

Work Life Balance and Psychological Health: A perceptual analysis

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Abstract

The main issue of this study is to assess the position of work-life balance domains and psychological health explained by psychological distress and examine the impact of work life balance on psychological health measured through psychological distress. The study has adopted descriptive and correlational research designs. The population of the study is the full time academics working within Kathmandu valley, the capital city of Nepal. The sample size made up our minds 384 and 400 useable responses were wont to analyze the information. The Five- point Likert scale questionnaire has been used to collect data. All responses were coded and tabulated using SPSS software. The analysis was made using mean for assessing the position, correlation matrix to assess the connection between work-life balance and psychological health and hierarchical regression to verify the link as shown by the coefficient of correlation. The result showed that the Nepalese academicians perceived a moderate level of interference from work to their personal life roles. Similarly, they perceived a coffee level of personal life spillover at work. This result indicates that Nepalese academicians felt low interfere with personal roles in their work-life roles. Regarding the work-life enhancers, they have a comparatively higher sense of enhancement from their work to life roles. However, the academicians felt less disorder and distress, which indicated that academicians tend to be psychologically well. Similarly, Personal life Spillover in work are negatively associated with psychological health, work-life balance enhancers have a negative and significant influence on psychological distress that indicates the many positive relationships with psychological health. In the overall work-life balance is negatively associated with psychological distress or positively associated with psychological health.

Keywords: Work-life balance, psychological health, psychological distress, academia, Kathmandu valley

The major issue under work-life balance is to mix paid work with personal works of caring infants, old members of the family, household chores including study, sports, welfare work, hobbies, etc. Every individual finds themselves trapped in an exceedingly continuous stifle network of private and vocation roles that result in a state of depression, anxiety, and unbalanced life task accomplishment (Amin & Malik, 2017). The world trend of the increased female within the manpower, the emergence of dual-earner couples and single-parent families, has raised considerable research issues about how members of those emergent family forms, manage their work and family responsibilities (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005). The stereotype of the male breadwinner is not any longer relevant as more and more women are engaging dead set work and support the family (Chalesworth et al., 2002 as cited in Singh, 2014). The increasing dual-earner couple's trend has led modifications in traditionally set roles and responsibilities of both men and women must do. Women are now more likely to figure outside in paid work that result forced men to satisfy more responsibilities reception yet (Mcelwain, Korabik, & Rosin, 2005; MacInnes, 2005). Historically, most of the study has focused on Work-life balance because the issues affect the ladies instead of men. Nevertheless, the changing workforce and also the increase in dual-earning families had an impact on the role of men in both workplaces and also the home, which specially relates to the work-life balance of men (Wilkinson, 2013). Irrespective of sex, personal identity or legal status both men and ladies struggle for work-life balance (Powell & Greenhaus, 2010). Moore (2007) conducted a quest to match work-life balance issues and concluded that a lot of the managers don't seem to be having the ability to realize work-life balance. Seven out of ten American workers struggle to realize an appropriate balance between work and family life (Fondas, 2014). Previously the term work-life balance was employed in the context of only the workers

working in numerous other organizations instead of academicians (Hakanen et al., 2006 as cited in Irfan & Azmi, 2015). The work-life balance survey has reported that 85% of academics feel workloads and felt unable to balance their careers with their personal lives and well-being (Bothwell, 2018). Therefore, achieving a balance between workplace needs and private life need is a vital issue among the workers globally. No organization and sector can remain far from the waves of globalization, advanced technology, changes in socio-cultural and demographic changes. Nowadays the organizations face heightened competition that puts pressure on employees to extend performance, to use extra effort, and also the long working hours (Morin, 2004 as cited in Burdzinska & Rutowska, 2015; Sheppard, 2016). Such high works demand to place extra effort and time in their working place create a barrier to work-life balance, though working long hours indicate commitment and productivity of employees (Jayanthi & Vanniarajan, 2012 as cited in Sheppard, 2016). Working long hours result in resource competition and conflict as we possess limited resources like time and energy (Lu & Kao, 2013). The author also added that the workers need adequate rest after the exertion of efforts at work to recover and recharge both physically and psychologically. Thus, the long stay or work overload makes the worker exhausted, strained, and unable to require on family duties, study, exercise, or activities associated with one's hobbies and private interests. The well-being of employees is important at the working place because it is related to employee loyalty, job satisfaction, higher productivity, and lower rates of turnover that indicates organizational efficiency (Chandrasekhar, et al., 2013). The promotion of wellbeing not only beneficial to employees, but also the employers because the employee's well-being and their satisfaction with work and life affect citizenship behavior at work, turnover rates and performance ratings (Harter et al., 2002).

Multiple workplace roles by University academics alongside organization and community pressures are likely to be viewed by the lecturers as a big trigger influencing the perceived work-life imbalance, which successively affects their occupational attitudes like job satisfaction, organizational commitment and intention to depart the organization (Noor, 2011). Academicians have many responsibilities to handle and preparing lectures, designing a syllabus, attending meetings, setting examination question papers, evaluating answer sheets, administrative works, and then thereon demand much time from the academicians (Gupta, 2018). The increasing demand in universities globally due to the growth of student numbers, increased target quality research & teaching, technological developments, increasing accountability of academics, mounting pressure to conduct research and publish research papers and reports and extra inspection raise job stress and consequently raise the problem of labor life balance (Rana & Panchal, 2014). Therefore, Academics are more likely to experience problems in maintaining a good work-life balance as their work is open-ended, wide roles with potentially competing demands than other professionals (Kinman & Jones, 2008). The multiple workplace roles alongside organizations and community pressures are likely to be perceived by academicians triggers their state of perceived work-life balance satisfaction which successively affects their occupational attitudes (Mukhtar, 2012) also as their perceived wellbeing.

Previous researches have mixed results regarding work-life issues and its consequent effects. Some researchers have found a positive relationship between work-life issues and outcome variables like job satisfaction (e.g. Mukhtar, 2012; Acharya & padmavathy, 2018), psychological well-being (Wilkinson, 2013), life satisfaction (Gorsy & Panwar, 2016) organizational commitment (Tamang, 2008) and subjective well-being (Singh & Amanjyot, 2013; Burdzinska & Rutowska, 2015). Work-life balance is influenced by the amount of conflict or the negative and positive spillover between the work and life interface. Most of the study is carried on conflict perspective and located negative consequences from both organizational and employees' point of view. The presence of work-family conflict to a high extent shows the results of low level or no satisfaction, high absenteeism, low level of organizational commitment, high rate of turnover, and lack of motivation among employees (Tamang, 2008). Similarly, authors Moreno-Jimenez et al., (2008) pointed out that work-family conflict was related to psychological strain. However, the author found no association with life satisfaction. Additionally, a meta-analysis (Kossek & Ozeki, 1998 as cited in Demsky, 2012) found a negative relationship between work-family conflict and satisfaction and explained the notion

that life satisfaction is full of multiple domains. Similarly, Adhikary (2016) also found an insignificant relationship between work-family conflict with career satisfaction. She found employees within the Nepalese banking sector have high satisfaction despite the work-family conflict. There's no consistency within the results of the studies that looked into the connection of work-life balance and its consequent effect. Hence, it's necessary to look at the connection in several contexts. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the gap by examining both perspectives of work-life balance and its consequent effect on Psychological health. Most of the previous researchers have shown the effect of the work-life balance of organizational outcome and work-related well-being and lacking the effect on individuals' perspective of their well-being. Burdzinska & Rutowska (2015) have suggested for the longer-term research on work-life balance and taking the individual perspective of distress. On the opposite hand, there's little research conducted to spot the connection between work-life balance and psychological health (Wilkinson, 2013). Therefore, the current study aimed to contemplate the problems regarding the work-life balance of Nepali Academicians and also the effect of it on their perceived psychological health.

Methodology

The design of this study is a descriptive and correlational research design with cross-sectional data and picked up through the survey. The world of investigation during this study was the perceived work-life balance of Academicians and its consequent effect on psychological health. The information was collected in a personal manner from the various colleges operating in Kathmandu Valley. The population of this study included full-time faculties of various colleges, which are affiliated under different universities in Kathmandu Valley. The number of sample size needed is 384 with the idea of a fifty percent non-response rate when the precise population size is unknown. A 485 questionnaires were distributed among the 18 different colleges with the expectation of getting a minimum of 384 questionnaires. Out of total questionnaires, 412 responses were collected with a response rate of 84.94 percent. Among the full 412 collected responses, only 400 were found usable. Babbie (1998) as cited in Adhikary, 2016) suggests that a 50 percent response rate is adequate for data analysis, a 60 percent rate is satisfactory and 70 percent is very recommended for investigation and reporting. So, it's claimed that the response rate is high and sufficient for further analysis. Work-life balance measures have supported by the measures employed by Singh (2014) because the tentative context of Nepal and India is analogous. WLB has four sub-scales - Work Spillover in Personal Life (WSPL), Personal Life Spillover in Work (PLSW), Work/Life Balance Enhancers (WLBE), and Work/Life Balance Constrainers (WLBC). Cronbach alpha value of independent variable is 0.908 in aggregate. So, reliability is high. The psychological health was assessed through General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) originally developed by Goldberg and widely used and validated by various researchers to work out whether an individual is at a psychiatric disorder (Goldberg & William, 1988 as cited in Zulkerfly & Baharudin, 2010). The reliability analysis of this scale has shown Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 (Zulkerfly & Baharudin, 2010). So, the scales are reliable enough. The scale had four responses from "better than usual" and "too much but usual". The high immeasurable psychological health scale indicated a high level of distress, hence low levels indicate good psychological health (Twigg & Weich, 2007 as cited in Kluczyk 2013). The questionnaire was developed in the Nepali (national) language and distributed through the research assistants. Mean was used to assess the positions of different domains of work life balance and psychological health. Coefficient of correlation was analyzed to look at the link between study variables and to check whether the hypothesized relationship is significantly associated with the expected directions. Further, hierarchical regression was conducted to verify the link as shown by the coefficient of correlation results.

The operational definition of variables

Work Spillover in Personal Life (WSPL): This aspect refers to job involvement in personal life, neglect of diets in personal life due to high demands on work-related duties, as well as time being limited by responsibility for work (Singh, 2014). This dimension included 13 questions and was calculated on a scale of 5 points from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agreed).

Personal Life Spillover in Work (PLSW): This dimension refers to personal life role demands that interfere with work-related duties, having to postpone things at work due to demands of personal life and family-related stresses (Singh, 2014). This dimension included 5 question items and was measured on 5 points Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Work-Life balance Enhancer (WLBE): This aspect refers to work-life facilities for personal life or the work-related approach to problem-solving that is often efficient in addressing personal and home problems (Singh, 2014). This dimension included 3 question items and was measured on 5 points Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Work-Life balance Constrainers (WLBC): This aspect refers to behavioral inefficiency and failure to behave in the same way both at home and in the workplace (Singh, 2014). This dimension included 3 questions and was measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly disagreeable) to 5 (Strongly agreed).

Psychological Health (PH): This aspect refers to a state of well-being in which the person knows his or her ability, can cope with the usual stresses of life, can work fruitfully and productively. This research allows the use of psychological distress to reach respondents' psychological wellbeing (Goldberg & William, 1988 as cited in Zulkerfly & Baharudin, 2010). The scale had four responses from "better than usual" and "too much but usual".

Levels of work-life balance, life satisfaction, and psychological Health

The minimum, maximum, skewness, and kurtosis of labor spillover personal life, personal life spillover work, work-life enhancers, and psychological distress are presented in table 1. Skewness and kurtosis test was executed for testing the normality of the information. Skewness and Kurtosis are the symptoms that designate whether the variables are normally distributed or not. Kline (2005 as cited in Kluczyk, 2013) argued that the info is generally distributed when the worth of skewness is a smaller amount than +3 or -3, and the value of kurtosis is a smaller amount than +10 or -10. Table 1 shows that data are normally distributed as skewness and Kurtosis value was within the prescribed range of ± 3 and ± 10 respectively as the rule of thumb.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of study variables (N=400)

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Work spillover in personal life	1	5	3.09	0.64	-0.005	-0.091
Personal life spillover in work	1	5	2.61	0.79	0.169	-0.304
Work-life balance enhancers	1	5	3.43	0.80	-0.568	0.456
Psychological distress	1	4	1.76	0.46	1.092	0.990

The mean of labor spillover in personal life (M= 3.09, S.D = 0.64) indicates that Nepalese academicians perceived a moderate level of interference from work to their life roles. Similarly, the mean of private life spillover work (M= 2.61, S.D = 0.79) shows that they perceived a low level of private life spillover in work. This result indicates that Nepalese academicians felt low interfere with personal roles in their work-life roles. The mean of work-life enhancers (M = 3.43, S.D = 0.80) indicates that they need a relatively higher sense of enhancement from their work to life roles and life roles to figure. However, the mean on the

psychological distress not up to average indicates that academicians felt less disorder and distress, which indicated that academicians tend to be psychologically well.

Effect of work Spillover on Personal Life on Psychological health

Similarly, to look at the link between work spillovers on Psychological health the multivariate analysis was conducted. Psychological distress, an explanatory variable for psychological health, was regressed on experimental variable WSPL. The regression result (Table 2) shows that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 14.253$, $p < 0.001$). The result also shows that work spillover on personal life was statistically significant ($\beta = .191$, $p < 0.001$) which indicates that it's a significant influence on the psychological health of individuals. The hierarchical regression results that job spillover on personal life shows a significant negative relationship with psychological distress. It means the work spillover on personal life increases the distress and destroys the psychological health of the employees. Change in R^2 is .036. It means work spillover on personal life can explain the psychological health by 3.6 percent only. Thus, it is also not the good predictor of psychological health even though it is statistically significant.

Table 2. Impact of Work Spillover on Personal life on psychological health

	Psychological distress	
	Step 1 β	Step 2 β
Work Spillover on Personal Life	.066	.067
ΔR^2	.191***	
ΔR^2	.167	.036
F	13.133**	14.253**
R^2		.203

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, Psychological health is measured through level of Psychological distress.

Effect of Personal life Spillover on work Life and Psychological health

The multivariate analysis was accustomed to examine the connection between Personal life Spillover on work-life and psychological health explained by psychological distress. The multivariate analysis was accustomed to examine the connection between personal life spillover and Psychological health. Psychological distress was regressed on variable PLSW. The regression result (Table 3) shows that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 17.143$, $p < 0.001$). The result also shows that private life spillover on work-life was statistically significant ($\beta = .268$, $p < 0.001$) which indicates that it's a significant influence on the psychological health of individuals. The hierarchical regression results that private life spillover on work-life has significant influence on dimensions of well-being. It's a positive and significant influence on Psychological distress, which indicates the many negative relationships with Psychological health. Personal spillover on job only explains the 6.7 percent. Thus the personal spill over on job is not the good predictor of psychological distress or psychological health.

Table 3. Effect of Personal life Spillover on work on psychological health

	Psychological distress	
	Step 1 β	Step 2 β
Personal Spillover on work	.066	.058
ΔR^2		.268***
ΔR^2	.167	.067
F	13.133***	17.143***
R^2		.234

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Psychological health is measured through the level of Psychological distress.

Effect of Work-Life Balance enhancers on Psychological health

Similarly, to look at the link between Work-Life Balance enhancers and Psychological health the multivariate analysis was conducted. Psychological distress was regressed on variable WLBE. The regression result (Table 4) shows that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 14.253$, $p < 0.001$). The result also shows that Work-Life Balance enhancers were statistically significant ($\beta = .191$, $p < 0.001$) which indicates that it's a significant influence on the psychological health of individuals. The demographic variables like legal status, age, and level of employment were found to be statistically significant during this model. The hierarchical regression results that Work-Life Balance enhancers have significant influence on dimensions of psychological health. It's a negative and significant influence on psychological distress that indicates the many positive relationships with psychological health. But the explaining power of the variable is only 2.9 percent. Thus this variable also cannot be treated as a good predictor of psychological health even though it is statistically significant.

Table 4. Effect of Work-life balance enhancer on psychological health

	Psychological distress	
	Step 1 β	Step 2 β
Work-life balance enhancers		-.173***
ΔR^2	.167	.029
F	13.133***	13.631***
R^2		.196

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$; Psychological health is measured through the level of Psychological distress.

Relationship between Work-life balance and Psychological health

Pearson coefficient of correlation was employed to spot the character and strength of the relationship between the study variables. The coefficient of correlation between the study variables is presented in table 5. The correlation test in table 5 indicates the connection of labor spillover on personal life, personal life spillover in work, work-life balance enhancers, and psychological distress, and the overall score of work-life balance, and psychological health. The results show that the study variables have a statistically significant relationship among study variables and are within the expected direction. Work Spillover on Personal Life had a statistically significant positive relationship with psychological distress. Inversely, there's a negative relationship between work spillover on the personal life and psychological health. Similarly, Personal Life Spillover on Work had a statistical significant positive relationship with psychological distress, which indicates a negative effect on psychological health. Furthermore, Work-life balance enhancers had a statistically significant negative relationship with psychological distress, inversely positive relationships with psychological health. The result also shows that the work-life balance had statistically significant but negative correlational with an overall score of psychological distress. It means when the colleges support to manage the worklife balance of the academics, the psychological health of the academicians remains better.

Table 5. Relationship among the variables of work-life balance and psychological health

Dimensions	WSPL	PLSW	WLBE	PD	WLB
Work spillover on personal life	1				
Personal life spillover	0.521**	1			

in work					
Work-life balance	0.60	0.048			1
Enhancers					
Psychological distress	0.202**	.340**	-0.207**		1
Work-life balance	.929	.743**	.273**	-.224**	1

Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01

Discussion and conclusion

The study found that employment Spillover in Personal life is negatively associated with psychological health. The finding suggests that the more work interference with personal life is experienced by individuals the more psychological distress they felt. This finding is in keeping with Moreno-Jimenez et al., (2008), who emphasized the recovery experience to buffer for lowering such reasonably negative consequences. This finding indicates that individuals who experienced high work-life conflict due to high job demands and pressure tend to experienced higher levels of distress, lower concentration power, sleep awareness, lack of self-confidence, and lack of decision-making capacity furthermore as poor psychological functioning. The study also proposed that non-public life Spillover in work are negatively associated with psychological health. The finding suggests that the more personal life demands interference with work is experienced by individuals the more psychological distress they felt hence negatively associated with psychological health. This finding is in keeping with Moreno-Jimenez et al., (2008). The possible explanation might be that the more personal or family-related duties interferes job-related duties that effect on effective psychological functioning. The increasing family-related roles, spousal demands, and other personal chores like study, career development programs, engage in socio-political activities, etc. create stress on people and become unable to hold on work-related demands which may result in ineffective psychological functioning. The study also proposed that employment life Enhancers are positively associated with psychological health and revealed the end in the expected direction. The finding suggests that the facilitation and support from both family and work domains enhance the work-life balance and hence reduce the psychological distress that indicates people being psychologically healthy and are capable of thinking clearly, developing socially, and learning new skills. Previous literature has also found out that the facilitation and moral support from one domain to a different domain results in work-life balance hence, the negative psychological distress which indicates psychological well-being (Burdzinska & Rutowska, 2015; Haar et al., 2013; Wilkinson, 2013). Similarly, Cheetri (2014) found the positive relationship between work and family enrichment and affective commitment, family satisfaction. Therefore, it is often inferred that the involvement in multiple roles facilitates both work and private roles to be performed that result in positive consequence or well-being. In the overall work-life balance is negatively associated with psychological distress or positively associated with psychological health. It means when the life and work responsibilities are balanced by the workers individually or through the policy of the employer or through the Social Security policy of the government, the strain of the workers decreases which simultaneously decreases the distress of the workers and psychological health would be better furthermore. This finding is in keeping with the previous findings (Tejara, 2014; Santos & Cardos, 2008; Westman, Brough & Kalliath, 2009 Bajracharya, Chalise, and Ghimire, n.d.).

Implications

Generally these variables are taken as important variables in the studies conducted in Nepal related to work life balance. But in the context of Nepal, even though these variables are significant but their explaining power is not very high. Thus the management can thought in a different ways while developing the policies. Management of the colleges of Nepal can considered to the other factors so as to improve in the psychological health of the academia. Considering these factors obviously support but not in high degree.

Thus this study helps to reform in the existing policies of the academic institutions to make improvement in the psychological health of the academia.

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