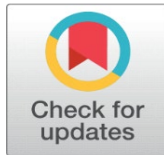
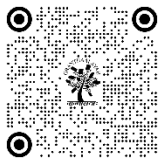


INVESTIGATING PERCEPTION OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG WOMEN TEACHERS; AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Work-life balance has emerged as a critical consideration in contemporary workplaces across various professions, including teaching. In the educational sector, where demands can be relentless and expectations high, achieving a balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is crucial. The article delves into the intricate relationship between work-life balance and teacher job satisfaction, highlighting work and personal life significantly impacts educators' overall contentment and effectiveness. Teaching is often perceived as more than just a job; it's a vocation. However, the inherent passion for educating should not overshadow the necessity of maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Teachers frequently find themselves immersed in a multitude of tasks beyond classroom instruction, including lesson planning, grading, and extracurricular activities. The demands of the profession can lead to extended working hours, encroaching upon personal time and potentially causing burnout. Educational institutions can support teachers in enhancing their self-efficacy by promoting strategies that foster a healthy work-life balance. Providing professional development opportunities focused on time management, stress reduction, and self-care can empower educators to develop the skills and confidence needed to maintain balance in their lives. Creating a supportive work environment that values work-life balance and offers resources for managing workload and stress.

Keywords: Supportive Leadership, Role Conflict, Job Stress Workloads, Work-Life Balance, Salary and Better Environment



1. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between work-life balance and teacher job satisfaction is undeniable. By recognizing the importance of work-life balance and implementing supportive policies and practices, educational institutions can foster a conducive environment where teachers feel valued, fulfilled, and empowered to deliver their best in the classroom, ultimately benefiting students and the educational community as a whole. The mediating role of self-efficacy highlights the importance of promoting work-life balance as a means of enhancing teachers' confidence and competence in their professional roles. By empowering educators to effectively manage their work responsibilities while prioritizing their personal well-being, educational institutions can contribute to the cultivation of a resilient and satisfied teaching workforce, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students alike. These include workload, administrative support, flexibility in scheduling, and the overall school culture. High workloads and administrative burdens can disrupt the balance, leaving teachers feeling overwhelmed and stressed. Supportive leadership, manageable workloads, and flexible

policies can facilitate a better balance between professional obligations and personal life. The provision of flexible working arrangements has the potential to profoundly influence teachers' overall well-being, job satisfaction, and effectiveness in the classroom. For instance, teachers may appreciate the ability to adjust their start and end times to align with family responsibilities, childcare needs, or personal interests outside of work hours. This flexibility fosters a sense of autonomy and empowerment, enabling educators to tailor their work schedules to suit their individual circumstances and preferences. Moreover, flexible working hours contribute to reduced stress and improved work-life balance among teachers. By providing the flexibility to manage work commitments around personal obligations, educators experience less conflict between their professional and personal lives. This, in turn, can alleviate feelings of burnout, fatigue, and work-related stress, promoting greater overall well-being and job satisfaction.

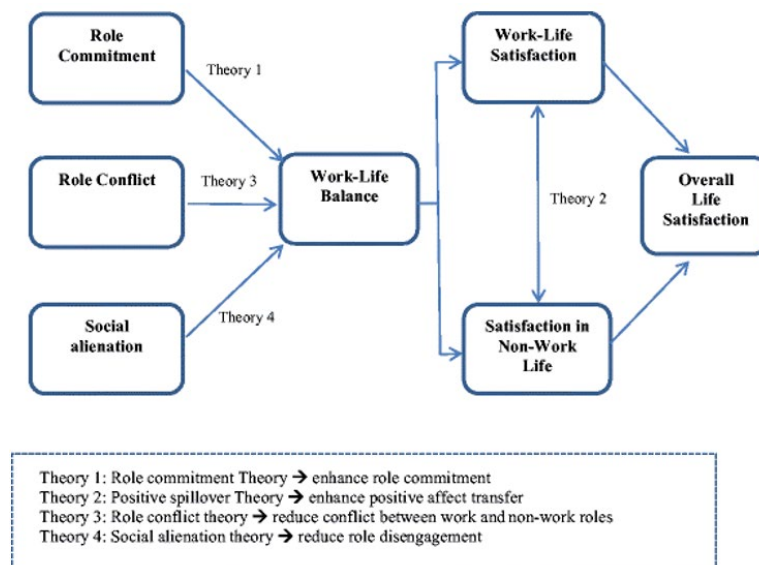
2. IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORTIVE POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Educational institutions play a vital role in promoting WLB among teachers. Implementing supportive policies and practices, such as flexible scheduling, telecommuting options, and professional development opportunities focused on stress management and work-life balance, can significantly enhance teacher satisfaction. Teacher job satisfaction is intricately linked with work-life balance. Educators who feel they have sufficient time to attend to personal matters alongside their professional duties. A balanced lifestyle fosters overall well-being, reducing stress and preventing burnout. Moreover, when teachers feel content in their personal lives, they are more likely to bring enthusiasm and energy to their classrooms, positively impacting student learning outcomes.

3. STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

WLB requires proactive strategies on the part of both educators and educational institutions. Teachers can prioritize tasks, set boundaries, and learn to delegate responsibilities effectively. Moreover, cultivating hobbies and interests outside of work can provide much-needed relaxation and rejuvenation. Educational institutions, on the other hand, can offer resources such as employee assistance programs, wellness initiatives, and mentorship opportunities to support teachers in maintaining balance.

Figure 1



Source: <https://media.springernature.com>

4. OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING IN TEACHING AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Occupational well-being in teaching is intricately linked to achieving a healthy work-life balance. Teachers face unique challenges in their profession, including high workloads, administrative demands, and emotional stressors from managing diverse student needs. Without adequate balance between their professional responsibilities and personal life,

educators may experience diminished well-being, leading to burnout, fatigue, and decreased job satisfaction. By implementing supportive policies, providing resources for stress management, and fostering a culture that values work-life balance, educational institutions can empower teachers to maintain equilibrium between their work commitments and personal lives, ultimately enhancing their well-being and effectiveness in the classroom.

5. MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE

The mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between work-life balance and occupational well-being among teachers is a crucial aspect to consider in understanding how balance impacts educators' effectiveness and satisfaction in their roles. In the context of teaching, maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for educators to feel confident and competent in their ability to manage both professional responsibilities and personal obligations. When teachers perceive that they have control over their work schedules, can effectively prioritize tasks, and have adequate time for personal pursuits, their self-efficacy in handling work-related challenges increases. Conversely, when work-life balance is compromised, teachers may experience doubts about their ability to meet job demands, leading to decreased self-efficacy and, consequently, diminished occupational well-being. A strong sense of self-efficacy enables teachers to effectively manage work demands, navigate professional challenges, and maintain a positive outlook, even in the face of adversity. As a result, teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy are better equipped to preserve their well-being, experience greater job satisfaction, and deliver higher quality instruction.

6. PREVIOUS LITERATURE STUDIES

Yavuzer's (2023) study explored the intricate relationship between work-life balance and teachers' organizational commitment within the Turkish education context. Organizational commitment, defined as the degree of attachment, identification, and involvement that individuals have toward their employing organization, is a crucial factor influencing teachers' job satisfaction and retention. This essay provides an overview and analysis of Yavuzer's study, shedding light on its findings and implications for understanding the importance of work-life balance in fostering organizational commitment among Turkish educators. Yavuzer's study aims to investigate the extent to which work-life balance influences teachers' organizational commitment in Turkey. Drawing on a sample of educators from various educational settings, including public and private schools, the study employs quantitative research methods to examine the relationship between work-life balance and organizational commitment. Data is collected through structured questionnaires, allowing for the systematic analysis of key variables and their interconnections. Educators who perceive a greater balance between their professional responsibilities and personal life exhibit higher levels of attachment and dedication to their employing organization. The study identified several factors that contribute to variations in teachers' perceptions of work-life balance and organizational commitment. These include workload, administrative support, family responsibilities, and institutional policies related to work flexibility and employee support.

7. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Yavuzer's (2023) 12 studies hold important implications for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teacher training programs in Turkey. Recognizing the pivotal role of work-life balance in shaping teachers' organizational commitment, stakeholders can implement targeted strategies to support educators in achieving balance and fostering stronger ties to their employing organizations. The findings underscore the need for ongoing research and dialogue on the intersection of work-life balance, organizational commitment, and teacher well-being in the Turkish education context. By gaining deeper insights into the dynamics at play and the factors influencing teachers' experiences, stakeholders can develop evidence-based interventions aimed at enhancing both individual and organizational outcomes within the education sector. By highlighting the positive impact of achieving balance between work and personal life on educators' attachment and dedication to their employing organization, the study emphasizes the importance of prioritizing work-life balance as a means of promoting teacher well-being and enhancing organizational effectiveness. Moving forward, it is essential for stakeholders to collaborate in implementing supportive policies and practices that empower teachers to achieve greater balance and contribute to a more vibrant and committed teaching workforce in Turkey.

Langsted's (2023) [5] research delves into the relationship between work-life balance and career expectations among newly qualified teachers in Norway. This review provides an overview and focusing on its methodology, key findings, and implications for understanding the experiences of early-career educators in navigating the demands of teaching profession and their aspirations for future career development. The study seeks to examine how perceptions of work-life balance influence the career expectations of newly qualified teachers in Norway. Through qualitative inquiry, the research explores the lived experiences and perspectives of early-career educators, shedding light on the factors shaping their career trajectories and aspirations. Data collection involves in-depth interviews with a sample of newly qualified teachers, allowing for rich insights into the complex interplay between work-life balance and career expectations in the Norwegian context.

8. ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND RESULTS

The demands of lesson planning, grading, meetings, and extracurricular activities can lead to long working hours and encroach upon personal time, contributing to feelings of stress and burnout among educators. Addressing workload management through realistic expectations, streamlined administrative processes, and supportive resources is essential for promoting a healthier balance between work and personal life. Administrative support also plays a vital role in teachers' work-life experiences. Adequate support from school leadership in terms of decision-making, resources, and recognition can alleviate the burden on educators and foster a more positive work environment. A lack of support or micromanagement can exacerbate stress and diminish job satisfaction, highlighting the importance of cultivating supportive leadership practices within educational institutions. Flexibility in scheduling is another key aspect of work-life balance for teachers. The ability to have control over one's work hours, such as through flexible start and end times or telecommuting options, can empower educators to better manage personal commitments and achieve greater harmony between work and life outside the classroom. Additionally, initiatives such as employee assistance programs, wellness initiatives, and peer support networks can provide valuable resources and social support for teachers facing challenges in balancing their professional and personal lives. The work-life factors of teachers encompass various dimensions, including workload, administrative support, flexibility in scheduling, and access to resources for personal well-being. Addressing these factors requires a concerted effort from educational policymakers, school administrators, and the broader education community to create supportive environments that enable educators. By prioritizing WLB and investing in the well-being of teachers, we can foster a more sustainable and fulfilling teaching profession, ultimately benefiting educators, students, and the education system as a whole.

Table 1 Opinion on the Work Life Factors (Professional factors)

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean Rank
Administrative support	3.10	1.028	5.09
Comfort in job sharing with colleagues	4.28	1.315	5.25
Convenient with Head / Superiors	3.33	1.125	5.11
Extra working hours	4.22	1.302	5.32
Flexible working hours	3.97	1.228	5.91
Getting disturbance	3.08	1.011	5.63
Heavy workload	3.58	1.407	5.56
Manpower shortage in the workplace	3.05	1.004	6.65
More clerical work	4.18	1.254	5.59
Friedman test			
No of respondents	200		
Chi-Square	6.256		
difference	8		
Asymp. Sig.	0.621		

The result from the Friedman test shows that the calculated Chi-Square value (6.256) for the degree of freedom 8 is insignificant. The significance is calculated at 62.1% which is more than 5%. Hence it is understood that opinion on the Work Life Factors is almost same and do not have significant difference in the mean rank. The key ways in which administrative support influences teachers' work-life factors is through workload management. Effective administrative support entails understanding teachers' workload capacities, providing necessary resources, and implementing streamlined processes to facilitate efficient task completion. When school administrators actively engage in workload distribution and offer support in managing administrative tasks, teachers experience reduced stress and are able to allocate more time and energy to personal pursuits outside of work. When teachers feel supported by school leadership, they are more likely to feel valued and appreciated, fostering a sense of job satisfaction and commitment to their profession. This supportive environment encourages teacher retention and promotes a culture of well-being where educators feel comfortable seeking assistance and sharing concerns related to work-life balance. Additionally, administrative support influences the availability of resources and opportunities for professional development aimed at enhancing teachers' work-life balance. School leaders who prioritize teacher well-being allocate resources for initiatives such as stress management workshops, flexible scheduling options, and wellness programs. By investing in these resources, administrators demonstrate their commitment to supporting teachers in achieving a healthier balance between their professional responsibilities and personal lives. Administrative support plays a role in shaping policies and practices related to work-life balance within educational institutions. School leaders who advocate for policies such as flexible leave arrangements, telecommuting options, and family-friendly initiatives create an environment that accommodates the diverse needs of teachers. These supportive policies not only facilitate better work-life balance but also contribute to a more inclusive and equitable workplace culture. Flexible working hours can enhance teachers' effectiveness and productivity in the classroom. When educators have the flexibility to schedule tasks and activities during times when they feel most energized and focused, they are better positioned to deliver high-quality instruction and engage effectively with students. Furthermore, the ability to take breaks or adjust work hours as needed can prevent feelings of exhaustion and enhance teachers' capacity to maintain enthusiasm and creativity in their teaching practices. Furthermore, offering flexible working hours can contribute to teacher retention and recruitment efforts within educational institutions. Teachers are more likely to remain committed to their profession and employer when they feel supported in achieving a healthy work-life balance. Moreover, flexible working arrangements can serve as a valuable incentive for attracting new talent to the teaching profession, particularly individuals who value flexibility and autonomy in their work. It is essential to recognize that implementing flexible working hours may present logistical challenges and require careful planning and communication. Additionally, effective communication between teachers, administrators, and colleagues is vital to coordinate schedules, maintain collaboration, and uphold accountability within the school community.

9. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study underscore the significance of work-life balance in shaping the career expectations of newly qualified teachers. Early-career educators who perceive a greater balance between their professional responsibilities and personal life are more likely to harbor optimistic career expectations and aspirations for advancement within the teaching profession. Conversely, those who struggle to maintain balance may express doubts about their long-term commitment to teaching and may entertain alternative career paths outside of education. The study identified specific factors influencing teachers' perceptions of work-life balance and its impact on career expectations. These include workload, administrative support, mentorship opportunities, and institutional policies related to work flexibility and professional development. Teachers who receive adequate support, manageable workloads, and opportunities for growth and advancement are more likely to envision a fulfilling and sustainable career in teaching, thus reinforcing the importance of supportive organizational environments in nurturing early-career educators.

10. IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Langsted's (2023) carried important implications for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teacher training programs in Norway. Recognizing the pivotal role of work-life balance in shaping the career trajectories of newly qualified teachers, stakeholders can implement targeted interventions to support early-career educators in achieving balance and realizing their career aspirations. This may involve providing mentorship programs, professional

development opportunities, and resources for managing workload and promoting well-being. Furthermore, the findings highlight the need for ongoing research and dialogue on the experiences of early-career teachers and the factors influencing their career development. By gaining deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by newly qualified educators, stakeholders can devise evidence-based strategies to enhance teacher retention, professional satisfaction, and overall effectiveness within the Norwegian education system.

11. CONCLUSION

Langsted's (2023) contributed valuable insights into the complex interplay between work-life balance and career expectations among newly qualified teachers in Norway. By elucidating the factors influencing early-career educators' perceptions of balance and its implications for their career trajectories, the research underscores the importance of creating supportive environments that enable teachers to thrive personally and professionally. Moving forward, it is essential for stakeholders to collaborate in implementing policies and practices that foster work-life balance and empower early-career teachers to pursue fulfilling and sustainable careers in education. Administrative support is instrumental in influencing the work-life factors of teachers, encompassing workload management, work environment, resource allocation, and policy development. By prioritizing administrative support and fostering a culture of support and appreciation within educational institutions, school leaders can empower teachers to achieve a healthier balance between their professional responsibilities and personal well-being. Ultimately, investing in administrative support benefits teachers, students, and the entire school community by promoting teacher satisfaction, retention, and effectiveness in the classroom. Flexible working hours represent a crucial work-life factor for teachers, offering opportunities to enhance well-being, job satisfaction, and effectiveness in the classroom.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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