

THE MODERATING ROLE OF ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT TOWARDS ACHIEVING A GOOD WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN THE NEW NORMAL: A MALAYSIAN LECTURERS' PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of organisational support as a moderator in the relationship between emotional intelligence, job engagement, and the work-life balance of Malaysian lecturers. A quantitative approach with a structured questionnaire was used for data collection and it was distributed to the randomly selected population of lecturers via their respective emails. The sample of this study consisted of 132 lecturers from public and private universities in Malaysia. Descriptive statistics and statistical inference were conversant in analysing the correlation and multiple regression using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25.0. The finding concludes that an increase in emotional intelligence and job engagement further increases the ability of the lecturer to achieve a good work-life balance. The results also indicate that organisational support does not affect the relationship between emotional intelligence, job engagement, and work-life balance. Besides, the study failed to find the influence of organisational support as a moderator on the work-life balance among lecturers in Malaysia. The implication of the study is crucial for institutions and management to be alert to the situational needs of the lecturers to ensure work and life expectations are optimised without ignoring other variables.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, job engagement, lecturers, organisational supports, work-life balance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The number of COVID-19 cases in Malaysia has fluctuated considerably since the first positive case identified in January 2020 (New Straits Times, 2020a). Malaysia's then Prime Minister, announced a few strategies to curb the worsening condition in Malaysia through the introduction of various forms of Movement Control Order (MCO) (Prime Minister Office, 2020a; 2020b, 2020c). The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused massive disruption to many facets of people's lives, including teaching and learning activities. Malaysia's Ministry of Education (MOE) had initially announced preventive measures to raise public awareness of COVID-19 while still allowing for the operation of educational institutions (MOE, 2020a). However, the significant rise in COVID-19 cases led to the enforcement of the standard operating procedure (SOP), instructing all higher education institutions (HEIs) to operate online as a measure to safeguard the health quality of communities (MOE, 2020b). HEIs then announced the practice of limited face-to-face classes and encouraged the utilisation of technology as a medium in ensuring the continuity of teaching and learning activities. The Fourth Industrial Revolution also accelerated the technological advancements that have changed the patterns of educational activities to be more digitally-centred and the new norm.

Today's technological advances have allowed lecturers to work with more flexibility. However, the recent work trends have resulted in lecturers working longer working hours and affect their work-life balance. A lot of emphasis is placed on the importance of achieving a balance between work and life, or commonly referred to as Work-Life Balance (WLB) within the higher education sector. A balance between work and life is a concept in which an individual gives optimal priority between work and life which can be achieved when an individual allocates limited mental, physical, and emotional resources in an appropriate way to accomplish the desired goal. The optimal WLB changes over time and varies between individuals because the individual needs to constantly change it as needed.

1.1. COVID-19 Pandemic Scenario in Malaysia

In May 2020, due to the improved condition of cases in Malaysia, the MOE agreed to allow partial physical reopening with teaching and learning. At one point, in July 2020, Malaysia achieved zero cases (New Straits Times, 2020b); however, the condition worsened the following year. On 15th June 2021, the Prime Minister announced the National Recovery Plan which consisted of four phases that includes MCO 3.0, ramping up the vaccination drive, and the final phase which only takes effect after COVID-19 cases are less than 500 cases and 60% of the population is vaccinated. By then, all sectors are expected to fully reopen, including HEIs (The Edge, 2021a). Sadly, despite thorough planning set by the government, the daily number of cases still exceeded 5,000 cases (The Edge, 2021b) which led MOE to still insist on online lectures to avoid the risk of COVID-19 infection among students, academic, and non-academic staffs (MOE, 2021). The uncertainty posed a new challenge to HEIs and lecturers per se to cope with this unprecedented scenario.

2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The profession of university lecturers is increasingly challenging with various demands and responsibilities such as supervision, writing, and providing community service, it is not just merely teaching (Wong & Chiu, 2019; Martin, 1997; Ebrahim et al., 2015). Lecturers are thus increasingly busy due to the career demands as indicated in the ever-urgent work environment. The workload that lecturers perform is heavy and causes dissatisfaction if tasks within the workplace compromises the time that should be spent on personal life.

However, the pandemic has made it worse for lecturers. The rapid shift to online teaching meant an increased workload for them with a lack of control over working hours and increased psychosocial risks associated with stress and work overload (Houlden & Veletsianos 2020; Bhumika, 2020; Van Nuland et al., 2020; Sokal et al., 2020; Boncori, 2020; Nwangwa; 2021; Manzoor et al., 2021). They were forced to learn unfamiliar technology in a short adaptation period which may affect their mental and physical health. Symonds (2020) reported that 50% of lecturers in universities globally had switched some of their scheduled courses online and this number will continue to rise as the health pandemic continues. The pressure to conduct online teaching, project supervision, and meeting research output was very high with less productivity. The HEIs might be supportive, albeit with some expectations on productivity. Lecturers must manage WLB while teaching in a largely unfamiliar environment, amid persistent uncertainty. The COVID-19 outbreak thus has created a set of unique challenges for lecturers.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are no exception for Malaysian lecturers (Azza et al., 2020; Nurfaradilla et al., 2020). This study aimed to explore how Malaysian lecturers confront their emotional intelligence and job engagement towards achieving WLB, especially during the implementation of MCO in Malaysia. The focus of this study is to examine the roles of organisational support in influencing and extending the quality of WLB of the lecturers. The study contributes to the existing literature by adding a new perspective of the Malaysian lecturers towards attaining WLB. The paper is structured; first, the previous literature was reviewed, followed by the research methodology, findings, and discussion. The last part discusses the conclusion of the study.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. *Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory and Work-life Balance*

The conservation of resources (COR) theory developed by Hobfoll (1988) proposes that individuals are motivated to acquire and maintain resources to deal with the demands of work and family. This theory provides a theoretical model for preventing resource loss, maintaining existing resources, and gaining resources necessary for engaging in healthy behaviours. The COR theory argues that resources are the key components to determining individuals' appraisals of events as being stressful and resources define how individuals can address the situation. Different individuals have different types of personal characteristics and they can use better skills to protect and promote their integrity.

Therefore, resources can be defined as anything people value, like self-esteem, close attachment, inner peace, WLB, feelings of being resilient and materialistic objects, like houses and cars. In particular, Hobfoll (1989, 2002) categorises resources into four general areas: (a) personal characteristics; (b) conditions; (c) objects; (d) energies. In this study, emotional intelligence is personal characteristics and conditions including organisational support and job engagement.

With regards to personal characteristics, Gardner (1983) defines intelligence as a set of abilities that are used to solve problems and create products that are valuable within a cultural setting or community. Individuals are struggling to manage a healthy WLB. People who have emotional intelligence will be able to balance between personal and professional lives. Therefore, it is proposed that emotional intelligence is an important factor in improving WLB.

This study also considers organisational support as a condition of resources. According to Eisenberger et al. (1986), perceived organisational support is viewed by employees' tendency to assign the organisation humanlike characteristics. Also, it is noted that supervisors play the main role in perceived organisational support. Because they act as organisational agents, the favourable treatment they give to the employees represents organisational support (Eisenberger et al., 2002). Nowadays, many organisations are implementing WLB programmes to manage their employees' professional and personal life. Thus, organisational support is expected to have a positive effect on WLB.

According to Hakonen et al. (2005), job resources are most beneficial in maintaining job engagement under conditions of high job demands. The support employees get from the organisation will reduce their work stress and work overload. As a result, employees will be highly engaged in their job. Ultimately, resources are key components for the individual to cope in different situations.

3.2. Emotional Intelligence and Work-life Balance

Emotional intelligence is defined as an individual's ability to manage and use emotions in a balanced and appropriate way (Money & Peter, 2014; Applewhite, 2017). In keeping with Kozakova and Saliger (2019), emotional intelligence is characterised as the social abilities, traits, and qualities required by each individual in socialising, interacting, and communicating with others. Many organisations and institutions believe that emotional intelligence is important and sometimes infrequently related to playing a vital role in improving the quality of work and life of an employee (Demir, 2011; Sakalle et al., 2017). It has been proven as one of the elements that have a positive impact on WLB of an individual (Applewhite, 2017; Gupta, 2016; Sharma, 2014; Shylaja & Prasad, 2017). However, studies done by Rafikah (2020) and Mohamad and Jais (2016) found that emotional intelligence has no significant effects on the WLB of an individual but it has a positive effect on the job performance of an employee. Organisations, where their employees have low emotional intelligence levels, have proven to have higher staff turnover, a higher level of burnout syndrome, and lower productivity.

In many organisations, emotional intelligence is important to attain job satisfaction and reduce stress. The teaching profession has no clear division between working hours and non-working hours due to its complex, challenging, and interrelated main academic activities like teaching, research, consultation, and community involvement. It had been found that these tasks might

provide a high burden and work pressure on the lecturers (Azreen et al., 2016; Markom et al., 2011). The never-ending workload and emotional instability have caused prolonged stress among lecturers which resulted in feelings of frustration or burnout. A lecturer must be sensitive and willing to face any changes in the leadership processes, faculty management, resource allocation, and academic goals (Mohd Khairuddin et al., 2017). The work pressure requires them to have a high level of emotional intelligence (Corcoran & Torney, 2012). Emotional intelligence is vital and has a positive relationship with individual tasks and commitment, but it is often neglected because task commitment is sometimes related to job satisfaction (Yahzanon & Yusof, 2011). A similar result was demonstrated by Nanda and Randhawa (2020) and Chauhan et al. (2020). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: There is a positive relationship between Emotional Intelligence and WLB.

3.3. Job Engagement and Work-life Balance

Engagement can be described as the opportunity and ability of an employee to connect with a colleague, employer, and organisation to form a positive environment, in which a positive environment makes employees motivated to perform their duties (Harini et al., 2019). Job engagement is defined as an employee expressing themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances (Kahn, 1990). Past studies have shown that a high level of engagement at work has a positive influence on the family domain, thereby reducing the role conflict between the two domains, resulting in the experience of a greater WLB job engagement (Crutchfield et al., 2013; Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Amarakoon and Wickramasinghe (2010) found a positive influence of WLB on employee engagement among Sri Lankan employees. This finding is consistent with that of Lewis et al. (2008), who found work engagement to be a crucial factor in enriching the family environment, and with a study conducted by Kansas State University (2009), which showed that when employees perceived higher levels of engagement at work due to positive moods, they were more likely to indicate increasing levels of work-family facilitation. This notion was supported by Crutchfield et al. (2013) and Muthu Kumarasamy et al. (2015), who found a positive relationship between work engagement and therefore the professional life phase.

Based on previous research, it is found that there is a relation of lecturer scope in identifying the relationship between job engagement and WLB, it supports the above idea where the WLB has a direct significant, positive, and strong relationship effect on work engagement (Harini et al., 2019; De Kort, 2016; Waclawska, 2018; Wood et al., 2020). Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H2: There is a positive relationship between Job Engagement and WLB.

3.4. Organisational Support as A Moderator

With organisational support, findings associated with the relationship between emotional intelligence and WLB are rare and not many have studied organisational support as a moderator. Eisenberger et al. (2001) indicated that employees with perceived organisational support, will positively impact employees' emotional intelligence. It is believed that employees will perform better once they receive rewards and appreciation from the organisation. A higher level of perceived organisational support will help to lessen the withdrawal behaviours and reduce the strain and stress level of employees (Cropanzano et al., 1997; Jawahar et al., 2007; Rhoades &

Eisenberger, 2002). It has been found that stress can negatively affect both physical and mental which ultimately resulted in lowering emotional intelligence and can negatively affect WLB. Similarly, employees with high emotional intelligence tend to have lesser stress and less burnout in managing and finding a balance thread between work and family especially in recognising their own emotions and recognising the emotion of others to assist facilitate performance (Shylaja & Prasad, 2017). However, there is a recent study that reported of a negative relationship between organisational and employee productivity (Osman et al., 2021). This was due to high monitoring and controlling of the work from home. Similarly, Maszura and Novliadi (2020) in a study examining the relationship between organisational support and WLB among 234 employees who work in the banking sector in Lhokseumawe city found that organisational support contributes positively to the achievement of WLB.

According to Mehmood et al. (2013), teachers who have an increased level of emotional intelligence tend to perform better. This is supported by Muhammad et al. (2017) and Sutton and Wheatley (2003), they agreed that positive mood and emotion may lead teachers to give better performance to their students and help them to determine the goal for their teaching. Similarly, a finding discovered that conflict management will also be impacted by teachers' emotional intelligence through a positive relationship (Muhammad et al., 2017). Therefore, organisational support is dire in ensuring high emotional intelligence among the employees. For instance, a study by Malik and Noreen (2015), indicated that organisational support significantly moderated the relationship between occupational stress and affective wellbeing. Regardless, organisational support is very important to strengthen the relationship between emotional intelligence, job engagement, and WLB. Besides, another study by Muthu Kumarasamy et al. (2016) highlighted that organisational support strongly moderates emotional intelligence and WLB among Malaysian Police Officers. Adebayo (2016) suggested in his study the development of WLB policy in ensuring the balance of work and non-work related among the lecturers. The findings from this study are expected to provide useful information to the management of the universities in particular, and educational institutions, in general, a deeper understanding of the role of organisational support and WLB.

One of the most crucial resources for remote learning is technology. Adequate technological infrastructure can help employees stay engaged at work and preserve their emotional intelligence, which is important during the COVID-19 pandemic as the number of employees working from home has greatly increased. Thus, employees who are facing issues in using available technology should receive adequate help from the organisation, particularly the IT team. Employees should be given a briefing or guidebook as a reference when executing work-related online activities. Furthermore, the organisation is also responsible for providing a seamless digital online platform for lecturers to conduct online classes. In this regard, many public and private universities in Malaysia have designed reliable and stable platforms as online teaching and learning mediums via asynchronous and synchronous interactions. For example, public universities such as University Malaya have adopted the SPeCTRUM online platform for teaching and learning activities, while University Technology Mara and University Putra Malaysia are using the uFuture and Putrablast platforms, respectively. Other public universities such as USM and UUM are utilising the Webex platform as their learning platform which includes online conferences and seminars. On the other hand, private universities have their online platforms such as BigBlueButton which is used by Universiti Selangor, CN Course Network by UCSI University, and ReWIND by Taylor's University.

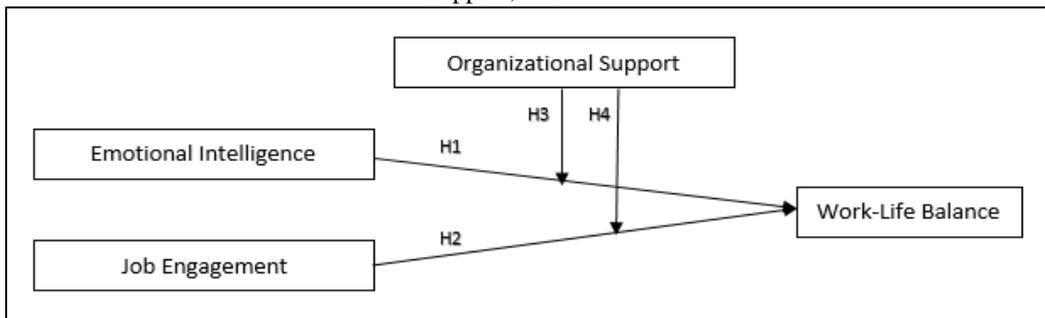
All in all, it can be argued that organisational support can strengthen the relationship between emotional intelligence, job engagement, and WLB. Therefore, this study aims at testing the role of organisational support as a moderator in strengthening the relationship between emotional intelligence, job engagement, and WLB. Based on the existing evidence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Organisational support will moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and WLB.

H4: Organisational support will moderate the relationship between job engagement and WLB.

An analytical framework outlining the interrelationship between emotional intelligence and job engagement in achieving WLB is depicted in Figure 1. The focus of developing the analytical framework is to find the influence of organisational support as a moderator on the WLB among lecturers in Malaysia.

Figure 1: An Analytical Framework for Emotional Intelligence, Job Engagement, Organisational Support, and WLB



Source: Author(s).

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A quantitative approach with a structured questionnaire was used for data collection and it was distributed to the randomly selected population of lecturers from public and private universities in Malaysia via emails. To build a structured questionnaire, a thorough assessment has been carried out mainly from previous studies and indexed journals (Nor Azilah et al., 2018; Muthu Kumarasamy et al., 2015, 2016; Mumtaz et al., 2018). A set of questionnaires consisting of 50 questions (excluding demographic items) both in Sections B and C were designed using a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) and distributed using the web-based survey tool, Google Forms. The primary data collection process was carried out between July to September 2020. A sample of this study consisted of 132 lecturers who were usable for further analysis. Descriptive statistics and statistical inference were accustomed to analysing the correlation and multiple regression using the SPSS version 25.0 based on the total number of respondents answering each particular question.

5. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

5.1. Respondent's Profile

From all the data, it shows that the majority of the respondents were female (77.3%) and most of them were from the age group of 30 - 39 years (54.5%) then it is followed by 40 - 49 years (32.6%), 50 - 59 years (6.8%), 20 - 29 years (4.5%), and the lowest is more than 60 years which is only (1.5%). As for the highest level of education, 51.5% of them currently hold a PhD followed by 43.9% with Master's Degree and 4.5% Degree holders. Regarding job experience, the majority of the participants had worked between 6 to 10 years (31.1%), followed by those who had worked between 11 to 15 years (22%), less than 5 years (21.2%), more than 20 years 15.9% and 9.8% worked between 16 to 20 years. The institution of the respondents shows that 59.1% are public universities while 40.9% are private universities. For the academic rank, the highest group is the lecturer (44.7%) and the lowest rank is a professor (1.5%). In terms of income, the majority of the respondents range from RM3,001 to RM7,000 (54.6%). The summary of the results is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent's Profile

Item	Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	102	77.3
	Male	30	22.7
Age	20 - 29	6	4.5
	30 - 39	72	54.5
	40 - 49	43	32.6
	50 - 59	9	6.8
	> 60	2	1.5
Education	Degree	6	4.5
	Master	58	43.9
	Ph.D	68	51.5
Length of employment	< 5 years	28	21.2
	6-10 years	41	31.1
	11-15 years	29	22
	16-20 years	13	9.8
	>20 years	21	15.9
Institution	Public University	78	59.1
	Private University	54	40.9
Academic Rank	Professor	2	1.5
	Associate Professor	13	9.8
	Senior Lecturer	55	41.7
	Lecturer	59	44.7
	Assistant Lecturer	3	2.3
Income	< RM3,000	6	4.5
	RM3,001 - RM5,000	36	27.3
	RM5,001 - RM7,000	36	27.3
	RM7,001 - RM9,000	28	21.2
	> RM9,001	26	19.7

5.2. Descriptive Statistics

As presented in Table 4.2, the mean value of all the constructs ranged between 3.357 and 4.024. Cronbach's alpha also ranges from 0.705 to 0.932 demonstrating high reliability for all the variables (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Reliability of the Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Work-life Balance	3.471	0.571	.713
Emotional Intelligence	4.014	0.441	.705
Job Engagement	4.024	0.503	.762
Organisational Support	3.357	0.706	.932

Table 3 below shows all items tested for each independent and dependent variable.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation for Each Item

	Statement	SD	Mean
Work-life Balance	I find my personal life least affected by my job	1.218	3.19
	I take care of my personal need better when I'm working from home	1.144	3.80
	I put my personal life on hold due to work commitments	1.080	3.63
	I miss my activities due to work commitments	1.147	3.57
	I struggle to juggle between work and non-work commitments	1.181	3.46
	I am happy with the amount of time spent on non-work activities	1.156	3.17
	I am satisfied with the organisation's arrangement of working from home	1.146	3.41
	I achieve work-life balance when I'm working from home	1.214	3.50
	I can control my work schedules and the environment when I'm working from home	1.199	3.45
Organizational Support	I am in a better mood because of my job	1.167	3.53
	My organisation appreciates any extra effort from me	1.231	2.89
	My organisation would listen to any complaint from me	1.083	2.90
	My organisation cares about my mental health	1.134	2.83
	My organisation cares about my general satisfaction at work	1.065	2.95
	My organisation is concerned about my well-being	1.041	2.97
	My organisation always provide supportive feedback on my work	1.004	2.98
	My organisation always encourages good communication among peers	1.141	3.36
	My peers are willing to listen to my work-related problems	0.944	3.72
	My organisation provides a good online learning platform for educational purposes	1.012	3.72
	I am happy to be part of this organisation as it provides a good and healthy environment	0.924	3.59
	My organisation has an extensive bandwidth capacity	1.093	3.28
	My organisation has a reliable network connectivity	1.147	3.36
	My organisation has a reliable digital learning platform	1.101	3.45
	The digital learning platform allows easy access to information when needed	1.050	3.56
My organization has a strong and stable internet connection which enables me to complete my work promptly	1.082	3.39	
My organisation's digital learning platform provides relevant learning content for educational purposes	1.042	3.57	
My organisation has a high degree of systems interconnectivity	1.045	3.23	

	My digital devices are up-to-date for my work purpose	1.192	3.57
	My organisation's internal system is accessible at any location	1.195	3.48
	There is a room for improvement in the existing system and network services	0.785	4.32
Emotional Intelligence	I have a good understanding of my own emotions	0.666	4.27
	I always know whether I am happy or not	0.629	4.41
	I have a good understanding of the emotions of people around me	0.762	4.02
	I am easily influenced by people around me	1.198	2.92
	I always believe in my competency	0.647	4.37
	I always encourage myself to deliver the best as an individual	0.543	4.55
	I can control my temper and handle difficulties rationally	0.898	3.95
	I always calm down quickly in a stressed situation	0.887	3.85
	I have good control of my own emotions	0.805	4.09
	My emotions will influence my job performance	1.149	3.71
Job Engagement	I find my work full of meaning and purpose	0.661	4.39
	I am enthusiastic about my job	0.786	4.33
	I am proud of my job	0.756	4.47
	I am immersed in my job	0.734	4.28
	I can detach myself from my job easily	1.074	3.38
	I always persevere, even when things do not go well	0.865	4.00
	I am still feeling energetic at end of my working days	1.125	3.40
	I work more than 8 hours a day	1.067	4.08
	I have a clear direction on the task assigned to me	0.752	4.08
	I always being assigned tasks related to my job description	0.964	3.84

5.3. Correlation

Pearson's correlation coefficient is the test statistics that measures the statistical relationship or association between two continuous variables. At a significant level, the value needs to be under 0.05 to be significant. Thus, it could be concluded that all the variables (emotional intelligence, job engagement, and organisational support) correlate with the dependent variable (WLB) among lecturers in Malaysia.

Table 4: Correlation

		Work-life Balance	Emotional Intelligence	Job Engagement	Organisational Support
Work-life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.344**	.392**	.238**
	Sig (1-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	132	132	132	132

Notes: *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

5.4. Multiple Regression

This study examined the direct relationships between emotional intelligence and job engagement on WLB. In the first step, the results indicate that emotional intelligence is positively and significantly related to WLB ($\beta = 0.206$, $t = 2.299$, $p < 0.05$). Besides, job engagement is positively and significantly related to WLB ($\beta = 0.296$, $t = 3.300$, $p < 0.01$). Thus, H1 and H2 were supported in this study. In the second step, a moderating variable (organisational support) was further added and the result indicated that organisational support had a positive effect on WLB ($\beta = 0.276$, $t =$

2.899, $p < 0.01$). In the third step, the interactions between emotional intelligence and organisational support, and between job engagement and organisational support, were added. The results indicate that in contrast, this study did not find organisational support as a moderator between emotional intelligence and WLB ($\beta = -0.891$, $t = -0.953$, $p > 0.05$) and between job engagement and WLB ($\beta = -0.135$, $t = -0.162$, $p > 0.05$). Thus, H3 and H4 were not supported. The R-value represents the simple correlation and is 0.495 (the 'R' Column), which indicates a high degree of correlation. The R2 value (the 'R Square' column) which is 24.5% indicates the total variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. Hence, following Cohen's (1988) guideline, the effect sizes of these three variables on WLB can be considered small.

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	t-value	P-value
Step 1: Independent Variable				
Emotional Intelligence	.433 ^a	.187	2.299	0.023**
Job Engagement			3.300	0.001***
Step 2: Moderating Variable				
Organisational Support	.487 ^b	.237	2.899	0.004***
Step 3: Moderating Terms				
Organisational Support*Emotional Intelligence	.495 ^c	.245	-0.953	.342
Organisational Support*Job Engagement			-0.162	.871

Notes: Predictors: (Constant), Work-life Balance, Emotional Intelligence, Job Engagement, Organisational Support *** $p < 0.01$ ** $p < 0.05$ * $p < 0.1$

5.5. Discussions and Analysis

The results of this study show that there is a significant, positive, and strong relationship between emotional intelligence and WLB. This is consistent with previous studies conducted by Applewhite (2017), Gupta (2016), Sharma (2014), and Shylaja and Prasad (2017). Emotional intelligence is an important indicator in forecasting the overall performance of lecturers, which is further related to achieving a good WLB. 56.1% of respondents in this study have recorded that they have a good understanding of empathy. Empathy is defined as the understanding of people surrounding an individual through their feelings, needs, and concerns. In the context of our study, 71.2% of respondents were able to handle their stress levels especially in managing their emotions efficiently as well as controlling their temper. The respondents in this study managed to maintain their self-esteem in achieving a healthy WLB despite facing disruptions in their normal life and adjusting to the new norm arising from the health crisis. Therefore, the first hypothesis was confirmed and accepted.

During the MCO, lecturers were permitted to work from home. This is to reduce the number of infections at the workplace. Responsibilities for the job assigned to lecturers continue as usual. The classes were conducted online and attending a conference or any matters relating to research and publication were performed using the online platforms. The results of this study show that the lecturers were able to balance multiple life roles. The respondents also agreed, whereby 55.3% of them achieved the WLB through working from home. They were also highly committed to their work and non-work roles. This result is supported by Abdur Rahman et al. (2020), where they suggested that occupations related to education and training are conducive to home-based work even though it involves a high level of physical contact. Consequently, the level of job engagement

in all HEIs, regardless of public or private universities, results appear to be the same. It is consistent with the job assigned to the lecturers, for example, teaching, researching, and supervising students (Wong & Chiu, 2019; Martin, 1997; Ebrahim et al., 2015). Hence, the second hypothesis was confirmed and accepted.

This study has analysed that there is no significant evidence to suggest that organisational support in moderating lecturers' emotional intelligence and job engagement is positively correlated with WLB. Respondents are of the view that extra efforts achieved are not valued by their respective organisations. In general, respondents disagree with the notion that their organisations are highly attentive to their needs, whether such matters are directly or indirectly related to the job. For example, 27.2% - 34.1% of respondents disagreed that the organisations in which they are serving would not listen to their complaints and do not provide supportive feedback on their work. This is followed by 32.6% - 40.9% of respondents who tend to disagree and agree with this statement. In regard to personal development and well-being, 31.1% - 35.6% tend to disagree and agree that their organisations do not take matters concerning mental health seriously, value the employees' well-being, and general satisfaction at work. It was further supported by 31% - 37.9% of respondents who disagreed with this statement. This may not come as a surprise since our respondents are mostly PhD holders (51.5%) and Master's degree holders (43.9%) who believe they can better manage themselves in terms of utilising technological resources, managing emotional intelligence, and handling job engagement. Thus, organisational support is dispensable in achieving the lecturers' WLB. The respondents also proved that they can adjust their emotions and confront societal challenges, such as working during the MCO period and working under pressure.

Utilising technological resources has been included as part of organisational support in the questionnaire. Despite having a reliable digital learning platform with extensive bandwidth capacity, the respondents agreed that they can handle it wisely through the possibility of internet disruption. The results also indicate that all the respondents can manage their work and non-works independently. Lee (2018) revealed that time management and setting priorities are the vital determinants of WLB from the perspectives of female lecturers in a private university. Although a previous study by Siti Asiah et al. (2015) found that interventions such as organisational support through the provision of the training program can improve the level of professionalism in the organisation which is interrelated with job performance, but it does not guarantee for achieving WLB. Conversely, in this new normal, it is believed that lecturers themselves are the key players in achieving their WLB without organisational support. Hence, the third and fourth hypothesis was rejected.

Theoretically, this study implies that there is a possible application beyond the COR theory that it supports. This study has contributed to enriching the body of knowledge on WLB literature within the Malaysian lecturers' context. In this study, emotional intelligence and job engagement were found positively related to WLB. The present finding empirically showed the important role of emotional intelligence as a personal characteristic in influencing WLB. Hence, the finding adds to the COR theory in this regard. Secondly, the finding demonstrated that all resources will produce positive outcomes as postulated by the COR theory. Thirdly, the current study contributes to the body of knowledge on WLB by including organisational support as a moderating variable. However, the finding revealed that organisational support was not able to help enhance WLB.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study explores the WLB status of a randomly selected population of lecturers from several universities in Malaysia. In conclusion, the balance between work and life is not an easy and ideal concept. Specifically, this finding concludes that an increase in emotional intelligence and job engagement further increases the ability of the lecturer to maintain a good WLB. Nevertheless, the results indicate that organisational support does not affect the relationship between emotional intelligence, job engagement, and WLB. Besides, the study fails to find the influence of organisational support as a moderator to WLB among lecturers in Malaysia. Several implications are derived from the findings of this study. For instance, universities can introduce a manual for online teaching since all lecturers are new to this norm. The guideline or manual shall be issued as a reference for the lecturers to obtain the necessary information for conducting online classes. Meanwhile, the provision of a stable and reliable online teaching and learning platform is also the responsibility of the university in regards to the effectiveness of platforms that serve as monitoring the productivity of lecturers who opt to work from home such as the MyLink2HR system used by UiTM, such an area requires further research.

Although the present study drew a broader picture of the WLB among Malaysian lecturers, due to the small number of participants, it is not possible to generalise the role of organisational support as a moderator due to different environments and situations. Some suggestions for future studies were proposed. First, the study only focused on emotional intelligence and job engagement as variables, future researchers might want to use other variables that may affect the WLB. There are still other variables that have an impact on WLB. Second, future researchers might want to test the variables in other different sectors and populations to find out the consistency of the findings since this study was only interested in those who were working in educational institutions. Third, the statistical data could be collected using a combined research method of quantitative and qualitative methods to produce a more coherent result.

Next, future works can examine whether the gender difference has any significant influence on the WLB. Furthermore, researchers can also attempt to investigate the moderating effects of different age groups on the lecturer's WLB in Malaysia. We hope this study provides an impetus for researchers to continue their investigation in this area. Nevertheless, this study might help HEIs in planning more effective and productive activities for lecturers. The COVID-19 pandemic has unexpectedly changed the perspective of Malaysian lecturers on emotional intelligence, job engagement, and organisational support for achieving a good WLB.

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