

**ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS OF WORK LIFE BALANCE AND
THEIR IMPACT ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMIC AND
ADMINISTRATIVE HEADS OF NORTH EAST UNIVERSITIES
IN SRI LANKA**

Sareena Umma Mohamed Abdul Gaffoor*

*Senior Lecturer, Department of Management, Faculty of Management and Commerce
South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka
agsareen@seu.ac.lk*

Navaneethakrishnan Kengatharan

*Professor, Department of Human Resource Management,
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka
nkenga@gmail.com*

and

Thirunavukkarasu Velnampy

*Senior Professor, Department of Accounting,
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka
tvnampy@gmail.com*

Abstract

This study proposes to detect the influence of organizational factors of WLB on JP. The research considered all the academic and administrative heads of the north east universities in Sri Lanka as the population and conducted a population study (339). Out of the total population, two hundred and fifty-seven (257) was used as respondents for the analysis. The findings of the study revealed that organizational factors of WLB did have considerable impact on JP. Further, job stresses had significant negative impact on JP and demand and culture of home had recorded significant positive relationship with JP. Work arrangements, organizational support and WLB-related company practices, did not significantly contribute to JP. This study offers valuable evidence that academic and administrative heads of universities could maintain WLB and manage their respective departments, units and centers to achieve better JP.

*** Corresponding Author**

Keywords: *Organizational factors of work life balance; Job performance; Academic and administrative heads of Universities.*

JEL Code : *D23, J28 and P47*

Paper Received : *26.05.2022*

Revised : *12.07.2022*

Accepted : *11.10.2022*

1. Introduction

In today's business world, job performance (JP) is crucial for any organization (Obiageli, 2015). With the technological improvement, world has become globalized and has created high degree of competitiveness among existing organizations (Dilhani & Dayarathna, 2016), which compelled organizations to be more competitive, active and consumer focused (Poulose & Sudarsan, 2014). Thus, human resources are one of the essential challenges for any firm, because properly administered human supply is vital for organizational success (Rifadha & Sangarandeniya, 2015).

In the world of work, work life balance (WLB) is an important construct because it affects the performance of the system (Bird, 2006). The prominence of WLB has been observed by many studies (Arunika & Kottawaththa, 2015). WLB is a naturally emerged notion, and it has no clear-cut definition (Pringle et al., 2003). It may be affected by many factors, mainly classified into five as individual, organizational, societal, environmental and other level factors. Guest (2002) and Ediriweera (2009) privileged individual and organizational factors. Poulose & Sudarsan (2014) and Choudhary & Shrivastava (2015) classified them into four broad categories. Kumarasamy, Pangil & Isa (2015) grouped them into three; individual, organizational, and environmental factors (Kumarasamy, 2016)

and (Easmin et al., 2019). The importance of organizational factors of WLB has been recognized by companies in order to retain them as well as to promote performance (Sail & Pawar, 2013). Since human nature is very multifaceted, it has to be managed by understanding their personal and work environment problems (Voydanoff, 2005). Therefore, this study addressed these organizational factors of WLB and their impact on JP of academic and administrative heads of North East Sri Lankan Universities (NESLUs).

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Work Life Balance and Job Performance

In today's competitive world, performance is a necessity and not an option. Corporate organizational goals are achievable through management-employee collaboration, but there are also internal and external factors (work and life) that affect employees' performance (Kuria & Nzuve, 2015). Without WLB, employees are likely to record weak performance and report higher absenteeism (Frone et al., 1997). WLB has been linked to employee JP (Allen et al., 2000; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999 as cited in Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007). A positive impact has been found between WLB and employee JP (Thevanes & Mangaleswaran 2018; Jayasinghe & Kaluarachchi, 2018). Nilashini & Sajeevanie (2018) also demonstrated the association between organizational WLB factors and JP. Abdullah

et al. (2018) concluded that WLB and flexible working arrangement, did have positive effect on academic staff performance of the Nigerian Universities and a positive relationship was found among WLB and JP of administrative staff of the Public Universities in Sri Lanka (**Perera, Sampath & Pushpakumari, 2019**).

2.2 Organizational Factors of Work Life Balance and Job Performance

Guest (2002) and **Ediriweera (2009)** identified organizational factors as work demand, work culture, home demand, and home culture. **Musura, Korican & Krajnovic (2013)** stated that organizational factors of WLB are related to work stress, job satisfaction, and company policies. **Poulose & Sudarsan (2014)** concluded that work arrangement, WLB practices and procedures, organizational support, managerial support, co-worker support, job stress, role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload constitute organizational factors of WLB. **Choudhary & Shrivastava (2015)** noted flexible work arrangements, leadership support, role-related support, work-life policy, technology, job stress, and culture to facilitate WLB. **Kumarasamy et al., (2015)** found positive effect of work overload and organizational support on WLB while **Easmin et al., (2019)** found positive effect of organizational support and negative effect of work overload on WLB and other researchers concluded a direct relationship between organizational factors and WLB (e.g., **Elliott, 2003; Fatima & Sahibzada, 2012; Helmle, Botero & Seibold, 2014; Reddy et al., 2010**). Since WLB is related to JP, these organizational factors of WLB also recorded relationship with JP.

There was great impact of WLB and flexible working arrangement on the performance of academic staff (**Abdullah et al., 2018**). Flexible work arrangements did enhance WLB, which increased job satisfaction and performance (**Lucille (2017)**). There was significant connection between job autonomy and JP (**Saragih, 2011; Gellatly & Irving, 2001; Langfred & Moye, 2004**). A robust connection was found between supportive work environment and JP (**Kossek & Ozeki, 1999; Kopelman et al., 2006; Lambert, 2000; Nilashini & Sangeevanie, 2018**). Flexible hours arrangement, relationship with peers and colleague support exerted significant effect on JP (**Perera et al., 2019**). Significant relationship was reported between job stress and JP (**Shaikh, Tunio & Shah, 2017**). There was work overload impact on employee JP in banking sector (**Ashfaq, Mahmood & Ahmad, 2013**). According to **Nilashini & Sajeewanie (2018)**, organizational WLB factors, including WLB practices, achieved higher levels of organizational employee performance. WLB practices did achieve higher levels of organizational performance through individual performance (**Lazer et al. 2010**). **Kamaruddin, Omar, Muda, Saputra, & Ismail (2017)** found strong association between organizational WLB factors and executive employees' JP, in selected Sri Lankan IT organizations (**Nilashini & Sangeevanie, 2018**).

Based on the review of literature, the researchers considered the importance of organizational factors as the components of WLB. The study considered thirty-three (33) items, grouped into five main constructs, such as work arrangements, job stress demand and

culture of home, organizational support and WLB company practices for measuring the organizational factors of WLB. JP dimension could not be generalised because tasks, duties and responsibilities varied between professions even in the same organization. **Ramawickrama et al. (2019)** stated that this gap could be rectified by determining the suitable measures for JP, for different professions, in different sectors, in different countries. The current study addresses these gaps by focusing on academic and administrative heads of universities in Sri Lanka, and by using multiple JP dimensions, i.e. nature of work, knowledge and skills, achievement factors, adaptive factors, contents performance factors, job-oriented factors, and disciplinary factors (**Sareena Umma, Kengatharan & Velnampy, 2021**). In other words, the current study would enrich the existing body of knowledge, on the topic of organizational factors of WLB and their effect on JP, by addressing the literature gap and opening up several avenues for future scholarly works.

3. Statement of the Problem

Higher education institutes play a major role in creating efficient and innovative graduates. They provide knowledge and expertise, train the professionals and create much of its cutting-edge research (**Winefield, Boyd, Saebel & Pignata, 2008**). Higher education has the ability to create a good number of important and wide-ranging economic and social benefits (**Hanushek & Woessmann, 2008**). Hence successful achievement of their goals is essential for overall growth of the nation. Since managerial employees in the realm of higher education, such as academic and administrative heads, have

higher responsibilities and they should demonstrate high level of JP (**Morrill, 2007**). Deficiency in WLB among them will be harmful for all other sectors, since they have to generate effective graduates for the nation (**Greenhaus, Collins & Shaw, 2003**). Despite the fact that the researchers identified the prominence of organizational factors of WLB, there is severe shortage of empirical knowledge with regard to organizational factors of WLB and their impact on JP, in Sri Lanka. In other words, there is a need to study the extent to which organizational factors of WLB impact JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

4. Need of the Study

There are several studies, which had examined the association between WLB and JP of employees in Sri Lanka but the impact of organizational factors of WLB on JP, has not been studied specially on academic and administrative heads of the university. Hence this study, in a developing country like Sri Lanka. Further, the study will offer a new theoretical framework, to explain the organizational factors of WLB that impact on JP of academic and administrative heads of the university. This research would offer useful inputs to policymakers and administrators, to design a model, that would enhance the JP in the setting of service sectors and universities in Sri Lanka.

5. Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between the organizational factors of WLB and JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

6. Hypotheses of the Study

H1: There is significant relationship between work arrangements and JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

H2: There is significant relationship between job stress and JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

H3: There is significant relationship between demand and culture of home and JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

H4: There is significant relationship between organizational support and JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

H5: There is significant relationship between WLB company practices and JP of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

H6: Organizational factors of WLB significantly contributed to job performance of academic and administrative heads of the NESLUs.

7. Research Methodology

7.1 Sample Selection

The data were collected from North East universities in Sri Lanka, comprising university of Jaffna plus Vavuniya campus, Eastern university of Sri Lanka plus Trincomalee campus and South Eastern university of Sri Lanka. The sample consisted of academic and administrative heads (i.e. Deans, heads, directors, coordinators, librarians, registrars, bursars of these NESLUs. Out of the total population of three hundred and thirty nine (339), responses of 257 were employed for this study.

7.2 Sources of Data

A structured questionnaire was sent through Google form, to collect the data from the sample respondents, by applying a cross sectional survey approach.

7.3 Period of Study

The study was conducted during the period from August 2020 to January 2022.

7.4 Tools used in this Study

The study used Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The study adopted the analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 23.0, to process the data. Based on the literature review, the conceptual framework was developed for this study. It is shown in **Figure-1**.

8. Data Analysis

8.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Reliability and Validity of Data

Analysis was conducted at three levels, namely, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), measurement model and structural model. CFA was performed, using AMOS, to obtain additional information on the validity and the reliability of the research instrument, used in this study. The confirmatory factor analysis of the reliability and validity of data was done, by using the measurement model. All factor loadings, shown in Table1 recorded values of more than 0.5, confirming that the items, included in the constructs, reported high reliability. Further, to establish validity and reliability of the constructs, Cronbach alpha (CA), composite reliability (CR) as well as average extracted variance (AVE) testing, were employed. All values of CA, CR, and AVE were above the threshold level and

hence further analysis was carried out, with statistical confirmation of validity and reliability. **Table-1** displays the results of confirmatory factor analysis of the reliability and validity of data.

8.2 Integrated Measurement Model

The internal consistency reliability, indicator reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity of the integrated measurement model were evaluated, based on the sub-scales of each dimension. The measurement model included six constructs, as shown in **Figure-2**. JPNW and JPDF in the construct of job performance were dropped since their standardised factor loading were below 0.50. The results showed a fit in the measurement model with χ^2 (df=355)=632.526; $p=0.000$; $\chi^2/df=1.782$; GFI=0.858; TLI=0.916; CFI=0.927; and RMR=0.039. In addition, the RMSEA was 0.055, which was less than 0.08.

8.3 Path Analysis for Testing Hypotheses

Conventionally, the relative chi-square is recommended to be less than 5.0, whereas GFI, AGFI, CFI, IFI, NFI and TLI should be greater than 0.90. Similarly, RMSEA and RMR are considered to be a good fit when the indices are less than 0.08 (Byrne, 2010; Hair et al., 2010). Baumgartner & Homburg (1996) and Doll et al., (1994) also recommend a good fit if GFI and AGFI to be greater than 0.80. Further, Hair et al., (2010) suggest that if any three to four of the above goodness-of-fit indices are within the required threshold, then the structural model fits and further analysis can be conducted to test the hypotheses.

The goodness-of-fit indices of this model were computed, based on the maximum

likelihood (ML) method. According to **Figure-2**, the chi-square was significant with χ^2 (df=355)=632.526; $p=0.000$; $\chi^2/df=1.782$; GFI=0.858; TLI=0.916; CFI=0.927; and RMR=0.039. In addition, the RMSEA was 0.055, which was less than 0.08. Thus, the structural model confirmed the goodness-of-fitness indices, to be used for hypothesis testing and further analysis. Consequently, unstandardized and standardised regression weights, in the hypothesised path model, were obtained to explore the path analysis and the result is presented in **Table-2**.

The analysis of structural model shows that organizational factors of WLB contributed significantly to job performance, with the regression weight of 22%, of which job stress had a significant impact on job performance ($\beta = -0.164$, $p=0.033 < 0.05$). Hence **H2** was sustained. Similarly, demand and culture of home ($\beta = 0.277$, $p=0.001 < 0.05$), formulated under **H3**, also was accepted. However, work arrangements ($\beta = 0.254$, $p=0.102 < 0.05$), did not support **H1**. Similarly, organizational support ($\beta = -0.031$, $p=0.765 > 0.05$), and WLB company practices ($\beta = 0.084$, $p=0.595 > 0.05$) did not support **H4** and **H5** respectively.

9. Finding of the Study

- The analysis of structural model indicated that organizational factors of WLB significantly influenced JP.
- Job stresses had exerted significant impact on JP.
- Demand and culture of home had significant impact on JP. However, work arrangements, organizational support and WLB Company practices did not have significant impact on JP

- The findings were consistent with the previous study by **Nilashini & Sangeevanie (2018) and Abdullah et al., (2018)** and validated the importance of organizational factors.
- Regarding job stress and JP, this finding was consistent with the earlier study that there was significant negative association between job stress and JP (**Shaikh, Tunio & Shah, 2017**).
- Similarly, this finding concurred with the earlier study of home demand and culture, exercising significant impact on WLB of managers and their performance (**Ediriweera, 2009**).
- However, work arrangement, organizational support and WLB company practices did not significantly affect JP and this finding was not consistent with the earlier findings of **Abdullah et al., (2018); Lucille, (2017); Perera et al., (2019); Easmin et al., (2019); Kumaraswamy et al., (2015) & Lazer et al., (2010); Nilashini & Sajeevanie (2018)**.

10. Suggestion of the Study

Conceptual framework and findings of the study would be applicable to the Sri Lankan state university academic and administrative heads, on the subject of WLB and JP. Administrators of these organizations could sort out the WLB issues, by aligning these organizational factors of WLB to improve their employees' JP.

11. Conclusion

The study concluded that organizational factors of WLB did have significant impact on JP. The study could provide valuable insights and guidance for high education sector in Sri

Lanka. This study would be beneficial for policymakers as it identified the organizational factors such as work arrangements, job stress, demand and culture of home, organizational support and WLB company practices, to be the critical factors, impacting JP of Sri Lankan University's academic and administrative heads. Therefore, policymakers and government (UGC and ministry) can direct the universities, to implement performance assessment process, to enhance the organizational factors of WLB, to enrich the JP.

12. Limitation of the Study

This research was limited only to academic and administrative heads of North and Eastern Universities in Sri Lanka. In other words, it disregarded other service category of employees and other provincial universities. Hence, this study suffers from generalizability issues.

13. Scope for Future Research

Future researchers may take this into account, while expanding the study, by using different sampling techniques, into other service sectors as well as other service categories. Also, further studies might deliberate comparative studies with other service categories or provinces and even across other countries.

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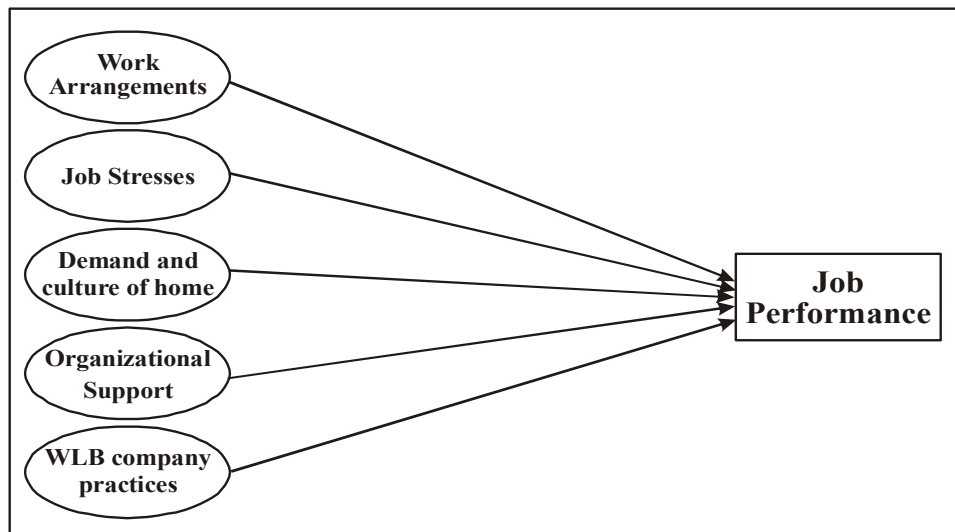
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Figure-1: Conceptual Framework of organizational factors of work life balance and its impact on job performance



Source: Developed by authors for this study

Table-1: Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Reliability and Validity of Data

Construct	CA	AVE	CR
OFWA	0.868	0.561	0.873
OFJS	0.814	0.500	0.800
OFDC	0.867	0.513	0.863
OFOS	0.858	0.503	0.858
OFCP	0.819	0.603	0.823
JPKS	0.919	0.580	0.917
JPAF	0.912	0.537	0.912
JPAD	0.950	0.587	0.945
JPCP	0.881	0.553	0.881
JPJO	0.902	0.560	0.899

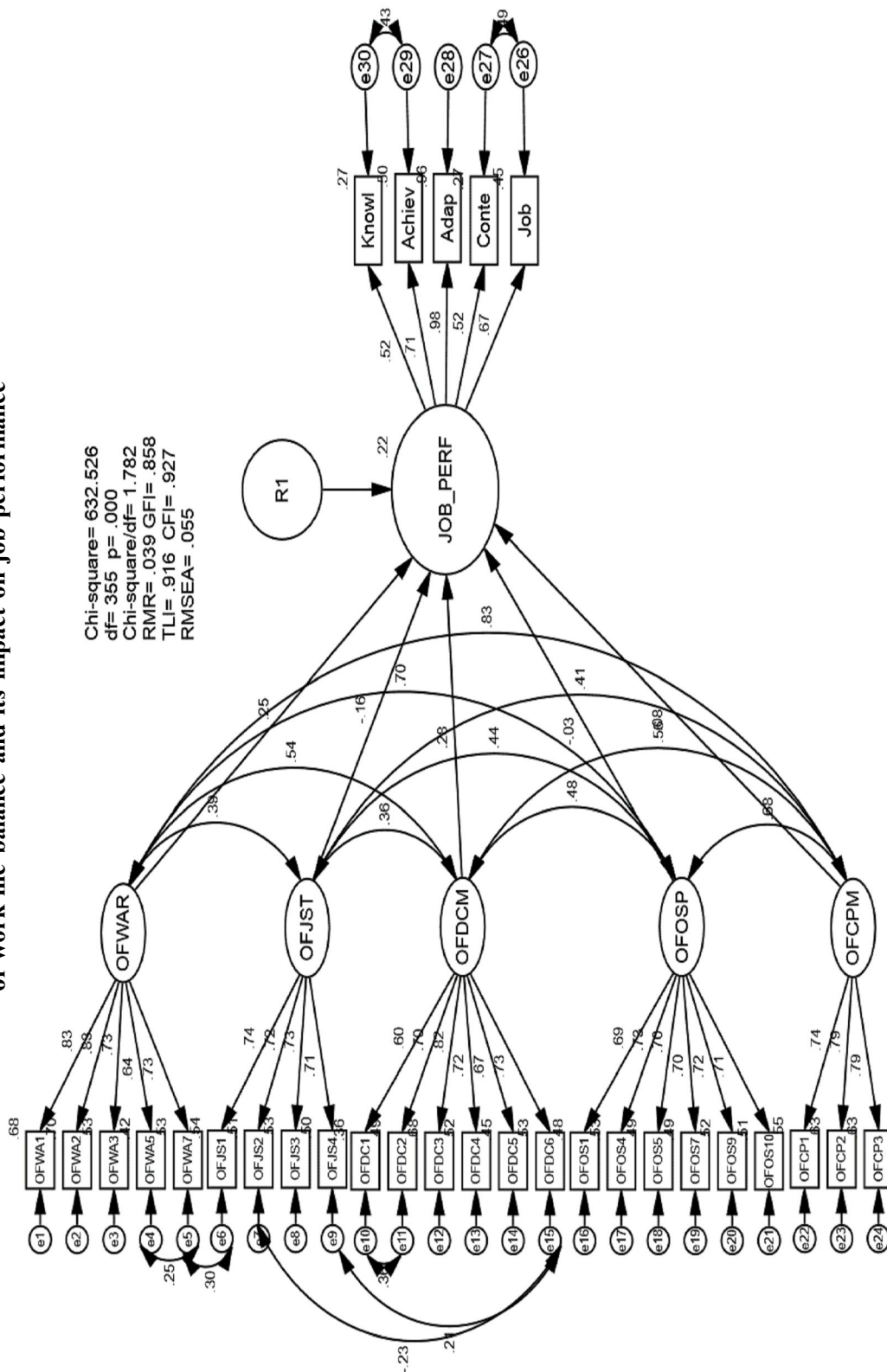
Source: Primary data computed using SME with AMOS version 23.0.

Table-2: Unstandardized and Standardised Regression Weight in the Hypothesised Path Model

			Estimate	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
JOB_PERF	<---	OFWA	0.195	0.254	0.119	1.635	0.102
JOB_PERF	<---	OFJS	-0.118	-0.164	0.056	-2.131	0.033
JOB_PERF	<---	OFDC	0.212	0.277	0.066	3.209	0.001
JOB_PERF	<---	OFOS	-0.023	-0.031	0.078	-0.299	0.765
JOB_PERF	<---	OFCP	0.059	0.084	0.112	0.532	0.595

Source : Primary data computed using SME with AMOS version 23.0.

Figure-2: The Structural Model of the Study with Standardised Regression Weights of organizational factors of work life balance and its impact on job performance



Source: Primary data computed using SME with AMOS version 23.0.