives. These variables can be classified into various categories, including organizational practices, individual characteristics, and external demands.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICES**

Organization practices stand as the primary elements that influence WLB. Organizations implementing flexible work options including telecommuting and flexible hours and job sharing systems develop settings where employees can achieve WLB (Hill et al., 2001). The ability for employees to control their work hours leads them to report better WLB along with increased job satisfaction according to Gajendran and Harrison (2007).

Organizational culture which provides support serves as a fundamental factor that enables WLB to occur. Organizations able to create family-friendly cultures through their support of childcare services together with wellness programs and mental health support assist their workforce to effectively handle both professional and personal responsibilities

(Baker et al., 2019). The existence of supportive environments produces loyalty among workers and controls employee exits which leads to better company outcomes (Allen et al., 2013).

## **INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The independent variables grouped by individual characteristics consist of personality traits alongside coping styles and demographic information. Parkes and Langford (2008) confirmed that WLB relationships significantly connect with personality traits especially conscientiousness and emotional stability. People with high conscientiousness demonstrate improved time management abilities which helps them handle professional and personal responsibilities better.

Independent variables consist of coping strategies, which provide critical measures in research studies. Individuals who use efficient coping strategies, which include problem-solving and emotional regulation, control their work-life conflicts better (Frone, 2003). Haar et al (2014), have linked the use of positive coping techniques to reduced work-life conflicts and better overall wellness according to research.

## **EXTERNAL DEMANDS**

External factors, such as caregiving responsibilities and socioeconomic status, further influence WLB. For example, individuals with caregiving duties for children or elderly relatives often experience increased stress and challenges in achieving WLB (Schneider et al., 2015). Socioeconomic factors, such as income level, education, and job security, also play a role in determining WLB, as individuals with higher socioeconomic status typically have access to more resources that facilitate balance (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010).

In conclusion, understanding the independent variables affecting work-life balance involves a multifaceted approach that considers organizational practices, individual characteristics, and external demands. By addressing these factors, organizations can create supportive environments that enhance employees' ability to achieve satisfaction in both their professional and personal lives.

## **DEPENDENT VARIABLES USED FOR WORK-LIFE BALANCE (WLB)**

Dependent variables in the context of work-life balance (WLB) pertain to the outcomes or consequences that result from individuals' experiences of balance or imbalance between their work and personal lives. Key dependent variables include job satisfaction, mental health, work performance, and employee retention.

## **JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction serves as a principal outcome variable throughout WLB research. The literature shows continuously that workers who believe they have a balanced work-life connection express higher satisfaction at their jobs. Employees who manage to bring balance between their professional and personal lives show increased job satisfaction according to research by Haar et al. (2014). This job contentment creates positive effects on organizational dedication. According to Haar et al. (2014) individuals who deal with work-life conflict show less job satisfaction while simultaneously planning job transitions.

WLB shapes crucial mental health outcomes among individuals. Studies confirm that inadequate work-life balance generates elevated stress symptoms alongside anxiety symptoms and burnout problems (Kahn et al., 1964; Williams & Alliger, 1994). Converging work and personal life domains produces positive effects on mental health which results in fewer instances of psychological distress (Gonzalez-Morales et al., 2014). Staff who manage to keep their work-life conflicts under control usually achieve higher psychological health levels that boost their workplace productivity while enhancing engagement.

Researchers utilize work performance as their main dependent measure in WLB investigations. Workers satisfied with their work-life balance levels display stronger productivity and creative abilities and engagement performance at work according to Greenhaus & Allen (2011). The combination of well-balanced professional and personal life leads employees to enhance their performance through better focus and energy and motivation. Employees involved in work-life conflict tend to confront concentration difficulties leading to decreased productivity and decreased performance (Voydanoff, 2005). The achievement of employee retention stands as the essential outcome that relates to work-life balance measures. Organizations that establish work environments that support workers through career and personal development schemes tend to maintain stable employee retention figures (Allen et al., 2013). Workers who get proper respect for their personal life from their employers demonstrate stronger organizational commitment that decreases their desire to pursue alternative opportunities.

## **MEDIATING VARIABLES USED IN WORK-LIFE BALANCE RESEARCH**

Mediating variables are factors that help to explain the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables in work-life balance (WLB) research. They act as intermediaries, providing insight into how specific influences translate into outcomes related to WLB. Various mediating variables have been identified, such as job satisfaction, psychological well-being, coping strategies, and support systems.

Job satisfaction is frequently recognized as a critical mediating variable in the relationship between WLB practices and employee outcomes. Research indicates that employees who perceive a higher level of WLB report greater job satisfaction, which, in turn, enhances their commitment to the organization and reduces turnover intentions (Haar et al., 2014). The job satisfaction of employees improves through flexible work arrangements along with family-friendly policies because these WLB initiatives let workers balance their work and personal lives (Allen et al., 2013). The satisfaction level acts as a mediator between organizational policies and total employee well-being and commitment because work environments require equilibrium to succeed.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING**

WLB research depends heavily on psychological well-being as a key variable for mediation. Insufficient work-life balance has been connected to higher stress levels and mental health problems involving anxiety and depression according to Kahn et al. (1964) and Williams and Alliger (1994). During their professional lives when employees achieve a suitable work-life balance their psychological well-being shows improvement thus positively affecting their workplace success (Gonzalez-Morales et al., 2014). The psychological state functions as an explanation through which WLB affects employee satisfaction and engagement and productivity. Research proves that WLB practices create improved psychological well-being when organizations successfully create boundaries between work and personal life thereby enhancing total mental health.

## **COPING STRATEGIES**

Research on work-life balance uses coping strategies as pivotal variables that link extracted data with its findings. Those who use efficient coping strategies successfully tackle workplace stress alongside work conflicts stemming from dual responsibilities (Frone, 2003). Positive coping tactics including problem-solving and emotional regulation demonstrate research-proven ability to protect workers from work-life conflict while boosting their balance capabilities (Haar et al., 2014). Organizations need to create

employee coping skills development programs because research shows such strategies act as a connection between workplace stressors and individual work performance levels.

## **SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Support systems, including familial, organizational, and social support, are essential mediating variables in WLB research. Employees who receive emotional and practical support from their families and workplaces are more likely to attain a successful work-life balance (Baker et al., 2019). Such support systems serve as buffers, reducing the psychological strain associated with work-life conflict. Research highlights that individuals with strong support networks report lower levels of stress and higher levels of job satisfaction, illustrating how support systems can mediate the effects of WLB initiatives on employee outcomes (Shah et al., 2020).

In summary, mediating variables such as job satisfaction, psychological well-being, coping strategies, and support systems provide valuable insights into the mechanisms through which work-life balance influences employee experiences and outcomes. Business organizations must study these mediators because they help improve WLB initiatives which in turn enhances employee satisfaction together with productivity.

The research examining work-life balance utilizes two types of intervening variables. Moderating variables shape the magnitude as well as the orientation of the relationships that exist between independent factors and dependent outcomes in work-life balance (WLB) research. The multiple work-life balance influences only activate under specific conditions which influence employee WLB experience. Several elements which affect work-life balance strength include employee uniqueness and organizational ethos alongside occupational duties and household circumstances.

## **INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES**

WLB research heavily depends on individual differences including personality traits and age along with gender background and socioeconomic position as moderation variables. The degree of work-life conflict experienced by individuals depends on personality traits which includes both conscientiousness and emotional stability according to Parkes and Langford (2008). The combination of extraversion personality traits enables individuals to solve social needs simultaneously at home and work which produces minimal work-life conflict. Youthful employees tend to manage work-life balance during different stages of life than older staff due to their distinct obligations such as family commitments. According to Shah et al. (2020) women experience elevated work-life conflict because society prescribes them higher levels of family responsibility.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE**

The specific culture of organizations determines how worker-life balance initiatives affect the results delivered by staff members. Employee satisfaction and performance demonstrate strong positive change following the implementation of supportive cultures that promote work-life balance according to Allen et al. (2013). Workplace culture influences employee perception about work-life balance so that flexible policies may not create noticeable changes within cultures that value excessive work duration. The impact of WLB initiatives becomes stronger within organizations endorsing employee well-being cultures.



**TABLE 1. INDEPENDENT, OUTCOMES, MEDIATING AND MODERATING VARIABLES TO WLB.**

Variable Type	Variable	Researcher(s)	Country
<b>Independent Variables</b>	Organizational Practices	Haar et al. (2014)	New Zealand
	Individual Characteristics	Parkes & Langford (2008)	United Kingdom
	External Demands	Bianchi & Milkie (2010)	United States
<b>Dependent Variables</b>	Job Satisfaction	Allen et al. (2013)	United States
	Psychological Well-Being	Gonzalez-Morales et al. (2014)	Spain
	Work Performance	Greenhaus & Allen (2011)	United States
<b>Mediating Variables</b>	Employee Retention	Haar et al. (2014)	New Zealand
	Job Satisfaction	Haar et al. (2014)	New Zealand
	Psychological Well-Being	Kahn et al. (1964)	United States
<b>Moderating Variables</b>	Coping Strategies	Frone (2003)	United States
	Support Systems	Baker et al. (2019)	Australia
	Individual Differences	Shah et al. (2020)	Pakistan
	Organizational Culture	Allen et al. (2013)	United States
	Job Characteristics	Greenhaus & Allen (2011)	United States

## CONCLUSION

WLB research studies a complex interaction pattern between independent along with dependent and both moderate and mediate variables. Studies establish that work environment standards alongside employee attributes together with organizational expectations strongly impact employee performance in work-life balancing. Work-life balance strategies which achieve their goals produce job satisfaction together with better psychological well-being and work performance enhancement. Job satisfaction together with coping strategies showcase the pathways WLB influences employee outcomes yet individual and cultural characteristics establish the optimal settings for WLB strategies to be effective.

More research efforts are required to explore this field further since existing studies need expansion in order to understand WLB across different contexts. Research spanned across multiple cultural situations alongside job sectors and demographic characteristics to reveal deeper information about WLB practices and their variation among employees.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

Future studies need to analyze various cultures because they aim to reveal how different cultural beliefs affect workers' work-life balance understanding. Diverse country studies show how cultural elements create specific relationships between business operations and employee reactions.

Longitudinal research enable researchers to track how WLB evolves as both organizational policies and personal life conditions shift throughout time. The investigations deliver

important data about how organizational intervention methods affect worker equilibrium over the long run and how worker perceptions evolve.

The focus on individual sectors such as healthcare education and technology through research delivers precise knowledge about WLB issues along with successful approaches. The particular challenges faced in distinct work environments require separate research programs because they have specific demands and pressures.

Examining how demographic factors such as age, gender, family structure, and socioeconomic status influence WLB experiences can enhance the contextual understanding of the topic. More diverse samples can offer insights into how varying backgrounds impact work-life integration.

Given the recent shifts towards remote work, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is essential to explore how remote working arrangements are reshaping WLB. Researching the dynamics of remote work can highlight challenges and opportunities that employees face when balancing their professional and personal lives.

Future studies should also evaluate the effectiveness of specific WLB interventions and best practices employed by organizations. Identifying successful strategies can provide a roadmap for other organizations seeking to improve their WLB offerings.

Incorporating mental health outcomes as a significant focus of WLB research can enhance understanding of the psychological implications of work-life conflicts. More studies should explore the reciprocal relationships between WLB, mental health, and occupational stress.

By addressing these recommendations, future studies can contribute to a richer understanding of work-life balance, enabling organizations to implement effective practices that promote employee well-being and overall organizational success.

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