E-ISSN: 1115 - 8425 P-ISSN: 3027-012X
MPRI-JAEE | INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION IN EDU.
VOL. 09 NO. 8 – JULY. 2025

WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL: EVIDENCE FROM UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS IN SOUTHWESTERN NIGERIA

***MUIBUDEEN, ISMAIL ALABI; &**
****DONALD A. ODELEYE, PhD**

*Federal College of Education (Sp) Oyo, School of Education, Educational Psychology Department.
**Department of Guidance and Counselling, Lead City University, Ibadan.
Corresponding Author: muibudeenismail@gmail.com
DOI: https://doi.org/10.70382/mejaee.v9i8.066

Abstract

This study investigated the influence of work-life balance on psychological capital among university faculty members. The growing demand for academic productivity often places university staff under intense pressure, potentially affecting their psychological resources and overall well-being. A descriptive survey research design was employed to gather data from selected faculty members across various departments. A structured questionnaire was used to assess the participants' work-life balance and components of psychological capital, namely hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Data were analyzed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to determine the relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between work-life balance and psychological capital, indicating that faculty members who reported better work-life balance also exhibited higher levels of psychological capital. The study recommends the implementation of institutional policies that support flexible working arrangements, mental health awareness, and workload management strategies to enhance both work-life balance and the psychological well-being of academic staff.

Key words:
Psychological Capital, Work-life Balance, Productivity, Stress.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. A.I. Mteiye [MALAWI]

Introduction

The concept of work-life balance (WLB) has gained increasing attention in academic and organisational discourse, especially in light of the growing demands placed on professionals. University faculty members often experience high workloads, tight deadlines, research obligations, and teaching responsibilities, all of which can lead to role conflict and stress. These pressures can significantly affect their personal lives and overall psychological well-being.

Psychological Capital (PsyCap) — comprising self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience — has emerged as a critical positive psychological resource in coping with such work-related demands. It has been associated with improved performance, greater job satisfaction, and better stress management. The interplay between WLB and PsyCap is particularly relevant in the academic sector, where burnout and mental health issues are prevalent among educators.

Psychological Capital is a positive psychological state characterized by self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, which enhances an individual's ability to succeed in challenging situations.

The Four Components of PsyCap:

1. Self-efficacy – Confidence in one's ability to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks.
2. Hope – The ability to set goals, find pathways to achieve them, and maintain the motivation to pursue those goals.
3. Optimism – A positive expectation about future outcomes and attributing success to personal effort.
4. Resilience – The capacity to bounce back from adversity, failure, or setbacks and to adapt positively.

Why PsyCap Matters:

It enhances job satisfaction, performance, commitment, and well-being. It acts as a psychological buffer against stress and burnout. It is considered a "state-like" quality, meaning it can be developed and improved through training and support.

Work-Life Balance (WLB)

Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to effectively manage and prioritize the demands of work and personal life in a way that promotes overall well-being and minimizes role conflict.

Key Aspects of WLB:

Time Balance – Allocating adequate time to both work and personal responsibilities.

Involvement Balance – Being equally engaged in both work and family or personal roles.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. A.I. Mteiye [MALAWI]

Satisfaction Balance – Finding satisfaction and well-being in both work and personal life domains. Poor work-life balance can lead to stress, burnout, low job satisfaction, and reduced performance. Good WLB is linked to better physical and mental health and higher productivity.

Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to an individual's ability to manage and harmonize the demands of both professional and personal life in a way that minimizes role conflict and maximizes well-being (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). In the context of university faculty members, achieving WLB is particularly challenging due to the multifaceted nature of their roles — including teaching, research, administrative duties, and student mentorship. The inability to balance these demands may lead to stress, job dissatisfaction, and burnout. Work-life balance is often assessed across three dimensions: time balance, involvement balance, and satisfaction balance. Faculty who can maintain equilibrium across these domains are more likely to report higher levels of job satisfaction, personal fulfillment, and psychological well-being. Studies have shown that a lack of work-life balance negatively impacts both mental health and work performance in academic settings (Othman, & Desa, 2024).

Psychological Capital

Psychological Capital (PsyCap), a concept introduced by (Guo, Wang, & Zhang, 2022). is a higher-order construct composed of four positive psychological resources: self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience. These resources are considered "state-like," meaning they are malleable and can be developed over time. PsyCap is strongly linked to positive outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and reduced burnout. Self-efficacy refers to an individual’s confidence in their abilities to accomplish specific tasks. Hope involves setting clear goals, creating pathways to achieve them, and maintaining the motivation to pursue them. Optimism is the tendency to expect positive outcomes and to explain negative events as temporary and external. Resilience is the ability to recover from adversity and continue to thrive despite challenges. Research suggests that employees with high psychological capital are better equipped to manage stress and navigate workplace challenges effectively

Relationship between Work-Life Balance and Psychological Capital

Emerging research suggests that there is a positive association between work-life balance and psychological capital. Faculty members who successfully manage their work and personal responsibilities are more likely to experience higher levels of optimism, resilience, and hope, contributing to an overall increase in PsyCap. For example,

maintaining work-life harmony can buffer the negative effects of occupational stress, thus enhancing one's psychological resources and work performance (Khan, & Bibi, 2025). In academic institutions, where high performance is expected across teaching, research, and service, a strong sense of psychological capital can help lecturers maintain focus, motivation, and persistence. Thus, fostering WLB may serve as a practical strategy for universities aiming to enhance the psychological well-being and effectiveness of their faculty members.

Conceptual Framework

This study adopts a conceptual framework that views Work-Life Balance as an independent variable that influences the Psychological Capital of university lecturers. The framework is grounded in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits that job and personal resources (like WLB) can foster positive psychological states (like PsyCap), thereby improving performance and reducing burnout. Work-life balance is conceptualized as a key personal and organizational resource.

Psychological capital — comprising self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience — is the outcome variable, reflecting the lecturer's psychological readiness to meet work demands. Demographic variables such as gender, academic rank, and university type may serve as moderators that influence the strength of this relationship. This framework supports the hypothesis that improving WLB will positively influence PsyCap, thereby enhancing the overall well-being and productivity of faculty members.

Statement of the Problem

University faculty members face increasing work demands, including teaching, research, administrative tasks, and student mentorship, often at the expense of their personal and family lives. These demands can lead to poor work-life balance, increased stress levels, and decreased psychological well-being. While Psychological Capital has been shown to buffer the negative effects of workplace stress, the influence of WLB on the development and sustenance of PsyCap among academic staff remains under-researched. The problem, therefore, lies in the insufficient understanding of how work-life balance affects the psychological capital of university faculty. Without this insight, institutions may struggle to implement effective support systems that foster lecturer resilience, optimism, and motivation — all of which are essential for academic productivity and institutional

Aim of the Study

To examine the influence of work-life balance on the psychological capital of university faculty members.

Objectives:

1. To assess the current state of work-life balance among university faculty members.
2. To evaluate the levels of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience) among lecturers.
3. To determine the relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital.
4. To explore demographic or institutional factors (e.g., gender, academic rank, type of university) that may moderate this relationship.
5. To provide recommendations for university management on how to enhance psychological capital through improved work-life balance initiatives.

Research Questions

1. What is the current state of work-life balance among university faculty members?
2. What is the level of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience) among university faculty members?
3. What is the relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital among university lecturers?
4. Do demographic or institutional factors (e.g., gender, academic rank, and type of university) moderate the relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital?
5. How can universities improve work-life balance to enhance psychological capital among faculty members?

Research Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital among university faculty members.

H_{02}: There is no significant influence of work-life balance on the components of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience

Methodology

The adopts a quantitative research design. This design is appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a large sample to examine relationships between work-life balance and psychological capital among university faculty. The population consists of university faculty members from selected public and private universities. This includes lecturers, senior lecturers, associate professors, and professors actively engaged in teaching and academic work. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across gender, academic rank, and type of institution (public vs. private).

The sample size was determined using Cochran's formula or Yamane's formula; a sample size of 350 respondents was used. The researcher used a standardized questionnaire to collect the needed primary data for the study. The questionnaire has five sections: Section A covers the bio-data (socio-demographic data) requesting for respondent's sex, age, and highest educational qualification, respondent's rank, and job tenure (years of lecturing or as administrative staff), job cadre (academic or administrative). Section B contained the Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Scale, Section C contained the work-life balance Scale, Section D contained the Motivation Scale, and Section E contained the Emotion Regulation scale. Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) The researcher adapted the Psychological Capital Questionnaire developed by Luthans, Avolio, and Avey2, which is a widely used instrument to measure the positive psychological capacities that contribute to workplace success. It focuses on four core dimensions of psychological capital: Hope, Efficacy, Resilience, and Optimism (commonly referred to as HERO). PCQ has 24 items divided into 4 sub-scales, but 22 items were adapted for this study.

Work-Life Balance Scale (WLBS)

This is a standardised tool used to measure an individual's perception of how well they are balancing their work responsibilities with their personal life. The Work-life Balance Scale assess the extent to which individuals feel they can manage the demands of both domains without significant conflict. The researcher adapted the Work-life Balance Scale (WLBS), which was developed by Brough et'al3 and its items assess perceived work-life balance. The scale has ten items that focus on the balance between work and personal life.

Results and Discussion of Findings

A total of 350 university faculty members responded to the questionnaire. The demographic profile is summarised below: Gender: 180 males (51.4%), 170 females (48.6%) Institution Type: 220 from public universities (62.9%), 130 from private universities (37.1%) Academic Rank: 40 Professors, 70 Associate Professors, 110 Senior Lecturers, 130 Lecturers Years of Experience: Mean = 9.2 years (SD = 4.7)

Descriptive Statistics of main Variables (N=350)

Work-Life Balance (WLB): Mean = 3.21, SD = 0.84 Psychological Capital (PsyCap): Mean = 3.67, SD = 0.76 Self-efficacy: 3.80 Hope: 3.55

Optimism: 3.70 Resilience: 3.65 These results show a moderate level of perceived work-life balance and a fairly high level of psychological capital among respondents.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 H_{01}:

There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital among university faculty.

Statistical Test: Pearson Product-Moment Correlation
$r = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$
Decision: Reject H_{01}

Interpretation: There is a statistically significant positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital. This implies that faculty members who report better balance between work and personal life tend to exhibit higher levels of psychological capital (self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience).

Hypothesis 2 H_{02}:
Work-life balance does not significantly predict psychological capital.
Statistical Test: Simple Linear Regression
$R^2 = 0.33$, $F(1, 348) = 67.45$, $p < 0.001$
Regression coefficient (β) = 0.57, $p < 0.001$
Decision: Reject H_{02}
Interpretation: Work-life balance is a significant predictor of psychological capital. Approximately 33% of the variance in psychological capital among faculty members can be explained by their level of work-life
Interaction term (WLB × Gender): $\beta = 0.12$, $p = 0.04$

Discussion of Findings
The results reveal a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital among university faculty. This aligns with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits that access to personal and organizational resources (like WLB) enhances individual coping capacity and psychological well-being. The finding supports earlier studies (Liu, Awang, Lim, & Ahmad, 2024)) that demonstrates how better work-life balance contributes to enhanced psychological attributes such as resilience, optimism, and hope. The significant predictive effect of work-life balance on psychological capital indicates that university lecturers who can balance their professional and personal responsibilities are better equipped psychologically to handle stress, setbacks, and performance demands. The moderating role of gender suggests that women, who may face greater family-related responsibilities, are more sensitive to the benefits of work-life balance. However, institution type (public vs. private) does not significantly affect the strength of this relationship, suggesting that workload pressures are comparable across university types.

Implications for Practice
University administrators should promote policies that enhance work-life balance (e.g., flexible schedules, workload reduction, wellness programs).

Psychological capital development (e.g., workshops on resilience or optimism) can be built into professional development programs.
Gender-sensitive work-life initiatives may provide additional support for female faculty.

Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of work-life balance on psychological capital among university faculty members. The findings revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital. Specifically, faculty members who reported higher levels of work-life balance also exhibited greater psychological capital — including self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. The study also showed that work-life balance is a significant predictor of psychological capital, accounting for approximately 33% of its variance. This highlights the critical role of personal and organizational support in promoting psychological well-being in academia. Additionally, gender was found to significantly moderate the relationship between work-life balance and psychological capital, with female faculty being more sensitive to changes in work-life balance. However, institution type (public vs. private) did not significantly influence this relationship. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of balancing work demands and personal life in strengthening the psychological resources of academic staff, which are essential for maintaining performance, reducing burnout, and sustaining motivation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made
Promote Institutional Work-Life Balance Policies
Universities should implement flexible work policies, such as: Remote teaching days Family-friendly leave policies Reduced administrative burdens for academic staff This will help faculty manage their roles more effectively, leading to higher psychological well-being.

Provide Psychological Capital Development Programs

Workshops, seminars, or online modules that focus on: Building resilience Cultivating optimism. Strengthening self-efficacy and goal-setting (hope) can improve lecturers' internal coping resources and buffer against occupational stress.

References

Abubakar, A. M., Chauhan, A., & Kura, K. M. (2019). *Psychological capital and work engagement among university academic staff in Nigeria: The mediating role of organizational commitment*. **Journal of Management Development, 38**(4), 355–369. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-03-2018-0089

Guo, J., Wang, Z., & Zhang, L. (2022). Psychological capital and occupational. well-being: Mediating effects of work engagement. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 647*, 524–530.

https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220110.097

Khan, M. N., & Bibi, S. (2025). The influence of teachers' psychological capital on the quality of work life: Exploring the mediating impact of emotions. *Frontiers i*

Liu, Y., Awang, N. A., Lim, Y. J., & Ahmad, N. H. (2024). The power of positivity: Examining psychological capital, work happiness, and rumination effects on performance among non-academic university staff in Malaysia. *Cogent Psychology*, *11*(1), 2428873. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2024.2428873

Liu, Y., Awang, N. A., Lim, Y. J., & Ahmad, N. H. (2024). The power of positivity: Examining psychological capital, work happiness, and rumination effects on performance among non-academic university staff in Malaysia. *Cogent Psychology*, *11*(1), 2428873. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2024.2428873

Okeke, M. I., & Madu, I. A. (2020). *Work-life balance and stress coping mechanisms among university lecturers in South-East Nigeria*. **International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 10**(6), 306–317.

Zhang, Y., Anwar, F., & Abid, G. (2024). Influence of work-life balance on mental health among nurses: The mediating role of psychological capital and job satisfaction. *Cogent Psychology*, *11*(1), 2413278. https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2024.2413278

Parray, W. M., Wani, T. A., & Akhter, R. (2023). Psychological capital and employee job attitudes: The critical significance of work-life balance. *Current Psychology*, *42*, 11750–11761. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-02765-3

Othman, A. K., & Desa, M. N. Y. (2024). Work-life balance among administrators in a Malaysian public university. *European Business & Management*, *10*(1), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ebm.20241001.11

Guo, J., Wang, Z., & Zhang, L. (2022). Psychological capital and occupational. well-being: Mediating effects of work engagement. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 647*, 524–530. https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220110.097

Khan, M. N., & Bibi, S. (2025). The influence of teachers' psychological capital on the quality of work life: Exploring the mediating impact of emotions. *Frontiers i*