



AN ENQUIRY INTO THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE MODELS

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Abstract

In this paper, the authors have attempted to find a balance between work and personal life. This balance can also lead to increased productivity and efficiency at work and can help reduce stress and conflicts. In today's globalized world, employees face various challenges, but prioritizing work-life balance can help mitigate these issues. Without this balance, individuals and society suffer, leading to negative consequences. To prevent these issues, companies should implement training programs that highlight the importance of work-life balance. Recently, there has been a focus on developing a comprehensive theory of happiness that can be applied globally. Further, many work-life balance models are available in the field of management science and these models have been elaborately discussed in detail.

Index terms: Work-life balance, Models, Management Science.

Introduction

A formal model holds great importance in the realm of social sciences as it provides the necessary structure and logical framework for developing explanations and theoretical arguments. Its significance is not limited to conducting controlled experiments and formulating hypotheses; rather, it serves a broader purpose. Models play a crucial role in evaluating existing theories, constructing new theories, and enhancing speculative ideas. This notion is reiterated by **Mershon and Shvetsova (2009)**, who emphasize the significant role models play in management science. In the domain of learning science, models hold particular value as they facilitate the improvement of explanations, foster meaningful discussions, enable prediction-making, offer visual representations of abstract concepts, and aid in the development of mental models. The research conducted by **Treagust, Chittleborough, and Mamiala (2003)** supports these assertions and further illustrates the various benefits of models in the field of learning science.

Models can help individuals envision their ideal work-life balance and set clear goals. Time management models, like the Eisenhower Matrix and Pomodoro Technique, aid in effective task prioritization. Stress models, such as the stress-strain-coping model, assist in identifying stressors and developing coping strategies to prevent spillover into personal life. Models addressing communication and boundaries, like the boundaries model, are valuable for setting expectations with employers and family members and crucial for work-life balance. Self-care models, like the self-care wheel, promote self-awareness and practices for physical health, emotional well-being, and relationships. Work-life balance models must be flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and accommodate work demands, family needs, and personal goals. Organizations can use models to design policies supporting work-life balance, recognizing its positive impact on employee performance and productivity. Financial models help manage the financial aspects of work-life balance, reduce stress, and enable informed financial decisions. Decision-making models, like the work-life balance decision model, align choices with values and long-term goals. Holistic well-being models, such as the well-being wheel, encourage balanced attention to physical health, mental well-being, relationships, and personal growth. Inclusivity-focused models consider cultural diversity and individual differences to better understand the unique challenges people face in achieving work-life balance. Work-life balance models provide a framework for understanding and prioritizing aspects of life, setting goals, and managing time effectively. Achieving work-life balance reduces stress, enhances health, and strengthens personal relationships. Balanced work-life approaches can boost job satisfaction, performance, and long-term well-being. Models offer a sustainable framework for work-life balance and serve as inspiration for others to pursue balanced lives.

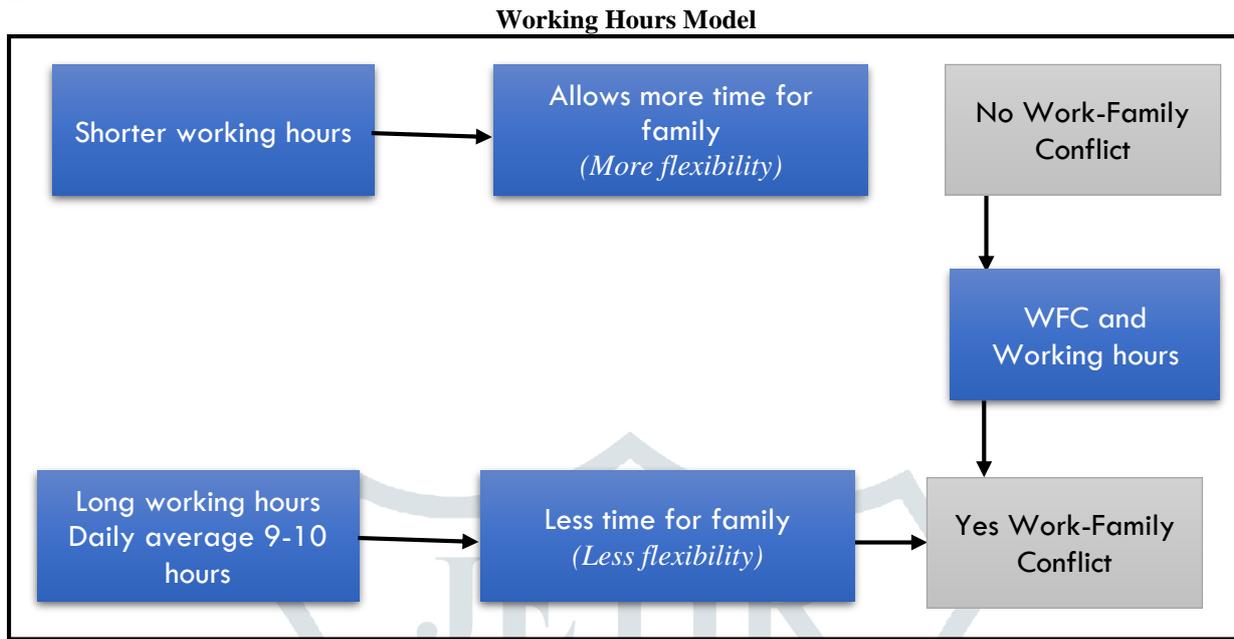
Work-Life Balance Models

Several models of WLB have been practised by different organizations in the modern world. The identified models of WLB are explained as follows:

Working Hours Model (WHM): The WHM of WLB as presented in **Figure 1** was proposed by **(Alam et al. 2009)**. It emphasises the relationship between long working hours and work-family conflict. It states that the personnel level work-family conflict results in emotional exhaustion and at the organizational level, it leads to the potential loss of female talent. In the organization, the women

managers find it difficult to maintain WLB due to the extended working hours i.e., 9-10 hours. It has been proved that long working hours lead to work-family conflicts (WFC). If the working hour is shorter i.e. 5-7 hours results in a stronger WLB among the women employees. Thus, WHM concludes that the organization should provide 5-7 working hours (shorter working hours) to women employees to help them attain a balance between work and life thus organizational productivity can be increased.

Figure 1



Source: Working hours model of work-family conflict proposed by Alam et al. (2009) as cited in Swathi et. al (2015)

Career Progression Model (CPM): The CPM of WLB as shown in Figure 2 has been introduced by (Asiedu-Appiah et al. 2014). This model identifies that if women employees are high in the organization, WLBPs must be introduced in the organization. It has been found that female lecturers find it difficult to balance work and life. WLBPs like providing initiative for future studies, research work and creating opportunities for career advancement help to make it easier for female employees to attain WLB through job satisfaction, employee retention, career development and increased morale retention. It helps to reduce absenteeism and employee turnover. For female lecturers, it is concluded that there exists a strong relationship between childbearing, child care and job progression. By reducing WLC organizations can attain a healthier, more productive and more motivated workforce. Thus, this model suggests that the organization should implement better WLB policies that help to achieve the desired performance and thus improve WLB among female employees.

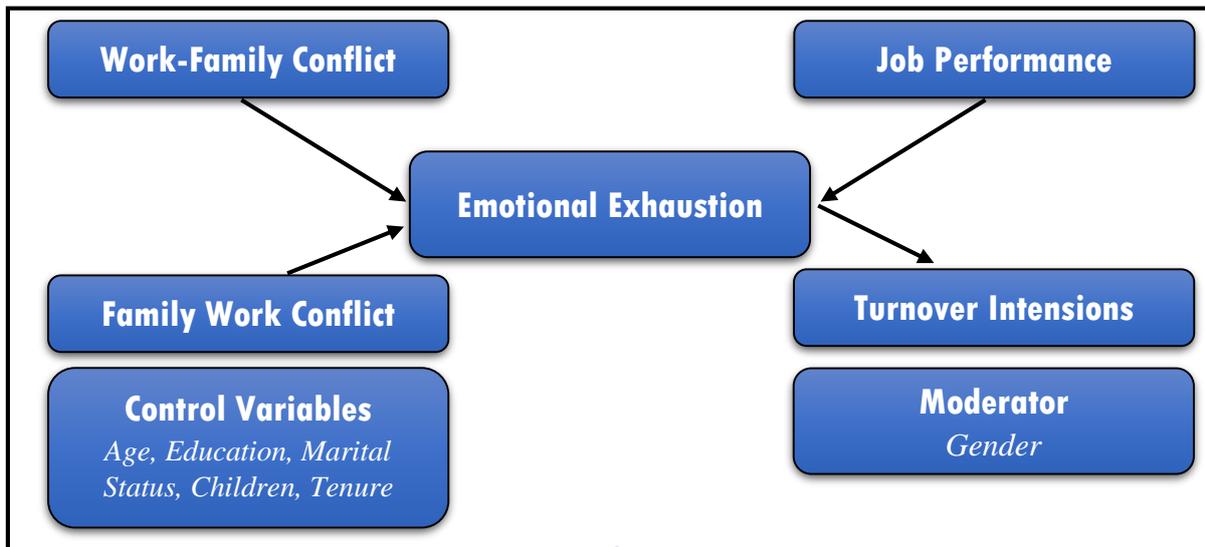
Figure 2
Career Progression Model



Source: Conceptual framework for Work-life balance of female lecturers proposed by Asiedu-Appiah, et al. (2014) as cited in Swathi et. al (2015)

Emotional Exhaustion Model (EEM): As per the EEM of Wok-life balance as given in Figure 3 was proposed by (Rutherford et al. 2005) shows that inter-role conflict arises due to the imbalance in WLB which results in poor job performance and higher employee turnover caused by on emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion has a serious role in attaining WLB. Gender acts as a moderator of relationships between emotional exhaustion and job outcomes. By implementing a better gender-specific mechanism the evils of emotional exhaustion can be minimised/eradicated.

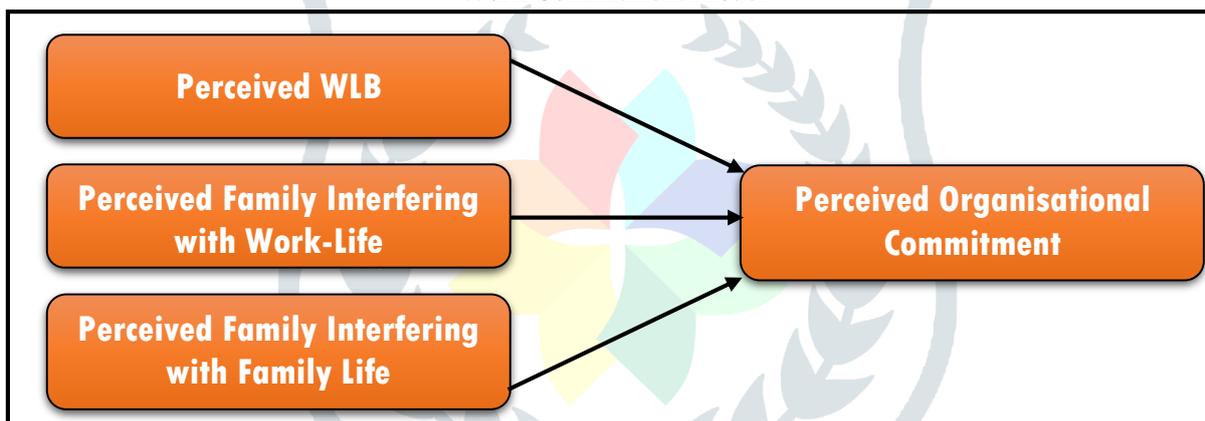
Figure 3
Emotional Exhaustion Model



Source: Emotional Exhaustion Model of Work-Family Conflict proposed By Yavas et al. (2008) as cited in Swathi et. al (2015)

Work Commitment Model (WCM): The WCM of work-life balance as illustrated in **Figure 4** was proposed by (Azeem and Akhtar, 2014). It emphasized that job satisfaction and WLB are the most significant in enhancing organizational commitment among healthcare workers. They pointed out that job satisfaction and WLB are two sides of a coin. Both are interconnected, one exists with the help of the other. In such cases, the organizations’ support is necessary to achieve WLB.

Figure 4
Work Commitment Model



Source: Conceptual Model of Work-life Balance, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment proposed by Azeem and Akhtar (2014) as cited in Swathi et. al (2015)

Job Satisfaction Model (JSM): The JSM of work-life balance as shown in **Figure 5** has been introduced by (Nikkah et al. 2013). It suggests that professional life and personal life have a good impact on job satisfaction. The individual and organisational factors with job satisfaction and the well-being of the employee are interlinked. Therefore, it is concluded that the employee's job satisfaction has a positive correlation with work-family balance.

Figure 5
Job Satisfaction Model



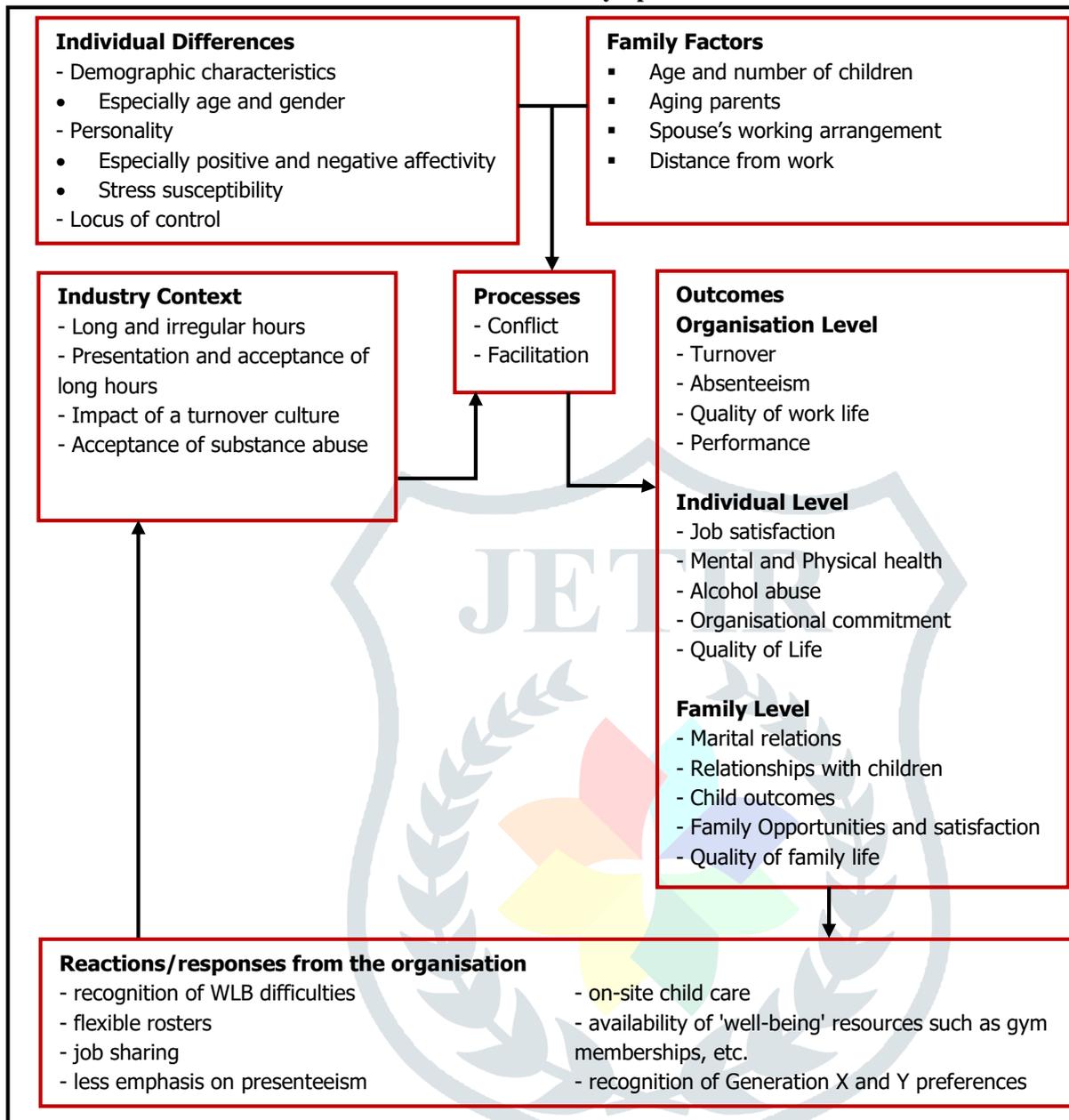
Source: Conceptual model of the link between job satisfaction and well-being proposed by Nikkah et al. (2013) as cited in Swathi et al. (2015)

Besides these models, several models of WLB as being practised by different organizations. The well-known models of WLB are listed as follows:

Industry Specific Model (ISM): The ISM of WLB is given in **Figure 6** and has been proposed by Deery and Jago (2009). The model represents that variables like stress, job insecurity, time pressure, role ambiguity, job autonomy, family pressures and

psychosomatic symptoms hurt the WLB of employees working in the tourism industry. Strategies that impact WLB positively are flexible scheduling, working from home and having access to both paid and unpaid leave. Job sharing is a strategy to improve WLB.

Figure 6
Industry-Specific Model

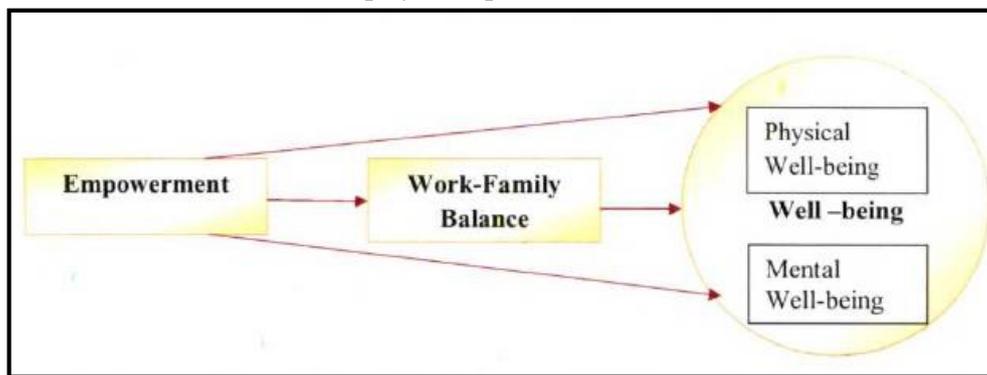


Source: Model of Work-life Balance in the tourism industry proposed by Deery and Jago (2009)

Therefore, the ISM suggests that organizations should implement flexible work practices that can assist women employees to achieve better Work-life Balance. Further, the model identifies that Work-life Balance is an area that has received less attention in the tourism industry. Although this model has been developed for the tourism industry this can well be replicated in other industries with industry-specific modifications.

Employee Empowerment Model (EEM): The EEM given in **Figure 7**, has been proposed by **Akdag (2012)**. The model views empowerment as a major factor that affects the work-family balance and physical and mental well-being of individuals. Empowerment can directly influence the mental and physical well-being of an individual or through its effect on family balance.

Figure 7
Employee Empowerment Model

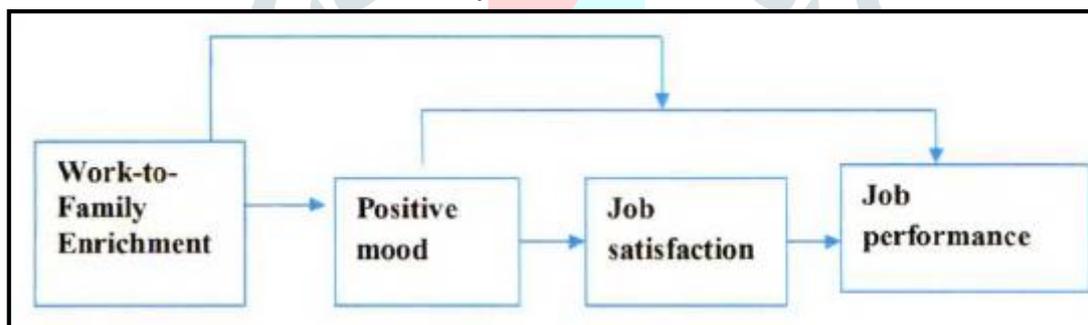


Source: Conceptual model of the interaction between empowerment, work-family balance and well-being proposed by Akdag (2012)

The EEM thus suggests that employees can have a sense of personal control through psychological empowerment. Psychological empowerment also helps them to engage in work.

Family Enrichment Model (FEM): The FEM of WLB has been depicted in **Figure 8**. The model has been proposed by **Carlson et al. (2011)**. This model is based on the Affective Events Theory (AET) which identifies the relationship between positive mood and job satisfaction with work-family enrichment and job performance. The salient features of the relationship identified between positive mood and job satisfaction with work-family enrichment and job performance model are: Work-to-family enrichment is associated with a positive mood state, which is in turn associated with a positive work attitude; Positive attitude at work leads to a behavioural response that causes enhanced workplace performance; Work-to-family enrichment and performance have an indirect relationship that is mediated by positive mood and partially mediated by job satisfaction; Work-to-family enrichment is directly related to employee job satisfaction; Positive spillover between the work and family domains of an employee leads to job satisfaction and job performance; and Process through which work-to-family enrichment plays a role in performance may be an effective one in which the emotion towards work plays a critical role in the experience of job satisfaction and performance.

Figure 8
Family Enrichment Model



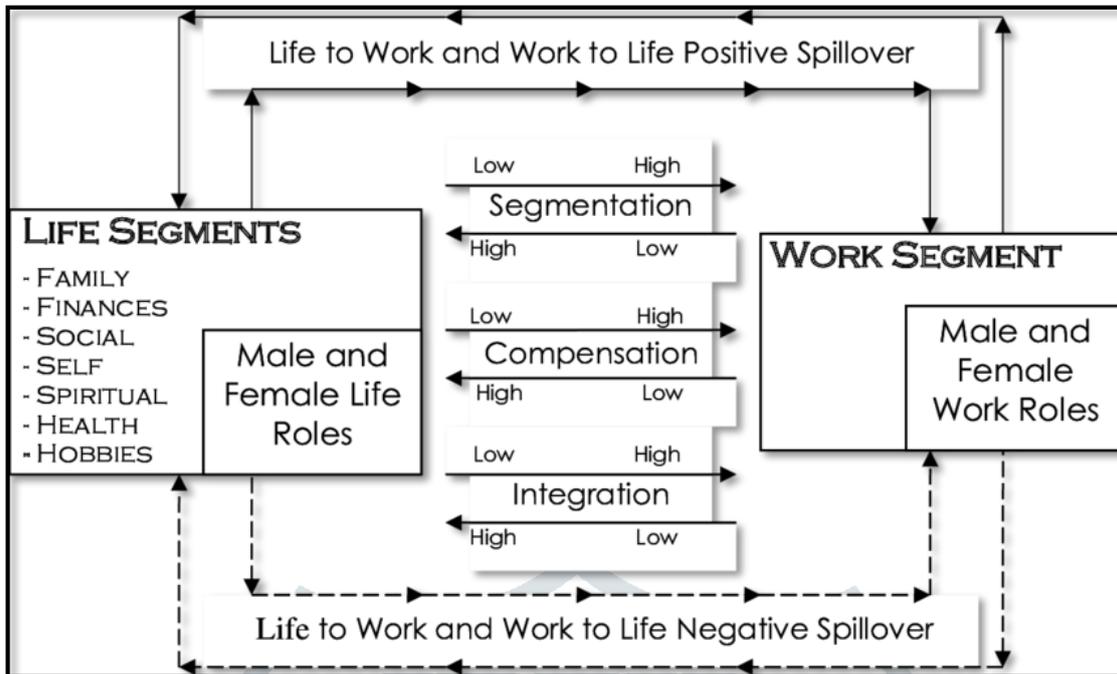
Source: Model for examining the relationship between work-to-family enrichment and job satisfaction, positive mood and job performance proposed by Carlson et al. (2011)

The FEM thus indicates that the positive mood of an employee can enhance workplace performance. Work-to-family enrichment builds a positive mood in an employee.

Spill-Over Model (SOM): The SOM of WLB given in **Figure 9** has been proposed by **Naithani et al. (2009)**. This model views that every individual life has multiple segments such as family, finances, social, health and hobbies. Most of the daily time and energy of an individual is consumed by the work segment. An individual who has a higher degree of work-life segmentation will have fewer opportunities to compensate for the loss in one segment from gains in the other segments. It is not very easy for women employees to completely segment their work and childcare responsibilities as they are socially and traditionally expected to engage in both. Thus, the non-availability of Work-life Balance policies for employees in their organizations leads to lower employee productivity and performance.

The SOM of WLB recommends that organizations should design their Work-life Balance policies in such a way that the policies help the employees to easily balance both the work and life segment and also improve their productivity.

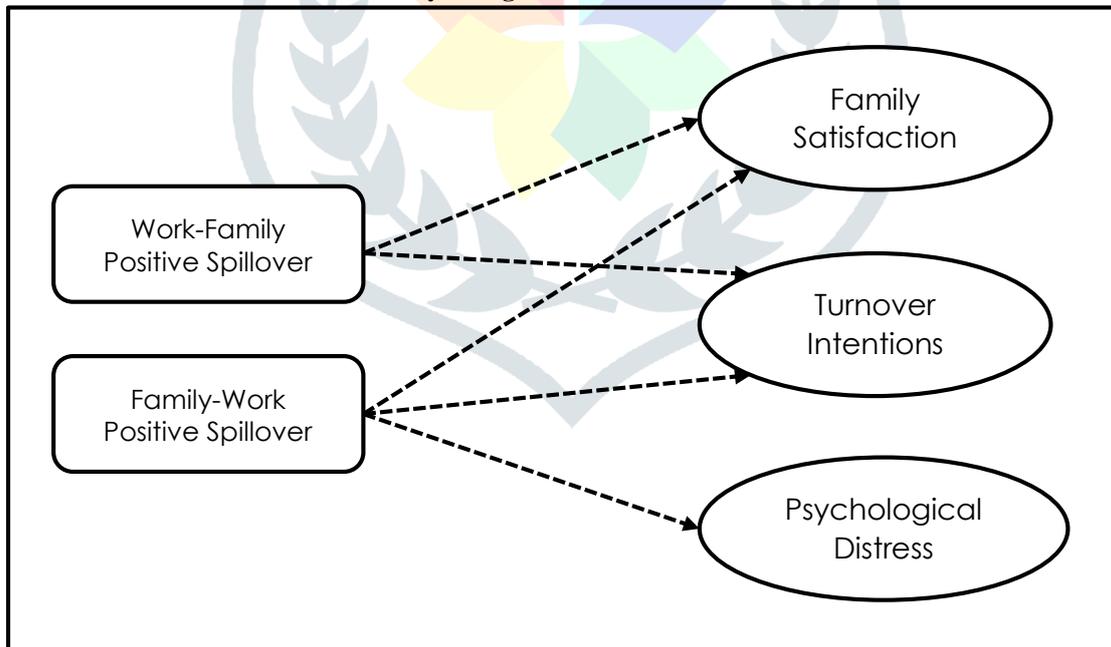
Figure 9
Spillover Model



Source: Work-life Balance: Macro level model proposed by Naithani et al. (2009)

Psychological Distress Model (PDM): The PDM given in Figure 10, has been proposed by Haar et al. (2007). This model identifies the relationship between work-family and family work with positive spill-over on outcomes. Work-family positive spillover was negatively linked with psychological distress and turnover intentions. Family-work positive spillover was negatively associated with psychological distress and is having a positive effect on family satisfaction. The positive spill-over has more influence on domain-related outcomes such as work-family positive spill-over and turnover intentions.

Figure 10
Psychological Distress Model



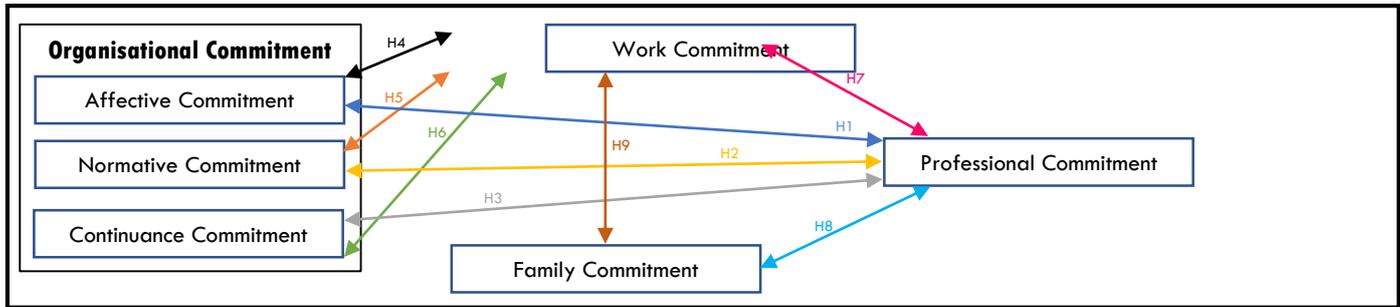
Source: Prediction Model for Positive Spillover and Outcomes proposed by Haar et al. (2007)

The PDM thus suggests that work-family and family-work spillover are significant in predicting the psychological distress of an employee. Work and family domains are separate spheres of an individual life.

Professional Commitment Model (PCM): The Professional Commitment Model, depicted in Figure 11, has been proposed by Benligray and Sonmez (2012). The model throws light on the strong constructive relationship between affective commitment to the organization and professional commitment. Employees mostly like to join organizations that value their skills. This attitude of people toward the organization represents their professional and work commitment and goal acceptance. Women and men perceive their work and family life roles differently.

PCM suggests that organizations should implement practices that increase the continuance commitment of employees. Modifying professional practices and implementing ethical practices increase the work commitment of employees.

Figure 11
Professional Commitment Model



Source: Relationship between professional commitment and organizational Commitment proposed by Benligiray and Sonmez (2012).

Working Hours Model specifies that the reduction of working hours for female employees improves their Work-life Balance, whereas, the **Career Progression Model** concludes that the provision of Work-life Balance policies for female employees results in desired productivity. Similarly, the **Workplace Support Model** suggests that the availability of alternative work schedules leads to job satisfaction of women employees, whereas, the **Work Commitment Model** views that Work-life Balance builds job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In the same way, the **Emotional Exhaustion Model** specifies that gender-specific mechanisms reduce employees' emotional exhaustion, and the **Psychological Distress Model** suggests that work-family and family-work spillover are significant in predicting the psychological distress of an employee.

Work-Family Conflict Model: Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) proposed a model of work-family conflict, which explains the important sources of conflict. According to this model, there are three major sources of work-family conflict: a) time-based conflict, b) strain-based and c) behaviour-based conflict. Time-based conflict occurs when time pressure associated with one role makes it difficult to participate effectively in other roles. Strain-based conflict occurs when strain caused due to one role interferes with effective participation in another role. Behavioural-based conflict occurs when the behaviour required to perform one role is incompatible with the behaviour required to perform another role. According to the model, the sources of conflict in the work domain are: the number of working hours, role conflict, role ambiguity, inflexible work schedule and expectations for objectivity and confidentiality. While, sources of conflict in the family domain are: the number of children, spouse employment, lack of spouse support, family conflict, and expectation for warmth and openness.

Determinants of Work-Life Balance Model: Guest (2002) proposed a model that explored the determinants of work-life balance in work, home and individual contexts. According to the model, determinants of work and home are; demands of work, a culture of work, demands of home and culture of home. Individual determinants include age, gender, personality, life and career stage, work orientation, energy, personal control and coping. The model also explained the nature, causes and outcomes of work-life balance. It defined work-life balance both subjectively and objectively. The objective indicators included time (number of hours) spent at work and family) over the other or giving equal weight to both domains. Work-life balance is defined as achieving a balance between the two domains. The model also reported outcomes of work-life balance which included enhanced performance at work and home, personal satisfaction and well-being.

Conceptual Model: Voydanoff (2005) proposed a conceptual model based on the person-environment fit theory that linked work, family, and boundary-spanning demands and resources to work and family role performance and quality. The linking mechanism included two dimensions of perceived work-family fit (work demands-family resources fit and family demands-work resources fit) and a global assessment of perceived work-family balance. It has been found that work-family and boundary-spanning demands and resources are associated with the two dimensions of fit, which combine with boundary-spanning strategies to influence work-life balance, which in turn affects role performance and quality.

Work-Family Enrichment Model: Greenhaus and Powell (2006) proposed a theoretical model of work-family enrichment. They defined work-family enrichment as the extent to which experiences in one role improve the quality of life in the other role. Work-family enrichment occurs through two paths: the instrumental path and the effective path. The model assumed that resources generated in one role (role A) promote high performance and positive effects in another role (role B) and vice-versa. Through the instrumental path resources can be transferred directly from role A to role B thus, enhancing performance in role B. This path is moderated by the salience of Role B, the perceived relevance of resources to Role B and the Consistency of resources with the requirements and norms of Role B. Through an effective path, resources generated in Role A can promote positive effect within Role A which in turn enhances performance and positive affect in Role B. This path is moderated by the salience of Role B only. Based on the above-mentioned theories and models, it can be concluded that work-life balance is a complex psychological construct, which is influenced by many factors like; work-related factors, family-related factors, personal factors and external factors (moderators and mediators). Hence, it needs to be examined thoroughly from a psychological perspective to make it manageable for individuals and organizations and benefit from its positive outcomes.

Multi-Dimension Model of Mental Health: Based on research, **Jahoda (1958)** proposed a multidimensional model of mental health in which she described six dimensions of mental health: a) the Attitudes of an individual towards his/her self; b) the degree of growth, and development and self-actualization; c) coherence and continuity of personality; d) autonomy and self-determination; e) adequate perception of reality and f) environmental mastery. **Keyes (1998)** argued that mental health is not a private phenomenon, it is influenced by social structure, social ties and, social tasks and challenges. Hence, he proposed a concept of social well-being to define mental health. He conceptualized his multidimensional model of social well-being on five dimensions: a) social contribution; b) social integration; c) social acceptance; d) social actualization; and e) social coherence. **Vaillant (2003)** based on theories of positive psychology, proposed six different criteria to conceptualize mental health: a) mental health as above normal; b)

mental health as positive psychology; c) mental health as maturity; d) mental health as social-emotional intelligence; e) mental health as subjective well-being; and f) mental health as resilience.

Conclusion

The models presented above provide clear evidence that finding a balance between work and life is essential for experiencing both physical and mental happiness. This balance can also lead to increased productivity and efficiency among individuals working in various organizations. Additionally, maintaining a healthy work-life balance helps to alleviate stress, strain, and conflicts among colleagues and family members. In today's globalized world, employees often face a range of challenges including health issues, both physical and mental, as well as cultural, environmental, legal, economic, and social problems. However, all of these issues can be mitigated by prioritizing a balanced work-life schedule. Without this balance, individuals and society as a whole suffer, leading to an increase in crime, illegal activities, and a waste of time, energy, and resources. In extreme cases, individuals may even resort to suicide or commit economic and social crimes. To prevent these issues from arising, companies and organizations should implement training programs that emphasize the importance of maintaining a work-life balance. In the past few years, there has been a growing focus among management experts on the importance of developing a comprehensive "theory of happiness" that can serve as the foundation for creating a happiness index applicable to diverse societies worldwide.

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