

## IMPACT OF WORK TO FAMILY AND FAMILY TO WORK CONFLICTS ON THE WORK LIFE BALANCE WITH MEDIATING ROLE OF JOB STRESS: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITIES OF JAMSHORO CITY, SINDH

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### ABSTRACT

The behaviorists established that in a person's life there are different domains such work domain, family domain and social domain that should be viewed as a separate entity and hence require separate time and space to successfully complete them. If a person is mixing them and unable to strike balance between those key life domains, then he or she is experiencing a work life imbalance. The issue is that these life domains are heavily interconnected which poses a serious challenge to a person in managing them successfully at the same time. This interconnection between work and non-work activities has become a source of what is called incompatibility and later on it was more commonly described by the institutional psychologist as "role conflict". The main objective of this study is to examine the impact of work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts measured through time-, strain- and behavior-based conflicts on work life balance of the faculty members working in the higher educational institutions of Jamshoro city. The estimates of direct structural path coefficients show that in work-to-family category, the most severe conflict is found to be strain-based conflict, followed by behavior-based conflict which negatively influence the work life balance of the teachers, implying that it is mismanagement of workload and unjust treatment of university authorities are major culprits that cause imbalance in their work and family life cycles. With respect to family-to-work category, they major conflicting factor happens to be behavior-based conflict, followed by strain-based conflict clearly indicating that it is not the time factor, but it is extra demands from work and family and non-cooperativeness from both work authorities and family members that cause stress and makes a teacher's life hectic and imbalanced. The results of mediating structural path coefficients show that except strain-based conflict emanating from work-to-family category, all other conflicts drive up the stress level of teachers which in turn leads them to have an imbalance work life cycle. These findings carry significant practical implications for university management, governmental agencies, field experts, community organizations and other relevant bodies that are working to design targeted policies to enhance the work life balance of university teachers.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, researchers have been trying to establish the facets of work life interface which is also referred to as work family interface and the major component that disturbs work life of an individual is his or her family. Initially, work life balance was operationalized using the two facets and these are: role enrichment and role conflict. It implied that work life balance has to fulfill two roles. First, it should make conflict between work tasks and family assignments zero and simultaneously it should enrich the work life as well as family life. A person meeting both conditions was considered to have a balance in

work life roles. As research advanced in this area, new dimensions were added to conceptualize and operationalize the work life balance construct. The notion of equity was added to work life concept, implying that an employee attains the balance in work-family interface when he or she is successful in distributing energy, time and involvement equally across the roles that he or she considers important to perform in life. Rahman et al. (2020) argued that work life balance basically refers to a worker's level of feelings and satisfaction he has towards equal engagement with his or her family and work roles in a given time and thus the

components of equal time & engagement to the level it generates satisfaction were added to the concept of work life balance. However, the equity approach has been criticized by some scholars on the grounds that the notion of equity is subjective phenomenon and thus varies from one individual to another. Individuals assign importance to each role they have to perform based on their own personal preferences and choices and hence equity theory falls short in accounting such an individual's subjective nature of importance he or she attaches to different roles at workplace and home (Pratiwi & Wahyuningsih, 2023). Bhattaru et al. (2024) highlighted the role of fitness in describing work life balance. Under fitness concept it was assumed that a person has a tendency to amass necessary personal resources, in terms of time, energy & competence, required to meet the demands arising from job tasks and family role to the extent he or she feels fitted in each domain of life. If an individual feels unfitted due to lack of time and other personal resources then it causes frustration, resulting in improper work life balance.

## 2. Higher Educational Landscape in Sindh Province

Pakistan has been lagging behind in quantity and quality of higher education, which is one of the reasons Pakistan's economy is not competitive and as result its export volume is much lower than the regional countries such India. Higher education plays a critical role in socio economic growth and development of a nation. Pakistan's higher education is marred by a number of problems such as low quality, poorly funded institutions and poor governance in all aspects. Though there are certain universities that perform as per international quality and governance standards, their number is limited and thus, the impact is very negligible at macroeconomic level. The developed countries have achieved sustainable growth in all social and economic sectors on the back of qualitative labor force supplied by their higher educational sector. In this global era, the rapidly changing technologies in almost each walk of life, environmental concerns, attainment of sustainable development goals (SDGs) mandated by the United Nations, and transition to clean energy and achieving inclusive growth and development across the regions of

country, the role of human capital becomes ever greater (Ovidiu, et al., 2023). Given the poor performance of higher educational institutions in Pakistan, it is essential to conduct research studies exploring each dimension to understand the sector's challenges and then accordingly propose solutions to make it a quality sector which is able to produce graduate to be fitted for jobs in dramatically changing labor market nationally and globally. This study is aimed to focus on the factors that influence work life balance of the faculty members working in higher educational institutions in Sindh Province Pakistan as it is strongly believed that the teachers are single most valuable assets of a higher educational institution.

## 3. Problem Statement

It is well documented that Pakistan's labor market is repeated with mediocre labor force and there is a dearth of qualitative human resources which has severely constrained national and multinational organizations' capacity and capacity to produce and market quality goods and services. One of the reasons for poor quality labor force is the lack of advanced higher educational institutions in the country. There is a growing recognition that the higher educational institutions in Pakistan are marred by multiple crises and the most prominent one is the poor quality of academic and research activities mainly attributed by the faculty having non supportive work life balance, which has negatively influenced the performance outcomes of the faculty members. Such scenario has caused the production of mediocre graduates who are not able to meet the ever-changing labor market needs of the country. Measuring and addressing the facets that impact the work life balance of the faculty members at higher educational institutions will not only improve the academic & research outcomes of teachers at individual level but also generate a number of positive externalities such as faculty with positive work life balance tend to produce quality graduates who would go in the market and improve the organizational performance across the socio-economic sectors in Pakistan. According to Badri(2024) the imbalanced work family life among university teachers is caused by a plethora of factors such as pressures emanating from job and family demands which limits a faculty member's

ability to fend off such pressures and as a result his or her performance is greatly compromised, causing huge loss to students. The paradigm changes in governance and administrative functions of universities due to emergence of modern technology and also because of strict quality standards imposed by provincial and federal higher educational commissions have added to the pressures of faculty members, resulting in anxiety and depression. It has observed that teachers working at the higher educational institutions face conflict, which is bidirectional, meaning work role is being negatively influenced by increasing demands coming from family roles, causing work-family conflict and at the same time, a teacher's family life is disturbed due to immense pressure arising from job demands, creating family work conflict (Shaikh&Wajidi, 2021). This dual scenario is extremely dangerous for the mental health, academic efficiency, research productivity and overall wellbeing of the teachers. Past research studies have showed that work life balance, which is disturbed owing to bidirectional causal chain that is from work to family and from family to work, can be best understood through examining the drivers of conflict based on three dimensions and these are: time-, strain- and behavior-based demands emanating from work and family domains. Therefore, this study is aimed at assessing the work life balance of teachers by examining drivers of conflicts (i.e., time, strain and behaviors based), using job stress variable as a mediating variable and propose solutions to enhance faculty members' work life balance.

#### 4. Literature Review

Individuals often scramble to balance work and family domains. Such challenging situations occur more frequently among teachers of higher educational institutions due to their highly demanding academic & teaching assignments. On one hand they have to meet their teaching & research responsibilities that require high level mental efforts, and on the other they have to fulfil their family obligations, which often create work family conflict. Given the nature of university teachers, they need to have more flexibility and autonomy to redeem, particularly, their research tasks at the time and place of their choice. That way

they can be kept efficient and productive, while enabling them to allocate sufficient time to meet their family roles. According to Eshun and Segbenya (2024) faculty members working in the universities need autonomy more than the employees working in other sectors of economy due to their mentally demanding job assignments. Amah (2021) explained that work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts refer to the inter-role rifts in which the demand pressures from work and family roles are incompatible mutually in a way that requirements for completing task in one domain presents an individual from completing task in another domain. In such situations, due to clash in time, energy, effort & place makes it virtually impossible for a worker to perform the roles at the workplace and family. A worker is wanted at multiple places at the same time, and neither is flexible to afford a person the chance to postpone or delay one task in order to be able to complete another assignment. Missing one assignment incurs huge sacrifice cost for an individual. For instance, if a worker is preferring to stay at the workplace to do overtime which is needed to finish the given job assignment and as a consequence, he or she is unable to attend a scheduled gathering in family, then he or she suffers in the form of disturbing family relationships. Likewise, if a worker leaves the office to do the task required in family at the time when his or presence, till late working hours, was required in the organization, may cost him or her monetary benefits or even in extreme case cost him or her losing job. Such circumstances create a rigid schedule from both work and family domains that conflict is bound to occur which negatively influence a person's working ability, reducing his or her job performance in the organization and at the same time that person is viewed is bad family member for not redeeming duties which he or she has shouldered as the head of family. The work family conflict breeds a number of negative externalities which not only influence an individual's health and performance but also causes issues at organizational level and social problems within the community level. Employees with high on work family conflicts are more likely to experience job stress & burnout, depression and other psychological issue in his or her dealing with

family and social members. On the other hand, employees who are low on work family conflicts tend to experience self-confidence, exercise self-efficacy and lead a life with high professional and social status due to their ability to perform multiple roles required at the workplace and at home. Past research studies show that work-to-family and family-to-work conflicts generally manifest through three important dimensions, and these are time-based conflicts, strain-based conflicts and behavior-based conflicts (Kamalulil&Pantik, 2021; Nelson&Onyeiwu, 2024). Time based demands are activated when a faculty is under high pressure to allocate time to complete job tasks at university, meeting certain deadlines and in parallel his or her time is needed at home to meet family obligations (Nelson&Onyeiwu, 2024). In such a situation a teacher is not able to prioritize one over another and as result feels stressed out which lowers his or her institutional performance, causing a serious damage to professional career. Time demand also generates pressure when a teacher is asked to do overtime to complete an organizational job assignment (Sarpong, 2024). Strain based demands are activated when a teacher finds the assigned teaching, research and/or administrative task tedious and challenging, requiring him to spend more mental energies to compete it, causing fatigue which hinders his or her ability to effectively redeem family responsibilities (Kamalulil&Pantik, 2021). The Sindh Province is very rich in education by imparting various domestic and international students in multicultural institutes and universities. Furthermore, the alumni of these universities are rendering their services in leading companies, industries, factories, hospitals, hotels and educational sectors. For retaining and sustaining the admission ratio in these universities it is important to maintain the trend line of admission and necessary to develop framework by identification of problems faced by students and by increasing self efficiency of students for chasing the problems and sustain their education instead of dropout (S Shaikh, 2024). Finally, behavioral based demands become operational when a faculty member's immediate boss like director, dean and other higher line authorities turn hostile towards him or her and who often puts the faculty down in

front of other colleagues (Leena & Kaur, 2024). Such hostile behavior of the boss produces a negative mood of the faculty at workplace who in turn performs very poorly due to mental stress and anxiety (Mohamed, S., 2023). Such faculty also tend to vent out his or her frustration over family members, causing damage to family relationships. The most valuable asset of a higher educational institution is its faculty members and thus it is critical to highlight and address issues that influence their work life balance.

## 5. Theories related to Work Life Balance

There has been a number of theories that explaining the phenomenon of work life balance, the most important theories that have bearing in the context of Sindh Pakistan's environment are discussed below.

### 5.1 Balance Theory

The Balance theory assumes that a person as a social actor carries a positive or negative feeling towards another person and an issue he or she is dealing with (Hummon & Doreian, 2003). Such feelings shape a person's cognitive and emotional structures through which he or she views and forms opinions about the issues being confronted. As per the assumptions of Balance Theory (BT), people inherently attempt to obtain a balance in cognitive and emotional structures. Work life balance is achieved when an employee has secured the balanced states in both emotional and cognitive aspects. Imbalance in either emotional or cognitive structure disturbs a person's positive mindset required to deal with the challenges of meeting work and family tasks. BT suggests that organizations put in place the resource system that ensures employees have adequate access to job and family resources which would help them achieving balance in emotional and cognitive structures and as result they would be productive and efficient at individual employee level as well as organizational level. An institution having emotionally, and cognitively balanced faculty members tends to outperform its competitors in academic and research domains (Williams & McCombs, 2023).

## 5.2 Border Theory

Border theory has been frequently used to explain the work-family life phenomenon. This theory proposes that work domain is different from home domain and thus an individual has to set boundaries clearly separating one sphere from another one in order to attain balance in both work and family duties. The major assumption of the border theory is that since work and family spheres are distinctive so if a person does not separate them through boundaries, then the roles from each domain would interfere, generating conflict of multiple nature (Xiaomei, 2023). Border theory captured the phenomenon that happened between organizational culture and home culture after industrial revolution and proposed that due to their separate nature, the pressure arising from work activities may cross the border and enter into the domain of home activities and limit a person's capability to fulfil home duties smoothly and as a consequence it would negatively influence his or her work life balance. According to Karassvidou and Glaveli (2015), using border theory, a worker can effectively create borders between work and family domains, identify major crossers that potentially can influence work life balance and thus accordingly design a customized border management, especially using segmentation and integration strategies.

## 5.3 Signaling Theory

The signaling theory (ST) assumes that the availability of job and family facilitative resources within an organizational form a worker's perceived organizational support. According to Xu and Wang(2023) perceived organizational support (POS) is described as workers' perceived belief over the extent to which organization cares and values their wellbeing and contribution towards attaining organizational goals, which is reflected by the support services organizations makes available for the workers. If an organization has an adequate supportive resource that can be used by an employee to balance his or her work life issues, then such an employee carries a high degree of POS which in turn enhances his or her loyalty and engagement with organizational job tasks. Likewise, Caspe and Harris (2008) argued that the availability of work life balance policies greatly

increases POS of employees which happens to work in the interest of both for an employee at individual level and at organizational level by increasing individual employee productivity and enhancing overall organizational sales volume and profitability.

## 5.4 Self Interest Utility Theory

Self interest utility theory (SIUT) has been used to explain the phenomenon of work life balance. SIUT, at its core, suggests that it is the use of job and family supportive resources available at workplace, generates positive perception among employees towards an organization and not mere availability of those supportive resources. Casper and Harris (2008) noted that the employees who have benefited in real terms from work life balance related facilitative resources available at an organization positively impact an employee's organizational attachment. The level of satisfaction in utilization of supportive resources is generated from an employee's feeling regarding the extent to which he or she is having a balanced work and family life. In such conditions employees work wholeheartedly to promote the image of an organization as they consider it caring towards their family needs and thus, they feel it obligatory to pay back to the organization by working with utmost commitment. The employees, who have an acceptable work life balance due to utility of organizational resources, are more likely to work harder and generate productive outcomes in job assignments.

## 6. Research Objectives

This research has the following research objectives:

- To examine the impact of time-based conflict arising from work to family interaction on work life balance of teaching employees.
- To analyze the effect of strain-based conflict arising from work to family interaction on work life balance of teaching employees.
- To measure the influence of behavior- based conflict arising from work to family interaction on work life balance of teaching employees.

- To examine the impact of time-based conflict emanating from family to work interaction on work life balance of teaching employees.
- To analyze the effect of strain-based conflict emanating from family to work interaction on work life balance of teaching employees.
- To measure the influence of behavior-based conflict emanating from family to work interaction on work life balance of teaching employees.
- To analyze the mediating effect of job stress between time, strain and behavior-based conflicts emanating from both work to family and family to work interactions and work life balance of teaching employees.

## 7. Research Hypotheses

Based on the comprehensive review of the literature, the following testable hypotheses are developed in this study. In total twelve hypotheses are developed, of which six are direct and six are indirect using the mediating variable (i.e., employee job stress).

### Research Hypotheses (Direct Hypotheses)

**Hypothesis#1:** Time based conflict arising from work to family interaction significantly influences work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#2:** Strain based conflict arising from work to family interaction has a strong impact on work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#3:** Behavior based conflict arising from work to family interaction is significantly linked with work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#4:** Time based conflict arising from family to work interaction is significantly

associated with work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#5:** Strain based conflict arising from family to work interaction has a strong effect on work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#6:** Behavior based conflict arising from family to work interaction significantly determines work life balance of teaching employees.

### Research Hypotheses (Mediating Hypotheses)

**Hypothesis#7:** Job stress significantly mediates relationship between work to family induced time-based conflict and work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#8:** Job stress has a significant mediating effect between work to family triggered strain-based conflict and work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#9:** Job stress has a strong mediating impact between work to family caused behavior-based conflict and work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#10:** Job stress significantly mediates relationship between family to work induced time-based conflict and work life balance of teaching employees.

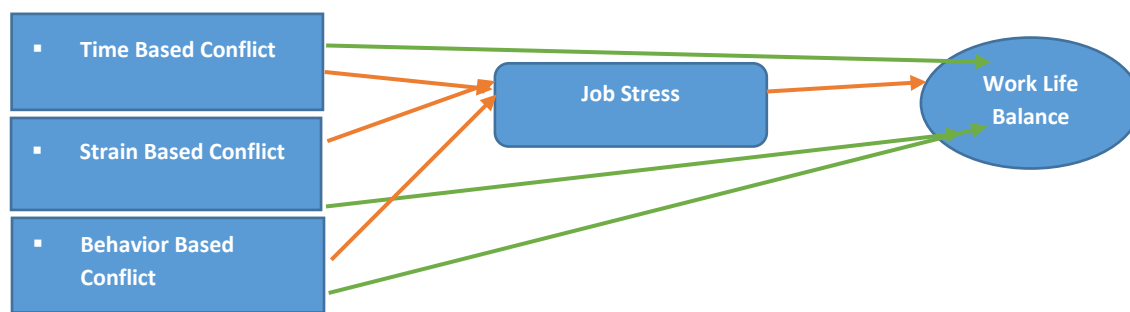
**Hypothesis#11:** Job stress has a significant mediating effect between family to work triggered strain-based conflict and work life balance of teaching employees.

**Hypothesis#12:** Job stress has a strong mediating impact between family to work caused behavior-based conflict and work life balance of teaching employees.

## 8. Conceptual Model

This study has the following conceptual model showing dependent, independent and mediating variables.

Figure-1: The Conceptual Model



## 9. Research Methodology

It is an explanatory research and Quantitative Approach is applied. All the regular teaching staff of three Universities (i.e., University of Sindh, Mehran University of Engineering and Technology and Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences) made the population of this study. 500 survey questionnaires were distributed to collect the primary data from respondents and 406 completely filled survey questionnaires were returned. Survey Questionnaire is adopted based on these studies: Khateeb, (2021); Steiber, (2009); Huo and Jiang, (2023). Since the conceptual model of this study includes mediating variable, thus Structural Equation Model (SEM) is used to analyze the data at the measurement and structural path levels.

## 10. Data Analysis and Discussions

### 10.1 Respondents' Profile

The respondents' profile data shows that 56% of the participants were male faculty members, whereas the ratio of female teachers was 44%. This is a balanced ratio which would enrich the findings of this study as it covers the factors that influence the work life balance of both genders i.e., male and female teachers who joined in the survey by almost in equal ratio. The majority (i.e., 40%) of the respondents were from the age group of 31 to 40 years, followed by the age cohort 41 to 50 years, implying that the senior faculty members participated in this survey and thus it is expected that valid factors would be identified as they are

being extracted from the faculty members who are older and are having an active work and family life. 39% of the respondent teachers held Assistant Professor title, followed by 22% who were working as lecturer. The ratio of faculty members holding Professor title was 21% and the remaining 18% were Associate Professors. The majority of respondents (i.e., 51%) had job experience of more than 11 years. This is followed by 29% of the respondents who were from job experience category of 7 to 10 years, indicating that the faculty members who had been working for a quite some time in their respective universities joined the survey and hence they would be more knowledgeable over the impact of factors that disturb their work life balance at the workplace. The last question in the respondents' profile part was related to marital status. The data shows that 91% of the respondent faculty members were married and were expected to meet the job demands and family demands simultaneously so they should be considered extremely relevant to find out the influence of the factors that they need to create a desired level of work life balance while working in the higher educational institutions.

## 10.2 Convergent Validity: Cronbach's Alpha and AVE

Convergent validity is used for the constructs that are reflectively developed and, in this context, convergent validity refers to the extent to which the items capture the same concept. Cronbach's alpha is applied to measure inter-item correlation among the items of the same formatively constructed variable. The higher Cronbach's alpha, the greater a construct has convergent validity. This is based on the logic that if items are strongly correlated to one another then it implies that they are measuring the same concept and hence, a construct is said to be reliable in measuring what it is designed to measure. According to Taber(2018) if Cronbach's alpha value is 0.7 or higher than the construct is found to have convergent validity and if it has a lower value then the researcher should reconsider the measurement of that variable, especially remove the items having lower outer loadings or add up more relevant items that should measure the similar concept and carry more inter-item consistency. The results of Cronbach's alpha show that the values for all constructs are above the cut-

off value of 0.7, hence the convergent validity at the variable level is established. The other two tests (i.e., Composite reliability (rho\_c) and Composite reliability (rho\_a) also measure the inter item consistency in a similar way that Cronbach's alpha measures, they just differ in their severity such as the Cronbach's alpha is viewed extremely severe way of measuring convergent validity, followed by Composite reliability (rho\_a) and then Composite reliability (rho\_c). The results of these both tests are also higher than the required value of 0.7, indicating that all constructs used in this study are having convergent validity. Lastly, Average variance extracted (AVE) is applied to assess the explanatory power of each item towards that construct. The cut-off value for AVE is 0.5 and if a construct has an AVE value greater than 0.5, it is considered to have convergent validity as all items jointly explain more than 50% of variation in that construct. The results of AVE show that values for all constructs are greater than a minimum required value of 0.5, hence from the perspective of AVE, convergent validity is established.

**Table-1: Convergent Validity: Cronbach's Alpha and AVE**

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
FW#BBC	0.781	0.796	0.804	0.577
FW#SBC	0.752	0.781	0.798	0.556
FW#TBC	0.815	0.836	0.855	0.617
JS	0.849	0.868	0.882	0.664
WF#BBC	0.747	0.762	0.772	0.529
WF#SBC	0.806	0.832	0.860	0.602
WF#TBC	0.721	0.744	0.763	0.521
WLB	0.863	0.879	0.896	0.674

## 10.3 Discriminant Validity: Fornell Larcker Criterion

According to Rönkkö and Cho (2022) discriminant validity refers to the extent to which a theoretically different construct is in fact distinctive from other constructs that have been used in the same model and are measured as per different set of theoretical assumptions. Discriminant validity ensures the variables are distinguishable not on theoretical grounds but empirically too. Rasoolimanesh(2022)

suggested that if the diagonal values, which represent square root of average variance extracted, are greater than correlation values of respective column and row then a construct is found to have achieved discriminant validity. The results show that the diagonal values marked bold in Fornell Larcker Criterion table are much higher than their corresponding values implying that all the constructs have discriminant validity.



**Tabel-2: Discriminant Validity: Fornell Larcker Criterion**

	FW#BBC	FW#SBC	FW#TBC	JS	WF#BBC	WF#SBC	WF#TBC	WLB
FW#BBC	<b>0.760</b>							
FW#SBC	0.325	<b>0.746</b>						
FW#TBC	0.375	0.438	<b>0.785</b>					
JS	0.299	0.528	0.465	<b>0.815</b>				
WF#BBC	0.604	0.497	0.471	0.504	<b>0.727</b>			
WF#SBC	0.468	0.377	0.360	0.547	0.347	<b>0.776</b>		
WF#TBC	0.509	0.473	0.207	0.420	0.547	0.475	<b>0.722</b>	
WLB	0.156	0.279	0.391	0.551	0.470	0.526	0.588	<b>0.821</b>

#### 10.4 Discriminant Validity:

##### Heterotraitmonotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Heterotraitmonotrait ratio (HTMT) is another test of discriminant validity and it measures the degree to which an item of one variable is correlated with the items of the same variable as well the items of other variables used in the same conceptual model. It calculates the monotrait ratio indicating the correlation of items to one another of the same construct and heterotrait ratio which implies the correlation ratio of the items of one construct with

the items of other constructs. Then heterotrait ratio is compared with monotrait ratio generating HTMT coefficient, which if has a value lower than 0.85, then it is empirically evidenced that the items are more correlated with their own construct than in comparison of an item's correlation with the items of other variables. The results in the table Heterotraitmonotrait ratio (HTMT) show that all values are lower than the threshold value of 0.85, hence all the constructs have discriminant validity.

**Tabel-3: Discriminant Validity: HeterotraitMonotrait Ratio (HTMT)**

	FW#BBC	FW#SBC	FW#TBC	JS	WF#BBC	WF#SBC	WF#TBC	WLB
FW#BBC								
FW#SBC	0.412							
FW#TBC	0.838	0.516						
JS	0.332	0.580	0.554					
WF#BBC	0.502	0.646	0.437	0.661				
WF#SBC	0.647	0.361	0.448	0.363	0.382			
WF#TBC	0.225	0.605	0.272	0.549	0.401	0.670		
WLB	0.721	0.288	0.584	0.595	0.396	0.608	0.484	

#### 10.5 Data Analysis: Structural Path Model

If the measurement model of the SEM is assessed successfully for its convergent validity and discriminant validity, then it is safe to analyze the structural path model. In this study, structural path model is made of using six direct path relations between exogenous and endogenous variables and

six indirect relationships using one mediating variable.

## 10.6 Path Model Fit Indices

It is essential that before interpreting path model parameters for determining the direction and magnitude of the impact between various path relationships, the goodness of fit tests should be examined. Model's fit tests show the ability of a specified model in representing the observed values collected through primary sources. A good fitting model has extremely less variance & covariance between model expected values and observed values. R-square is the most popular test to assess the explanatory power of a model which then implies its goodness of fit with the observed data values. R-square value at endogenous variable job stress (JS) is 0.716, indicating that 71.6% of variation in job stress is collectively explained by the six independent variables representing work to family and family to work conflicts. This high R-square indicates that the job stress that teachers working in the higher educational institutions experience is coming from the work and family conflicts. The R-square value at endogenous variable work life balance is 0.682, implying that 68.2% of variance in the work life balance is caused by the job stress construct. The R-square values at both exogenous paths are higher, showing that the model used in this is

correctly specified using the relevant variables. The other dominant model fit tests include the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and the Normed Fit Index (NFI). SRMR captures the discrepancy between observed values and the expected values such that higher discrepancy indicates the model is mis-specified and lower discrepancy indicates the model is properly specified and it represents that real data on the ground. SRMR is measuring the extent to which a model has an error term so the lower SRMR value, better it is. According to Pavlov et al. (2021) SRMR should not exceed 0.1. The SRMR value in this study is 0.084, which is lower than the cut-off value of 0.1, showing the model is having a good fitting with the observed data. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) is a goodness fit test which measures the improvement of the model due to the specified placement of each variable along the correct line of structural path in comparison with the null model path structure. The correctly structured model often yields a higher NFI and according to Sahoo(2019) NFI greater than 0.9 shows a model carries acceptable range of goodness of fit. The model fit results show that NFI value is 0.945 which is higher than the threshold value of 0.9, indicating that model is well fitted.

**Table-4: Path Model Fit Indices**

	R-square	R-square adjusted
JS	0.716	0.712
WLB	0.682	0.680
	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.083	0.084
d_ ULS	2.739	2.741
d_ G	0.628	0.629
Chi-square	762.526	762.421
NFI	0.946	0.945

## 10.7 Work to Family: Time-Based Conflict and WLB

The faculty members working in the higher educational institutions are especially vulnerable to suffer from time-based conflict due to their nature of job tasks, especially research activities which often cases require more time to complete a report

than expected. The failure of management's understanding of the nature of job and its time requirements, ultimately push a teacher to assign additional time to meet the official deadline which in turn reduces the time left for family. Berheide et al. (2022) noted that even in cases where teachers work overtime and delay attending family tasks to

complete the given job assignment, they feel disappointed if their efforts are not properly recognized and awarded in terms of additional monetary benefits and boost in career development. Management can take a number of measures to reduce the time-based conflict such as allowing teachers to work at flextime or work from home so that they can do the job work and handle family issues, putting their minds at ease, which would enhance their productivity on the work. Similarly, Chung(2024) suggested flextime and flexplace are the effective tools to mitigate the time-based conflicts an employee faces at the workplace. Görmüşand Baytur(2023) reported that organizational management in certain situations abuse its authority in employee time management and assigns the unscheduled tasks to the employees, requiring them to complete it within unrealistic time frame, further worsening the work life balance of the employees. Such abusive practices can be handled through enforcing labor regulations that enable laborers to work standardized job hours and then give the time to their family affairs. The estimates of structural path model show that the beta path coefficient between work to family: time-based conflict and WLB is -0.152, indicating that time-based conflict is reducing the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. The p-value of this negative relationship is 0.018, which is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. Based on this statistically significant path coefficients the hypothesis#1 “*Time based conflict arising from work to family interaction significantly influences work life balance of teaching employees*” is fully supported.

## **10.8 Work to Family: Strain-Based Conflict and WLB**

The role ambiguity and mentally stressful job assignments are frequently observed by the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. It is almost a standardized practice in each university in Pakistan to assign additional administrative assignment to any faculty member which is mandatory for him or her to complete it. Since the faculty members don't carry sufficient capabilities to redeem the administrative task as per the set standards and resultantly, they feel

burdened up thereby experiencing strain-based conflict, which takes a heavy toll on their work life balance. Nauman et al. (2023) suggested that university management should think twice before assigning additional assignments to a faculty member and it should seek willingness and the assignment should match the skills level of that teacher. It is after meeting all such conditions, an additional administrative task should be given to a teacher. Further, the nature of publishing in the impact factor research journals, which is a compulsory requirement for a promotion of teacher in the university, causes a great deal of mental fatigue to the teachers who often suffer from job stress and job burn out at the workplace which increases the strain-based conflict in their professional lives. The estimates of structural path model show that the beta path coefficient between work to family: strain-based conflict and WLB is -0.658, indicating that strain-based conflict is negatively influencing the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. The p-value of this negative relationship is 0.000, which is statistically significant at 99% confidence level. Based on this statistically significant path coefficients the hypothesis#2 “*Strain based conflict arising from work to family interaction has a strong impact on work life balance of teaching employees*” is fully supported.

## **10.9 Work to Family: Behavior-Based Conflict and WLB**

Behavior-based conflict is mainly the result of a supervisor'/manager's hostile attitude towards employees within the working environment. The rude and unfair behaviors of the boss have a strong negative impact on the mood and energy level of the employees. The nature of teaching job is different from other business jobs as doing academic and research activities effectively require a positive mindset and a happy mood on the part of the teachers. In this regard, it is well documented that the mood of a worker is highly influenced by the behaviors of the immediate supervisor under whose command he or she is working (Fransisca, et al., 2023). The positive and encouraging supervisor behaviors are more likely to enhance the energy level of the employees who then whole-

heartedly focus on their work and yield highly productive outcomes. Conversely, the unjust and negative attitude of the managers towards the employees makes them nervous and depressed and as a result their performance is greatly reduced. A supervisor's positive attitude in relation to maintaining a good work life balance includes the understanding of an employees' family needs and the development at personal and professional levels. Law, S. (2023) found that employees often reciprocate positively to the fair treatment of their supervisors by performing innovatively at the workplace and substantially contributing to enhancing the productive level of that session, making the supervisors proud through higher performance. Supervisors design special coaching sessions to uplift the spirit of employees who are feeling low due to work and family related stressful situations and provide support to address not only work issues but help employees in sorting out their family issues too. It is extremely essential that heads of the universities should behave positively and be cognizant of the family needs of the teachers in order to afford the opportunity to the teachers to create an acceptable level of work life balance and perform creatively in their teaching and research tasks. The estimates of structural path model show that the beta path coefficient between work to family: behavior-based conflict and WLB is -0.557, implying that behavior-based conflict has a negative impact on the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. The p-value of this negative relationship is 0.000, which is statistically significant at 99% confidence level. Based on this statistically significant path coefficients the hypothesis#3 "*Behavior based conflict arising from work to family interaction is significantly linked with work life balance of teaching employees*" is fully supported.

### **10.10 Family to Work: Time-Based Conflict and WLB**

Time-based conflict does not only arise from work domain, but it can be caused by the pressures emanating from family demands too. According to Vavasseur (2024) the time-based conflict induced by the family pressures carry a substantial influence on a worker's personal and family life

thereby disturbing his or her work life. A family structure which is demanding in terms of expecting the head of the family to complete family tasks within a designated time. Such strict family values make a person, who is a worker at the same time, tense which severely constrains his or her capability to meet the dual time demands arising from family and work spheres that negatively influences his or her work life balance. Poornima and Ashokan (2023) noted that a family set up which is flexible and accommodative towards the head in performing family duties, tend to reduce the level of time-based conflict and enable the worker to perform family tasks and work assignments effectively due to autonomy in the timings of performing each activity. On the other hand, if family culture is strict in its demand and expect the family head to finish the family task on time, tend to increase the time-based conflict which drives up the stress level of an employee who feels stressed out due to family issues and resultantly perform poorly at the job tasks too. The estimates of structural path model show that the beta path coefficient between family to work: time-based conflict and WLB is -0.063, indicating that time-based conflict is lessening the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. The p-value of this negative relationship is 0.009, which is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. Based on this statistically significant path coefficients the hypothesis#4 "*Time based conflict arising from family to work interaction is significantly associated with work life balance of teaching employees*" is fully supported.

### **10.11 Family to Work: Strain-Based Conflict and WLB**

An employee who is overburdened due to higher family demands, is more likely to undergo strain-based conflict which has a tendency to negatively affect his or her both family and work lives. Fulfilling family obligations in this highly socially interactive era requires time, energy and financial resources. Teachers working in higher educational institutions often have a vibrant and active social life which necessitates a substantial commitment from the teachers to come up to the expectations of his or her family. According to Afrianty et al.

(2015) a worker who remains tired from family roles which he or she feels extra & unnecessary, then such worker is more likely stay sluggish in doing job tasks and don't enjoy a good reputation at the workplace. Similarly, Fazal et al. (2022) noted that employees who devote more time to meeting family roles tend to remain absent or spend less hours at the job which severely jeopardizes their employee status, and they stay in low ranks for a longer time period. It is important to meet the family obligations for an employee, but such roles demand more time, cross the border and intrude into work sphere, then it causes strain-based conflict, which prevents a person from maintaining a right work life balance. The family members of the university teachers have to understand the work demands and help him or her in striking a balance between work demands and family demands in a way that it should not cause any strain. The estimates of structural path model show that the beta path coefficient between family to work: strain-based conflict and WLB is -0.415, implying that strain-based conflict has a negative impact on the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. The p-value of this negative relationship is 0.000, which is statistically significant at 99% confidence level. Based on this statistically significant path coefficients the hypothesis#5 “*Strain based conflict arising from family to work interaction has a strong effect on work life balance of teaching employees*” is fully supported.

### 10.12 Family to Work: Behavior-Based Conflict and WLB

Family is an important for a working individual who spends a significant portion of time with family members and that's why the attitudes and

behaviors of the family members play a pivotal role in shaping his or her mindset and general outlook for doing non-family roles. According to Smith (2023) a university teacher, who has supportive family members, tend to outperform at the workplace in comparison of their counterparts who have unsupportive family environment. An employee needs the supportive behaviors from his or her family in way that they should understand the pressures arising from job tasks and allow an employee to pay the required attention to job tasks and family should make him or her realize that they are together in both good and bad times and together they would find ways and means to get through the stormy times whether related to family or work domain. A person sheds whole day's tiredness and fatigue when he or she reaches home and reenergizes the next day if the time spent at home is relaxed and enjoyable due to positive behaviors of the family members. In cases when family members are unfairly rude, an employee's fatigue is multiplied which results in behavior-based conflict, and as a result his or her work life balance is extremely poorly managed. The estimates of structural path model show that the beta path coefficient between family to work: strain-based conflict and WLB is -0.428, indicating that behavior-based conflict carries a negative effect on the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions. The p-value of this negative relationship is 0.000, which is statistically significant at 99% confidence level. Based on this statistically significant path coefficients the hypothesis#6 “*Behavior based conflict arising from family to work interaction significantly determines work life balance of teaching employees*” is fully supported.

**Table-5: SEM Estimates: Direct Paths**

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
FW#BBC -> JS	0.115	0.114	0.024	4.798	0.000
FW#BBC -> WLB	-0.428	-0.428	0.025	17.160	0.000
FW#SBC -> JS	0.096	0.096	0.051	1.871	0.061
FW#SBC -> WLB	-0.414	-0.415	0.027	15.206	0.000
FW#TBC -> JS	0.301	0.301	0.064	4.672	0.000

FW#TBC -> WLB	-0.062	-0.063	0.024	2.616	0.009
JS -> WLB	-0.526	-0.526	0.071	7.361	0.000
WF#BBC -> JS	0.244	0.243	0.081	3.030	0.002
WF#BBC -> WLB	-0.557	-0.557	0.069	8.028	0.000
WF#SBC -> JS	0.050	0.050	0.064	0.784	0.433
WF#SBC -> WLB	-0.658	-0.658	0.086	7.630	0.000
WF#TBC -> JS	0.410	0.410	0.041	10.114	0.000
WF#TBC -> WLB	-0.147	-0.152	0.062	2.370	0.018

### 10.13 Structural Path Analysis: Mediating Results

In this study the variable job stress is used as a mediating variable with the rationale that all three forms of the conflict (i.e., time-, strain- & behavior-based conflict) create job stress at first and then that transforms into undesirable and negative work life balance of the employees. The conflicts that a worker experiences at the workplace and at home basically increase stress level which limits his or her ability to maintain a productive work life balance (Rashid, et al., 2022). In this causal chain the construct job stress is treated as a mediating variable. According to the structural path results regard mediating impact, job stress serves as a

significant mediating variable and lends support to all of mediating hypotheses except mediating hypothesis#8. These findings carry significant implications that organizational policies aimed at improving work life balance of the faculty members working at the higher educational institutions should mitigate the work to family and family to work conflicts in way that it should reduce the job stress level in the initial phase which then will improve the work life balance. The policy interventions would prove effective only if they are intended to contain the job stress first that means policy has to work through its way to reducing job stress to enhancing work life balance of the university teachers.

**Table-6: SEM Estimates: Mediating Paths**

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
FW#BBC -> JS -> WLB	-0.060	-0.061	0.018	3.421	0.001
FW#SBC -> JS -> WLB	-0.033	-0.033	0.012	2.657	0.008
FW#TBC -> JS -> WLB	-0.159	-0.160	0.045	3.509	0.000
WF#BBC -> JS -> WLB	-0.129	-0.125	0.038	3.427	0.001
WF#SBC -> JS -> WLB	0.026	0.025	0.032	0.823	0.410
WF#TBC -> JS -> WLB	-0.216	-0.215	0.033	6.508	0.000

### 11. Conclusion

A positive work life balance produces tremendous benefits in almost every aspect of the personal, social, and professional life of a person. According to Szegedi et al. (2024) employees having positive work life balance tend to have a higher level of job satisfaction which in turn enhances their productivity and efficiency at individual and organizational levels. Organizations witness much lower turnover among employees if they are retaining a desired level of work life balance at the

workplace. That way organizations retain the talented employees which reduce their expenses to be incurred in hiring new employees in case older employees leave and overall organizational outcomes are also enhanced in all departments and categories of service delivery. Malau(2023) found that employees who are content with their work life balance often perform better, and their job engagement and commitment remain high in comparison with the employees who are facing troubles in having a positive work life balance.

Work life balance promotes a worker's organizational citizenship behavior and as a result he or she behaves in line with organizational values and culture. Qudah et al. (2019) pointed that organizations that have a conducive working environment, enabling employees to establish an acceptable level of work life balance tend to experience lower employee absenteeism, higher level of efficiency and productivity in virtually all production, administrative and service segments. Khoeriyah and Widarta (2024) noted that the quality of products and customer services are greatly enhanced due to the employees with a balanced work life cycle. Through a satisfactory work life balance an employee create a buffer zone that safeguards his or her interests at both work and family domains and ultimately prevent an employee from the clash which might occur due to job and family demands in the absence of that buffer zone. With respect to family domain, work life balance creates a great level of family satisfaction which is indicative in reduced divorce rates, high frequency of family gatherings, and sound mental health of children. Tang et al. (2024) argued that in addition of the positive impact of work live balance on job performance, it helps employees accumulate personal resources such as become more resilient & skilled at doing activities, which carry positive spillovers in the family domain as such employees tend to fulfill their family duties in much efficient way.

## 12. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to improve the work life balance of the teachers working in the higher educational institutions in particular and the employees working in other corporate sectors in general.

## 13. Adoption of Flextime and flexplace

In this era of advanced technology that has made it possible to render job services irrespective of mandatory time and place requirements. Flextime strategies include compressed workdays, workweeks, and flexi job hours which are aimed to grant freedom to employees in distributing their workload hours in a way they deem convenient and fit to their non-work time schedules.

## 14. Mentoring Sessions

The results of this study show that despite flexibility in doing teaching and research assignments, teachers still feel overwhelmed by higher quality demands from accreditation bodies and simultaneously a rising family demands put a lot of strain on faculty members which hamper their ability to meet work and family commitments timely and productively. Female faculty members are particularly prone to overburdened workload given to them by the university management as they have to look after their children and may be elderly parents, which make it extremely challenging to walk on a path of positive work life balance. In this context, it is recommended that the university management should arrange formal mentoring sessions by senior male and female teachers, and other field experts to enhance teachers' time management, stress management and overall life management skills. Teachers need time management skills to effectively prioritize their work & family roles and then efficiently assign enough time to redeem satisfactorily each activity within work and family domains. Under stress management, teachers should be taught to resort to activities such as doing physical activities like sports & exercise and practicing mindfulness to enhance mental and physical strength to fend off the stress volume emanating from job and family task requirements. Positive perspective and mindset are pre-requisite for creating a positive work life balance.

## 15. Training and Development

In addition to personal development through mentoring sessions, university teachers need training & development sessions in order to seek opportunities to enhance their career development. The training program aimed to update faculty members' teaching and research skills and competencies are recommended to enable them to grab opportunities for the next higher cadre and gain professional status as per their enhanced qualification and experience.

## 16. Availability of Supportive Resources

All the mentoring sessions and training plans will yield the desired outcomes when employees have

access to the resources needed to do their job tasks effectively and efficiently, which would afford them extra time and energy to accommodate other life activities. Teachers working at the higher educational institutions that have adequate resources such as research & teaching technological aid devices, high speed internet connectively, e-linkages with global digital libraries tend to outperform in academic & research activities than their counterpart teachers working in the universities having less resources. Additionally, universities need to offer childcare, luncheon canteen, prayer-room and other facilities that enable teachers to live a balanced life.

## 17. Labor friendly regulations

Workplace harassment in its all forms should be controlled through designing and implementing the relevant rules. The teaching and research workload should be as per national & international standards such as eight hours a day should be followed, and no teacher should be assigned teaching credit hours beyond the set limit under the rules. The promotional policy should be transparent and as per the principles of merit.

## 18. Implications of this study

First, it makes a significant contribution to the existing literature on work life balance among university teachers, specially making addition that the way job stress plays a role in mediating the relationship between work and family conflict and work life balance variable. Lasty, it helps the management of the higher educational institutions in designing the relevant & practical policies which would mitigate the work & family conflicts and enhance work life balance of the teachers thereby improving the quality of life of teachers at individual level and also improving the productivity at organizational level.

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