INTER ROLE CONFLICT: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW
OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Research in the inter role conflict in organizations are increasing especially in the domain of work-family interference and work-family enhancement. Studies have found different outcomes of work-life balance from different context and occupation. The essence of balancing work and family life is based on the impact of work-family conflict on the wellbeing, performance and productivity of employees. In this light, this study conducts a systematic literature review of studies on work life balance not later than year 2000. Past studies on work life balance and work life conflict were retrieved from four educational databases: Google scholar, Research gate, Social science research network, and Frontiers. Using eligibility criteria and search keywords such as inter-role conflict, work-life conflict, work-life balance, work-life interference, and work-family conflict, 89 studies were retrieved and reduced to 15 studies used for analysis

after applying eligibility criteria. Analysis of the literature reviewed that studies on work life balance are mostly job satisfaction (7), work stress (1), turnover intention (2), burnout (1), psychological wellbeing (1), organizational commitment (2), and life satisfaction (1). It was also revealed that 7 studies were conducted from the Asian context, 4 studies from Europe, and 4 studies from the United States, and studies lacking from the African context. All the studies reviewed used quantitative methodology. The study recommends more studies from the African context to cover this gap. Also, further studies are needed to examine ways of balancing the inter-role conflict rather than revealing just the outcomes or effects of the conflict.

Keywords: Inter role conflict, Work-life balance, Work-life conflict, Life Satisfaction, Job satisfaction, Systematic literature

INTRODUCTION

The measurements of performance and quality in any workplace are generally generated based on the potential of each person or team, which is eventually interpreted as their commitment, devotion, or love for the task or the workplace. There are many ways in which a person's ability to accomplish his or her duties may be affected by the balance between the different roles employees are confronted with such as the home and workplace role as well as his or her ability to facilitate quality in both. But in actual working contexts, the later impression of maintaining quality in both home and work is seldom maintained (Poulose & Sudarsan, 2018).

If an employee's work-life balance is good, the company gains a resourceful and creative worker. If the opposite is true, the company risks developing a depressed and disgruntled workforce (Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020). Feeney and Stritch (2019) research found that both men and women who suffer from work-life balance difficulties and mental health problems are more likely to suffer from negative emotions, sadness, poor energy, pessimism, exhaustion, and sleep abnormalities. In a study conducted by Haider, Jabeen and Ahmad (2018), it was shown that female workers' job satisfaction is connected to the environmental conditions, departmental atmosphere, and demographics of the company in which they work.

The issue of work-life balance and conflict has been extensively studied by academics as well as professionals in different fields. It is no secret that finding a healthy work-life balance is an important topic for researchers in a variety of professions, including sociology psychology, human resource management, and organizational studies. WLB and organizational policy, culture, HR management, job commitment, absenteeism, gender equality, WLB, and family life are all common topics of study into the relationship between work and family life (Jaharuddin & Zainol, 2019). Numerous research has looked at the

relationship between WLB and employee well-being. Yet these studies were mostly carried out in the western nations such as the United States (Azevedo et al 2020), the United Kingdom (Smith et al 2011), as well as Australia and New Zealand (Pocock, 2005). In addition, numerous studies (Poulose, S., & Sudarsan, 2017; Uzonwanne & Ijide, 2017) noted that work and family literature, emphasizes family life as time spent with a husband and children, disregarding other significant components of family, such as time spent with parents, siblings and other relatives.

Also, there has been a lot of focus on interference between family and work roles in work-family studies. Role interference between work and family argues that limited time, mental resources, and physical energy are used up in a negative way when job and family obligations compete with one another (Mathew & Panchanatham, 2010). Work and family role improvement, on the other hand, contends that juggling various responsibilities may improve performance in other areas of one's life as well (Deery, 2008). Thus, this study is essential to understand the focus of literature regarding the work and life issues (work-life balance, and work-life conflict) of employees, the research methodology used, and the context of the research.

Employees' well-being may be significantly impacted by conflicts between job and family life, which is why focusing on these two areas is critical to the overall well-being of workers. People may attain excellent WLB and well-being by avoiding role conflicts and being content with their current work/home life balance. The purpose of this study is to conduct a systematic review on inter-role conflict focusing on work-life conflict and work-life balance as they were examined in the literature.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

In this systematic literature review, some processes were followed to achieve the aim of the study. This includes the identification of an electronic database, determining the eligibility criteria, literature search, evaluation of the study, analysis, and discussion.

Search Strategy

In locating studies that examined work-life balance and work-life conflict, several educational databases were used. Precisely, four educational databases which include, Google scholar, Social science research network, Frontiersin, and Research gate. After deciding on the educational databases that would be used, journals, conference papers, published thesis, and research articles were the basis for study type selection. The next process in the search strategy is the identification of keywords that will produce studies relevant to work-life balance and work-life conflict. The keywords used include inter-role conflict, work-life conflict, work-life

balance, work-life interference, work-family conflict. Using advanced search tools of the databases and the keywords, the researcher was able to narrow the search results to studies relevant to the study. After which, the study criteria also included studies from 2000 to 2022. Priority was given to studies that have any of the keywords in the title of the studies.
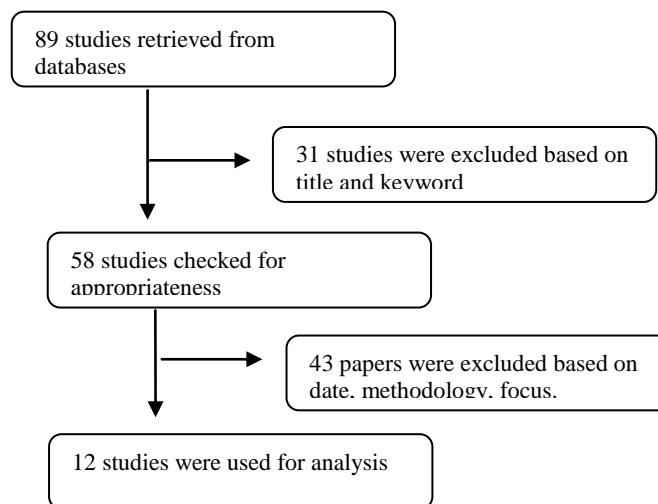
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│ 12 studies were used for analysis│
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Figure 1: search strategy of the study

Study Selection

Out of the 89 papers retrieved from the databases after searching for the keywords, the paper was reduced to 58 after filtering with the keywords to appear in the title of the studies. A further filter of the date of publication to include studies from 2000 to 2022 reduced the number of papers to 34 papers. Applying all the exclusion criteria such as the methodology used and type of study, the paper used for final analysis was reduced to 15. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are presented in Table 1.

Eligibility Criteria

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1	Examines work-life conflict, work-life balance, and job satisfaction	Does not Examines work-life conflict, work-life balance, and job satisfaction
2	Adopts primary data for analysis	Uses secondary data for analysis
3	Assesses link between either work-life conflict and job satisfaction, or work-life balance and job satisfaction	Does not link either work-life conflict or work-life balance with job satisfaction
4	Conducted from the year 2000 to 2022	Conducted before the year 2000
5	Specify context of the research (nation)	Does not specify the context of the research

Table 2: Article selection per database

Databases	Articles used
Google Scholar	6
Social Science Research Network	3
frontiersin	3
Research gate,	3
Total	15

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study characteristics

Table 3: study Characteristics

No	Research Type	Region	Focus	Data Source
1	Quantitative	Pakistan	Work-family conflict and job satisfaction	Hassan et al (2014).
2	Quantitative	Australia, Germany, Netherland, Sweden, and UK.	Work-life conflict, job satisfaction	Roeters & Craig (2014)
3	Quantitative	United States	Work-life conflict, family-work conflict, job satisfaction	Namasivayam & Mount (2004).
4	Quantitative	Pakistan	Work-life conflict, job satisfaction	Nadeem & Abbas (2009).
5	Quantitative	China	Job satisfaction, job stress, work-family conflict	Lu et al (2017).
6	Quantitative	United States	Work-life conflict, job satisfaction, burnout	Wright et al (2014)
7	Quantitative	Spain	Work-life balance, job satisfaction, organizational pride	Mas-Machuca, Berbegal-Mirabent & Alegre (2016).
8	Quantitative	Denmark	Work-life conflict, job satisfaction, physiological wellbeing	Munir et al (2012).
9	Quantitative	United States	Work-family conflict, job satisfaction	Bruck, Allen & Spector (2002).
10	Quantitative	United States	Work-life balance and job satisfaction	Mukhtar (2012)
11	Quantitative	India	Work-life balance, job satisfaction	Azeem, & Akhtar (2014).
12	Quantitative	Italy	Work-life balance, job satisfaction	Maeran, Pitarelli & Cangiano (2013).
13	Quantitative	Indonesia	Work-life balance, job satisfaction	Kasbuntoro, et al, (2020).
14	Quantitative	Pakistan	Work-life balance, job satisfaction	Arif, B., & Farooqi (2014).
15	Quantitative	India	Work-life conflict, job satisfaction,	Rashmi & Kataria (2021).

DISCUSSION

Themes of work-life conflict and work-life balance examined in the literature

Literature on inter-role conflict particularly work-life balance and work-life conflict have been researched in different themes. Themes researched in the literature reviewed include mostly job satisfaction (7), work stress (1), turnover intention (2), burnout (1), psychological wellbeing (1), organizational commitment (2), and life satisfaction (1). The essence of knowing the themes of the studies that dominated research into work-life conflict and work-life balance is to identify the gaps in the literature.

Table 4: Themes of Work-Life conflict and work-life balance

Themes	No of Publications
Relationship of work-life balance with other variables	4
Outcomes of Work-Life Balance	3
Outcomes of Work-Life Conflicts	7
Relationship of work-life conflict with other variables	1
Total	15

As revealed from the themes of the studies of work-life conflict and work-life balance, it is evident that most of the themes researched are the outcomes of work-life conflict. As revealed from the studies, the researcher mostly examined how work-life conflict affects the job satisfaction of employees from different contexts.

Hassan et al (2014) examined the effect of work-life conflict on job satisfaction of employees from the perception of Pakistani doctors. Their study found a significant negative interference between work-life conflict and job satisfaction. Another study by Roeters and Craig (2014) examined the outcome of a work-life conflict on job satisfaction from diverse contexts and found different results as to that of Hassan et al (2014) by stating that part-time work reduces work-life conflict and the outcome of a work-life conflict on job satisfaction is negligible. A study by Nadeem & Abbas (2009) found a negative outcome in terms of the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction of workers in Pakistan. Mukhtar (2012) revealed that work-life balance has a positive relationship with job satisfaction at (r=.595).

Azeem, & Akhtar (2014). Also found a positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction of employees in India. Similar findings of the relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction were also revealed in the study of Maeran, Pitarelli & Cangiano (2013) where they found a positive influence between work and family, commitment, work, and family, Kasbuntoro, et al, (2020) found a positive influence between work-life balance and job satisfaction of Indonesian workers revealing that the more work-life balance, the more the job

satisfaction of employees. Arif, B., & Farooqi (2014). Also found a significant positive relationship between work-life balance and job satisfaction of university teachers. Mas-Machuca, Berbegal-Mirabent & Alegre (2016) found a positive relationship between work-life balance, organizational pride, and job satisfaction.

As revealed from the studies. A common theme is a fact that work-life balance and work-life conflict influence job outcomes in the aspect of job satisfaction, employee commitment, and work stress.

Lengthier work weeks are consistently related to lower work-life outcomes on the work-life variables examined by Hsu et al (2019). Their study revealed a low level of acceptance regarding long work hours which is a major indicator of work-life conflict. This is evident in the study of Peters, Den Dulk and Van Der Lippe (2009) which revealed that part-time workers have a lesser conflict between work and family roles. This implies that hours spent at work is a factor essential in moderating or balancing work and family roles, thus reducing the tendency of conflict between work and life. With these reviewed studies in mind, the 'balancing component' essential for managing inter-role conflict refers to a person's attempt to strike a balance between the responsibilities of their professional and personal lives.

In many cases, flexible work programs help workers attain a better work-life balance (Dizaho, Salleh & Abdullah, 2017). Flexibility in the workplace may be affected by a variety of circumstances, including organization-related factors (leadership style, culture) and individual lifestyle choices (Bjärntoft et al 2020). Employers in different sectors are responding to current trends and issues regarding work-life balance by providing their workers with a variety of programs to assist them in better managing their time between work and home. According to Wong and Ko (2009), many companies in the hotel sector lack family-friendly work cultures that are shown to benefit both workers and the organization. Work-life balance is difficult for many people in the hospitality industry with more emphasis on the hotel business, which is thought to be the major reason it becomes difficult for employees in the hotel sector to achieve work-life balance or manage the conflicting role of family and work (Mohanty & Mohanty, 2014).

According to a study conducted by Chawla and Sondhi (2011), the hospitality sector, aviation sector, and medical sector have a culture of working long hours and being absent-minded. Research done by the US National Survey of Workers indicated that employee engagement is more likely to occur in organizations with family-friendly policies, regardless of whether or not the employees can profit from it (Blazovich, Smith & Smith, 2013).

Individual workers who take advantage of the benefits of an inclusive family-friendly policy may have a favorable effect as a result of the policy's inclusion. According to (Yasbek, 2004), work-family policies in organizations are linked to better organizational performance. Iqbal et al (2017) found a link between good work-life balance practices, favorable views about work, and high levels of engagement among employees. Peer and supervisor support is seen in workplace cultures that encourage work-life balance to permit career advancement among their employees without work conditions like extended working hours. Many occupations such as hospitality and medical are known for their long and unpredictable hours, which may require emergence which affects the hours set aside for family roles. Besides, these jobs require physical presence as opposed to remote working which promotes flexibility in job roles and the opportunity to combine work and family roles. Chawla and Sondhi (2011) opined that job roles such as hospitality, crew team in aviation, among other roles require migration from one location to the other, which may negatively impact family life.

In a study by Hsu et al (2019), extended work hours were shown to be a significant obstacle to obtaining work-life balance. Because extended work hours reduce the hours required to fulfill home roles thus resulting in work-family conflict among workers. Furthermore, research by Blomme et al (2010) found that hospitality employment often has poor job security, lengthy and unpredictable hours of work, and a strong need for collaboration and shift work.

Several studies have attempted to find a way to reconcile work and personal life, but Russell, H., O'Connell and McGinnity (2009) came up with a novel approach by bringing together the needs of both individuals and the company as a whole to boost productivity and improve the quality of the workforce. It may be considered as a win-win scenario if the duties offered to the employees are suited to their strengths. To keep their best workers, employers will need to implement regulations that promote a healthy work-life balance (Omar et al, 2021). Among the many tactics being deployed throughout the sector are long-standing ones like flextime and compressed workweeks. Employees will be able to achieve work-life balance and maximize their potential with such easy measures. Similarly, Uzonwanne and Ijide (2017) found that three dimensions of work-life conflicts: perceived flexibility at work, the ability to refuse overtime at work, and supportive management practices and policies form the basis for employer strategies to create work-life balance for employees.

Research by Chung and Van der Lippe (2020) found that flexible schedules lead to more adaptable work-life balance. According to Chung and Van der Lippe (2020), flexibility in terms of both space and time, as well as demands relating to one's family, are all important considerations when resolving work and life role conflict.

Work-life balance articles by region of study

From the studies reviewed in this study, the studies on work-life conflict and work-life balance are mostly conducted from the Asian context. From the 15 studies used in this study, 7 studies were conducted from the Asian context, 4 studies from Europe, and 4 studies from the United States. This revealed that most of the studies are conducted from the Asian context with studies lacking or limited from the African context.

The methodology of the studies into work-life balance and work-life conflict

Understanding the methodology used in examining work-life conflict, and work-life balance is essential to understand the commonly used methodology and ways of improving methodology in inter-role conflict research. From the studies reviewed in this study, quantitative research dominated the methodology used in conducting the study with all the 15 studies using quantitative research. This implies that the studies used in the studies employed primary data to understand the perception of employees regarding the assessed inter-role conflicts (work-life balance and work-life conflict).

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE STUDIES

This study aims to conduct a systematic review on inter-role conflict focusing on work-life conflict and work-life balance as they were examined in the literature. This is essential to determine the position of literature regarding work-life balance and work-life conflict to contribute to the body of research in three major areas. First, the implication of this study for the future is serving as a reference and adding to the body of knowledge on what is already known about inter role conflict, particularly work-life conflict and work-life balance. Second, this study helps to identify the gaps in the literature regarding work-life balance and work-life conflict. As revealed from the study, literature has examined the outcomes of work-life conflict mostly from the Asian and European context with studies lacking in the African context, this implies that more studies are needed from the African context to cover this gap. Besides, most of the outcomes of work-life conflict and work-life balance have examined job satisfaction, and few studies examining how to balance the inter-role conflict of work and family. This implies that further studies are needed to examine ways of balancing the inter-role conflict rather than revealing just the outcomes or effects of the conflict. Third, this study revealed the common themes examined as thus implies the need for exploring other themes such as individual factor (such as personality, attitude, belief, and culture) that contributes to how best to manage inter-role conflict.

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