

Impact of Job Satisfaction and Work Life Balance on Mental Health

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Abstract

Assistive Background: This research paper examines the impact of job satisfaction (JS) & work life balance (WLB) on mental health (MH) amongst academic workforce of Higher Education Institute. A compromised work life balance can indicate burnout, stress, and reduced JS.

Objectives: This study examined the effect of job satisfaction (JS) and work-life balance (WLB) on mental health (MH) of academic faculty members.

Methods: Quantitative cross-sectional study design was used in this study. 265 participants for data gathering were selected through convenience sampling. Survey consisted on questions covering demographic variables, two independent variables that are JS and WLB and one dependent variable that is MH. The questions for independent and dependent variables were developed with a 5-point Likert scale and adapted from supported and validated instruments. he statistical analyses were performed in SPSS 27, using Cronbach's alpha reliability tests, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regression.

Results: Both JS and WLB have strong positive relationships with mental health. The multiple regression analysis revealed that the predictors explained 81.6% of the variance in mental health. Job satisfaction and work-life balance were found to be positive significant factors of mental health.

Conclusion: The findings recommend that organizations should execute policies that boost employees' Job Satisfaction and Work Life Balance.

Keywords: Special Education, Students with Disabilities, Academic Performance, Assistive Technology, Learning

Introduction

Background

An average normal person works 90 thousand hours at a work during their lifespan (Bhandari, 2024). That's a lengthy interval of time. Some of them may find pleasure or self-fulfillment in their profession. Nevertheless, it can also follows to main complications with mental health. To be productive at workplace, it's fundamental to acknowledge and master mental health tasks that can occur from job-linked stress.

These days, balancing work and personal life is a key problem for employees in both the public and private sectors. Since employee productivity will decline performance if an organization does not suitably consider and manage its employees' work life balance (Wolor, 2020).

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Work life balance has appeared as a fundamental topic of discussion when it comes to mutually personal and organizational performance. Individuals' quality of life commonly drops, their stress levels ascent, and they become less productive at work when they are incapable to retain this balance (Aazami et al., 2015; Mendis, Weerakkody, 2014). Further than the effects on people, low WLB can indication to larger social issues including dropping birth rates, which over time may have an impact on population sustainability (Lewis et al., 2007). Finding approaches to accomplish WLB is especially crucial in sectors like construction as it has a direct impact on organizational effectiveness and employee health (Lingard et al., 2007). Although it's obvious that WLB is nonetheless not well recognized, and its theoretical implication do not keep up with the term's developing usage (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011; Valcour, 2007).

According to Hall et al. (2013), WLB focuses on finding a balance between work and family life, frequently ignoring other important areas like free time, socialization, and personal development activities. Cultural factors like gender equality and individualism versus collectivism, can influence how WLB impacts mental health and job satisfaction (Malaterre, 2014). International research suggests that although WLB helps workers in a variety of cultural contexts, the degree of those advantages frequently varies depending on the environment of the cultural (Greenhaus, Allen, 2011; Kossek et al., 2011). This highlights how important it is to advance WLB that are suited to various cultural conditions. It has been demonstrated that initiatives like job-sharing plans, flexible work schedules, and extended family leave help workers better balance their personal and professional life, which decreases stress and increases job satisfaction (Bird, 2006; Kang et al., 2006).

Factors that affect mental health at workplace also include workload which leads to exhaustion in workers. Among the most commonly observed reasons of mental health problem in the job is burnout, or exhaustion. It also creates imbalance between personal and professional life. Workers that are burned out cannot perform well. Also poor payments can also cause mental illness like anxiety and depression. Depression and anxiety can occur in any worker, depending on the workplace environment and level of job satisfaction. Troubling and challenging work environment, job insecurity, a lack of balance between work and family life, and overwork are some of the most important factors contributing to depression in employment context (Bhandari, 2024).

Work-life balance has a significant impact on mental health since it frequently causes employees to experience stress, worry, and emotional tiredness. Burnout and psychological stress are more common among female educators who find it difficult to balance their personal and professional obligations (Wohid et al., 2024).

Approximately 15% of the working-age population experiences mental health issues, while more than half of the global population is actively employed (Kestel, 2024). Without adequate support, these mental health challenges can lower self-confidence, affect professional identity, and reduce work efficiency, potentially leading to increased absenteeism (Kestel, 2024). Stress and depression alone contribute to a loss of nearly 12 billion workdays each year (Kestel, 2024).

Work can often take over our lives in these days, making it difficult to balance one's jobs with our personal life. We don't know much about how these factors impact our mental health. While

feeling good about our work and having a healthy balance between work and life are important for performing well in job and being productive.

Significance of the study and Problem Statement

Previous studies suggest that in order to fully investigate the dynamics of work life balance and mental health, more variables and settings need to be investigated. The study recommends examining the links between work family balance, job satisfaction, and intent to stay, considering demographic factors like age, gender, and marital status, as well as the mediating and moderating impacts of mental health disorders. These explanations highlight significant gaps in literature, mainly the relative lack of focus on service industries related to manufacturing sectors. Also, earlier research highlights the need for a more thorough investigation into the nature and nature of work life balance initiatives as well as their impact on mental health and job satisfaction. By concentrating on the academic sector and addressing these elements, the aim of this study is to contribute to the literature by finding these gaps through existing research. In a context that is yet largely unexplored, this will offer a more comprehensive knowledge of how work life balance and job satisfaction affect mental health.

More research is needed in other fields, like academics, even though earlier studies have examined the connection between work family balance and mental health, particularly in manufacturing industries. By investigating the effects of job satisfaction and work life balance on the mental health of academic staff at Dow University of Health Sciences, this study seeks to close this gap.

The aim of this paper is to examine the relationships between job satisfaction, work life balance and mental health. The study will particularly focus on the impact of job satisfaction and work life balance on mental health of employees of academia in Dow University of Health Sciences.

Research Questions

- 1) What is the impact of job satisfaction on mental health?
- 2) What is the impact of work-life balance on mental health?

Objective of the Study

- 1) To determine the impact of job satisfaction on mental health.
- 2) To determine the impact of work-life balance on mental health.

Literature Review

Job Satisfaction and Mental Health

The term job satisfaction discusses the physiological, psychological, and environmental factors that lead an entity to feel contented with their work. A wide range of things, including job satisfaction and job involvement, burnout, intention to leave, job demands and resources, job

attitudes, self-efficacy, and resilience, mediate JS (Pereira, Feher, Tibold, Esgalhoda, Costa, Monterio, 2021). Jang, Park & Zippay, (2019) emphasizes the importance of the work satisfaction factor for the mental health of working people. Also, job satisfaction has the ability to lessen feelings of anxiety and sadness, suggesting that it may operate as a safeguard for mental health.

According to Locke, Lathan (1976), job satisfaction is a positive state that results from a person's assessment of their work experience. It includes a number of factors that affect how people think and feel about their jobs, including compensation, possibilities for advancement, supervision, and the work environment (Luthans, 1998). Stress, anxiety, and depression can be brought on by low job satisfaction worsening mental health and affecting interpersonal communication as well as job performance (Alexander et al., 1997; Jamal, 1997; Piko et al., 1997).

Analyses explaining the negative consequences of unhappy employment expectations, high work demands, and unfair compensation also demonstrate the relationship among job satisfaction and mental health (Mitchell, Lasan, 1987). Employees frequently experience unpleasant emotional states and a decline in their general mental health when they believe that their efforts are not fairly acknowledged (Mitchell, Lasan, 1987). These results make the connection between job happiness and mental health crucial, indicating that raising job satisfaction may have a major positive impact on workers' psychological health.

Employee mental health and job satisfaction are closely related, according to multiple research studies. Stress, anxiety, and depression are more common among workers who are dissatisfied with their jobs. However, by encouraging emotional stability and professional engagement, a satisfying and relaxed work environment promotes excellent mental health outcomes (Alexander et al., 1997; Levinson, 1997).

Since previous studies were less focused on academia that's why the relationship between Job satisfaction and mental health was studied in academic area focusing faculty members in this research.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Job Satisfaction and Mental Health.

Work-Life Balance and Mental Health

Work life balance (WLB) refers to the extent to which organizations support employees in managing their personal responsibilities through initiatives like flexible schedules, dependent care programs, and personal or family leave (Michael, 2005; Beauregard, Henry, 2009). In the modern workplace, WLB has become a significant concern for both employers and employees (Nizam, Kam, 2018). Poor WLB has been associated with increased psychological distress (Aazami et al., 2015) and reduced organizational efficiency (Mendis, Weerakkody, 2014). Factors such as excessive workload, rigid schedules, unpredictable or irregular hours, and competing demands between work and personal life can pose risks to mental health and impact WLB (Cox, 1993). Among employees facing job-related health issues, mental health issues such as stress, anxiety, and depression are often regarded as the most serious.

According to Clark (2000), work life balance is the means of maintaining a balance between personal and professional lives while reducing role conflict. Higher levels of psychological distress, such as anxiety, burnout, and depression, have been associated with deprived work-life balance, generally when employees experience conflicts among their roles in the home and at work (Frone, 2000; Kinnunen, Mauno, 1998). Technological improvements improve these problems by distracting the differences between the personal and professional concerns, resulting in work-life conflicts and worsening mental health (Ross, Vasantha, 2014).

On the contrary, it has been exhibited that supportive workplace practices including job-sharing, telecommuting, and flexible scheduling improve WLB and reduce psychological stress (Bond et al., 2008). Buelens and Broeck (2007) indicates that workers who prioritize WLB have higher psychological well-being, suggesting that WLB-focused firms can have a favorable impact on mental health outcomes.

Achieving work-life balance is essential for improving mental health, according to the literature. Employees with higher WLB report less psychological distress and stress, whereas those with lower WLB frequently suffer from depression and burnout. Therefore, promoting WLB can improve workers' mental health (Frone, 2000; Buelens, Broeck, 2007).

Since previous studies were less focused on academia that's why the relationship between work life balance and mental health was studied in academic area focusing faculty members in this research.

H2: There is a significant relationship between Work-life Balance and Mental Health.

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) differentiates between motivators such as achievement, recognition, and career growth factors, which include salary, job security, and workplace conditions. According to this theory, while motivators enhance job satisfaction, Lack of hygienic considerations may cause dissatisfaction. This study encourages Herzberg's framework to examine the connection between job satisfaction and mental health. Better job satisfaction is habitually linked to enhanced psychological well-being, however dissatisfaction in the workplace can contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and burnout.

Boundary Theory examines how individuals manage the differences between their personal and professional lives (Ashforth, Kreiner, Fugate, 2000). It indicates that a lack of clear boundaries might conclusion in conflicts among work and life, which can have a negative effect on mental health.

The work-life balance concept is foster supported by the spillover theory (Staines, 1980), which describes how attitudes, behaviors, and feelings in one area (work or personal life) affect the other. Although positive spillovers improve conventional well-being, negative spillovers from work to home can cause stress, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion.

Managing these theories, this finding examines how work-life balance influences faculty members' mental health by regulating if personal ways of coping and organizational regulations may decrease pressures coupled with the workplace.

The objective of this study is to contribute in the academic situations regarding the mental health of faculty associates by providing understandings into how work life balance and job satisfaction can be expanded to improve wellbeing by using theoretical perceptions.

Conceptual Framework

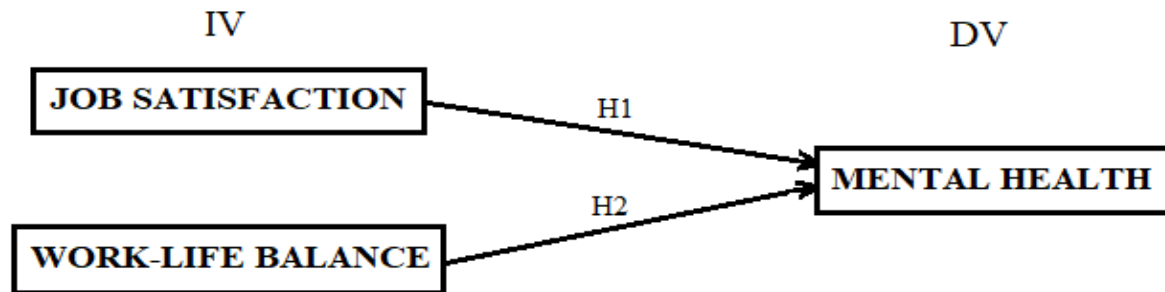


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Study Design

Quantitative cross-sectional study design with an electronic questionnaire was used for this study.

Study Population and Sampling Technique

The target population was the academic staff working in the different departments of Higher Education Institute. The sample size was 265 respondents, which was determined by using a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. Purposive sampling techniques were used in this research.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Faculty members were currently employed at HEI. Non-teaching staff, administrative employees and students, and individuals who reject to participate or didn't complete responses to the questionnaire were excluded from the research.

Measurement/Instruments

A closed-ended survey was used for data collection. The questions for the independent and dependent variables were adapted from the following:

Table 1:

VARIABLE	ITEMS	SOURCE
Job Satisfaction	Six items	Depré, Hondeghe (1995).
Work-life balance	Six items	Hill, et al. (2001)
Mental Health	Six items	Khan (2022)

Table item 1 for Dependent and independent variables

Pilot Test

Pilot testing was done before floating the questionnaire. It is considered as a research instrument's pre-test (Baker, 1994). By the end of November 2024, a pilot test was randomly administered to 25 faculty members of Higher Education Institute who agreed to participate in order to ensure that the questionnaire is understandable to the respondents for the purposes of this study. Their comments were positive and helpful. However, the pilot study's results show that the variables are considered reliable.

Table 1: Research variables Reliability Statistics (Pilot test)

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach Alpha
Jobs Satisfaction	6	0.679
Work-Life Balance	6	0.858
Mental health	6	0.861

Questionnaire Design

This questionnaire comprised of three sections. The first section covered six demographic variables including age, gender, education, income, experience, and employment type. Second section was about the independent variables that were job satisfaction and work-life balance. Last section was about the dependent variable which was mental health. 5-point Likert scale was used in the last two sections with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree.

Data Analysis Procedure

Cronbach Alpha reliability test, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis and regression analysis was done through SPSS version 27.

Ethical Considerations

Study was proceeded after the approval of institutional review committee. Ethics were considered while conducting the study. Purpose of the study and prior informed voluntary consent were provided to the participants, have no direct or indirect consequences, and provide them the freedom to withdraw from participation at any moment for any reason. Responses and

identity of the participants were kept confidential and solely used for academic research only. All collected data was securely stored.

Results

Demographic Profile

The sample population consisted of highly experienced and qualified academic staff of Dow University of Health Sciences and the largest number of respondents were in the age group of 42-50 followed by 33-41 years. There was an almost equal distribution of the sample between females (51.7%) and males (48.3%). With regards to academic qualifications, the majority had a Masters, M Phil or PhD, which was the minimum requirement for Higher Education faculty (18 years of education). Findings of the study shows that 30.6% of our sample falls under the category of 6-10 years of working experience that is the largest proportion of the sample. 20% of the people having 11-15 years of experience while 10-20 years, 21-25 years, 0-5 years and 26-30 years of experience covers 18.9%, 14.7%, 8.7%, 5.3% respectively. While the smallest proportion of this data is 1.9% that are participants having above 30 years of experience.

majority of the sample are regular employee and contractual employees while third party employees' proportion is too low. 27.9% of the sample falls in the income range of 225,001-275,000. While 23% of the sample are in 125,001-175,000. Similarly 18.1%, 15.1%, 12.1% and 3% of the population falls under of 175,001-225,000, 75,001-125,000, 275,001-325,000 and above 325,000 respectively. Likewise the smallest proportion 0.8% have less than 75,000 respectively.

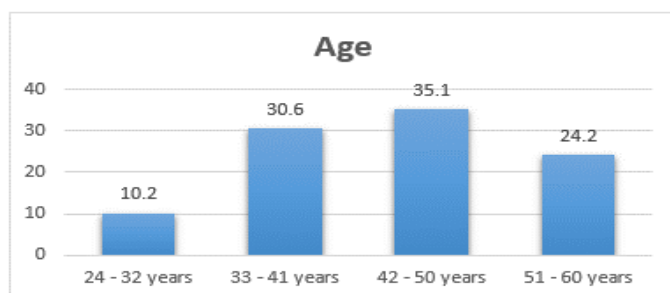


Figure 2: Age of the Respondent

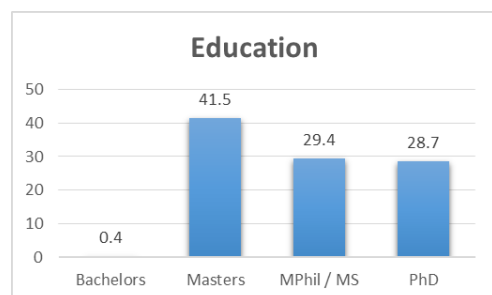


Figure 3: Education of the Respondent

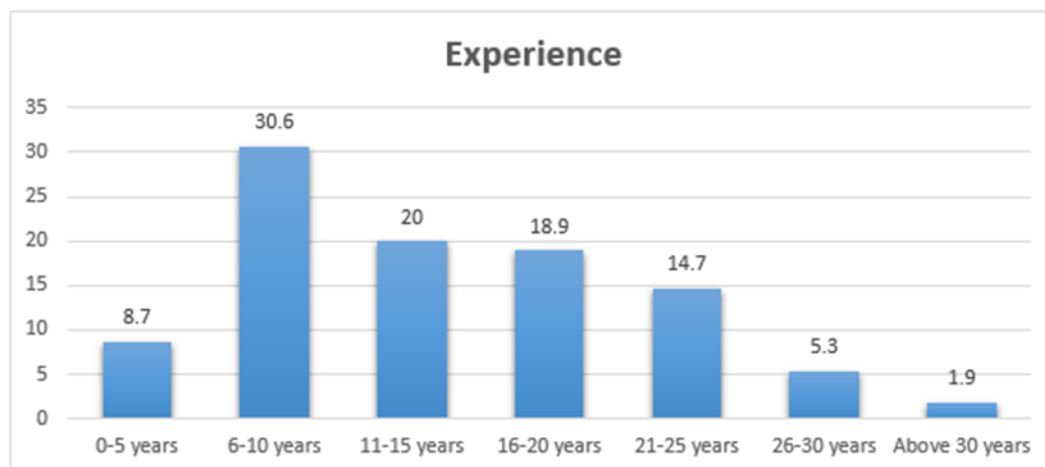


Figure 4: Experience of the Respondent

Reliability

Job satisfaction, work life balance and mental health all had high reliability coefficients of 0.746, 0.882 and 0.851 respectively. However according to research experts' reliability of 0.60 can be considered average, and a reliability of 0.80 considered as strong coefficient reliability (Nunnally, 1978; Sekaran, Bougie, 2010). Therefore the results achieved a high dependability coefficient, which varied from 0.74 to 0.88.

Table 1: Reliability test of variables

Variables	No. of Responses	No. of items	Cronbach value
JS	265	6	0.746
WLB	265	6	0.882
MH	265	6	0.851

Correlation

Correlations of all variables are significant at the 0.01 level, indicating strong statistical relationships. An improved WLB is associated with greater JS and better mental health. The close connection between JS and mental well-being highlights the significant role workplace conditions play in mental health. In summary, the findings suggest that enhancing work-life balance can have a positive effect on both job satisfaction and mental health, making it a crucial focus for faculty mental health programs.

Table 2: Correlation

Variables	JS	WLB	MH
JS	1	.897**	.880**
WLB	.897**	1	.880**
MH	.880**	.880**	1
N	265	265	265
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.000	.000

Note. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression

In order to test hypothesis and determine whether the variables have a stronger positive or negative association, regression analysis was used. The predictors, which comprises the independent variables, explain 81% of the dependent variable, which is mental health.

Table 3 Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.903 ^a	.816	.815	.311
a. Predictors: (Constant), WLB, JS				

Job satisfaction and work-life balance both have an impact on mental health, as shown in table 7, which also shows the multiple regression results. Job satisfaction ($\beta=0.453$, $t=7.729$, $\text{sig}=0.000$) and work-life balance ($\beta=0.433$, $t=7.753$, $\text{sig}=0.000$) were found to be significant in predicting mental health, as shown in table 4.

Table 4: Outcome of regression analysis

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.362	.081		4.475	.000
	JS	.453	.059	.463	7.729	.000
	WLB	.433	.056	.464	7.753	.000
a. Dependent Variable: MH						

Table 5: Summary finding

Hypothesis	Statement	Decision
H1	There is a significant relationship between Job Satisfaction and Mental Health.	Supported
H2	There is a significant relationship between Work-life Balance and Mental Health.	Supported

Discussion

The overall results of this research provide empirical evidence of the significant impact that job satisfaction and work life balance have on the mental health of academic staff at Higher

Education Institute. Findings were align with previous researches highlighting the connection between WLB, JS, and MH (Nagy, 2002; Burisch, 2002; Kalliath & Morris, 2002). Maintaining a healthy and effective work life balance and job satisfaction is a fundamental factor in reducing mental health problems are suggested in the study.

Regression analysis presented a positive relationship among job satisfaction and mental health, supporting previous research shows that higher job satisfaction among workers is associated with better-quality emotional mental health and emotional resilience and a reduced risk of anxiety and depression (Lee et al., 2009). In academia job expectations can be high and disappointment can results in burnout, absenteeism, and decreased efficiency, this relationship is proved significant (Shamian et al., 2001; Stechmiller, Yarandi, 1993). The results of this study highlights the hypothesis that improve job satisfaction is a factor that supports in improving mental health outcomes.

The study also suggests that WLB is a significant factor in mental health, other research studies also highlighted and emphasizes the need for a balanced personal and professional life in order to maintain positive mental health. (Demerouti, Bakker, Bulters, 2004; Barck-Holst et al., 2015, 2019). According to the findings of the previous research, workers who had an enhanced work-life balance tends to decrease stress and enhance psychological health. Killgore (2008) explored that this is also discovered in earlier research papers that indicate a clear and statistical relationship between job dissatisfaction, burnout and enflamed mental health. The positive link between WLB and MH is in line with research indicating that flexible work schedules to improve employees' well-being was indicated in the analysis (Jang, Park, Zippay, 2011).

The overall results of this research emphasized the requirement of organizational policies that helps to support work life balance and job satisfaction in enhancing employee's mental health. Previous studies also suggested that job satisfaction and mental health results can be significantly improved by practices like workload management, flexible working time and arrangements and perceived organizational support for improving mental health (Bond, Flaxman, Bunce, 2008; Greenhaus Allen, 2011). Furthermore, encouraging and engaging work environment that focus on the well-being of employees can enhance engagement towards job, motivation, and job satisfaction (Piko, 1999; Trinkoff, Storr, 1998). In a short, this study demonstrates that job satisfaction and work life balance have a significant impact on mental health. These outcome demonstrate the importance of workplace policies and practices that prioritize employees' well-being first.

Limitations and Weakness of the study

In this study, there was a lack of difficulty in the research.

- Only Public Sector University was targeted in the research.
- This research is based on a case study and it is limited to the academic staff only, its conclusions cannot be applied to other academic or industrial settings.
- The reliance on self-reported data, which may cause response bias.
- There were time constraint to complete the study.

Strength of Study

This study has various advantages beside the limitations mentioned previously. The study provides empirical and statistical evidence for the strong correlation between mental health, work life balance, and job satisfaction. Validated measurement tools were used for data gathering and ensured reliability of the tools. Moreover, the findings are clearer when statistical techniques such as multiple regression analysis are emphasized and used. By filling in the gaps in academic studies, specifically in the Pakistani circumstance, this research contributes to the literature already present and provides insightful information for academic leaders and policymakers of academia.

Conclusion

This study emphasizes the significant impact of job satisfaction and work-life balance on the mental health of the academic staff of Higher Education Institute. This study represents that being an employee having better job satisfaction and work-life balance outcome can foster positivity and improved mental health. The results of the study emphasize the importance of workplace policies and procedures that prioritize employee's mental health and support academicians' job satisfaction and work life balance. Organizations must implement policies to improve work life balance and job satisfaction, despite the challenges facing academic professionals.

Recommendations and Future implications

Future researchers should use a longitudinal and qualitative research design to examine the long-term effects of work-life balance and job satisfaction on mental health in order to contribute the findings of this study. If the sample size was increased and more institutions were included then the results would be more accurate. Similarly, using qualitative techniques such as focus groups and in-depth interviews may give a detailed understanding of worker's experiences. Future research should also examine the implications of workplace culture, leadership principles, and organizational support systems on mental health outcomes. Mediating or moderating variables can be included in the framework. In the future, more academic institutions including public and private can be considered. At last, comparative research should provide further thorough overview of the relationship between Job Satisfaction, Work Life Balance, and Mental Health.

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