

## **Mediating Effect of Work Engagement between Work-Life Balance and Turn over Intention in Higher Education Institutions of Quetta:**

By

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### **Abstract:**

*In modern working environment organizations ask employees to invest their time and energy for betterment of organizations. While employees are in pressure to manage their time and energy for work-and life aspects together that affect their engagement level with work. The purpose of this study is to explain the turnover intention from work-life balance and work engagement based on theory of social exchange among faculties of higher education institute of Quetta Pakistan. 300 Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to teachers of four universities (public and private) operating in Quetta through proportional stratified sampling technique. Multiple linear regressions and Bootstrapping 5000 resample approach was applied to test hypotheses. Result indicates that teachers are facing work-life balance issues that affect their engagement level at work place. Despite the work-life balance issues teachers' turnover intention was at low because of permanent nature of job. It is recommended that supervisors should support teachers to manage their work-life balance by providing autonomy at work place.*

**Keywords:** Work-life balance, work engagement, turnover intention, job autonomy

### **Introduction:**

In globalized world the role of human resource management is to retain best talent for longer period of time to achieve long term advantages. For that organization invest huge amount and time to train their employees for betterment of organizations. At part of employees such pressures from organizations force employees to invest their time and energy for the betterment of organizations (Adler, 2012). Due to these pressures employee struggle to manage contrary pressures from organization and at private lives as well (Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005). Over the period of time voluminous literature has produced to find the factors that affect employee retention so that possible strategies to retain employees can be developed (De Lange et al., 2008; Shankar & Bhatnagar, 2010; Suifan, Abdallah, & Diab, 2016). The earlier studies were focused from equity theory perspective in which perceived

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organization justice is key component for turnover intention (Loi, Hang-Yue, & Foley, 2006); from the leadership perspective the servant leadership characteristics are more likely to decrease the turnover intention (Jaramillo, Grisaffe, Chonko, & Roberts, 2009), from cognitive perspective the psychological health includes psychological capital and wellbeing (Gupta & Shaheen, 2017), from the perspective of employee engagement (Saks, 2006), and critical factor in economies where unemployment rate is high, and the employees' right are not protected, women enrollment is increasing in job market is the study of work-life balance (Sirgy & Lee, 2018).

There is growing literature that are documenting that most of employees have intention to leave when work-life is imbalance in organization (Balmforth & Gardner, 2006; Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Boamah & Laschinger, 2016; Colichi, Bocchi, Lima, & Popim, 2017). Therefore work-life balance is critical factor for organization to be care off otherwise create huge costs for organizations in terms of low productivity and low engagement of employees with their work (Pichler, 2009). Now organizations has realized that the work-life balance is powerful resource tool and has developed, implemented strategies for better employee engagement such as Microsoft, Shell, HP and several education institutes that are responsible for preparing the graduates (Lindfelt, Ip, Gomez, & Barnett, 2017). The work-life balance is based on contrary activities raised from jobs and work, and for good balance employees need to prioritize their activities and task. For balancing contrary activities employees should have the ability of prioritization that are linked with time management and productivity (Sirgy & Lee, 2018).

Several surveys have been conducted on work-life balance, for instance, the European survey was conducted in 1991-2010 in which reveal that around 20% employees are struggling while managing their work-life activities (Abendroth & Den Dulk, 2011). While in Netherlands the survey revealed that employees have little concern for work-life balance activities therefore placed as top ranked country in this regard (Schermerhorn et al., 2014). The primary reasons documented are the policies and structures of organizations are supportive to their employees and overall national structure is built to facilitate their inhabitants (Schermerhorn et al., 2014) according to their situations (Gupta & Shaheen, 2017). But research document that those who think to leave their jobs identify the work-life balance is critical factor due to which their well-beings are stake (Colichi et al., 2017). Previous studies has examined the effect of work-life balance on turnover intention and found the significant results that are based on different practices (Boamah & Laschinger, 2016). Similarly other researchers have documented the employee engagement as one key factor of turnover intention (Gupta & Shaheen, 2017). Further several other researchers found the similar relationship between work engagement and turnover (Timms et al., 2015). However, little research documents the integrated frame work to explain the turnover intention from the perspective of support and engagement together especially from higher education institute perspectives (Lindfelt et al., 2017). The purpose of this study is to explain the turnover intention

from work-life balance and work engagement based on theory of social exchange among faculties of higher education institute of Quetta Pakistan.

The academic contribution of this study is that it is explaining the turnover intention from employee engagement and work-life balance perspective that would enhance the understanding the nature of relationships if applied together in the context of developing countries where female ratio is also increasing in higher education sector that create the dual responsibility that can affect the employee engagement at work place and likely to leave organization. Moreover, the practical contribution is that organization would understand the role of managers' support and the factor of job autonomy by which organization can manage their employees very well and ensure their full potential at work place while managing home responsibilities as well. Hence this study can contribute in designing policies and practices to increase employee engagement at work place (Parkes & Langford, 2008). Thus organizations are in position to charter the role of work life balance in reducing turnover intention along with the mediating effect of work engagement.

### **Literature Review:**

### **Hypothesis Development:**

Earlier studies have explored several work-life balance practices that are predispose to increase the engagement level among employees (De Lange et al., 2008; Saks, 2006) and good performance (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999). The theory of social exchange elaborates the link between the balancing the work and job that are associated with engagement at work place (Cook & Emerson, 1987). According to this theory when employers provide care, development opportunities, address the employees' issue and show the actions that promote justice, in return employee show favorable attitude, pay attention to work, work with honesty and reciprocate the same treatment towards organizations that are helpful for organization productivity (Adler, 2012; Bakker, 2011; Beauregard & Henry, 2009). When apply the social exchange theory to work-life balance, employee feels that organization is caring for their problems, provide maximum support to address the issues, support to manage the demands of work and life. This treatment from organization creates the positive perception among employees that during crisis organization will help and would not create issues. This perceived support motivates employee to give more than their best to achieve the organizational goals (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Richman, Civian, Shannon, Jeffrey Hill, & Brennan, 2008).

**H1:** Supervisor support significantly contribute in work-life balance

**H2:** Job autonomy significantly contribute in work-life balance

When employers provide the resources, it increases some level of engagement (Saks, 2006). In earlier studies results indicate that the supportive work-life practices including manager support and flexibility (job autonomy) has positive relationship with employee engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Further study suggests that support to

recovery from work-life conflict can enhance the work-life balance that contributes in employee engagement (Suifan et al., 2016). The recovered employees are more resilient to conflict to future situations and increase ability to manage their work-life activities and enhance work engagement, thus it is hypothesized that,

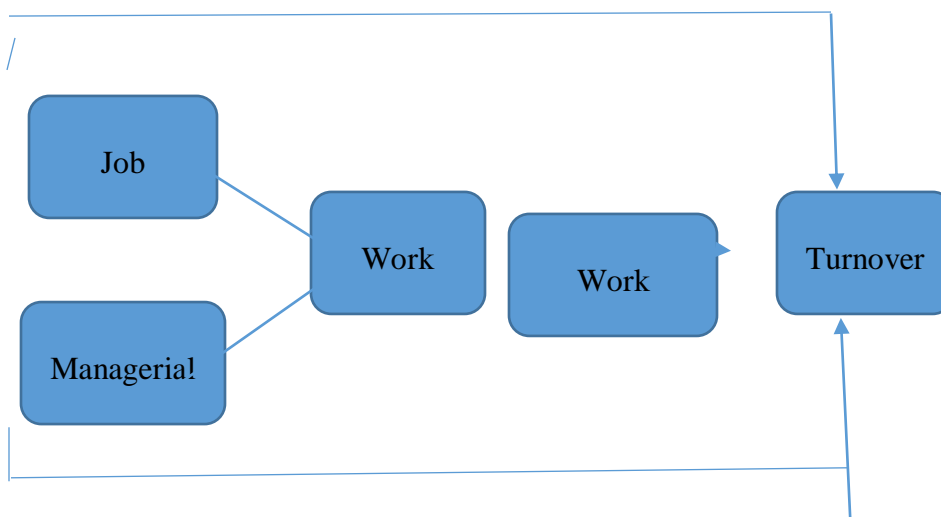
**H3:** Work life balance has significant relationship with work engagement

Further scholar conceptualize the intention is a best predictor of turnover (Saks, 2006). The underlying reason is that engaged people are high with energy level that make employee proactive and persistent towards work and are happy at work place that reduce their turnover intention. Hence, when employees think that they have better engagement level reduce the intention to leave work place. On these lines a number of research has been conducted in which work engagement is found inverse relationship with turnover intention, means when employees have high level of engagement, would reduce the turn over intention (Bakker & Bal, 2010; De Lange et al., 2008; Gupta & Shaheen, 2017). Thus, it is hypothesize that

**H4:** Work engagement negatively influences intention to turnover

In a broader sense, job autonomy (flexibility) allows employees to balance their work and non-work activities through appropriate scheduling and prioritizing the tasks. When this flexibility is further supported by the managers who are responsible to create the good working environment help employees to balance their issues and also ensure the work is done effectively (Baltes et al., 1999). Based on organization support theory explains that how employees are engaged with their work that create the positive work place outcomes. The manager supports motivate, encourage, and reduce stress creating due to work-life balance among employees who in turn dedicate themselves for organization. Thus it is hypothesized that

**H5:** the relationship between WLB and TI is mediated through Work engagement



**Methods:**

To carry out research hypo-deductive design was opted with cross-sectional nature of data. The target population was teachers (Faculty members responsible for teaching) from 2 public (UOB, BUIETMS), 1 semi-government (SBK) and 1 private (Alhamd) university operating in Quetta. Teachers were selected because nature of work is research and teaching, responsible to contribute in uplift ranking of universities through publication and patent registration that requires abundant time and might affect work-life issues. For appropriate estimation of sample size, the estimated teachers in each university were obtained from registrar office, accumulatively 1344 teachers were working in 4 universities. Sample size was calculated at 95% confidence interval and 5% error of Margins for 1344 population, the obtained sample size was 300. For appropriate allocation the proportionate stratified sampling technique was utilized for appropriate representation of university according to which UOB were 33% (92), BUIETMS had 38% (105), SBK 22% (61) and Alhamd Islamic 7% (20) had in sample size participation. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed in which 02 sections were developed. First section contained demographic information (gender, age, marital status, qualification, designation, experience, partners working). The second part consist of variable measured on 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree where questions for work-life balance 14 items, work engagement 6 items, supervisor support 3 items, Job Autonomy 3 items and Turnover intention had 3 items.

### **Results and Discussions:**

The demographic distribution highlights that male 54% and female 46% had participation in survey showing appropriate participation from gender perspective. From qualification wise 53% respondents were MS/M.Phil. Leads to 28% Masters and 19% were PhDs. For designation 70% were lecturers, 25% Assistant Professors, 4% Associate professors and 1% were professors. The ages of respondents were mostly between 31-40 years of age (48%) while respondent of 18-30 years was 39%, and rest were between 41-55 years 13% showing that majority of respondents were middle age. As the work-life balance is assumed difficult for those who are married due to responsibility, 69% were married and 31% were single and if life-partner of married couples are working then it could create more pressure to balance life issues thus out of 206 married couples 45% having their life-partner working and 55% were not working. Further dependents also create pressure on work-life balance, the 61% had dependents and 39% were not having dependents responsibility. As instruments were adapted from earlier studies, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were used. Before analyzing CFA, KMO and Bartlett's test were conducted that check sample adequacy and non-uniformity of matrices. Results indicate that value of KMO is .771 near to 1 and value of Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant (.000<.05). Hence data was suitable for applying CFA. Two tests were conducted in order to examine the construct validity: (1) convergent validity, (2) discriminant validity. Convergent validity demonstrates how the measures are related to each other; and simply, this test shows whether measures can be in the same

scale or not. Convergent validity is examined by using the factor loading of each item (should  $> .50$ ), reliability (should  $> .60$ ) and the average variance extracted (AVE) of each construct (should  $> .40$ ). All the variables (see table 1) have convergent validity.

Table 1  
*Result of Factor loadings*

Variables	Composite reliabilities	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Work Engagement	.808	.45
Work-life Balance	.956	.66
Supervisor Support	.830	.81
Job Autonomy	.864	.70
Turnover Intention	.883	.74

Source: Author calculations based on primary data

The discriminating validity indicates how well each construct discriminate each other (nature of independence) and correlation method applied to measure discriminant validity in which square root of AVE is compared with correlations of relevant constructs where AVEs should be greater than correlation values (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Table 2 shows that square root of AVEs are greater than correlational values hence constructs are well discriminated. As convergent and discriminant validity is established the regression analysis for hypothesis testing is sufficient.

Table 2

*Correlations and Descriptive statistics*

Pearson correlations	Mean	S.D	1	2	3	4	5
1.Worklife Balance	3.76	.818	<b>.81</b>	.320	.410	.313	.266
2.Work Engagement	4.14	.406		<b>.67</b>	.003	.129	.088
3.Supervisor Support	3.64	.951			<b>.90</b>	.339	.122
4.Job Autonomy	3.85	.514				<b>.83</b>	.154
5.Turnover Intention	1.92	.527					<b>.86</b>

*Note.* Diagonal values are AVE (Average variance extracted), cross diagonal correlation values

In the descriptive statistics all measures were carried out through a five-point Likert ranging scale such as strongly disagree (1) disagree (2) neutral (3) agree (3) strongly agree (5). The standard deviation and mean score for all five variables are as follows; work-life balance value is 3.76 and .64055, work-engagement is 4.14 and .406, supervisor support 3.64 and .951, Job Autonomy is 3.85 and .514 and Turnover intention value is 1.92 and .527. The most important that despite the mean value of work-life balance is 3.76 means having issues to manage their work-life, the intention to leave job is at low primarily because of permanent nature of job (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

### **Hypothesis test**

To check the hypothesis i.e. Job-autonomy and supervisor support play significance role in work-life balance, multiple linear Regression (MLR) was used. Initially the MLR assumptions checked. For normality

the value of Mahalanobis Distance was 20.05 which is higher value indicated that the data is not having outliers and showing normality. For auto-correlation the value of Durbin Watson was 1.6 that is within the limit of 1.5-2.5 showing that there is no auto-correlation between predictors. Further the value of Tolerance is  $.679 > .1$  and value of VIF is  $2.04 < 10$  showing that there is less multi-collinearity among predictors. Moreover, to check multi-collinearity the Correlation coefficients values among predictors need to be smaller than .08 that found accurately (see table 2), hence the MLR test is acceptable. The results of MLR indicates that F value is ( $F=37.654$ ,  $p < .05$ ) significant, value of R-square is .202 showing that predictors (job autonomy and supervisor support) has 20% explaining the variance in work-life balance. Further the value of Beta for supervisor support is .343 ( $p < .05$ ) showing that if 1% change in supervisor support will lead to 34% change in work-life balance, thus indicate the high importance of supervisor support for work-life balance. Moreover, the beta value of Job autonomy is .197 ( $p < .05$ ) highlighting that if 1% autonomy at work place is changed that leads to 19% better in managing work-life balance.

Table 3

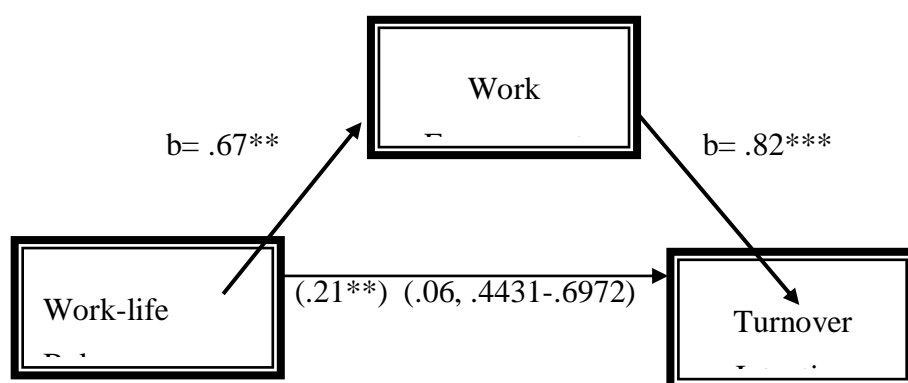
*Results of Simple Linear Regression*

Hypothesis	Regression analysis	Regression weights (Beta values)	R2	F Statistics	P Value	Hypothesis supported
H1	SPT →	.343	.202	37.654	.000*	Yes
	WBL					
	JBA →	.197			.000*	
	WBL					

Note. \* $P < 0.05$ . SPT: Supervisor support, JBA: Job Autonomy, WBL: Work life balance

**The mediation effect of work engagement (ENG) between work-life balance (WBL) and Turnover intention (TNI)**

To check the mediation effect of work engagement between work-life balance and turnover intention (Baron & Kenny, 1986) approach was utilized. Results of each component was obtained through the bootstrapping method with bias-corrected confidence estimates, (MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004; Preacher & Hayes, 2004) with 95% confidence interval at 5000 bootstrap resamples (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) through the process of Andrew F Hayes. Results of direct relationship show that WBL has significantly and positively related with ENG ( $b = .67$ ,  $p = .00 < .05$ ), ENG has positive and significant relationship with TNI ( $b = .82$ ,  $p = .00 < .05$ ), WBL has significant relationship with TNI ( $b = .21$ ,  $p = .00 < .05$ ). Further results of mediation analysis indicate that when ENG is added as mediator between WBL and TNI (see table 1) The coefficient (Beta) reduces from .21 to .06 and the values of lower limit (LICT) and upper limit (UICT) are greater than zero (.4431 \_ .6972) when controlling for ENG thus suggested full mediation



### Conclusion and Recommendation:

The purpose of study was to examine the mediating effect of work engagement between work-life balance and turnover intentions. Further this study examined the effect of supervisor support and job autonomy on work-life balance. Results indicate that supervisor support and job autonomy is significant predictors for work-life balance especially the supervisor role has high beta effect on work-life balance. Further the work-life balance and work engagement were significantly positive correlated indicates that managing work-life would contribute in work engagement. Interestingly the work life balance and turnover intention was found weak relationship because nature of job of teachers are permanent thus having low intention to leave job despite challenge at work place. Further work engagement has partial mediating effect on relationship between work-life balance and turnover intention. It is recommended that universities should highlight the role of supervisor to support their staff in managing work=life balance issues and provide them sort of autonomy that would contribute in work engagement. Due to time and financial constraints this study was only conducted in HEIs of Quetta. The future research can be conducted in different educational institutes particularly schools and colleges.



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