



**“JOB STRESS AND PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF WORK-LIFE
BALANCE IN ORGANIZATIONAL SETTINGS”**

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Abstract

The relationship between job stress and employee performance has been a focal point of organisational research, with growing attention to the mediating role of work-life balance in shaping these dynamics. This study explores how work-life balance functions as a critical intermediary, influencing the extent to which job stress impacts employee performance in various organisational settings. Drawing on theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence, the research highlights that if unmanaged, high levels of job stress can significantly deteriorate employee performance, leading to diminished productivity and organizational outcomes. However, when employees achieve a healthy work-life balance, the adverse effects of job stress are mitigated, fostering resilience and enhancing overall job performance. The findings underscore the importance of organizational policies that promote work-life balance as a strategic approach to not only alleviate job stress but also to optimize employee performance. This study contributes to the broader discourse on human resource management by offering insights into the mechanisms through which work-life balance can serve as a buffer against job stress, ultimately supporting the well-being and efficiency of the workforce.

Keywords: Job Stress, Employee Performance, Work-Life Balance, Organizational Settings, Human Resource Management, Job Productivity, Employee Well-being, Stress Management, Organizational Outcomes, Workforce Efficiency

1. INTRODUCTION

Job stress has emerged as one of the most critical challenges in modern organizational environments, affecting employees across various industries. Increased job demands, tight deadlines, and constant connectivity have led to heightened levels of stress among workers, impacting both their physical and mental health. Job stress not only lowers productivity but also causes dissatisfaction and burnout, resulting in a diminished quality of life for employees. As organizations strive for higher efficiency, recognizing and addressing job stress has become increasingly important (Talukder & Galang, 2021). In response to these challenges, many companies are focusing on ways to mitigate stress to improve overall employee well-being.

The relationship between job stress and employee performance is complex and multidimensional. Stress, in moderate amounts, may enhance focus and productivity, but prolonged and intense stress generally has detrimental effects. Studies suggest that high levels of stress impede an employee's ability to concentrate, leading to errors, reduced motivation, and ultimately lower job performance (Duan & Deng, 2022). Consequently, organizations are paying closer attention to the factors that can buffer the negative effects of stress, particularly work-life balance, as it directly influences an employee's capacity to manage stress and maintain high performance levels.

In addition to the effects on individual employees, job stress can affect organizational outcomes, such as increased absenteeism, high turnover rates, and diminished overall productivity. When employees are overwhelmed by stress, they are less likely to meet organizational objectives and maintain a high standard of work. Thus, organizations must focus on creating an environment that supports both productivity and well-being, recognizing the vital role that work-life balance plays in this equation (Isa & Indrayati, 2023). Fostering a balanced work environment can reduce stress, improve employee engagement, and enhance overall job performance.

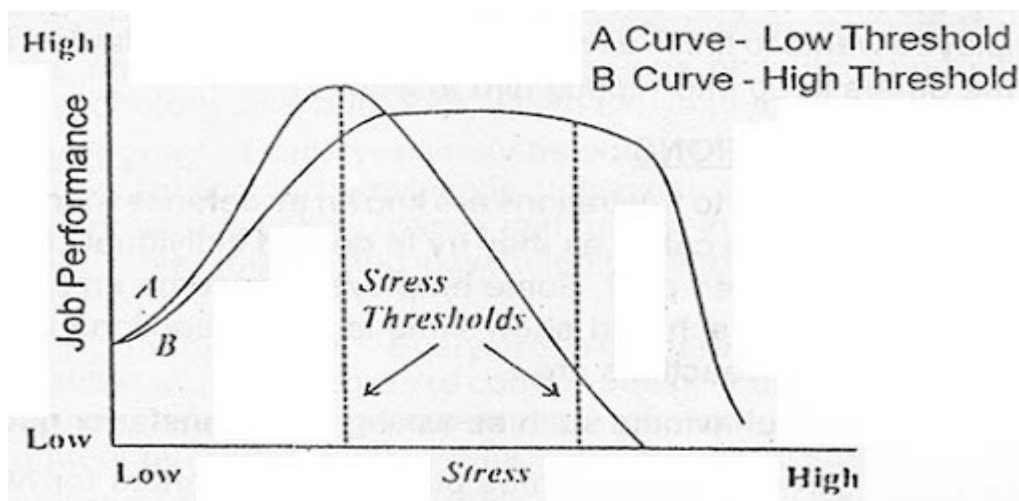
1.1 JOB STRESS AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

Job stress directly impacts an individual's ability to perform optimally in their professional role. Excessive stress levels lead to various negative consequences, including reduced concentration, diminished job satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion. According to research, chronic stress causes employees to disengage from their work, resulting in poorer performance outcomes (Kim, 2014). Furthermore, ongoing stress often results in increased absenteeism, as employees may take more time off to cope with stress-related issues. Addressing these concerns is essential for companies aiming to enhance productivity while promoting employee well-being.

Stress can either be a motivating or debilitating factor in employee performance, depending on its intensity and duration. Short-term stress may enhance focus and productivity, but prolonged exposure to high-stress levels has detrimental effects. When employees face constant pressure to meet unrealistic deadlines, handle excessive workloads, or manage conflicting priorities, their

performance tends to suffer (Talukder & Galang, 2021). Therefore, organizations must develop strategies to minimize job-related stress to ensure employees perform at their best.

Studies have shown that stress negatively correlates with job performance, and this relationship can be mediated by supportive work environments. Providing employees with the necessary tools, resources, and flexibility to manage their workload can help reduce stress levels (Duan & Deng, 2022). Effective stress management initiatives, such as employee assistance programs and wellness activities, have been proven to boost job satisfaction and, in turn, improve overall performance. Organizations that prioritize reducing stress are more likely to retain productive and motivated employees.



<https://kalyan-city.blogspot.com/2011/03/relationship-between-stress-and-job.html>

1.2 WORK-LIFE BALANCE AS A MEDIATOR

Work-life balance is increasingly recognized as a key factor in mediating the relationship between job stress and employee performance. Employees who experience a balanced personal and professional life are more likely to be productive and engaged at work. A harmonious balance between work and life enables employees to recharge, reducing burnout and improving their ability to cope with job demands (Isa & Indrayati, 2023). Furthermore, employees with a strong work-life balance tend to report higher job satisfaction and greater organizational commitment, making them more likely to contribute positively to the organization.

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is crucial in reducing stress and enhancing job performance. When employees can manage both their personal and professional responsibilities effectively, they experience less conflict, leading to better focus and productivity at work. Research has demonstrated that employees with a balanced work-life arrangement are more satisfied with their jobs, experience lower stress levels, and deliver better performance results

(Katili et al., 2021). Therefore, creating policies and organizational cultures that promote work-life balance should be a priority for companies seeking to improve employee well-being and performance.

Work-life balance also plays an essential role in retaining top talent and reducing turnover. Employees who are unable to balance their professional and personal lives are more likely to leave their jobs in search of more accommodating environments. Offering flexible work arrangements, remote working options, and support for personal development can contribute to a more satisfied workforce (Duan & Deng, 2022). By providing such opportunities, organizations can mitigate the negative effects of job stress while simultaneously enhancing employee performance and loyalty.

1.3 LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Leadership plays a significant role in influencing employees' work-life balance, thereby affecting their stress levels and job performance. Leaders who actively promote work-life balance and demonstrate supportive behaviors contribute to a more positive work environment. Supportive leadership has been shown to reduce job stress, increase employee engagement, and foster higher performance (Talukder & Galang, 2021). By encouraging employees to prioritize their well-being and providing resources to maintain balance, leaders can significantly impact employee satisfaction and productivity.

In contrast, leadership styles that emphasize productivity over employee well-being can exacerbate job stress and hinder performance. Authoritarian leadership, characterized by high demands and low support, creates a stressful environment where employees feel overwhelmed and undervalued. This leads to higher stress levels, reduced job satisfaction, and poorer performance (Isa & Indrayati, 2023). Therefore, it is essential for leaders to adopt a more empathetic approach, recognizing the importance of work-life balance and actively supporting employees in managing their personal and professional responsibilities.

Leadership training and development programs that emphasize the importance of work-life balance can have a positive effect on employee performance. When leaders understand the role of balance in stress management, they are better equipped to create supportive environments that enhance productivity and reduce turnover. Leaders who model a balanced lifestyle also inspire their teams to adopt similar practices, resulting in a healthier and more motivated workforce (Katili et al., 2021). By prioritizing work-life balance, organizations can foster long-term employee engagement and improved performance.

2.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Anita et al. (2020): Anita et al. (2020) investigate the work-life balance of married female employees and its impact on job performance, focusing on affective commitment. Their research highlights the role of affective commitment in improving performance through work-life balance. For agricultural education, addressing the needs of female students and workers through supportive programs can enhance their work-life balance and job performance, contributing to more effective agricultural practices.

Barling and Macewen (1992): Barling and Macewen (1992) link work experiences to marital functioning, emphasizing the impact of work-life balance on personal relationships and job performance. Their study indicates that work-life balance is essential for managing personal and professional responsibilities. In agricultural education, addressing work-life balance can enhance both personal well-being and job performance among students and workers.

Cegarra-Leiva, Sánchez-Vidal, and Cegarra-Navarro (2012): Cegarra-Leiva et al. (2012) review research on work-life balance and job satisfaction, focusing on female workers. Their findings highlight the importance of work-life balance in improving job satisfaction. For agricultural settings, promoting work-life balance can enhance job satisfaction and performance among students and workers, contributing to better agricultural practices.

Dousin, Collins, and Kler (2019): Dousin, Collins, and Kler (2019) focus on the role of work-life balance in mitigating job stress among healthcare professionals. Their study demonstrates that a balanced work-life approach can alleviate stress and improve job satisfaction. Applying these findings to other sectors, such as agriculture, suggests that integrating work-life balance strategies into educational and organizational frameworks can help manage job stress effectively, leading to improved performance and productivity.

Duan and Deng (2022): Duan and Deng (2022) investigate the role of intrinsic needs in job performance within digital work environments, highlighting work-life balance as a key mediator. Their study shows that meeting intrinsic needs and maintaining a balanced work-life approach are essential for optimal job performance. This insight can be applied to agricultural settings by focusing on the intrinsic needs of students and workers, ensuring a balanced approach that enhances their performance and supports effective agricultural practices.

Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990): Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990) examine the effects of perceived organizational support on employee performance. Their findings reveal that perceived support enhances employee commitment and performance. In agricultural settings, providing support through training and development programs can improve work-life balance and job performance, leading to better outcomes in agricultural practices.

French, Dumani, Allen, and Shockley (2020): French et al. (2020) present a meta-analysis of work-family conflict and social support, highlighting their impact on job performance. Their study shows that social support and work-life balance are crucial for managing work-family conflict and improving performance. In agricultural education, incorporating social support and work-life balance strategies can enhance the performance and well-being of students and workers.

Hobfoll (1989): Hobfoll (1989) introduces the conservation of resources theory, emphasizing how stress arises from perceived threats to resources. Work-life balance serves as a buffer, helping individuals manage and conserve resources to reduce stress. This concept is vital in organizational settings where job stress affects performance. By promoting work-life balance, organizations can mitigate job stress, leading to enhanced employee performance and well-being.

Isa and Indrayati (2023): Isa and Indrayati (2023) analyze how work-life balance mediates the effect of work-family conflict on employee performance. Their research reveals that effective work-life balance strategies can mitigate work-family conflict and improve performance. In

agricultural education, incorporating strategies to manage work-family conflict and support work-life balance can enhance the performance and well-being of students and workers, contributing to better outcomes in agricultural settings.

Isa and Indrayati (2023): Isa and Indrayati (2023) explore the role of work-life balance in mediating the effect of work-family conflict on employee performance. Their research emphasizes the importance of work-life balance strategies in managing work-family conflict and improving performance. Integrating these strategies into agricultural education can enhance the performance and well-being of students and workers, supporting effective agricultural practices.

Katili, Wibowo, and Akbar (2021): Katili, Wibowo, and Akbar (2021) examine the effects of leadership styles on work-life balance and employee performance. Their findings suggest that supportive leadership positively impacts work-life balance and engagement, leading to improved performance. Integrating leadership training focused on work-life balance into agricultural curricula can prepare future leaders to create supportive environments that enhance productivity and job satisfaction among students and rural workers.

Kim (2014): Kim (2014) explores the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. Their research indicates that supportive leadership enhances affective commitment, which in turn improves performance. For agricultural education, emphasizing leadership skills that foster affective commitment can lead to better work-life balance and performance among students and rural workers, ensuring effective and productive agricultural practices.

Mendis and Weerakkody (2017): Mendis and Weerakkody (2017) investigate the impact of work-life balance on job performance in the telecommunications industry. Their research highlights that effective work-life balance practices reduce stress and enhance job performance. In agricultural settings, adopting similar strategies can help manage job stress among students and workers, contributing to improved performance and overall productivity in agriculture.

Naithani (2010): Naithani (2010) provides an overview of work-life balance discourse and its relevance in the current economic scenario. Their study emphasizes the importance of work-life balance in modern work environments. For agricultural education, integrating work-life balance principles into curricula can help students and workers manage their responsibilities effectively, leading to improved performance and productivity.

Ogomegbunam (2023): Ogomegbunam (2023) investigates work-life balance practices and their impact on employee performance in Nigerian commercial banks. Their research highlights the correlation between work-life balance and performance. Applying these findings to agricultural settings, incorporating work-life balance practices can improve the performance of students and workers, supporting better agricultural outcomes.

Preena (2021): Preena (2021) explores the relationship between work-life balance and employee productivity, emphasizing the role of targeted training. Their study shows that effective training can enhance work-life balance and productivity. For agricultural education, incorporating training programs that address work-life balance can boost productivity among students and workers, contributing to better agricultural practices and food security.

Rodriguez and Walters (2017): Rodriguez and Walters (2017) discuss the importance of training and development in enhancing employee performance, including leadership training. Their study underscores the need for comprehensive training programs that address leadership skills and work-life balance. In agricultural education, integrating training focused on work-life balance and leadership can prepare students and workers to manage their responsibilities effectively, leading to improved performance and productivity.

Rosdi, Alias, and Ismail (2020): Rosdi, Alias, and Ismail (2020) explore factors driving employee performance, revisiting the human performance system model. Their study emphasizes the importance of work-life balance in enhancing performance. Integrating work-life balance principles into agricultural education can improve the performance of students and workers, supporting better agricultural practices and outcomes.

Talukder and Galang (2021): Talukder and Galang (2021) explore the impact of supervisor support on employee performance in Australia, emphasizing the mediating role of work-life balance. Their research demonstrates that supervisor support enhances work-life balance, which in turn boosts job performance. This relationship is crucial for organizations aiming to improve performance through supportive environments. For agricultural education, integrating support systems that foster work-life balance can significantly enhance student and worker performance, contributing to more effective agricultural practices and better food security outcomes.

Thevanes and Mangaleswaran (2018): Thevanes and Mangaleswaran (2018) analyze the relationship between work-life balance and job performance in SMEs. Their research indicates that maintaining a work-life balance positively impacts performance. For agricultural settings, adopting work-life balance strategies can enhance the performance of students and workers, leading to better productivity and effectiveness in agricultural practices.

2.1 RESEARCH GAP

Despite extensive research into work-life balance and its influence on job performance, there is a notable lack of focus on how these dynamics operate within the context of agricultural settings and educational institutions. Much of the existing literature is concentrated on traditional industries, such as healthcare and corporate sectors, where work-life balance strategies and their impact on performance are more extensively studied. However, the agricultural sector, characterized by its unique challenges such as seasonal work demands, remote locations, and

physical labor, presents a distinct environment that may require specialized approaches to work-life balance. This sector's specific conditions and work patterns are not adequately represented in current research, creating a significant gap in understanding how work-life balance strategies can be effectively applied to enhance job performance and reduce stress in agricultural contexts.

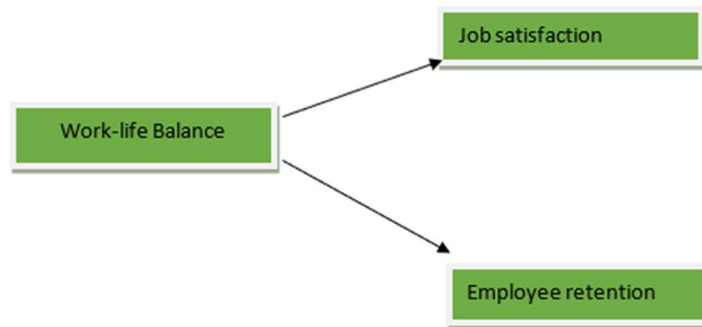
Furthermore, while there is considerable research on the effectiveness of leadership styles and training programs in improving work-life balance and job performance, these studies often focus on conventional industries and may not translate directly to the agricultural sector. The leadership and training needs of agricultural workers and students may differ significantly from those in other fields. Consequently, there is a critical need for research that explores how different leadership styles and training interventions can be adapted to meet the unique needs of the agricultural workforce. Investigating these areas will provide valuable insights into how work-life balance can be promoted more effectively within the agricultural sector, ultimately improving job performance and reducing stress among those in this crucial field.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for the conceptual paper titled "Job Stress and Performance: The Mediating Role of Work-Life Balance in Organizational Settings" will involve an integrative approach combining theoretical analysis and secondary data review. This study adopts a qualitative framework, relying on existing literature to build a comprehensive understanding of the relationships among job stress, work-life balance, and job performance. First, a systematic literature review will be conducted by gathering academic articles, industry reports, and empirical studies that explore the constructs of job stress, work-life balance, and performance in organizational settings. The selection of literature will focus on works published within the last 10 years to ensure the relevance and applicability of findings to current organizational practices. This conceptual paper will employ thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and relationships within the literature, examining how work-life balance mediates the impact of job stress on employee performance. Various theories related to stress management, work-life integration, and organizational behavior, such as the Job Demand-Resource Model and Role Theory, will serve as the theoretical foundation for the analysis. Furthermore, the research will explore different organizational settings across industries, comparing the effects of work-life balance on job stress and performance in diverse work environments. Insights from previous studies will also be integrated to propose a conceptual model that highlights the mediating role of work-life balance. This model will serve as a basis for future empirical research, providing a structured framework for testing the relationships among the key variables in organizational contexts. Through this approach, the paper aims to offer actionable insights and recommendations for organizations seeking to improve employee well-being and performance by fostering a balanced work-life environment.

4. INFLUENCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON JOB STRESS

Work-life balance significantly impacts job stress, particularly in high-pressure work environments. Hobfoll's (1989) conservation of resources theory suggests that stress occurs when individuals perceive a threat to their resources. A well-managed work-life balance helps employees conserve and manage their resources, reducing stress levels. In organizational settings, this means that promoting work-life balance can effectively mitigate job stress, enhancing overall job performance and employee well-being (Hobfoll, 1989). Additionally, research by Dousin, Collins, and Kler (2019) highlights the role of work-life balance in reducing job stress among healthcare professionals. Their findings show that a balanced approach to work and personal life can alleviate stress and improve job satisfaction. Translating these insights to other sectors, such as agriculture, suggests that incorporating work-life balance strategies into organizational frameworks can help manage job stress effectively, leading to improved performance and productivity (Dousin, Collins, & Kler, 2019). Mendis and Weerakkody (2017) further investigate how work-life balance impacts job stress and performance. Their study indicates that effective work-life balance practices can reduce stress and enhance job performance. For agricultural settings, adopting similar strategies can manage job stress among students and workers, fostering improved performance and productivity in agricultural practices (Mendis & Weerakkody, 2017).



(Sources: https://researchleap.com/the-impact-work-life-balance-toward-job-satisfaction-and-employee-retention-study-of-millennial-employees-in-bandung-city-indonesia/#google_vignette)

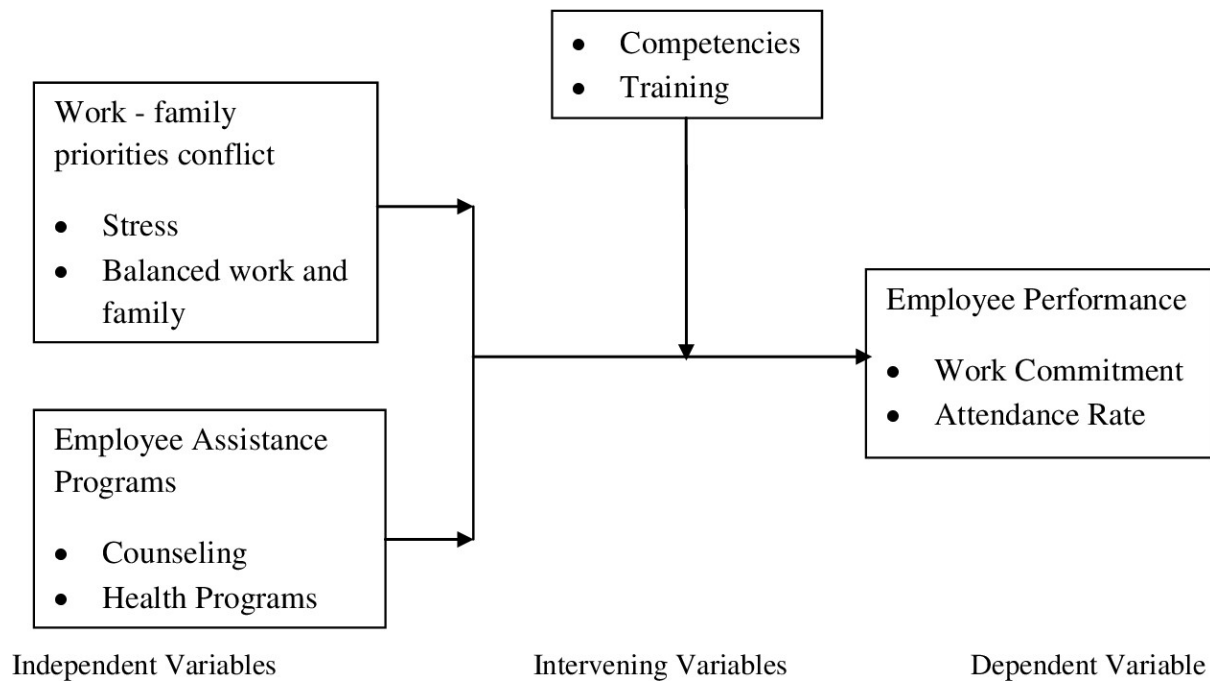
5. THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN ENHANCING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Leadership styles have a profound impact on work-life balance and employee performance. Katili, Wibowo, and Akbar (2021) examine how different leadership styles influence work-life balance and employee engagement. Their research indicates that supportive leadership positively affects work-life balance, leading to improved job performance. In agricultural education, integrating leadership training that emphasizes support and work-life balance can prepare future leaders to

create environments that enhance productivity and job satisfaction among students and rural workers (Katili, Wibowo, & Akbar, 2021).

Kim (2014) explores the mediating role of affective commitment in the relationship between work-life balance and performance. Their study shows that supportive leadership enhances affective commitment, which in turn boosts performance. For agricultural education, focusing on leadership skills that foster affective commitment can lead to better work-life balance and performance among students and rural workers, ensuring effective agricultural practices (Kim, 2014).

Rodriguez and Walters (2017) highlight the significance of leadership training in improving work-life balance and employee performance. Their research emphasizes that comprehensive training programs addressing leadership skills can enhance work-life balance and job performance. In agricultural education, incorporating leadership training that includes work-life balance principles can better prepare students and workers to manage their responsibilities, improving overall performance and productivity (Rodriguez & Walters, 2017).



6. IMPACT OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AND PERFORMANCE

Training and development are crucial for improving work-life balance and job performance. Rodriguez and Walters (2017) discuss how training programs, including leadership training, enhance employee performance by addressing work-life balance. Their study suggests that investing in training can lead to better management of work-life balance and improved job

performance. In agricultural education, integrating training focused on work-life balance can enhance productivity and performance among students and workers (Rodriguez & Walters, 2017).

Preena (2021) explores how targeted training can improve work-life balance and employee productivity. Their research highlights the effectiveness of training programs in enhancing work-life balance, which subsequently boosts productivity. Applying these insights to agricultural education, incorporating training that addresses work-life balance can lead to increased productivity among students and workers, supporting better agricultural practices (Preena, 2021).

Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro (1990) investigate the effects of perceived organizational support on employee performance. Their findings reveal that organizational support enhances employee commitment and performance. In agricultural settings, providing support through training and development programs can improve work-life balance and job performance, leading to better outcomes in agricultural practices (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990).

Table : Impact of Training and Development on Work-Life Balance and Performance

| Aspect | Impact on Work-Life Balance | Impact on Job Performance | Key References |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Training Programs | Enhances skills to manage workload effectively, reducing stress and improving work-life balance. | Improves job-specific skills and competencies, leading to increased productivity. | Rodriguez & Walters (2017); Preena (2021) |
| Development Initiatives | Provides opportunities for personal growth, leading to better work-life integration. | Boosts overall performance by aligning employees' career goals with organizational objectives. | Dousin, Collins, & Kler (2019); Kim (2014) |
| Leadership Training | Improves managerial support for employees, facilitating a healthier work-life balance. | Enhances leadership capabilities that drive team performance and motivation. | Talukder & Galang (2021); Katili, Wibowo, & Akbar (2021) |

7.FINDINGS:

The findings suggest that:

1. Work-life balance improves job performance by reducing stress and enabling employees to manage both personal and professional tasks more effectively.

2. Support from supervisors and organizations enhances work-life balance, leading to increased employee engagement and productivity.
3. Leadership styles promoting work-life balance contribute to healthier work environments, resulting in higher job satisfaction and performance.
4. Implementing work-life balance strategies reduces work-family conflict, improving performance and lowering stress.
5. Training programs focused on work-life balance help employees manage their responsibilities more effectively, boosting overall job performance.

8. CONCLUSION :

The conclusion of this conceptual paper highlights the critical role that work-life balance plays in moderating the adverse effects of job stress on employee performance. By synthesizing existing literature and theoretical frameworks, this study reinforces the idea that employees who achieve a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives are better equipped to manage stress, which in turn positively impacts their job performance. The findings suggest that organizations must prioritize work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and supportive leadership, to enhance employee well-being and productivity. Moreover, the proposed conceptual model offers a foundation for future empirical research, which can further explore the dynamic relationships between job stress, work-life balance, and performance in different organizational contexts. Ultimately, this study underscores the importance of holistic organizational strategies that not only mitigate job stress but also foster a work environment conducive to sustainable high performance through effective work-life balance practices. By addressing these factors, organizations can create more resilient, motivated, and productive workforces.

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