



Work-Life Balance and its Impact on Productivity in Iraqi Educational Organizations

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Abstract. Productivity is one of the major issues facing Iraqi educational institutions, and it can be identified by examining the factors that influence it. Work-life balance is one of the key elements affecting the productivity of companies that rely heavily on human resources. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine how WLB affects employee productivity in Iraqi educational institutions. The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional, and correlational methodology. Every employee in academic institutions in Iraq who worked in the educational departments of the Maysan Education Directorate was included in the statistical population. Using random sampling and variance calculations, the sample size was calculated to be 200. A standard productivity questionnaire based on the ACHIEVE (1980) model and two work-life balance questionnaires by Wang and (2009) served as data collection tools for the study. Expert opinions were used to validate the questionnaires in terms of form and content, and Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the instrument to be greater than 0.7. Smart PLS and SPSS 22 software were used for analysis. The results showed that employee productivity was affected by all elements of work motivation.

Keywords: Iraq, educational institutions, productivity, work-life balance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Work-life balance and productivity are a critical and sensitive topic in human resources organizations. Companies can face numerous negative consequences when employees overwork themselves or fail to balance their personal and professional lives. This concept, which is quite distinct from family responsibilities, recognizes the importance of achieving work-life balance. People also desire to make time for leisure and personal development.

Work life balance is becoming the most central issue of all employees whether it be private or public sector and of all professions and lives. This fine juggling act, known as the work-life balance, involves harmonizing the personal with the professional and recognizing that the two operate in symbiosis. People who work hard in their careers often face responsibilities that cause distractions in their relationships and time, causing a work-life imbalance.

There's no doubt that work-life balance is crucial to an individual's mental, emotional, social, and financial health. A good work-life balance increases the likelihood that employees will be positive, energetic, and productive at work. These outcomes benefit organizations, creating a positive and supportive work environment that fosters achievement.

This simply illustrates why it's crucial for employers to enable and drive work-life balance, with the understanding that a balance maximizes the benefits between your personal and professional obligations.

This is a prime example of the need for companies to facilitate work-life balance and appreciate the importance of maintaining this ideal work-life balance.

One key factor that can shape employee commitment to a company's aims is work-life balance. Not only is it good for relationships and your health, but a balanced work and home life can actually improve your performance and efficiency in the office.

Work cannot escape life, and if you want to grow your workers' output, keep them engaged. Research consistently shows a close relationship between work-life balance and career success. According to more than half of working adults, work-life balance significantly impacts productivity. (Adnan Bataineh, 2019). Workplace bullying is a type of violence experienced by an individual at his/her place of work. (Hoshi et al. 2025)

Employee productivity is impacted by work-life balance, research shows. However, while burnout rates have been particularly high at educational institutions, this research has in general not been extensively conducted at educational institutions (Marecki, 2023; Jackson & Fransman, 2018; Rahajeng & Handayani, 2022; Apraku et al., 2020).

In light of increasing workloads in organizational settings, work-life balance is an essential consideration, including in culturally diverse organizations, such as those in Iraq, as ignoring work-life balance can cause significant number of administrative complaints, and work related problems such as burnout and job abandonment.

Consistency in the performance level and accomplishments earned is paramount, and stated in the organization's educational goals and vision. Without commitment, work-life balance, and organization no corp can achieve all the excellence possible with its objectives. They are thus now "vital aspects of innovation, proactive thinking, and an effort to boost productivity at educational organizations." (Al-Musawi,2022).

Work-life balance appears to significantly impact employee productivity in the education sector. Burnout and stress decrease with work-life balance. When employees achieve a certain level of work-life balance, they are less susceptible to stress and burnout, which can lead to decreased performance (Irfan et al., 2023). Furthermore, work-life balance enhances satisfaction and motivation in the workplace (Al-Fatiha et al., 2021). Individuals tend to perform better and feel happier when they feel they work for an organization that cares about and supports their personal needs and aspirations. This can lead to higher efficiency.

Achieving a healthy work-life balance is challenging in educational institutions in Iraq and can negatively impact productivity. However, this issue is a major problem in Iraqi schools, and no studies have been conducted on it. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to examine the impact of this balance on employee productivity in the Iraqi education sector.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of work-life balance began in the UK in the early 1970s, and by the 1980s it was appearing in the US and spreading quickly. Physical and mental wellbeing, leisure activities, family and friendships and personal growth, to name a few, are all part of a meaningful life. This concept reveals the tension that would exist between work commitment and personal welfare (Fernandez-Crehuet et al., 2016).

Between work and personal life, at the crossroads work-life balance is possible. Personal There are many personal dimensions which can overlap into work, such as family, play and health. Work/life balance is a mutual thing. This equilibrium can be harmful or beneficial as well. Indeed, recent scholarship has indicated that the line between work and life has become porous, particularly for tech-enabled professionals (Friedman et al., 2019).

With long working hours, part-time work, and family responsibilities, work-life balance has become a major challenge for organizations over the past century. (Schmidt & Duenas, 2022).

Get defined by two core concepts which are achievement and happiness, both of which are important for overall health. It is important to have work and life balance as many successful people report of unhappiness even with their success (Bataineht, 2019). Without enough time spent together as a family, unorganized schedules can lead to family conflicts, and these in turn are associated with Depression and decreased work performance (Meenakshi et al., 2013).

Organizations, in turn, are employing a variety of measures to promote work-life balance among employees, such as flexibility in the work and Productivity (Baker et al., 2007, Darcy et al., 2012, Darko-Assomado et al., 2018, Das, 2015).

The willingness to initiate these forms of programs can result in a more happiness and productive workforce because it can help employees better manage their personal and professional obligations.

Individual needs For some employees, factors such as increased flexibility (Parham & Rauf, 2020) in terms of office hour constraints and freedom from savings in commuting time (Ivasciuc et al., 2022) may lead them to have lower levels of work-life conflict (Golden et al, 2006) Technology resources where employees are able to apply information and can perform their activities in their employment in relation to their personal life may result in increased performance of employees, more time with the family and lower work-life conflict, according to Kiparoglou et al (2020) In addition, White (2020) found out that technology resources have the positive effect on employees' WLB An adequate level of technological resource for

employees' use influences the individual work- life balance to the betterment of the level of productivity, performance and job satisfactionAs stated by Jamal et al(2021).

In addition to the internal problems, an educational organization is a set of administrative structures that can help to solve problems arising from organizational trekked, in a way that the future administrative paths and ways of thinking about organization and management is a creative and innovative. (Al-Musawi,. 2023)

Variables that may affect employee performance, such as according to the "ACHIEVE" model of Hersey and Goldsmith.16Factors that Have an Influence in the Ability of Employee Performance are the variables that give impact for the performance of an employee. These factors were ability and knowledge and skills, perception or image of the role (clarity), help from the organization, will or (desire), evaluation (training and performance feedback), legitimate actions and employee rights (credibility) and environmental fit. (Vinu & Bright, 2020).

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Using a few statistical techniques and instruments, this section aims to present the findings of the research variables and items. (Hushi.2023) Since the present study deals with the objective, real and systematic description of the characteristics of a subject, it is descriptive, and since it requires the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, through a questionnaire and weighing variables in large populations that cannot be accessed in their entirety, and examines the relationships between variables, it is correlational. Due to the uncertainty of the variance of the statistical population, it was necessary to pre-estimate the sample through a preliminary study. For this purpose, the prepared questionnaire was provided to thirty of the samples, and after determining the variance of the population, The sample size was determined. Based on the initial distribution of the questionnaire, the population variance was estimated at 0.13. To calculate the sample size for this study, the following formula was used. In this study, considering the amount of variance and also the level of error of one percent, the sample size was estimated to be 200 people.

The data collection instrument is the standard Human Resources Productivity Questionnaire, which consists of 26 questions. This questionnaire was designed and constructed based on the ACHIEVE model and consists of seven components (capabilities, role clarity, organizational support, incentives, evaluation and feedback, validity, and environmental factors) and is rated on a Likert scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). The Work-Life Balance Questionnaire consists of 27 questions and seven components:

sufficient leisure time, loyalty to work, workplace support for work-life balance, flexibility in work schedule, life orientation, job and career maintenance, and voluntary reduction of working hours. This questionnaire measures work-life balance using a Likert scale, with questions such as: "When I talk to my supervisor about personal or family problems that affect my work, he/she understands me." SPSS and Amos software packages were used for data processing and hypothesis testing.

The smartpls program and structural equation modeling methodology were used to test the study hypotheses. Structural equation modeling analysis is used in studies that seek to evaluate a specific model of the relationship between variables (Mahmoud et al., 2024).

4. FINDING

To answer the research question related to the impact of work-life balance on productivity, Figure (1) shows the factor loading coefficients and the impact coefficients of each of the work-life balance variables on productivity.



Figure 1. Structural Equation Model Showing the Impact of Work-Life Balance and Related Factors on Productivity

As Figure (1) shows, all variables in the work-life balance model have a positive and significant impact on productivity. To verify the validity and suitability of the model, Table (1) shows the model's suitability indices, in addition to the chi-square coefficient.

Table 1. Indicators for evaluating the impact of work-life balance factors on productivity

Index	Df	Relative Chi-square	Adaptive fitness index
Value	1310	2.9	0.91

The overall fit indices of the model indicate its consistency with the data. All fit indices demonstrate the model's appropriateness by taking into account the required values for these indices. The impact of work-life balance factors on productivity.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the research, the scale of work-life balance should not be ignored since it has a positive effect and it is very significant to enhance the productivity of the employees.

And when workers are overwhelmed with stress and emotional exhaustion from poor work-life balance, it sucks up cognitive space, making it tough to concentrate on tasks and be productive. High-ability and -skill individuals have higher productivity in their jobs than low-ability and -skill individuals. Clear job description. Knowing their job description results in more productive employees than those with vague role descriptions. Workers who feel their employer supports them and provides an opportunity for them to receive sufficient equipment and training - including multiple foodservice skills - will be more effective. Workers who feel rewarded and appreciated for their work are more productive than those who don't have an incentive. Employees can enhance their productivity by receiving regular performance assessments and feedback from their supervisors that set clear expectations and create opportunities for personal growth.

Work-life balance can increase employee retention, trusting that workers who feel valued and respected in their personal lives are less likely to look for jobs at other organizations.

Companies that value work-life balance have a competitive advantage in attracting the very best talent because they offer an image of being great places to work; this can raise the overall quality of the workforce.

To further facilitate work-life balance, suggestions to managers and educational organizations that are implementing flexible work arrangements would be to provide opportunities for employees to effectively manage personal and professional duties, such as telecommuting, flexible scheduling, and compressed work week. Offering access to resources such as mental health services and employee assistance programs, as well as wellness programs and initiatives to help them reduce stress and take care of their physical and mental health.

Transparency

The authors confirm that no conflicts of interest exist and that no artificial intelligence assisted technologies were utilized in the research or the creation of this article. Qualitative data will be accessible for further review. Furthermore, the authors declare that this study was not funded and there is no financial interest in its findings.

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